

Victorian Heritage Database Report  
**St Matthews Anglican Church and Hall.**

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**Location:**

17 Monash Avenue, Olinda VIC 3788 - Property No 20232

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Included in Heritage Overlay

**Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:**

**Listing Authority:** HI

**Heritage Overlay Number:** HO276

**Statement of Significance:**

St. Matthews Anglican church (1903) has high local significance as one of the earliest remaining timber churches, still on its original site, in the Dandenongs. Its hall, dating from 1901, when it was opened as the Mernda Free Methodist Church, has significance as the first Methodist Church built in the hills. Both buildings are typical of the simple timber churches built in the Dandenongs in the early years of this century, which became important community centres.

## Description

St Matthew's Anglican Hall and Church are located on the steep hillside east of Monash Avenue with access via a steep driveway. The site is generally cleared, with smaller shrubs and ferns to the front of the boundary and several mature trees to the north and rear boundaries of the property.

The Hall and Church are located adjacent to one another towards the north boundary. Architecturally they are very similar. Each is a gable roofed, timber clad building with a rectangular plan and minimal timber ornamentation. The Church is largely a double height space, while the Hall is more modestly scaled.

The Church is a double fronted building with an small off-centre, gable roofed entrance porch to the front. The roof is pierced by a gable roofed vent below the ridge line which probably houses the Church bell. A sign at the Church driveway entrance notes that this is a later addition.

The sign reads: Church, built in 1903. The entrance/ bellcote of the Church was added in 1992, to replace the original, free-standing belltower, dating from 1924. (Notice outside the Church.)

Entry to St Matthew's is from a door on the north side of the entrance porch while the front elevation is delineated by a centrally located, pointed arch window. The side windows of the Church are four pane, timber framed windows. The corrugated iron, green painted roofs have a small bargeboard and eaves overhang. A carved finial and timber cross are located at the apex of the entrance and Church roofs respectively. A timber ventilation panel is located beneath the cross within the gable end.

St. Matthew's Parish Hall is a triple fronted building, with a small, centrally located entrance bay to the front which links a larger room to the main Hall behind. The corrugated iron, green painted roofs have an overhang to the bargeboards and the eaves. The front facade includes a centrally located four pane window, with the entrance to the south wall.

The larger rectangular plan section at the rear of the Hall has a timber ventilation panel beneath the apex of the roof and the windows on the side elevations are double hung, six pane windows, indicating that this section is the older section of the building.

A sign at the site's entrance reads as follows:

The former Mernda Methodist Church, built in 1901 was the first Church in the district. It was purchased by the people of the St. Matthew's in 1935 and brought to Olinda by horse-drawn cart to become St. Matthew's Parish Hall.

Excellent

Intact

Heritage Study / Consultant	Yarra Ranges - Shire of Yarra Ranges Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2000
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	YARRA RANGES SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	115817
Property number	20232

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online*