

Former Samson's Cottage, Golden Square- heritage in danger



Samson's Cottage in 2012.

Samson's Cottage was constructed in stages beginning in 1856. It is one of the few remaining unaltered early stone miner's cottages remaining on the Bendigo goldfield. The property was listed as of State Significance by both the National Trust and Heritage Victoria in 2009, at the owner's request. Sadly, nothing at all was done to maintain or repair it since, and it has fallen into disrepair and partial collapse in the intervening 13 years.

The images below document it's decline.

The cottage needs urgent work to save it before it succumbs completely to years of neglect.

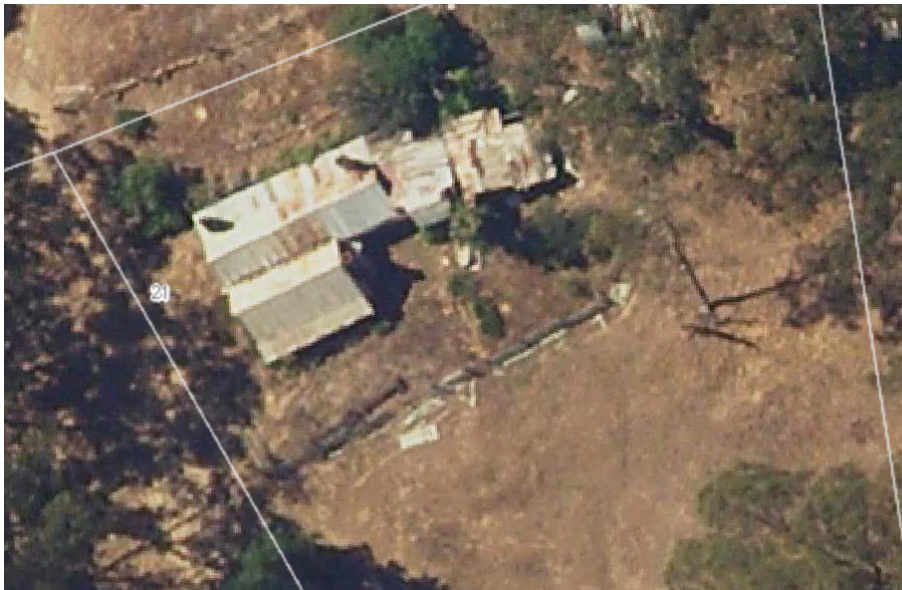


Figure 1: An Aerial view in 2009, when the building was intact. It was included on the VHR in 2009.



Figure 2: By September 2021 rear sections had collapsed. Both aerial images from Pozi Bendigo Community Compass, CoGB website

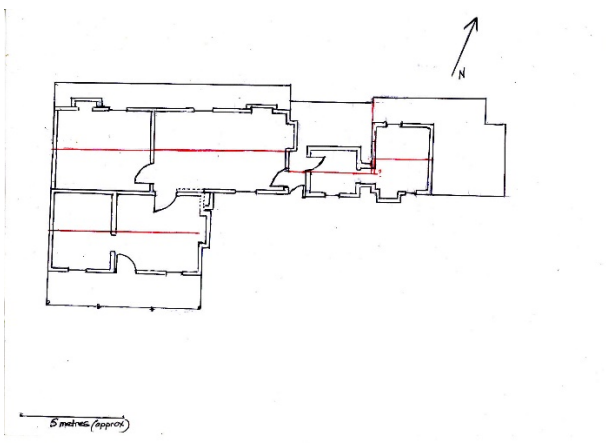


Figure 3: Approximate floorplan of Samsons Cottage.



Figure 4: In 2012 the verandah and windows were intact.



Figure 5: By 2022 all windows were smashed and the verandah was collapsing.



Figure 6: In 2012 the north side of rear bootmaker's workshop and verandah were still standing, although the wall was in need of repair. The verandah has since fallen down and the wall seen here has collapsed.



Figure 7: The rear section of Samson's Cottage in 2022. The collapsed section is on the left.

Below are the VHR and National Trust listings for this property. They include a brief history.

http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/reports/report_place/114752

http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/reports/report_place/114559

Victorian Heritage Database place details - 12/4/2022

FORMER SAMSON FAMILY RESIDENCE



Location:

21 DOYE STREET GOLDEN SQUARE, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H2231

Listing Authority: VHR

Extent of Registration:

1. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 2231 held by the Executive Director, being all of the land described in Certificates of Title Volume 9011 Folio 328 and Volume 9310 Folio 259, and part of Crown Allotments 63M and 63J Section L Parish of Sandhurst.

2. All the buildings B1 and B2, and feature marked F1 on Diagram 2231 held by the Executive Director.

General: The landscape and garden

B1 Main building

B2 Fowl shed

F1 Underground water tank

Statement of Significance:

The former Samson residence is a miner's cottage which was built in stages during the second half of the nineteenth century, probably beginning in the mid- to late-1850s. It was built on a Miner's Right taken up in the mid-1850s by Thomas Samson, a shoemaker, below Specimen Hill, on the outskirts of what became the town of Bendigo. A Miner's Right was from the mid-1850s the necessary evidence for the occupation of a mining

claim. Later Goldfields Acts gave the miner a number of rights, including the right to occupy a quarter of an acre of Crown land for residential purposes, the right to take timber and stone from Crown Land for building and mining purposes, and the right to build races and dams on Crown Land for mining purposes. The Samson family had ten children, and as their family grew they continually extended the cottage, changing a two-roomed gabled cottage into a sprawling house with many rooms. Samson died in 1893 and his wife Sarah remained in the cottage until 1906. In 1908 it was bought by the Doye family, who lived there until 1966, and still owned it in 2009. It passed from Miner's Right to freehold in 1974.

The former Samson residence is a miner's cottage, mainly of sandstone rubble, with a corrugated iron roof set into the hillside on a gently sloping site. The original cottage was a two-room gabled structure (the south-west corner of the present building) with a low stone-paved verandah along the south side. This was over the years extended to the north and east with several additional gabled stone and timber skillion sections linked with a verandah along the north side. The original timber shingles survive under the corrugated iron in parts of the roof. The interiors are very simple, with floors mainly of dirt, walls of painted rough stone and ceilings lined with boards that follow the line of the roofs. At the front of the house is a small garden, and at the rear is a stone retaining wall with gardens above. To the north is a brick-lined underground water tank, to the east is a stone fowl shed and behind this the remnants of a water race.

The former Samson Residence is of architectural and historical significance to the state of Victoria.

The former Samson residence is architecturally significant as a largely intact example of a typical stone miner's cottage, built in stages from the mid- to late-1850s, which has remained largely unchanged since the late nineteenth century. It is significant as a demonstration of the typical form of such early miners' cottages, which generally began as two-roomed gabled structures and grew as their owners' needs and wealth increased.

The former Samson residence is historically significant as an unusually intact example in Victoria of a miner's cottage known to have been built under a Miner's Right. It is also unusual in that it still largely retains its original context, partly surrounded by lightly forested Crown Land, with remnants of early mining infrastructure, such as a water race, and is strongly evocative of its mining era origins. It is also historically significant as a demonstration of the simple way of life of miners and other workers in Victoria in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Victorian Heritage Database place details - 12/4/2022

Former Samson Family Residence



Location:

21 Doye Street,, BENDIGO VIC 3550 - Property No B7330

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H2231

Listing Authority: VHR

Extent of Registration:

Statement of Significance:

The former Samson Family Residence is a mainly sandstone rubble stone building with a corrugated iron roof, with outbuildings, retaining walls, a well, water race, and front and rear gardens. It appears that the first two rooms (under the southern gable) date from the 1850s, while the northern gabled section dates from after 1866. The original timber shingles survive under the later corrugated iron. There are low pitched verandahs both to the north and south with stone paving, the northern one extending to the east to link up various stone and weatherboard skillion roofed additions. The cottage is cut into the slope to the north and east, with high retaining walls holding back the soil on both sides. The interior is extremely basic, with mainly dirt floors, painted rough stone walls and ceiling boards following the line of the roof. Apart from a few probably 20th century chimneys and a gas stove, the house appears little changed since the 19th century.

There are some outbuildings from various periods to the north and east and rudimentary garden layouts to the north and south.

Thomas Samson, a shoemaker turned joiner, came to the Bendigo goldfields in the mid 1850s and took up a miner's right in Spec(k) Gully in the mid-1850s, and probably built the first stage of the cottage at this time on a miner's right site below Specimen Hill, south west of what became central Bendigo. He worked as a miner until about 1871 then returned to boot making from the property. From 1889 he was a partner in a shop a few blocks

closer to the centre of town, and died in 1894. With his wife Sarah they had 10 children and she remained in the cottage until 1906. Albert and Florence Doye purchased the site in 1908 and lived there with their family until 1966. It was renovated by a tenant in the 1970s and passed from miner's right to freehold in 1974. It is now owned by Arthur Doye.

Former Samson Family Residence is significant for historic and architectural reasons at the State level.

The former Samson Family Residence is historically and architecturally significant as the dwelling of a family of simple means that appears largely unchanged since the 19th century. The first part of the house dates from the initial gold rush era in Victoria in the mid 1850s and perhaps uniquely demonstrates the early domestic conditions of the first mining families of the goldfields in the region. It is also directly associated with this early phase of surface mining through the nearby mine workings and other infrastructure such as the water race. The residence as a whole exemplifies the evolution of a family home and the range of activities involved in providing for a working class family.

The house is architecturally significant for its ability to demonstrate characteristic vernacular design and construction as seen in the rubble stone work, low verandahs and timber roof shingles of the goldfields era and for its very high level of integrity.

Classified: 01/06/2009

