

HERITAGE PLACE REPORT

Greater Bendigo City



Name House and Former Stables and the brick boundary wall at 72 Queen Street and 52 Edward Street, Bendigo

Reference

Address 72 Queen Street and 52 Edward Street, Bendigo VIC 3550

Property No: 175871

Building Type: Residential building and former stables now converted into commercial buildings

Map Reference

Survey date

July 2012 (external and internal inspection)

Recommendation

Include in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay

Heritage Status:

Hermes Number

Precinct No within DDO5

Significance The residence and associated former brick stable building are of local historical, social and aesthetic/architectural significance to the City of Greater Bendigo



stables



wall

Heritage Study

Thematic Environmental Study

Author

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Mandy Jean

Year

2012

Grading

Local

Designer/Architect

Possibly W. Beebe

Maker/Builder owner

William Webb JP owner of Webb & Co Flour Mill

Architectural Style

Late Bendigo Boom style

Date of Construction

1904

Type of Place

Hermes Number

Heritage Place Report

Place History

History of the Area

The early history of the area in the vicinity of Edward and Queen Streets is associated with water and flour mills, public baths and laundries, which centred on Bendigo Creek and clustered around the centre of the town. The development of the land is a testament to the local histories of Bendigo and the micro-politics of the place.

The subject site at 52 Edward Street and 72 Queen Street were once part of the same Crown Land allotment that was leased by Mary Donohue, an Irish émigré, who is first recorded as arriving in Bendigo in 1865. Although she is married, the land is leased from the Crown in her name and her profession as a laundress is recorded. This pattern of land development is unusual and particular to Bendigo and has resulted in the existing residential development within the centre of the city. Prior to 1860s land was alienated around the city centres by competitive auction at a starting price of 1 pound. This system as Charles Fahey argues favoured the wealthy as there was fierce competition for land and land prices were high, but in Bendigo competition was low until the mining boom peaked in the early 1870s.¹ By 1867, when Mary Donohue purchased the land, the holders of Miner's Rights had unique rights to continue to retain their leased land for a low annual rental or alternatively they had first right to purchase their leases, without competition.

For the first 40 years of the site's history from 1864 to 1904, the land was used as a laundry business operated by Mrs Mary Donohue, who also lived there. During the operation of the business other laundresses, were recorded as working in the business, Mrs Martin and Mrs McLaughlin in 1865-1866.² Access to water was nearby and had the added advantage of being near the town baths located approximately 50 metres away in Bath Lane.

Mary Donohue first leased the Crown Land Allotment parcel PT CA 21 C Section 29C in 1865 presumably under a Miner's Right (Sandhurst Rates Book 10, no 1342). The land is recorded in the Parish Plans as being purchased on 13th May 1867 by Mary Donohue, who is also recorded in the rates book at the time as working as a laundress on the site, in Queen Street. The land and house had a rateable annual value of 9 pounds then. In 1878 the land is registered as being on the corner of Queen and Edward Streets. The naming of Edward Street after a local mining speculator and director of the Bendigo Electric Company occurred after the 1860s. The rateable value of the property increases to 20 pounds and remains fairly constant, fluctuating marginally down to \$16 until 1904.

¹ Charles Fahey (2005) 'Flour Milling in the Bendigo District', in *Bendigo at Work. An Industrial History*, editors, M. Butcher and M.J. Collins, National Trust of Australia, Bendigo Branch, pp 105-114.

² VPRS Series No, 16267, Sandhurst and Bendigo Rate Books, Books 9 to 48, Bendigo Regional Archives Centre, BRAC, accessed July 2012 by Mandy Jean.

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In 1904 the new owner of the land is William Webb, J. P., who owns a house at a rateable annual value of 50 pounds on the corner of Edward and Queen Street and a substantial two storey stables in Edward Street, both comprising the subject land, at an annual rateable value of 30 pounds. The land now consist of two parts of PT CA21C Section 29, the actual formal separation and subdivision of the land appears to have occurred in 1936 under instrument 1622015 11/08/1936, according to the Title of the land. Both, the 1904 stables, substantial red brick boundary wall and 1904 late Bendigo boom style house all remain intact on the site.

The gold rush to the central goldfields in the 1850s initiated a huge demand for grain for horses and wheat and flour to feed the new population. The population in Bendigo grew from 13,020 in 1861 to 36,000 in 1881. While according to the Bendigo census report in 1861 there were only 14 farmers in the Loddon district, by 1871 there were 1,760 farmers and 4,656 farmers by 1881.³ The operation and establishment of flour mills was likely to yield high returns for investors. In Victoria in the mid 1870s there were between 150-160 mills but by 1891 this had dropped to 90, and a further 20 left the business by 1901 and by 1986 only 5 were in operation. The house and stables at Edward and Queen Streets represents the zenith of the lucrative returns made possible during the flour milling days in Bendigo.

The earliest mill, the Sandhurst Steam Flour Mill was built in Lyttleton Terrace in 1857 by John Buckley, in 1867 J. B. Loridan and A. Lanson established a four storey flour mill, the Adelaide Flour Mill in High Street, and two of the W. Degraives flour mills were built n Hargreaves (1867) and Wills Street (1873). Charles Fahey writes that of the industrial concerns in Bendigo during the 1870s the flour mills were among the most highly capitalized. Mill owners invested their money in mining, becoming part of the Bendigo elite mine speculators and by the end of the quartz boom in the late 1870s found themselves in financial difficulty. The J. Buckley and J. B. Loridan mills were insolvent by 1879 and the W. Degraives mill was purchased by William Webb.

William Webb J.P. was born in London in 1840, started work in an engineering firm as a clerk, before moving to Melbourne Australia in the 1850s. He worked initially in the large mill offices of W. Degraives & Company on his arrival in Melbourne. He was appointed manager of the Kyneton mills before, transferring to the Degraives & Co Bendigo mills, where he worked for 7 years. After a long tour of Japan, China, India and the Phillipines he returned to Bendigo in 1871 to become a partner in the Degraives & Co, Hargeaves mill and then purchased the milling property. In 1878 when his competitors were going out of business he built his own business the four storey mill at the corner of Lyttleton and Queen Street to the design of the architect Joseph Martin Brady with modifications by Webb and his miller/millwright John Butcher. William Webb was gazetted as a JP in 1892 and became a leading member of the Zenith Lodge, a Masonic lodge and very successful mining speculator. In 1904 at the age of 64 years old he purchased the property on the corner of Edward and

³ Charles Fahey (2005) 'Flour Milling in the Bendigo District', in *Bendigo at Work. An Industrial History*, editors, M. Butcher and M.J. Collins, National Trust of Australia, Bendigo Branch, pp 105-114.

Queen Street from Mrs Mary Donoghue and built a substantial red brick property, a house and two storey stables which were surrounded by high red brick boundary walls. In 1909 he at the age of 69 years he died.⁴

Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes

Victoria's themes and sub-themes:

5.6: Entertaining and socialising

5.8: Working

Description

There is uncertainty about the possible architect, who designed the very ornate single storey late Bendigo boom style house and attached stables but it appears in the style of William Beebe, Bendigo's most prominent architect of the time, who trained under W.C. Vahland. His approach to design was influenced by the Picturesque Art Nouveau style and is highly ornate with decorative render details and finely crafted timber fretwork to the verandah and window hoods and finials. The main house is of a hybrid Federation style, typical of Bendigo. It is asymmetrical in plan with a projecting gable front room and ornate cast iron verandah. The decorative details shows borrowing from a number of different influences such as the French Second Empire, Edwardian and European Art Nouveau styles, all key architectural motifs present in typical Bendigo architectural style described by Andrew Ward in the Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study and regarded as a very good example of a late Bendigo boom style example. The property, residence and stables have been identified in the thematic environmental heritage study.

The two storey red brick stable is a substantial structure built on the property line with high brick masonry walls that extend around the site as a boundary wall on the north west and north east side. The boundary wall extends across the boundary line of the property at 72 Queen Street. The former Webb residence at 72 Queen Street and its rear outbuilding is constructed of the same bricks and displays the same brick details as the stable block, clearly they were built at the same time by the same builder to the same architect's design and formed part of a large impressive residential complex.

The stables have a skillion roof and projecting end brick eaves. The upper level is accessed from an external timber stair case and door on the south-east side and there is also an internal stair case on the opposite, north-west side of the building. The segmental arched upper windows and half circle arched former hay loft door on the first level are outlined in polychrome cream brick.

⁴ Bendigo Advertiser obituary 1909 13 May

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Integrity.

The external integrity of the buildings generally is fairly high. The residence is totally intact and structurally sound and well maintained. The stables have been altered at ground level. It is not known whether this is an adaptation of a pre-existing original skillion section, which appears likely. The lower section of the front external walls has been altered and modified to accommodate the operation of the Bicycle Shop. It appears from a site inspection of the extent of the original brick walls that there may have been a single storey skillion addition to the stables. This section has now been converted to the shop and the majority of the former internal walls stables stalls and the like removed at ground level. The upper floor remains intact albeit the ceiling has been sprayed with a concrete foam insulation system.

The significant fabric is the main residence, the substantial red brick external walls the stables and boundary walls. These walls are of fine quality and clearly indicate their historic relationship with the adjoining residence.

Physical Conditions

The condition of the external walls and façades is generally good, though some areas of deterioration are associated with rainwater gutters pipes and drainage system.

Comparative Analysis

There is a large group of mining speculators residences in Bendigo, which form a distinct Bendigo architectural style and three known residences of grain merchants. This is what defines Bendigo unique architectural and built historic form.

Examples of these latter houses that were owned by mill merchants include the William Webb, JP, house at 72 Queen Street and stables at 52 Edward Street, the subject site, the early 1870s house at 10/12 Bannerman Street house and stables, which is individually protected under the heritage overlay. And the 1930s house at Wills Street owned by Amand Friedrich and Adam Bassemir, who bought the original Desgraves & Co mill in Wills Street from Stewart Scott & Co in circa 1914, previously owned and managed by William Webb. The Bassemir brothers opened the Hygiene Vienna Bakery, which operated until 1970; the former mill is individually listed on the heritage overlay, along with several of the mill workers cottages in Garsed and Wills Streets. Although demolition of this interwar residence was recently approved to allow for replacement by a four storey apartment block, the residence is not comparable to the buildings at 52 Edward and 72 Queen Street.

The stable building is a rare surviving example of an early twentieth century horse and carriage building. It is a reminder of a means of transport and of an industry, which was essential until the twentieth century, and has now completely disappeared. Such buildings associated with horse transport were once extremely common, but few now survive in the city. There are no known other examples of private stables in the centre of Bendigo city.

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Bibliography

Primary Sources

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Assessment Against Criteria

It is recommended that barn, be protected as an item of individual local significance within the heritage overlay of the Bendigo Planning Scheme.

Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history

Criterion B Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion C Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

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

Criterion E Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

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

Criterion G 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 their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

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

Statement of Significance

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What is significant?

The development of the land is a testament to the local histories of Bendigo and the micro-politics of the place associated with water and flour mills, public baths and laundries, which centred on Bendigo Creek and clustered around the centre of the town. For the first 40 years of the site's history from 1864 to 1904, the land was used as a laundry business operated by Mrs Mary Donohue, who also lived there. Mary Donohue arrived in Bendigo in 1864/5 taking out a Crown Allotment lease on the land, later purchasing the land in 1867 and operating a laundry business in which she employed other women, Mrs Martin and Mrs McLaughlin in 1865-1866. Access to water was nearby and had the added advantage of being near the town baths located approximately 50 metres away in Bath Lane. At the time of her death in 1904 the land was purchased by William Webb, a successful flour mill owner and mining speculator.

In Victoria in the mid 1870s there were between 150-160 flour mills. The operation and establishment of flour mills during the gold rush years yielded high returns for investors. Flour mills were among the most highly capitalized industrial concerns in Bendigo. Like other local mill owners, William Webb invested his money in mining, becoming part of the Bendigo elite mine speculators. But unlike many others, faced with financial difficulty at the end of the quartz boom in the late 1870s, Webb prospered building the four storey Webb & Co flour mill on the corner of Queen and Williamson Streets in 1878. The J. Buckley and J. B. Loridan mills were insolvent by 1879 as too were the W. Degraes mills, which were purchased by William Webb. By 1901, Webb owned one of the few country flour mill businesses that still were in operation. The house and stables at Edward and Queen Streets represents the zenith of the lucrative returns made possible during the flour milling days in Bendigo. William Webb who arrived in Melbourne in 1850s, worked as manager and owner for over 50 years in the biggest flour mills in the state is regarded as an old pioneer a '50ers'. His Bendigo Boom style house, which he built at the end of his career, is an important testament to the changing values and tastes of early migrants to the colony, which were inspired by the new Federation of Australia movement in the early 20th century.

William Webb commissioned the construction of a substantial Bendigo architectural boom style villa with attached two-storey stables at 72 Queen and 52 Edward Street in inner Bendigo city. The work is in the style of William Beebe, Bendigo's most prominent architect of the time, although this is not confirmed. The red brick stables, high boundary walls and adjoining residence form one complex which is visually prominent and adjacent Hunter House in Queen Street, a two-storey mine speculators mansion. The two buildings form an historic group of highly ornate Bendigo boom style residences complete with stables.

How is it significant?

The residence at 72 Queen Street and former red brick two storey stables at 52 Edward Street and brick boundary walls are of local historical, social and aesthetic/architectural significance to the City of Greater Bendigo as a complex, which is considered rare.

Why is it significant?

Criterion A *Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history*

The residence and former two-storey stable and boundary walls are historically significant (Criterion A) for its history as a part of a substantial residential complex built in 1904 by the wealthy flour mill owner William Webb, J.P., who was also a successful mine speculator and had a long 50 year association since the early 1850s with some of the major flour mill businesses in Victoria.

The site has historic significance as it demonstrates the arbitrary character and changing fortunes of the city as it developed from a new gold rush town to a large regional centre in the 20th century. The early history of the site illustrates the story of Mary Donohue and the opportunities available to her to establish a thriving laundry business in the 1860s and remain there for over 40 years.

Criterion B *Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history*

The red brick residence and adjoining stables and high boundary walls form one complex which is visually prominent and adjacent Hunter House in Queen Street, a two-storey mine speculators mansion. The two buildings complex both built by highly successful Bendigo mine speculators form a strong visual historic group of highly ornate Bendigo boom style residences complete with stables, which are rare in the centre of Bendigo.

Criterion E *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.*

The house and stables at Edward and Queen Streets represents the zenith of the lucrative returns made possible during the flour milling days in Bendigo. The complex design of residence and stables demonstrates influence by the Picturesque Art Nouveau and Federation style of architecture is a very good example of the distinct hybrid Bendigo boom style. The decorative details shows borrowing from a number of different influences such as the French Second Empire, Edwardian and European Art Nouveau styles, all key architectural motifs present in typical Bendigo architectural style. The former red brick stables, high boundary walls and adjoining residence are of aesthetic/architectural significance (Criterion E) for their construction techniques in brick and architectural design.

The residence and former red brick stables and high boundary walls meets the threshold of aesthetic value at a local level for community held value due to its prominence as a historic and aesthetic element of the streetscape, being located at a principal road intersection in the centre of Bendigo city.

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

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The residence and former red brick stables and high boundary walls is of local social significance (Criterion G and Criterion H), to Bendigo as part of intact residential complex, built in 1904 by the wealthy flour mill owner William Webb, J.P., who was also a successful mine speculator. He had a long association with some of the major mill businesses in Victoria, working in the Desgraves & Co firm in Melbourne in 1850s, later managing the Kyneton mills before, transferring to the Degraives & Co Bendigo mills (2 at Hargreaves and Wills Streets). He later become a partner in the Degraives & Co, Hargeaves mill and purchased the milling property. In 1878 he built his own business the four storey mill at the corner of Lyttleton and Queen Street to the design of the architect Joseph Martin Brady with modifications by Webb and his miller/millwright John Butcher.

William Webb's Bendigo Boom style house and stables, which he built at the end of his career, is an important testament to the changing values and tastes of early migrants to the colony and Bendigo in particular, which were inspired by the new Federation of Australia movement in the early 20th century.

Recommendations

The property of both the residence and stables and boundary wall are recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Greater Bendigo Heritage Overlay.

The recommended extent of Heritage Overlay coverage is indicated in the maps and includes the land of 72 Queen Street and 52 Edward Street.

Conservation Policy Guidelines (Specific)

The overall condition of the heritage values of the heritage buildings and boundary wall is good. Generally the purpose built commercial shop and interiors does not have heritage value and can be removed after photographic recording.

Built Elements

- The focus of significance is on the main historic residence and stables, and the presentation of the building, boundary wall with the side wall of the residence.
- The structure of the former stables can be altered, recycled, adapted and reused. The brick walls and openings should be retained.
- Sufficient space and curtilage should be retained around the residence to allow an appropriate picturesque setting for the presentation of the building as a landmark icon in the streetscape.

Interpretation of heritage Values

Interpretation of heritage values will be a key component for future planning, conservation and management of the site to assist in the appreciation and understanding of the site.

- Interpretation should consider significant historical phases of the site, the significant fabric and archaeological resources, consider public visual access and connections with the adjoining buildings residence and soft treatment ie stepped and recessed edges to nearby medium rise development.