



# THE PIONEER

RURAL & RESIDENTIAL  
PROPERTY

## “Thornleigh”

“Thornleigh is the best representation and only substantial example, (although with Georgian overtones), of Victorian Filigree 1880s domestic architecture in Stroud. The property is significant as the intact building and many of the original fittings, such as locks, doors, fireplaces, windows and ceilings remain.

Before the construction of “Thornleigh” the site was owned by the Australian Agricultural Company on which their Storehouse was located. It was a two-storey bare brick building with a central gable, built around 1835. The structure coincided with the building of the Church and was in alignment with two company cottages on either side.

In 1881, Henry Adams and Henry Luck, Maitland coach proprietors, bought the site for £150. In that same year it was sold on to John Dark. Little change had occurred during his time.

In 1889 the site was purchased for £102 by Henry James Smith, a coach and haulage proprietor. Smith became the first owner and builder of “Thornleigh”. Convict made bricks, timbers and doors were reused from the storehouse during construction of the new house. The property was used as a private residence and the west wing was used as a tap room for the reception of coach passengers.

In 1919 deeds passed from Henry to his son, Percival. He and his wife, Minnie Ann, celebrated their wedding reception at “Thornleigh”. The family owned a dairy farm along Simmsville Road and “Thornleigh” was used as headquarters of a milk and cream run.

In 1953 until 1974, Charles and Lucy Campbell owned the property. Charles worked on the council and Lucy used the property as a guesthouse. Teachers, bank workers as well as temporary guests such as agricultural advisers and tourists stayed at the house. During this period the house was ‘modernised’ with louvre windows and fibro kitchenettes on the front verandah and balcony. The original cedar staircase, windows, architraves and skirting boards were painted glossy pale green and lemon.



In 1974, Harry and Jeanne Ikin bought the site for \$19,000. The house was divided and rented to various people relocating to the area. The Ikins lived in the property from 1978 to 1980 when it was put to auction. The failed bidder intended to demolish the derelict “Thornleigh”, build three cheap cottages on the site and use the convict made bricks elsewhere.

In 1980 Ken and Bev Stone bought the house for \$30,000 after the failed auction. The dwelling is now used as a private residence. The present owners have been dedicated in restoring and, when necessary, renovating, as many parts of the building and outbuildings were decayed. Much of the original filigree cast iron lacework on the verandah was lost, so remnants were matched and recast. The home has restored cedar doors, architraves, windows, staircase and ceilings. The restoration and renovation of “Thornleigh” has taken 30 years of patient work on holidays and weekends before the stones moved in permanently. They worked in Sydney, while raising a family, and many trips were made carrying restoration materials on their trailer.

Now the property is surrounded by a pleasant garden divided into garden rooms around its outbuildings. A honeysuckle pergola, similar to one in a wedding party photo, has been built close to a large rose garden. “Thornleigh” now has returned to its deserved setting.

~ Kindly written for R & R Property by Bev Stone – Thank you.