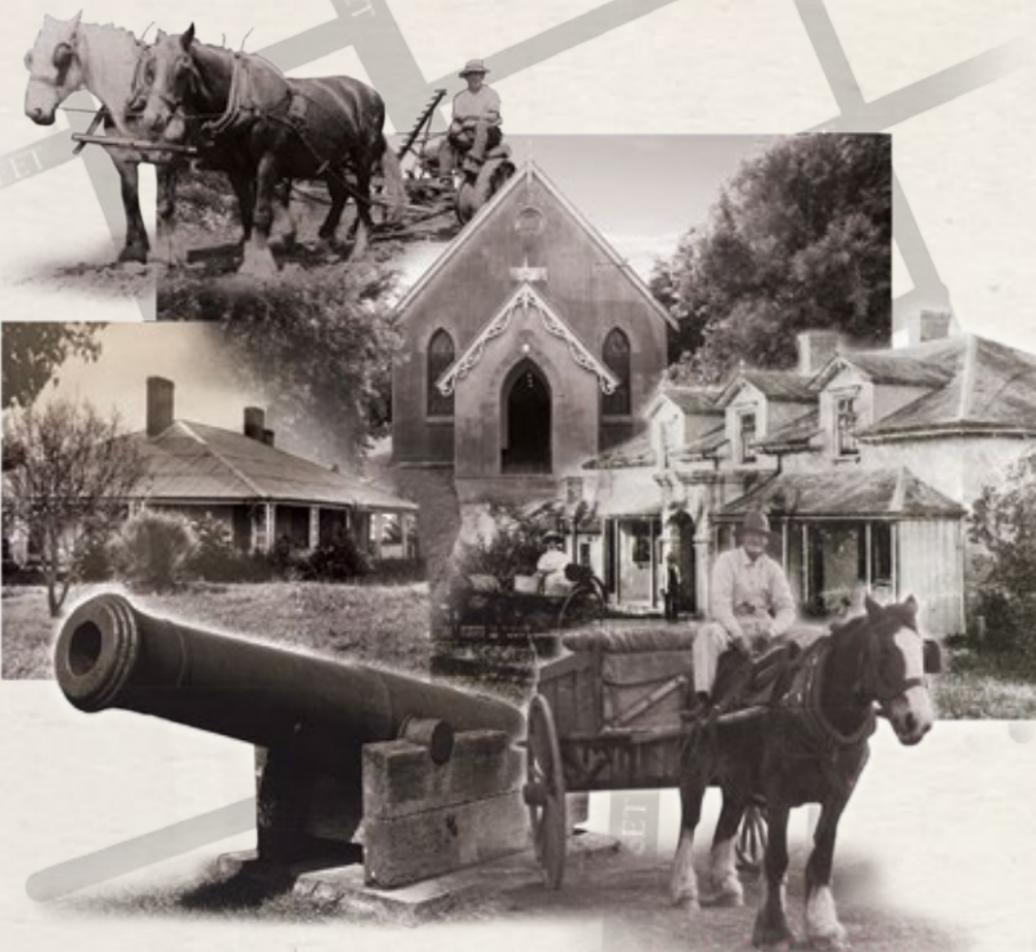


STROUD HERITAGE WALK



**DISCOVER A RICH & UNIQUE
PART OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORY**

Prepared by
Stroud & District Historical Society



View from Stroud Common toward St John's Anglican Church, circa 1906-1912

WELCOME TO STROUD

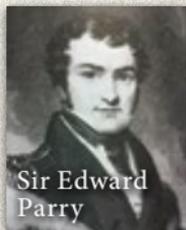
Stroud stands on the traditional lands of the Worimi people whose ongoing connection to country and culture we respectfully acknowledge.

Stroud is rich in history with a special place in Australia's colonial past.

In 1824 Australia's first publicly funded company – the Australian Agricultural Company (A.A. Company) – received a grant of one million acres of agricultural land between Port Stephens and the Manning River.

THE BEGINNINGS OF STROUD

In 1826 the company's first chief agent, Robert Dawson, selected the site for an inland town. He chose a valley where the Karuah River and Mill Creek joined and named the site 'Stroud', after the English town of the same name in Gloucestershire, England.



Sir Edward Parry

Settlement began in the late 1820's and Stroud became the company's headquarters during the 1830's.

Using largely convict labour, the A.A. Company erected a number of buildings in Stroud, many of which are still standing and in use today. These include St. John's Church built in 1833 by the company's first commissioner, Sir Edward William Parry.

Together with the church, rectory and parish hall, the buildings are considered highly significant examples of Georgian colonial architecture.

WALKING THROUGH HISTORY

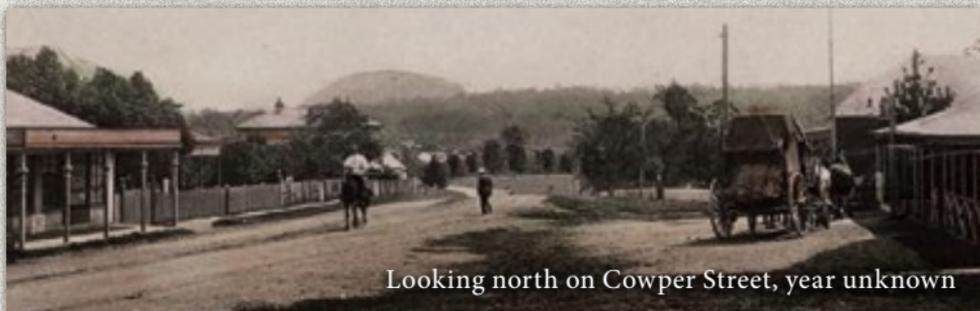
The self-guided Stroud Heritage Walk explores many of the historic buildings and sites of Stroud.

Taking in Silo Hill and Stroud Showground, the full route is a leisurely one hour, 4km walk. An alternative 1km route takes in the historic highlights of the town centre and takes around 15-20 minutes.

North Stroud from Post Office Hill, circa 1906-1912



Looking north on Cowper Street, year unknown



Looking south on Cowper Street, year unknown



22

Show Ground

LONG WALK
Approx. 4 km

SHORT WALK
Approx. 1.5 km

TO DUNGOG

23

COWPER STREET

MILL BROOK

21

24

20

25

26

1

2

19

18

ERIN STREET

MEMORIAL AVENUE

3

4

5

6

7

17

CHURCH STREET

STROUD COMMON

16

BROADWAY

15

8

BROADWAY STREET

9

10

10

10

10

11

12

13

BERKELEY STREET

14

TO PACIFIC HIGHWAY



200 metres

START YOUR WALK HERE



1. **STROUD COURT HOUSE** was constructed in 1877 to replace the original 1840's police station and court house – just in time for the infamous McAskill murders hearing.

Police quarters and cells directly behind the court house were demolished in the 1930's.

The court house is now a museum run by the Stroud & District Historical Society. It contains original red cedar courtroom furniture and some fascinating displays and records of Stroud's colonial past.

2. Original **OLD STORE BUILDINGS** located south of the court house along Cowper Street.

The store, now housing 'Crafty Friends', was built in 1905. The adjacent building has had multi uses since it was constructed in the 1920's using bricks from the early 1800's Golden Fleece Inn, which originally stood on the site.

The inn became the Australasia Bank until the bank was relocated to Stroud House in 1882.



As you cross **MEMORIAL AVENUE** and head towards **THE RECTORY**, look down the avenue to the **STROUD CENOTAPH**, **ALLEN PARK** and beyond to **STROUD COMMON**.

As you cross **CHURCH LANE** look down to what is now **STROUD LIBRARY**, formerly the Stroud RSL Hall, which was moved to this location from Allworth around 1949.



3. **THE ANGLICAN RECTORY** was convict-built by the A.A. Company in 1836.

It was partially rebuilt in 1859, minus one back wing and with an altered roof, after a disastrous fire which also destroyed many early church records. The rectory features fine red cedar fittings, open fireplaces and a cellar. It is home to Stroud's Anglican minister.



4. ANGLICAN CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST built in 1833 by convicts under the supervision of Thomas Laman.

One of the first buildings to be constructed in Stroud by A.A. Company Commissioner Sir Edward Parry.

A finely crafted example of early colonial Georgian architecture, it has been described as *“Perhaps the finest and certainly the most intact Anglican Church in Australia which predates the influence of ecclesiology... historic importance and architectural quality make it of outstanding importance...”* (Clive Lucas, heritage architect). Incredibly, few changes have been made to the building, and it remains essentially as it was designed and constructed in 1833.



The church is surrounded by the fascinating St John’s cemetery. Notable gravestones include those of Alan and Mary McAskill, who were brutally murdered at Booral in 1878 in Stroud’s most enduring mystery. The Historical Society has information on many of the gravestones.

5. ST JOHN’S PARISH HALL was built in 1858 and was used as a school when the parish school (now Quambi Museum) became overcrowded.

Together the hall, church, rectory and Quambi form an aesthetically significant group of colonial Georgian buildings known as ‘the St Johns’ group’ which remain virtually unaltered since construction, in their original setting and continuing their original social, spiritual and educational functions.



6. **QUAMBI** was initially a neat slab school room and schoolmaster's residence. Built in 1831 and known as 'Lady Parry's School', it also functioned as a place of worship before the church was built.

The current two-storey structure dates from 1841. It remained a school, including a grammar school with boarding for boys, until 1900. It was then rented out as a private residence until 1973.

The name 'Quambi' means 'place of shelter' and was given to the building by early resident and St John's organist, Edward Callow. The building was saved from demolition in 1975 by the Stroud & District Historical Society, whose members restored and re-opened Quambi in 1988 as a museum. It is now owned by MidCoast Council.



Quambi sits at the crossroads of three streets – Berkeley Street to the south, Cowper Street to the north and Broadway Street is the cross street.

7. **ORCHARD COTTAGE** was convict-built in the 1830's as the A.A. Company's post office, later used as a hospital and is now privately owned.

8. At the top of Broadway Street is **STROUD COMMON**, dedicated by the A.A. Company in 1905 as open space and for grazing.

The 25 hectare common was an early golf course, and a landing site for the first aeroplane to visit Stroud. It is administered by a Common Trust.



Stroud Common, year unknown





Looking west on Cowper Street, year unknown

LONG WALK: Turn right at **QUAMBI** and head up Broadway Street to **SILO HILL**. This section of the walk involves a 250m steep climb.

SHORT WALK: Cross Cowper Street at **QUAMBI** and walk north back towards town.



9. **SILO HILL** is named after the eight inground brick-lined silos built into the hill by convicts in 1841 as grain stores for the A.A. Company.

Each bell-shaped silo is six metres deep by five metres wide and stored ten thousand bushels of grain.

Originally two long roofs covered the area, protecting the grain and the machinery used to extract it.

While many local teenagers remember when the silos were open for adventure, they are now closed for public safety.

The other unexpected structures on Silo Hill are two Crimean War cannons. Originally sent from England in 1866 to defend Sydney against possible attack by the Russians, the cannons found their way to Silo Hill when the army phased out these guns in the early 1900's and they were offered to councils as public ornaments.

Silo Hill offers panoramic views of Stroud and is an ideal spot for a picnic or BBQ. Facilities include a covered picnic table, electric BBQ, and toilets.



Central Stroud, year unknown

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10. As you walk back down Silo Hill and turn right onto Berkeley Street you will pass (at numbers 1, 5 and 7) several **CONVICT-BUILT COTTAGES** set well back from the road to encourage large gardens.

Originally built by the A.A. Company for their workers and their families, the cottages are now privately owned.

11. **MELROSE**, at 11 Berkeley Street, was built by convicts in the 1830's.

This cottage housed the A.A. Company's Clerk of Works and Assistant Medical Superintendent. The cottage was partly reconstructed in 1930 when the front walls were replaced.

The cottage is now privately owned.



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12. **THORNLEIGH** rose from the rubble of the original A.A. Company's two-storey store building which was demolished on the same site.

It was constructed in the early 1880's as a private residence with bricks from the demolished store.

13. Convict built in the 1830's, **THE STOREKEEPERS COTTAGE** adjoined the original A.A. Company store which was situated where Thornleigh now stands.



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The cottage later became the residence of the A.A. Company's superintendent of works, Thomas Laman and is now privately owned. From the Storekeepers Cottage cross over Berkeley Street and head north to the School of Arts.



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14. **STROUD SCHOOL OF ARTS** was built in 1893 to replace an earlier two-storey structure and remains an important centre for the community.

Early maps show this site was occupied by the local carpenter and wheelwright, with the saddler and smithy adjoining. Early church services were held in the workshop with nearly 200 people attending morning and evening service.

15. Detour up Broadway Street to Stroud's second oldest church **ST COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC CHURCH**.

The church was originally built in 1861 but was struck by lightning in 1907 which severely damaged the vestry. Whilst under repair in 1911 it was enlarged to its current structure.



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16. As you continue along Cowper Street you will pass the **STROUD BAPTIST CHURCH**, built on the site of the former surgery and hospital grounds.

The church was originally constructed in 1912 and still holds regular services.

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17. Further on is **THE STROUD UNITING CHURCH**, formerly the Methodist Church.

The current church building was constructed in 1915 to replace a previous building, which possibly dated from 1865. The church is lined in cedar boards and the house to the left of the church was built as a hospital in the 1930's.

18



18. **STROUD CENTRAL HOTEL** is Stroud's only pub.

Stroud Central Hotel was built in 1913 on the site of the former Cottage of Content Inn which later became Le Mottee's Hotel.



19. Currently 'The Friendly Grocer' this building has housed a **GENERAL STORE** for more than 100 years.

Cunliffe and Co. were early owners, delivering goods as far as Monkerai by horse and cart.

The store was then owned by the Wilmen family for many years.

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20. **THE OLD BANK BUILDING** was built in the 1920's for the relocated Bank of Australasia from Stroud House.

This later became the ANZ Bank and traded from the building until 1996.

21. The A.A. Company began work on **STROUD HOUSE** in 1827, as its inland headquarters but did not complete it until the 1840's.

Built by convicts using brick and lime cement render, the house is essentially Georgian.

It is Stroud's oldest house and served as the home of successive Commissioners and the centre of company operations until towards the end of the 19th century. In 1882 it was sold to the Bank of Australasia who on-sold it in the 1920's to the first of a series of private owners.

Basically unchanged and with the same layout, it has all original cedar joinery, shutters and cellars. It is listed with the NSW Government Dept. of Environment and Heritage for protection.



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22. **THE STROUD MEMORIAL GRANDSTAND** was erected in 1926 in memory of the men and women from the district who served in World War 1.

Two plaques on the front entrance of the steps are inscribed with their names.

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23. The huge wooden gates – known as **THE STROUD GATE** – on either side of Cowper Street, adjacent to the showground and the Stroud Community Lodge, are a reminder of Stroud’s early days as a ‘gated community.’

The town precinct - ‘a mile square’ - was fenced and the gates were closed on a 10pm curfew, reportedly to protect stock and residents.

24. **ST JAMES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** was built in 1887 using bricks from the previous A.A. Company stables located on this site. Restoration work was carried out in 1987 for the church’s centenary.

The building was sold in 2018 and is now privately owned.

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25. **STROUD PUBLIC SCHOOL & SCHOOL HOUSE** was built in 1884 and classes commenced at the school the following year.

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26. **STROUD POST OFFICE** was built in 1884 and is considered by some as one of the best historic post office buildings in the Hunter region.

It has cedar fittings and was restored in 1984. Privately licensed since 1993, the building still operates as a post office.



27

27. **DERRYBAWN** is a beautiful old home built in 1905 as a boarding house.

It served as a doctor's surgery in the 1950's, then a teahouse, before becoming a private residence.

OTHER SITES OF INTEREST

STROUD COUNTRY CLUB sits on a hilltop north of the village.

The club and golf course opened in 1977 on the site where Matron Lowrey's house stood for many years.

STROUD MONASTERY & HERMITAGE was created by the community of St Clare which started in 1975, when sisters of this Anglican order moved to Stroud.

Their mud-brick monastery, which serves as a contemplative retreat, was finished in 1980 with volunteer labour. They have more recently been joined by brothers of the Franciscan order who occupy a mud-brick hermitage on the site.

SIMMSVILLE has only a road name to record the once prosperous 500-strong timber town of the early 1900's.

The town was named for the first timber mill manager William Pitt Simms. 'The Jarrah' mill was reportedly one of the largest in NSW at the time.

Part of the early Australian film 'Tall Timbers' was filmed in Simmsville in 1936 with many locals acting as extras.

ALDERLEY HOUSE is situated on the Bucketts Way between Booral and Stroud. The house was built with convict labour by the A.A. Company in 1831-32 as a cottage for the company's farrier and his family.

A horse stable was located at the rear of the building and a kitchen, butcher and baker were situated at the front. Cobb and Co subsequently used it as a staging post. It was rumoured that bushranger Captain Thunderbolt rested horses he had stolen from Monkerai here.

WASHPOOL is approximately 3km along the Stroud Hill Road, where there is a bridge over the Karuah River. Upstream, on the northern side of the bridge, is **THE WASHPOOL** - a series of sheep pens built by convicts over a rock weir which stretched across the river.

Up to 800 sheep a day were reportedly driven through the yards to wash and improve their wool. The remnants of the weir can still be seen about 100 metres north of the bridge. The remains of the pens have been seen during drought.

Between Stroud and Stroud Road on the Bucketts Way is the former **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT TELEGHERRY**, built in 1904.

At the rear of the adjacent house was Telegherry school. The schoolroom still exists in what is now a private residence.

THE FOUR CAIRNS: As part of the Australian Bicentenary, four cairns mark the locations, and provide information on, buildings / structures that are no longer present. These are:

1. The Flour Mill - 400m along Mill Creek Road from Cowper Street;
2. Peach Trees - 13.5km along Mill Creek Road from the corner of Cowper Street;
3. Brick Clay Pits - 200m along Mallon Street from the corner of Broadway Street;
4. The South Gate - 1.1km from Quambi, heading south along Berkeley Street.



ABOUT THE STROUD & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Stroud & District Historical Society is an inclusive, respectful and motivated community group engaged in preserving and sharing local heritage values. The society offers a range of services:

LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY RESEARCH

Books, photographs and records relating to descendants of pioneer colonial and local families, A.A. Company employees, residents of Stroud and surrounding districts since 1826, and places of interest such as church, cemetery and school registers, can be found at stroudhistoricalsociety.com.au

LOCAL HISTORY TOURS

Organised by appointment, including light refreshment or lunch. Minimum numbers apply, please email to stroudhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Stroud & District Historical Society books, local history publications and souvenirs are available at Stroud Courthouse, Quambi and other local outlets.

E | stroudhistoricalsociety@gmail.com T | 4994 5400

W | stroudhistoricalsociety.com.au

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