



Penrith – Timeline

Possibly named after Penrith in the County of Cumberland (now Cumbria), England. It is not known who first introduced the name to the area. The earliest reference to Penrith can be found in the 1819 journal of three Frenchmen – MM. Jean Rene Constant Quoy, Charles Gaudichaud and Alphonse Peilion. In their journal entitled “Excursion to the Town of Bathurst, 1819” they refer to the “military depot” at Penrith. To date, this is the earliest reference found using the name of Penrith. The name may have been in use as early as 1817; however, as records show that a Court-House was operating at Penrith from April, 1817. Whether the name was in use at this earlier date is as yet unknown.

Unlike nearby Castlereagh, Penrith was never a planned town but instead grew up around the early Court House and along the Great Western Highway. In attempting to explain why Penrith was named, the “Australian Encyclopedia” (Vol. VII 1965 edition, P. 52) relates that the English Penrith was also built on one long street, and that “circumstances may have suggested the adopting of the name for the New South Wales town, where the pattern of development, on either side of the Great Western Road, was similar”.

1804	1 February	Daniel Woodriff granted 1000 acres which covered most of the present Penrith suburb
1806	12 September	Governor William Bligh reaffirmed orders preventing settlers from crossing the Nepean River
1814	24 January	John Best Superintendent of Convicts at Norfolk Island was granted 470 acres south of the Great Western Road, known as Hornesywood Estate
1815	January	Great Western Road (from Emu Ford to Parramatta) built through Woodriff grant by William Cox
1815	25 April	Governor Macquarie commenced his tour from Penrith to Bathurst over the newly built road
1824	1 January	First horse race in Penrith was run between Peach Tree Creek and Parker Street
1828	8 January	John Tindale purchased John Best's grant and built Hornesywood (near Penrith High School)
1828	1 March	First Post Office opened at the Court House. Post Master was Alexander Fraser

1832	6 April	First Royal Mail coach service from Parramatta to Bathurst via Penrith
1832	8 September	John MacHenry died. He owned land north of the railway line
1832	30 September	First Court of Petty Sessions established
1834	6 September	Sarah MacHenry granted 100 acres in neighbourhood area of Lemongrove
1837	22 November	Foundation stone laid for St Stephen's Anglican Church
1838		Provisions for Catholics to worship were provided for by the opening of the Catholic Church Parish of Penrith
1839	16 July	St Stephen's Church was consecrated and the deeds handed over by John Tindale
1839	13 December	Foundation stone laid for St Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church in High Street
1844	29 June	Sir John Jamison died and was buried at St Stephen's Anglican Church
1850	13 November	Archbishop Polding opened the St Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church
1853	6 September	St Joseph's Convent School commenced on the corner of Evan and High Streets
1856	2 January	First traffic bridge over the Nepean River opened. It was washed away in a flood the following year
1857	25 July	Great flood. Washed away the bridge over the Nepean River
1860	28 March	Telegraph Office opened
1862	22 April	First account opened at the Bank of New South Wales
1863	18 January	Penrith railway station opened
1865	11 April	Formal application for a National School at Penrith
1867	1 April	Victoria Bridge opened. It carried a single line for both rail and road traffic
1871	12 May	Penrith declared a municipality
1880	19 April	Penrith Post Office built
1880	4 October	Penrith's third Court House opened. Demolished in 1978
1882	3 March	First issue of Nepean Times newspaper
1885	26 January	New St Joseph's Convent School official opening which replaced old school
1890	11 January	Sergeant James Beatty of Penrith police was murdered while on duty in High Street
1890	30 April	Foundation stone laid for Electric Light Station. Penrith was the third country town to have electricity
1893	2 March	First Agricultural and Horticultural Show
1907	2 May	Railway Bridge opened over Nepean River. Victoria Bridge became road traffic only
1911	16 March	Nepean Picture Theatre opened in High Street
1911	4 November	William Ewart Hart made the first cross country flight in Australia from Penrith to Parramatta Park, being 18 miles and taking 12 minutes

1915	9 November	"Coo-ee" march through Penrith
1922	8 July	Memory Park opened as a memorial to the fallen men and women during World War I
1924	16 October	Nepean District Historical Society formed
1928	11 April	Nepean Rowing Club formed
1934	27 November	The Duke of Gloucester's Royal Train stopped at Penrith
1938	10 September	Explorers' Memorial erected by the citizens of Penrith
1944	16 February	Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade formed
1948	19 April	An avenue of trees planted along the driveway of Penrith High School to commemorate servicemen of the two World Wars
1948	6 May	Penrith's first free Public Library opened in the School of Arts
1947	17 December	Penrith Press began
1949	1 January	Castlereagh, Mulgoa, St. Marys and Penrith Shires amalgamated to form the Municipality of Penrith
1954	7 March	Cardinal Gilroy officially opens St Nicholas of Myra Catholic School
1955	8 October	First electric train to Penrith
1959	3 June	Foundation stone laid for Council Chambers
1959	14 November	Penrith proclaimed a city
1962	16 November	Penrith T.A.F.E College opened
1963	26 April	Penrith Court House opened
1964	6 March	New Penrith Library building opened in Henry Street
1967	30 April	St Nicholas of Myra Roman Catholic Church opened
1971	30 March	Penrith Plaza opened
1973	4 July	Anglican Parish Council considered demolishing St Stephen's Church
1973	14 July	Humphrey B. Bear visited Penrith
1974	1 December	Last church service in Methodist Church Henry Street
1976		St Joseph Convent demolished
1976	20 June	Radio station 2KA opened in Borec House
1981	19 January	Penrith Tourist Information Office opened to the public
1981	20 May	Penrith Police Station opened; the fourth station on the site
1981	10 July	Penrith City Council Administrative Centre at 114 Henry Street opened
1984	17 April	Penrith Panthers Club opened
1985	16 November	Penrith Mall officially opened by Premier Neville Wran
1989	February	Penrith High School takes first students as a selective high school
1993	31 August	Grand opening of new Penrith Plaza refurbishment
1993	7 December	Penrith City Council's New Civic Centre opened for business
1994	8 January	Penrith City Library opened for business in new Civic Centre
1996	12 September	High Street reopened for traffic after the dismantling of the High Street Mall

2000	September	Penrith hosted rowing, kayaking and canoeing at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games
2001	December	Horrendous bushfires swept through Wallacia, Mulgoa, Glenmore Park, Emu Heights and Castlereagh
2002	January	Bushfires continue
2002	24 January	\$6.4 million grant from the State Government to contribute to the \$12 million upgrade of the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre
2018		New ambulance station opens near Nepean Hospital
2018	October	Yandhai Nepean Crossing pedestrian bridge opens
2018	November	\$842,000 upgrade of Penrith City Library begins
2019	March	Penrith Library refurbishment is completed
2019	October	Penrith Council announces plan for a city park on the corner of Station and High Streets