



- Tharwa School House
- Tharwa Bridge
- Lanyon Homestead

LISTED PLACES IN  
**TUGGERANONG [1]**

1. Mount Tennent
2. Cuppacumbalong Homestead & Gardens
3. Cuppacumbalong Cemetery – The Grave of a Count
4. St Edmund’s Church
5. Tharwa General Store
6. Tharwa School House
7. Tharwa Public Hall
8. Hong Yong’s Grave Site
9. Tharwa Bridge
10. Tharwa Bridge Reserve
11. Tidbinbilla Road Scenic Lookout
12. Lanyon
13. Lambrigg, William Farrer’s Grave

*A heritage tour of*  
**TUGGERANONG**

**THARWA & LANYON**

A SELF-GUIDED TOUR



This tour has been developed by the  
National Trust of Australia (ACT)  
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Tuggeranong is the southernmost valley of Canberra. It has an Aboriginal history dating back at least twenty thousand years. European connections to the area go back nearly 200 years with the first pastoral settlements in the early 1800s.

### 1. **MOUNT TENNENT**

*Cross Tharwa Bridge and follow the Adaminaby road sign for 2.5km until you reach the Namadgi Visitors Centre.*

Mount Tennant overlooks the Tuggeranong Valley. It is a very steep walk to the top of the mountain, but if you want to try it, the Namadgi Visitors Centre has a printed guide to the walking trails up to the summit. The mountain is named after John Tennant, an Irish convict turned bushranger. He used the mountain as a hide-out and to observe the movements of people below. Tennant was captured in 1828 near the mountain and served a prison term in Norfolk Island.

### 2. **CUPPACUMBALONG HOMESTEAD & GARDENS**

*Cross Tharwa Bridge and follow the Adaminaby road sign for 2.5km until you reach the Namadgi Visitors Centre. The entrance to Cuppacumbalong is 800m on the left. The homestead and grounds are open to the public.*

The first impression gained from Cuppacumbalong Homestead is that it is another of the stately nineteenth century homes built by wealthy pastoralists. In fact, it was built in 1923. It is the third homestead built at Cuppacumbalong; the first was built in 1849 and the second in 1885. Both were located too close to the Murrumbidgee River and were flooded. The current homestead now stands on higher ground. There are still traces of the first and second homesteads in the picnic area below the gardens. The gardens and grounds provide a relaxing environment on the banks of the Murrumbidgee. Cuppacumbalong also has a restaurant and a gift shop.

### 3. **CUPPACUMBALONG CEMETERY**

*– THE GRAVE OF A COUNT –  
Situated on the junction of the Murrumbidgee and Gudgenby Rivers. Follow the pathway above the Murrumbidgee River from Cuppacumbalong Homestead car park.*

The cemetery is located about 1.5km south of the Cuppacumbalong on a high point overlooking the junction of the two rivers. A dry stone wall surrounds the burial sites. It is one of the very few intact nineteenth century cemeteries situated on formerly isolated pastoral holdings and is closely associated with Count Leopold Fane de Salis and his family who lived at Cuppacumbalong from 1856 to 1894. There are over sixteen members of the de Salis family and their staff interred in this small private cemetery. The separation between the de Salis graves and those of their employees reflects the differing social standing of the time.

## THARWA VILLAGE

*Cross Tharwa Bridge on Tharwa Road and turn right into Tidbinbilla Road.*

Tharwa was the Aboriginal name for Mount Tennant which overshadows this rural settlement. The village is the oldest official settlement within the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). It was established in 1861. Tharwa owes its origins to the well used crossing point of the Murrumbidgee River (Tharwa Bridge). This crossing was a crucial link between the rural properties west of the Murrumbidgee and Queanbeyan and to the Kiandra goldfields. In 1891 Tharwa was a busy rural centre boasting 38 dwellings and a population of 255 inhabitants.

### 4. ST EDMUND'S CHURCH

*Johnson Street, Tharwa, between Cuppacumbalong and the bridge*

Set in a large block surrounded by trees, this church was built in 1919 in the Carpenter Gothic style. This architectural style was

### 5. THARWA GENERAL STORE

*North Street, Tharwa.*

The Tharwa general store was built in 1922 and since then has been the focal point of local trade in the village. The store consists of two weatherboard buildings linked by a weatherboard addition. In 1926 the store was bought by C.C. Jeffery and has remained in the family since then. The facade of the store bears the name 'General Merchant, CC Jeffery'. It advertises hot pies, cold drinks, beer, an antique gallery and icecream, banking and postal services. If you have ever wanted to buy a beer from the bank or a hot pie from the post office, then this is the place to do so.

### 6. THARWA SCHOOL HOUSE

*Located on the corner of North and Union Streets.*

The schoolhouse was opened in 1912 just after the creation of the ACT, but schooling in the town goes back further with the earlier establishment of Tharwa. Its heritage significance is important, because it is one of only two examples of school-houses in the ACT associated with the end of the period when rural schools were provided for the region, before suburban schools were built for Canberra.

### 7. THARWA PUBLIC HALL

*Johnson Street, Tharwa, next to the general store.*

The hall was opened in 1926, to serve the residents as a community meeting place and function centre. To the people of Tharwa the hall represents an important historical link to the past social structure of the village which changed during the 1960s. During this period much of the land surrounding Tharwa was resumed by the Australian Government, this resulted in a population decline in

### 8. HONG YONG'S GRAVE SITE

*The exact site of the grave has not been located, but it is known to be on the rocky slope north-west of Bridge Street.*

Hong Yong was one of the best known Aboriginal men during the early European settlement period of Canberra. Described as a 'tall burly man', he cut an impressive figure to all who met him. His leadership of his people was recognised among the European settlers. Hong Yong was feared by some settlers and he often raided their stock, but he struck up a respected friendship with ex-convict Gareth Cotter and the two spent much time together. Hong Yong was buried in a traditional Aboriginal ceremony on the slopes overlooking the Murrumbidgee River near Tharwa.

### 10. THARWA BRIDGE RESERVE

*Either side of the bridge, access from Tharwa Road.*

The reserve is on the Tharwa Village (west) side of the Murrumbidgee and extends along the banks on both sides of the bridge. The reserve offers a tranquil setting by the banks of the river with picnic areas and barbecue facilities available. It has a blend of native and exotic vegetation. The southern section of the reserve is dominated by tall poplar trees and willows by the bank. The northern section has been developed retaining more of the native vegetation. The river is mostly shallow and slow flowing making the reserve an excellent area for a swim and a barbecue.

### 11. TIDBINBILLA ROAD SCENIC LOOKOUT

*Tidbinbilla Road, about 5km from Tharwa.*

Before leaving Tharwa it is worth driving north along Tidbinbilla Road to the lookout to see the Tuggeranong Valley. The rolling hills of the

### 12. LANYON

*Access is from Tharwa Road south of the suburb of Banks. Look for the entrance sign.*

Lanyon was one of the earliest established grazing properties in the Tuggeranong Valley. It is set in a landscape of natural beauty on the slopes of the Murrumbidgee River. The buildings range from the archaeological remains of a small three room structure built in 1838, to the elegant nineteenth century homestead built in 1859. A visit to Lanyon enables you to experience a glimpse the lifestyles of the 'squattocracy' together with the austerity of that of the servants. Near to the homestead is the Nolan Gallery where you

commonly used for many small rural churches. The characteristics of this church type are the steeply pitched gable roof and its modesty in decoration. The Gothic arch windows and door frame provide the simple but prominent religious imagery. The granite cladding was added in the 1930s to cover the brick skirt and timber stump footings. The church was built on land donated by the owner of nearby Cuppacumbalong, to serve the Anglican community in the district. Memorials within the church are dedicated to members of some of Tharwa's prominent residents.

the surrounding area which changed the social structure of Tharwa. However, the hall is regularly used today to provide a venue for many local and district functions.

## 9. THARWA BRIDGE

*Tharwa Road - Murrumbidgee River crossing.*

Tharwa bridge was completed 1895 as the first all-weather crossing of the Murrumbidgee River in the district. It is the oldest standing bridge in the ACT. The site of the bridge has traditionally been a crossing point of the Murrumbidgee River linking Tharwa and surrounding rural properties to Queanbeyan. The area was also frequently travelled by Aboriginal people for many generations before European settlement, often using this crossing point. Walk across the bridge and stop a while in the middle. You can get a good view of the Murrumbidgee upstream and downstream.

southern end of the Valley can be seen in the foreground. Mount Taylor and Mount Arawang to the north, Tuggeranong Hill and the Gigerline Range to the east mark the flanks of the Valley. The abrupt end of Canberra's southern suburbs can be seen in the middle distance. The view gives an idea of the extent of the Tuggeranong Valley which is sometimes difficult to perceive while driving through it.

Nolan Gallery where you can browse through the art works by, Australian artist, Sidney Nolan. ([www.museumsandgalleries.act.gov.au/nolan](http://www.museumsandgalleries.act.gov.au/nolan)).

## 13. LAMBRIGG, THE GRAVE OF WILLIAM FARRER

*Entry from Tidbinbilla Road. Lambrigg is a privately leased property. Access is by request.*

The grave of William Farrer (1845–1906) is situated on the top of a hill overlooking the Murrumbidgee River. The site consists of the graves of Farrer, his wife and a memorial obelisk in granite and marble. The latter was erected by the Australian Government in 1939 when the grave was declared a national memorial. Farrer was a pioneer in the development of wheat varieties suited to the Australian climate and ecosystem. His work in breeding varieties of plants enabled the Australian wheat industry to become one of the most important in the world. Most of Farrer's experiments were done in a small laboratory which still stands in the fields by the Murrumbidgee below the grave site.

