



Description:

6 Petrie Street comprises a rectangular garden suburb allotment located amidst the grided subdivision of the Frankston Railway Station Estate. The Estate is located east of the original Frankston township and is predominantly occupied by post war, 1960's & 70s detached housing and single storey medium density development.

The dwelling at 6 Petrie Street is a single storey detached Italianate style Victorian Villa constructed of poly chrome brickwork with cream brick dressings to front façade doors and windows. The dwelling has a symmetrically composed façade with central door and flanking double hung sash windows, front verandah and hipped roof clad with corrugated iron. The dwelling is set back from the street boundary allowing a front garden setting.

The building is reasonably intact and has evidently been recently restored.

It is noted that an internal and back-of site inspection has not been carried out as part of this assessment.

History:

6 Petrie Street was originally Lot 34 in the *Frankston Railway Station Estate*. It was built in 1887-88 by James Petrie, owner of the 108 block subdivision.

In 1878 the land where the house at 6 Petrie Street now stands was part of a larger holding owned by James Raeburn Petrie, a coal merchant from St Kilda.¹

Little is known of Petrie (c.1833-1903), who is not recorded in the published histories of either Frankston or St Kilda. It is known that he was married to one Augusta Sophie Allan, with whom he had five children between 1857 and 1875. Their fourth child, James Robert Petrie, was born in Frankston in 1870, which indicates that the family had settled there by that time.

The rate book for 1885-86 (compiled 26 September 1885) lists James Rabone [sic] Petrie as the owner of 34 acres identified as Crown Allotment parts 5 and 5A of Section C, Parish of Frankston, County of Mornington. The land had a Net Annual Value of £30.² The following year, the rate records (compiled 11 September 1886) list Petrie as the owner of 19 acres, parts 5 and 5A, Section C, now valued at £50 and divided into 76 quarter-acre building lots.³

A sales notice held in the Map Collection at the State Library of Victoria records the auction of the *Frankston Railway Station Estate*, which took place on Monday, 9 November.⁴ No year is cited, but reference to a perpetual calendar indicates that it could have been either 1885 or 1891 – the former seems to be most likely, as this tallies with the above chronology established by the rate book entries. This, moreover, is confirmed by the lodged plan for the subdivision, which is dated 23 February 1886.⁵

The brochure depicts the *Frankston Railway Station Estate*, 'adjoining the terminus and within two minutes of the sea-beach', as a 108-lot subdivision on the north-western corner of Beach Road and Dandenong Road, comprising four new streets: Petrie and Lewis streets (running north-south, with a right-of-way between), intersected by Erskine and David streets (running east-west). Most allotments were standard quarter-acre blocks, with street frontages of 66 feet (20.11 metres); five larger blocks, fronting Beach Road, had frontages of 153 feet (46.63 metres). The brochure's description of the new subdivision, composed in Boom-period real estate agent bravado::

The situation of the Estate is on rising ground in the pretty village of Frankston, which nestles on the shore of the bright blue ocean wherein the finny denizens of the deep disport themselves lazily and fall willing victims to the wiles of the Waltons. In this neighbourhood the nestors of the Victorian legislature recuperate their exhausted energies and become inspired with the grand and noble sentiments which the travelling Ministers of Literature – the Salas and the Forbeses of the day – love to chronicle. The importance of Frankston (the scene of our Autumn Military Manoeuvres) as a watering-place is becoming daily more assured, and one of its chief charms is its easy distance from Melbourne – about an hour's ride, but not quite far enough removed from the "madding crowd's ignoble strife" to allow of cool reflection and health-giving recreation.

Described as being 'quite within the reach of both bachelors and benedicts', the allotments were offered for a deposit of £5, with the balance to be paid over two years at 5% interest. A certificate of title could be prepared for an additional sum of two guineas.

The auction, however, failed to excite a rush of bidders, and the market failed to improve until the twentieth century due to the depressed conditions of the 1890s. The rate book for 1892-93, for example, reveals that only about 25 people owned land on the new subdivision, which was referred to only as 'Sub 5A, Section C'. Moreover, only four houses had actually been

1 Graeme Butler. *Frankston Heritage Study* (1995). p 91.

2 *Shire of Mornington Rate Book*, 1883-90, p.9, PROV VPRS 11016, Unit P001.

3 *Ibid.*, p.48.

4 'Plan of Subdivision of the Frankston Railway Station Estate'. MAP 820bje 1880?. Map Collection, State Library of Victoria.

5 Lodged Plan No 1007, stamped 23 February 1886. Held by Land Victoria.

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built on the estate by that time. The first house was that of J R Petrie himself, which appears for the first time in the 1888-89 rate book, described as 'house, stables' valued at £40. Petrie subsequently erected another house, valued at £40, which first appears in the rate book for 1890-91.⁶ Although not explicitly stated in the rate books, the relatively high Net Annual Value suggests that both houses were of brick construction.

The two other early houses on the estate were built between 1889 and 1891 by John Laurisson and James Moore.⁷ Both houses were valued at only £10, which suggests that they were of timber construction. Later rate books indicate that Moore's house was located on Lots 59 and 60 – i.e on the east side of Lewis Street, between David and Erskine streets.⁸ John Laurisson's house, the exact location of which is unknown, was evidently demolished around 1900, as his entry in the rate book for that year has the word 'house' crossed out, and the Net Annual Value duly amended from £10 to £3.⁹

It would appear that the existing brick house at 6 Petrie Street (Lot 34) was the original 'house, stables' built by James Raeburn Petrie between October 1887 and September 1888. His other house, erected between September 1889 and September 1890, survives at 10 Lewis Street.¹⁰ By 1910, the original house at 6 Petrie Street – then described in the rate books as 'Lot 34, Petrie's [Estate], Section C' – was owned by one Josiah Bray, then with a Net Annual Value of £28.¹¹ From 1962 until at least 1972, the house was occupied by a Mrs M Keast.¹²

Cultural Significance

6 Petrie Street is of social, historical and architectural cultural significance to the City of Frankston as:

(We may need to assess against AHC thematic Criteria?)

- A rare and highly intact example of Nineteenth century built development in Frankston.
- For its associations with notably unsuccessful Boom period land speculation in Frankston, particularly the Frankston Railway Station Estate.

References

Graeme Butler, *Frankston Heritage Study* (1995).

Shire of Mornington Rate Book, VPRS 11016, Unit P001. Public Record Office, North Melbourne.

'Plan of Subdivision of the Frankston Railway Station Estate'. MAP 820bjc 1880? Map Collection, State Library of Victoria.

Lodged Plan No 1007, stamped 23 February 1886. Held by Land Victoria.

Sands & McDougall Victorian Directory. Various volumes.

6 *Shire of Mornington Rate Book*. 1891-93, pp.13-14.

7 *Shire of Mornington Rate Book*. 1883-90, p.11; 1891-93, p.11.

8 *Shire of Frankston and Hastings Rate Book*, 1910.

9 *Shire of Frankston and Hastings Rate Book*, 1900-01, p.17.

10 Graham Butler. *Frankston Heritage Study*, p.91.

11 *Shire of Frankston and Hastings Rate Book*. 1910, p.5.

12 *Sands & McDougall Victorian Directory*. Various volumes.