

Victorian Heritage Database Report  
**'Kirkella' Homestead & outbuildings, 696 Kirkella Road,  
CAMPBELLS BRIDGE**

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**Location:**

696 Kirkella Road CAMPBELLS BRIDGE, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Recommended for Heritage Register

**Statement of Significance:**

Kirkella Homestead, 696 Kirkella Road, Campbells Bridge has significance as a predominantly intact 19th century farm complex in a formal landscaped setting including a main rudimentary Victorian Italianate styled main house, imposing early Federation styled brick stables, modest timber tennis pavilion adjacent to the tennis court, timber cricket pavilion/office and associated servant's quarters, blacksmith's shop and other farm buildings. Established by Duncan McKellar in c.1861, the original portion of the main house was constructed in 1868 to a design by the Stawell architect, Alfred Scurry. The front portion was added in c.1881 to a design by prominent Melbourne and Stawell architect George Inskip, while the rear nursery and other spaces were constructed in 1926. The stables building was built in the 1890s, as was the cricket pavilion/office. Kirkella homestead played host to several social activities during the ownership of Duncan G. McKellar between 1884 and 1907, including the Australian and English Test cricket teams.

Kirkella Homestead is architecturally significant at a STATE level. The main house demonstrates original and early design qualities of a rudimentary Victorian Italianate style. These qualities include the single storey

height; front (c.1881) traversing gambrel roof form punctuated by the central, heavy, projecting portico with round-arched openings, Tuscan pilasters and the balustraded parapet; decorative tessellated portico floor tiles; English bond brickwork with regular bays of timber framed and glazed French doors having transom windows above; multi-paned timber framed double hung windows; imposing rendered brick chimneys with incised rectangular panels and projecting tops; cement rendered quoinwork; elaborate cast iron finials in the gable ends and the timber ventilators as gable infill. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the galvanised corrugated iron roof cladding to all roof forms; paired turned timber columns with projecting mouldings to the front portion; paired timber verandah brackets and decorative timber valances; complex hipped roof forms of the original central portion of the house with rendered brick chimneys, rendered/painted brick wall construction, narrow eaves, and multi-paned timber framed double hung windows; and the rear hipped roofs reflecting the 1926 additions with the rendered/painted brick wall construction, narrow eaves, simple timber framed double hung windows, and the encircling verandahs.

The stables demonstrate original design qualities of an early Federation style. These qualities include the broad gambrel roof form surmounted by the central ventilated turret that is adorned with a cast iron weathervane. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the narrow attic gable that projects at one end; wide skillion return verandah at the other end; small projecting, hipped ventilation dormers; face brick chimneys with multi-corbelled tops; narrow eaves; face brick wall construction; galvanised corrugated iron roof cladding; timber framed 8 paned double hung windows; timber doors with 3 paned transom windows above; double timber doors with 4 paned transom windows; turned timber finials to the gable ends and ventilation dormers; and the stop chamfered timber verandah columns with capital mouldings and timber brackets. The interior hewn timber floor slabs sloped and drained toward sumps, also contribute to the significance of the place.

The cricket pavilion/office demonstrates original design qualities of a rudimentary Late Victorian style. These qualities include the hipped roof form, together with the chamfered entrance doorway. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single storey height, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, galvanised corrugated iron roof cladding, return verandah under the roof supported by timber posts, shallow-projecting faceted bay with timber framed double hung windows, and the brick chimney.

The tennis pavilion demonstrates significant design qualities that include the simple curved gabled roof form clad in galvanised corrugated iron, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding and the decorative rounded timber bargeboards on the gable ends.

Kirkella Homestead is aesthetically significant at a STATE level. It demonstrates significant visual qualities including the park-like landscaped setting with gravelled drive that leads to an oval turntable; tennis court with adjacent timber tennis pavilion; open grassed areas and numerous mature exotic and native trees; fountain near the tennis court; fruit trees and avenue of pines that point toward the family cemetery built from granite blocks with wrought iron gates; and the remnants of the early driveway (defined by the curved row of exotic trees) and croquet lawn (defined by the open grassed area nearby the curved row of trees).

Kirkella Homestead is historically significant at a STATE level. It is associated with Duncan McKellar who established the property in c.1861, building the original portion of the main house in 1868. The front portion of the house was constructed in c.1881, while the rear sections were added in 1926. It was after the death of McKellar in 1884 when Kirkella was transformed into a show place. An imposing brick stables and cricket pavilion (now office) were built in the 1890s, and a tennis pavilion added at the front. Substantial landscaping was carried out during this time. The prosperity of these years was brought about by McKellar's successor, his son, Duncan G. McKellar, who hosted the Australian and English Test Cricket Team. After Duncan G. McKellar's tragic death in 1907, the property passed to Duncan J. McKellar, and then to Sue McKellar. The property also has associations with Alfred Scurry, Stawell architect who designed the original portion of the main house, and George Inskip, prominent architect of Melbourne and Stawell who has been claimed to be responsible for the front portion of the house in 1881.

Overall, Kirkella Homestead is of STATE significance.

## Description

Kirkella Homestead, 696 Kirkella Road, Campbells Bridge, consists of a predominantly intact 19th century farm complex that includes the main house/homestead, and some associated farm outbuildings.

### Setting

The homestead has a park-like landscaped setting, typical of 19th century farm complexes. There is a gravelled drive that leads to an oval turntable. The homestead looks onto a tennis court of the front, with its adjacent timber tennis pavilion. The front is also characterised by open grassed areas and numerous mature exotic and native trees, some arranged in rows that further enhance the formality of the extensive setting. A focal point to the front garden is the fountain near the tennis court, the water pressure for which was once achieved by a header tank above the entrance portico. Other mature exotic trees and plantings are also situated nearby the main house. Beyond the fountain is an area of once cultivated fruit trees and an avenue of pines that point toward the family cemetery built from granite blocks with wrought iron gates.

At one end of the house is an open grassed area with a curved row of exotic trees which denotes the 19th century drive, and the open grassed area is a legacy of the early croquet lawn.

### Main House/Homestead

The asymmetrical, single storey, face brick, rudimentary Victorian Italianate styled main house is characterised by complex roof forms and an encircling concave verandah. These roof forms are clad in lapped galvanised corrugated iron.

The front traversing gambrel roof form represents the c.1881 addition designed by Inskip. It is punctuated by a central, heavy, projecting portico with round-arched openings, Tuscan pilasters and a balustraded parapet. The portico floor features decorative tessellated tiles. The front is constructed of face English bond brickwork with regular bays of timber framed and glazed French doors having transom windows above, and multi-paned timber framed double hung windows. Imposing rendered brick chimneys with incised rectangular panels and projecting tops adorn the roofline. Early decorative features of the front include the cement rendered quoinwork, elaborate cast iron finials in the gable ends and the timber ventilators as gable infill.

A feature of the formal front portion of the main house is the encircling verandah. It is supported by paired turned timber columns with projecting mouldings, above which are paired timber brackets and decorative timber valances.

The central portion represents the original house of 1868. It is characterised by complex hipped roof forms with rendered brick chimneys, rendered/painted brick wall construction, narrow eaves, and multi-paned timber framed double hung windows.

The rear hipped windows reflect the 1926 additions and are constructed of rendered/painted brick, with narrow eaves, and simple timber framed double hung windows. There are also encircling verandahs.

### Cricket Pavilion/Office

The modestly scaled, single storey, horizontal timber weatherboard, rudimentary Late Victorian styled office building has a hipped roof form, together with a chamfered entrance doorway. There is a return verandah under the roof that is supported by timber posts. A shallow-projecting faceted bay has early timber framed double hung windows. There is also an early painted brick chimney.

### Stables

The imposing, face brick, early Federation styled stables building is characterised by a broad gambrel roof form surmounted by central ventilated turret adorned with a cast iron weathervane. A narrow attic gable projects at one end, while there is a wide skillion return verandah at the other end (the return is formed under the main

roof). The roof is also adorned by small projecting, hipped ventilation dormers, and face brick chimneys having multi-corbelled tops. The roof forms are clad in lapped galvanised corrugated iron. Narrow overhangs are features of the eaves to the main building, although there are modest eaves with exposed timber rafters to the projecting attic gable.

Other early features of the design including the timber framed 8 paned double hung windows, timber doors with 3 paned transom windows above, and the double timber doors with 4 paned transom windows.

Other early decorative features of the design include the turned timber finials to the gable ends, ventilation dormers, and the stop chamfered timber verandah columns with capital mouldings and timber brackets.

Part of the verandah has been filled in with timber boarding at some stage.

Internally, the stables floor (except grain room and coach area) is constructed of hewn timber floor slabs sloped and drained toward sumps, which in turn carry the effluent.

#### Tennis Pavilion

The small, horizontal timber weatherboard, tennis pavilion consists of a simple curved gabled roof form clad in galvanised corrugated iron. A feature of the structure is the decorative rounded timber bargeboards on the gable ends.

Heritage Study / Consultant	Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	104803
Property number	

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online*