

Item Details

Name
Dwelling (Former W.F. Keys' Farm)

Other/Former Names

Address
911 Binna Burra Road FEDERAL NSW 2480

Local Govt Area Group Name
Byron

Item Classification

Item Type	Item Group	Item Category
Built	Residential buildings (private)	Homestead building

Statement Of Significance

This original timber-clad cottage is historically, associatively and aesthetically significant to the historical development of Federal. This property was originally home to William Francis Keys, one of Federal’s early European settlers. The building's scale, form, materiality and location on the property, with several outbuildings nearby, demonstrates the early development and rural character of the village, when it was a centre for dairy farming families in the area. This farm and the remnant of William Risley’s farm and farmhouse bookend the village.

Assessed Significance Type	Endorsed Significance	Date Significance Updated
Local	Local	04/05/2024

File Number

Listings

Listing Name	Listing Date	Instrument Name	Instrument No.	Plan No.	Gazette Page	Gazette Number
Potential Heritage Item		Byron Local Environmental Plan 2014	I1211			

GroupItemFlag

GroupItemFlag

Data retrieval failed for the subreport, 'GroupItems', located at: C:\home\site\wwwroot\bin\Reports\GroupItems.rdlc. Please check the log files for more information

Heritage Item ID	Source
6001260	Local Government

Location

GEOCORTEX

Boundary Description

A reduced curtilage applies to this farmhouse and immediate grounds as per the Heritage Map. (There is an existing approval for tourist cabins and a restaurant on this property).

Addresses

Records Retrieved: 1

Street No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postcode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
911	Binna Burra Road	FEDERAL/NSW/2480	Byron					Primary Address

Title Information

Title Information Updated 03/17/2024

Records Retrieved: 1

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
	2			869145

Aboriginal Area	Hectares	Latitude	Longitude
Bundjalung			
Location Validity	Spatial Accuracy	Map Name	Scale
AMG Zone	Easting	Northing	Gis Datum

Description

DesignerBuilder/Maker

Construction Year Start & EndCircaPeriod
NO

Physical DescriptionUpdated 04/09/2024

Single-storey, timber and iron vernacular farmhouse with a hipped iron roof extending over the front verandah. The dwelling retains its historic scale and form but has seen some alterations, such as an enclosed front verandah and the replacement of original timber windows with aluminium, replacement of the timber tongue-and-groove flooring and the relining of interior walls with gyprock.

Physical ConditionUpdated 03/17/2024

Good

Physical Condition Summary

Good

Archaeological PotentialUpdated

Archaeological Potential SummaryUpdated 03/17/2024

Not assessed

Modifications And Dates

Real estate photographs show that the house has lost much of its interior original fabric, with gyprock sheeting on the walls and ceilings (which may cover original lining boards), an enclosed verandah and aluminium-framed windows.

Further Comments

The building's form and location on the property, with several outbuildings nearby, clearly demonstrates the early rural character of the village, when it was a centre for dairy farming families in the area. This farm and the remnant of William Risley's farm and farmhouse to the north bookend the village. The 14-plus hectare property has retained its essentially rural character and most recently has been home to a coffee plantation. Its new owners are currently planning to develop it with a farm-style restaurant serviced by kitchen gardens and six tourist cabins. At present there are plans to shift the old cottage slightly to the west of its original location, maintaining its orientation, and to restore it.

History

Historical Notes or Provenance

Updated 04/09/2024

Federal Historical Context

The hinterland village of Federal is situated 16km due west of Byron Bay, in Northern New South Wales. It stands on land that was originally part of the Big Scrub — 75,000 hectares of lowland subtropical rainforest. The traditional custodians of the Big Scrub, known as Gabul, are the Widjabul people of the Bundjalung nation. For thousands of years, pathways through their country linked spiritually significant features of the landscape, ceremonial and meeting grounds, men's and women's sites, areas of seasonal plenty, places to shelter during the wet season and sources of traditional medicine.

This culturally significant and richly bio-diverse landscape was transformed from the mid 1800s by Europeans, who cleared almost all of the rainforest in little over half a century. The first Europeans who moved through the area were the cedar-getters. After exhausting the timbers in more accessible areas, they ventured into the Big Scrub. Then came the farmers, many from the South Coast of NSW. They had heard of the excellent and fertile red-brown soils and quickly established dairy farms and banana plantations. Men from China and the Punjab also worked on these farms and helped to clear the land until the Immigration Restriction Act (which formally established the White Australia Policy) came into being on 23 December 1901.

The first European settlers who selected land in the area were farmers Robert Davis; William Risley, from Camden; and William John Bate, from Wollongong. According to Bate's obituary (the 'Northern Star', 9 July 1948) he was guided to the area by a cedar-getter called Daniel Withers in March 1882. Other early dairy farmers to settle in the area that now makes up Federal included Robert King, William and Andrew Keys and W.E.Shackel.

Parish maps of the early 1890s show a settlement at the junction of Old Brunswick Road (now Federal Drive) and Binna Burra Road, straddling the boundary of the Parishes of Jasper and Clunes. Federal, which was then known as Jasper, is one of a handful of villages that sprang up along Old Brunswick Road, the oldest road in the Byron Shire, which linked Lismore to the Brunswick River.

By 1893 a butter factory had been established in the village and tenders were called for the erection of a school building on Crown Land at Jasper two years later. According to 'Place Names of the Tweed, Brunswick and Upper Richmond Regions', the original name for the settlement (and presumably the parish also) came from many early settlers who hailed from the Jasper valley on the South Coast of NSW. But this name for the village did not survive for long. While the school retained it until 1906 (and the Jasper Progress Association until WWI), the Butter Factory was always known as the Federal Butter Factory, named by the co-operative of local farmers and Federalist enthusiasts who set it up, and eventually the village came to be known as Federal as well. An obituary for Andrew Keys, one of the district's first European settlers, notes that he was a member of a delegation of local residents who took a petition to Parliament to have the village's name changed from Jasper to Federal.

The catalyst for the name change was perhaps a bout of nationalistic fervour around the time of Federation.

By 1909, the Wise's NSW Telephone Directory lists 61 people living in the wider area of Federal. Most were farmers, but there were also two blacksmiths, a butcher, a storekeeper/postmaster and a teacher. In the 1920s two tick inspectors joined the community and, in the 1940s, the owner of refreshment rooms is listed. The population waxes and wanes with the times, swelling in the 1920s and 1930s and then halving in the 1940s and 1950s following the outbreak and aftermath of the Second World War.

The village originally consisted of a string of shops, workshops and cottages lining the western side of Robert and Albert Streets (now both renamed as Federal Drive), plus the two timber-clad civic buildings on the eastern side of Albert Street. Timber farmhouses, dairy bails and piggeries dotted the surrounding hills, standing on land parcels of

around 100 to 150 acres. Examples of these buildings still exist both within the village zone itself and the wider area that constitutes Federal.

The hub of community life was — and still is — the School of Arts building, opened on 2 January 1899. Over the last 120-plus years the School of Arts (now known as Federal Hall) has been the venue for public lectures, balls, concerts, dances, euchre tournaments, farewell parties, Christmas celebrations, community and local club meetings, table tennis, carpet bowls and theatre performances. More recently, film nights, pop-up food events and art shows, as well as yoga, community choir practice, wedding parties, wakes and dance classes have been held there.

Recent history and continued community activism.

Federal is noted for its strong community spirit, which has achieved much for its residents. The first European settlers were committed to creating the village’s public buildings, donating land and raising money to construct a Butter Factory (since demolished), School of Arts building and two churches, as well as campaigning for a local school. Following the closure of the school in 1978, and the removal of the school building to Clunes two years later, a group of dedicated Federal locals — now named the Federal Community Centre Inc. (FCC) — successfully campaigned for the retention of the 1905 schoolmaster’s house for use as a preschool. When the Methodist Church (designed and built by Lowe and Beckinsdale, and opened on 28 May 1909) was moved to Eureka in 1987, the FCC was responsible for the construction of two low-cost houses on the former church site, near the junction of Federal Drive and Binna Burra Road, to mark International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

The FCC also drove the creation of Federal Park in the early 1990s.

Both Federal Hall and the adjacent Anglican Church — the latter also designed and built by Lowe and Beckinsdale and opened on 28 July 1909 — form what is now known as Jasper Corner. In 2012, the Federal School of Arts Associated Inc. management committee (also known as the Hall Committee) raised over \$200,000 for the purchase of the Anglican church for community use, and it is now a popular venue for weddings and other classes and events.

THIS ITEM

This property was originally home to William Francis Keys, one of Federal’s early European settlers. The original timber-clad cottage and several outbuildings are located on the northern part of the property. The house sits at a slight angle, facing across the T-intersection of Federal Drive and Binna Burra Road.

William Francis Keys was a prominent member of the Federal community. Along with his brother Andrew and cousin Hugh, he emigrated from Northern Ireland and selected land in the area — in William’s case, 98 acres in late August 1896 (Northern Star, 2 Sept 1896). A bachelor, he donated two acres of land for the purposes of erecting a school (Northern Star, 17 July 1895) and another ¼ acre of land which became the site of the first Methodist Church, built in 1909. In 1910, he and his brother-in-law Hugh Clarke had an altercation which ended in both being shot and killed. The property was then passed to Keys' nephew, Samuel McCutcheon, who then sold it to Les Davis, Robert Davis’s son. The property’s association with the Keys and later the Davis families, two of Federal’s earliest settler families, meets historical and associative significance.

Historic Themes

Records Retrieved: 1

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
4. Settlement	Accommodation	Homestead

Uses

Current Use

Dwelling

Former Use/s

Dwelling/Homestead

Assessment

Criteria a)

Historical Significance

This original timber-clad cottage is historically significant to the early development of Federal. This property was originally home to William Francis Keys, one of Federal’s early European settlers. The building's scale, form and materiality, and location on the property, with several outbuildings nearby, demonstrates clearly the early development and rural character of the village, when it was a centre for farming families in the area. This farm and the remnant of William Risley’s farm and farmhouse to the north bookend the village.

Criteria b)

Historical Association
Significance

This property was originally home to William Francis Keys, one of Federal’s early European settlers and a prominent member of the Federal community. Along with his brother Andrew and cousin Hugh, he emigrated from Northern Ireland and selected land in the area — in William’s case, 98 acres in late August 1896 (Northern Star, 2 Sept 1896). A bachelor, he donated two acres of land for the purposes of erecting a school (Northern Star, 17 July 1895) and another ¼ acre of land which became the site of the first Methodist Church, built in 1909.

Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

The farmhouse is aesthetically significant in terms of its building’s form and where it sits on the property, with several outbuildings nearby, which demonstrates clearly the early rural character of the village, when it was a centre for dairy farming families in the area. This farm and the remnant of William Risley’s farm and farmhouse to the north bookend the village.

Criteria d)

Social/Cultural Significance

Criteria e)

Research Potential

Criteria f)

Rarity

Rare, as the early surviving dwelling of W.F. Keys, an early settler of Federal.

Criteria g)

Representative

Representative example of a modest timber vernacular farmhouse from late 19th century to early 20th century.

Integrity/Intactness

Modified but retains its historic scale and form.

References

References

Records Retrieved: 1

Title	Author	Year	Link	Type
Preliminary Heritage Assessment of Federal Village	Jenna Reed Burns	2023		Written

Heritage Studies

Records Retrieved: 0

Title	Year	Item Number	Author	Inspected By	Guidelines Used
No Results Found					

Recommended Management

Management

Records Retrieved: 0

Management Category	Management Name	Date Updated
No Results Found		

Management Summary

Recommend listing as an item of local heritage significance.

Conservation principles: Conserve cultural heritage significance and minimise impacts on heritage values and fabric in accordance with the 'Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance'.

Custom

Custom Field1

Custom Field2

Custom Field3

Custom Field4

Custom Field5

Custom Field6

Admin Code1**Admin Code2****Admin Code3**

Stakeholders

Records Retrieved: 0

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Organisation	Position	Mobile	Email
No Results Found						

Images Table

Images

Records Retrieved: 6

Image	File Name	Image Type	Subject	Photographer/Author	Date	Display Sequence
	IMG_7004.JPG		Keys' Farmhouse	Jack Dods	4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM	1
	IMG_7029.JPG		Keys' Farmhouse, view nth to Federal Dr	Jack Dods	4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM	4
			Keys' Farmhouse	Jack Dods	4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM	4
	IMG_7009.JPG		Keys' Farmhouse	Jack Dods	4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM	3
	IMG_7006.JPG		Keys' Farmhouse	Jack Dods	4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM	2
	IMG_7039.JPG		Keys' Farmhouse from Federal Drive	Jack Dods	4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM	5

Notes

Records Retrieved: 0

Application ID / Stakeholder ID	Type	Date	Added By	Notes	Attachments
No Results Found					

Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Data Source	Record Owner	Heritage Item ID
Local Government	Byron Shire Council	6001260
Internet Available	Item Redundant	
False		

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Merged Heritage Items

Merged Heritage Items

Records Retrieved: 0

Name	Address	Date Merged
No Results Found		

Images



Caption: Keys' Farmhouse

Photographer: Jack Dods

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM



Caption: Keys' Farmhouse, view nth to Federal Dr

Photographer: Jack Dods

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM



Caption: IMG_7013

Photographer: Jack Dods

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM



Caption: Keys' Farmhouse

Photographer: Jack Dods

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM



Caption: Keys' Farmhouse

Photographer: Jack Dods

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM



Caption: Keys' Farmhouse from Federal Drive

Photographer: Jack Dods

Copyright Owner: No Credit

Date: 4/6/2024 12:00:00 AM