

## History

The foundation stone of the present St Paul's Cathedral, Rockhampton, was laid in 1879. This was the third building constructed for Church of England worship in Rockhampton. The original building was of wood, and used by both Anglicans and Presbyterians. It was the subject of much dispute and was destroyed by cyclone the day after Bishop Tufnell of Brisbane consecrated it an Anglican building in 1861.

Thomas Jones had come from England with Bishop Tufnell to Brisbane in 1860, having been made deacon in Salisbury Cathedral the year before. Tufnell sent him to Rockhampton where Jones conducted the first service in a room over Grant's Timber Yard in East Street. In 1862, following the destruction of the first church, another timber building was constructed on the site. It was exclusively for Anglican use and boasted 156 rented pews with 30 free pews. It remained as St Paul's Church until the present building was completed in 1883. The practice of rented pews was only discontinued in 1916.

Having been responsible for the construction of the first church, Jones remained as Rector until 1864 when he returned to Brisbane as first Rector of All Saints Wickham Terrace.

In 1867 one acre of land was granted by the Crown to "... certain people called Protestants connected with the Established Church of England in the Colony of New South Wales within Queensland ...". Two other portions of land were granted for the erection of a schoolhouse and a Rectory.

By 1875 an amount of £1300 had been collected and with this the foundations of a new church were laid. The work stalled until 1879 when the Reverend W A Diggins was appointed and under his dynamic leadership another £4000 was raised. Bishop Stanton of North Queensland set the foundation stone on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 1879 in the presence of Bishop Hale of Brisbane and a large gathering of townspeople.

Public works architects Voysey and Scarr were responsible for the design and the sandstone was quarried locally from the Stanwell Quarry, St Paul's being the first building in Rockhampton to use the stone which is now such a prominent feature of the historic buildings in the City.

The cost of the building was £7300 with a further £1000 spent on furnishings. St Paul's was dedicated by Bishop Hale of Brisbane on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1883 but it was another twenty-eight years before the debt was paid. On 20<sup>th</sup> June 1911 Bishop Halford issued a Licence of Consecration for his new Cathedral Church.

During this early period of the establishment of the Anglican Church in Central Queensland, the staff of St Paul's were responsible for ministry across the south of Rockhampton as well as a considerable country area stretching to the Westwood and Banana Districts. The Reverend A.H.Julius, as Curate of St Paul's in the 1880s, was even engaged in the commencement of church work in Springsure, Clermont and Gladstone prior to his appointment as Rector of Springsure/Clermont in 1886

Many of the Rectors of St Paul's have been prominent in the life of the Church, both within the Diocese of Rockhampton and nationally. A number have become Bishops, notably G D Halford who came to Rockhampton in 1902 after service as Head of the Brotherhood of St Andrew in Longreach.

The Brotherhood of St Andrew was the first Brotherhood established in Australia, a group of mission priests giving service for a fixed term and ministering over vast geographical areas. Halford became Bishop of Rockhampton in 1909, resigning in 1920 to test his vocation to the religious life.

Other clergy were active pastorally in the Rockhampton area, and were responsible for the establishment of other parishes and institutions in the Diocese.

Until 1959 the Bishop was Dean of the Cathedral and the priest-in-charge was Rector of the Cathedral Parish. This changed with the St Paul's Cathedral Canon introduced to Synod by the Venerable S J Matthews who became first Dean and Rector.

There have been a number of changes to the internal appearance of the Cathedral. In 1925 the mosaic on the sanctuary apsidal wall was covered with wooden panelling. This magnificent and unique mosaic tiling has recently been restored to its original condition. Many of the tiles were made by Minton in England and the workmanship is particularly detailed.

The Warrior Chapel was originally established in 1917 by Bishop Halford in the north aisle and moved in 1928 to the south aisle. It is the Garrison Chapel of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, with the Battalion colours laid up in the Chapel, along with flags of the three services and the flag of the United States of America in token of the continuing connection between Central Queensland and the United States which began in World War II with the stationing of a large number of troops near the City. For a time Rockhampton was also the headquarters of General Douglas McArthur. The United States flag was presented to the Cathedral by the US Consul General in a special ceremony in 1994.

In 1917 the gas lighting was superseded and St Paul's became the first public building in Rockhampton to be lit by electricity. There is record of a Special meeting of parishioners as early as November 1891 to discuss a proposal of the Rockhampton Gas Company to "... fit up the Church with electric light." The proposal was to cost 70:18:6.

During the 1920s, when the Oratory of the Good Shepherd staffed the Parish under the leadership of the Venerable A T Robinson, a rood screen was installed. The crucifix on the wall behind the lectern came from the centre of the screen. It was at this time that the aumbrey was built into the sanctuary.

The original organ was being brought from England when the sailing ship "Deutschland" which was carrying it, was wrecked in July 1883 about 25 miles east of Cape Capricorn. A syndicate under Captain C Norris purchased the wreck and its cargo. The organ had been placed at the top of the cargo and the twenty cases containing it were saved and sent on to Rockhampton. This instrument was built by J Porrit of Leicester who received an award at the South Kensington Exhibition in 1862 for the beauty of tone of an organ he had built. The present instrument was installed in 1966 and built by J W Walker & Sons of Middlesex. It consists of 7 ranks, 513 pipes with 5 ranks enclosed in a swell box. The Great Organ has 10 stops, the Swells has 12, and the Pedal 8. The organ and choir were removed in 1966 from their traditional position in the sanctuary and located in their present situation adjacent to the West Doors. It was at this time that the clergy stalls in the sanctuary were ranged around the Bishop's Stall.

A major restoration occurred from 1996 until 2007. The degraded sandstone was replaced and considerable drainage installed to halt the rising damp and salt attack problem. The Cathedral was rewired and award winning light fittings installed. The vinyl on the aisles and sanctuary was replaced with a replica of the tiling mosaic, to highlight the magnificent mosaic on the sanctuary wall. The vestry was been refitted, the choir stalls rebuilt, and a number of smaller works carried out to enhance the beauty of the Cathedral.

The Bell Tower with its peal of eight bells was constructed in 1947 as a thanksgiving for victory in World War II. The bells are capable of being rung by hand but are more usually mechanically operated. The design of the Tower was by Rockhampton architect Eddie Hegvold. The bells were cast by Gillet & Johnson of Croydon in England and cost 1750 pounds.

By Easter 1901 a new schoolroom, costing nearly 2700 pounds had been completed and opened as a Day School. This was on a portion of the land originally granted in 1867. Until they completed their work in 1911, for some years the Sisters of the Church were in charge of this School. The School itself closed in 1912 but strong representation by parents led to it remaining open for that year as a private school under the management of Miss Warren. After the School closed, the building became the Parish Hall. Owing to subsidence it was necessary to buttress the Alma Lane side of the stage end in 1922. The Hall is part of an impressive late Victorian streetscape and is currently used as the Parish Offices as well as a wedding reception centre.

The Cathedral takes very seriously its responsibility as a major historical and spiritual centre in Rockhampton. A new tourist book was published in 2006 and excellent tourist guides are available, highlighting the many interesting features of the building, as well as the unique stained glass windows, many by the artist William Bustard.