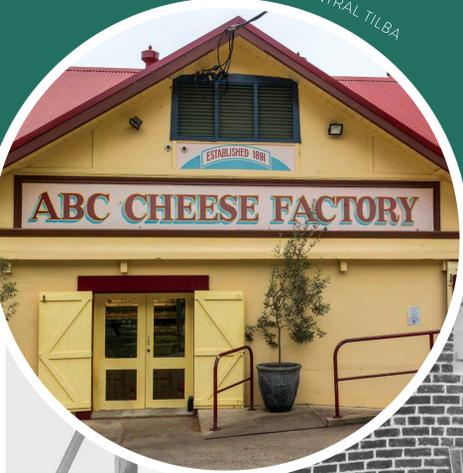


Today, Tilba Real Dairy operates from the original ABC cheese factory site, built in 1891.

ABC CHEESE FACTORY CENTRAL TILBA



DAIRY COWS TILBA DISTRICT (BRAD CHILBY)

Dairy farmers undertook widescale clearing of trees, resulting in the rolling hills that now characterise the district.

Dairy Farming in the Tilba District

Dairying in the Tilba District began in the early 1840s.

By the late 1860s more settlers took up land under the Robertson Land Acts and by 1870, cheese was being produced. The industry continued to grow, particularly after the Mt Dromedary mining boom ended around 1904.

The district boasted three cheese factories, one each at Central Tilba, Tilba Tilba and Corunna. Tilba district farmers were known to be progressive. Many were ahead of the rest of the state in the storage of maize silage, conserving it firstly in outside stacks, and then in silos built on farms. This fodder conservation improved survival rates in livestock during droughts and boosted milk production in winter. There were at least 50 silos in the district by 1921.



BRICK SILO (WILLIAM CORKHILL COLLECTION TT802-R)

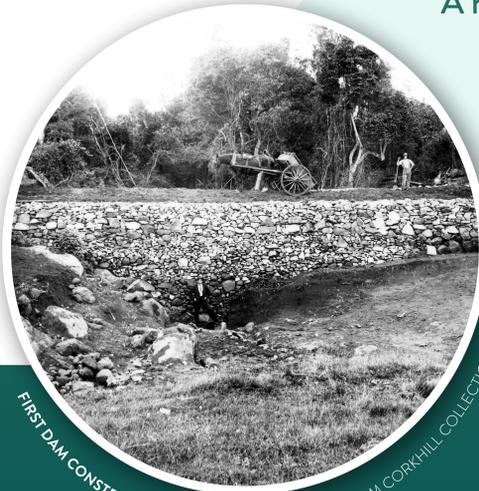
Many original silos still dot the Tilba district landscape.

At its height, the industry had more than 40 dairy farms supplying the three factories.

Tilba district also gained a reputation for breeding fine cattle and horses. The popularity of the breeds changed over time. The best way of showcasing stock and produce was at the annual agricultural show, held for many years at the Tilba Tilba showground.

The daily delivery of milk to the factories was important, not just for sustaining cheese production, but for community life. Farmers were able to socialise with their peers, exchange knowledge, information and gossip, which helped weave the fabric of the district together.

A modern day men's shed!

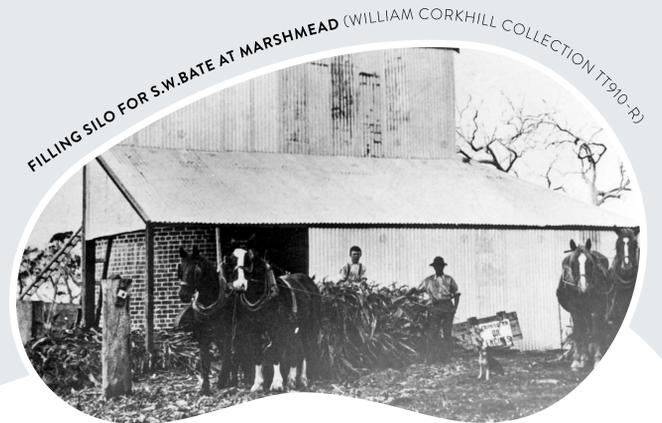


FIRST DAM CONSTRUCTION CA.1906 AT HENKLEY (WILLIAM CORKHILL COLLECTION TT293-R)



LEWIS POOLE, DRIVING TO CHEESE FACTORY CA.1910

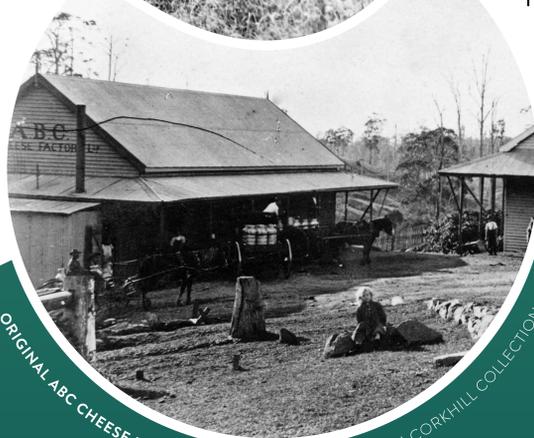
(WILLIAM CORKHILL COLLECTION TT323-R)



FILLING SILO FOR S.W.BATE AT MARSHMEAD (WILLIAM CORKHILL COLLECTION TT910-R)

Each factory had periods of boom and decline.

New styles of cheese were made to adapt to changing tastes, and cheeses from Tilba district were exported around the world. Challenges included droughts, bushfires, the arrival of rabbits, two World Wars and changes in production standards. These challenges put pressure on farmers and factories alike.



ORIGINAL ABC CHEESE FACTORY & CURING ROOM (WILLIAM CORKHILL COLLECTION TT966-R)

By 1974 the last of the original factories closed and local dairy farmers were sending their milk to Bega Cheese.

Deregulation has further changed the industry and today there just two farms operating in the district – one at Corunna supplying Bega Cheese, and one at Tilba Tilba supplying both Tilba Real Dairy and Bega Cheese.

