

12. Wollombi Cemetery

Consecrated in 1849 by Bishop Tyrrell. Many pioneers of the district are buried here. Behind the cemetery is the mill pond. A flour mill here was used to grind the wheat which was grown in the district. From this spot can also be seen the twin-gabled roof of "Wollombi House". For many years Dr Bapty and his family lived here. It is now a private house.

13. Wollombi School & Residence

The school has been in continuous operation since 1855. The present structure of sandstone was built in 1881, as was the school residence.

14. Picnic Table

Picnic table overlooking the mill pond and the paths were recently installed by Tidy Valleys.

15. Flour Mill

The flour mill originally stood on the opposite side of the mill pond to the cemetery. It was powered by horses turning a capstan which was later replaced by a steam engine. It burnt down in 1904.

16. Anzac Reserve

Beyond the mill pond picnic table and the Wollombi Bush Fire Brigade is Anzac Reserve. It is here at the monument that Anzac Day is observed. A picnic table and seats are located near the native gardens as well as a water bird sanctuary including a nesting island.

BRIEF HISTORY OF WOLLOMBI

Wollombi is on the road from Wiseman's Ferry to Singleton or Maitland, and was a stopping place for travellers along the Great North Road

The name Wollombi is believed to be Aboriginal for "meeting of the waters". Situated where the North and South Arms of the Wollombi Brook meet with Yango Creek, the district always had a reliable source of water for agriculture and grazing.

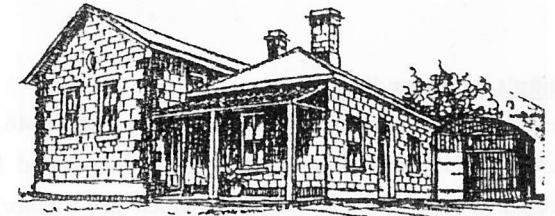
The area was first settled by farmers moving north from the Hawkesbury River district and the MacDonald Valley. Wheat was grown and ground into flour at the local mill from 1844. Timber getting was another important industry. The convict-built Great North Road was completed through the area about 1830. Also at this time steam packets started going along the Hunter River to Morpeth. This was a quicker and more reliable mode of transport. Rust disease in the wheat forced the settlers to move to northern parts of New South Wales, and Wollombi ceased to grow. By the beginning of the 20th century, coal was being mined in the Cessnock area, and that town became the commercial centre. Thereafter dairy cows, cattle and other farm livestock became more prominent farming activities in Wollombi Valley as well as supplying timber to the Cessnock area mines.

ENDEAVOUR MUSEUM

Exhibits in the museum are of a wide variety and reflect everyday life in the area. There are artefacts relating to farming and mining as well as many household items. The courthouse doors, railings, magistrate's bench and fittings are all made of local red cedar. The rear of the building has two cells, once used to house prisoners, and a wire exercise yard. On the magistrate's bench is the photographic collection of the life and times of the area. The Endeavour Museum opened in the Courthouse in 1970 and the rear building housing local agriculture machines and equipment was built and opened in 2008.

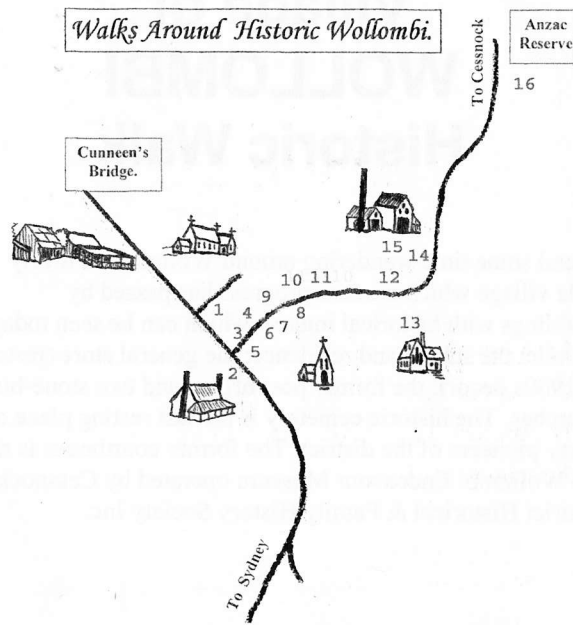
Village of WOLLOMBI Historic Walk

Spend some time wandering around Wollombi, a lovely little village which modern progress has passed by. Buildings with historical interest which can be seen today include: the school and residence; the general store (restored to 1900s decor); the former post office, and two stone-built churches. The historic cemetery is the last resting place of many pioneers of the district. The former courthouse is now the Wollombi Endeavour Museum operated by Cessnock District Historical & Family History Society Inc..



© Produced by Cessnock District Historical
& Family History Society Inc.

This work has been assisted by funds allocated to the Royal Australian Historical Society by Arts NSW.



1. St John's Anglican Church

Designed by Edmund Blacket. Foundation stone laid 1846. Consecrated 1849 by Bishop Tyrrell. Built in pointed Gothic style; features stained glass windows which are memorials to past parishioners. Across the Wollombi Brook from the Church was the Parsonage, built of sandstone and completed in 1859. It was occupied by rectors until 1950.

2. Wollombi Tavern

A wine saloon has traded on this site since 1868. In 1959, when owned by Mel Jurd, the wine saloon burnt down, and was replaced by the present building.

3. Endeavour Museum

Originally on this site was a timber court house and lock-up. David Dunlop was appointed as Police Magistrate for the Wollombi and MacDonald in 1840. The present building was erected in 1866, and has also been used as a police station. In 1970 it became a museum operated by Cessnock Historical Society. The museum features cedar fittings and original cells.

4. Police Residence

The police residence was built around 1900 to replace the earlier court house built in 1840. It is still used as a police residence with a very small local police station in the grounds. Wollombi has had a continuous police establishment since the 1850s.

5. The Forge

This was the site of a blacksmith and wagon building business from the 1870s to the 1930s. Thomas A. Townshend, son of J.M. Townshend, owned the property and lived in the old slab house that is immediately behind the forge. This slab house is typical of those seen about 1800. In 1875 T.A. Townshend advertised himself as a wheelwright.

6. St Michael's Catholic Church

This church was built at Cunneen's bridge in 1840. After the 1893 flood, it was relocated to its present site on higher ground. It features Gothic style doors and windows and a stained glass rose window behind the altar. The first foundation stone has been incorporated in the wall of the present building. This Church was sold to Friends of St Michael in 1992 and was then reconsecrated.

7. Former Overland Telegraph Office

A post office was established at Wollombi in 1839. The telegraph office was opened in 1860 as part of the Sydney to Brisbane Telegraph line. The two offices combined in 1882. It is not known when the lower part of the building was erected. The top storey was built when the work was done on St Michael's church. It is now a private residence.

8. Wollombi Cottage

Thought to have been originally the Clerk of Petty Sessions Building, it dates back to around 1840. With the revival of Wollombi in the 1970s the cottage was restored and is now occupied as a wool/craft shop.

9. Wollombi Store

Built before the end of last century. In 1910 purchased by Richard Owens, who was the founder of the Savemores chain of stores. Owens had a wagon, which he took around the district visiting farmers, and traded fresh goods.

10. Kenny's Folly

A two-storey stone building, built around 1890 by John Kenny. Early last century, part of the building was leased to Gordon Edgell, the engineer responsible for maintaining the district roads. Gordon Edgell went on to found the Edgell (food canning) Company.

11. The Old Barn

The present building was originally the local hall built around 1860. From 1920 it operated as a ware-house and produce store.