

---

## Webb red brick dwelling and stables (former)



52 Edward Street Bendigo  
wall



72 Queen Street Bendigo

---

### Location

52 EDWARD STREET, AND 72 QUEEN STREET, BENDIGO - PROPERTY NUMBERS 175871,178070, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

### Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO859

### Heritage Listing

Greater Bendigo City

---

### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 12, 2023

#### What is significant?

The development of the land is a testament to the local histories of Bendigo and the micro-politics of the place associated with water and flour mills, public baths and laundries, which centred on Bendigo Creek and clustered around the centre of the town. For the first 40 years of the site's history from 1864 to 1904, the land was used as a laundry business operated by Mrs Mary Donohue, who also lived there. Mary Donohue arrived in Bendigo in 1864/5 taking out a Crown Allotment lease on the land, later purchasing the land in 1867 and operating a laundry

business in which she employed other women, Mrs Martin and Mrs McLaughlin in 1865-1866. Access to water was nearby and had the added advantage of being near the town baths located approximately 50 metres away in Bath Lane. At the time of her death in 1904 the land was purchased by William Webb, a successful flour mill owner and mining speculator.

In Victoria in the mid 1870s there were between 150-160 flour mills. The operation and establishment of flour mills during the gold rush years yielded high returns for investors. Flour mills were among the most highly capitalized industrial concerns in Bendigo. Like other local mill owners, William Webb invested his money in mining, becoming part of the Bendigo elite mine speculators. But unlike many others, faced with financial difficulty at the end of the quartz boom in the late 1870s, Webb prospered building the four storey Webb & Co flour mill on the corner of Queen and Williamson Streets in 1878. The J. Buckley and J. B. Loridan mills were insolvent by 1879 as too were the W. Degraives mills, which were purchased by William Webb. By 1901, Webb owned one of the few country flour mill businesses that still were in operation. The house and stables at Edward and Queen Streets represents the zenith of the lucrative returns made possible during the flour milling days in Bendigo. William Webb who arrived in Melbourne in 1850s, worked as manager and owner for over 50 years in the biggest flour mills in the state is regarded as an old pioneer a'50ers'. His Bendigo Boom style house, which he built at the end of his career, is an important testament to the changing values and tastes of early migrants to the colony, which were inspired by the new Federation of Australia movement in the early 20th century. William Webb commissioned the construction of a substantial Bendigo architectural boom style villa with attached two-storey stables at 72 Queen and 52 Edward Street in inner Bendigo city. The work is in the style of William Beebe, Bendigo's most prominent architect of the time, although this is not confirmed. The red brick stables, high boundary walls and adjoining residence form one complex which is visually prominent and adjacent Hunter House in Queen Street, a two-storey mine speculators mansion. The two buildings form an historic group of highly ornate Bendigo boom style residences complete with stables.

#### **How is it significant?**

The residence at 72 Queen Street and former red brick two storey stables at 52 Edward Street and brick boundary walls are of local historical, social and aesthetic/architectural significance to the City of Greater Bendigo as a complex, which is considered rare.

#### **Why is it significant?**

##### **Criterion A**

*Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history*

The residence and former two-storey stable and boundary walls are historically significant (Criterion A) for its history as a part of a substantial residential complex built in 1904 by the wealthy flour mill owner William Webb, J.P., who was also a successful mine speculator and had a long 50 year association since the early 1850s with some of the major flour mill businesses in Victoria.

The site has historic significance as it demonstrates the arbitrary character and changing fortunes of the city as it developed from a new gold rush town to a large regional centre in the 20th century. The early history of the site illustrates the story of Mary Donohue and the opportunities available to her to establish a thriving laundry business in the 1860s and remain there for over 40 years.

##### **Criterion B**

*Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history*

The red brick residence and adjoining stables and high boundary walls form one complex which is visually prominent and adjacent Hunter House in Queen Street, a two-storey mine speculators mansion. The two buildings complex both built by highly successful Bendigo mine speculators form a strong visual historic group of highly ornate Bendigo boom style residences complete with stables, which are rare in the centre of Bendigo.

##### **Criterion E**

*Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics .*

The house and stables at Edward and Queen Streets represents the zenith of the lucrative returns made possible during the flour milling days in Bendigo. The complex design of residence and stables demonstrates influence by the Picturesque Art Nouveau and Federation style of architecture is a very good example of the distinct hybrid Bendigo boom style. The decorative details shows borrowing from a number of different influences such as the French Second Empire, Edwardian and European Art Nouveau styles, all key architectural motifs present in typical Bendigo architectural style. The former red brick stables, high boundary walls and adjoining residence are of aesthetic/architectural significance (Criterion E) for their construction techniques in brick and architectural design.

The residence and former red brick stables and high boundary walls meets the threshold of aesthetic value at a local level for community held value due to its prominence as a historic and aesthetic element of the streetscape, being located at a principal road intersection in the centre of Bendigo city.

### **Criterion H**

*Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.*

The residence and former red brick stables and high boundary walls is of local social significance (Criterion G and Criterion H ), to Bendigo as part of intact residential complex, built in 1904 by the wealthy flour mill owner William Webb, J.P., who was also a successful mine speculator. He had a long association with some of the major mill businesses in Victoria, working in the Desgraves & Co firm in Melbourne in 1850s, later managing the Kyneton mills before, transferring to the Degraives & Co Bendigo mills (2 at Hargreaves and Wills Streets). He later become a partner in the Degraives & Co, Hargeaves mill and purchased the milling property. In 1878 he built his own business the four storey mill at the corner of Lyttleton and Queen Street to the design of the architect Joseph Martin Brady with modifications by Webb and his miller/millwright John Butcher.

William Webb's Bendigo Boom style house and stables, which he built at the end of his career, is an important testament to the changing values and tastes of early migrants to the colony and Bendigo in particular, which were inspired by the new Federation of Australia movement in the early 20th century.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Greater Bendigo - Heritage Advisor report, City of Greater Bendigo, 2016;
Construction dates	1904,
Architect/Designer	Beebe, William,
Hermes Number	203264
Property Number	

---

## **Physical Description 1**

There is uncertainty about the possible architect, who designed the very ornate single storey late Bendigo boom style house and attached stables but it appears in the style of William Beebe, Bendigo's most prominent architect of the time, who trained under W.C. Vahland. His approach to design was influenced by the Picturesque Art Nouveau style and is highly ornate with decorative render details and finely crafted timber fretwork to the verandah and window hoods and finials. The main house is of a hybrid Federation style, typical of Bendigo. It is asymmetrical in plan with a projecting gable front room and ornate cast iron verandah. The decorative details shows borrowing from a number of different influences such as the French Second Empire, Edwardian and European Art Nouveau styles, all key architectural motifs present in typical Bendigo architectural style described by Andrew Ward in the Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study and regarded as a very good example of a late Bendigo boom style example. The property, residence and stables have been identified in the thematic environmental heritage study.

The two storey red brick stable is a substantial structure built on the property line with high brick masonry walls that extend around the site as a boundary wall on the north west and north east side. The boundary wall extends across the boundary line of the property at 72 Queen Street. The former Webb residence at 72 Queen Street and its rear outbuilding is constructed of the same bricks and displays the same brick details as the stable block, clearly they were built at the same time by the same builder to the same architect's design and formed part of a large impressive residential complex.

The stables have a skillion roof and projecting end brick eaves. The upper level is accessed from an external timber stair case and door on the south-east side and there is also an internal stair case on the opposite, north-west side of the building. The segmental arched upper windows and half circle arched former hay loft door on the first level are outlined in polychrome cream brick.

## **Integrity**

The external integrity of the buildings generally is fairly high. The residence is totally intact and structurally sound and well maintained. The stables have been altered at ground level. It is not known whether this is an adaptation of a pre-existing original skillion section, which appears likely. The lower section of the front external walls has been altered and modified to accommodate the operation of the Bicycle Shop. It appears from a site inspection of the extent of the original brick walls that there may have been a single storey skillion addition to the stables. This section has now been converted to the shop and the majority of the former internal walls stables stalls and the like removed at ground level. The upper floor remains intact albeit the ceiling has been sprayed with a concrete foam insulation system.

The significant fabric is the main residence, the substantial red brick external walls the stables and boundary walls. These walls are of fine quality and clearly indicate their historic relationship with the adjoining residence.

## **Physical Conditions**

The condition of the external walls and facades is generally good, though some areas of deterioration are associated with rainwater gutters pipes and drainage system.

*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/>*