



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Permanent Entry

1. **Data Base No.** 2262
2. **Name.** Hassell Homestead
3. **Description of elements included in this entry.** Two-storey homestead & associated farm buildings, and the land on which they stand being Lots 193 & 227 on Plan 4692, comprised in C/T 1641/689.
4. **Local Government Area.** Shire of Plantagenet
5. **Location.** 1km along Jellicoe Road, turn-off to which is 3km south of Kendenup on Albany Highway
6. **Owner.** Picador Pty. Ltd.
7. **Statement of Significance of Place (Assessment in Detail)**

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The history of the Hassell Homestead farm complex is inextricably linked with the development of the whole area now known as Kendenup. Its origins date back to the early 1830s, when explorer George Cheyne made a selection of land in the area, known by the native name Moor-ilup.¹

Captain John Hassell was born in England in 1798. He arrived in Tasmania in 1822 as chief mate of the brig, *Belinda*. Between 1822 and 1825 he served on various ships trading between Tasmania and Sydney. In 1827 he was granted a land grant of 500 acres on the banks of the Tamar River, between Launceston and George Town, in Tasmania. On 3 March 1837 John Hassell left for London on the brig *Rhoda*. It was during a five-day stopover in Albany that he is believed to have met with George Cheyne and John Morley from whom he was to later purchase the Kendenup land. He is also believed to have met with Sir Richard Spencer.²

On his return journey aboard the *Dawson* in 1839, Hassell once again called at King George's Sound.³ Before he left, Hassell negotiated with Cheyne for the purchase of his land at Moor-ilup. Cheyne had been under pressure to improve his land, one of the conditions of the grant. This is verified in a letter (dated 5 March 1839) written to the Colonial Secretary, while on board the *Dawson* before it sailed to the Eastern Colonies verifies. "Sir, I have the honour to inform you that I have made purchase of a

¹ Allen, R. Kendenup - Homestead and Farm Buildings, Unpublished Architectural History Thesis, School of Architecture, University of Melbourne, 1949, p.2

² Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, UWA Press, Nedlands, for the Shire of Plantagenet, 1979, p.109

³ Cairns, D.C. A History of Kendenup: A resume of the growth and development from the first explorers to the present time, Unpublished Thesis, Teachers' Higher Certificate, c1965, p.13

quantity of land in this district with the intention of locating it myself, it being my intention of bringing with me a capital of from £15,000 to £20,000; with this I will stock and improve the lands. I also beg leave to inform you that I am now on my way to Sydney, where I shall purchase stock and farming implements and return in about 12 months." ⁴

After completing a number of business transactions, Hassell chartered the barque *China* to transport 800 sheep, 12 cattle and ten horses to stock his property at Kendenup, arriving in Albany in March 1840.⁵ R.N. Bland, a Protector of Natives, in an official report dated January 26 1842, records that the farm at Kendenup, a name adapted from the native name of the locality and applied by Hassell to the property, was established in March 1840.⁶ It appears that Captain John Hassell recognised the potential value of wool, and spent a considerable amount of time from 1840-50 travelling throughout the unexplored lower south of Western Australia in search of good sheep grazing country. When he found suitable conditions he usually took up the lease. "Thus he became the proprietor of a wool-growing empire of which Kendenup was the capital."⁷

From Kendenup went the shepherds, each with a flock of about 900 sheep and they came back to Kendenup for shearing. Through astute management and careful planning good results were achieved and 'Kendenup' was the recipient of a number of wool-growing awards.⁸

During the life of Captain Hassell three homesteads were built on Kendenup. The first house was reported as having been built before September 1841, but it was damaged by fire some time before Archdeacon Wollaston visited in 1851.⁹ Wollaston noted in his journal, 6 March 1851, "... and reached Kendenup, 42 miles, at 6pm. The heat and closeness of the air was very oppressive, and tho' a very clean woman at the farm had prepared a bed for me I preferred sleeping out of doors in some wheat straw before an old tumbling down barn. a fire had destroyed the dwelling house, and the only building inhabited was a detached kitchen. ..." ¹⁰ The house was subsequently rebuilt, standing at the top of the lane leading up from the Kalgan River to the farmyard on the north side.¹¹

Captain Hassell, his wife and family, lived in Albany where he conducted business as a storekeeper. "Practically from the beginning, the actual development and working of Kendenup was entrusted to managers resident on the property. Their work was supervised by John Hassell who made periodical visits from Albany. This continued until his two sons, J.F.T. Hassell, and A. Y. Hassell, were old enough to reside on the station, which took place in 1856 when the former had attained the age of 17 years."¹² It is likely Captain Hassell made many trips between Albany and Kendenup and the rapid success of the station speaks volumes for his organisational ability.

Across the top of the lane to the south stands the second homestead built of mud brick. This was built in 1854 or 1855 by Lieutenant Peter Belches, while he was in control of the property, on behalf of the British and Australian Bank. The bank, which Captain Hassell's partner and brother-in-law, Frederick Boucher, had

⁴ CSO, ACC 36, AN 24, Vol 66, fol 20

⁵ *ibid.* p.14

⁶ Western Mail 23 May 1940

⁷ Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, p.112

⁸ Battye, J.S. (ed) The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia, Vol II, Hussey & Gillingham Ltd, 191, p.266

⁹ Allen, R. Kendenup - Homestead and Farm Buildings, p.3

¹⁰ Wollaston, Rev J. Wollaston's Albany Journals 1848-1856, (collected by Rev Canon A. Burton), C.H. Pitman & Son, 1948, p.113

¹¹ Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, p.116

¹² Western Mail 30 May 1930

established in London got into difficulties soon after the establishment of the Kendenup property. Lieutenant Peter Belches had been appointed as the agent of the trustees to try and realise on Boucher's assets. The Hassell property was involved as Boucher's assets included two-thirds share of Kendenup. "Captain Hassell referred to it as a useless building erected at a cost of £300."¹³ In 1856 Hassell and his family took up permanent residence at Kendenup and this building served as the station homestead until c1866 when a larger, two storeyed residence was completed.¹⁴

The third homestead is the substantial two-storeyed building thought to have been built in the late 1860s for Captain Hassell's eldest son, J.F.T. Hassell, who married Isabella Morrison in 1868. The Hassell family referred to it as 'Kalgan Hall'.¹⁵

The Hassell property is mentioned in an extract from the journal of Thomas Scott who was travelling through the area in the early 1870s. "After an early and anything but pleasant breakfast we sallied forth with the determination of making a long day's journey. Nineteen miles brought us to one of the largest sheep stations in West Australia. Keninup [Kendenup] the property of Mr. Hassell, or as he was familiarly called Captain Hassell, could boast at this time of something less than 30,000 sheep. Keninup farm is situated in the midst of a dense forest of trees of every description. The private residence of the eldest son, Mr A.H., is a building of some considerable pretensions, beautifully situated on a hill looking over the whole of this extensive farm. This building as a country residence claims more credit than is generally attributed to West Australia."¹⁶

This imposing building is also mentioned in Battye's Cyclopaedia of Western Australia, "Mr. Hassell's [J.F.T. Hassell, eldest son of Captain John Hassell] present home is of brick and stone, with a wood and iron roof, and is of two stories, containing fourteen large, airy rooms. It is surrounded by a flower and vegetable garden, and adjacent is an orchard of five acres, which contains a great variety of fruit trees.. On the opposite side of the river the usual outbuildings are in evidence, and the whole forms a very snug corner in the general picture."¹⁷

The Hassell property is also known for its short-lived association with gold mining. This originated from a notice in the Government Gazette on 20 July 1869, offering a payment of £5000 for the discovery of payable gold. In 1872 Captain Hassell submitted samples of stone from Kendenup and was told they were gold bearing.¹⁸ A five-ton parcel was subsequently crushed in Victoria, the result being four ounces of gold. On 15 December 1874 the Standard Gold Mining Company Ltd was registered with a capital of £3,000. This was the second gold-mining company to be registered in Western Australia, and the first to start mining operations. The company's operations did not pay expenses, and on 5 June 1876 the company decided to go into voluntary liquidation.

The mine is located on the north bank of the Kalgan river, about one mile south of the Hassell Homestead. Some fifty yards from the shaft still stands the five-stamp battery, although in a deteriorated condition. The battery crushed only ten tons of ore from the mine, before it proved unpayable and was closed down.

It is thought that J.F.T Hassell went to live in Albany in about 1871/72, where he built "Melville House". From this time Albert was in charge of Kendenup and continued to live on the property until 1886 when he built "Hillside" in Albany and

13 Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, pp.115-116

14 Allen, R. Kendenup - Homestead and Farm Buildings, p.4

15 Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, p.116

16 Hasluck, P. 'Travels in Western Australia 1870-74. Extracts from the Journal of Thomas Scott' in Early Days, Vol 2, Part 15, p.24

17 Battye, J.S. (ed) The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia, Vol II, p.266

18 Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, pp.119-124

went to live there.¹⁹ Captain John Hassell died in 1883 although it was not until his wife died in 1886 that the estate was evenly divided between the six surviving children. By 1892 the arrangements for the division of the property were finalised and J.F.T Hassell took the south west holdings which included the property at Kendenup.²⁰

After 1900 little development occurred. The period after the death of John and Ellen Hassell saw not only the split up of the properties and gradual reduction in acreage, but also the spilt up of the family. J.F.T. Hassell made an unsuccessful attempt to sell the property in 1903. In 1904-05 he built a substantial house in Hay Street, West Perth, which has since been demolished. Although Hassell continued to run the property until his death in 1919 these moves indicated a lessening of family ties with the property, perhaps brought about by the lack of a son to carry on the family farming tradition.

The subsequent history of Kendenup also occupies a significant place in the development of the state. Mr C.J. DeGaris and his vision of a system of closer settlement were to herald a new era. DeGaris had been successfully involved in a scheme on a Murray River property called Pyap. However, the impossibility of suitable subdivision led him to look elsewhere for the purchase of land that would allow him to fulfil his dream.²¹

On 20 July 1920 DeGaris was in Adelaide and heard that the Kendenup Estate was for sale. Following the necessary arrangements, the DeGaris Kendenup W.A. Development Company was formed, to be financed by the issue of debentures to the value of £150,000. The subdivision of the estate was arranged and provision was made for a town-site with an administrative and civic centre, public parks, recreation areas, factory areas, a school and church sites. The remainder of the estate was divided into farm blocks of ten to sixty acres each.

Active settlement started in late 1920 and continued actively until the end of November 1921, when there was a virtual stoppage of the sale of debentures as the Company had started to run into financial difficulties. DeGaris appears to have used the buildings at Kendenup as a base for his venture. The main homestead had a new two-storey section added at the rear. The building was used as a Hostel to house up to 30 people.²² Little mention is made in other sources of the use of the Hassell buildings, except that shortly before liquidation, "DeGaris had given the Settlers Association the shearers' quarters from the Hassell farm to pull down and rebuild as a temporary hall...the hall was put up by the settlers under the direction of George Duckett on the hill beside the Hassell farm."²³ Allen also makes little mention of the use of the buildings, "a complete dehydrating factory was built at great cost, Hassell's crude brick-making plant was converted into a proper brick-works, the Homestead became the busy 'nerve-centre', three new shops and a handsome school were built and a large building to house the administrative staff was erected beside the homestead."²⁴

The venture finally collapsed in 1923, when owing to a combination of insufficient financial backing, small demand for the products and bad management, the majority of the settlers left.

¹⁹ Hassell, C.W. The Hassells of Albany, C.W. Hassell, 1972, pp.49-50

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp.63-64

²¹ Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich and Beautiful, p.125

²² National Trust of Australia (WA) Kendenup Assessment, April 1992

²³ *ibid.*, p.137

²⁴ Allen, R. Kendenup - Homestead and Farm Buildings, p.14

The current owners bought the property after the collapse of the DeGaris venture.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The construction of the early 1850s homestead, as described in a 1949 report, outlines a number of interesting points: the foundations are of local stone; all the walls are 18 inches thick and built of sun dried bricks made from local clay mixed with straw and stuccoed inside and out; the roof was originally shingles cut from local jarrah though it has been replaced by galvanised iron.²⁵ Allen states that the plans and elevations, "show the dwelling to be typical of the low-eaved Australian colonial type, the West facade with its retaining wall balustrade being particularly attractive."²⁶

The construction of the third homestead is also described in the 1949 report by Allen. "The footings are stone, (granite), the walls are brick stuccoed externally, floors are jarrah and the main roof is shingle - the roof of the balcony being galvanised iron. The bulk of the timber dressing was evidently done on the job, because underneath the flooring there is a 9" mat of jarrah shavings and adse chippings."²⁷ Allen notes that it could not be ascertained whether the bricks were made on the property or transported from Albany, though the former seems more likely, as many other farm buildings are of a similar brick, so to transport such a quantity would be unlikely. He also notes that the brick itself was rather crudely pressed, slightly underburnt and as a result rather porous and crumble.

Attached is a National Trust site inspection report, written in December 1991, which provides a description of the type of construction of the buildings. A more detailed inspection report is held on file.

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.

1. AESTHETIC VALUE

The individual buildings on the Kendenup property are not of particular aesthetic significance. However, the homestead and associated farm buildings collectively form an aesthetically pleasing image of rural building.

2. HISTORIC VALUE

As a relatively complete complex of buildings, Kendenup farm has a high degree of historic significance. It demonstrates the evolutionary development and expansion of farming activities, made possible by the financial success of the first owners.

Kendenup has a moderate degree of historic significance as a reflection of both the success of the early stage of development of the area and the later disorganisation and ineffective management of a group settlement scheme.

²⁵ ibid., p.6

²⁶ ibid.

²⁷ ibid., p.7

The property has a high degree of historic significance due to its close association with the Hassell family, who spent considerable time, money and effort in the area, establishing Kendenup as the centre of the surrounding wool producing area. John Hassell had a number of other holdings in the region and became a central figure in the development of the area. The property is also associated with the ill-fated DeGaris venture, which led to the sub-division of Kendenup and the formation of the Kendenup township.

3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

It is possible that an archaeological study of the Kendenup buildings would prove informative, but this has not been assessed.

4. SOCIAL VALUE

The farm complex has a high degree of social significance as the place of initial settlement in the region, contributing significantly to the region's sense of place.

5. RARITY

The farm complex of Kendenup is a rare example of the evolution of colonial farming activities in Western Australia.

6. REPRESENTATIVENESS

Kendenup is a highly significant example of an early isolated farm, which became a self-contained centre, providing for all the needs of the occupants.

CONDITION

• 1st Homestead/Kitchen	Fair, south west corner needs repairs
• 2nd Homestead	Good, recently repaired
• Main Homestead	Good, repairs required to 1920s addition
• Blacksmiths	Fair
• Horse Stalls	Good
• Shearing Shed	Good
• Hay Shed	Good
• Barn	Good
• Store cond	Very Poor, cellar collapsed, roof good
• Flour Mill floor	Fair, floorboards missing on ground

AUTHENTICITY

The complex has a high degree of authenticity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The homestead, associated farm buildings and brick kiln at Kendenup have a high degree of cultural significance. It is one of the few complete farm complexes in the region, which through a series of buildings demonstrates the evolution and

expansion of colonial farming activities and reflects the success of a prominent family of the district.

8. Register of Heritage Places

Interim Entry 20/08/93

Permanent Entry 01/07/1994

9. Conservation Order

10. Heritage Agreement

11. References

Allen, R. Kendenup - Homestead and Farm Buildings, Unpublished Architectural History Thesis, School of Architecture, University of Melbourne, 1949, p.2

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Hassell, C.W. The Hassells of Albany, C.W. Hassell, 1972, pp.49-50

National Trust of Australia (WA) Kendenup Assessment, April 1992

Historic Photographs:

Battye, J.S. The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia, p.266-268

Glover, R. Plantagenet: Rich & Beautiful, p.117

Western Mail 23 May 1960 p.vi

Twentieth Century Impressions of Western Australia, P.W.H. Thiel & Co, 1901, p.518

Battye Library:

453B c1860 View of buildings from a distance

BA503/20 c1900 view from a distance

BA503/8 1921 Close up of 2-storey homestead

4518B/15 nd. Close up of 2-storey building