

BACCHUS MARSH HERITAGE STUDY.

Ref: 245

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

NAME: St Bernard's Church, Presbytery and Parish Centre.**ADDRESS:** 49- Lerderberg Street.**TITLE DETAILS:****USE:** Church, residence & office.**CONSTRUCTION DATE:** C: 1871-4; P: 1888-9**SOURCE:** 3**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** **DATE:** P: 1911-12**SOURCE:** 4**DESIGNER:** C: H.R. Caselli; P: McMullan; Charles Rice.**BUILDER:** C: Hiam & Rose, J.F. Taylor, P: Murphy & Taylor**SOURCE:****CRITERIA:** H2; So1,3/ H2; Ar1,3; So1,2.**HISTORIC THEME:** Community Life/ Townships.**DESCRIPTION:** **STYLE:** C: Dec. Gothic **STORIES:** P: 2 **DETACHED.****MATERIALS:** **WALLS** Brick **ROOF** C: Slate **STRUCTURE** Lb**CONDITION:** Good **INTACTNESS:** Excellent **THREATS:** -**SIGNIFICANT INTACT ELEMENTS:**FORM. church **FACADE.** church **VERANDAH.** presbytery **ROOF FORM.** church **USE.**ROOF DECORATION. **VERANDAH DECORATION.** presbyteryCHIMNEYS. presbytery **DOORS.** **WINDOWS.** **PAINTWORK SCHEME.**

STREET FURNITURE.

SIGNIFICANCE:**TYPE:** HISTORICAL. ARCHITECTURAL. SOCIAL.**LEVEL:** LOCAL.**DESIGNATION EXISTING:** Nil**RECOMMENDED CONTROL:** PLANNING SCHEME.

AREA 2.

MAP NO: U4.07 **SURVEY:** RP **DATE:** 14.2.94 **NEGS:** 20.7-12, 14-17

HISTORY: The first Catholic church in Bacchus Marsh, a brick chapel adjoining the cemetery at Hopetoun (ref: 353), was dedicated on October 15, 1850 by Bishop Goold.¹ A second church was erected in Fisken Street in 1863, replacing the chapel at Hopetoun which had fallen into disuse as the township centre moved westwards.²

By 1871, however, the parish required a more fitting place of worship, and in August of that year, tenders were called for the erection of the present church in Lerderberg Street. Five months later, the foundation stone of a church designed by H.R. Caselli was laid by the Bishop of Melbourne, J.A. Goold. The contractor, Messrs. Hiam and Rose, had completed the brickwork in July 1872 when two gables and a section of the roof collapsed. In April 1873, a contract for rebuilding the gables and roof was let to J.F. Taylor. The completed structure, dedicated to St. Bernard, was opened amid great ceremony on Sunday, 28 June 1874.³

In February 1888, tenders were called for the erection of a presbytery. The foundation stone was laid in April. Designed by a Mr McMullen of Prahran, the single-storey dwelling was completed in February 1889. The contractors were Messrs. Murphy and Taylor. A second storey was built in 1911-12 to the design of architect, Charles Rice.⁴

A choir loft was erected in 1899, the provision of which had been specified in the architect's original drawings. Other additions include the replacement of the windows in the sanctuary, the erection of confessionals, and the installation of a "Vesper" organ between 1911 and 1919, and the addition of stations of the cross after 1920.⁵

VISUAL DESCRIPTION: *Exterior.* A gable-roofed Decorated Gothic tuckpointed red brick church with a slate roof, aligned parallel to Lerderberg Street, this is to liturgical direction. It has five bays to the nave, a chancel with a vestry on its southern side, two porches opening into the nave sides and a tower. The windows have lancet pairs and quatrefoil, with foliate labels formed from Celtic bands.

The west front has an upper large triple lancet window, with a six-foil light over. Below are two small lancets. All lancets inscribe ogee arches with cusps. Buttresses terminate in gables, with cruciform ridges. There is a rock-face base, generally. There are skillion vents to the roof. Porches, chancel and vestry have gable roofs, and porches are rendered.

The tower has a substantial base, soon reducing with a stop-chamfer to an octagon. It is quite severe, eventually reducing to a timber belfry, with lancets inscribing trefoils with labels, then curiously, a dentillated cornice and a candle-snuffer roof, terminating in a ball

¹ Love, *St. Bernard's Church Bacchus Marsh 1874-1974*, p.1.

² *Ibid.*, p.2.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5; see also *Bacchus Marsh Express*, 4 July 1874.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10.

and delicate metal cross. The presbytery has a octagonal chimney and convex shouldered windows and doors.

Interior: There is an exposed timber roof structure of rafters with scissor braces and arch braces. There is a rare complete set of stained glass windows: there is a fine east window of the resurrection, the sanctuary windows to the memory of Thomas Cain and his wife, who died in 1913 and 1914, nave windows of saints in multi-lobed panels set in plain glass with Edwardian and even Art Nouveau decoration, and a cross of *fleur de lis* motif in the quatrefoil. Between these are stations of the cross, painted on board.

Presbytery: An eclectic two-storey Edwardian three-bay brick house, with a two-storey timber verandah on three sides, returning to projecting side wings towards the rear. A gabled frontispiece projects at the centre, with a finial. Windows are pairs on ground and triples on first floor with shallow segmental heads. The entrance is round headed and recessed, and with a label mould at first floor. Rectangular double-level bay windows project from the side wings. The upper gables jetty on brackets. Windows are quadruples, with highlights.

The roof is slate, with roughcast chimneys with a decorative brick band and four pots. The verandah has plain tall posts on short brick plinths at ground level and at first floor are decorative balustrades, each third baluster wider and pierced with a tulip motif. Posts are Doric and triples at corners, neatly allowing a cross motif above the linked capitals. There are cast-iron lace brackets. The footpath is a pre-cast concrete diamond pattern.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: There are ten churches identified in Bacchus Marsh. Of these, five are nineteenth century. Generally, the seven non-conformist churches are Early English in style and the Roman Catholic are Decorated and red brick (refs: 197 and 283A also). One of the three large churches in the municipality. Nothing compares with the eclectic presbytery.

SIGNIFICANCE: A brick Decorated Gothic Victorian church, designed by H.R. Caselli in 1871 and opened in 1874.

The eclectic brick two-storey Edwardian presbytery was designed by Mr McMullen in 1888 and opened in 1889.

The group is of local historical significance for its association with the religious development in the community life of the town. It has architectural significance as an intact surviving representative example of the Victorian Decorated Gothic style and the eclectic Edwardian of the presbytery.

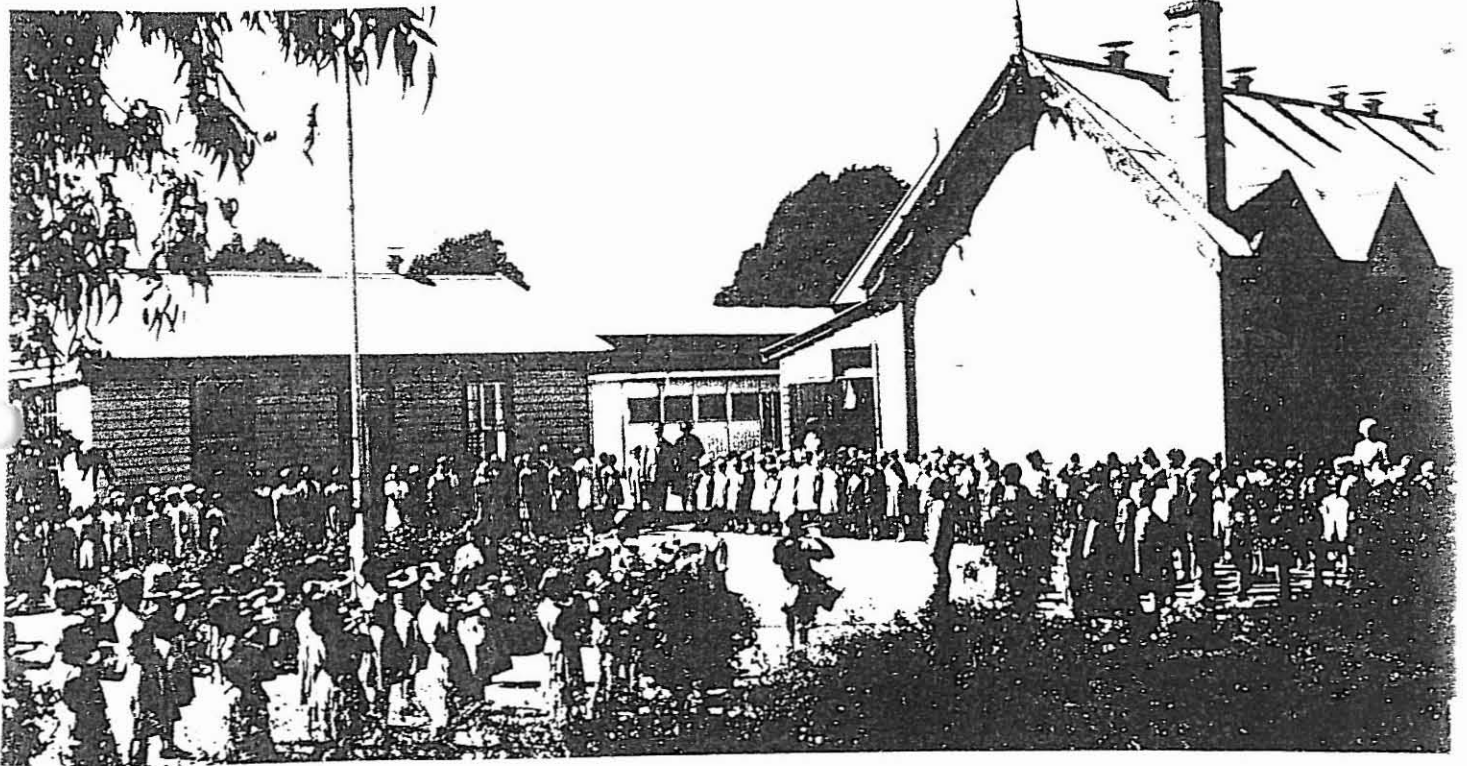
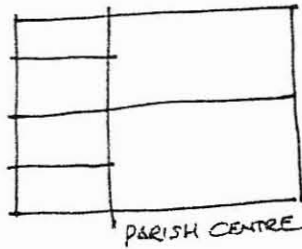
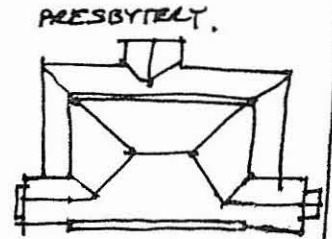
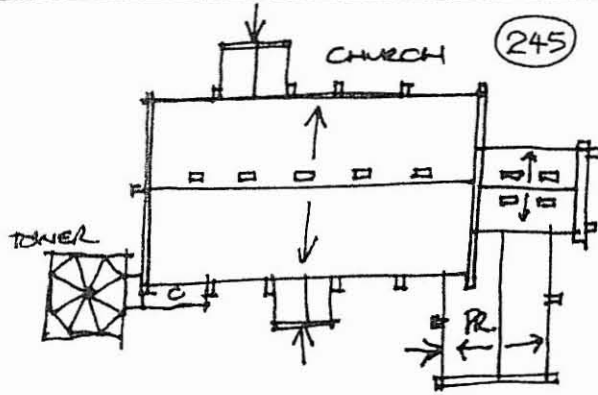
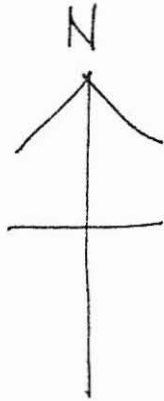
Finally, the church is of local social significance as known and valued by the community as part of the sense of identity of the place and as a landmark used by the community for orientation.

INTACTNESS: Excellent, especially the church interior.

CONDITIONS & THREATS: Good. There is vertical structural cracking in the church and staining of its brickwork.

LERDERBERG STREET

No 49



ASSEMBLY 01967.

MAZE & COMES, P.141.