

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name Oubuilding
Address 45 Westblade Street MIA MIA **Grading** 2008 Local
Building Type Private studio/outbuilding
Assessment by Context Pty Ltd



Recommended Heritage Protection VHR No HI No PS Yes

Architectural Style Victorian Period (1851-1901)
Vernacular

Maker / Builder Unknown

Integrity

High

History and Historical Context

History of the Shire of Strathfieldsaye

The land around the former Shires of Strathfieldsaye and McIvor had a long history prior to the arrival of Europeans. The Jaara Jaara people are the original inhabitants of the area.

The area around Port Phillip was explored by Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor General of New South Wales, and a large party in 1836, on the homeward leg of a journey to Portland Bay. Impressed by what he perceived as the bounty of

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the land, Mitchell named the area *Australia Felix*.^[1]

The Port Phillip district was opened up for settlement soon thereafter, and much of the land in the Western districts of Victoria, including the former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye, was subsequently dominated by a series of pastoral runs. Most of the area around the town of Axedale and the numerous small towns in its vicinity was licensed to David Jennings as part of the Campaspe Plains run. The run covered an area of more than 144,900 acres and was populated with an estimated 12,000 sheep. A portion of Campaspe Plains was licensed to A. Jennings and George Playne in 1840 and the 67,000 acre station became known as Axedale. In the coming decade the holders of the license changed a number of times. By the time the leasehold over the land was cancelled in 1865, the run had greatly reduced in size.^[2]

Following the cancellation of leasehold, land holdings were of a smaller scale and pastoralists were gradually overtaken by farmers. The discovery of gold at Bendigo and the surrounding areas changed the face of the district and brought about new patterns of settlement and expansion. William John Bulling claimed to be the first man to discover gold at McIvor, and he was granted a £400 reward for the find. By 1853, over one hundred prospectors had assembled at Wild Duck Creek in the hopes of striking it rich. This number expanded the following year, and included some 2,000 Chinese immigrants.^[3]

The Strathfieldsaye Road District was proclaimed in the Government Gazette on the 12th August 1861, and encompassed within it the parishes of Axedale, Strathfieldsaye, Eppalock, Mandurang, Sedgwick and Lyell.^[4] The process of election of the board was punctuated by rivalries between Catholic and Protestant faiths, a characteristic of the district which infiltrates much of its history. Strathfieldsaye met the criterion prescribed to become a Shire in 1863, a transition that was officially proclaimed on the 17th September of that year.^[5]

In 1864, Strathfieldsaye Shire was divided into three wards; Mandurang, Strathfieldsaye and Axedale.^[6]

History of Mia Mia

Mia Mia was originally known as Miami, which developed in conjunction with the settlement at Heathcote. The small postal township developed in conjunction with the land around it, that was gradually taken up for agricultural and pastoral pursuits. Mia Mia shared in some of the benefits of the gold rushes, and a number of mines were established in the vicinity of the town. The industry provided for the establishment of a number of hotels, which found the majority of their clientele in association with the mines. The town was laid out just prior to the first land sales, which occurred in 1860.

History of outbuilding, 45 Westblade Street, Mia Mia

The outbuilding at 45 Westblade Street is built on part of allotment 7 of Section 2 in the Township of Mia Mia (formerly Parish of Spring Plains) that was granted by the Crown to Hugh McDonell on 17 January 1865 (a noted on the Town of Mia Mia, Parish of Spring Plain map).^[7] McDonell was the holder of significant lands in the region, but this allotment covered a mere one rood, 32 perches and was not a substantial contribution to his holdings. He purchased two other town allotments of the same size (8 and 10) that same day. After McDonell's death in 1868, Catherine McDonell, his widow, became the owner of the land. She mortgaged it to George Christian in 1878, and he is listed as the owner of the property by August of 1880. Christian was a civil engineer, and the holder of a number of adjacent properties to the McDonell land. The acquisition of this property brought his total holding to just over 13 acres.^[8]

Christian sold the entirety of his parcel of land to Henry James and Marion Speed in 1885. The Speeds were graziers and pioneers of the district. The Speeds continued to expand their allotment, and by 1889 it covered a total area of 35 acres. After taking out a mortgage on the property, the Speeds sold it to William Fleming, a grazier, on the 9th June 1903.^[9] The building was most likely constructed using farm labour and local stone, and given the Speeds' significant land holdings in the district, it is likely that they had the funds at their disposal to finance such a project. Community

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consultation has revealed that the outbuilding was at one stage connected to power. The building is also thought to have been renovated, and a chimney removed.[10]

William O'Sullivan bought the property on the 6th March 1905.[11] This marked the beginning of a long association as the O'Sullivan family held the land for more than the next fifty years. O'Sullivan was also a grazier. After his death, the property was owned by Jeremiah O'Sullivan. He died in 1949, and his widow, together with Gerald O'Sullivan, held the property. Mary O'Sullivan became the sole owner in 1950, and after her death in 1958, William Gerald O'Sullivan and Jeremiah O'Sullivan are listed as the owners.[12]

[1] Randell, J. O. (1985). *McIvor: A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote*, Shire of McIvor, p. 1.

[2] Spreadborough, Robert and Anderson, Hugh (1983). *Victorian Squatters*, Red Rooster Press, Ascot Vale, p. 150.

[3] Spreadborough & Anderson (1983), p. 31.

[4] Hewat, Tim (1983), *Bridge Over Troubled Waters, A History of the Shire of Strathfieldsaye*, Shire of Strathfieldsaye, Victoria, pp. 11 - 12.

[5] Hewat, Tim (1983), p. 18.

[6] Hewat, Tim (1983), p. 107.

[7] Town of Miami (Mia Mia), Parish of Spring Plain map, M110, July 1934; Certificate of Title, Vol. 241, Fol. 024.

[8] Certificate of Title, Vol. 241, Fol. 024.

[9] Certificate of Title, Vol. 2186, Fol. 173.

[10] Targeted community consultation.

[11] Certificate of Title, Vol. 2186, Fol. 173.

[12] Certificate of Title, Vol. 2186, Fol. 173.

Primary sources

Certificates of Title, Vol. 241, Fol. 024; Vol. 2186, Fol. 173.

Targeted community consultation

Secondary sources

Hewat, Tim (1983), *Bridge Over Troubled Waters, A History of the Shire of Strathfieldsaye*, Shire of Strathfieldsaye, Victoria

Randell, J. O. (1985). *McIvor: A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote*, Shire of McIvor

Spreadborough, Robert and Anderson, Hugh (1983). *Victorian Squatters*, Red Rooster Press, Ascot Vale

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

4.0 Transforming the land

4.4 Farming

Description

Physical Description

45 Westblade Street comprises a small bluestone outbuilding and more modern house. The bluestone outbuilding appears to be the earlier. The stone outbuilding was probably used for a farm store or workshop indicated by the door placed at the end of the building. The door appears to be original. The remains of the timber framed casement sash windows are still in evidence. Corrugated iron has been placed over a timber shingle roof. The shingle roof places this building more firmly into the McDonnell ownership of the 1860s or earlier. The stonemasonry is random coursed rubble and the sills and lintels are of large rough cut stone blocks. The interior has a fireplace, although there is no evidence of a chimney on the exterior. The interior has been fitted out with racks and shelves.

The main house is not of interest.

Physical Condition

Fair

Conservation Policy

Guidelines (Specific)

The following specific conservation actions are recommended, should the opportunity arise:

- Repairing door and window joinery to ensure the bluestone building is secure.

Comparative Analysis

Small bluestone outbuildings are relatively common in the study area and many still survive.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The outbuilding at 45 Westblade Street, Mia Mia, including all of the fabric of the bluestone outbuilding is significant. The main house is not of interest.

How is it significant?

The outbuilding is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

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Why is it significant?

45 Westblade Street comprises an outbuilding on land granted to Hugh McDonell in 1865. Historically, the outbuilding is also notable for its association with the O'Sullivan family who held the property from 1905 until at least 1958. *Criterion A*

The bluestone outbuilding appears to be the earliest built on the site. Originally constructed of local bluestone, it may have been used as a shearing shed, farm store or workshop. The building retains an original door and the remains of the timber framed casement sash windows are still in evidence. Of particular interest is the timber shingle roof which has been covered with corrugated iron. The building has been altered, and a chimney removed. The interior fireplace is extant and racks and shelves have been fitted. *Criterion D*

Assessment Against Criteria

HERCON CRITERIA

Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion A*

Possession of uncommon rare or endangers aspects of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion B*

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion C*

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments. *Criterion D*

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. *Criterion E*

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

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

Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history. *Criterion H*

Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls

No

Internal Alteration Controls

No

Tree Controls

No

Fences & Outbuildings

Yes

Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted

No

Incorporated Plan

Yes

Aboriginal Heritage Place

No

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that 45 Westblade Street, Mia Mia be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the Greater City of Bendigo Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown above. The extent of registration is to be defined by a map. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.' It is also recommended that the neighbouring property woolshed and outbuilding be assessed as a future piece of work.