

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: ST ANDREW'S UNITING CHURCH

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Martin Street PENS HurST

STUDY NUMBER: 098

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PRECINCT: Penshurst

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 2 **SECTION:** 3 **PARISH:** PARISH OF BORAMBORAM

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

VicRoads 233 O11; Located on the west side of Martin Street between Cobb and Ritchie Streets in the centre of the township

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



St Andrew's Uniting Church, Martin St, Penshurst

Image Date: 13/02/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the building and all of the land.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

St Andrew's Uniting Church is located on the west side of Martin Street, in the centre of the township of Penshurst. The church, built in 1865, is constructed of bluestone in the Gothic Early English Rudimentary style (Lewis, 138). The design is a simple rectangular nave, with an entrance porch and Vestry. Stained glass leadlight lancet windows are positioned between buttresses, which rise in two stages with sloped ends. The window surrounds and buttress ends appear to be made of cement render painted white. The church has an unusual gable of intermediate pitch containing a nimbus, an elliptical relief of the Burning Bush, beautifully carved in contrasting stone in a highly stylised form, with a scroll bearing Latin text below. In traditional iconography, the nimbus shape is reserved for the Divine figure, symbolised obliquely here by the Burning Bush. Internally, the decoration is typically plain and there are important memorials to individuals from the congregation.

The Martin Street boundary has a roughcast rendered front fence and iron gates which were erected in 1936 in memory of the Pioneering families of the parish. A grey cement brick extension to the church has been erected on the south side in the 1970s. The former manse is located adjacent to the church, but is now in different ownership. St. Andrews Uniting Church retains a good degree of integrity and is in good condition.

HISTORY:

The land on which St. Andrews Uniting Church stands was purchased from the Crown by the Presbyterian Church in 1864, as allotments 1 & 2 of section 3 (Township of Penshurst, 1864). Angus McDonald, the minister of the Hamilton Presbyterian Church had provided an occasional service as an outstation prior to this time (Mackiehn, 38). In 1861, the Penshurst congregation called for regular services, and two ministers were appointed to preach alternatively. They were the Reverend J. McLabernathy and the Reverend A. Begg (ibid.).

The first full time permanent minister was the Reverend Robert Falconer [or Fawkner?], who arrived in Penshurst in 1893 and was inducted in 1864. His charge extended to service Caramut, Dunkeld and Penshurst under the jurisdiction of the Mortlake Presbytery (ibid.). On his induction he organized a movement for the erection of a church, which object, with the help of the leading pastoralists in the district, he succeeded.

Tenders were called for the design and construction of a bluestone church in 1864. The architect of the church is not known, but it may have been J. M. Knight (at that time Mount Rouse Shire Secretary/Engineer) and A. Kerr, who referred to themselves as architects, and who later called tenders for the manse; or the Hamilton architect, James Henry Fox who was responsible for the design of several substantial buildings in the area. Although the contractor's name is not known, the cost of construction was 1 000 pounds (Mount Rouse & District File Note).

On August 26th, 1864, Mrs. Ritchie, (wife of Daniel Ritchie, Justice of the Peace and prominent pastoralist of nearby Blackwood) laid the foundation stone for the present church. St. Andrews Presbyterian Church was formally opened on April 30 1865, described as being of '...ornamental bluestone with a porch and vestry attached...and seating was provided for 200'(Mackiehn, 38). At this time, the first committee of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church was initiated, the founding members being Dr. Daniel Ritchie of Blackwood, James Alexander of Woodhouse, David Hutton of Cheviot Hills, Robert Aitken Snr., Malcolm McIntyre and William Anderson of Penshurst (ibid.).

In 1865 and 1866, Knight and Kerr called tenders for the construction of a bluestone manse, to be built adjacent to the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Penshurst. It is likely that Knight and Kerr were the architects of the manse, however James Henry Fox, who had designed the Branhholme Presbyterian Manse a few years earlier, may have been responsible. The contractor is not known, but the construction cost was 650 pounds (Mount Rouse and District Historical Society File Note).

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In 1869, Reverend Allsworth replaced the Reverend Falconer [or Fawkner]. Allsworth remained in the district until 1876, when he departed for New Zealand (Sutherland, 67). Between 1876 and 1881, the Reverend Andrew Chambers was the pastor for the district until he his successor, the Reverend J. Ringland Anderson, MA; a native of Ireland arrived in Penshurst in 1882 (ibid.). During his time at Penshurst, Reverend Anderson was the President of the Penshurst Band of Hope and of the Rechabite Tent. Through the late 1880s, the church was strongly associated with the temperance movement through he incumbent, Reverend Anderson.

In 1936, a fence and memorial gates were erected on the Martin Street frontage to honour the early pioneering families of the Parish, some who had served on the first St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Committee.

Between 1955 and 1959, the church and the manse were re-roofed, the manse renovated and new seating for the church was installed at a cost of over 700 pounds (Mackiehen, 38). John Clark of Hamilton provided the seating in memory of his wife, formerly Miss Beatrice Eales, who served the church for many years as teacher, organist and choir leader (ibid.). In the 1970s a concrete block extension was added to the south side of the church, and along with most Presbyterian congregations, St. Andrews of Penshurst joined the Uniting Church in the 1970s. It is likely that the joining of the Uniting Church was the stimulus for the sale of the adjacent manse into private ownership.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 8 Developing Australia's cultural life

8.6 Worshipping

8.6.1 Worshipping together

8.6.3 Founding Australian religious institutions

8.6.4 Making places for worship

CONDITION:

St Andrew's Uniting Church Penshurst is in good condition. [The interior has not been inspected.]

INTEGRITY:

Excellent degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

St Andrew's Uniting Church, formerly Presbyterian, is located on the west side of Martin Street, in the centre of Penshurst. The bluestone church was completed in 1865 and is built in the Early English version of the Gothic revival style, a departure from the Classical stream previously associated with Presbyterianism. The architect is not known for certain, but J. M. Knight (the Shire of Mount Rouse Engineer and Secretary) and A. Kerr seem very likely. A roughcast fence The gable incorporates an unusual device in contrasting stone, a nimbus around the Burning Bush representing Christ non-figuratively and Eternal Life. The church was associated with major landholders of the district, Mrs Daniel Ritchie of Blackwood laying the foundation stone. The first minister was Rev Robert Falconer. In the later 1880s, the church was associated with the temperance movement through the incumbent, Rev. J. Ringland Anderson, MA. Along with most Presbyterian congregations, St Andrew's Penshurst joined the Uniting Church in the 1970s. The church is in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

St Andrew's Uniting Church, Martin Street, Penshurst is of historical and architectural significance to the township of Penshurst and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

St Andrews Uniting Church is of historical significance as the expression of the role and position of the

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Presbyterian Church, and subsequently the Uniting Church, and its congregation in the community for over one hundred and fifty years. It is of architectural significance for its use of the Gothic revival style to express religious values, for the range of its memorials, and as a comparison with the churches of other denominations in Peshurst. It is of particular significance for its rare iconographical use of the nimbus form and abstract Biblical symbolism.

COMPARISON:

020 St Andrew's Uniting Church, Winter Street, Coleraine

159 Presbyterian Church, Coleraine Rd, Balmoral

211 St Andrews Presbyterian Church (former), Monroe St, Branholme

ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

19-May-02

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Alexander Sutherland, ed.	Victoria and Its Metropolis, Vol 2	1888	67
J. Mackiehen	Shire of Mount Rouse Shire Centenary	1964	
Miles Lewis ed.,	Victorian Churches, Their origins, their story and their architecture	1991	var.
Mount Rouse & District Historical Society	File Note - St. Andrews Presbyterian (Uniting) Church		n.d
Office of Lands and Survey	Township of Peshurst	1864	
Surveyor General's Office	Suburban & Country Lands & Township of Peshurst near Mount Rouse in the Parishes of Yalimba and BoramBoram, County of Villiers	1855	