

BACCHUS MARSH HERITAGE STUDY.

Ref: 193

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

NAME: Garravembi Press, Publishers and Bookbinders.

PREVIOUS NAME: The Express.

ADDRESS: 8 Gisborne Road.

TITLE DETAILS:

USE: Publisher & printer

SIGNIFICANT DATE: 1866-1915 (-1970) **CONSTRUCTION DATE:** 1865

SOURCE:

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: **DATE:** 1870, 1966 **SOURCE:** 4,5

CRITERIA: H2,3/ H1/ H2/ So1,2.

HISTORIC THEME: Townships/Community Life/Industry/ Conserving.

DESCRIPTION: **STYLE:** Early **STORIES:** 2 **DETACHED.**

MATERIALS: **WALLS** Stone & brick **ROOF** Iron **STRUCTURE** Lb

CONDITION: Reasonable **INTACTNESS:** Reasonable

THREATS: Traffic; access.

SIGNIFICANT INTACT ELEMENTS:

MATERIALS. FORM. FACADE. VERANDAH. USE.

VERANDAH DECORATION.

DOORS. WINDOWS.

CONTEXT. 6 & 10

SIGNIFICANCE:

TYPE: HISTORICAL. ARCHITECTURAL. SOCIAL.

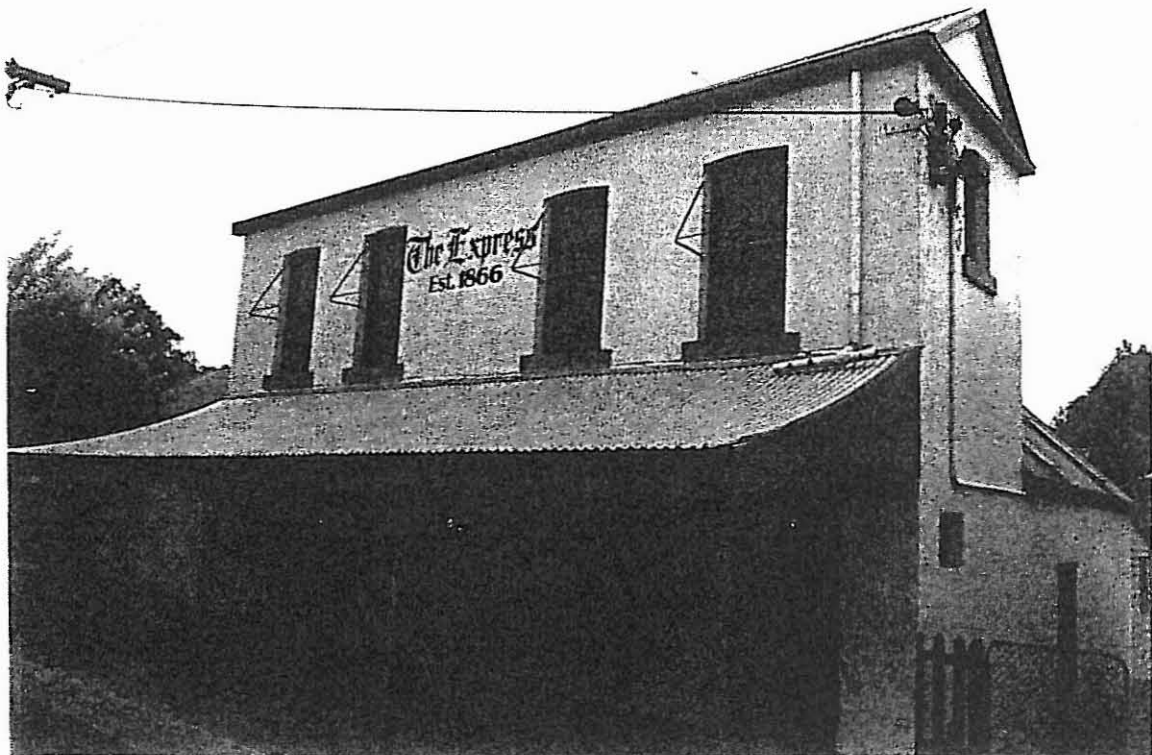
LEVEL: STATE.

DESIGNATION EXISTING: HBCR. RNE. PLANNING SCHEME. NT.

RECOMMENDED CONTROL/NOMINATION: HBR. RNE. PLANNING SCHEME.
AREA 1.

MAP NO: U4.07 **SURVEY:** RP, GV. **DATE:** 29.1.94

NEGS: 15.14, 15, 17, 20 & 21



HISTORY: The *Bacchus Marsh Express* was established by a local syndicate comprising Dr Rae, the Reverend James Scott, John Saunders, William Watson, George Lane, James E. Crook and James Young. First published on 7 July 1866, the newspaper was edited by Dr Rae (ref: 162) and published by George Lane (ref: 192), whose shop at the rear of the present building, erected *circa* 1865, became the *Express* printing office.¹ Three months later the syndicate disbanded. George Lane, in partnership with Christopher Crisp, then assumed control of the newspaper, producing, in the opinion of one contemporary, "a journal vigorous, graphic [and] conducted with much ability".²

Christopher Crisp (1844-1915), editor and proprietor, was an intelligent and skilful journalist, an activist who strove to educate opinion on public issues from protection and industrial legislation to Federation and Australia's imperial role. Cited in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Crisp's achievements were many and varied:

In local affairs Crisp promoted water storages and the Mechanics' Institute, revived the Agricultural and Pastoral Society in 1883 and acted as secretary in 1885-90, and skilfully negotiated the completion of the Ballarat-Melbourne rail link via Bacchus Marsh in 1889 after fifteen years of protracted effort. At Bacchus Marsh in 1891 he published *Railway Guide Book and Time Table for Melbourne, Ballarat, Adelaide and all intermediate stations*. Supporters of two public testimonials applauded "the most unostentatious though vigorous force in town"; critics suspected "surreptitious means". He successfully co-ordinated local efforts with the influence of public men and civil servants in Melbourne who became *Express* subscribers through his deliberate search for a wider audience, "fit though few". From the 1870s he argued the extension of government responsibilities as the practical basis for social and political progress. In Melbourne James Service and Alfred Deakin acknowledged "ideas and hints" from *Express* comments on their legislative endeavours in the 1880s. He published detailed studies of the drafting stages of the federal constitution in 1895-98. Several convention delegates encouraged his arguments to sharpen their own; "your discussion [of schemes to overcome deadlocks] is helping to clear our minds on the question", Deakin wrote in May 1897. Crisp issued a Federation supplement in May 1897, lectured on the clauses of the Commonwealth bill in March 1898, ably defended it in public debate against H.B. Higgins in May, and later declined for business reasons a private invitation to stand for the Federal Senate.³

The office of the *Bacchus Marsh Express* was enlarged *circa* 1870 by the addition of a two-storey section parallel Gisborne Road.⁴ This section was extended northwards in the closing

¹ Moore, "Express Office", typescript, BMDHS.

² Williams, *A History of Bacchus Marsh and its Pioneers*, p.12.

³ Rundle, J.H. "Christopher Crisp" in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol.3, p.495.

⁴ Building File No.3982, National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Schematic plan drawn 'G.L.' dated 8 January 1981.

decades of the nineteenth century. A single-storey section was erected on the north side of the printing office for the centenary of the newspaper in 1966 (refer: plan).⁵

George Lane retired as publisher and proprietor of the *Express* in 1899. Christopher Crisp, who had married his partner's daughter, Grace Lane, died in 1915. Christopher Lane Crisp succeeded his father as editor, retiring in 1931 in favour of his nephew, Francis Christopher McCausland Crisp.⁶ "Mac" Crisp sold his interest in the newspaper in 1970. He died in 1973.

Purchased by Syme Community Newspapers in December 1983, the *Express* ceased publication in Bacchus Marsh, ending 117 years of continuous service. In November 1984, the *Express* briefly operated an office from this building, then it became an art gallery and craft shop.⁷ It now retains an active office in Bacchus Marsh, not in this building. The building was subsequently occupied by The Garravemmbi Press, Publishers and bookbinders who publish small edition works to the highest standards of craftsmanship. They moved on in 1994.

VISUAL DESCRIPTION: An L-shaped, shallow two-storey, commercial building, gable-roofed across the site, with a wing extending at rear. It has two bays with a display window in each and french doors on the right, where there is a continuous timber lintel. The left hand window has a pair of sashes with segmental heads and 12 panes. There are two windows to each bay at first floor level, with sequential heads. The first floor level has rendered brickwork, otherwise brickwork is exposed. Ground floor level, is stone, rendered. There is a low concave verandah with cast-iron lade brackets. Quadrant roof gutter links front and rear gutters to form a pediment effect. Inside are various items of printing equipment:

1. 'Eagle' hand printing press. Old and possibly unique.
2. 'Wharfedale' flatbed printing press, manufactured Yorkshire, England (c1880s, 60s).
3. "Chandler and Price", hand-platen printing machine (c1887?).
4. Mostly modern type blocks.⁸

⁵ Personal communication with Gwyn Moore, BMDHS.

⁶ Moore and Oomes, *Bacchus Marsh: A Pictorial Chronicle*, p.25.

⁷ *Mail-Express*, (Bacchus Marsh Edition), 21 November 1984.

⁸ Letter to Mrs S. Hawker, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), from P Milner and L.J. Jones, Mechanical Engineering Department, University of Melbourne, 23 April 1981.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: *Standard* printing works, Chiltern.

SIGNIFICANCE: An early brick, partly two-storey, newspaper printing works and publishing office, the earliest section (identified on the accompanying plan) built in 1865. Here was published the *Bacchus Marsh Express* newspaper (1866-1970).

Through its forceful and intelligent editor (until 1915) and part proprietor, Christopher Crisp, The *Express* was influential on Alfred Deakin and the Australian Federation movement at the end of the nineteenth century. This is one of a group of three buildings associated with the newspaper (also refs: 192 & 194). It contains two presses, a printing machine and a collection of old type blocks.

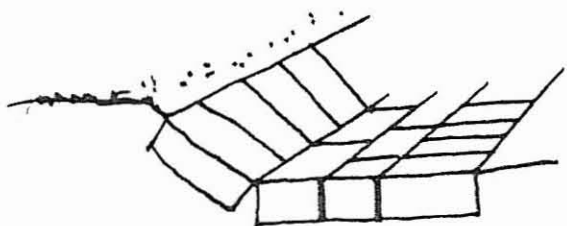
The building is of state historical significance for its association with the *Express*, with Crisp and with the development of newspaper publishing and printing in the Community life of Victoria.

It is also of state historical significance as a rare surviving representative embodiment of the newspaper industry in the late nineteenth century in Victoria.

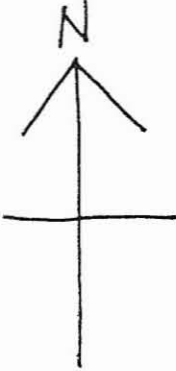
It is finally of social significance as known and valued by the community as part of its sense of identity of the place and as an embodiment of a sequence of varied approaches to conservation action, over twenty-five years.

INTACTNESS: Reasonable. First floor windows have been replaced. Two of the verandah brackets are lacking. Glazing bars from the right-hand display window are missing and replaced with otto metal. Roofing and roof-plumbing have been replaced in quadrant profile oddly. There is a recent addition at left.

CONDITIONS & THREATS: Reasonable. There is cracking to all rendered stone, especially in front, centre. The ground level has risen above the floor level, allowing damp penetration. Difficult access and car parking may limit its continued commercial use. It is unclear if all of the scheduled significant equipment survives.



DETAIL
BRICK KERB & CHANNEL



BRICK KERB & CHANNEL
(REFER DETAIL)

DIAMOND CONCR. FOOTPATH

OPEN

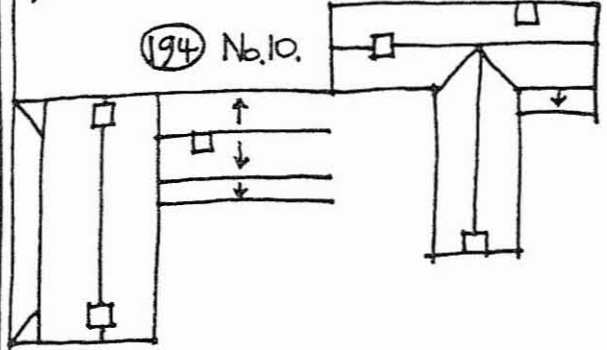
ROAD

GISBORNE

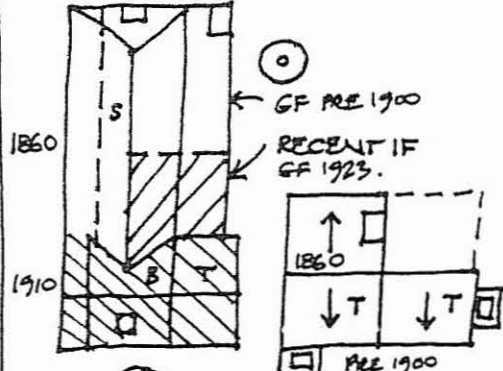
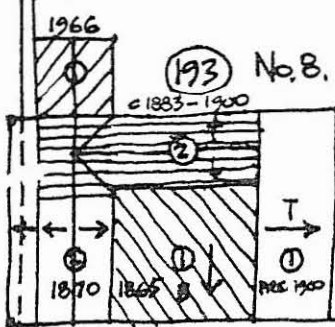
MAIN

STREET

(194) No.10.



(193) No.8.



(192) No.6.

No.4

LANE

(149)

COURT HOUSE HOTEL