



## Christ Church Cathedral

**Take a tour of Christ Church Cathedral and discover its rich history. A survivor of the Japanese submarine attack of WWII and the 1989 Newcastle Earthquake, Christ Church Cathedral is now a fully restored masterpiece. Built on a site overlooking the city which has been a place of worship for over 190 years, beautiful grounds and views surround the city's 'Castle'.**

Because Newcastle was the second settlement outside Sydney on the Australian mainland and this the first church north of the Hawkesbury, the building is notable for the length and uniqueness of its history.

Christ Church had its beginning in 1804 when, among Lieutenant Menzies' instructions from Governor King was one saying, "You are to cause the prayers of the Church of England to be read with all due solemnity every Sunday." This instruction was faithfully obeyed by the Military. Legend has it that, by 1812, there was a slab hut available to house the people during the reading of the prayers and that it was on the site of the present Cathedral.

This building, however, was pulled down in 1816 and a more stable church was designed. The first church was erected in 1817 "by Order of Governor Macquarie". It was built by convict labour but materials and workmanship were of a poor standard and it began to deteriorate within three years. There was no resident clergyman and the commandant of Newcastle, Captain Wallis assumed the job of minister of the area. On 2nd August 1818 at a service conducted by The Reverend William Cowper of St Phillip's Church, Sydney, Governor Macquarie himself named the little convict built church 'Christ Church'. On that day alone, 10 marriages and 30 baptisms were performed. Soon after followed a parsonage (built of brick) and a burial ground, however there was still no chaplain to officially perform religious duties. To this point, Commandants and their Officers took the services.

With considerable alteration and constant repair, the building survived to become our first Cathedral. By Letters Patent of 25th June, 1847, Dr William Tyrrell became the First Bishop of Newcastle and by those same Letters Patent in these terms, Newcastle became a city. "and we do further by these presents ordain and constitute the Town of Newcastle within the Colony of Australia to be a Bishop's See and seat of the said Bishop and be called the City of Newcastle." And so, our City was born.

In the 1890s work began on the construction of a new Christ Church Cathedral on the original site. The cathedral was designed by the famous American architect, John Horbury Hunt, and there were many acrimonious disputes about its design between the architect and the Anglican Dean of Newcastle. Many of Europe's grand cathedrals took centuries to complete and Christ Church Cathedral followed this tradition by having its tower added 162 years after work first began on the site.

Those who enter it today see the Cathedral restored and refurbished after the 1989 earthquake. It is a place of beauty and grandeur, and a popular Newcastle landmark.