

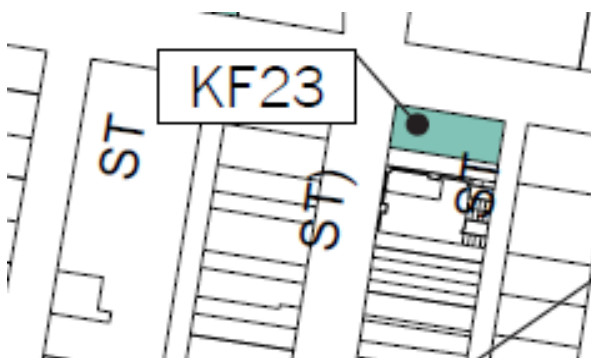
Name	St Monica's Catholic Church	Reference in 1998 Marong Study	KF23
Address	97 High Street, corner Station Street, Kangaroo Flat	Map reference	VicRoads 613 M3
Building Type	Church	Survey date	June and July 2010
Date of construction	1926	Recommendation	Include in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay
Significance	St Monica's Catholic Church is of local historical, social and aesthetic/architectural significance.		



Left: Presentation of St Monica's at the corner of High and Station streets. Right: Rear (east) view, with sanctuary at centre and sacristy to the right.



Left: South elevation. Right: Entry to the sacristy (north elevation).



Left: Aerial view, 2010 (Source: City of Greater Bendigo). Right: Proposed Heritage Overlay map, with St Monica's shown as KF23.

Intactness ✓ Good Fair Poor

History

The first Mass in Kangaroo Flat was held in 1857, at Mr Hiemann's International Hotel, located on the site of the present St Monica's Church (built 1926). Hiemann, a German Lutheran, is believed to have made the International Hotel available to the Catholic community following a proposal for the first Mass to be held in a slab hut at the north-east corner of High and Station streets, opposite the International.¹ In the early-1860s, the site of the slab hut was developed as school, church and hall, dedicated to St Monica. The (then) church building, designed by prominent Bendigo architects Vahland and Getzschmann, was built of locally-fired bricks, and blessed by the Bishop of Melbourne, the Most Reverend James Goold, on 24 July 1864. It served as a school during the week and a church at weekends, until the completion of the present church on a separate site in 1926. The 1864 building was demolished in 1992.² In the early 1920s, the site of the present St Monica's Church was acquired by Bishop John McCarthy, the third Bishop of Sandhurst – by then the International Hotel was long since de-licensed. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop McCarthy on Sunday 16 May 1926, and the church was blessed by the Bishop on Sunday 7 November 1926. The total cost of the building and fittings was £4,000. The architect was George Austen; the contractor was Frank Brown.³ Austen also designed Bendigo's former Limerick Castle Hotel in Williamson Street, again in 1926.

Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes

Victoria's themes and sub-themes:

- 8.1: Maintaining spiritual life

Description & Integrity

St Monica's Church is located on the south-east corner of High and Station streets, south of St Monica's Primary School (formerly the site of the slab hut and 1864 Vahland and Getzschmann church, see 'History', above). It is located in the approximate centre of a rectangular allotment, with an open landscaped area to the west, a row of specimen trees to the north and a car park to the east (rear). There is a public pathway to the south and a modern toilet block to the south-east corner of the site. The building addresses the west.

St Monica's is a richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival red brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts. The roof is steeply pitched and clad with original slate tiles. The gable ends have characteristic Gothic Revival copings with crosses at the apexes; the main west gable has a rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above, and a sloping parapet, dressed apex, four kneelers and angled buttresses. The nave measures 16.7m by 8.2m, and is 9.1m high; the sanctuary is 5.2m by 5.2m, and the sacristy, on the east side of the sanctuary is 4.3m by 3.7m.⁴

The large rose window to the west gable has a broad intrados and moulded extrados, acting as a drip-mould, and ending in ballflowers halfway round. It has radial bar tracery, like a wheel window, converging on a quatrefoil. The nave windows are all lancets with trefoliated inner frames, each with conspicuous quoin surrounds and a thick, smooth intrados coupled to a moulded extrados ending in ballflowers at the impost. The side buttresses are two-stepped with cement-rendered offsets; the west gable has conspicuous three-step angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with square-plan gablet pinnacles. The pinnacles and upper third step of these buttresses have recessed panels ending in trefoils. The front porch also has two buttresses with two steps, the upper being cement rendered with recessed oblong coffer panels filled with foliate ornament. There is a faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The chancel windows are sited high, being paired lancets with trefoliated frames and similar quoined architraves to those of the side nave windows. The vestry cuts across these chancel windows on the north-east side. It is dominated by a large gable with a crucifix finial, apex stone, kneelers, and two tall flanking corbels each capped by a gablet. The south-east wall of this vestry has a high mounted two-light window with timber frames and mullions, each pane with depressed three-centred arches cut in the window frames. These are surmounted by a flat head, above which was a depressed pointed arch. This flat head with surmounting pointed arch is matched by the side porch door and the vestry door. The nave's south-west side has a two-leafed door set in the fourth bay. The external doors are planked and appear to be long standing.

The trees to the north boundary are a variety of species and appear to have been planted at the same time or soon after the construction of the church.

Comparative Analysis

St Monica's is a characteristic interwar church of the 1920s. It inherits the vigorous and robustly scaled detail seen in a series of August Fritsch's Roman Catholic churches around Melbourne from c.1906 onward, as in his St Joseph's Church in Stanhope Street, Malvern (1908). This robustness continued in his much larger red brick Catholic churches such as St Mary's, Bairnsdale (1913); and in churches by others, such as St Joseph's Benalla by Kempson and Connolly (1907-8).⁵ St Monica's architects, Keogh and Austin, had also designed similar churches, as with the Church of the Immaculate conception at St Arnaud (1906-7). Clegg, Miller and Riley went in similar directions with St Michael's and St John's Horsham (1913), soon after E F Eberach had completed the John Knox Presbyterian Church at Swan Hill (c.1912). On a tall plinth, this latter building included similar buttress-pinnacles, rose windows and gabled porch with paired lancets. The quoins and cement-dressed surfaces at the St Arnaud church are also of similar weight to those of St Monica's.⁶ The difference here is that George Austen used Gothic influences, where Fritsch and other Melbourne-based Catholic Church architects preferred Romanesque. In texture and colour St Monica's resembles other vivid red brick churches of the period in Victoria, such as the Methodist Church in Kerang (1928). The main window detailing, a simple trefoil inside a lancet, was related to the square-headed trefoil being used consistently by newer architects such as Alexander North and Louis Williams, especially in their Trinity College Chapel for the University of Melbourne (1909-15). The thick, flat extrados surfaces on St Monica's are deliberately emphatic and heavy, and such emphasis was common in the middle and later 1920s, part of an effort to make churches more visible and sturdy in appearance. The multiple kneelers on the side gable were common throughout the red-brick period of church design between c. 1890 and 1930, as were the pitched gable parapets and the cement dressing. The subject church is also emphatically processional; and proportionally long churches predominated in Victoria's church architecture during this period, climaxing with Payne and Dale's St Dominic's at Camberwell, and Newman College Chapel (1938-42).

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Greater Bendigo's cultural history.

St Monica's Catholic Church, at the corner of High and Station streets, Kangaroo Flat (built 1926), is historically significant as the principal Catholic Church and centre of Catholic worship at Kangaroo Flat since 1926. The first Mass at Kangaroo Flat was held in 1857 on the site of the present church, then the International Hotel. The association between Catholicism and this part of High Street is reinforced by St Monica's Primary School, located to the north-east of the Station and High streets intersection, on a site originally developed by the Catholic community from the 1860s.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Greater Bendigo's cultural history.

N/A

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Greater Bendigo's cultural history.

N/A

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects.

N/A

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics in the context of the municipality.

St Monica's Catholic Church is of aesthetic/architectural significance. The 1926 building is a substantially intact, richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts, and a steeply pitched slate clad roof. It is a vigorous and robustly scaled church, with vivid red brick walling, and distinguished by Gothic Revival elements including copings with crosses at the gable apexes, and a large rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above to the west gable end. Other elements of note include the lancet windows with trefoiled inner frames to the nave; two-stepped side buttresses with cement-rendered offsets; the three-stepped angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with pinnacles to the west gable; the buttressed front porch; and the faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The unusually thick and emphatic extrados surfaces on St Monica's reflect an emphasis on making churches more visible and sturdy in appearance during the 1920s. The subject church is also emphatically processional and demonstrative of the proportionally long churches which predominated in Victoria's church architecture during this period. St Monica's, which has not been significantly modified since construction, also occupies a prominent location on High Street at the north end of Kangaroo Flat's retail strip.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

N/A

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of the place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

St Monica's Catholic Church is of social significance in the local context, as the centre of the local Kangaroo Flat Catholic community since 1926, including the focus of church services and worship.

Criterion H: Special association with life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Greater Bendigo's history.

N/A

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

St Monica's Catholic Church, at the corner of High and Station streets, Kangaroo Flat, was built in 1926, south of St Monica's Primary School. The church is a richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival red brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts. The roof is steeply pitched and clad with original slate tiles. The gable ends have characteristic Gothic Revival copings with crosses at the apexes; the main west gable has a large rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above; and nave windows which are all lancets with trefoiled inner frames and conspicuous quoin surrounds. The side buttresses are two-stepped with cement-rendered offsets; the west gable has three-step angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with pinnacles. The front porch also has two buttresses; there is a faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The external doors are planked and appear to be long standing. The church addresses the west and is located in the approximate centre of a rectangular allotment, with an open landscaped area to the west, a row of specimen trees to the north and a car park to the east (rear). The trees to the north boundary are a variety of species and appear to have been planted at the same time or soon after the construction of the church.

How is it significant?

St Monica's Catholic Church, at the corner of High and Station streets, Kangaroo Flat (built 1926), is of local historical, social and aesthetic/architectural significance.

Why is it significant?

St Monica's Catholic Church is historically significant (Criterion A) as the principal Catholic Church and centre of Catholic worship at Kangaroo Flat since 1926. The first Mass at Kangaroo Flat was held in

1857 on the site of the present church, then the International Hotel. The association between Catholicism and this part of High Street is reinforced by St Monica's Primary School, located to the north-east of the Station and High streets intersection, on a site originally developed by the Catholic community from the 1860s. It is also of social significance (Criterion G) as the centre of the local Kangaroo Flat Catholic community since 1926, including being the focus of church services and worship. Aesthetically and architecturally (Criterion E) St Monica's is a substantially intact, richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts, and a steeply pitched slate clad roof. It is a vigorous and robustly scaled church, with vivid red brick walling, and distinguished by Gothic Revival elements including copings with crosses at the gable apexes, and a large rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above to the west gable end. Other elements of note include the lancet windows with trefoliated inner frames to the nave; two-stepped side buttresses with cement-rendered offsets; the three-stepped angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with pinnacles to the west gable; the buttressed front porch; and the faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The unusually thick and emphatic extrados surfaces on St Monica's reflect an emphasis on making churches more visible and sturdy in appearance during the 1920s. The subject church is also emphatically processional and demonstrative of the proportionally long churches which predominated in Victorian church architecture during this period. St Monica's, which has not been significantly modified since construction, additionally occupies a prominent location on High Street at the north end of Kangaroo Flat's retail strip.

Recommendations

St Monica's is recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Greater Bendigo Heritage Overlay. The extent of the Overlay is indicated in the above map. The focus of significance is on the 1920s church building, and its presentation to the west and north. The walls should remain unpainted.

External Paint Colours	No
Internal Alterations Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and fences exemptions	No
Victorian Heritage Register	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Incorporated plan	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No

Identified By

Andrew Ward, 1998.

References

J Hattam, *The Church of St. Monica, Kangaroo Flat*, unpublished paper, 1976.

David Horsfall (ed), *Kangaroo Flat, A History, Gold, Goats and Peppercorns*, Back To Committee, 1993.

Andrew Ward *et al*, City of Greater Bendigo Heritage Study (Marong) Study Area, Stage 2, 1998.

Specific:

¹ David Horsfall (ed), *Kangaroo Flat, A History, Gold, Goats and Peppercorns*, Back To Committee, 1993, p. 108.

² Wesley Hammill and Dorothy Wild, *Photographic History of Kangaroo Flat*, Photographic History series, Bendigo, 1994, Volume 2, unpaginated.

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- ³ David Horsfall (ed), *Kangaroo Flat, A History, Gold, Goats and Peppercorns*, Back To Committee, 1993, pp. 108-09.
- ⁴ Measurements cited in J Hattam, *The Church of St. Monica, Kangaroo Flat*, unpublished paper, 1976.
- ⁵ Miles Lewis (ed., contrib.), *Victorian Churches*, National Trust, Melbourne, 1991, pp. 76 item 109 (Malvern), 93 item 162 (Bairnsdale), 103 item 202 (Benalla).
- ⁶ Miles Lewis (ed., contrib.) *Victorian Churches*, National trust, Melbourne, 1991, p. 148 item 377.