

Historical Notes on St. Andrew's Church, Coolah

In the year 1848, Coolah was part of the Parish of Muswellbrook, within the Diocese of Newcastle. This parish covered a vast area, bounded in the north by the Liverpool Ranges, in the south by the Goulburn River, and Coolah was the furthest point west.

By 1874, Coolah had become a centre of the Parish of Merriwa and construction of the present St. Andrew's Church was begun. The church was not completed and opened for worship, however until May 1882. In his address to Synod that year, the Bishop of Newcastle noted that "the district of Coolah has lately had a day of rejoicing upon occasion of the opening of a comely stone church, which is at length completed after many discouragements."

The first wedding at St. Andrew's Church was celebrated on June 17th 1883 between Edwin Jones Harvey and Margaret Ann Wilde.

In 1896, Coolah was transferred to the Diocese of Bathurst, and became a Parish in its own right. The first Rector was the Rev. William Hurst, who unfortunately was drowned while trying to ford a flooded river on horseback, on 10th January 1896. His grave and a tombstone to his memory are located in St. Andrew's churchyard.

The fine stained glass windows in the east end of the church were the gift of the people of St. Andrew's parish as a thank offering for a hundred years of worship, and were dedicated at the Centenary Service on May 9th 1982, by the Bishop of Bathurst, the Right Reverend Howell Witt.

Rev. R. Hugh Booker,
Rector.

