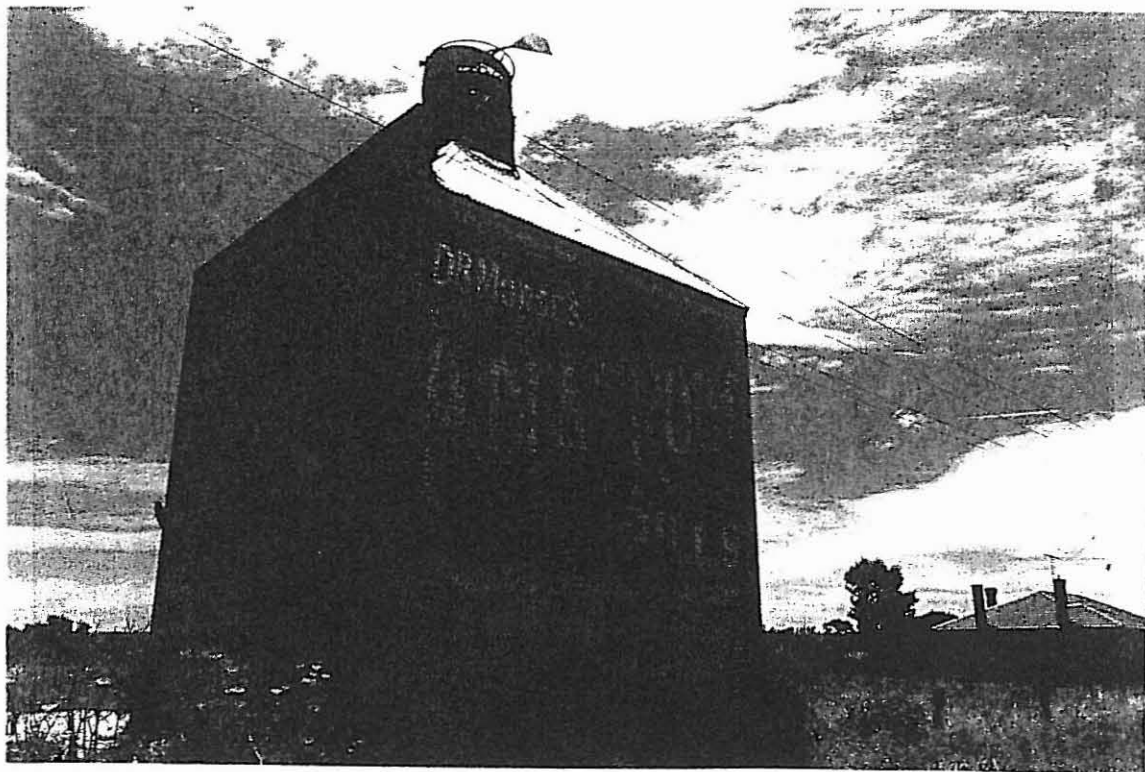


BACCHUS MARSH HERITAGE STUDY.

Ref: 88

Richard Peterson Architect & Conservation Consultant. Daniel Catrice Historian 1994.

<u>NAME:</u> "Chicory Kilm".		
<u>ADDRESS:</u> Taverner Street (NE cnr Fisker Street).		
<u>TITLE DETAILS:</u>		
<u>USE:</u> Store?		
<u>PREVIOUS USE:</u> Chicory Kilm. Advertising sign.		
<u>SIGNIFICANT DATE:</u>	<u>CONSTRUCTION DATE:</u> 1885	<u>SOURCE:</u> 1
<u>DESIGNER:</u> T.G. Pearce	<u>BUILDER:</u> P. Murphy & J.F. Taylor	<u>SOURCE:</u> 3
<u>CRITERIA:</u> H1/ H1, 6, So2. <u>HISTORIC THEME:</u> Industry/agriculture		
<u>DESCRIPTION:</u> <u>STORIES:</u> 4 <u>DETACHED.</u>		
<u>MATERIALS:</u>	<u>WALLS:</u> Brick	<u>ROOF:</u> Iron <u>STRUCTURE:</u> Lb.
<u>CONDITION:</u> Fair. <u>INTACTNESS:</u> Reasonable <u>THREATS:</u> Repainting of sign.		
<u>SIGNIFICANT INTACT ELEMENTS:</u>		
FORM. ROOF FORM. USE.		
PAINTWORK SCHEME.		
UNPAINTED FINISH.		
STREET FURNITURE.		
SCENIC VALUE.		
AGRICULTURAL PLANTING.		
<u>SIGNIFICANCE:</u>		
<u>TYPE:</u> HISTORICAL. ARCHITECTURAL. SOCIAL.		
<u>LEVEL:</u> STATE.		
<u>DESIGNATION EXISTING:</u> Nil		
<u>RECOMMENDED CONTROL/NOMINATION:</u> HBR. RNE. PLANNING SCHEME.		
<u>MAP NO:</u> U5.09	<u>SURVEY:</u> DC, RP & GV.	<u>DATE:</u> 7.1.94
<u>NEGS:</u> 4.27A, 7.23-26		



HISTORY: This chicory drying kiln was erected in 1885 for the entrepreneurial brothers, T.G. and E. Pearce.¹ The root of the Chicory plant is mixed with or used as a substitute for coffee. After washing, the roots are dried in a kiln, before roasting. Chicory had been grown in Bacchus Marsh from 1876, but sold green, because the harvested roots could not be dried effectively. The completion of a drying kiln overcame these difficulties.

Designed by T.G. Pearce, the kiln was fitted with a root-cutting disc and an elevator to the drying floor.² The contractors were P. Murphy and J.F. Taylor.³ The building and its sign are sufficiently famous to be illustrated on a recent colour postcard.⁴

Pearce with his brother F.C., was involved in hay production and operated a chaff mill in Bacchus Marsh from the 1880s to 1920s. Other family enterprises included the general store and motor sales and service depot. The chicory kiln was an unusual industry for the region and was apparently related to the development of irrigation and horticulture in the Bacchus Marsh area in the 1880s.

VISUAL DESCRIPTION: A four-storey brick former hop kiln, with a square plan. Surmounting the hip roof is a corrugated iron cylindrical flue, with a weather vane. Brickwork is colonial bond and there are two tie rods with cast iron plates at half-height and nine at three quarters height on each side. On the west side is a parapet wall. There are two openings on the south side for loading, facing the road, at levels three and four and at levels one and four on the west side, with segmental head brick arches, where there is a door. On the south side is a large painted sign, overpainted at least once, with the legend "Dr Morse's Indian Root Pills For The Liver". The north side is not visible. Adjacent is a large operating orchard, at the north-east corner of Fiskin Street.

The cylindrical flue has probably been made from a water tank. It demonstrates the need to control ventilation during the roasting process. Beams projecting from western wall indicate internal floor levels and may have been part of an adjoining structure while structures have been removed from the eastern face also. The tie rods possibly counteract the effects of the heating process, during roasting. The west wall parapet, formerly acted as a common wall to a two storeyed addition. The removed eastern building appears to have been single-storeyed.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: Useful comparisons could be made with chicory kilns of French and Phillip Islands and the Mornington Peninsula, which are found in a number of forms, construction methods and materials including pise, timber and corrugated iron as well as brick. None of these is quite like the Bacchus Marsh Kiln. Timber and earth construction are common on French Island, with only a few examples. Cheeseman's chicory kiln on

¹ *Bacchus Marsh Express*, 18 July 1885.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 25 July 1885.

⁴ Melbourne's Living Museum of the West, 1990.

French Island is large, but the Bacchus Marsh chicory kiln ~~appears to be one of~~ the largest in Victoria. Also comparable are hop kilns at Riverbank East Road, East Bairnsdale (cob or concrete, square plan,⁵ c1882. Recently this has been largely demolished) and at Mossiface, near Bruthen (timber, square plan, 1881).

SIGNIFICANCE: A large brick four-storey chicory kiln, built in 1885 with a famous "Dr Morse's Indian Root Pills" painted advertising sign on one side.

It is of state historic significance as the relatively rare and intact embodiment of the industrial process, hop roasting and its methods.

On the other hand, it is also of state historical significance as the relatively rare pioneering evidence of an agricultural practice, hop farming. It is the largest and most substantial hop kiln in Victoria. Other than the Mossiface kilns which are timber, it is the earliest known physical evidence of hop farming in Victoria.

The "Dr Morse" painted sign once common in Victoria is now rare. It has state architectural significance as a rare and intact survival of a building element type.

Finally, the building and its sign, which are visible from the railway line and roads, have social significance as a local landmark and by the community for orientation and illustrated in representative views including postcards.

INTACTNESS: Reasonable.

CONDITIONS & THREATS: Fair only. It needs weatherproofing and repair. Tie rods on the east and west sides at level three, have sprung. The sign needs a porous coating to protect it. It is said that there are plans to repaint the sign, which should be resisted strongly.⁴

⁵ Vines and Ward, *Western Region Industrial Heritage Study*, 1989; Historic Places database, Historic Places Section, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

⁴ Mrs Vallenge (who bought this land in the 1940s, the sixth generation of this family in Bacchus Marsh, they were earlier on the south side of Taverner Street) said that Mr Reed of Rotary is considering the repainting. Conversation with RP on 7 January 1994. NT FN 4295.