

**Attachment 4 – Heritage Assessment/Statement of
Significance**

Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number
1300170
Study Number
1300170

Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

Location: **12 Balmoral Avenue, Croydon Park [Canterbury]**

Address:	12 Balmoral Avenue	DUAP Region:	Sydney South
Suburb / Nearest Town:	Croydon Park 2133	Historic region:	Sydney
Local Govt Area:	Canterbury	Parish:	Concord
State:	NSW	County:	Cumberland
Address:	Cook Street	DUAP Region:	Sydney South
Suburb / Nearest Town:	Croydon Park 2133	Historic region:	Sydney
Local Govt Area:	Canterbury	Parish:	Concord
State:	NSW	County:	Cumberland

Other/Former Names: Rosedale Presbyterian Church

Area/Group/Complex: Group ID:

Aboriginal Area:

Curtilage/Boundary: The curtilage is the parcels of land on which the building is situated.

Item Type:	Built	Group:	Religion	Category:	Church
Owner:	Religious Organisation				
Admin Codes:	Zoning: Residential 2(a)	Code 2:		Code 3:	
Current Use:	Church (disused)				
Former Uses:					

Assessed Significance: **Local**

Endorsed Significance: **Local**

Statement of Significance: St John's Church at 12 Balmoral Avenue, Croydon Park, is of local historical significance. The 1884 section of the church is one of the earliest church buildings still standing in the local area. Only St Paul's at Canterbury is earlier. The 1884 section of the church is also of local historical significance as one of only a handful of buildings erected on the Rosedale estate in the 1880s which have survived. The historical significance of the church relates to the development of the Presbyterian congregation at Croydon Park in the late nineteenth century, and later, the Roman Catholic from 1926 onwards. During the latter period, the church played a minor role as a station church. The aesthetic value of the church is not exceptional compared to major churches in the local area. It is however appropriate to the historical role of the church and its suburban context.

Historical Notes or Provenance: The Rosedale Estate:
The church is situated in an area which formed part of Simeon Lord's 800 acre Brighton Estate which was granted to him in 1816. Lord's Brighton Estate covered an area bounded by Liverpool Road to the north, Cooks River to the south, Coronation Parade to the west and Croydon Avenue to the east. It took in much of the present day suburbs of Croydon Park, Enfield and Croydon. In 1824 Lord sold his Brighton Estate to W.H. Moore, a solicitor, who in turn sold the estate in 1834 to Francis Stephen. From 1836 to 1838 Francis Stephen

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subdivided the Brighton Estate into small farm allotments and created Burwood Road. The subject site was situated within lot 59 of the Brighton Estate subdivision.

In the late 1870s large parts of the Brighton Estate began to be subdivided into suburban allotments. The first Croydon Park subdivision was made in 1878 and comprised the area east of Brighton Avenue. The second Croydon Park subdivision, which stretched from Brighton Avenue to what is now the east end of Cook Street, took place in 1881. The remainder of the Brighton Estate was shortly afterwards subdivided as the Rosedale estate by Edward Hogben and Henry George in 1881. In 1883, the bulk of the Rosedale estate was sold to the Australian Mutual Investment and Building Company limited which was a major land development company in Sydney. The company designed model worker's cottages for the estate. Several examples have survived in varying states of original integrity. Those at 53-55 and 60-62 Windsor Avenue are listed heritage items.

Parcels of land within the Rosedale estate were sold in a series of auctions in the early 1880s and the area developed a distinctly working class character. Many of the new residents were tradesmen who worked on the houses which were being built on the estate. The promise of a tramway to the area increased the attractiveness of the estate. After some delay, the tramway was extended along Georges River Road to Enfield in 1891.

The Rosedale Presbyterian Church:

As new inhabitants moved into the area the need for places of worship arose. The nearest churches at the time were the Church of England at Croydon and Enfield. In the winter of 1882 a number of residents decided to commence worship in a small weatherboard building erected for general purposes in Balmoral Avenue opposite Cook Street. The church met in this location for over two years and the congregation initially comprised a number of protestant denominations. As the small church grew the Presbyterians became the ascendant group and the other denominations diminished, in some instances establishing churches of their own in the district.

In 1884 it was decided to purchase a site in Cook Street to erect a more suitable building. The chosen site on the corner of Cook Street and Balmoral Avenue comprised two parcels of land, Lots 10 and 11 of Section C of the Rosedale estate subdivision. The property was jointly purchased in July 1884 by Robert Walker of Croydon, Stephen Mills of Burwood, a surveyor, Alfred Vaughan of Rosedale, a sheet metal worker, and James Best of Croydon, a clerk. These were active members of the Presbyterian community in the local area. Mr Walker in particular was regarded as the founder of the Presbyterian Church at Rosedale and regularly led services, as did Stephen Mills and James Best.

The building was opened on 30 November 1884. It was a simple church comprising a brick nave broken into three bays by buttresses on the side elevations. It had a gabled roof (corrugated iron) with small gabled roof ventilators near the ridge line, and a timber bellcote at its south (Cook Street). A small porch (later replaced) was situated at the front of the building and entered from Cook Street.

A listing for the church first appears in the Sydney Sands Directory in 1885 however it was referred to (possibly incorrectly) as a Methodist church. From 1886 until 1924 the church was listed as a Presbyterian church and for much of that time was known as the Rosedale

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Presbyterian Church. The Sands Directory also lists two of the ministers associated with the church, Rev. Alexander Osbourne (recorded 1889-1892) and Rev. W. McKenzie (recorded 1893 and 1896).

In addition to services, the church was also used for Sunday school and for community meetings. For example, a large and crowded meeting of residents was held in May 1888 to discuss and pass a resolution to campaign for the long awaited tramway connection to Ashfield. The following year a "Free-trade Meeting" was held in the church to argue the case against protectionism to local trade unionists.

In 1921 the congregation of the church purchased a property on the corner of Boyle and Violet street in Enfield, about a kilometre to the north, for the purpose of building a new church. The foundation stone for the new church in Enfield was laid on 30 July 1921. The Sands Directory continued to list the Presbyterian Church in Cook Street until in 1925 it is referred to as Balmoral Hall. The following year the property was sold to the Catholic Church.

St John's Catholic Church:

In a short space of time in August and September 1926 the property was registered in the name of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW), then Peter Hurley of Enfield, then Michael Kelly, Archbishop of Sydney, Michael Sheehan, Co-adjutor Archbishop of Sydney, and the priests Patrick Lewis Coonan, Thomas, Phelan and John Patrick Considine. Rather than the property being sold directly from the Presbyterian Church to the Catholic Church, it first passed through a third party, Peter Hurley. Whether this arrangement was due to sectarian concerns is not clear.

Between 1925 and 1928 the building was not listed as a church in the Sands Directory but as Balmoral Hall. This period overlaps with the sale of the church to the Catholic Church (1926). Further research would be necessary to establish the function of the building in this period. It may have operated as a community hall before its new use as a Catholic church was established.

The church, which was now known as St John's or St John the Baptist Catholic Church, fell within the Enfield parish. It served as a station church secondary to the principle parish church of St Joseph's at Enfield. It appears that the majority of sacraments were held at St Joseph's and that for many years St John's was used for a Sunday mass once a week. St John's certainly figures less frequently in newspaper articles and notices than did the preceding Presbyterian Church.

In September 1933, tenders were called by architect G. Clancy for additions to the Catholic Church at Croydon Park. Glancy's firm specialised in Catholic churches and schools, usually designed in the Inter-War Romanesque style. Examples include the Catholic churches at Taralga and Bangalow, additions at St Vincent's Potts Point, and St Christopher's Cathedral in Canberra. The additions to St John's Church comprised a new Romanesque style front and side porches, as well as a new chapel on the west side of the building and a small vestry on the east side, both towards the rear. The additions at the front of the church removed the original porch of the Presbyterian Church. Further small additions, a toilet on the east side attached to the vestry, and a porch on the west side attached to the chapel, were made some time later, possibly in the 1940s or 1950s.

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In the 1990s the church was used by the Catholic Melkite community. It was rented from the Archdiocese of Sydney on the condition that local Roman Catholics could continue using the building for Sunday mass. The Melkite congregation unsuccessfully sought to purchase the property to establish an inner west parish.

The church has progressively fallen into disuse and no services have been held there for a number of years.

Themes: National Theme

State Theme

Local Theme

8. Culture

Religion

(none)

Designer: G. Glancy (1933 additions)

Maker / Builder:

Year Started: 1884

Year Completed: 1933

Circa: Yes

Physical Description: Suburban scale church building, located in a residential context. The original section of the church was built in 1884. It comprises the central brick nave, the external walls of which are divided into bays separated by brick buttresses and featuring paired windows (narrow, with sash windows and brick arch lintels). Three bays were originally visible but two (one on each side towards the rear) have been obscured by additions. The walls of the original 1884 section can be clearly discerned as they have been painted white. They are constructed of brick laid in a Flemish bond. The form of the roof is original as are the six small gabled roof ventilators with timber louvers (three on each side).

The most prominent element of the church is the new front built in 1933. The original nave was extended to the Cook Street boundary to create the new front and porches were added on either side. The walls of the 1933 front are a dark dry pressed face brick laid in stretcher bond. The roofing is corrugated metal sheet, continuing the original roof of the 1884 church. The design of the new front is a very simplified Romanesque style, the key feature of the façade being a recessed bay with a round arch. The porches on each side have brick gables with corbelled ends. Window and door openings are very simple, featuring arched lintels with two header brick rows.

The chapel on the west side towards the rear of the church appears to have also been added as part of the 1933 additions. It is a simple gable roofed extension in brick, divided into bays by external buttresses and featuring narrow sash windows with arched lintels. A small vestry was also added on the east side of the building at the rear in a similar style. Further minor additions (date unknown) have been added, including a brick and timber framed porch on the west side giving access to the side chapel, and a toilet in front of the vestry on the east side. These appear to have been added perhaps in the 1940s or 1950s. On the whole the church building (both the 1884 section and the later additions) is very simple. Ornamental elements include simplified Celtic crosses on the porch and façade gables, and a gothic style lantern over the entry to the west porch. On the Cook Street

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frontage there is also a brick fence on each side of the façade featuring brick piers with rendered coping. One pier (on the east side of the façade) is missing.

Physical Condition: Moderate

Modification Dates: 1933: Addition of a new Inter-War Romanesque style front, a chapel on the north west corner of the nave and a vestry on the north east corner of the nave.
1940s/50s: Small porch on west side of nave and toilet block on east side next attached to the vestry.

Recommended Management: The church is in need of maintenance. Reuse of the building either as a church or as an adaptive reuse project would offer the best means of ensuring its proper maintenance and the conservation of its significance.

Management: Statutory Instrument List on a Local Environmental Plan (LEP)

Further Comments: The condition of the church has been neglected through lack of use and lack of routine maintenance. The building also shows evidence of vandalism. The building appears however to be structurally sound.

Criteria a) The 1884 section of St John's Church is one of the earliest church buildings still standing in the local government area. The only surviving church building of earlier construction is St Paul's at Canterbury (1859). The 1884 section of St John's Church is also one of only a handful of buildings still standing which were erected in the first phase of the development on the Rosedale estate at Croydon Park (subdivided 1881). St John's is therefore of local historical significance as it comprises (albeit with later additions) one of the local area's earliest surviving churches and one of Croydon Park's earliest surviving buildings.

The church building is also of historical significance in relation to the development of, firstly, the Presbyterian community and then the Roman Catholic Church (from 1926 onwards) in the local area. The 1933 additions to St John's reflect the latter association. The humble nature of the church reflects its historical origin serving a small but growing Presbyterian community in the local area, and then its role as a minor station church within the Enfield Parish of the Roman Catholic Church.

Criteria b) Like any church, an association can be drawn between the building and prominent individuals in the congregations who have worshipped there. A direct and continuing association is however difficult to quantify owing to, firstly, the period of time which has elapsed since the Presbyterian congregation left the building in 1921, and secondly, given the diminishing role of the church within the Catholic Parish of Enfield in more recent times.

Criteria c) The 1933 additions in a simplified Romanesque style are largely intact. They are typical of the preferred Romanesque style for Roman Catholic churches in the Inter-War period, albeit executed in a manner appropriate to both the minor role of the church at this time and the small scale of the building. The ecclesiastical nature of the building distinguishes it from the surrounding residential development but it maintains a complementary scale.

The 1884 section of the church is partly concealed by the 1933 additions. It was a simple brick church, typical of small suburban and rural protestant churches of the time. Original

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elements which are still visible include the buttressed bays on the walls of the nave and the original triangular ventilators on the roof.

Criteria d) As noted under criterion (b), a direct and continuing association is difficult to quantify owing to the period of time which has elapsed since the Presbyterian congregation moved in 1921, and secondly, the diminishing role of the church within the Catholic Parish of Enfield in more recent times.

Criteria e) This criterion is usually applied to assess the potential archaeological value of an item, or the research potential inherent in the construction techniques and materials of a building. An archaeological assessment has not been conducted however there does not appear to have been any previous occupation of the site prior to the erection of the church in 1884 and archaeological potential is likely to be low.

While the 1884 section of the church is one of the earliest surviving church buildings in the local area, the techniques and materials employed in its construction are not rare and are therefore of limited research potential.

Criteria f) The 1884 section of St John's Church is rare in the local area. Firstly, it is one of three masonry churches built prior to 1900 which is still standing, and secondly, it is one of only four early buildings erected on the Rosedale estate in the 1880s which have survived without substantial unsympathetic alterations.

Criteria g) The 1933 components of St John's are typical of small suburban churches in the local area in the Inter-War period of which there are a number of examples. The Romanesque style was particularly favoured by the Roman Catholic church at this time, though other churches such as St Mel's at Campsie are more exceptional examples of this style.

Integrity / Intactness: Medium

References:	Author	Title	Year
	City of Canterbury	Report to City Development Committee Meeting, 12 May 2011	2011
	City of Canterbury	Report to Council Meeting, 09 December 2010, Item 3	2010
	Croydon Park Presbyterian Church	History of the Croydon Park Presbyterian Church 1884-1935	1935

Studies:	Author	Title	Number	Year
	City Plan Heritage	Canterbury Heritage Study Review	1300170	2006

Parcels:	Parcel Code	LotNumber	Section	Plan Code	Plan Number
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	LOT	10	C	DP	876

Latitude:

Longitude:

Location validity:

Spatial Accuracy:

Map Name:

Map Scale:

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AMG Zone:

Easting:

Northing:

Listings:

Name:

Title:

Number:

Date:

Heritage Act - Interim Heritage Order

St John's Catholic Church IHO No.1

17/12/2010

Heritage study

Custom Field One:

Custom Field Two:

Custom Field Three:

Custom Field Four:

Custom Field Five:

Custom Field Six:

Data Entry:

Date First Entered: 22/10/2002

Date Updated: 11/05/2011

Status: Completed

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Image/s:



Caption: St John's Catholic Church.

Copyright: Canterbury City Council

Image by: City Plan Heritage

Image Date: 20/11/2002

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1300170b.jpg

Thumb Nail Path:

Thumb Nail File:

Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number

1300170

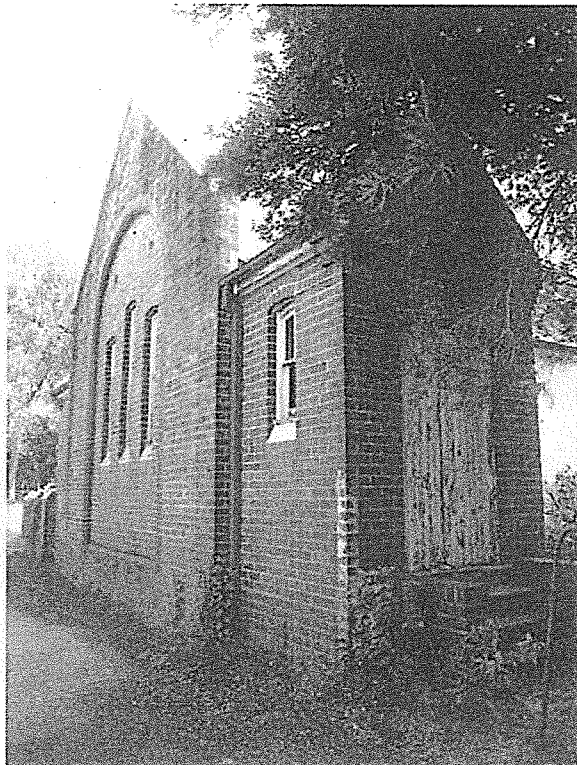
Study Number

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Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

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Image/s:



Caption: Facade of the church on Cook Street looking west.

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 7/12/2010

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1300170c.jpg

Thumb Nail Path:

Thumb Nail File:

Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number

1300170

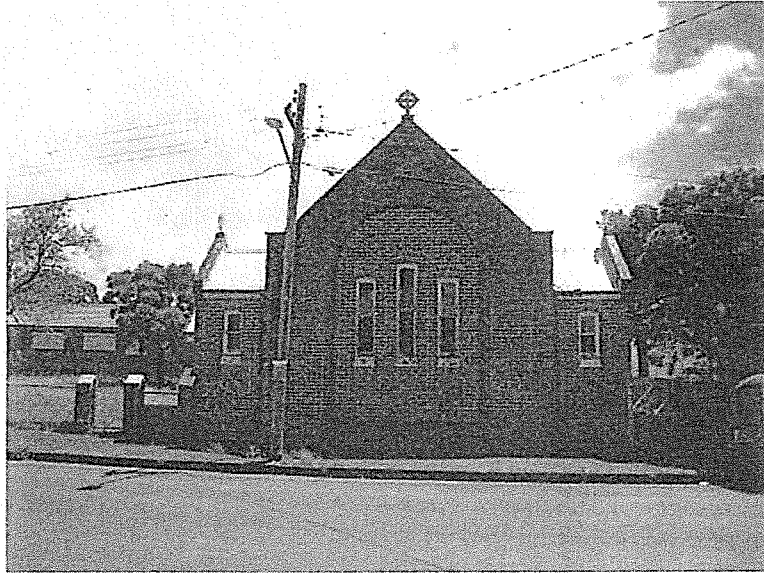
Study Number

1300170

Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

Location: **12 Balmoral Avenue, Croydon Park [Canterbury]**

Image/s:



Caption: Facade of the church from Cook Street looking north.

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 7/12/2010

Image Number:

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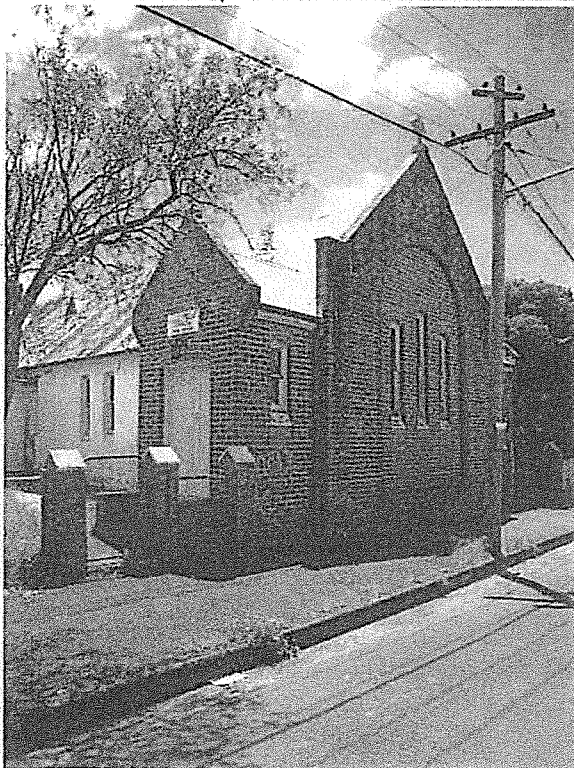
Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number
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Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

Location: **12 Balmoral Avenue, Croydon Park [Canterbury]**

Image/s:



Caption: Facade of the church from Cook Street looking north east.

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 7/12/2010

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Thumb Nail File:

Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number

1300170

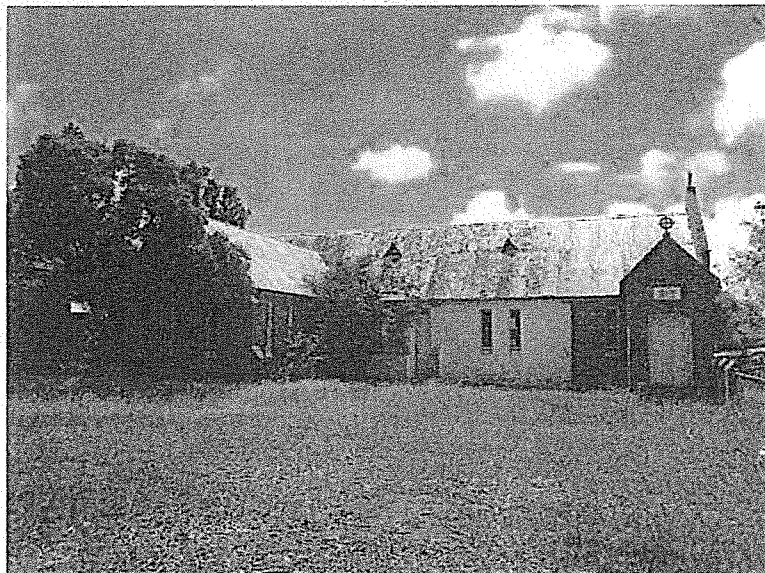
Study Number

1300170

Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

Location: **12 Balmoral Avenue, Croydon Park [Canterbury]**

Image/s:



Caption: West elevation of the church from near Balmoral Avenue looking east. The 1884 section is painted white. The face brick sections are 1933 additions.

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 7/12/2010

Image Number:

Image Path:

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Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number

1300170

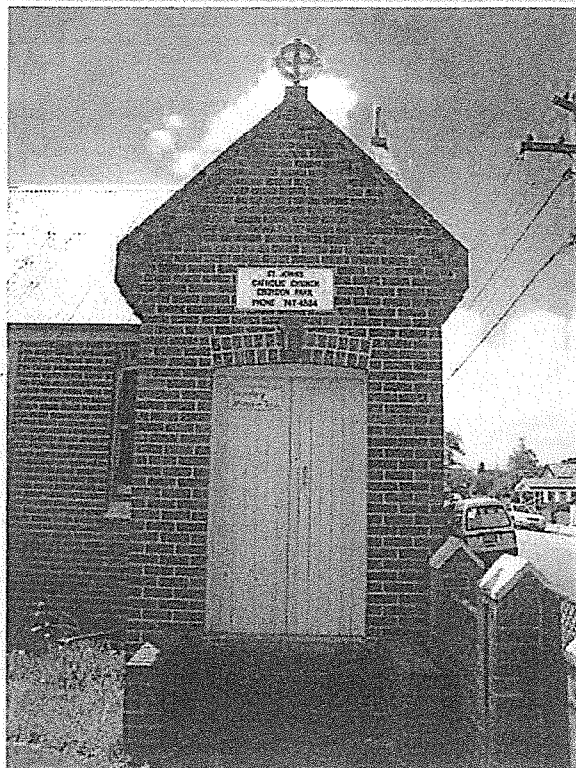
Study Number

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Image/s:



Caption: Porch on the west side of the front added in 1933.

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P Woodley

Image Date: 7/12/2010

Image Number:

Image Path:

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Thumb Nail Path:

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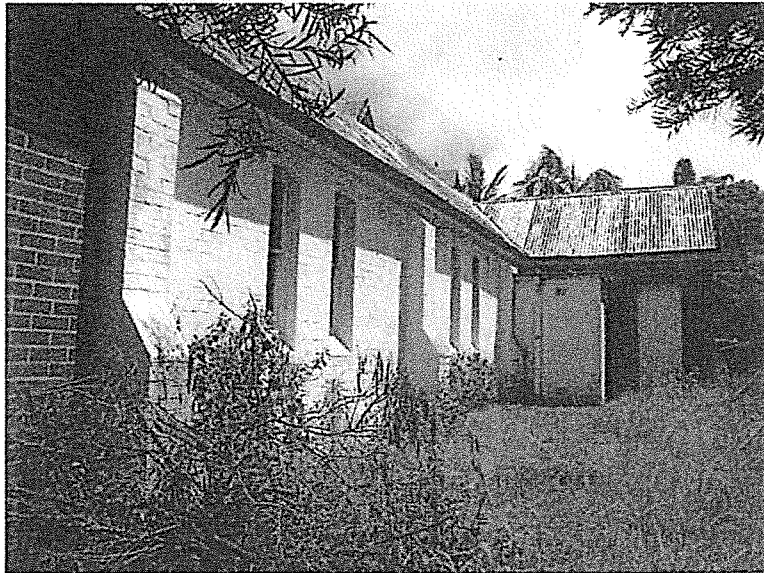
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Image/s:



Caption: The east side of the church from the Cook Street entry. The white section to the left was built in 1884. The projecting section to the rear is the 1933 vestry and a latter toilet block.

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 7/12/2010

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1300170h.jpg

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Image/s:



Caption: Interior of the church looking towards the altar (taken through a broken window on the west side of the nave).

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 11/05/2011

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1300170i.jpg

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Thumb Nail File:

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Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

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Image/s:



Caption: Interior of the church looking towards the south front (taken through a broken window on the west side of the nave).

Copyright: City of Canterbury

Image by: P. Woodley

Image Date: 23/03/2011

Image Number:

Image Path:

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Canterbury Heritage Inventory

SHI Number

1300170

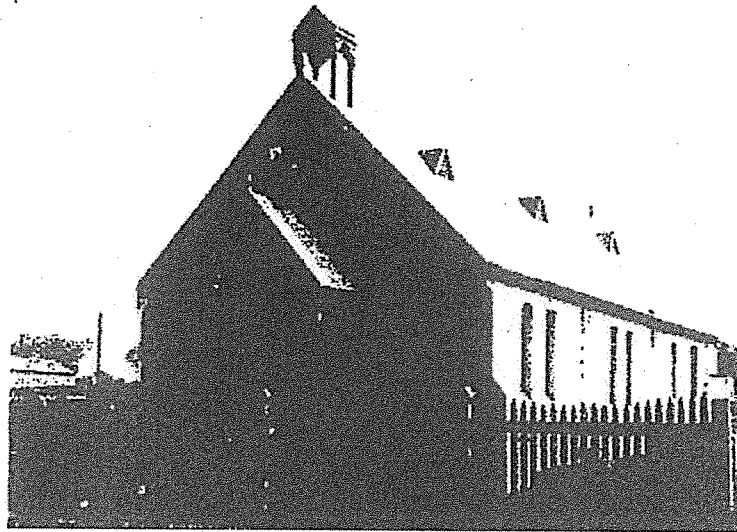
Study Number

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Item Name: **St Johns Catholic Church**

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Image/s:



Caption: Undated photograph of the church prior to the 1933 additions and appearing in "History of the Croydon Park Presbyterian Church 1884-1935). Photograph probably taken around 1900.

Copyright:

Image by:

Image Date:

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1300170k.jpg

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