



# REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

## 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

*King Cottage* is a fine example of the Georgian-survival style notable for harmonious restful proportions and sense of repose, in which the patina of aged and weathered materials, and welcoming sheltering verandahed form, also impart a picturesqueness, all evidencing a high degree of creative achievement by its artisan author, Henry King. (Criteria 1.1, 1.2)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*King Cottage* is a striking example of the basic, single-span rural cottage form which is a main elemental form within the morphology of all Western Australian housing prior to the Modern Movement; believed to evidence a case of the relatively long staged growth typical of many such rural dwellings. (Criterion 2.1)

*King Cottage* is part of the evidence which illustrates the eventual break-up of the huge estate (Location 26) taken up by the first Governor, Sir James Stirling, his wife Ellen Mangles, and her family, in Bunbury, and marking the former road from the town to the Preston River ford at Picton, through this estate. The origins of this grant were among the prime motivations for the foundation of Bunbury. (Criterion 2.2)

*King Cottage* is associated with the noted bricklayer and brickmaker Henry King and an achievement from his hands of technical excellence, as well as contributing to an understanding of the brickmaking industry in Western Australia. (Criteria 2.2, 2.3, 2.4)

### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

*King Cottage* is a place that has been conserved as a consequence of the esteem with which it has been held and which has subsequently engendered much community commitment and support, evidencing its strong associations and contribution to community cohesiveness. (Criteria 4.1, 4.2)



## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

*King Cottage* is one of a scarce number of such rural cottages in such good condition and an example of fine and distinctive patterned colonial brickwork which is relatively rare and endangered. (Criteria 5.1, 5.2)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*King Cottage* is representative of the pattern of colonial rural housing in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*King Cottage* is in very good condition, with the core form and stylisms being apparently largely unchanged from the original construction. Management of a close kind applies whereby the fabric of the building is constantly monitored and deleterious impacts limited. Substantial grounds remain available for further development of the Museum function which is capable of being accommodated without prejudice to the assessed values of the building and land.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*King Cottage* retains a high degree of integrity, given that albeit the original private residential use is non-extant, nevertheless the museum use is carefully limited by circumstances and management to a tolerable level and maintains a residential intensity and scale.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The verandahs and shingle roofs are a reconstruction based on documentary evidence of a former state, at the era for which it is most significant. It is interpreted from the oral traditions of staged construction and examination of the fabric for wall joints, and the plan forms, etc. that the rear pair of brick rooms with fireplaces may have been an earlier stage to accommodate the Kings at the site during staged construction.

The fabric of walls, floors, roof and details have been subject to a moderate degree of modification, through restoration and reconstruction, and minor alterations and additions during its former residential use; however, the fabric is valuable as much for its aesthetically appreciable patina of wear and domestic variety as for a provenance of limited historic date.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary and physical evidence has been compiled by Ian Molyneux, Architect.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*King Cottage* is a simple, vernacular style building, constructed in c.1867-1880 by Henry King to provide residential accommodation for his family.<sup>1</sup>

The date of construction for *King Cottage* has been subject to debate and dispute and at present this can only be conjectured.

However the documentary evidence of the development of Leschenault Location 26, Stirling's vast South Bunbury-Picton estate, as the contextual locality for the place, is summarised by Molyneux in a paper 'The Lower Preston River Settlement', and difficulties with dating nineteenth century buildings from documentary evidence is discussed in another paper; Note on Dating of Land Transfers and Buildings in Western Australia from circa 1829 to circa 1900.<sup>2</sup>

A date of construction, circa 1867 is offered for the place pursuant to the arguments contained in those documents and consistent with the time of need for such a dwelling by Henry King, its owner-builder, based on the age and number of his children, and the time when those children were of an age to assist in its construction (as tradition has it).

The above documents also provide a more detailed history and precinctual context for the place to circa 1880 when conveyance of the land to King was confirmed by memorial.

Subsequently part of King's five acre lot was resumed for the Bunbury to Perth railway line in accordance with a survey of his parcel in 1893.

Henry King (b. 1831-32) and Susannah King nee Ruskin (b. 1833-34) lived initially in rented quarters at Lot 9, Wollaston Street, in Bunbury. Their sons James, Harry, George, and John were born in the period 1856 to 1874.

Henry died on 6 January 1899, aged 67 and Susannah died on 16 November 1912 aged 78. Both were buried at *St Marks Anglican Church*, Picton. (William King, died 1917 aged 52, is also buried there)

The property passed to William King, a retired prospector, then on the latter's death to Henry's grandson, William King, in 1922. The property was transferred to Henry Carlson a farmer of Balingup on 28 February 1925, and although the land was subdivided, the house remained in the Carlson family until purchased by the Town of Bunbury in 1967.

The Cottage was opened as a museum on 17 November 1968.

The Bunbury Historical Society Inc. (formed 1954) was given custodianship of the place and renamed *Lamorna* as *King Cottage*.

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<sup>1</sup> The documentary evidence for the provenance of the building is slight, principally being that gathered by Ian Molyneux from oral and other sources in circa 1978 and documented in his "Bunbury National Estate Study 1978".

<sup>2</sup> Both documents are attached to this assessment.

In 1988, Museum and Bunbury Historical Society facilities were built under direction of the Bunbury architect Sasha Ivanovich.<sup>3</sup> The present title, replacing any earlier form of title, was issued to the City of Bunbury on 6 March 1991.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The place is a marker of the former road (formerly the 'Blackwood' and 'Dardanup' Road, now Forrest Avenue) from the Bunbury town-site to the Preston River ford at Picton, through Stirling's estate and Wollaston's abutting farm.

The physical evidence is of a rectangular plan of three linked rooms with surrounding verandah and skillion roofs enclosing a pair of brick rooms and flanking timber framed enclosures. The main central row of three rooms is roofed with a shingled hipped roof, and the verandah roofs are discontinuous with the main roof. The shingles and verandah roofs (as above) are reconstructions of 1988.

The floor steps up from the skillioned rooms to the main centre row and the brickwork in the west main wall at the junction between skillion and raised section shows inconclusive evidence of alterations.

The external brick walls are well laid in Flemish bond patterned by the variety of colour (warm oranges to blues) in the bricks. The joinery is finely made and includes casement windows, which, like the main doors, are glazed with multiple panes.

The verandahs are of timber beams posts and flooring

The central cottage form appears with similar windows at *House at 82 Stirling Street*, where the extension is a parallel attached repetition of the same.

The appearance and condition of the building to date are of well maintained fabric.

### 13.3 REFERENCES

Molyneux, I., 'The Lower Preston River Settlement: Chronology of European Exploration and Settlement of the Lower Preston River at Bunbury', (unpublished paper, 1996).

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<sup>3</sup> Further documentary evidence was developed by Ian Molyneux in 1983 in the form of a measured survey drawing in which the roof is shown in proposed reconstructed form, conjectured from photographic archives and the evidence of the fabric, for a funding submission for the Bunbury Historical Society Inc., and it is this form which was reconstructed in 1988 under the control of Bunbury architect Sasha Ivanovich.