



“The Pioneer”

Denise Haynes - ‘R & R’ Rural and Residential Property



St Johns Church - Stroud

Built entirely with convict labour, in 1833 under the direction of Sir Edward Parry. (Superintendent of the A.A. Co. 1830-1834), St Johns Church in Stroud forms part of a group of historic buildings in this area. Its bricks were made from local clay deposits, and the doors, floor, altar, dual pulpits, pews, balustrade and stairway, were all made from local cedar, and are still in original condition.

The beautiful stained glass window in the Eastern wall was placed there in 1892 by R.H.D. White, in memory of his mother Sarah Elizabeth White, whose grave is located near the Nth. Eastern portion of the Church yard. The corner stone for the Church was laid by Sir Edward Parry, on the 29th April, 1833, and the first service in the completed Church, was Sunday, 22nd December 1833 less than eight months later.

Tombstones surround the Church, the earliest marked grave being 1836, but many burials took place before this. Many marriage ceremonies have also been conducted at St. Johns over the years. One of note being in November 1860 when Frederick Wordsworth Ward who would later be known as “Captain Thunderbolt” – bushranger, married the love of his life Mary Ann Bugg, who would later become one of only two famous Australian female bushrangers. No marriage certificate has been found to date, although this was quite common apparently.

In an article in “The Days That Were” Mrs Dreamer wrote in reference to their wedding –
“It was in Stroud & I was going to school at the time. Frederick Ward, that was Thunderbolt’s name, was a nice looking young fellow, and the girl he married was Mary Bugg, daughter of Mr Jimmy Bugg who looked after the Pastoral Company’s station at Port Stephens. There was a great to-do at the church the day the wedding was on, and we were all let out of school to see them come out of the church”

This year - November 2010 - marked the 150th anniversary of Thunderbolt & Mary Ann’s Wedding ceremony.
Today, St. John’s remains one of the oldest and most original buildings in Australia, and is used each Sunday.

