

Places of worship

Welsh Church

320 LaTrobe Street, Melbourne, Victoria

The tradition of Welsh Calvinist Methodism began in Wales in 1735 and continues in the heart of Melbourne in this church erected in 1871. It is the only church in Australasia still conducting regular services in Welsh.



The Welsh Church was built in 1871 to a Gothic Revival design by the notable architectural firm Crouch and Wilson, who were probably the favoured architects for Methodist churches in Victoria. Non-conformists generally chose simple classical style buildings for their churches, but many Methodist groups in Victoria were happy to adopt the Gothic style from the mid 1850s. The pointed, stained-glass windows were designed by the Melbourne manufacturers Ferguson, Urie and Lyon.



The tradition of Welsh Calvinist Methodism began in Wales in 1735, with the revival led by Howell Harris, which predated the English Methodism of John Wesley by three years. Adopting some of Wesley's teachings, the Welsh Calvinist Methodists initially were established as non-conformists within the Church of England, but declared their independence in 1811.



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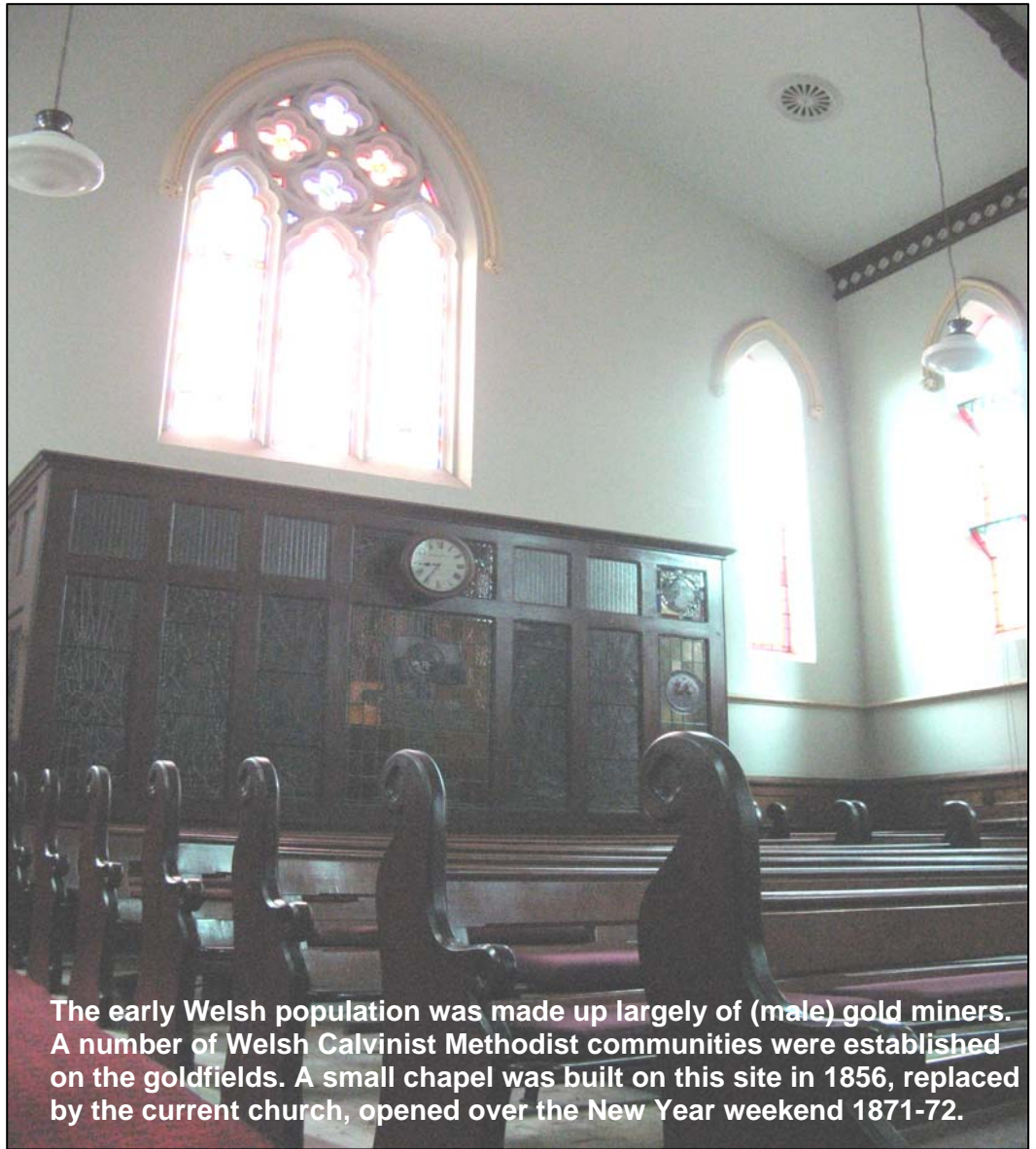
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The early Welsh population was made up largely of (male) gold miners. A number of Welsh Calvinist Methodist communities were established on the goldfields. A small chapel was built on this site in 1856, replaced by the current church, opened over the New Year weekend 1871-72.

Notable interior elements include the arrangement of pews from a circular to a straight pattern, and a raked floor, which is characteristic of Nonconformist churches. Note that to accommodate the later organ the pulpit was relocated to one side, which is very rare in a church of Calvinistic tradition.

The church is also historically significant as a hospital run by women for women was established here in the late 1890s by pioneering female medical practitioner Constance Stone. The church was the actual site of the first women's hospital in Melbourne.

The Victorian Heritage Register

The Register was established under the *Heritage Act 1995* to protect the most significant places in Victoria. It covers buildings, archaeological sites including shipwrecks, industrial heritage, cemeteries, heritage objects, gardens, trees and cultural landscapes. Over 2,000 places and objects are now on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The Heritage Council of Victoria decides which places go on the Register, based on established criteria for heritage values.