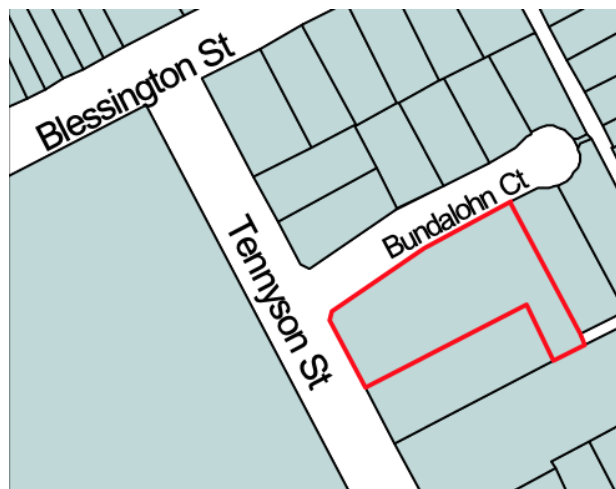


City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: Bundalohn
Other names: -

Citation No:
2154



Address: 6 Tennyson Street, St Kilda

Heritage Precinct: St Kilda Botanical
Gardens & Environs

Category: Residential: Mansion

Heritage Overlay: HO269

Style: Victorian: Italianate

Graded as: Significant

Constructed: 1884-86

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Designer: Reed, Henderson & Smart

Amendment: TBA

Comment: Revised citation

Significance

What is significant?

Bundalohn, the substantial, nineteenth century, brick, mansion, designed by the eminent architectural firm of Reed, Henderson & Smart, and built in 1884-86 for Henry Gyles and Helen Turner, at 6 Tennyson Street, St Kilda is significant. The interior of the building to the extent of the stair hall also contributes to the significance of the place.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Bundalohn at 6 Tennyson Street, St Kilda is of local historic, representative, and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Bundalohn is of historical significance to the City of Port Phillip as a mansion built for the businessman, historian and writer, Henry Gyles Turner. It is evidence of this portion of St Kilda, adjacent to the Botanical Gardens, being a popular place for the elite and wealthy to build large homes in the nineteenth century. The current arrangement of the mansion, where its former gardens are now occupied by surrounding built form, is evidence of a later phase of residential development in Port Phillip where mansions built during the Land Boom were transformed into flats and their grounds subdivided and developed to address the need for more modest and denser residential housing in the suburb. (Criterion A)

Bundalohn is of representative value to the City of Port Phillip as an example of the nineteenth century work of the eminent architectural firm of Reed, Henderson & Smart. It is representative of a distinctive building style by the firm, which in a deviation from the typical rendered facades commonly found on mansions, used face red brick relieved with rendered dressings. This combination of materiality was precursor to a treatment that became popular in the Federation era. (Criterion D)

Bundalohn is of aesthetic significance as a fine example of a Land Boom mansion, designed in a busy asymmetrical composition with its tower and arched entrance at its base off-centre on elevation, and to its side a bay capped with a rendered pediment and detailed with long vertical windows which light the internal staircase. The large amounts of red face brickwork relieved with rendered dressings are of note, as an early and competent application of this treatment, which did not gain widespread popularity until the Federation era. Also of note is the surviving original detail within the stairhall that includes the timber staircase, large vertical panels of leadlight windows, a fireplace, and other joinery and finishes. (Criterion E)

Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development), 5.3 Diverse Housing (5.3.1 Mansions and grand villas, 5.3.5 Higher-density housing)

History

Contextual history

Private development in the City of Port Phillip began from the time of the first sales of Crown land in the 1840s and 1850s. The gradual development of infrastructure, including roads, public transport networks and utilities, paved the way for increasing development of private land. Private subdivision within the broad framework set out by Hoddle's survey saw neighbourhoods in the City of Port Phillip grow into populated, thriving communities (TEH).

Mansion estates – large detached homes on generous allotments – defined early, permanent housing in Elwood and St Kilda, in the mid-nineteenth century. Although the oldest surviving houses in Elwood – such as Vautier House, built in the mid-1850s – are terrace houses, it was mansions on large allotments that came to characterise the neighbourhood in its early years. The estates were located in four distinct clusters: St Kilda Hill; the semi-rural estates occupying the high ground on the south side of Dandenong Road from the Nepean Road (now St Kilda Road) to Orrong Road; those surrounding the St Kilda Botanical Gardens and along Brighton Road; and the remote 'sea-side' estates along Ormond Esplanade. Kearney's 1855 map of the area shows the contrast between dense residential development in St Kilda, and the large mansion estates to the east of the Nepean Road including Charnwood and Marlton, south of Carlisle Street (then known as Beach Road), and on both sides of Brighton Road, including Erindale and Chiverton, and Bramshaw, Osborne House and Wiltonia further south (TEH).

As demand for housing grew, mansion estate subdivisions commenced as early as the 1870s when part of the Charnwood Estate in St Kilda was subdivided to create Charnwood Crescent and Charnwood Grove, where detached villas were erected. The original mansion often survived the first two rounds of subdivision, only to be demolished by the interwar or post-war periods. Those that were retained on much smaller blocks of land were rarely used as single dwellings. Instead, many were converted into boarding houses or flats and this often ensured their survival. Examples include Eildon and Marlton in St Kilda and

Rotherfield, Tiuna and Thalassa in Elwood. Others that were demolished are remembered in street names such as Charnwood Avenue, Cintra Avenue, and St Leonards Avenue (TEH).

Bundalohn

The development of the St Kilda Botanical Gardens from c.1860 led to the surrounding area becoming a desirable residential neighbourhood. By the end of the nineteenth century Blessington, Tennyson, Dickens and Herbert streets were lined with substantial villas, and mansions set in large grounds.

Bundalohn, designed by the noted architects Reed, Henderson and Smart, was built for prominent businessman and historian Henry Gyles Turner and his wife Helen. Tenders were invited in March 1884, the house was under construction in 1885 and completed by 1886, when it was described as a 16-room brick building on land with a 172 foot frontage to Tennyson Street (RB). In 1888 the architects invited tenders for additions, but it appears these were not carried out as the number of rooms in rate book descriptions does not change between 1886 and 1892.

Bundalohn was one of several mansion estates established along Tennyson Street in the mid to late nineteenth century. The 1895 MMBW plan (see Figure 1) shows the house set well back at the end of a curving carriage drive within a large allotment that contained a tennis court, with outbuildings at the rear. A photograph dating from 1895 shows a two-storey bi-chrome brick mansion with central gabled stair hall and tower, glazed conservatory and verandahs, and a projecting canted bay facing south. Internally the property was richly decorated and furnished, including leadlight windows and stencilled decoration to the stair hall (see Figure 2).

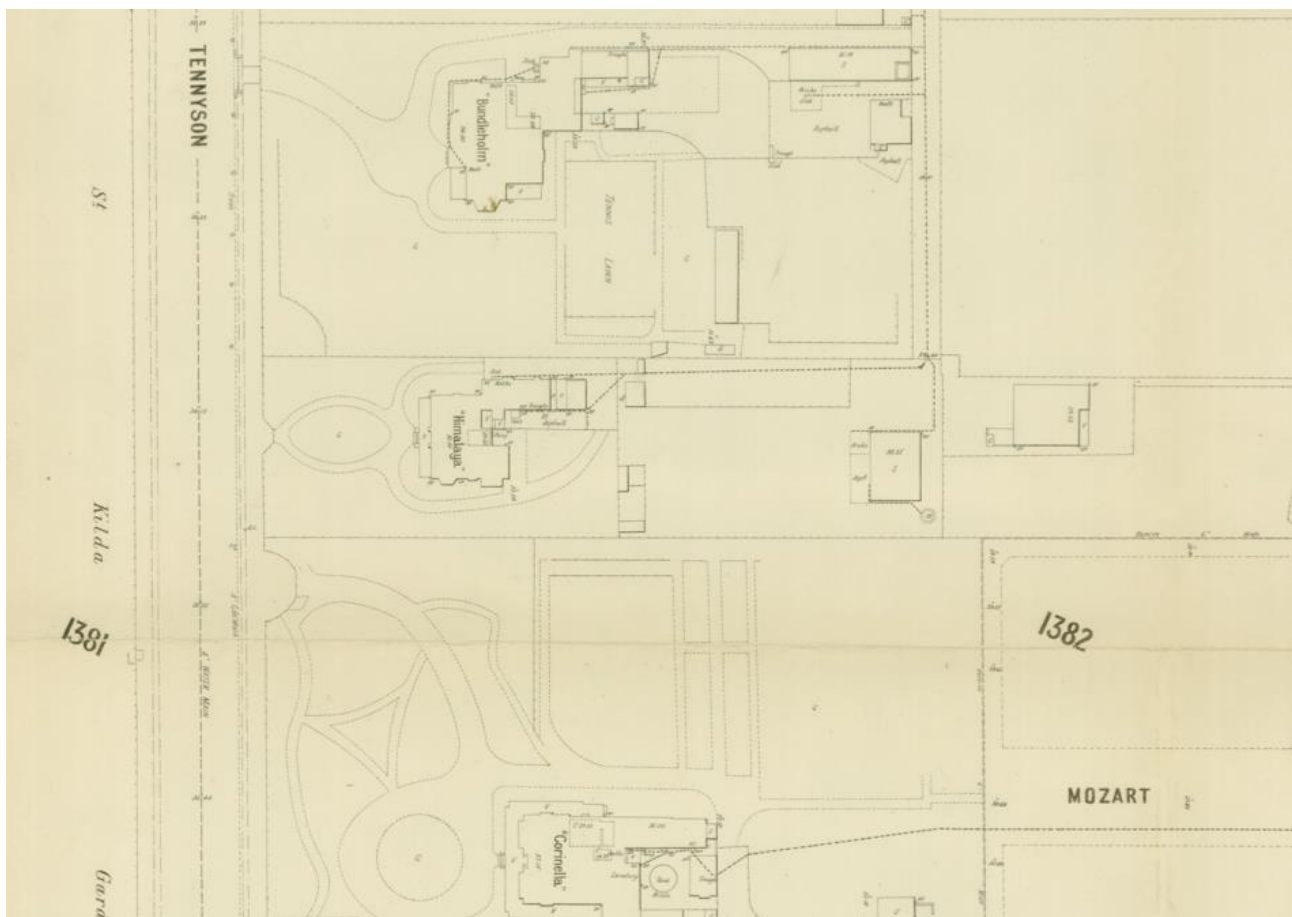


Figure 1: Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works Detail Plan No. 1385 (detail), Bundalohn shown as Bundleholm (sic) at top.



Figure 2: At left, Bundalohn in 1895 (Source: State Library of Victoria). At right: The double height stairhall in 1904 (Source: Punch, 28 July 1904)

Helen and Henry Turner continued to reside at Bundalohn until their deaths in 1914 and 1920, respectively. After the property was sold in 1921 the southern garden was subdivided (this is now 8 Tennyson Street), the mansion was converted to flats and in 1927 Bundalohn Court was created by the subdivision of the neighbouring property to the north. In 1933 Bundalohn was sold again, and the rear wing and outbuildings were demolished and replaced with the two storey block of flats known as Darwalla at 1 Bundalohn Court, which was designed and constructed by E. Jennings & Sons (Raworth 2017:6).

Further alterations and additions were carried out in the 1950s and 1960s. During this time, the original verandahs were removed, and the mansion was enveloped by a three storey building constructed in the front garden facing Tennyson Street and along the north side. These additions almost completely concealed the mansion from public view, except for a glimpse of the tower and south bay across the front garden of 8 Tennyson Street.

In 2019 the site including Bundalohn, Darwalla, and the post-war additions was acquired for social housing. The 1950s additions along the north side were removed and replaced with single storey buildings, opening up views of the north and west elevations of the mansion. The three storey building within the front garden was replaced with a new building. Some conservation works were carried out to the mansion.

Henry Gyles and Helen Turner

Henry Gyles Turner, banker, historian and litterateur, was born in London in 1831 and immigrated to Melbourne in 1854 to work for the Bank of Australasia. His fiancée Helen Ramsay followed him, and they were married in Prahran in 1855. Turner became chief accountant of the Bank of Australasia in 1864, at the same time as pursuing a range of other interests. Described as 'tall and muscular, with a great love of the outdoors' he founded the Banks Rowing Club and performed for the Melbourne Histrionic Club. He contributed articles to a number of Australian periodicals, was at times secretary and lay preacher of the Melbourne Unitarian Church (ADB).

Turner became general manager of the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1870, and is credited with turning the failing institution into a successful enterprise with significant deposits, a large reserve fund and new branches in Victoria, as well as interstate and in London. By the late 1880s, his success and impressive articles in financial journals had made him one of Melbourne's most influential bankers and in July 1886 he was a founder and first president of the Bankers' Institute of Victoria. Turner also served as president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1889-92 and was a three-time chairman of the Associated Banks between

1875 and 1900 (ADB). Turner remained as general manager of the Commercial Bank of Australia throughout the depression of the 1890s, retiring at the age of 70 in 1901 (ADB).

Turner was also known for his literary achievements. In 1875 with a dozen friends including Alexander Sutherland he launched the *Melbourne Review*, and its reputation as Australia's first quality review owed much to Turner's efforts as contributor and editor. Upon his retirement, he authored a number of books on Australian history, including the two-volume *A History of the Colony of Victoria* published in 1904, and contributed over forty essays and reviews in journals and newspapers (ADB).

Helen Turner was known for her philanthropic and charity work. In 1904 she was described as:

... one of our most highly-esteemed Victorian ladies and, though many know she takes her full share of the work pertaining to public and philanthropic movements, there are others who do not know the amount of good she does privately ... (Punch, 28 July 1904, p.25)

Reed, Henderson and Smart

One of Melbourne's leading architecture practices, the firm has designed many of Victoria's most prominent buildings and continues today as Bates Smart. The firm was established by Joseph Reed, an architect who arrived from England in July 1853. Reed executed some important commissions including the first stage of the Melbourne Public Library before entering into partnership with Frederick Barnes in 1862. Together they designed some of Melbourne's most important early buildings including the Independent Church (1866), Melbourne Town Hall (1867), Rippon Lea (1869) and Scots Church (1873).

In 1883 the firm became Reed, Henderson and Smart after Anketell M. Henderson and F.J. Smart, former employees of Reed and Barnes who had left to set up their own practice, rejoined the firm as partners. Over the next thirty years with the replacement of partners due to death or resignation the firm went through several changes of name, before becoming Bates, Smart and McCutcheon in 1926. This was retained through subsequent changes until 1995, when it became Bates Smart. In the post-war period Bates, Smart and McCutcheon designed some of Melbourne's first and most important buildings in the International style including Wilson Hall at the University of Melbourne (1956) and ICI House (1958).

In the City of Port Phillip, the buildings known to have been designed by Reed Henderson and Smart are Sacred Heart Church, St Kilda (1884), Bundalohn (1884-86) and the former Bank of Australasia, St Kilda (1889-90).

References

Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB), 'Turner, Henry Gyles' (1831-1920) viewed online 4 July 2021: <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/turner-henry-gyles-4760>

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, 'Proposed redevelopment, 6 Tennyson Street, St Kilda. Report to Council – Assessment of heritage impacts', December 2017

J.E.S. Vardy, surveyor, 'Plan of the Borough of Kilda' compiled under the direction of the Borough Council Hamel and Ferguson, Melbourne, 1873, map number 9 South Ward

Lovell Chen, *Review of B-graded buildings in Kew, Camberwell and Hawthorn*, 2006

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan no.1382, dated 1897

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH) **Version 1, July 2020**

St Kilda Council rate books (RB) 1884-85, entry 1439; 1886, entry 1485

Sands & McDougall Directories (SM) 1920-1950

Description

A late-Victorian, two-storey, bi-chrome brick, former mansion. The original garden of the house has since been subdivided, but earlier the house was set back behind a garden and drive from Tennyson Street. Only the north (side) and the west elevation of the house, are visible from Bundalohn Court.

The red face brickwork is relieved with render in places including the pediment above one bay, and on the tower; and where cream brick is also used for detailing. The west elevation (front) is asymmetrically composed. It has a three-stage tower off-centre on the elevation, with an arch at its base that forms the entrance porch to the house. A verandah and conservatory formerly extended to the right side of this tower on the ground and first floors, but these have since been removed. Another verandah, at the southeast corner of the house, has also been removed. The tower has a hip roof with bracketed eaves, and the remainder of the house has a hip roof. All roofs have had their slate tiles removed and replaced with corrugated galvanised steel sheeting.

To the left of the tower is a bay with a steep rendered pediment at its top. This bay internally forms the double height entrance hall and stairwell. This stairwell, one of the intact interiors of the house, retains its original timber staircase and other joinery. It is lit by the deep narrow vertical windows with stained glass of this bay. To its left is another bay that forms the northwest corner of the house that has a timber frame double-hung sash window on both levels. These, and other double-hung sash windows on the house have segmental arched openings for their heads and detailed in cream brick with a pronounced keystone. The windows have a distinct glazing bar detail on the upper sashes. The south elevation has a canted bay, which formerly was flanked by the verandahs that are now removed. The north elevation has four windows at first floor level. Alterations to this elevation include partial demolition of the chimney, rebuilding of part of the wall (that once connected to the now demolished 1950s additions) and construction of a single-storey contemporary addition that projects forward to Bundalohn Court.

The building is in good condition.

Comparative analysis

By the boom of the 1880s, many mansions were built in the Italianate style and were asymmetrical in plan, often with projecting bayed windows and corner towers. They were often rendered and featured elaborate cement decoration and two-storey cast iron or colonnaded verandahs. Surviving examples in the South Melbourne area include Airlie and Ulimaroa in St Kilda Road and Lanark and Netherby House in Queens Road, while in St Kilda and Elwood there are Halcyon, Rotherfield, Ravelston, Tiuna and Thalassa. Bendigonia in Queens Road is an unusual example of the Picturesque Gothic style (TEH).

The mansions were usually set within spacious grounds with landscaped formal gardens and were accessed by a carriage driveway. Most included a complex of outbuildings, including stables. Later re-subdivision has resulted in the loss of most original gardens, although sometimes remnant buildings or trees remain on the same or sometimes different lots. For example, while the Hammerdale mansion was demolished, two trees from its once extensive gardens – a palm and a stone pine – survive in the rear yards of houses on the west side of Hammerdale Avenue, St Kilda (TEH).

Most of the nineteenth century mansions in the area surrounding and to the south of the St Kilda Botanical Gardens have been demolished (for example, Ascog), or significantly altered and converted to flats (for example, Himalaya at 10 Tennyson Street). The most intact surviving example is the former Rotherfield at 14 Hennessy Avenue (Citation 336). While it was converted to flats, the ornate boom-era exterior remains largely intact. Other surviving examples, which have all been converted to flats, include:

- Hartpury (c.1865, Crouch & Wilson) 9 Milton Street, Elwood (Citation 2098, Individual HO191). Two storey rendered Italianate. Verandah rebuilt and significant additions to the side and rear.
- Ravelston (1869-70, John F. Matthews), 17a Tennyson Street, Elwood (Citation 371). Two storey rendered Italianate. Verandah reconstructed.
- Wimbledon Mansions (1870), 2 Wimbledon Avenue, Elwood (Citation 2299). Two storey rendered Italianate, asymmetrical in plan with projecting bay and cast iron return verandah.
- Whin Bank (1875-76, 1890-91, J.A.B. Koch) 34 Mitford Street, Elwood (No citation). Asymmetrical with arcaded return verandah and projecting bay with pediment.

While Bundalohn has been altered and some original external features, most notably the verandahs/conservatory to the west façade and the verandah to the southeast façade, have been lost the original form and much of the original detailing remains legible. It is notable for the retention of some of the original details and finishes within the internal stair hall, which is rare.

Bundalohn is one of several houses designed by Reed, Henderson and Smart in the 1880s, which are distinguished by the use of red face brick with cream brick and render trim dressings and are said to have been influential in establishing the forms and experimental basis for Federation architecture in Melbourne (Lovell Chen 2006). Among these houses are several designed for Melbourne University from 1882 to 1887 of which Nanson House (now University House) of 1884 survives, and 9 Eglinton Street, Kew (see Figure 3). The latter house also shares the same tall windows with unusual margin glazing and the use of pediments. In Port Phillip, Reed Henderson and Smart also used red face brick with render for the Bank of Australasia, erected in 1889-90 at 17-19 Grey Street, St Kilda (Citation 2115).



Figure 3: 9 Eglinton Street, Kew – note window details and pediment (Source: Hermes place record 14616)

Bundalohn is one of only five surviving examples of Victorian era mansions in Port Phillip with towers and while a tower is a typical feature of Italianate mansions, here it is distinguished by the double height stair hall with tall narrow windows, which is expressed in the façade beside the tower. The only other known example of this arrangement is at Liverpool, designed by Nahum Barnett in 1888, at 36 Princes Street, St Kilda (Citation 2116). Other towered mansions are Claremont (1884), 286 Albert Road, South Melbourne (Citation 1001), Ulimaroa (1890), 630 St Kilda Road, Melbourne (Citation 220, VHR H658) and Halcyon (1886), 53 Acland Street, St Kilda (Citation 57, VHR H775).

Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, using the Hercon criteria.

Recommendations

Retain in the Heritage Overlay with external paint and internal controls.

Primary source

Peter Andrew Barrett, *H07 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations*, 2021

Other studies

Andrew Ward & Associates, *City of Port Phillip Heritage Review*, 1998

Robert Peck von Hartel Trethowan, *St Kilda 20th century architectural study*, Volume 3, 1992

Other images

