

An article in the *Advocate* of 11 June 1947 titled, "Army Structure Makes Beautiful Church," told of the blessing ceremony by Archbishop Mannix. The building was now dedicated to St. Kevin. The last Mass was held at St. Kevin's on 28 July 1968, a new church being built on a site in Herlihys Road¹⁸⁹

The former Army chapel was then taken to Park Orchards. Catholic services there had previously been held in the Chalet on the Park Orchards County Club Estate. The 1940s chapel was renamed in June 1970 when it became St. Anne's and was opened on its present Knees Road site, after being re-roofed and repainted.¹⁹⁰

Of *local social and historical significance* for its associations with Camp Pell during the Second World War period as a purpose-built Army chapel, and for its subsequent associations with district parishes at Templestowe and Park Orchards, and with the local builder, Ted Sheahan.

Former Hilldene 36 Octantis Street, East Doncaster.

The history of this property goes back to 1885 when William Cronan(or Cronin),farmer, was rated for land in Section Road.¹⁹¹ This was later identified as the Hilldene site on the corner of Blackburn and Andersons Creek Roads. An early cottage (incorporated into the later house in the 1930s)was built on this land and completed by 1887-89. It was owned and occupied by John and Thomas Cronan, farmers¹⁹²

The Cronans, who became orchardists, were early district farmers. William Cronan purchased a farm allotment in the Carlton Estate, where his modest home and land were rated in the earliest surviving 1863 district rate records..¹⁹³ An 1874 map showed this property near Edger Road and the Koonung Creek.¹⁹⁴ William still owned his Koonung Creek house on 17 acres in the 1880s¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter Nov 197 -

¹⁹⁰ Irvine Green,*Park Orchards*,1983,p.16.

¹⁹¹ Shire of Bulleen RB 1885 Doncaster Riding No.150(NAV 18 pounds).

¹⁹² Shire of Bulleen RB 1887 No.169(NAV 35 pounds); 1888 No.186 (NAV 151 pounds).

¹⁹³ Templestowe District Board RB 1863 No.37 (NAV 12 pounds 10 shillings).

¹⁹⁴ *Plan of Bulleen*,Parish of Bulleen Plan 526B, 1874.

¹⁹⁵ Shire of Bulleen RB 1888 Doncaster Riding No.187.

The site of John and Thomas Cronan's new house on 47 acres (on the Blackburn/Anderson Creek Roads corner) was originally part of Section 8B, a 312 acre property owned by A. McArthur. It was located south of Lewis Robinson's Pre-Emptive Right allotment, bounded on the north by Reynolds Road.¹⁹⁶ Robinson, an early district squatter, arrived at Andersons Creek in the 1840s.¹⁹⁷

The Cronans planted an orchard and lived on their 47 acre property until the First World War period.¹⁹⁸ Shire of Doncaster rate records confirmed a transfer by September 1918 to Ernest Wagstaff, manager, of St.Leonards¹⁹⁹ Avenue, St.Kilda. The large asbestos-cement clad timber Bungalow style residence constructed as a holiday house and hobby farm for Wagstaff was completed by 1919.²⁰⁰

Oakden and Ballantyne (and others) were designing single ridged Craftsman Bungalows from 1906, but in 1918, bungalows were still rare in Melbourne.²⁰¹

Asbestos -cement building sheet was imported from 1903-4 and manufactured locally from 1917. By 1927, Wunderlich's Durabestos was promoted as economical, durable, easy to use, and offering more fire resistance and vermin-proofing than an all-timber home. It was used particularly in the construction of holiday homes²⁰².

The new East Doncaster residence became a district land mark, the intersection soon being called Wagstaff's Corner. At this time, Hilldene was said to be the largest and finest house in the district.²⁰³

Wagstaff, the first general manager of the British Imperial Oil Company (Later, Shell, Australia) appointed Jack Snell as manager of his East Doncaster property, the old orchard being extended and replanted. District rate records confirm that Snell lived in the 1880s Cronan cottage, which had been retained.²⁰⁴ After his retirement in 1927, and his move to a residence in Heyington Place, Toorak, Wagstaff and his wife, Florence, spent more time at Hilldene.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁶ *Bulleen*. T.F. McGauran, Dept. of Lands and Survey, Vic, 30 Aug. 1906.

¹⁹⁷ Billis and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip*, p.132. (A small cottage on this allotment may date from the 1850s).

¹⁹⁸ *Hilldene*, Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter, March 1990, p.8.

¹⁹⁹ Shire of Doncaster RB 1917-18 No.389 (NAV 112 pounds).

²⁰⁰ Shire of Doncaster RB 1918-19 Doncaster Riding No.399 (NAV 170 pounds).

²⁰¹ John Clare, "The Post Federation House in Melbourne: Bungalows and Vernacular Revival Styles from 1903-1930," Univ. of Melb., 1984, p.36.

²⁰² Miles Lewis, *Physical Investigation of a Building*, Technical Bulletin, 9.1, National Trust of Australia (Vic), 1989, p.33.

²⁰³ *Hilldene*, Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society Newsletter, pp.8,9.

²⁰⁴ Shire of Doncaster and Templestowe RB 1927-28 Doncaster Riding No.742.

²⁰⁵ *Hilldene*,

In 1932, the Wagstaffs sold the property to J.J.Tully, who retained the house site but sold 41 acres of the farm land to his nephew, John Russell.²⁰⁶ The following year, William Langlands Jack purchased the house site with the 1880s and 1918 houses on it and five (or six) acres of land. Jack, a graduate of Melbourne University and Oxford University, became a Melbourne barrister and solicitor. By the time that Jack came to East Doncaster, he had taken over his father's Market Street insurance agency and the role of Consul to Portugal.²⁰⁷ Some additions were made by Jack in the 1930s, including linking the 1918 house to the old cottage and adding a side entrance. Mrs Jack renamed the house Mossvale after the town where she grew up.²⁰⁸

Other owners of the former Hilldene included John Fothergill Barnes in about 1936. He was a retired British Army major, and later, an advertising agent.²⁰⁹ Barnes renamed the property Hilltop.²¹⁰ In 1950, Barnes built a new house on the east of the land and sold the former Hilldene to Ken Stonier.²¹¹ Subsequent additions were made in the 1960s and more recently by the present owner, Mr.N.J.Macpherson. Today, no fruit trees remain on the once well-known orchard property.²¹²

Of local historical significance as a timber house which has developed over time from an 1880s orchardist's cottage to a businessman's hobby farm; for its associations with John and Thomas Cronan, early district orchardists, and with Ernest Wagstaff, first general manager of a company which became Shell Australia; and once the local land mark at Wagstaff's Corner.

²⁰⁶ Shire of Doncaster and Templestowe RB 1932-33 Doncaster Riding Nos.648-650; 1933-34 No.621.

²⁰⁷ *Hilldene*, p. 11.

²⁰⁸ *Hilldene*, p. 12.

²⁰⁹ *Hilldene*, p. 12.

²¹⁰ Shire of Doncaster and Templestowe RB 1936-37 Doncaster Riding No.15(2 houses.shed. 5 acres.NAV 70 pounds).

²¹¹ *Hilldene*, p. 12.

²¹² "34 Octantis Street(formerly Hilldene),E.Doncaster," Richard Peterson 9 Feb.,1923(Includes sketch showing 1880s,1918, 1930s and later section of the house.