

## HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

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**Name** CAPE BRIDGEWATER HOMESTEAD **HO175**  
**Address** 65 BLOWHOLES ROAD, CAPE BRIDGEWATER  
**Place Type** Homestead building  
**Citation Date** 2013



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**Recommended** VHR - HI - PS -  
**Heritage Protection**

### History and Historical Context

James Kennedy and Mary Kennedy, nee McIntyre, and their children left Ireland on the sailing ship "The Intrinsic" in 1841 for Port Phillip and came on to Portland Bay by coastal schooner. (Savill, p.4.) James was aged 39 and Mary was aged 38 and they travelled as assisted British immigrants. Shipping records give their surname as Keaneedy or Keneady and list eight or possibly nine children with ages ranging from 21 to 4. (IRABI, bk. 1, p. 130.) For colonial experience James took a shepherd's job at 25 pounds per annum and their first home on the Cape was built of earth sods and stone which was whitewashed inside and outside. (ibid.)

Their eldest son, John Thomson Kennedy held the Cape Bridgewater squatting run lease along with R. C. Hedditch from 1845 to 1853 after which he held it with James McClelland until 1859. (B&K, p. 92.) 'Kennedy and McClelland' had been listed as 'settlers, Bridgewater, Portland' as early as 1847. (Mouritz, p. 102.) The lease had been held by the Henty Brothers; when it was taken up, the Pre-emptive Right, which was smaller than normal, was located in the southeast corner of the intersection of Blowholes Road. This is probably where the original sod hut was located and is the land on which the ruined stone homestead still stands. 'The Kennedys worked hard to clear their land - they prospered, especially in the Gold Rush years.' (Savill, p. 7.) It is not known when the stone homestead was commenced but it may have been financed by this early prosperity. It is clearly built in two stages, which doubled its size from two rooms to four, with evidence of further wings and outbuildings.

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A private cemetery was established in the north-east corner of the Pre-emptive Right where the earliest members of the Kennedy family as well as some members of the Wilson and Vance families are buried. (Savill, p. 5.) McKinley's boarding house was located on the John Kennedy Pre-emptive Right below Kennedy's Cape Bridgewater Homestead. The Cape Bridgewater School, which started in a room of the Kennedys' house and became State School 741, was established in 1863 on an acre of land in the south-west corner of Bridgewater Road and Blowholes Road. (V&R, Vol. 2, p. 29.) Kennedy and Vance children were amongst the first enrolments. Also nearby was the Presbyterian Church, 'built on Kennedy land in 1870' which survives. (Savill, p. 7.)

John Kennedy - known as 'John. T. Kennedy' took up the four allotments totalling about 325 acres which constitute the Cape Bridgewater headland and became known as Stony Hill. This was separated from the Pre-Emptive Right by land in four allotments totalling about 88 acres owned by George Godwin Crouch. John Kennedy married Frances Anne Holmes in 1862 and it may be that the Stony Hill Farm dates from this time (VPI, Reg. No. 3169). They had 11 children (Savill, 1978, p. 104). He died in 1894 a 'Colonist of 55 years' and she died in 1939 a 'Colonist of 87 years'; both are buried in the Bridgewater cemetery.

The Kennedy family was linked through marriage to several other local families. Rose married John McKay and later Henry McKinley; Mary married Mathew Palmer; Jane married John Carrick Moore Tunnock; and Hannah married James Craig White. (Saville, 1978, p. 104.)

The Pre-emptive Right and Stony Hill were later purchased by John Doyle. He used it for grazing milk cows, processing the milk in his own butter factory rather than using the main factory off the Knights and Parkers Road because of the distance he had to travel. The private milk factory is said to have survived at least until 1979. (Savill, p. 24)

Oral history records three members of the Kennedy family all dying at the homestead in 1939. The three deaths were: Daniel, aged 80, on 8th April; John James, aged 79, on 20th October; and Frances Ann, aged 96, on 21st November. Daniel was the son of James Montgomery Kennedy who had arrived with James and Mary aged 14. Daniel was a Shire of Portland councillor for 24 years and served three terms as Shire President. (Saville, 1978, p. 104.) He appears to have neither married nor had children. Similarly, John James, Daniel's brother also never married. (Saville, 1978, p. 104.) It may be that the abandonment and decline into ruin of the house was triggered by these deaths.

Their family grew and prospered through their son Nicholas, who still has descendants in the area to the sixth and seventh generation and some on the original selection. These families were devout Christians and were to the fore in the establishment of the Cape Presbyterian Church (built on Kennedy land) in 1870. The first actual man of the cloth to visit Bridgewater was Portland's first Presbyterian minister, Reverend Alexander Laurie, in March 1842. The Sabbath school was commenced some years before.

It is interesting to note that when the Hentys started their out station (Maps in 'For thee and thine'), there were no pastoral licences as such. Among the Pastoral Pioneers of the settled district of the County of Normandy, we find that Bridgewater Cape was in the hands of the Henty Bros in 1839 but no actual figures were officially recorded as to acreage and number of stock it was licensed to run. It was before records. In 1845-53 this licence came into the hands of John Kennedy and Hedditch and in 1859 to John Kennedy and McLellan.

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## References

- Savill, Vanda. *For Thee and Thine*, 1978, Self Published, Heywood.
- Billis, R. V. and Kenyon, A. S., *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip*, 1974, Stockland Press Pty. Ltd, Melbourne.
- Public Records Office of Victoria, *Index to Registers of Assisted British Immigrants 1839-1871*, (n.d).
- Mouritz, J. J., *Port Phillip Almanac and Directory*, (comp, 1847). "Herald" office, Melbourne.
- Education Department of Victoria, *Vision & Realisation*, Vol. 2, (1973). Education Department of Victoria.
- Savill, Vanda, *All This and More*, 1979, Self Published, Heywood.
- Department of Crown Lands and Survey, *Plan of the Parish of Tarragal, County of Normanby*.

## Description

### Physical Description

Little remains of the stone house other than the main walls. It was single storey, symmetrical and faced north-east across Bridgewater Bay, enjoying what is still a spectacular view. It is clear from the embedded quoins that the house was built in two sections. Each had two rooms and from surviving footings there appears to have been a wing on the south side which may have been a semi-detached kitchen, possibly timber rather than stone. Close by there is a small stone outhouse which may have been an early dairy. No garden survives apart from one *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey Cypress) nearby which definitely dates from before the twentieth century.

### Physical Condition

The house is ruinous but stable with some potential for archaeological investigation about its construction and the lifestyle of the inhabitants.

### Usage / Former Usage

Abandoned

### Recommended Management

Maintain generally as existing, undertake works to make water tight.

## Comparative Analysis

Stony Hill, Blowholes Road, Cape Bridgewater  
Nicholson Residence, Nicholson Road, Bridgewater  
Trewalla Springs Farm, Bridgewater Road, West Portland (Trewalla)

## Statement of Significance

The Cape Bridgewater Homestead ruins are located on the Cape, overlooking Bridgewater Bay. Little remains of the stone house other than the main walls. It was single storey, symmetrical and faced north-east across Bridgewater Bay, enjoying what is still a spectacular view. It is clear from the embedded quoins that the house was built in two sections. Each had two rooms and from surviving footings there appears to have been a wing on the south side which may have been a semi-detached kitchen, possibly timber rather than stone. Close by there is a small stone outhouse which may have been an early dairy. No garden survives apart from one *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey Cypress) nearby which definitely dates from before the twentieth century. The homestead was built by the Kennedy family, who took up the land with Hedditch in 1845, taking over one of the earliest pastoral leases in Victoria, taken up by the Henty Brothers in 1839. It is likely that the homestead was built between 1845-1850, by local stonemason Joshua Black. The homestead is in ruinous condition, but retains a high degree of integrity, having not been altered or 'improved'.

How is it significant?

The Cape Bridgewater Homestead ruins are of architectural and historical significance to the Shire of Glenelg.

Why is it significant?

Cape Bridgewater Homestead is of historical significance for its siting on one of the first pastoral runs, taken up by the Henty Brothers in 1839, although it is likely that they were using this area for pastoral activities prior to this date. It is of further historical significance as a surviving example of a very early homestead, built by the Kennedy family, who continue to be important members of the local community. The siting of the homestead is also of considerable interest. Of architectural significance is the vernacular building composition and fine stone masonry, which is unusual for so early and isolated a building. It is also an excellent example of the work of Joseph Black, an early stonemason and storekeeper in the Cape Bridgewater area.

**This information is provided for guidance only and does not supersede official documents, particularly the planning scheme. Planning controls should be verified by checking the relevant municipal planning scheme.**