

Heritage Report Pentecost house, now Mornington Toy Library, 8 Albert St, Mornington

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Figure 1 General view, front

History

The following is an extract from the Shire of Mornington Heritage Study 1994:

Early Township Surveys

Mornington township was the focus of the earliest township settlements in the 1850s, despite the fact that Government surveyors also laid out a town plan for Osborne, further down the coast. < Moorhead: 48> Although parts of the central section of Mornington have been altered in recent years to cater for traffic and parking in the retail centre, the layout that was planned in the earliest town map, from the Esplanade to Parry (now Queen), Ross and Franklin Sts extending from Vancouver to Cook Sts remains the same.

The basic configuration of the plan of Osborne township can also still be seen on present day maps, despite the fact that the township was not settled for many years. Osborne Park, for instance, was reserved for public purposes in 1859 and the interesting pattern of three long boulevards, intersected by cross streets and reaching a fan encircling the reserve can still be seen today from the Esplanade to Maude St and from Victoria Crescent to Helena St. The Osborne township plan, using circular drives and a central open space, reflected philosophies about healthy urban design that were popular in the mid-nineteenth century.

Mornington

Early Buildings

The earliest known shop at Schnapper Point was that built by Thomas Allchin commencing in 1859. The Allchins added substantially to this store over the next 13 years, but it still stands at the corner of Albert and Main Sts. Allchin built another building, the Oriental Bank, in the 1870s on the opposite corner. Another building said to date from the 1850-60s is the house 'Warrawee' at 26-28 Strachans Rd built possibly by Robert Byrne who bought the land at the first subdivisional sale in 1854. < GM Francis, 'History of Warrawee', unpub ms>

Community Beginnings

Evidence of the beginnings of a community in the 1860s is to be found in churches and school at Mornington. St Andrew's Presbyterian Church was built on land donated by J. Barrett in Barkly St in 1866-67. It was built by local builder, J. Grover to a design by Mr Webb< *Mornington Leader, St Andrews Church, Mornington, 1866-1966*>.

The Church of England congregation of Mornington built the first section of their church, St Peters, in Queen St in 1860, opening it for its first service in 1861. This church was designed by Leonard Terry. < *St Peters Church Mornington, op cit, p. 9*>

The first school held in the district was said to have been conducted at the house which still stands at 3 Vancouver St in the early 1850s. < *Vision and Realisation*, and Vera Mills, personal communication> In 1857 the head teacher of this school, William Armstrong, moved (presumably with his pupils) to an 'undenominational' school erected by the Church of England in Main St, near Ross St. This small wooden school became the Schnapper Point Common School number 567 in the early 1860s.<*Vision and Realisation*> It was not until 1878 that a new two-roomed Government-built school opened in Vale St.< *ibid*> Although far larger now, the Mornington Primary School, with its original buildings, still stands on the same site.

While the early churches and the Vale St school are reminders of early community life in Mornington, a cluster of buildings on the corner of Main St near The Esplanade are evidence that Mornington was early encouraged to develop by the establishment there of local government facilities. In 1860 the Mt Eliza Roads Board was declared with Mornington as its administrative centre, and a court house and lock up were commenced in Main St. < Moorhead: 97> A Post Office was opened on the opposite corner the following year. <*ibid* :99> It was not until 1885 that a Mechanics Institute, an important cultural and community institution, was completed. <*ibid*: 121> Part of this building survives as an adjunct to the Shire Offices today. It was also only in the last decade of the nineteenth century that the Catholics of Mornington built their first church, a timber building, opened in 1897 and superseded in 1910 by a brick St Macartan's.

8 Albert St

The first town lots were created at Schnapper Point (Mornington) in an 1859 plan, set out between Vancouver St, Parry, Franklin and Cook Streets¹.

¹ Moorhead: plate 11

An early subdivision (LP 130) created more west of this first core, making town lots from CAs 19, 23, 23 & parts of 27&28, as surveyed by Robert R Morgan in 1886. Buildings shown on this plan included: a store and stables on town sections 21 & 22, Renison's Hotel on CS 20, Hobsons Hotel at the Vancouver St and Esplanade corner, Post & Telegraph office and court house in the government subdivision, a store at the Parry/Main Streets corner, and a house owned by G Dimock Esq in Albert St. No buildings are shown on the lots offered for sale. The owner of many of these lots was Robert Byrne, agent, who held man

The property at 8 Albert St was on lot 5 of a re-subdivision plan (LP 2515, 1889) of Crown Allotment 28, parish of Moorooduc, County of Mornington. The owner of the land and re-subdivider was Joseph E Worrell, who was then both the Mornington Shire Secretary and a land agent². He sold the newly created lot to Mary Pentecost³.

Mary Martha & William Pentecost

The title for 8 Albert St was first issued to Mary Martha Pentecost (of Albert St) in May 1889., with a 55' 5" frontage to Albert St and a depth of 130'. At the same time she mortgaged the property to Anne CL Walker⁴. It is probable that the house was built at that time⁵.

Mary Jeans had married William Pentecost in 1868 and was the mother of: Sydney (who married Martha McLean in 1897, with many children to follow) , Florence, Eveline, Harold, Frank and Annie⁶ in the period 1870-1879. In the early 1880s, William was described as a labourer and owner-occupier of a house and out-buildings on ½ acre, part of subdivision of lot 6 Schnapper Point⁷

William Edmund Pentecost was a local pioneer, having been on the 1856-7 electoral roll (farmer, Schnapper Point, with land next to the Tanti Hotel, and later a publican) and part of the first Mt Eliza District Roads Board of 1860⁸: he died in 1870, aged 56. His son, William Pentecost was listed in Wise *Victoria Post Office Directories* at Mornington in the 1880s, the only Pentecost listed in the Colony by the 1890s⁹. There is a Pentecost Rd in Mornington North, off the Nepean Highway.

Reuben Richmond Chapman

Isabella & Henry Walker sold the property to Reuben Chapman of Albert St (gentleman) in 1912. Reuben, also described as a gardener, leased it to persons such as F Bell, the property being described in rate books as brick house and land 55'x133' in Albert St¹⁰

² VTO V2407/F309 agent

³ VTO V5726/F126

⁴ James E Walker was the head teacher at Mornington State School from 1883: he married Martha Usher in 1870

⁵ VTO V2195/F843

⁶ Macbeth *Pioneer Index*

⁷ RB1881-2, 1012 West Riding (VPRO).

⁸ Moorhead: 49, 65, 70

⁹ Wise: 1891-2, 1888-9, 1884-5 not listed.

¹⁰ RB 1912-13, 134 South Riding.



Reuben, the son of George & Anna Chapman, died in 1917 aged 66¹¹. After Reuben's death probate was granted to Henrietta Chapman, widow of Tanti Road, and she became the new owner. Two years later she sold the house and land to Alice Edith Johnson a widow of 323 Station Street, Box Hill.

James Arthur Biggs

Alice sold it to James Arthur Biggs, baker of Main St, Mornington in 1923 who was to die seven years later, with probate granted to James AW Biggs & Ethel Maud Elvins of Latrobe Terrace, Geelong, in 1931¹². Meanwhile rate books show intermittent occupation of the house through the late 1920s, with Mrs Maryann Biggs as owner-occupier by c1931: the annual valuation increased from 20 to 35 pounds in the first half of the 1920s¹³.

Description

This double-fronted brick house has a steeply gabled roof clad with corrugated iron and a rebuilt timber-framed front verandah, with a hipped convex roof form also clad with corrugated iron. Two early corbel-top brick chimneys show the original hand-made brick brown colour, since painted or rendered over on the walls below. Local brick maker, Thomas Allchin, is the likely source of these bricks (provided bricks for St Andrews Presbyterian Church in 1866)¹⁴.

Windows are double hung sashes, symmetrically arranged around a 4 panel door with simply panelled top and side lights (some glazing replaced). The openings are supported on segment-arched iron bars.

The verandah floor has been paved with concrete flags but the timber framing has been rebuilt apparently to match the original. The verandah roof is simply

¹¹ Macbeth *Great War Index*

¹² VTO V2195/F843

¹³ RB1925-6, 167; 1930-1, 1724; 1935-6, 850.

¹⁴ See Appendix 2

supported between the wall plate and the bressumer beam, with no rafters except at the hips, in the traditional manner. Verandah posts are stop-chamfered and the curved brackets evocative of 1870s construction: the existing simple timber capitals are symbolic of the original moulded type, still evident on the post set against the wall.

A skillion form addition at the rear is clad with weatherboard (north) and fibre cement sheet (south, west) with detailing typical of the inter-war era. The timber-framed chain-wire front fence is also typical of the inter-war period. New roof plumbing is unrelated.

The house is simply designed and typical of the Victorian-era suburban villa type, as built in rural towns in the Colony. In Mornington it now has few contemporaries in terms of brick construction.

Context

The house is in an old section of the township (1880s) but is now isolated within visually unrelated car parks.

Comparison

The following Victorian-era houses were identified at Mornington for the Shire of Mornington Heritage Study 1992-4 (L=local, R=regional, S=State): see appendix 1 for details. Some are large houses that are not directly comparable to this example: those in bold are directly comparable.

STREET	NUMBER	NAME	DATE	VALUE
Albert Street	017-019	Peninsula Community Health Service	1890c-1900c	L
Barkly Street	107-109	Glenbank, later Andrew Kerr Home for Children	1875	L
Barkly Street	072	Victorian Railways Gate House (demolished)	1890	R
Barkly Street	086		1890c	L
Esplanade	750	Clyde Villa	1869-	R
Esplanade	740-742	Bella Vista (large villa)	1890c	R
Esplanade	797	Glencoe House, now Mulberry (large villa)	1898c-	R
Ross Street	001	St. Peter's Vicarage	1861c, 1880	R
Strachans Road	026	Warrawee	1860c	R
Sunnyside Road	001	Sunnyside, later Morningstar Boys' Home (large villa)	1867-	S
Tanti Avenue	012-14	Sutton Grange (large villa)	1878	S
Tanti Avenue	077	Morvern Manor (large villa)	1889	R

Only three houses are comparable, the Albert St example being later.

Statement of significance (draft)

The house at 8 Albert St, Mornington is locally significant¹⁵ As one of a small number of Victorian-era suburban houses surviving in Mornington, reflecting this early phase of the town's development (criterion A4, B2);

¹⁵ Assessed within the Heritage Overlay practice note (DOI) ranking of either State or Local significance.

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for the association with the early pioneering Pentecost family who were in turn associated with the earliest period of permanent settlement at the town of Schnapper Point (Mornington) and the first local Roads Board (Mt Eliza District).

Appendix 1: comparative examples

STREET	NUMBER	NAME	DATE	VALUE	DESCRIPTION
Albert Street	017-019	Peninsula Community Health Service	1890c	L	This Victorian-era house has been considerably altered, the verandah rebuilt, additions made, and the garden changed.
Barkly Street	107-109	Glenbank, later Andrew Kerr Home for Children	1875	L	This is the former Rev. J A Caldwell home, a two storey, now cemented Italianate style house. It has been altered and added to, and a recently a bullnose profile Edwardian period verandah has been added to the facade. The garden is gone except for two good 'Araucaria heterophylla' specimens which contribute to the house period. This is Mornington's largest private 19th century town residence.
Barkly Street	086		1890c	L	This is a typical Italianate villa of the late 19th century and is among the small group of urban houses from this date in the study area. It has been altered in detail.
Esplanade	740-742	Bella Vista	1890c	R	This hipped roof verandahed villa is finished in unpainted stucco and is in the popular Italianate style of the late 19th century but with high integrity to its construction date, albeit in disrepair. The house is set on a landscaped podium, as viewed from the front, with a cellar beneath the verandah and front room, accessed from the south side. Cement urns ornament the piers to the verandah stair retaining walls. The verandah line extends along three sides of the house (west, south and north) and across a protruding room bay, with a window bay attached. A rear service verandah (between the kitchen and bathroom) matches to ogee profile of the main verandah. There are valuable cast-iron verandah details, using the Angus Maclean patented cement-filled sections, while cement detailing includes quoining, chimney cornices and architraves to openings. Inside the decorative scheme appears to be from the Edwardian period (Lewis tenure) and surviving in most of the main rooms, as expressed in the cornice friezes and timber overmantels

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STREET	NUMBER	NAME	DATE	VALUE	DESCRIPTION
					which have been placed over the four simulated marble timber mantels, probably from the late Victorian-era. An unusual feature is the built-in grained wardrobe or cupboard in the second front room on the south which, by the indentation it makes in the hall, demarcates the main hall from the service hall. There is an early timber picket fence (part), gate, pathway but the overgrown garden has little period content except for a remnant orchard to the south. An early timber stable with a groom's room attached, lies to the east of the house but is in poor repair.
Esplanade	797	Glencoe House, now Mulberry	1898c-	R	This is a double-fronted verandahed timber house showing two major periods of construction, one late 19th century wing of four main rooms and the other early 20th century including a two-storey section. There are some representative interiors. The first core of the house appears to have had a hipped roof and cemented chimneys, symmetrical about the doorway. Ashlar pattern boarding was used for the walls, three-light windows and the door had the typical late Victorian-era side and top lights. Plans prepared by the architects, Bates Peebles & Smart, show elements such as a windmill, well (still there) and stables (demolished) early this century. They also suggest how the first four-room plan (3 bedrooms and a parlour) was extended to the south and east, removing part of the symmetry and replacing one roof hip with a gable facing south. At the rear, a large dining room with a bayed north end was added, next to a vestibule which housed the stair to the added level above. At the rear was a detached servants block, 'motor yard' and garage, and, near the dining room east wall was the windmill{ Armstrong collection}. The verandah was probably rebuilt then in a wider form with a slatted frieze and gabled entry bay, complete with archway. Mulberry is among the larger 19th century urban seaside houses in the area.
Ross	001	St. Peter's	1861c,1880	R	The commemoration plaque in front

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STREET	NUMBER	NAME	DATE	VALUE	DESCRIPTION
Street		Vicarage			of the building notes that the vicarage was between 1863-1867, with 4 bedrooms and a kitchen, as a gift from the Balcombe family of the Briars< Mornington Chamber of Commerce>. The house is stuccoed and comprised of many gabled room bays, with the first section presumably being the L-shape plan around the entrance door. The fret-sawn gable fascias are notable and rare early details of the Gothic Revival Style, as is the pattern-book form of the first stage of the house, the Tudor arched entry, and the chimney form and detail. Subsequent stages have bayed windows but are in a similar style. The garden has little period planting ('Eucalyptus ficifolia' and Monterey cypress) and there are fence remnants. The vicarage relates historically to the nearby civic precinct (court house, post office, bank).
Strachans Road	026	Warrawee	1860c	R	This house has a characteristically early high hipped roof form (slated) with old corbel-top brick chimneys and is built from brick. The verandah has been renovated c1913, presumably when it was purchased by Nunn. Warrawee is one of the area's oldest urban houses. Reputedly the interior also reflects Nunn's occupation with pressed metalwork and retains early joinery such as mantels and timber ceilings{ ibid.}.
Sunnyside Road	001	Sunnyside, later Morningstar Boys' Home	1867-	S	The original buildings are Gothic Revival in style, using cemented brick construction but extensive additions have been carried for the Morningstar Boys' Home use, albeit in matching materials, both to the house and as free-standing buildings. Early aerial views show an ornamental garden set to the west of the old wing{ 1957}. Australian Heritage Commission: 'The two storey stuccoed house is asymmetrically composed with a single storied timber verandah and stucco porch. Steeply pitched slate roofs, prominent chimneys and decorated gable ends with finials, characterise the design. there are stepped eaves, cornices, string courses, quoins, hood moulds and

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STREET	NUMBER	NAME	DATE	VALUE	DESCRIPTION
					castellated parapets{ AHC citation} The landscape setting includes mature trees in surrounding grass paddocks.
Tanti Avenue	012-14	Sutton Grange	1878	S	Sutton Grange is distinguished by its early use of coloured face brick on the peninsula and by its balustraded three-level tower. The brickwork is particularly pertinent to its owner, the brick maker, Thomas Allchin, as is the cantilevering balcony in the tower which was used to observe the owner's shipments to and from Melbourne{ Moorhead,p.60}. The house is two-storey with an elegant one level concave-roof verandah abutting the square tower, with iron posts and friezes. The main roof is hipped, with the general stylistic influence being the Italian Renaissance, with details including eaves brackets. There are locally important to typical plantings include `Ficus macrophylla', Italian cypress but otherwise little period garden remains.
Tanti Avenue	077	Morvern Manor	1889	R	The house has Queen Anne revival attributes which are some 15 years ahead of the popular use of this style. The house is the only example of this style in the study area and parallels with a former doctor's house in Davey Street, Frankston, since redeveloped{ see G Butler & Associates, Frankston Conservation Study}. This large single-storey and verandahed house is built from coloured brickwork, has a hipped and slated roof, separately roofed window bays and protruding king-post trussed and helm-hipped gables. The style marks a departure from the prevailing cemented Italian Renaissance provincial villa styles. It uses instead the Italian Romanesque among other medieval-based styles, such as Queen Anne, to provide richly coloured brickwork, ceramic wall tiling, label moulds, turned timber verandah posts, segment arched openings and formerly, coloured glass in window casement toplights. The brick is in three colours with encaustic tiles to the verandah. Many internal rooms have been

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STREET	NUMBER	NAME	DATE	VALUE	DESCRIPTION
					<p>united but the entry hall has a fair integrity with Kauri pine boarded ceilings, overdoors, and dado moulds. There are also marble fire places. Internally the hall has original elements and some marble fireplaces survive but little else survives in the form of detailing. Early views show a Gardenesque series of geometric bordered beds and gravel pathways, all replaced with asphalt, concrete and grass{ MPHS collection Book 3, p.65-6}. Locally important trees include two 'Araucaria cunninghamii' but otherwise the garden has been altered.</p>

Appendix 2 bricks at Mornington

Brick-making and Quarrying

(extract from Shire of Mornington heritage Study 1994)

Early observers of the Mornington Shire noted the existence at several locations of clay suitable for brick-making. William Blandowski mentioned that an 'excellent clay for making bricks' was available on Jamieson's Special Survey <Blandowski, op. cit>. Even as late as the 1880s, the Victorian Municipal Directory found the brick clays of Mt Eliza of sufficiently good quality to include in their description of the locality. < *Victorian Municipal Directory and Gazetteer*, 1880> Several clay pits are mentioned in the vicinity of Mornington township in the mid-nineteenth century. These included Robertson's brick field, John Barrett's brick yard and of course, Thomas Allchin's brickworks <RB1885, 1135, 874,819>.

It was not uncommon in nineteenth century Victoria for small local brick-making industries to be established to meet local needs for building materials and, in Mornington's case, the bricks do not seem to have travelled very far.

Although several clay pits are mentioned by local history sources, identifying the sites of these pits is difficult. A name closely associated with the brick-making industry was that of Thomas Allchin, whose pit was said by several sources to be located on what is now Berry Reserve in Phillip St, Mornington and is also said to have been worked by William Irons before Allchin <EM Gilbert, pers.com.>. An 1860 photograph of Allchin's Brick Works reveals a large pit, rudimentary scaffolding and five workers posing for the camera. Allchin is said to have supplied the bricks for St Andrews Presbyterian Church in 1866. St Peter's Church of England was built from bricks supplied from a quarry also located in this vicinity. < *St Peter's Mornington 1861-1986*, commemorative booklet:9> Another church, St James the Less in Mt Eliza, was constructed from clay obtained from a paddock opposite the church on the grounds of what is now Peninsula School. < "The Little Church of St James The Less' in Mt Eliza, op cit:.36>

Many houses were built apparently from bricks quarried and made on the spot. One clay pit and kiln was located on Balcombe Creek at The Briars. According to Mabel Brooks, early sections of The Briars homestead were built by ticket of leave men from bricks fired in this kiln.

< Mabel Brooks, *The Riders of Time*, 1967:.4>The clay used in the chimneys at Nyora, Mt Eliza, was apparently dug from the foreshore at Canadian Bay <Mann, op cit: 11> Beleura was built of handmade bricks, as were the stables at Earimil. T J Sumner, who bought Earimil in 1871, intended to replace the timber home with a brick one. According to his grand daughter, Maie Casey, Sumner had a kiln constructed and baked enough bricks for the stables and house. He died before the house was begun and the pile of bricks intended

for it gradually dissolved away to nothing. <Maie Casey, *An Australian Story 1837-1907*:163>

Thomas Allchin continued to make bricks until 1896 <Moorhead, op cit: 61>. The brick-making industry does not seem to have survived into the twentieth century, when building materials could be brought more easily into the district by rail or road. Those locally-made brick buildings which survive are testimony to an early local industry and to the isolated nature of Mornington in the nineteenth century.

(Refer File: Albert 8 Heritage Assessment.doc)