

St. Andrews Uniting Church

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The following article was written by Bruce to appear in the Uniting Church publication Hawkesbury People Power. Bruce kindly gave permission for it to appear in our journal.

This is the story of St. Andrews Church Riverstone. The church is the people who have been called by God to live as his disciples in the world today.

Rev. Graham Beattie in 1982 stated that “The church is not just a building, it is people – people who have been claimed, called and equipped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to belong to Him and witness to his love and truth in the world.”

It was people of faith who established the St. Andrews Church in Riverstone. Rev. P. Fitzgerald, Minister of Windsor started church services at Riverstone in 1882. The first services were held in the home of John Greig in Garfield Road just up from St. Andrews church today.

The minister was well received and did a good work among the folk who attended. Having established the church services, he encouraged the noble little band of attendees to build a church in Regent St.



So St. Andrews in Regent Street (pictured above around 1907) was opened on 2nd November 1884, by Rev. P. Fitzgerald. It was the centre for worship until the new St. Andrews Community Centre was opened 1980.

The original building is still used for worship to-day on the third Sunday of the month. There was discussion about moving from Regent Street to a more central location in 1911. So in 1913 permission was given by Windsor Council for St. Andrews Church to move to the corner of Oxford and Garfield Streets, on Saturday 8th February 1913. From the stories handed down by older church folk, we are led to believe that the church was moved by manpower which must have been an incredible achievement. (Editor: *The church centenary booklet in 1982 recorded, "The building was cut in half and each half removed by timber waggon, then rejoined at the new site."*)



From the beginning until 1970 we were part of the Windsor, Richmond, Pitt Town/Ebenezer Parish. So the concept of now being part of the Hawkesbury Zone is not new to us.

1974 was a highlight when Riverstone participated in the celebrations of the 150th anniversary at Ebenezer. Members of Riverstone were in the choir and the celebrations were televised and shown around N.S.W.

St. Andrews has always been active in the community from when the first small band of followers met together in 1882 until the present day. Betty and I have been serving at St. Andrews since 1972. We were asked to be the Camp parents at Clarence for the Riverstone youth camp in 1973. There were about 30 teenagers attending and we had only just been married ourselves.

From there we were involved in the Sunday School, and various youth groups. I even had a stint at teaching Scripture in the high school in the 80's.

St. Andrews Riverstone have led the way in many ventures with other churches including support of the combined carols, Riverstone Festival, Youth worker and Chaplain in the High School.

Sometime in the late 70's Mrs. Cason asked me if I would help to put stage props together for the Christmas Carols for our youth group, not knowing she had been told "NO", we went ahead. The night of the carols there was a break in the music and out we came. Pam and myself carried out the larger stable props, the music started, the sound of the young voices echoed as they came out singing 'Away in a Manger' and placing the manger, baby Jesus and animals in the stable. It was a great success. After that all the Churches participated. It grew to become Riverstone's Combined Christmas Carols.

St. Andrews carols are on December 17th on the grounds and Christmas Morning service at 8am. We hold Special Easter Services on the Thursday and Friday at Easter. Our Sunday Worship starts 9:30 each Sunday, and the third Sunday is held in the Heritage Church followed by a fellowship lunch.

We are still involved in the community with activities including; Monday carpet bowls at 9:30 followed by Tia-Chi at 1:30. Every fourth Tuesday at 9:30, we have a morning tea with a guest speaker. In the evenings each week a laughter group. Wednesdays is Tumble Time for toddlers between 10 and 12. Every third Thursday, a Street Stall at the Town Centre. Fridays, every second week, between 4 and 6pm we have fun afternoons with games, snacks and activities.