

# ST JOHNS UNITING CHURCH



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St Johns Streatham Interior  
September 2000



st johns h257 extent nov 2000

## Location

38 CAMPBELL STREET STREATHAM, ARARAT RURAL CITY

## Municipality

ARARAT RURAL CITY

## **Level of significance**

Registered

## **Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H0257

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO124

## **VHR Registration**

October 9, 1974

## **Amendment to Registration**

February 8, 2001

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - June 3, 1999

What is significant?

The one acre site now occupied by the bluestone church of St Johns was gazetted in 1869 as a reserve for public worship for the Presbyterian Church. A temporary structure may have existed before 1874, when tenders were called for the new church by architect George Harriott of Wickliffe. The work was superintended by a local policeman, HS Saville. The nearby squatting run of Fiery Creek was run by John Ritchie from 1853 to 1900. Ritchie, a Presbyterian Scotsman, donated funds towards the building of the church and insisted that it be built of bluestone. The limestone for the dressings was quarried locally from the property of Mr Meeks at Cullen Lakes. In 1977 bush fires swept through the area and almost totally destroyed the church. The bluestone and some of the limestone dressings survived but all other parts, including the roof and all fixtures and fittings, were destroyed. The local community lobbied for the church to be rebuilt in the original style rather than be replaced by a modern church. Accurate rebuilding of the destroyed elements was based on documentary sources. New Zealand white Oamaru limestone replaced the dressings which were lost. A new single storey hall in a contemporary and contextual style and with direct access to the church was added at the rear.

The church is designed in an early English Gothic style, with a buttressed nave of four bays. The tower has a large quatrefoil oculus and angled buttresses with a reduced belfry and diminutive broach spire. Inside the gallery hood mouldings with bosses and the roof trusses are all honest to the original design. The original slate roof was replaced with modern corrugated steel. The 1977 rear addition is excluded from the registration.

How is it significant?

St John's Uniting Church is of social and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

St Johns Uniting Church is historically and socially significant as a symbol of the rebuilding of one of the institutions and landmarks of the town of Streatham following the disastrous bushfires of 1977. It demonstrates the commitment of the community to the form as well as the spirit of the church.

St Johns Uniting Church is architecturally significant as a representative example of the vernacular design and construction tradition of rural churches of the basalt plains area, notably the coursed squared blocks of bluestone and lead light windows. The large quatrefoil window, the belfry and diminutive spire are unusual and distinctive details.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must [notify](#) the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

\* Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.

Construction dates	1875,
Architect/Designer	Harriot, George,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	1130
Property Number	

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## History

History of Place:

The one acre site now occupied by the bluestone church was gazetted as a temporary reserve for public worship for the Presbyterian Church in 1869. (Victorian Government Gazette No 39 1869 p 1228). In 1874 tenders were called by architect George Harriott of Wickliffe. The work was superintended by a local policeman, H S Saville. (Through the Corridors of Time, Centenary of St John's Presbyterian Church Streatham 1875 – 1975).

The local squatting property of Fiery Creek was run by John Ritchie from 1853 to 1900. Ritchie, a Presbyterian Scotsman, donated funds towards the building of the church and insisted that it be built of bluestone. The limestone for the dressings was quarried locally from the property of Mr Meeks at Cullen Lakes.

In 1977 bush fires swept through the area and almost destroyed the church. The bluestone and some of the limestone dressings survived but all other parts, including the roof and all fixtures and fittings, were destroyed. These parts were accurately rebuilt based on documentary sources. Imported white Oamaru limestone was used to replace the destroyed dressings. A new single storey hall in a contemporary style and with direct access to the church was added at the rear.

Associated People: John Ritchie

## **Extent of Registration**

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended in that the Heritage Register Number 257 the category described as a Heritage place is now described as :

St John's Uniting Church, Campbell Street, Streatham, Ararat Rural City Council

#### EXTENT:

1. All the land reserved in Streatham in the Parish of Streatham as the site for a Presbyterian Place of Public Worship, marked L1 shown on diagram 257 held by the Executive Director.

1. All the buildings and structures marked as follows on diagram 257 held by the Executive Director : B1 Church

Dated 5 February, 2001

RAY TONKIN  
Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* G 6 8 February 2001 182]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*