



# **History of Stanthorpe Tinfield**

**Author**

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**Compliments of StanAurum Limited**

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## **Acknowledgements and Sources**

Tony Fawdon would like to thank all parties past and present, whose works contributed towards the presentation. The main sources were;

Books- “They Came to the Plateau” by Jean Harslett & Mervyn Royle,  
‘Misty Mountain, Stanthorpe Through Time’ by R.J.L. Adams,  
Geological Survey of Queensland, The Queensland Public Library, Oxley Library, , Mrs N. Greenup, Mr W.L. Haig, Reuters International News Agency, The Queensland Parliamentary Library, and many other contributors as yet un sourced.

## Pre-European Settlement

- The main local Indigenous group of the Granite Belt was the Kambuwal people whose territory ranged from Wallangarra to where Millmerran is situated today.
- Adjoining them to the east and north was the Keinjan people who ranged from Woodenbong NSW to Leyburn Qld
- The Granite Belt was an ancient trading centre between different clan groups. In the summer months spears and boomerangs made from the western Myall timber were traded for shields and carryalls, the Eelamans, made from the eastern rainforest timbers. Also the trading of possum skins, which are plentiful in the Granite Belt.
- The Kambuwal people annually burnt the high country in May, before leaving for their winter retreats and returned to the Granite Belt with the onset of fresh new green growth in spring.
- There does not appear to have been widespread conflict in the area with the coming of the Europeans, as further north in parts of Queensland.

### Explorers and Settlers

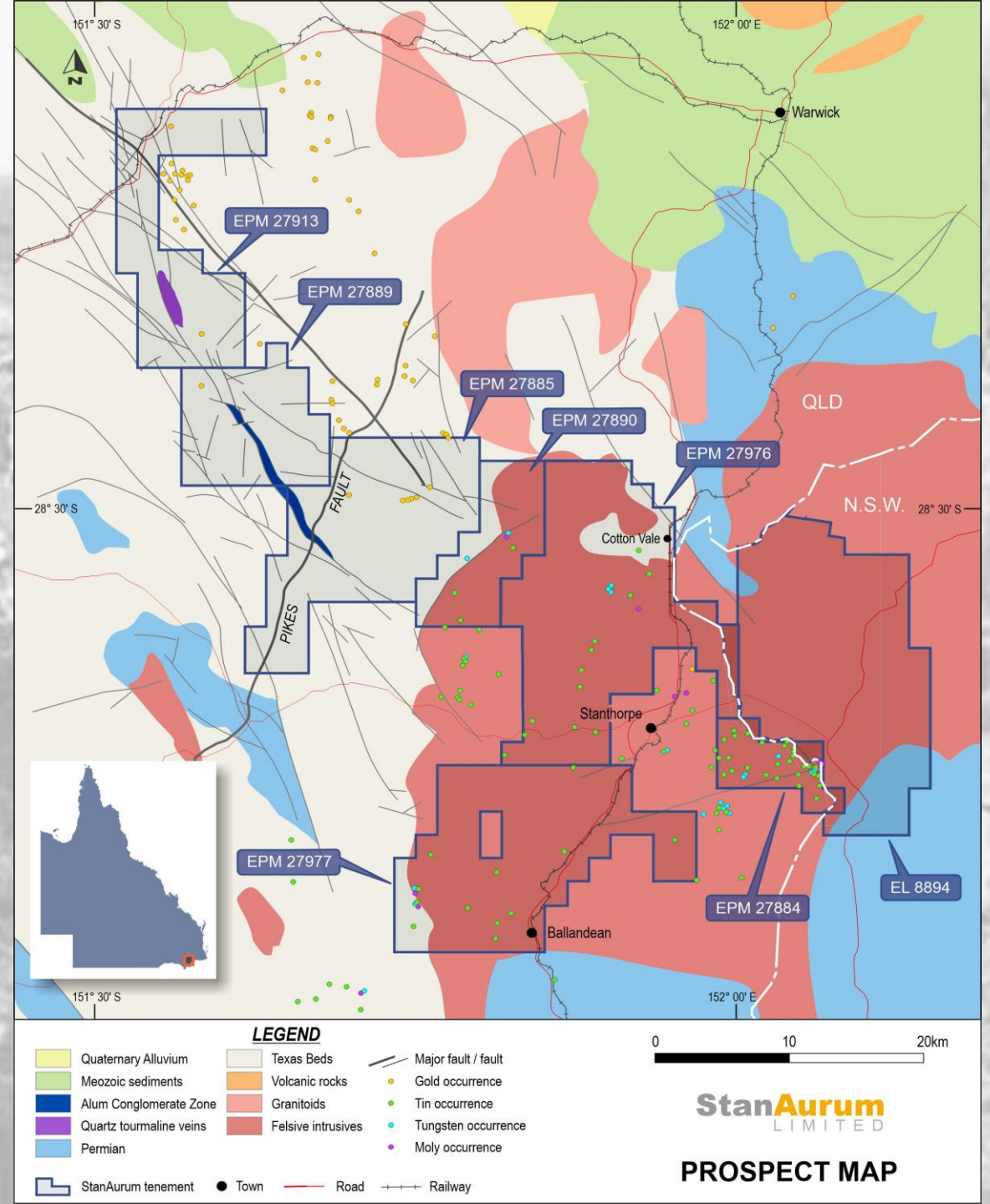
- The first European to travel through the area was Allan Cunningham in 1827 who had been commissioned to explore for good pastoral land. 14 years later the Leslie Brothers took up first run on the Darling Downs.
- The first settlers in the Granite Belt/ Traprock region were Squatters at Marylands Station taken up by Matthew Marsh in 1844, a run of 200,000 acres stocked with 25,000 sheep,.
- The land rush developed and Squatters quickly took up the station runs, at Ballandean by Henry Nicol in the Granite Belt and in the Traprock Region at Pikedale by Captain John Pike, of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot, and Mcleod & Wright at Glen Lyon Station.
- It was to be the opening of the railway in 1887 that with the advent of small crop production being railed to Brisbane, that the land was slowly cut up for small holdings.

## Gold and Tin – The first Whisperings

- The Rev. W B Clarke in his extensive travels, was the first recorded person to identify tin in the headwaters of the Pikes Creek, in the Granite Belt and gold in the same creek, where it crossed into the Traprock terrain in 1853.
- Later in the same year S. Stutchbury (NSW Geol. Survey) located gold at Canal Creek, 50km west of Warwick.
- In 1854 Joseph Greer “a shepherd of original character” found tin at Kilminster, and proceeded to work the ground, until a Squatter forced him off with a court order.
- In 1866 two gold prospectors reported tin in the Quart Pot Creek (Later called Stanthorpe) then continued prospecting in western Queensland. When they heard of the tin rush to Elsmore NSW, they immediately decamped and returned to Quart Pot Creek only to find the ground pegged for tin.

# Geology of the Granite Belt & Traprock Region

- Triassic Stanthorpe Granite 247 my ago  
Tin terrain.....Brown Colour
- Carboniferous Texas Beds 380 my ago  
Gold, copper terrain.....Beige Colour
- Permian Rift 280 my ago.....Blue Colour
- Gold Occurrences.....Yellow Dots
- Tin Occurrences.....Green Dots



## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

### • RUSH

- The Pioneer Tin Mining Co. is formed C A Lee at Quart Pot (Township) with capital of £50,000 @ £1 per share. 35,000 shares for the vendors and 15,000 for the investors.
- Cornelius McGlew experienced English prospector (known as the God's Gift to Conmen) was taken in hand by Mr Eisenstaedter and floated the New Banca Tin Mining Co. with a capital of £60,000.
- Thousands rush the creeks and gullies from Wilsons Downfall NSW in the east to Sundown in the west.
- The size of the Stanthorpe Rush was never calculated, only that 37,000 Chinese were on the field over time.
- The miners and speculators from NSW & Vic took up a large proportion of the field. By October 1871 the Geological Society of London was reporting the discoveries of rich tin on the border ranges

## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

### Gold- Warwick



**Meanwhile back on the Traprock in Qld Gold had been discovered at Lord Johns Swamp in 1852 & at Canal Creek in 1863**

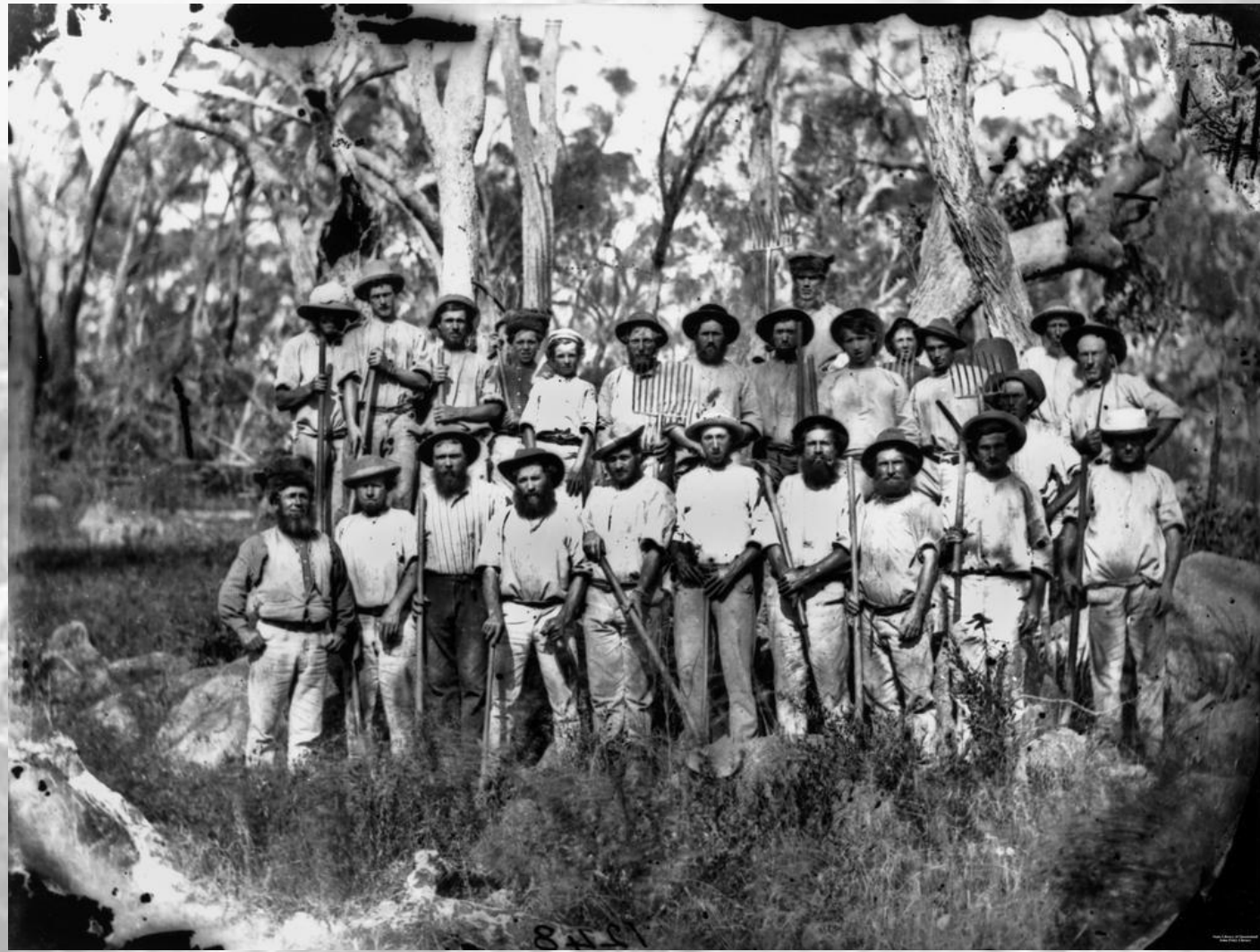
**In the Warwick Region.**

**Gold miners decamped en-mass for the new rushes at Gympie and later Quart Pot.**

### Tin Boom

Meanwhile at Quart Pot the name was changed to Stanthorpe, Stannus latin for tin, Thorpe old English for town, hence Tin Town

- In the first week of operation The Warwick Lands Office processed 54 mining Claim applications covering 4,200 acres
- The Tin Price in 1870 had escalated from 40 to 60 pounds
- Stanthorpe production by June 1872 was 1,400 tons @ 65p/ton



Happy alluvial tin miners with long handled shovels & sluicing forks at the ready, Quart Pot Creek getting rich tin and liked the name change

# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield Alluvial Hand Mining



Sluicing with "long toms" at Quart Pot Creek  
& Funkers Gap on the range



## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

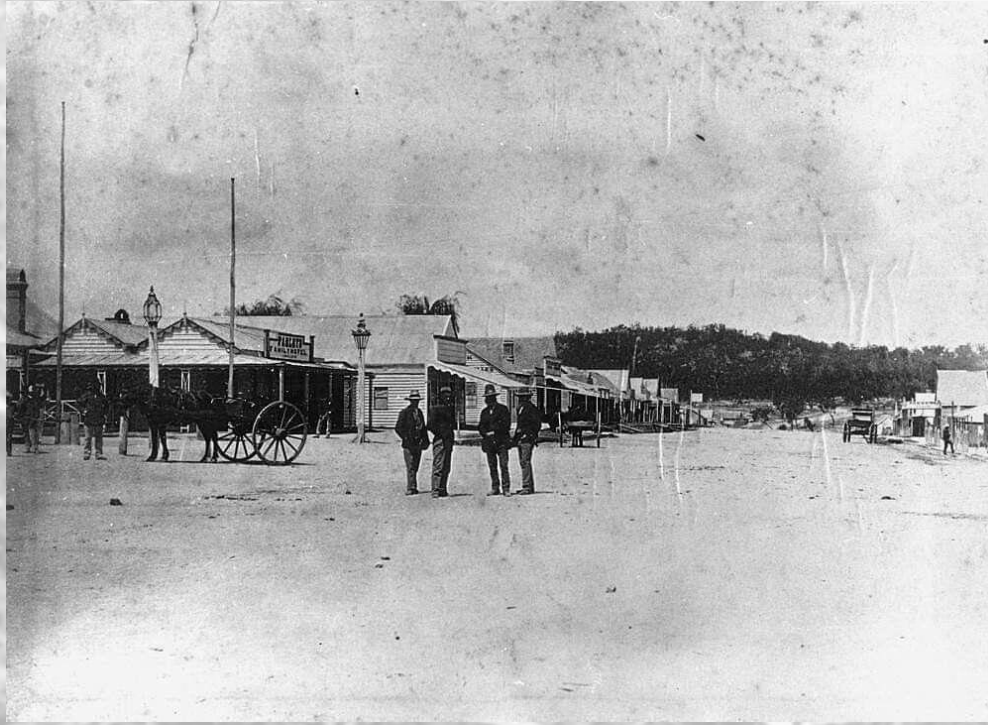
### Peak Production

- Production reached 9,081 tonnes in 1873
- Records show tin grades as-  
Best high at 90lb per Cu Ft  
good high at 50lb /CuFt,  
average at 2lb- 10lb / Cu Ft
- Adams Gully at Lode Creek recovered 8lb of tin to the panning dish
- Worlds richest alluvial tin was at “Brisbane Claim” recovering 18,000 tonnes of tin concentrate

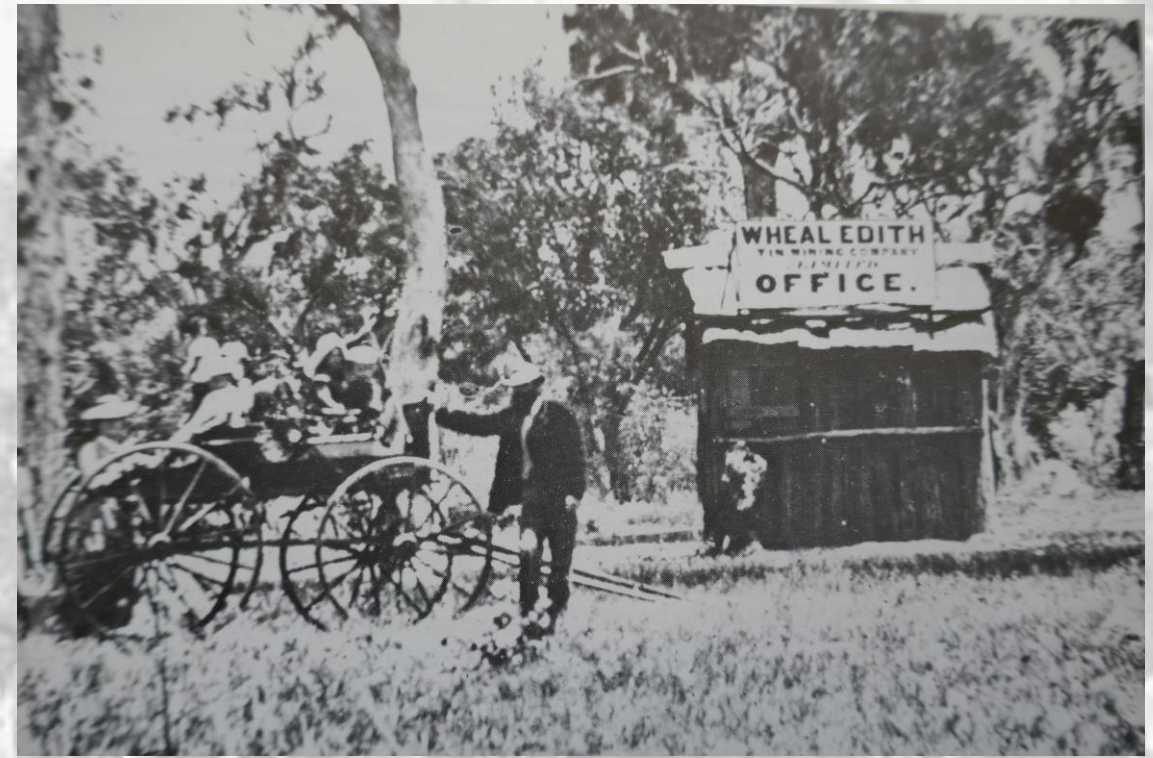


# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

## Boom Town



History of Stanthorpe Tinfield  
**Mine Offices**  
**Top end of Town**



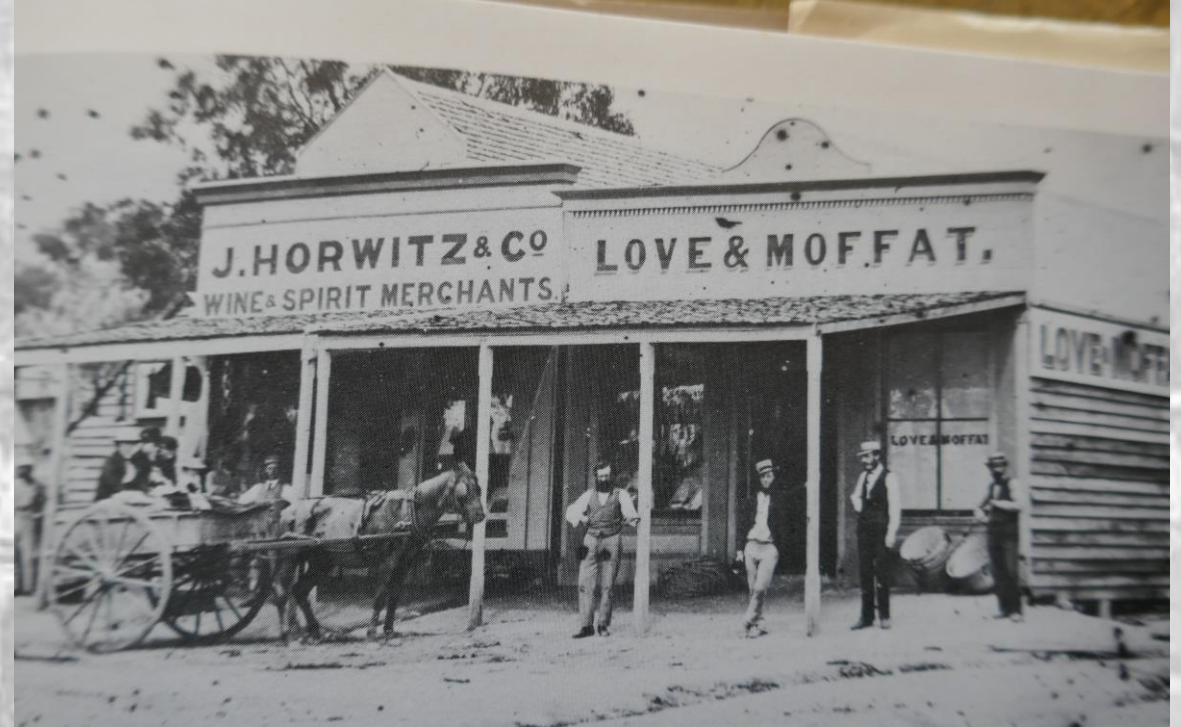
**Stanthorpe the worlds biggest tin  
producer through 1872 to 1875**

History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

# RollUp Tree & The Legend



The Famous Roll up Tree in Stanthorpe. When a roll up was called with the banging together of two panning dishes, and repeated by others across the field, all Miners were duty bound to attend the dispute or important announcement



The Store of Mining entrepreneurs Moffat & Love, John Moffat became the "The Tin Baron" of North Queensland's tin and copper fields, John Moffat standing second from right.

# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield Crash

- Tin price starts to slide in late 1875
- In 1876 the tin price reaches all-time low of £26 per ton
- Many miners leave the Stanthorpe Tinfield
- World financial crash of 1873-1879 “The Long Depression” once the tin priced crashed, kicked in and forces many businesses and miners off the diggings.
- Mining has now resorted to a few tin scratchers and Chinese, gully raking for remnant patches of tin.
- The gullies and creeks in the ranges were largely silent the miners made more money working on the new southern railway to Stanthorpe. Some turned to vegetable and fruit growing when the rail reached Stanthorpe in May 1881

## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

### New Dawn

- In the Late 1890's the tin price was creeping upwards by 1911 the tin price was £216 per tonne.
- In about 1900 the first dredges and hydraulic sluice plants were installed on the main creeks and bigger gullies .
- Unfortunately the Federation drought was in full swing and most dredgers were awaiting the rains. In 1903 some rain fell and produced enough runoff to float the dredges and operate the hydraulic monitors.
- The Stanthorpe Proprietary Dredge had a capacity of 9,000 tons, had a 6.7metre bucket ladder with 34 chrome tipped buckets of 0.13 Cu Mt, run by a 25 hp engine was one of the bigger dredges.



The Stanthorpe Proprietary Dredge operating on the sw portion of the Brisbane Claim in Quart Pot Creek

# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield Dredges & Hydraulic Sluice plants Galore Queensland

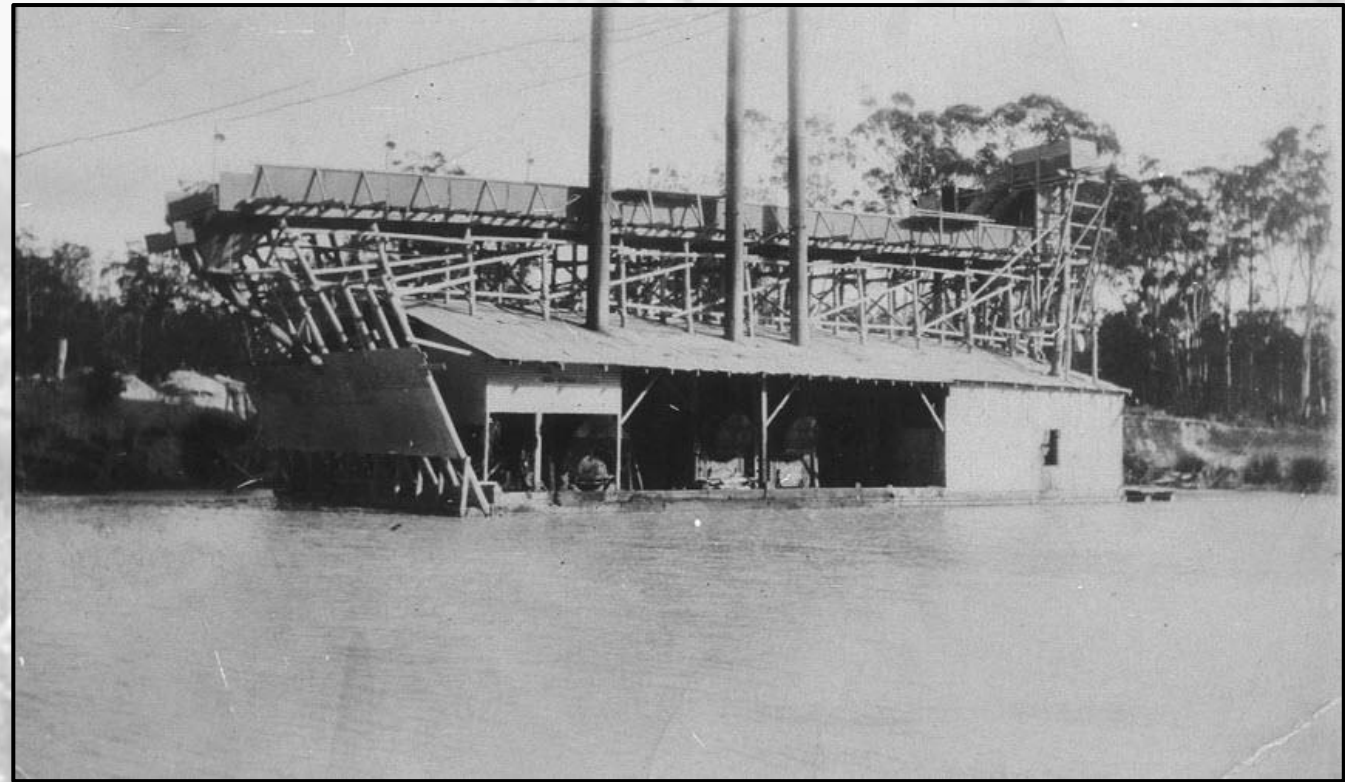


HYDRAULIC TIN MINING, NEAR STANTHORPE, QUEENSLAND.



TIN DREDGING ON THE ROVER MINE, 4 miles from Stanthorpe, showing sluicing plant at work.

History of Stanthorpe Tinfield  
**Dredges & Hydraulic Sluice  
plants Galore NSW**



**Above the Herding Yard Creek Dredge & left  
the Thompsons Dredge**

**Dredge production from 1903- 1954 was 3,337.9  
tons of tin concentrate from 8,255,000 Cu Yard  
at a tin grade of 0.905 lbs/ton**



## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

# The Okay Years

- The Tin Miners did well post World War 2 but by the early 1980's, its biggest use the humble tin can was being superseded by aluminium and plastics.
- Tin price was being supported by the International Tin Council, and God was in his Heaven
- Small miners and Fruit Growing Orchardists were out in force turning over and raking the gullies from Sundown to Stormers Ridge to the Sugarloaf.
- BHP and Amoco Minerals were mapping and sampling the Lode Creek and Sugarloaf Fields, big prospects they reported were in the offering.
- The first fly in the ointment was the softening tin price on the LME in 1983- BHP & the big boys departed



**Fat Cat Mine Arbouin Gully at Sugarloaf- Concentrating plant jig and spirals Circa 1993**

## The Mother of Crashes

- In October 1985 the price of tin fell by half, from just over £8,000 to less than £4,000 per tonne.
- The International Tin Council (ITC) — the 22-nation body made up of both consumers and producers which administered the International Tin Agreement (ITA) and whose job was to keep the tin price stable—had run out of money
- They were owing about £900 million to bankers and metal traders. The international tin market collapsed. In March 1986, after all efforts to rescue tin trading had failed.
- The London Metal Exchange (LME) terminated its tin contract



**Blood on Floor in the Open Cry Bull Ring- No friends, all foes in the commodity Markets**

History of Stanthorpe Tinfied

**It Was Bad, Traders trying to close out tin contacts in the open outcry ring, as the tin price plummeted.**



## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

# When the Dust Settled

- A few small miners like the O'Keefe Brothers on Lode and Browns Creeks, the Blyths at Fat Cat on the Arbouin Gully on the Queensland side and Prentices on Wards Gully in NSW, kept low cost operations going, but by 2000 all had stopped.
- The gullies and creeks were silent again.
- Not Quite!
- In the 90's Allied Coal drilled some of the alluvials on the Qld side, with good results.
- Stanthorpe tin production totalled 60,000 tonnes in Qld and 17,000 tonnes in NSW.(That was reported)

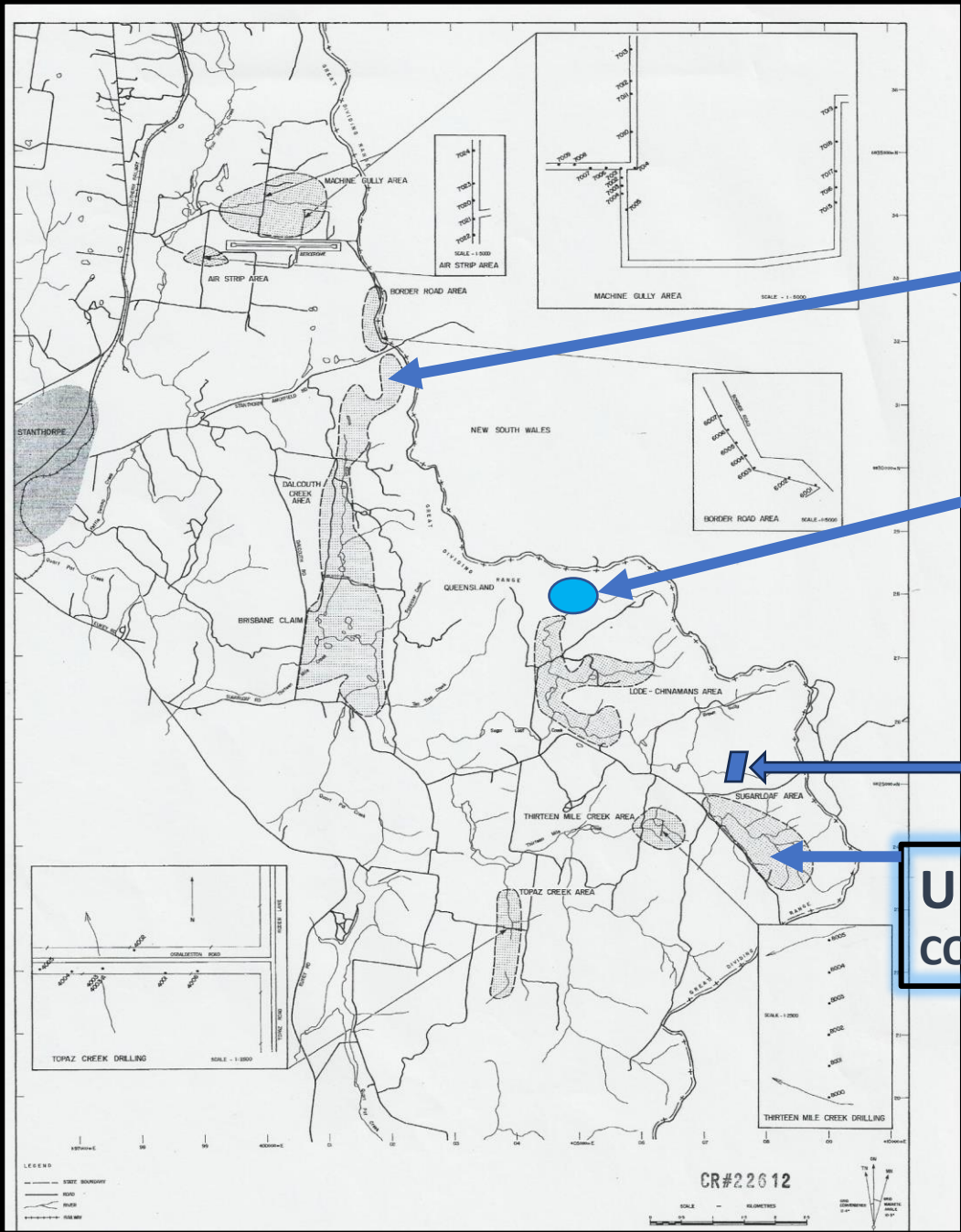


Above Photo: the Remains of O.Keefe's Alluvial Plant Lode Creek

# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

## Wildness Years

- From the Crash in 1985 till 2021 the tin price was subdued.
- World tin demand was being serviced largely by Artisanal tin miners in the Third World.
- Desultry tin plant startups popped up mainly in Nth Qld.
- All foundered & slowly failed.
- Exploration at a lessor scale took place in the eastern Granite Belt until 2000.



**Stormers Ridge**  
SHEET WASH COLLUVIAL

**LODE CREEK**  
HARD ROCK &  
TAILINGS DUMPS

**Mining Lease 5926**  
Fat Cat

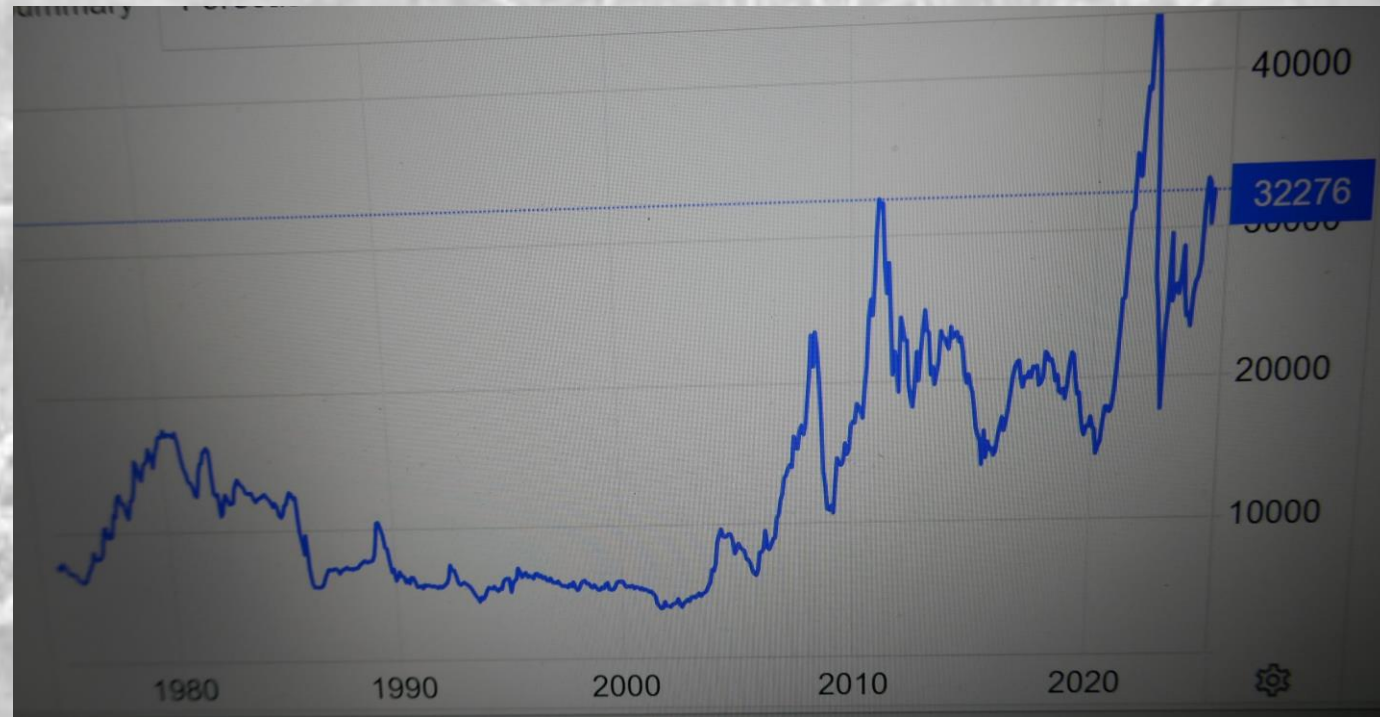
**UPPER SUGARLOAF CREEK**  
COLLUVIAL & ALLUVIAL RESOURCE

# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

## Asleep At the Wheel

### Industry never saw it coming

- **News Flash Reuters May 2021**
- **SUPPLY CRUNCH 2021-2022**
- London Metal Exchange (LME) three-month tin hit a 10-year high of \$30,650 per tonne on Tuesday.
- Inventory is super low. There are just 1,235 tonnes of tin in LME warehouses, most of it earmarked for physical load-out.
- The remaining 360 tonnes represent around eight hours' worth of global consumption basis 2019 refined tin demand of 359,000 tonnes



### Tin Price Graph- 50 years

Panic buying in May 2021 tips tin at US\$30,226

Hysterical buying up to March 2022 takes tin to US\$45,642

The LME has two days supply of tin, SME not much better.

# Resurgence

Known as the “Spice metal”

Tin uses & research-

- (1) solder for all electronic circuitry
- (2) Stanene high quality electronics
- (3) Tin + Niobium superconductor wiring fast magnets- production of micro chips
- (4) PVC stabilisers & polymer catalysts
- (5) lead acid & lithium batteries
- (6) wide variety of glass coatings



# History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

## Seize the Day

- In July 2021 StanAurum Founder Directors Fawdon & Rolfe started applying for Exploration Permits Mineral (EPM) across the Granite Belt & Traprock Region.
- The EPMs covered known tin & gold areas taking up an area of 130,000 hectares.
- Geological reconnaissance & sampling in 2021 to 2023 was conducted across the better prospects on the field.

Photos top showing cassiterite (tin oxide) from the Granite Belt and gold from the Traprock.  
Photo Lower showing coarse cassiterite from NSW side of the Range



## History of Stanthorpe Tinfield

# Small Beginnings

## Reconnaissance

**StanAurum sampling at the Hardrock tin prospect at Lode Creek Sugarloaf potential for tin, tungsten, molybdenum, rubidium, lithium and Kaolin**



**Tin tungsten bearing quartz vein stockworks in greisen altered granite 3 km x 2 km extent-overlain by tin alluvials, exploration target 8,000,000 tonnes surface to average of 40 metres depth. Small fraction previously drilled**



**Graham Rolfe Geologist & Technical Director of StanAurum Standing in front of greisen quartz veined kaolinized granite**

# StanAurum in the Sugarloaf- 2024



**Channel  
sampling in  
alluvial bulk pits**

**Tony Fawdon  
Chairman CEO  
Panning off Sluice  
Concentrate**



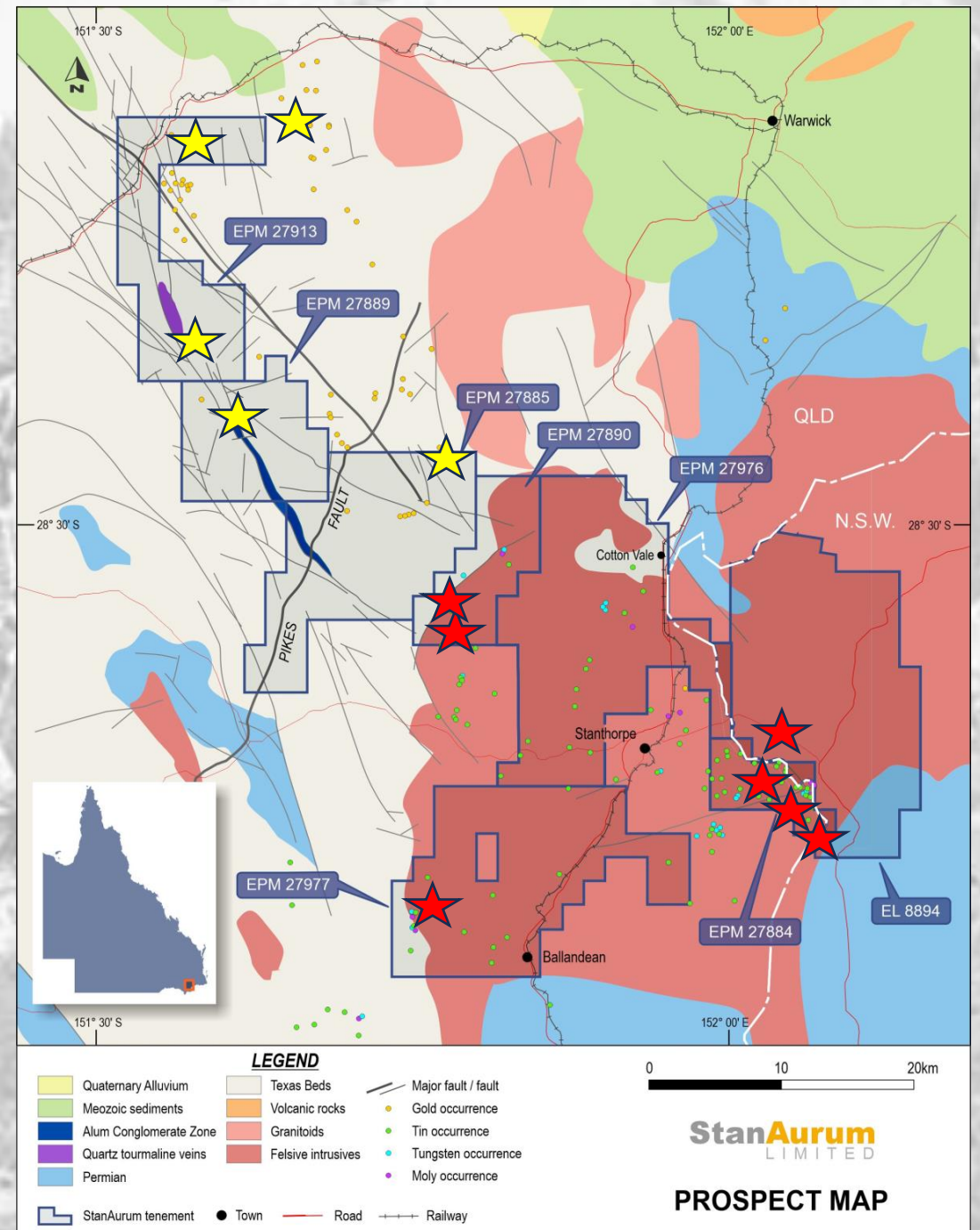
**Pan Concentrates**

**High Banker Sluice**



# Early in the Cycle

- StanAurum conducted geophysical Ground penetrating survey looking for alluvial tin leads.
- In 2024 StanAurum carried out an alluvial testing program of 79 bulk sample pits to test the potential of the mining lease 5926 “Fat Cat”
- 2024- 2025 exploration program, plans for 7 drilling programs (red stars) and 5 soil geochemistry surveys (yellow stars) & 2000 bcm bulk sample at Fat Cat



History of Stanthorpe Tinfield  
**Quart Pot Creek**  
Where it all Started



**The Rush that vanished, now a walk on the wondrous side at Quart Pot Creek, where a thousand Diggers worked along the creek, now one million tourists visit the Granite Belt annually.**