

LANDMARK POSTCODE

2370



Image courtesy of Paul Mathews and Glenn Innes Visitor Information Centre

Story: Sheryl Allen

LOCATION: Glen Innes
7.5 hours northeast of Sydney

POPULATION: 6,250

INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, tourism,
manufacturing

CLIMATE: Temperate
Summer: 13.3°C – 26.5°C
Winter: 0.8°C – 12.7°C
Rainfall: 856mm

Glen Innes is a major country township in the NSW New England region.

Roosting high atop the Northern Tablelands at the intersection of the New England and Gwydir Highways, it proudly carries its early Scottish history forward into its modern-day character.

Glen Innes was gazetted in 1852, taking its name from Scottish pastoralist Major Archibald Clunes Innes, and was soon noted for sheep-raising and wheat-growing.

"The Beardies", two hairy convict stockmen who guided earliest settlers to the district, are commemorated in local place names and in November's Land of the Beardies Bush Festival.

The 1872 discovery of tin in the district sparked a double-decade boom for the town. Antimony, gold, manganese, silver, sapphires and emeralds have all been mined here over the years.

Commercial sapphire mining, especially of the world-famous Reddestone blues, was prosperous from the 1950s through to the 1980s.

Gem fossicking continues to be popular with

March's Minerama attracting "gem lovers, rockhounds and outdoor adventurers" from across the country and beyond. NSW's largest annual gem show, Minerama offers a 3-day program of fossicking great fun – visitors can try their luck in a natural setting, marvel at mineral displays or browse the wares of more than 70 traders in gemstones, jewellery, crystals, mineral specimens, hobby equipment and more.

Timber milling was once a key industry in Glen Innes but now it's bushwalkers and 4-wheel drivers who venture into the tall timber country.

Glen Innes continues to be central to a rich fattening and breeding area for fine wool, prime lambs and cattle. Regular livestock sales make the most of Glen Innes's strategic location to transport routes through the region.

"The New England region is renowned for the safeness of its seasons, the reliability of its rainfall," added Landmark's Jim Ritchie. "Many people have invested in the district because of that certainty. To first timers, the per acre price might appear a bit above their region, but when you factor in the carrying capacities, the DSE (dry sheep equivalents) value is very competitive and often less than other regions."

"The residential market is ticking along nicely and offers plenty of value. Glen Innes was recently named among the top ten places to invest in Australia."

Big business agrees – Woolworths and McDonald's have recently come to town and PhotoCreate, a photographic and print

products processor, established here in 2006. PhotoCreate's usual workforce of around 150 can quadruple during peak "gifting" season. More than 5,000 photo kiosks around Australia plus many online businesses feed their printing work through to Photo Create. The business was attracted to Glen Innes's affordable commercial rents, ready workforce and availability of high-speed ADSL.

The Glen Innes region is known as Celtic Country – and there is no shortage of Celtic references: the Australian Standing Stones inspired by Great Britain's monoliths; the annual Australian Celtic Festival each May; the local placenames such as Ben Lomond and Stonehenge; and the haunting sound of pipers playing in the main street and beyond.

There's a definite spirit of mystery and history here, with more than a touch of Celtic mischief amongst the local characters.

CONTACT:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: three bedroom home \$250,000

Rural: good grazing/fattening country \$1,500 to \$2,500 per acre (depending on pasture quality and structural improvements)