

The annual Tilba Festival is a great expression of community spirit and a drawcard for visitors.

New Life & Community

Adapting to a wider world

The early 1970s saw a significant transition for life in the district. It faced crisis and opportunities. Up until then 'everything happened between milkings'.¹

In 1972 the Bega Co-operative bought the ABC Cheese Factory. Milk was collected by bulk tanker so there was no need for farmers to make their daily trip to town. 'It seemed this would be the death knell for our little town. We looked like losing the general store, post office, public halls, school, church, pub and even our identity'.²

The modern history and culture of the Tilba district is a response to this crisis. The Central Tilba Progress Association reformed and a small rural community, nestled by an ancient mountain, gradually became a national treasure.



TILBA FESTIVAL 1992 (J. DONNELLAN FAMILY ALBUM)

Today the two general stores have become one and incorporate the post office - they are not lost. The community halls continue to be lovingly restored as a central focus to the district's life. The Saturday Market provides local produce and a meeting place.



TILBA MARKETS, CENTRAL TILBA HALL



THE DROMEDARY HOTEL, CENTRAL TILBA

The early history of the district became cemented in the public mind by the gift of the William Corkhill collection of glass negatives to the National Library of Australia in 1975.

That same year the villages of Central Tilba and Tilba Tilba were recognised by the National Trust as being of historic value, having a unique relationship with the surrounding landscape.



TILBA 1 FIRE TRUCK (CENTRAL TILBA PUBLIC SCHOOL)

Since opening in 1895, initially as a coffee palace, the pub has been a popular meeting place for locals and visitors.

The school is a thriving primary community that takes an active part in local events. The churches have morphed into Open Sanctuary where people of all faiths, spiritual beliefs and philosophies are welcome.

Proud rural traditions were upheld.

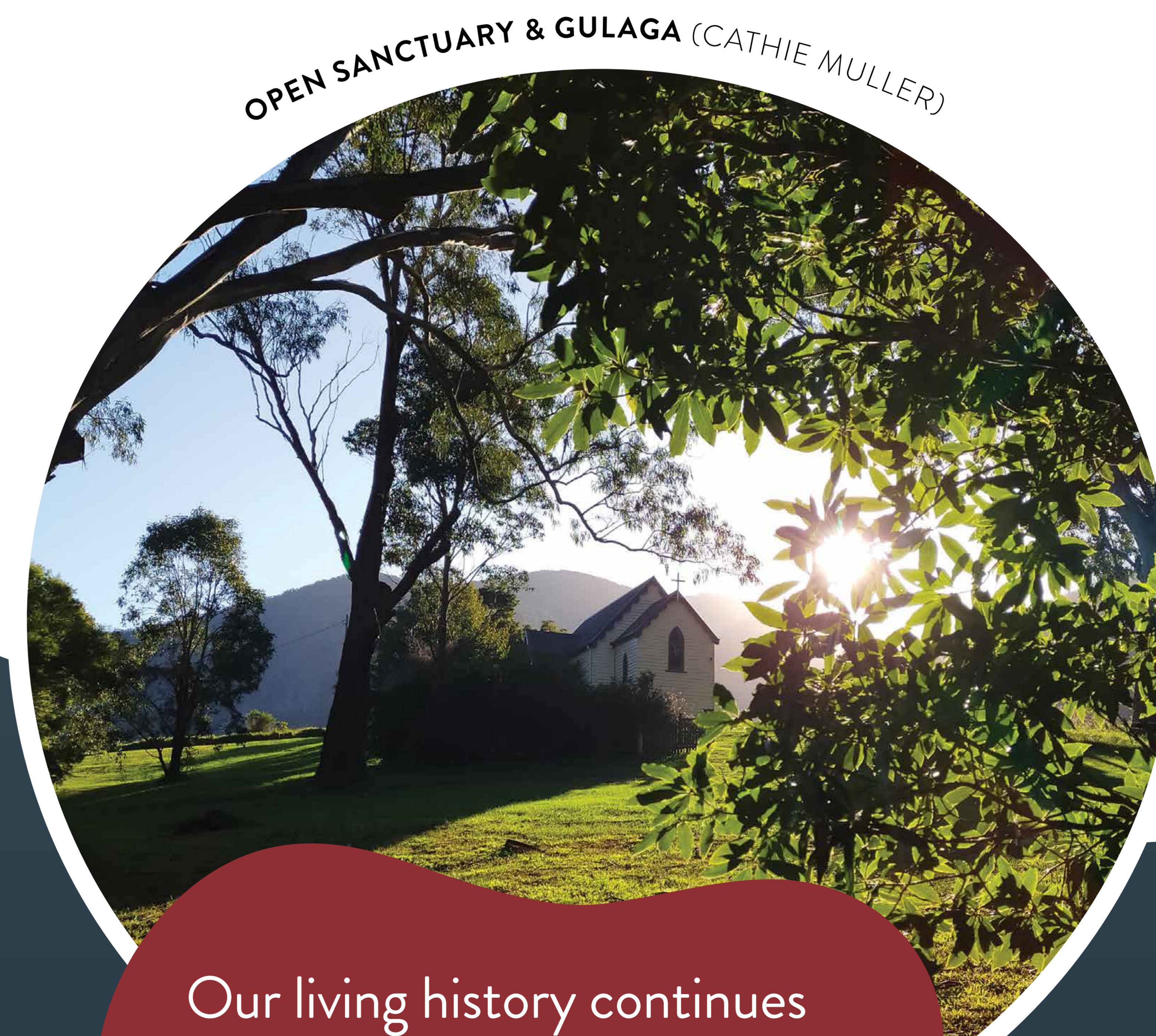
With the arrival of new families, ancient and contemporary cultural visions emerged. Aboriginal land rights were recognised in 1983, the Umbarra Cultural Centre was opened in 1995, and in 2006 Gulaga National Park containing Gulaga Mountain, 'the heartbeat of the Yuin nation' was 'handed back' to the Yuin people. 'I know their spirits are here with us.'³



LOGGING PROTESTS 2005



TRADITIONAL OWNERS MARY DUROUX & LIONEL MONGTA AT THE HANDBACK CEREMONY. (DAPHNE NASH)



OPEN SANCTUARY & GULAGA (CATHIE MULLER)

Our living history continues to unfold and Gulaga, the mother mountain, bears witness to it all.

