
ST MONICA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH



Presentation of St Monica's at the corner of High and Station Streets.



Rear (east) view, with sanctuary at centre and sacristy to the right.



South elevation.



Entry to the sacristy (north elevation).

Location

97 HIGH STREET, KANGAROO FLAT - PROPERTY NUMBER 197433, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO507

Heritage Listing

Greater Bendigo City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 24, 2023

What is significant?

St Monica's Catholic Church, at the corner of High and Station streets, Kangaroo Flat, was built in 1926, south of St Monica's Primary School. The church is a richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival red brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts. The roof is steeply pitched and clad with original slate tiles. The gable ends have characteristic Gothic Revival copings with crosses at the apexes; the main west gable has a large rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above; and nave windows which are all lancets with trefoiled inner frames and conspicuous quoin surrounds. The side buttresses are two-stepped with cement-rendered offsets; the west gable has three-step angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with pinnacles. The front porch also has two buttresses; there is a faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The external doors are planked and appear to be long standing. The church addresses the west and is located in the approximate centre of a rectangular allotment, with an open landscaped area to the west, a row of specimen trees to the north and a car park to the east (rear). The trees to the north boundary are a variety of species and appear to have been planted at the same time or soon after the construction of the church.

How is it significant?

St Monica's Catholic Church, at the corner of High and Station streets, Kangaroo Flat (built 1926), is of local historical, social and aesthetic/architectural significance.

Why is it significant?

St Monica's Catholic Church is historically significant (Criterion A) as the principal Catholic Church and centre of Catholic worship at Kangaroo Flat since 1926. The first Mass at Kangaroo Flat was held in 1857 on the site of the present church, then the International Hotel. The association between Catholicism and this part of High Street is reinforced by St Monica's Primary School, located to the north-east of the Station and High streets intersection, on a site originally developed by the Catholic community from the 1860s. It is also of social significance (Criterion G) as the centre of the local Kangaroo Flat Catholic community since 1926, including being the focus of church services and worship.

Aesthetically and architecturally (Criterion E) St Monica's is a substantially intact, richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts, and a steeply pitched slate clad roof. It is a vigorous and robustly scaled church, with vivid red brick walling, and distinguished by Gothic Revival elements including copings with crosses at the gable apexes, and a large rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above to the west gable end. Other elements of note include the lancet windows with trefoiled inner frames to the nave; two-stepped side buttresses with cement-rendered offsets; the three-stepped angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with pinnacles to the west gable; the buttressed front porch; and the faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The unusually thick and emphatic extrados surfaces on St Monica's reflect an emphasis on making churches more visible and sturdy in appearance during the 1920s. The subject church is also emphatically processional and demonstrative of the proportionally long churches which predominated in Victorian church architecture during this period. St Monica's, which has not been significantly modified since construction, additionally occupies a prominent location on High Street at the north end of Kangaroo Flat's retail strip.

Theme

8. Building community life

Heritage Study/Consultant	Greater Bendigo - Heritage Policy Citations Review, Lovell Chen P/L, 2011;
Construction dates	1926,
Architect/Designer	Austen, George,
Hermes Number	184919

Physical Description 1

St Monica's Church is located on the south-east corner of High and Station streets, south of St Monica's Primary School (formerly the site of the slab hut and 1864 Vahland and Getzschmann church, see 'History', above). It is located in the approximate centre of a rectangular allotment, with an open landscaped area to the west, a row of specimen trees to the north and a car park to the east (rear). There is a public pathway to the south and a modern toilet block to the south-east corner of the site. The building addresses the west.

St Monica's is a richly decorated, gabled and buttressed, Gothic Revival red brick church with tuckpointing and white stuccoed contrasts. The roof is steeply pitched and clad with original slate tiles. The gable ends have characteristic Gothic Revival copings with crosses at the apexes; the main west gable has a rose window with a dressed course and blind triangular panel above, and a sloping parapet, dressed apex, four kneelers and angled buttresses. The nave measures 16.7m by 8.2m, and is 9.1m high; the sanctuary is 5.2m by 5.2m, and the sacristy, on the east side of the sanctuary is 4.3m by 3.7m.4

The large rose window to the west gable has a broad intrados and moulded extrados, acting as a drip-mould, and ending in ballflowers halfway round. It has radial bar tracery, like a wheel window, converging on a quatrefoil. The nave windows are all lancets with trefoiled inner frames, each with conspicuous quoin surrounds and a thick, smooth intrados coupled to a moulded extrados ending in ballflowers at the impost. The side buttresses are two-stepped with cement-rendered offsets; the west gable has conspicuous three-step angle buttresses with cement-rendered gablets capped with square-plan gablet pinnacles. The pinnacles and upper third step of these buttresses have recessed panels ending in trefoils. The front porch also has two buttresses with two steps, the upper being cement rendered with recessed oblong coffer panels filled with foliate ornament. There is a faceted apsidal sanctuary with attached vestry. The chancel windows are sited high, being paired lancets with trefoiled frames and similar quoined architraves to those of the side nave windows. The vestry cuts across these chancel windows on the north-east side. It is dominated by a large gable with a crucifix finial, apex stone, kneelers, and two tall flanking corbels each capped by a gablet. The south-east wall of this vestry has a high mounted two-light window with timber frames and mullions, each pane with depressed three-centred arches cut in the window frames. These are surmounted by a flat head, above which was a depressed pointed arch. This flat head with surmounting pointed arch is matched by the side porch door and the vestry door. The nave's south-west side has a two-leafed door set in the fourth bay. The external doors are planked and appear to be long standing.

The trees to the to the north boundary are a variety of species and appear to have been planted at the same time or soon after the construction of the church.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>