

# Heritage Report 16 Crook Street, Kennington

Prepared for Megan MacDougall, Heritage Architect/Advisor, City of Greater Bendigo

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## 1.0 History

### 1.1 History of 16 Crook Street, Kennington

The property at 16 Crook Street, Kennington, comprises part of Allotment 165, Section H, Parish of Sandhurst. The area in which the property is located was first known as Grassy Flat after the reservoir which opened in 1861 as part of a government program to provide safe drinking water to growing gold rush settlements across the colony of Victoria. By 1909 the district was populated by settlers on small holdings, many of whom were involved in dairying. In 1911, a school was opened and named Kennington.

Nicholas Casey, law clerk of Sandhurst, first held title to Allotment 165, 20 acres at Grassy Flat, on 14 September 1863 (although the Sandhurst Parish Plan cites the purchase date of 2 March 1863).<sup>1</sup> His brother, James Joseph Casey, held contiguous properties, also purchased in 1863: 7 acres (Allotment 123), 3 acres (Allotment 125), 5 acres (Allotment 126), and 19 acres (Allotment 164).

In April 1863, J J Casey advertised a cottage to let at Grassy Flat: 'on a most healthy site...[with] all the necessary out offices. Attached, three-stalled stable and coachhouse, twenty acres of ground, admirably adapted for a vineyard.'<sup>2</sup> As both allotments owned by the Casey brothers were at Grassy Flat, it is not known if this advertisement referred to Allotment 165 (owned by Nicholas Casey) or Allotment 164 (owned by J J Casey). However, it appears that J J Casey may have assumed control of his brother's allotment, as an entry in the *Victoria Government Gazette* on 31 March 1865 stated that J J Casey had applied for the closing and alienation of a road running through his allotments of 124 (allotment 165) and 125 (including allotment 164) at Grassy Flat.<sup>3</sup>

In April 1867, under the instructions of J J Casey, MLA, a 'superior cottage' in occupation by J W McCutcheon, and 'garden and pleasure grounds' on five acres facing Grassy Flat Reservoir, was advertised for sale. In November of the same year, J J Casey of Temple Court, Pall Mall, advertised the same property to let.<sup>4</sup>

The title to Allotment 165 was transferred to Hon James Joseph Casey of Melbourne, MLA, on 18 May 1869.<sup>5</sup>

On 4 January 1872, Casey transferred part of Allotment 165, one rood and three perches, to John Neill Macartney, and four acres one rood and 13 perches (the subject site) to Jane Macartney, wife of Ross Kenneth Macartney, mining agent.<sup>6</sup> Ross Macartney, the son of John Neill Macartney, was the manager of a number of gold mining companies, including the South Feely Quartz Mining Company in 1871 and the Cambrian Gold Mining Company in 1872, both located in Sandhurst. The 1872 Strathfieldsaye Shire rate books describe Ross Macartney as the owner of five acres at Grassy Flat valued at £5.

On 13 May 1872, James Buick Dugald Macdougall (mayor of the Bendigo City Council in 1871-73) and John Stewart, esquires, took over ownership of the property.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 00010 Folio 818, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>2</sup> 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 6 April 1863, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Victoria Government Gazette*, No. 33, 31 March 1865, 774. The Shire of Strathfieldsaye rate books describe Nicholas Casey's land as Allotment 124 at Grassy Flat, and James Joseph Casey's land as Allotment 125 at Grassy Flat.

<sup>4</sup> 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 12 April 1867, 4. 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 11 October 1867, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 00309 Folio 666, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>6</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 00309 Folio 666, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>7</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 00466 Folio 097, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

In October 1872, L Macpherson and Co, instructed by the trustees, advertised a property on four and a half acres for auction at Grassy Flat:

This capital stone built, well finished, elegant family residence, containing drawing and dining-rooms, two bed-rooms, bath-room, servant's room and kitchen, situated on the banks of the Grassy Flat Reservoir...There is good stabling and convenient out buildings; also half-an-acre of garden, well stocked with ornamental shrubs, fruit trees, &c.<sup>8</sup>

On 17 January 1873, Jane Macartney once again became the title owner, and on the same day, John Knowles Scott, gentleman, became proprietor of the property.<sup>9</sup> Scott was manager of a number of gold mining companies, including the Victory and Pandora Amalgamated Company at Sandhurst in 1875 and the Poverty Company at Tarnagulla in 1878. The 1873 Strathfieldsaye Shire rates book described John K Scott as the owner of a residence at Grassy Flat valued at £45.<sup>10</sup> The 1874 Strathfieldsaye Shire rates book listed a 'stone house and garden' at Grassy Flat owned by John K Scott, speculator, valued at £50; by 1876, the property was valued at £60.<sup>11</sup>

The property was put up for sale in August 1874 under the instructions of J. K. Scott, esquire, with the land described as comprising four and a half acres. The house was described as 'faithfully built of stone and brick' containing 'drawing and dining rooms, four bed rooms, bath-room, spacious hall, verandah'; in addition, there were a 'kitchen with capital range, scullery, wash house, pantry, two-stall stable, bay room, and out buildings'.<sup>12</sup> The advertisements continued in 1875, under instruction from the mortgagee, through until 1878.

In January 1878, Macpherson and Co were instructed to sell, without reserve,

the well-known and comfortable Suburban Residence, lately occupied by J. K. Scott, Esq. The land is part of Crown allotment 165, Grassy Flat, containing 4a. lr. 8-10p. and having large frontage to Grassy Flat Reservoir, on which is erected brick and stone house, containing six large and commodious rooms, exclusive of kitchen (in which is built first-class cooking range), scullery, pantry, washhouse, bathroom, fowlhouse, and stable. The whole of the ground is securely fenced. The garden is well stocked with vines, fruit trees, and flowers.<sup>13</sup>

The title to the property was transferred to the Bendigo Permanent Land and Building Society on 1 May 1878.<sup>14</sup>

In 1883, Allotment 165, Parish of Sandhurst, containing 4 acres 1 rood 13 perches, situated at Grassy Flat, was again advertised for sale. The property, still owned by John K Scott and occupied by Mr A Thunder, included 'a substantially built six-roomed brick house in good order, with outhouses, stables...horse paddock, etc.' The grounds were 'securely fenced' and 'laid out with a well-preserved garden'.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 28 October 1872, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Certificates of Title, Volume 00496 Folio 152, and Volume 00559 Folio 753, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>10</sup> Shire of Strathfieldsaye Rate Books, PROV, VPRS 16136, P1.

<sup>11</sup> Shire of Strathfieldsaye Rate Books, PROV, VPRS 16136, P1.

<sup>12</sup> 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 3 August 1874, 4.

<sup>13</sup> 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 23 January 1878, 4.

<sup>14</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 00559 Folio 754, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>15</sup> 'Advertising,' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 23 April 1883, 4.

On 24 October 1894, Arthur Thomas Crook, teacher of music and singing, became the owner of the property.<sup>16</sup> On his death in 1917, the property, by then named 'Stonehaven', was described as four acres one rood thirteen perches at Kennington (formerly Grassy Flat) with improvements of a 'House built of stone – six rooms and kitchen, verandah in front, W. B. Stabling. Rated by the Shire of Strathfieldsaye at annual value of £34'.<sup>17</sup>

The Crook family continued to live in the house until 29 June 1920, when Emma Eliza North, married woman, took over title. Later owners included gardener Battista Torri from 22 July 1949; and Joseph Watson and Frank Rupert Watson from 16 August 1951.<sup>18</sup>

In summary, the earliest part of the house currently on site at 16 Crook Street may have been constructed ca. 1863 for J J Casey, however the more likely scenario is that the house was constructed in 1872 for Ross and Jane Macartney or James Buick Dugald Macdougall and John Stewart. Comprising four main rooms, a further two rooms were added to the residence ca. 1874.

## 1.2 Sir James Joseph Casey

Sir James Joseph Casey, politician and judge, was born on 25 December 1831 at Tromra, County Clare, Ireland, son of James Casey, landowner, and his wife Maria, née Coffey. Casey arrived in Melbourne in February 1855. In the same year, J J Casey, together with Sydney reporter Angus Mackay and John Henderson purchased the *Bendigo Advertiser*. In 1863 they established the *Melvor Times* and bought the *Riverine Herald*. Mackay was also a member of the syndicate that began the *Daily Telegraph* in Sydney in 1879. Casey married Maria Theresa Cahill, daughter of James and Mary Cahill of Bendigo, in 1858. Their marriage was childless.

Casey was an important figure in both Bendigo's and Victoria's history, taking a prominent role in public affairs at both a local and state level. When the Land Convention (which campaigned for land reform to free up land that was leased by squatters) was established in 1857, the election of delegates from Bendigo was carried out under Casey's auspices. He was a member of the municipal council of Sandhurst in 1860-61 and the first president of the Campaspe Road Board (later the Huntly Council) in 1861. He was also a member of various boards and committees in Sandhurst. As a member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly almost continuously from 1861 to 1880, Casey served as Commissioner of Crown Lands and President of the Board of Land and Works, as Justice Minister in 1868-72, and as Minister for Agriculture in 1872-1875. Casey served as a crown prosecutor in 1883 and as a County Court Judge in 1884-1900.<sup>19</sup>

Even though he lived in St Kilda in his later years, Casey did not forget his connection to Bendigo, donating part of his art collection to the Bendigo Art Gallery on his death.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 10136 Folio 691, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>17</sup> Shire of Strathfieldsaye Rate Books, PROV, VPRS 16136, P1.

<sup>18</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 10136 Folio 691, supplied by Megan MacDougall.

<sup>19</sup> 'DEATH OF MR. J. J. CASEY.' *Bendigo Advertiser*, 7 April 1913, 5.

<sup>20</sup> Wills, Probate and Administration Records, PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, 492.

## 2.0 Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The stone and brick house and palm tree located at 16 Crook Street, Kennington. The existing palm tree and original location, form, materials and details of the residence are integral to the significance of the place.

The front section of the house, comprising four rooms with walls constructed of stone with brick quoins and dressings, and the palm tree are significant. The roof and verandah have been altered.

The more recent brick addition at the rear of the building is not significant.

### How is it significant?

The stone and brick house and palm tree located at 16 Crook Street, Kennington are of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

### Why is it significant?

The stone and brick house is of historical significance for its demonstration of the establishment of white settlement in the Grassy Flat district, now Kennington, from the 1860s, that followed the opening of the Grassy Flat Reservoir in 1861. By 1909 the district was populated by settlers on small holdings, many of whom were involved in dairying. In 1911, a school was opened and named Kennington. The existing house is believed to have been constructed in 1872 on part of Allotment 165, Section H, Parish of Sandhurst. The property incorporated an extensive garden, of which the existing palm tree is the only remnant.

The property is of historical significance for its association with Sir James Joseph Casey, who took over title to the land in 1869. Casey was an important figure in Bendigo and Victoria's history, taking a prominent role in public affairs at both a local and state level. He was the co-owner of the *Bendigo Advertiser* in 1855, and in 1857, when the Land Convention (which campaigned for land reform to free up land that was leased by squatters) was established, the election of delegates from Bendigo was carried out under Casey's auspices. He was a member of the municipal council of Sandhurst in 1860-61 and the first president of the Campaspe Road Board (later the Huntly Council) in 1861. He was also a member of various boards and committees in Sandhurst. As a member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly almost continuously from 1861 to 1880, Casey served as Commissioner of Crown Lands and President of the Board of Land and Works, as Justice Minister in 1868-72, and as Minister for Agriculture in 1872-1875. Casey served as a crown prosecutor in 1883 and as a County Court Judge in 1884-1900. He died in St Kilda in 1913. Even though he lived in St Kilda in his later years, Casey did not forget his connection to Bendigo, donating part of his art collection to the Bendigo Art Gallery on his death.

The house is of historical significance for its associations from 1872 with prominent local Bendigonians, including mine managers, Ross Macartney and John K Scott, and Bendigo City council mayor, James Macdougall. (Criteria A & H)

The house is aesthetically significant as a rare surviving example of a stone and brick residence dating from the 1870s constructed in the Grassy Flat (Kennington) area.

The residence is also of aesthetic significance for the skilled craftsmanship demonstrated in the stonework. The palm tree is an important aesthetic reminder of the once extensive garden that surrounded the house. (Criteria B & E)