

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name Manse
Address 17 Valley Road MIA MIA **Grading** 2008 Local
Building Type Presbytery/Rectory/ Vicarage/Manse
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

Altered

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

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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 and 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.

Mia Mia and Redesdale were two adjacent townships formed along the sectarian divide, with Redesdale predominantly populated by those of Irish descent who were Roman Catholic, and Mia Mia with those of Scots descent who were predominantly Presbyterian.

History of Manse, 17 Valley Road, Mia Mia

The Manse at 17 Valley Road was constructed between 1884 and 1886. Ewen Matheson's store was bought in 1886^[7], and the Pastor at the time, Rev. H.J Robertson began fundraising efforts for the project. The Kyneton Guardian published a poem, apparently written by school master Jas. Davies, on the methods and difficulties involved in the effort:

The good folk there are casting round

For means to draw in each stray pound

To build a manse; alas, they've found

The hens refuse to lay!

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

A cake fair would be just the thing

To bring the needed bawbees in

Suggested some; but there's the sting

The hens refuse to lay!" [8]

These fundraising events were eventually successful, and James Scambler built a brick structure on the site for the cost of £510.[9] After its successful construction, the first minister to reside in the manse was Rev. Robertson. [10]

The manse grounds were beautified on a tree planting day in 1888, as reported in the Kyneton Guardian on July 21 of that year: "A stranger passing the Manse about 4pm would have been surprised to see a large assemblage of young ladies and gentlemen. Upon closer scrutiny it would have been observed that each young lady in turn advanced to a different point in the Manse grounds carrying a tree, followed by a young gentleman, who carefully put the earth around the plant while she held it upright."

Additional rooms were added in 1898 by builder Robert Russell at a cost of £86. In 1923 the stables were demolished and replaced with a store room and garage.[11] A bore and windmill was donated in 1926 by the Federal Secretary Mr Norman Heart to provide a 'plentiful supply of good water [which] gladdens the heart of every gardening minister'. [12] Telephone services were added in 1927, along with a septic system and electricity generating plant in 1950.[13]

[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] Ross, J,(1972), p 36

[8] Kyneton Guardian, date unknown, as in Ross, J,(1972), p 36

[9] Ross, J,(1972), p 36

[10] Ross, J,(1972), p 36

[11] Ross, J,(1972), p 36

[12] Ross, J,(1972), p 36

[13] Ross, J,(1972), p 36

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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

Ross, J, (1972) *Mia Mia Presbyterian Church, 1872-1972: the first 100 years*, Centenary Booklet Committee

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

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

6.0 Building towns, cities and the garden state

6.5 Living in country towns

Description

Physical Description

Although some distance from the church with which it is associated, there is a visual connection across a valley from the Mia Mia Uniting Church to the former manse. Several other manses in the Heathcote area have either been demolished or relocated away from their churches. There are few examples of this type of building in the study area.

17 Valley Road is a typical Victorian vernacular house were it not for the different plan that had the entry from the side, set within a brick porch that takes up part of the return verandah. The corridor is planned transversely across the house. The house is square in plan and has a typical 'M' shaped roof with a central chimney. The four main rooms are added to by a timber framed and weatherboard skillion roof extension to the rear. The verandah has a slight convex profile to it and the verandah posts are turned in the manner of many late nineteenth and early twentieth century ones. The bricks are plain face in the distinctive orange red of the locality. The sash windows are plain with no glazing bars and there is no verandah frieze, although this may have been removed. The sole decoration is confined to a leaded glass window in the porch which is rather elaborate compared to the rest of the house . An interior view from a recent real estate photo (2007) shows that the passage is lined with a timber dado, there is an interior archway and the porch window has a art nouveau character.

Physical Condition

Good

Conservation Policy

Guidelines (Specific)

The following specific conservation actions are recommended, should the opportunity arise: None specified.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The brick manse constructed c1884 -1886 at 17 Valley Road, Mia Mia is significant. The timber additions at the rear of the manse are not significant. The mature trees adjacent to the house are also significant.

How is it significant?

The manse at 17 Valley Road, Mia Mia is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

The manse at 17 Valley Road, Mia Mia is associated with the Mia Mia Church and its minister Rev.H.J Robertson. As a predominantly Scots Presbyterian township, the church was an important institution and considerable effort was expended by the parishioners to house the minister in a suitable manner. The trees surrounding the house are of historical significance as their planting was carried out by the parishioners to beautify the grounds. *Criterion A*

There are few nineteenth century manses in the study area, and some have been relocated. 17 Valley Road maintains a connection to the church it is associated with despite being some distance away. It is visible from the church grounds.. *Criterion E*

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*

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	Yes
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	No
Incorporated Plan	Yes
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that the former manse at 17 Valley Road, Mia Mia be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown above. The extent of registration is the whole of the property as defined by the title boundaries. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.'