

Name	Former McKay farmhouse	Reference in 1998 Marong Study	R9
Address	3536 Elmore-Raywood Road, at Oxleys Road intersection, Raywood	Map reference	VicRoads 44 E2
Building type	Private residence	Survey date	August 2010. Note: access to the site was not permitted. The survey was limited to views from Oxleys Road.
Date of construction	Built by 1864; extended c. 1916	Recommendation	Include in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay.
Significance	The former McKay farmhouse is of local historical and aesthetic/architectural significance.		



West elevation, viewed from Oxleys Road. The c. 1864 brick dwelling is pictured left. The larger weatherboard structure was relocated from the nearby New Nil Desperandum Mine in c. 1916.



Left: Aerial view, 2010, with the historic farmhouse highlighted (Source: City of Greater Bendigo). Right: Proposed Heritage Overlay map. The subject site is designated R09. The extent of the HO boundary is indicative only.

Intactness Good ✓ Fair Poor

History

Nathaniel McKay occupied the original brick dwelling at the McKay farmhouse by 1864, the year after the discovery of alluvial gold by Joseph Woodward on the edge of nearby Thunder Plains.¹ The humble property was almost certainly the birthplace of Hugh Victor McKay (1865-1926), inventor of the Sunshine harvester and one of Australia's most successful industrialists.²

Hugh McKay was the fifth of 12 children born to Nathaniel McKay and his wife Mary. Nathaniel McKay was an Irish settler who had been a stonemason and a miner before becoming a small farmer at Raywood. In the early 1870s the family moved to a selection at Drummartin, north-east of Raywood. Hugh grew up to become an efficient ploughman and was manager of the Drummartin farm by the age of 18. He used a reaper and binder and later a stripper on his father's holding where, with other members of his family, he designed and built a machine that would gather, thresh and clean the grain as it went through the crop. It was successfully trialled on the farm in February 1884. Hugh McKay subsequently built machines for sale in Ballarat and from 1906 in Braybrook (later Sunshine). McKay built up the largest agricultural implement factory in the southern hemisphere. He was noted for his stand on unionism and the wages board regulations established by Victorian Premier Allan McLean in 1900.³

The later timber section of the farmhouse, facing the Elmore-Raywood Road, was relocated from the New Nil Desperandum mine on Lincoln Street, Raywood (Heritage Inventory number H7724-0208). The New Nil Desperandum was the town's last quartz reef mine, closing in 1916.⁴ The property was originally a mine manager's house and may have been the home of Mr R Eddy, manager of the New Nil Desperandum.

Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes

Victoria's themes and sub-themes:

- 4.1: Living off the land
- 4.3: Grazing and raising livestock
- 4.5: Gold mining

Description & Integrity

The former McKay farmhouse occupies a large landholding at the corner of the Elmore-Raywood Road and Oxleys Road, approximately two kilometres east of Raywood. The property includes multiple farm outbuildings and two dwellings, being the original property (built by 1864 and extended c. 1916) and a smaller mid-twentieth century property. The original property, which is the subject of this assessment, is located at the north end of the driveway.

The historic dwelling consists of two elements. The original c. 1864 component, facing Oxleys Road to the north is a small brick structure with rendered walls. It has a hipped roof clad with corrugated galvanised sheet metal and two brick chimneys. There is a timber posted verandah to the west and north, enclosed by a sheet metal balustrade. There is a single door to the west elevation, a double hung window with glazing bars, and an addition extending from the north-east corner. The 1864 building is effectively obscured from view by additions and the return verandah.

The property was extended, presumably after 1916, by the addition of a weatherboard house from the New Nil Desperandum mine at Raywood. The latter building is also a single-storey structure, on a square plan, and is turned 'side-on' to the earlier building. It has a hipped roof, with two lesser hips, clad with corrugated galvanised sheet steel, and two brick chimneys. A bull nosed post supported verandah with a ladder frame frieze is attached at the south end, facing the Elmore-Raywood Road. The west elevation has a double hung sash window with a pair of panes to each sash. The detail of the elevation beneath the verandah is not available. This building is connected to the original property by a narrow skillion roofed timber linking element.

A row of trees, possibly a wind break, is planted close to the south verandah of the timber addition. Trees are also planted to the east, obscuring views from the driveway.

Comparative Analysis

In its simple materials and humble scale the original 1864 farmhouse compares with dwellings built all over Victoria during the early years of settlement. The former mine manager's house, relocated to the McKay farm house presumably after 1916, is a weatherboard structure whose planning and form also appears typical of the late nineteenth century. While neither building is necessarily distinguished, the combination of the two, and their survival here in an (apparently) externally intact form is of some note.

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

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

The former McKay farmhouse near Raywood, built from c. 1864, is historically significant as the birth place of Hugh Victor McKay (1865-1926), inventor of the Sunshine harvester and one of Australia's most successful industrialists. The McKay family occupied the property prior to moving to a selection at Drummartin in the early 1870s. The original 1864 component of the property is also significant for its capacity to recall the earliest phase of settlement at Raywood following the gold strike at Thunder Plains in 1863. The property was extended in the early twentieth century through the addition of the former manager's residence from the nearby New Nil Desperandum mine, which was Raywood's last quartz reef mine, closing in 1916.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City the 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.

The original farmhouse, built c. 1864, is a structure of simple materials and humble scale with limited architectural pretension, typical of many rural dwellings built all over Victoria during the early years of settlement in the 1850s-60s. The former mine manager's house, relocated to the McKay farm house presumably after 1916, is a weatherboard structure whose planning and form are also typical of late nineteenth century design. While neither buildings are necessarily distinguished, the combination of the two, and their survival here in an (apparently) externally intact form is of some note.

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

N/A

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.

N/A

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.

The former McKay farmhouse is significant as the birth place of Hugh Victor McKay (1865-1926), inventor of the Sunshine harvester and one of Australia's most successful industrialists. The McKay family occupied the property prior to moving to a selection at Drummartin in the early 1870s.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The former McKay farmhouse consists of two elements: the original c. 1864 component, facing Oxleys Road to the west, and a weatherboard addition to the south, which is believed to have been added after 1916. The original building is a small brick structure with rendered walls. It has a hipped roof clad with corrugated galvanised sheet metal and two brick chimneys to the north. There is a timber posted verandah to the west and north, enclosed by a sheet metal balustrade. The c. 1916 addition is also a single-storey structure, on a square plan. It has a hipped roof, with two lesser hips, clad with corrugated galvanised sheet steel, and two brick chimneys. A bull nosed post supported verandah with a ladder frame frieze is attached at the south end. The 1864 dwelling was the birth place of Hugh Victor McKay (1865-1926), inventor of the Sunshine harvester and one of Australia's most successful industrialists.

How is it significant?

The former McKay farmhouse is of local historical and aesthetic/architectural significance.

Why is it significant?

The former McKay farmhouse (built c. 1864 and extended c. 1916) at the corner of the Elmore-Raywood Road and Oxleys Road is of local historical and aesthetic/architectural significance. It is historically significant (Criteria A and H) as the birthplace of Hugh Victor McKay (1865-1926), inventor of the Sunshine harvester and one of Australia's most successful industrialists. The McKay family occupied the property prior to moving to a selection at Drummartin in the early 1870s. The original 1864 component of the property is also significant for its capacity to recall the earliest phase of settlement at Raywood following the gold strike at Thunder Plains in 1863. The property was extended in the early twentieth century through the addition of the former manager's residence from the nearby New Nil Desperandum mine, which was Raywood's last quartz reef mine, closing in 1916. The former McKay farmhouse near Raywood is also significant for its capacity to demonstrate (Criterion D) characteristics of relatively humble twentieth century dwellings. The original farmhouse, built c. 1864, is a structure of simple materials and small scale with limited architectural pretension, typical of many rural dwellings built all over Victoria during the early years of settlement in the 1850s-60s. The former mine manager's house, relocated to the McKay farm house presumably after 1916, is a weatherboard structure whose planning and form are also typical of late nineteenth century design. While neither buildings is necessarily distinguished in its own right, the combination of the two, and their survival here in an (apparently) externally intact form is of some note.

Recommendations

The property is recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Greater Bendigo Heritage Overlay. The extent of the Overlay is indicated above, however, the focus of significance is on the (c. 1864) original dwelling and the weatherboard addition relocated here in c.1916. Given this focus, the extent of the Heritage Overlay could be reduced to cover these structures and the setback to Elmore-Raywood Road. Given the historical significance of the property, as the birthplace of Hugh Victor McKay, consideration could also be given to introducing a plaque to this effect in an appropriate location on the property boundary or entrance.

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

Ken Arnold, *Bendigo its Environs, The Way it Was*, Volume 1, Crown Castleton Publishers, 2003.

Marie H Manning (ed), *Back-To Raywood and District Souvenir Booklet*, 1973.

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

Specific:

- ¹ Shire of Marong rate book, 1864, cited in citation for 'McKay Farm House,' Andrew Ward *et al*, City of Greater Bendigo Heritage Study (Marong) Study Area, Stage 2, 1998.
- ² John Lack's entry 'McKay, Hugh Victor (1865 - 1926)' in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 10, Melbourne University Press, 1986, pp 291-294, notes that Hugh Victor McKay was born at Raywood on 21 August 1865.
- ³ John Lack, 'McKay, Hugh Victor (1865 - 1926)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 10, Melbourne University Press, 1986, pp 291-294.
- ⁴ Pers comm., Mrs Oxley, long-time Raywood resident and then owner of the property, interview with Andrew Ward and Ray Wallace, 6 August, 1998, cited in citation for 'McKay Farm House,' Andrew Ward *et al*, City of Greater Bendigo Heritage Study (Marong) Study Area, Stage 2, 1998.