

RICHMOND BRIDGE

Location: Over the Coal River in Richmond.

Owner: Clarence City Council.

The plaque is built into the northern wing wall.

The bridge

Located for many years on the main route from Hobart to the East Coast, the bridge has six semi-circular arches with a total length of 41.5 metres.

It remains in service although there are periodic requests for a bypass to avoid occasional damage to its parapet by errant vehicles. The designer is not known.

Major Thomas Bell (1782-1866)

Bell was born in Scotland. He joined the 48th Regiment when 17 years old and saw distinguished service in the Peninsula War.

On coming to Tasmania he was appointed Acting Engineer and Inspector of Public Works and, in that capacity, supervised considerable road construction and a number of bridges, including the Richmond Bridge.



Richmond Bridge

HISTORIC ENGINEERING MARKER

Richmond Bridge

This fine example of early colonial bridge engineering was built to provide a reliable crossing of the Coal River. Originally named after Commissioner John Bigge, it was constructed by convict labour between December 1823 and January 1825 under the supervision of Engineer Major Thomas Bell and stonemason William Wilson, using locally quarried freestone. It is the oldest bridge in Australia.

Dedicated by The Institution of Engineers, Australia 1991

Heritage Listing

Richmond Bridge was accepted for the National Heritage List in 2006.

The view of the St John the Evangelist Church spire through one of the bridge arches appears in many tourist brochures.