

## ATTACHMENTS TO REPORT

### Item 5.3

**Planning Proposal and Heritage Assessment of 2 & 4 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and 'Karingal', 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale—Interim Heritage Orders Nos. 12 & 13**

#### **Attachment 1**

Report and Minutes of 8 December 2021 Council Meeting regarding Interim Heritage Order No. 12 for 2 & 4 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and Interim Heritage Order No. 13 for 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale.

#### **Attachment 2**

Heritage inventory sheet for 'Karingal' Interwar bungalow and garden including brick and trachyte fence, 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale.

#### **Attachment 3**

Biographical Notes and Gazetteer of Work on Alf Stephens & Sons 1886-1965.

#### **Attachment 4**

Planning Proposal for 2, 4 & 6 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale (heritage)

5.3 Planning Proposal and Heritage Assessment of 2 & 4 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and 'Karingal', 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale—Interim Heritage Orders Nos. 12 & 13

ATTACHMENT 3 Biographical Notes and Gazetteer of Work on Alf Stephens & Sons 1886-1965.



LATE AGENDA FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Wednesday 08 December 2021

REPORT GENERAL MANAGER



1. GENERAL MANAGER

**L.1 Interim Heritage Orders Nos. 12 and 13 for 2 & 4 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale**

**Report Author:** Strategic Land Use Planner (Heritage)  
**Authoriser:** Manager Strategic Land Use Planning

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to advise Council and the community of two interim heritage orders issued by Council that came into force on 19 November 2021.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT**

1. The report be noted.
2. A report on the heritage assessments of 2 & 4 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale, be presented to the Local Planning Panel and Council in due course.

**REPORT**

On 19 November 2021, Interim Heritage Order No. 12 for 2 & 4 Myrtle Street, Bowral, and Interim Heritage Order No. 13 for 'Karingal', 26 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale, were published in the NSW Government Gazette and came into force on that day.

Copies of the Gazette notices are **ATTACHED**.

These Interim Heritage Orders (IHOs) were recommended because of the threat to the sites by current or future potential development proposals. There is evidence that these sites have heritage values that contribute to the history and character of the towns of Bowral and Moss Vale and their retention has been championed by the community who created online petitions and garnered local newspaper coverage of their fight to protect these properties.

Under section 25 of the Heritage Act 1977, an IHO may be placed on items, places and areas that may be found, on further investigation, to be of State or local significance and that are under threat. The IHO process delegated to Councils provides a six-month protection to enable heritage investigations to be carried out. The IHO is extended to 12 months if Council, during the first six (6) months, makes a resolution to include the item in its heritage schedule.

**Delegations**

In 2001, the Minister delegated his powers under section 25 of the Heritage Act to certain Councils, including Wingecarribee Shire Council.

These delegations to issue Interim Heritage Orders have been further delegated to Council's Director, Communities and Place in accordance with the delegation provisions of the Local Government Act 1993. The conditions attached to the Ministerial delegations to Council are articulated in the *Local Government Heritage Guidelines* issued by Heritage NSW and have been complied with in relation to the issuing of these IHOs and will continue to be adhered to in any relevant future actions.

## **Biographical Notes and Gazetteer of Work on Alf Stephens & Sons 1886-1965**

Prepared by Dennis McManus December 2021

Alf Stephens and Sons was an important building firm that operated in Bowral in the Southern Highlands of NSW for 79 years over two generations - 1886 to 1965. The company had a big impact on Bowral and nearby towns and beyond in Canberra in a wide range of projects from cottages to mansions, schools, churches, commercial buildings and public buildings.

Major projects included:

- 1895 Bowral Courthouse
- 1897 Berrima Gaol Governor's Residence
- 1914 Empire Cinema in Bowral
- 1919 Bowral Golf Club House
- 1924 four storey Ranelagh Hotel at Robertson
- 1929 Church of England Grammar School in Canberra
- 1930 St Johns Anglican Church in Moss Vale
- 1930 Gibraltar Park Children's Home in Mittagong
- 1933 Bowral Ambulance Station
- 1934 Dormie House at Moss Vale
- 1935 Bowral Hospital
- 1935 Canberra Masonic Hall
- 1938 Canberra Fire Station at Manuka and 10 two storey residences for staff
- 1930s government contracts for hundreds of new houses in Canberra
- 1965 Clubbe Hall at Frensham School in Mittagong.

The following notes draw heavily on Maureen and Bud Townsing's excellent book - A brief history of Alf Stephens & Sons 2020 pages 3-7.

To the Townsing book I have added additional material including more information on Canberra projects and a gazetteer base of buildings erected by the company in date order which can be added to as other company built projects become known. This project greatly assisted by using Trove and in particular a search "Alf Stephens and Sons" provided 217 results across the Bowral District and Canberra.

### Alf Stephens Snr (1863-1924)

Some of the information that is known about the background of Alf Stephens Snr. before he arrived in Australia, comes from his obituary notice printed in The Methodist 1st March 1924: "he was born at Brixton England in 1863, but spent his early life in Teddington where he became a member of the Rye Lane (Peckham) Baptist Church, and under the ministry of Rev J. T. Briscoe while quite young he confessed Christ. It was also at the same church that he met the lady who became his wife. Coming to Sydney in 1886, he settled in Bowral, where in the absence of a Baptist Church, he joined the Methodists, of which denomination he continued to be a member".

On 28 November 1885, two vessels left England bound for Sydney. One was the Garonne, which arrived in Sydney on 11 January 1886. The other vessel leaving Plymouth was SS. Parthia, with 764 government immigrants on board. The Parthia arrived in Sydney two days after the Garonne.

On board the Garonne was Alf Stephens Snr., age 22, carpenter. Also on board was Charles Stephens, age 20, carpenter and Geo. E Marston, age 30, a clerk.

On board the Parthia was Elizabeth Riley, age 24, domestic servant, Baptist, from Surrey. Elizabeth was the lady referred to above, whom Alf had met at the Peckham Baptist Church.

Elizabeth Riley and Alf Stephens Snr. were married on 1 May 1886 by the Reverend John Debenham of St. Jude's Church of England. The ceremony was held in a private house in Bowral. The wedding was witnessed by James Austin and Emily Austin. James Austin undertook contracts for all kinds of wooden buildings, according to an advertisement in the Bowral Free Press of 26 April 1884.

George Marston married Kate Holloway in Sydney on 10 December 1886. In 1891, they opened a shop selling boots, shoes and clothing on the corner of Banyette and Bong Bong Streets.

In 1963, Alf Stephens Jnr. in a letter to respected Bowral Town Clerk and keen historian A.V.J.(Jack) Parry, wrote "Alfred Stephens Senior came out to Australia from Teddington (Middlesex) England in 1885 where his father carried out building works there with eight brothers in the family (all carpenters) and one sister. He was engaged to his wife before leaving England and she followed him a year later when they were married in Bowral. He came direct to Bowral with fellow passengers Mr. and Mrs. Marston who opened a shop on the corner of Banyette and Bong Bong Street".

With a little give and take on the details, this all fits together. Alf Snr. left England in 1885, arriving January 1886. Elizabeth Riley came out on a different ship arriving two days after Alf. They were in Bowral by May 1886 where they married.

Alf Jnr. has also recollected that his father's first job in Bowral was as a carpenter with J.J. Campbell working on a two-storied house in Merrigang Street, built for Dr. Swinton, and later the home of Dr. Harbison.

Within months of his marriage to Elizabeth, the Bowral Municipal Council Rate Book for 1886 shows that Alf Snr. had bought land from the Jamieson Hill Estate at Upper Bowral. The Bowral Rate book for the year commencing 1 February 1887 shows that Alf had a dwelling on lot 19 Elm Street.

The 1895 Bowral Council Valuation book shows that by that year Alf had a new house ("Teddington" a brick villa) on lot 19 Elm Street with a valuation of £450. On lot 18 Elm Street he had a workshop with a valuation of £100. On lot 20 he had a house rented to A. Riggs, worth £150. He also had two houses in Woodbine Street with a value of £300. In later years, Alf Snr. built further houses in Woodbine Street and continued to own some of these all his life.

By 1896/97 Alf Snr. had a house and land in Bong Bong Street valued at £268. By this time, Alf Snr. and Elizabeth also had children. A photograph at "Teddington" - a polychrome brick structure with much style - shows Alf, Elizabeth and three children on the front verandah in about 1894. Alfred Jnr. was born in 1887, Jessie in 1891, Annie in 1893. Other children followed Ethel Grace (1896), Norris (1899), and Phyllis (1904).

Through the late 1880s Alf Snr. was the successful tenderer for a number of small projects. In the early 1890s larger jobs such as the Rose Street bridge, a schoolteacher's residence at Robertson, and Bowral's first fire station came his way.

In 1895, Alf Snr. was the successful tenderer for the Bowral Courthouse. One year and one day after pegging out, this monumental trachyte stone and sandstone building was opened. Alf Senior's reputation was enhanced on a remarkably solid foundation.

At the same time as he ran the building business, Alf Snr. involved himself in public life - he was elected to represent Glebe Ward on the nomination of his friend Geo. Marston with whom he had travelled out from England. Alf Snr. was Mayor in the years 1899, 1900, and 1904.

Alf Snr. was Circuit Steward and Trustee of the Methodist Church for many years. He was made a magistrate in 1900. He regularly supported Friendly Societies and held office in the local Lodge of Oddfellows.

Alf Snr. played cricket for the Surveyors Camp team, and his son Alf Jnr. was scorer for the team from an early age, joining the team at age 16 after he left school. Alf Snr. was president of the Berrima District Cricket Association from its inception in 1911 until 1915. Alf Jnr. followed him into this position in 1919 and held it to 1960.

In 1913 a Bowling Club formed in Bowral, and Alf Snr. built, at cost, the first 20 by 12-foot club room, located in Corbett Gardens. Alf and Geo. Marston were foundation vice-presidents of the Club, and Alf Snr. was president in 1916, 1917 and 1918.

Elizabeth and Alf Snr. remained in touch with family back in England, travelling back several times. Alf visited in 1898 and he and Elizabeth visited, without the children, in 1906. Prior to his retirement Alf Snr. took the whole family to England in 1913. It was on this trip that Alf Jnr. met his wife-to-be Agnes Lily Peel at a place called Grantham. Alf Jnr. returned to Bowral in April 1914 to be present at his sister Jessie's wedding, to play football as captain of the Bowral team, and no doubt to attend to business. Lily came out to Australia with the other members of the Stephens family on their return journey in September/October 1914. That journey was memorable given the background in 1914 of World War One, their ship the Orontes was chased by the Emden in the Indian Ocean.

In 1917, Alf Snr. retired and went to live at Manly with Elizabeth and youngest daughter Phyllis. By the time he left, he had long since involved his sons in the workings of the business. He directed that Alf Jnr. (now aged 30) take over, and that brother Norris (Norrie) Stephens be brought in when he turned 21. The name of the firm from 1921 was therefore Alf Stephens & Sons (in the plural). The business was relocated from Elm Street to Boolwey Street after Alf Jnr. took over.

Alf Snr. died 6 February 1924. A report in the Southern Mail of 15 February 1924 about the funeral at Manly included the following observations:

“He was a conscientious tradesman...in all his business dealings he was a man of honour...”

“He was a man of exemplary character, always ready to lend a helping hand to deserving men.”

“He had not time for shirkers, but was ever generous in his treatment of those who showed a desire to improve their condition.”

Elizabeth Stephens lived in Manly for a time before returning to Bowral to live at “Dulwich”, (later called “Barkfold”) in Aitken Road with her daughter Ethel Gurney and Vic Gurney. After the death of Alf Snr., Davis and Westbrook held an auction sale of properties from his estate. All cottages and shop buildings sold well, but vacant land was not much in demand on the day.

#### Alf Stephens Jnr. (1887-1973)

Alf Stephens Jnr was born 14 April 1887 at Elm Street, Jamieson Hill, Bowral. He attended Bowral Public School in Bendooley Street and was Dux in 1902 at the age of 15.

Having met his wife-to-be on the family trip to England in 1913/14 and she having travelled out with the family, Alf Jnr. married Agnes Lily (nee Peel) at the old Methodist Church in Bowral on 22 July

1915. Lily had been an elementary school teacher before her marriage. They had a family of three children - Peggy (1916), John Victor (Jack) (1918) and Joan (1920).

Alfred Jnr. was involved in the work of the firm from when in 1903 the firm had a contract to build four railway stations on the Leura line. The family relocated there for the duration of this work. Another early job he was involved in required the cutting into sections and moving of the Upper Bowral Store (Mitchell's Store) in Merrigang Street, which had been bought by his father in 1896 for £116, into Bong Bong Street. Having moved the house into town in 1903, and lived in it for some years Alf Jnr. famously moved it out again in 1926 to Victoria Street, where it still stands.

Alf Jnr. would have worked with his father on many of the earlier projects. Like his father, he involved himself in the Methodist Church and public affairs. He became an alderman of Bowral Municipal Council and served as Mayor for two years in 1928 and 1929. He resigned in December 1929 in order to take a trip to England - in part to seek specialist medical attention for his son.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> December 1952 a meeting was arranged by the then retiring mayor Ald. Venables and the election of the new mayor R H Springett. The Southern Mail noted that Amongst those present was ex-alderman Alf Stephens, who was a member of the Council in 1922, and it was then believed that that it was the most progressive Council. Later at this same event Mr. Alf Stephens said he was in the Council when Ald. Venables first came as an alderman. He had known Mrs Venables for many years as they were schoolmates together. His father came to Bowral in 1885 and Mrs. Venables' father about the same time. He had been an alderman for 20 years and served for two years as Mayor and regarded Ald. Venables as the best citizen of Bowral as he had been 30 years in the Council and served 15 of them as Mayor.

Again so very like his father, Alf Jnr. involved himself in the game of cricket. At Bowral Public School, Alf Jnr. captained the team in school competitions. After leaving School, he played with the Surveyors team. He became President of the Berrima District Association in 1919 and held this position until 1960 when he did not seek re-election. As well Alf Jnr. became captain of Bowral 1st Grade in 1921 in which capacity he also acted until his voluntary retirement in 1960. He involved himself with other district and regional cricket organisations throughout his life. Not without reason was Alf Jnr. widely called "The Skipper".

Inevitably, Alf Jnr. knew Don Bradman. Don's father, George, was employed by the Stephens firm. Don attended Bowral Public School, as had Alf about ten years earlier, and played with school teams before he attracted notice in the local senior teams. When in about 1925, Alf Jnr. and Lily built their "forever home" in Aitken Road, (which they called "Grantham" after the place where they had met), they had a concrete cricket pitch laid to the side of the house, where Bradman and the family and the local team could play.

The mentoring relationship was close and remained so. In 1930, when Alf and Lily were in England, Don visited the Stephens' and their relatives at Grantham on the day before his famous 1930 test cricket match. He signed and dated a book, belonging to Lily - a special album/autograph book she had carried with her when she left England in 1914 to marry, and seemingly took back with her on this voyage. The "Don" included the word Grantham in his evocative inscription, perhaps both thinking of home?

During the years that Alf Jnr. and Norrie Stephens ran the firm it continued to grow and flourish. Major projects in the Southern Highlands include Dormie House at Moss Vale Golf Course, the four storey Ranelagh House (now Robertson Hotel) at Robertson, the Bowral Golf Clubhouse in Kangaloon

Road, the former Berrima and District Ambulance Station in Bong Bong Street, Bowral and a major rebuild of the Empire Cinema also in Bong Bong Street, Bowral

#### Work by the firm in Canberra

In Canberra in 1928 the firm secured a major contract for the Church of England Grammar School. The Robertson Mail of 7/12/1928 reported: *"The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the Church of England Grammar School at Canberra on Wednesday. The school will be one of the most modern private schools in the Commonwealth. We congratulate Messrs. Alf. Stephens and Son, of Bowral, upon having secured the contract for the erection of the first section of the buildings, which will cost somewhere about £30,000."*

In the same year, 1928, the firm secured the contract for the Church of England Grammar School Headmaster's Residence.

A considerable volume of other work in Canberra followed including the building of hundreds of houses under government contract. So much so that an advertisement in the Southern Mail in May 1940 the firm could advise:

*"Messr. Alf Stephens and Son, [sic] who as old established builders and merchants of Bowral, have a wealth of experience in the planning and erecting of new buildings and in the supply of all builder's requirements.*

*Their experience is so wide that they are able to ensure a thoroughly reliable job. They are contractors to many Federal and State Departments and have also become known through their many outstanding homes and public buildings erected in this district.*

*Located in Boolwey Street is their extensive and modernly equipped joinery department and timber yards where all the requirements of the building trade are met.*

*During 1939 Alf Stephens and Son erected two houses per week in Canberra, beside a large volume of work in this district. These operations gave continuous employment to approximately 200 men in both centres of activity. All joinery work for these jobs was done in the Bowral yard and the firm is justly proud that no work is done outside for any of their building assignments."*

Newspaper reports from The Canberra Times illustrate the work done in Canberra and a fuller research project for another time:

- 17 November 1933. Erection of ten semi-detached brick cottages at Griffith; price £9,051; contractor Alf Stephens and Son. (D. McManus: These were on lots 12 to 21 in Section 2 at Griffith.)
- 30 March 1935. The contract for the erection of six brick residences on Section 35, Brad-don, has been let to Alf Stephens and Son, P.O. Box 9, Bowral. The contract price is £6,117.
- 9 August 1935 The contract for the erection of five brick residences ( including two semi-detached) on Section 36, Reid, has been let to Alf Stephen and Sons, I Bowral, the contract price being £6,573.
- 17 January 1936 The contract for the erection of fourteen brick buildings on sections 17 and 28 Kingston has been let to Alf Stephens and Son, of Bowral, the contract price being £14,997.
- March 5 1936: Extensive development at Kingston during the next few months will see the completion of residential blocks on the corner of Canberra and Wentworth Avenues. A start

has been made with the erection of 24 buildings, comprising 31 residences (includes semi detached) , for which the successful tenderer was Messrs Alf Stephens and Son, of Bowral. In the first instance, the plans for these buildings provided for composite construction, with brick outer walls and wooden partitions between the rooms. After consideration, however, the department decided to build in brick throughout, and this will result in a considerable saving in maintenance while providing a more substantial building. Messrs Alf Stephens and Son have secured three contracts for six, eight and 10 buildings. And related to same contract: 15 April 1936 Rapid progress is also being made by Messrs Alf Stephens and Son and 24 buildings comprising 31 dwellings are taking shape on Sections 17 and 28 Kingston.

- 26 June 1936 The tender of Alf Stephen and Son, of Bowral, has been accepted for the
- election of three brick residences on Sections 3 and 13, Griffith. The contract price was £4,457, the date for the completion being fixed at December 19, 1936.
- July 16 1936: At the new residential area in Kingston, Alf Stephens & Son expect to have 31 homes completed in about six weeks' time, while an additional 15 residences of a superior type are in various stages of construction at Reid. This firm is also engaged in the erection of 11 residences at Ainslie.
- July 10 1937: A contract for the erection of five superior type residences at the new suburb of Deakin, has been let to Alf. Stephens and Son, of Bowral, the contract price for the five buildings, inclusive of garages, being £9,873. The date for the completion of the work has been fixed for December 6, 1937.
- 12 November 1938: one of the largest contracts for house construction in Canberra has been let to Alf. Stephens and Sons, of Bowral. This involves the construction, at Sections 33 and 34, Ainslie, of 64 cottages, the contract price being £48,317. Provision has been made for the completion of the contract early in August, 1939.
- 2 October 1939: YARRALUMLA COTTAGES The tender of Alf. Stephens and Sons, Bowral, has been accepted for the erection of six residences at Section 63, Yarralumla, the contract involving the expenditure of £5,832. The date for the completion of the work has been fixed at December 31,
- In 13/9/1935 The Canberra Times reported on MASONIC TEMPLE MODERN DESIGN Construction Commenced A modern design similar to that of the Institute of Anatomy is employed on the Canberra Masonic Temple, the first section of which has been commenced and will be ready for occupation in about six months. The site of the Temple is at the corner of Broughton Street and National Circuit, alongside the Hotel Kurrajong, and it is estimated that the completed building will cost approximately £15,000. The first section at present under construction will be about one third of the ultimate building. It will include lodge room, supper room, board room, and all necessary offices. The design of the completed structure provides for the construction of a second storey, and for the erection of a large auditorium at the rear of the ground floor: When the temple is completed, the temporary office accommodation to be provided in the centre of the first section of the building will be moved to the second storey, leaving a spacious foyer leading from the main entrance right through to the auditorium. The building will be faced with synthetic stone. The design is the work of Messrs. M. J. Moir and K. H. Oliphant, acting in conjunction, and the contract for the first portion has been let to Alf. Stephen and Son, Bowral.
- On 1 July 1939 The Canberra Times reported: on the REID METHODIST CHURCH RENOVATED A full congregation was present at the Reid Methodist Church for a service at which new furnishings, including a Communion Table and a Baptismal Font were dedicated. The 'furnishings formed part of a scheme of alterations to the chancel end of the building. The Holy Table, which has been placed in the central position, is a solid carved oak structure

surmounted by a Cross of the same wood. A simple, but finely-designed oak Font has been placed at the north-eastern corner of the nave, while the choir and organ are situated on the opposite side, with suitably carved panellings. The design is in line with the symmetry of the buildings and greatly enhances its beauty. This work, together with certain repairs to the Church fabric, necessitated by a slight outward movement of the wall at the north-western corner, was carried out by Messrs Alf. Stephens and Son, of Bowral. ....The Reid Church, formerly known as the "South Ainslie Methodist Church," was opened in 1927. The present alterations and additions have made the building complete.

- In February 1941 The Canberra Times reported the opening of Woolworths built by Alf Stephens and Sons in Kennedy Street in the Kingston shopping centre

#### *WOOLWORTHS IN KINGSTON*

*Modern Store in Kingston. One of the most notable additions to the Kingston shopping centre—Woolworths' new store— will open its doors on Thursday, in Kennedy St., Kingston. After many weeks of industrious effort, a modern and imposing building stands on this site, and internally it reflects all the up-to-date improvements which the resources of this extensive organisation have been able to devise. This is the 96th unit of the Woolworths Chain of Stores, which is spread throughout Australia and New Zealand.*

*The new Woolworth building at Kingston is similar in construction, fittings and elaborate finish to those which have become well known throughout the country. The familiar island and side counters, with their facilities for display, have been placed along the full length of the premises.*

*A striking feature to be seen on entering the shop is an elaborate ceiling which has shaded and mottled cornices and umber outlinings on a cream base. Two rows of large sky lights, each opened by a single winding apparatus placed on the floor are let into the ceiling for daylight effect. The walls consist of texture finished Travatine blocks, shaded and lined.*

*The interests of the staff have been kept well in mind. Electric foot-warmers and folding stools have been provided behind the counters, besides lunch rooms for girls and men. A locker is provided for each girl on the staff, and the lunch room is furn-ished with seats, tables and electrical conveniences. The main shop is 150 feet long by 34 feet wide. The building widens out at the rear to 50 feet and the basement is 50 ft. by 70ft.*

*The building was erected by Alf Stephens and Son, Builder, under the supervision of Kenneth H. Oliphant, Architect.*

Alf Jnr. found time amidst all this to continue playing cricket and be involved in district cricket organisations. He involved himself in Rotary, and on visits to England in 1948 and 1953 spoke at meetings there in many towns. He received a particularly warm welcome at Grantham to which parcels had been sent from Bowral for distribution to the aged and needy. Whilst in England on these occasions, Alf Jnr. also saw some of Don Bradman's most notable cricket matches.

The Southern Highland News of 29 July 1965 carried a report that, after 53 years, Alf Jnr. was retiring. Many of the tradesmen employed by the firm had more than 30 years of experience there. Mr Geoffrey Charles Plater took over as owner.

Alf Jnr. died in October 1973 in Bowral, aged 86. Lily predeceased him in 1971. They were survived by two daughters Peggy and Joan, son Jack having died in 1944.

