

Pioneers of the Cherry Capital

Young's cherry story began in the late 1840s when Edward Taylor planted the first cherry trees using Kentish stock brought by early European settlers.

Nicolas Jasprizza – Australia's First Commercial Cherry Grower

Croatian migrant Nikola Jasprica (Jasprizza) arrived in 1878, initially seeking gold. Realising the land held greater promise, he began experimenting with grafting techniques suited to Young's cool winters and rich soils. By the 1880s he established Cherry Vale, Australia's first large-scale commercial cherry orchard. By 1893, Cherry Vale had 100 acres of cherries, 7,000 mature trees, 300 cases of cherries shipped daily, and a dedicated railway truck each night bound for Sydney.

Cherry Vale was proudly proclaimed "the world's largest cherry orchard."



**Young and the Hilltops Region -
A Multicultural Story Woven Through Time**

Our First Storytellers - Young sits on Wiradjuri Country, one of the largest First Nations cultural landscapes in Australia. The Hilltops Region also extends into Ngunnawal Country around Boorowa.

For thousands of years, Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal people cared for this land cultivating native legumes, seeds and yams, practicing fire-stick farming, and using ingenious technologies such as the returning boomerang and sequential burning to manage wildlife and Country.

Each year, the National Cherry Festival begins with a Welcome to Country performed by the Young Local Aboriginal Land Council, honouring the traditional custodians of the land on which our festival is held.

First Contact & Collaboration

A remarkable moment of peaceful first contact took place at Lambing Flat (now Young) between Coborn Jackey, respected Wiradjuri Burrowmunditory leader and James White, a former British convict transported on the Earl Spencer in 1813.

Their partnership shaped the early pastoral history of the Hilltops Region. Together they established Burrangong Station, with Coborn Jackey guiding routes, sharing knowledge, and fostering cultural cooperation during a time of profound change.

Gold, Migration & New Communities

From the 1860s, the gold rush transformed the region. Young became a meeting place of cultures, with people arriving from Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, France, The United States (including African American workers) and China. Many remained long after the gold was gone, settling into farming life as large pastoral estates were subdivided.



*Young's
Multicultural
Story*



HILLTOPS

BOOROWA HARDEN YOUNG JUGIONG

www.visithilltopsregion.com.au

Young's Multicultural Trailblazers

Carlo Marina (1832–1909)

An Italian revolutionary turned pastoralist, vigneron and wool producer, Marina improved Merino flocks, ran successful butcheries and vineyards, and became a celebrated host to visiting dignitaries.

Baldo Kunić (Cunich) – Australia's Cherry King

Arriving from Dalmatia in the 1880s, Baldo Cunich expanded his orchard Peachvale to over 150 acres and by the 1940s he was known nationally as "Australia's Cherry King", producing 30,000 crates in one season and becoming a generous community figure.

Chinese Market Gardeners

Chinese gardeners established thriving farms along Spring Creek, Wombat, and across the diggings producing tens of thousands of cabbages, radishes, garlic and more. Their vegetables supplied homes, hospitals and towns across the district, with some earning up to £400 in a week. Their legacy continues through descendants who still contribute to Young today.

Our Arabic Connection

Many people from Lebanon, Palestine and the Middle East came to the Hilltops Region in the early 1970s, 80s and 90s – often older migrants who had lived rural lives tending citrus and olive orchards before coming to Australia, bringing additional farming and horticultural knowledge to the Region.

Creative Cuisine and Cultural Connections

Often integrated with growing food is creating food, and Australia has a long and storied history of milk bars, take-aways, cafés and restaurants run by migrant families. The Hilltops shares this wonderful history, and several new residents have also opened inventive and very popular cafes, restaurants, or fruit, vegetable and grocery stores, adding their creativity to Hilltops eateries.

A Community Built on Culture

The Hilltops Region's story is one of deep Indigenous heritage, migration, resilience and innovation. From ancient agricultural practices to pioneering orchardists and multicultural settlers, every cultural thread enriches who we are today.

These stories – from Italian orchardists to Chinese gardeners and European settlers – shaped the diverse character of Young long before multiculturalism had a name.



Fast Facts

Young is named after Sir John Young, NSW Governor (1861–1867)

In 1889, Young became the first town in Australia to install electricity into streets and homes

The former Young Shire created NSW's first rural school bus system

Soldier-settlement schemes after WWI helped shape today's farming communities



Celebrated 75 Years in 2025 – The National Cherry Festival

The first National Cherry Festival was held in 1949, evolving from the early Blossom Festival into the vibrant, multicultural celebration it is today.

Although the 2021 Festival was replaced by a smaller "Cherry Festival Lite," 2025 marked the 75th official celebration of cherries, culture, and community.

Each year the Festival honours our Wiradjuri custodians, generations of growers, our diverse communities and the rich, shared heritage that makes Young the Cherry Capital of Australia.

Places to Visit

Lambing Flat Chinese Tribute Gardens

Pitstone Rd, Young
Open daily, BBQ's and toilets

Young Historical Museum

2 Campbell St, Young
Hire a gold pan – yes, there's still gold!

Drop into the **Young Visitor Information Centre** for more stories, books and memorabilia or Ph 1800 628 233