

Rylstone Historical Walk

ENJOY A WALK ALONG THE ROUTE LAID OUT AND VIEW THE BEAUTY OF THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS. LOOK FOR THE HERITAGE PLAQUES ON OR ADJOINING MOST OF THE BUILDINGS.



1. THE SCHOOL OF ARTS & MEMORIAL HALL
Now known as the Small Hall, the School of Arts (c.1910) was originally a library and centre for meetings. It later functioned as a supper room for card tournaments, as a Red Cross Centre and a Guide Hall. The 1926 Memorial Hall next door was once used as the town's cinema theatre and is now used as a multifunction Community Hall.

2. JACKSON'S CORNER
Built by John Wesley Jackson, these shops were originally constructed in stone. A disastrous fire in 1927 destroyed the buildings but new ones were erected on the foundations. The stone barn, by the Showground gate, and Jackson's original house with slab walls tucked behind the shops on the north side, remain intact in their appearance.

3. THE GLOBE HOTEL & SAMPLE ROOM
In 1880 Mr Holland, an ex-saddler, and his Father-in-law Mr Thomas Owen, an ex-policeman, built a sandstone hotel of 12 rooms. It was soon extended to accommodate the increased business brought by the railway in 1884. The entrances and façade were altered in the 1930's due to changes in the street level. The Sample Room next door was constructed to provide a space for commercial travellers to display their wares to local storekeepers. Now a popular family meal venue with accommodation.

4. ST. MALACHY'S CHURCH
This graceful 1875 Catholic church replaced a small timber slab church built in the 1850's. Designed by Edward Gell, the style is Victorian Gothic with an Italianate belltower. An addition to the front was made in 1960 with stone from a private chapel on Monivae, a property near Rylstone.

5. RYLSTONE GARAGE
Cars came to Rylstone in the 1920's, and this building was Rylstone's first garage. Removing the cars made a great space for dancing, and the Sample Room opposite was near enough for a supper room. The garage was also the first venue for silent movies before the cinema operated at the Memorial Hall.

6. FLOUR MILL
This building was originally a 3-storey flour mill built in 1872 by John Purvis. In 1893 the boiler blew up and rocketed through the wall into the building next door, killing two people. This event, and a fire in 1922, resulted in major changes to the look of the building.

7. THE BRIDGE HOTEL
This fine building, built for publican Goodwin Spires Hall, opened in 1872. In 1895 it became a bank and manager's residence and was used as such until 1957. It was acquired by the Historical Society in the 1960's and now hosts a variety of boutique businesses and accommodation. The building is protected by a permanent conservation order and is on the NSW State Heritage Register.

8. JAMES NASH HOUSE
Built for James Nash, blacksmith, this home was originally located near the Showground. The building now houses the Cottage Museum and the family history archives of Rylstone and District Historical Society. It is open Sundays 10am-3pm or by appointment.

9. HALL'S CORNER
These two early cottages were erected by Goodwin Spires Hall to house his extended family. In later years they were converted to businesses, including a newsagency, bootmakers, garage, solicitor's office and bank. Now home to local artisan products.

10. THE DRY GOODS STORE
This substantial building was erected for John W Hardwick to house his dry goods and general store. It operated as such until the 1900's. For a number of years it served the community as the local Masonic Hall.

11. HEDINGLY
The home of John W Hardwick, commenced in 1859. It was later owned for many years by local general practitioner Dr Howe. His daughter still resides here. They have undertaken restoration in keeping with the original design.

12. HIGHFIELD COTTAGE
This is one of the very early slab cottages of Rylstone still standing, built by Robert T Highfield.

13. LOVE'S TERRACE
This is Rylstone's only terrace-style building, built for John Love, a blacksmith. It is two storeys at the front and three storeys at the back, with the original kitchens at the bottom. It was used for many years as a boarding house, with one male boarder breaking his neck falling down the steep stairs.

14. ST JAMES' CHURCH OF ENGLAND
The church was consecrated in 1864 and features splendid stained-glass windows. It was one of the earliest Anglican churches west of the Blue Mountains.

At the rear is a small slab building that functioned as both church and Rylstone's first schoolhouse in the 1850's.

15. WESLEYAN CHURCH
The Wesleyan Church, serving a growing Methodist congregation, was built in 1884. It now serves the Uniting Church congregation. The building replaced the smaller sandstock brick Zion Chapel (1852, now demolished) that stood next to St Andrews Church. A Temperance Hall (1874) once stood in the present roadway. The Federation period church manse, on the opposite corner, is of brick construction.

16. JOSEPH TAYLOR'S COTTAGE
A convict receiving his Certificate of Freedom in 1836, Joseph Taylor arrived in Rylstone with his wife in 1842. He purchased this block of land in the same year for £5.40, replacing the original house with a larger stone house as his family grew. Owner of a dairy herd and an entrepreneur, Taylor continued to grow his family's landholdings throughout his life. In 1852 he donated two acres to the Zion Chapel for Wesleyan Services. At the time of his death (1902) Taylor was the oldest resident of Rylstone and recognised as the Father of Rylstone.

17. THE POLICE COMPLEX
These buildings date from 1875 to 1895 and consist of the Court House; the Constable's House (with sandstone lock up and cells - no longer in use), the Sergeant's House, and the slab stable at the rear. The rear of the Constable's House houses the current Police Station, and the Court House is still in use.

18. THE POST OFFICE
Postal deliveries to Rylstone commenced in 1850. The Post Office and the Telegraph Office were originally separate, but combined in this building built in 1880, along with a residence on the right side. It operated as the town's post office until 2007.

19. THE SHIRE CHAMBERS
Rylstone Shire was formed in 1906 and functioned for 98 years until parts of Rylstone, Mudgee and Merriwa Councils were merged to form Mid-Western Regional Council. The building was erected in 1913 and extended in the 1970's.