

**Item name:** St Mathew's Anglican Church Site and Edwards Family Cemetery

**Location:** 2038 Salisbury Road Salisbury 2420

Dungog

**Address:** 2038 Salisbury Road

**Planning:** Hunter & Central Coast

**Suburb/nearest town:** Salisbury 2420

**Local govt area:** Dungog

**Parish:**

**State:** NSW

**County:**

**Other/former names:**

**Area/group/complex:**

**Group ID:**

**Aboriginal area:**

**Curtilage/boundary:**

**Item type:** Complex / Group

**Group:** Cemeteries and Burial Sites

**Category:** Cemetery/Graveyard/Burial Ground

**Owner:** Private - Individual

**Admin codes:**

**Code 2:**

**Code 3:**

**Current use:** Cemetery and Grazing

**Former uses:** Church and Cemetery

**Assessed significance:** Local

**Endorsed significance:**

**Statement of significance:** The land on which the former church and cemetery is sited is a part of the "Melbury" property and records the selection of this land by William Edwards in 1852. The church site and cemetery are associated with the Melbury property and the Edwards family. The land has been farmed continuously by the Edward's family and their descendants to this day. The building of St Mathew's Anglican Church in 1906 on land donated to the church by William Edwards records the development of the Anglican community in this area. Similarly, the land for the cemetery was donated by Albert Edwards and records the use of this land for burial of three generations of the Edwards family and their association with the Anglican Church. Albert Edwards is the first burial in 1959, George Nicholson (1965), Elsie Marie Gale (nee Nicholson) (1990) and her sister Laura Chaffer (2003), Linda Smith and her son Kevin Ross Smith (2008).

The cemetery has aesthetic value in its siting in a rural landscape of alluvial within proximity to "Melbury" house, to the south of the Williams River and a backdrop of the Barringtons. The destruction of the church has diminished the aesthetic values. The church site includes remnant brick footings and there is potential to record the building footprint.

The cemetery is valued by the descendants of the families buried at this location.

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**Historical notes** The land on which the former church and cemetery are located was selected by William Edwards in 1852.  
**of provenance:** William's father, John Edwards migrated from Wales and farmed in the Camyr Allyn area. William Edwards built a slab hut on his selection and then constructed a more substantial house that was destroyed by fire at an unknown date. These buildings were located to the north and north-west of the cemetery site across the Williams River. From 1872-1876 William lived in the existing house known as "Melbury" that is sited to the south of Salisbury Road. Owen Nicholson owns "Melbury" and the property including the cemetery and he is the fifth generation to live on the property. William Edwards lived at "Melbury" and then his son Albert Edwards. George Nicholson, Owen's father also lived at "Melbury".

St Mathew's Anglican Church was constructed in 1906 on land donated to the church by William and Wilhelmina Edwards. It was built by Bejamn Boswrth with the assistance of Herbert F. Deards. It was timber framed and clad from local timber that was sawn and dressed on site including local cedar for the pews and altar rails. Other fabric such as the interior linings, windows and roof iron were purchased. The church could seat 100. The church was built by local labour and donations. Some of the subscribers to the building included William and Wilhelmina Edwards, their sons William Henry and Albert, son-in-laws William and Henry Deards, nephew John Everett, John and Samuel Rapson and J.R. Fulton. After the opening of the church concerts were held within the Church to repay the debt. On the 8th November 1998 the church was destroyed by fire.

The church is shown in a photograph (photograph mounted to brick plinth on site) as a timber framed structure on brick piers, clad with painted timber and a sheet metal roof. The church is a simple Gothic in style with a porch and vestry each with a pointed arch door. A secondary porch is located to the west of the entrance porch and this has a pitched roof and is an open structure supported on timber posts. The windows are lancet within a rectangular timber frame. There is little decoration with a timber cross on the southern gable and a turned timber finial to the porch and vestry.

The land for the cemetery was donated by Albert Edwards just before his death as he realised the earlier cemetery across the river where William and Wilhelmina were buried was often inaccessible. It was located to the west of St Mathew's Church site between the road and the river, though this was later reduced in size.

Three generations of the Edward's family are buried in the cemetery: Albert Edwards is the first burial in 1959 at the age of 87, George Alfred Nicholson in 1965 54 years of age, and Albert's daughters Elsie Marie Gale (nee Nicholson) (1990) and her sister Laura Chaffer (2003). There are also a number of Smith burials and memorials including Athol Ainslie Smith (1993), H.G. Smith (1998) and Albert's daughter Linda Smith and her son Kevin Ross Smith (2008).

(John Edwards is buried in an unmarked grave in the Dungog cemetery. William is buried in the General Salisbury Cemetery located on the Melbury property across the Williams River.)

**Themes:** **National theme**  
9. Phases of Life

**State theme**  
Birth and Death

**Local theme**

**Designer:**

**Builder:** Ben Bosworth

**Year started:** 1906

**Year completed:**

**Circa:** No

**Physical description:** The church was demolished in 1998 and there are some remnants of the building. These include the brick footings, concrete paths and steps, and timber fences and steel gate. There is a brick plinth located at the original entry to the church that includes a photograph of the church and a tablet: "Site of Melbury Church 1906-1998."

The cemetery is located to the west of the church site. This includes 4 graves and a columbarium. Three generations of the Nicholson family are buried in the cemetery: Albert Edwards is the first burial in 1959, George Nicholson (1965), Elsie Marie Gale nee Nicholson (1990) and her sister Laura Chaffer (2003), Linda Smith and her son Kevin Ross Smith (2008).

**Physical condition**  
**level:**

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**Physical condition:** The church site has archaeological potential to record the footprint of the building.

The cemetery is maintained and in good condition.

**Archaeological  
potential level:**

**Archaeological  
potential Detail:**

**Modification dates:** Church demolished in 1998.

**Recommended  
management:**

<b>Management:</b>	<b>Management category</b>	<b>Management name</b>
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**Further comments:**

**Criteria a):** The land on which the former church and cemetery is sited is a part of the "Melbury" property and records the taking up of this land as a free selection by William Edwards in 1852. This land has been farmed continuously by the Edward's family and their descendants to this day. The building of St Mathew's Anglican Church in 1906 on land donated to the church by William Edwards records the development of the Anglican community in this area. Similarly, the land for the cemetery was donated by Albert Edwards and records the use of this land for burial by three generations of the Edwards family and their association with the Anglican Church. Albert Edwards is the first burial in 1959 at the age of 87, George Alfred Nicholson in 1965 54 years of age, and Albert's daughters Elsie Marie Gale (nee Nicholson) (1990) and her sister Laura Chaffer (2003). There are also a number of Smith burials and memorials including Athol Ainslie Smith (1993), H.G. Smith (1998) and Albert's daughter Linda Smith and her son Kevin Ross Smith (2008). Albert Edwards is the first burial in 1959 at the age of 87, George Alfred Nicholson in 1965 54 years of age, and Albert's daughters Elsie Marie Gale (nee Nicholson) (1990) and her sister Laura Chaffer (2003). There are also a number of Smith burials and memorials including Athol Ainslie Smith (1993), H.G. Smith (1998) and Albert's daughter Linda Smith and her son Kevin Ross Smith (2008).

**Criteria b):** The former Church and Cemetery are associated with the Edwards family and their descendants who include the Smiths as recorded on the gravestones and columbarium.

**Criteria c):** The cemetery has aesthetic value in its siting in a rural landscape of alluvial plains within proximity to "Melbury" house, to the south of the Williams River and a backdrop of the Barringtons. The demolition of the church has diminished the aesthetic values.

**Criteria d):** The cemetery is valued by the descendants of the families buried at this location.

**Criteria e):** The Church site includes remnant brick footings and there is potential to record the building footprint.

**Criteria f):**  
[Rarity]

**Criteria g):** The site is representative of a Church and cemetery. There are remnants of the church which include the paths, entrance steps, gate and fences. This value has been diminished by the demolition of the Church.

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**Intactness/Integrity:** Cemetery is intact and well maintained. The Church has been demolished and is an archaeological site.

References:	Author	Title	Year
	Owen Nicholson	Owner	2013
	Family history of the Edwards family, Numerous members of the Smith and Nicholson family		

Studies:	Author	Title	Number	Year
	Carste Studio	Dungog Heritage Study Review	19	2013
	Perumal, Wrathall & Mur	Dungog Heritage Study	A36	1986

Parcels:	Parcel code	Lot number	Section number	Plan code	Plan number
	PART PORT	8			

**Latitude:**

**Longitude:**

**Location validity:**

**Spatial accuracy:**

**Map name:**

**Map scale:**

**AMG zone:**

**Easting:**

**Northing:**

**Listing: Name**

**Title**  
Heritage study

**Number**

**ListingDate**

**Data entry:** Data first entered: 08/03/2013

Data updated: 11/07/2013

Status: Partial

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**Image:**

**Image missing**

**Caption:**

**Copy right:**

**Image by:**

**Image date:**

**Image number:**

**Image url:**

**Thumbnail url:**