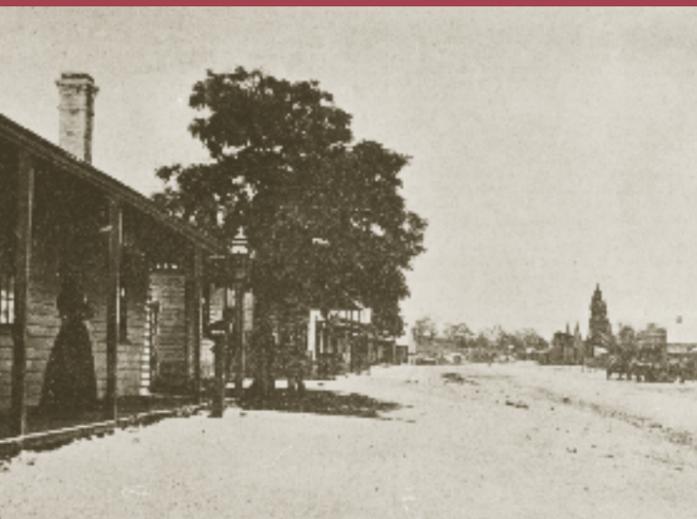


**13. The School of Arts** On the southern side of the road is The School of Arts which opened in 1887, replacing the original Miner's Hall that stood on the corner of old Rae Street (now Phoenix Mine Road). It soon became the centre of community activity, being used for dances and other social events. At one time it was even used for roller-skating, to the detriment of the wooden floor. Families living in Lucknow during the gold boom enjoyed a range of social activities, mostly organised by the mines to keep the workers happy. Events included picnics, sporting events, balls, boating and swimming and a competition for the cleanest house! Orange City Council restored The School of Arts building in 1999.

*Continue east along the Mitchell Highway in an easterly direction*

**14. Once a pub always a pub.** There has been a hotel on this site since the 1860s. In the mid 1860s the village had three hotels, five blacksmiths, two bakers, three butchers, three shoemakers, two produce merchants, a tailor, a saddler and a couple of storekeepers, as well as the school and churches. The nearest doctor was at Orange, so it was fortunate that the Lucknow mines had a relatively good safety record.



Main Street Lucknow, 1904.



View of Lucknow, looking south. The two storey mine office is on the far left, Alf Lane's Royal Hotel is in the centre and the Phoenix Mine Poppet Head is at the far back right of the photo.

**15. The Reform Mine** has been described as the richest small gold field of its type in the world. Mining began here in the 1870s or earlier and prospered until the late 1890s. In 1935 the Wentworth Company built a new poppet head over the shaft to pump water in conjunction with the Wentworth Main shaft. At the height of the gold rush the whole hillside beyond the Reform site was a hive of activity, including a battery, foundry and grand two-storey mine office, along with houses, stables and numerous shafts and tunnels. Behind the Reform poppet head, impressive remains of bluestone walls can still be seen. Built on a series of levels, these formed the foundations of the mill, or battery. The small corrugated iron shed behind the poppet head, old equipment and overgrown mullock heaps are other reminders of years of toil by hundreds of men.

**16. Cottage** Across the road is an early 20th century cottage that belonged to a blacksmith's son, Dick Cornish. Its rendered finish was made from cyanide sands used in the gold recovery process. One of 13 children, Cornish used to cart road metal with horse and dray in the early 1900s. He prospected for gold and trained horses in his spare time and eventually had the mail run between Orange and Canowindra.

**17. The Weir** From here you also see remnants of stone walls, which formed part of the weirs along Frederick's Valley Creek, on a hill to the north west was the Boat Dam and the Tangye Dam between the Wentworth Main Mine and the Miner's Rest.

*Make your way back along the Miner's Walk to the car park.*



View of Lucknow from Wentworth Main Shaft c1900.

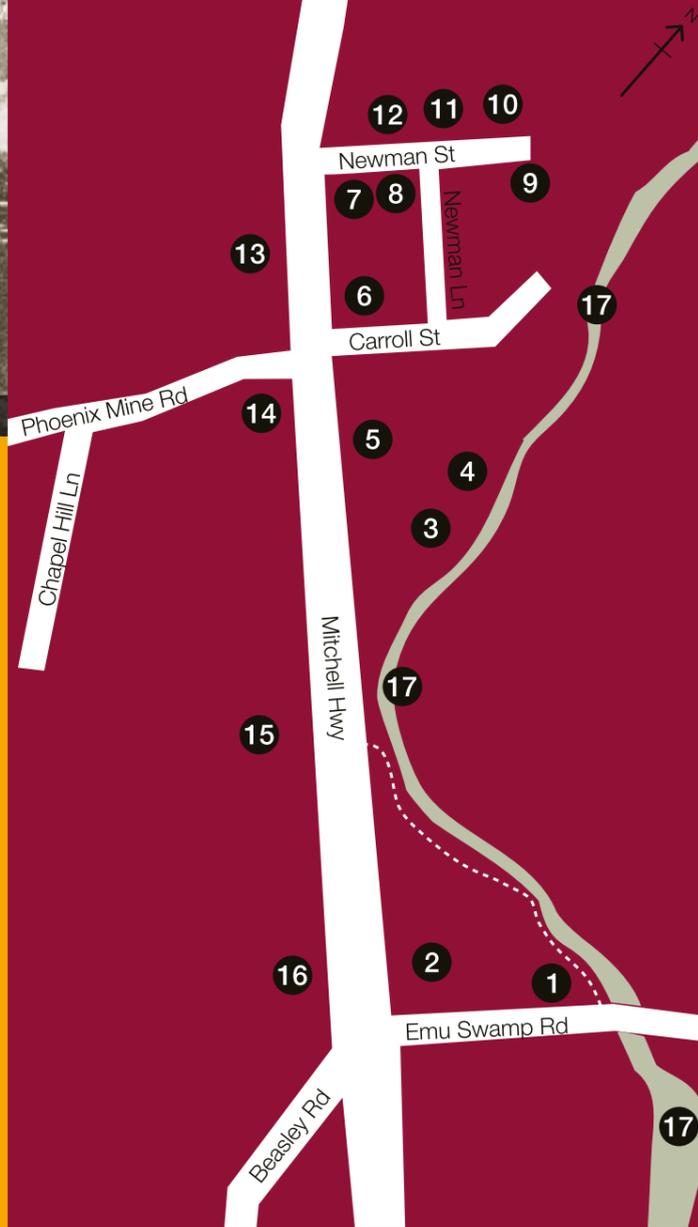
You may also wish to drive to Chinaman's Bend Cemetery, 3km west of Lucknow towards Orange on the Mitchell Hwy. Chinaman's Bend lies near a section of creek known variously as 'Frederick's Valley' and 'Summer Hill' and contains many pioneer burials, but few surviving headstones dating back to the early 1840s.

Earlier burials are thought to have been from a government station established nearby in the 1820s as a base between Bathurst and the emerging town of Wellington. The station, which housed a small number of soldiers and convicts, closed in the early 1830s. It was the first European settlement in that area, which until then had been inhabited by the indigenous Wiradjuri people.

Chinaman's Bend was named after Chinese market gardeners who leased adjacent land in the 1880s and 90s.

Although the years have taken their toll some inscriptions can still be made out, such as the one dedicated to a young man whose untimely death at age 18 was 'much regretted by a large circle of friends', and the poignant words on a child's headstone.

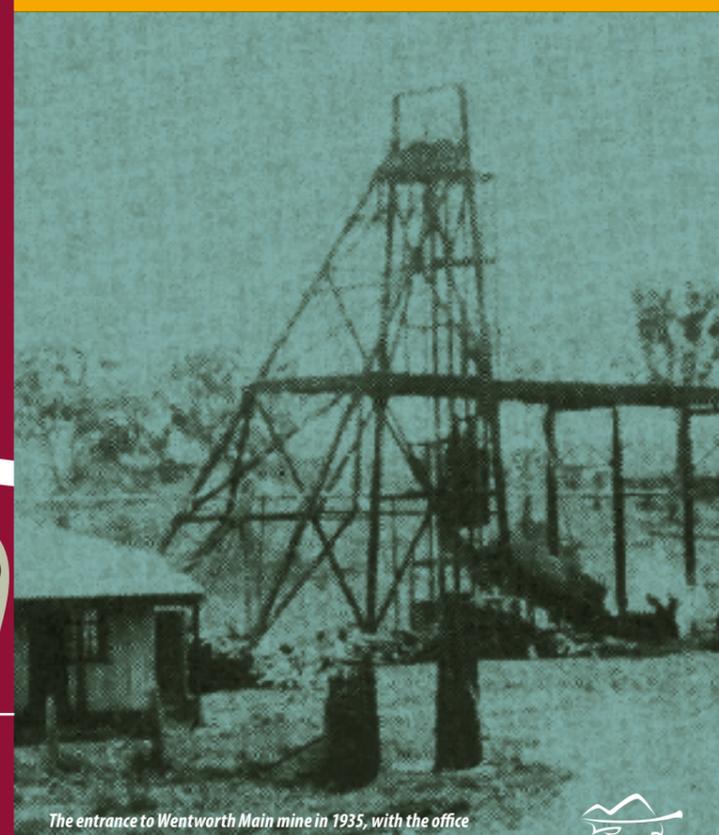
On the way from Lucknow to Chinaman's Bend other relics can be seen, such as the Cornish boiler on a rise to the left (this was from St Aignan's mine) and the Bismarck Range winch house and mullock heap on the right. Also of interest, although now private residences, are the Summer Hill homestead settlement, the Wellwood property and, closer to Orange, the two storey building on the northern side of the road known locally as The Halfway House or Curran's Inn.



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# lucknow

## heritage trail



The entrance to Wentworth Main mine in 1935, with the office and pay office on the left and the equipment store on the right. Photo courtesy Nita Wasson



A stroll around the historic village of Lucknow takes you into a part of Australia's history where the 'boom and bust' of the gold rush left an indelible mark. Lucknow has a rich heritage as a gold mining settlement dating back to the 1850s. Once the site of Australia's richest gold field, it is a reminder of the lifestyle, hardships and fortunes of those who lived and worked there.

The Lucknow Heritage Trail takes you on a walking tour of the village, offering an insight into its mining, social, cultural and architectural history.

As you follow the trail you will see interpretive signs, each of which has a story to tell about the way life used to be in the hamlet of Lucknow, which has been listed by Orange City Council as a heritage precinct.



The walk takes approximately 45 minutes. Along the way you will see remnants of the gold rush days - most striking are the two steel poppet heads at the eastern end of the village, Wentworth Main Mine on the north side of the Mitchell Highway and Reform on the south. You will find old miners' cottages, sheds, mullock piles, remains of stonewalls, earthworks and pieces of old machinery, most of which have sadly fallen into disrepair. It is easy to imagine what the place was like more than a century ago when, at its peak, 700 men lived, breathed and worked these hills.

# history

Gold was discovered at Lucknow at a time when hopefuls were flocking north of Orange to Ophir, home of the gold rush. Two tenant farmers in 1851 reportedly found surface gold at the top of a hill, which later became the site of Lucknow's Phoenix Mine, so rich that gold was found in the roots of grass above it. Before the gold rush, settlers had successfully run sheep and cattle in the area.

When one such landowner, William Charles Wentworth, found his tenant farmers spending more time prospecting than farming and making money from it, he demanded royalties. The miners refused and this led Wentworth, who owned large parcels of land in the area, to form the Wentworth Gold Field Company in 1852. It is no surprise, then, that for more than a decade the diggings bore the name Wentworth Goldfields.

By the 1860s many claims sprang up, their names reflecting the backgrounds and hopes of those who toiled there: Homeward Bound, Great Britain, Uncle Tom, Perseverance, Hard To Find (which produced the goldfield's largest nugget weighing 1.5cwt - or 76kg!), Golden Point, Reserve, Phoenix, Shamrock, Snobs (so named because it was run by a group of shoemakers), Industry Rewarded, Greek, Jackass and others. The story goes that one shaft was named Happy Go Lucky by four sailors who turned up on the gold field "with no idea how to mine for gold". They apparently did get lucky but drank most of their profits and the mine was closed, perhaps not surprisingly, for safety reasons.



Lucknow mines in early days.

Lucknow was given its name in 1863, probably after the siege of Lucknow in India, in which British and Indian soldiers tunnelled under each other's fortresses then blew them up. Another theory is that the name was a deliberate play on the words 'Luck Now', depending on how you pronounce it.



Newman's Post Office and store, 1894.

The next few decades saw huge changes in the way ore was mined and processed, from the early days when miners used home-made picks and shovels until the last years of the Lucknow mines when machines - sophisticated for their era - were in use. Mining ceased around 1938 after 40 tons of gold had left the village.

*The Trail begins at the Miner's Walk, approximately 50m north along Emu Swamp Road from the intersection of the Mitchell Highway at the eastern end of the village. Here you can park your car and return.*

**1. Picnic Area** Orange City Council and the Heritage Office of NSW jointly funded The Miner's Walk; the walking track includes a picnic area, car park and site interpretation along Summer Hill Creek of the Wentworth Gold Mine.

**2. Wentworth Main Mine** As you walk in a westerly direction along the track you will see the Wentworth Main Mine and its landmark poppet head, which still has part of the winding gear attached. The poppet head was built in 1935 to bail water from the mine workings into the creek (the problem with rising water continued to plague the mines which are now all flooded). The plant ran 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but the mine's main income came from the cyanide vats where gold and other ore were extracted from the old tailings dump. The corrugated iron buildings near the poppet head were built early this century. The small cottage nestled into the bottom of the hill was the Mine Manager's house.

Orange City Council purchased the Wentworth Main Mine in 2001 to develop as a tourism and educational facility.

**3. Miners' Rest** At the miners rest, near where cyanide vats were once used in gold extraction, mounds of sand left over from this process can still be seen to the north. The cyanide vats were crucial to the settlement's viability in the early 1900s. Despite many changes in the village, the street layout has changed very little since the gold rush days.



Preparing for parade  
Image from Ray Powell Collection. Postcard courtesy Kerry Condon

**4. Miner's Cottage** An old miner's cottage can be seen near the creek. It is thought it was relocated from elsewhere in the village.

**5. Ted Barker's cottage.** Although empty for many years, this weatherboard cottage late 1880s was home to the son of a pioneering miner named Phillip Barker who came to Lucknow after trying his luck at Sofala and the Turon. Murphy's general store, a blacksmith and Newman's original shop once flanked the house.

**6. 'Mamhead'** is Lucknow's grandest surviving building and was the home of Henry Newman. Mr Newman made a fortune with the Homeward Bound claim, lost it all through business enterprises including a general store and then became wealthy again through the Reform Mine. From his interests in the Reform Mine, he bought back his original store and another, newer store. He had the Post Office agency, the Telegraph office and the bank agency. Behind the store he built Mamhead and named it after a family home in England. Newman married three times and had 14 children, his first two wives, Adelaide and Kitty dying soon after childbirth. His third wife, Kitty's sister Ellen outlived him.

**7. Blunt's Butchery & residence.** Former site of Blunt's Butchery and residence. Now a private home, the oldest part of this building dates back to the late 19th century. The outbuilding on the Newman Street side may have been staff quarters and/or stores. The butcher, Charles Blunt jnr, whose father earlier had the Commercial Hotel, was very successful in business and local politics and was known locally as 'Daddy Blunt'. He ended up buying 'Mamhead' after Henry Newman's death. The Butchery was in a row of shops that included Thomas Bryant Shoemaker, Kinghorn's Butchery and Newman's store on the corner of Carroll Street.

*Turn the corner and head north along Newman Street*

**8. Old Stables** These Old Stables once belonged to Blunt's Butchery. Despite the heavy reliance on horses for transport and work in the past, these are Lucknow's only surviving examples of early stables. The hayloft can be seen clearly from Newman Street.

**9. The Police Station** and lockup was next to the Catholic Church, which stood across the road from the school. Some time before 1916 the station was relocated to Orange, where it stands at 103 Sampson Street and is now a private residence.

*Cross the road at the top of the hill and proceed south along Newman Street*

**10. Miner's Cottage** This miner's cottage is a typical example of the many small corrugated iron cottages that were home to miners and their families in the late 19th century. Notice the kitchen outbuilding at the rear of the cottage. Many houses were designed that way to prevent the whole house burning down if a fire started in the kitchen. Similar buildings, although many now derelict, are scattered throughout the village.

Itinerant miners and their families lived on the hill above Lucknow, known then as Bagtown because of the type of housing: timber frames and hessian bags for walls. The exterior was tarred to keep out the weather and the inside was whitewashed using sand from the dump near the cyanide vats. They had a bark or hessian roof. More permanent residents built huts elsewhere from bark, timber or corrugated iron. Good examples remain at Shadforth, east of Lucknow; on the southern side of the Mitchell Highway are the Rose, Shamrock, Thistle and Waratah Miners' Cottages.

**11. Lucknow Schoolhouse** The former Lucknow Schoolhouse was built in 1900 as an addition to the brick and stone school residence that had been built in 1878 to replace the original bark building. As the mining boom faded, so did enrolments and the brick building became a residence, eventually being demolished. Lessons continued in the weatherboard building until the school closed in 1971. It now operates as a community hall for the village.

**12. St John's Anglican Church** was built from bluestone and sandstone with the church's foundation stone being laid in 1873. The church was an important part of the early social fabric of the village and during the peak of the boom, was found to be too small. It was extended in 1896.

*Retrace your steps east along the Mitchell Highway keeping on the northern side of the road*