



# Showcasing SA Heritage Places

## Hope Cottage

Centenary Avenue, Kingscote KI

SAHR 10401 – confirmed as a State Heritage Place on 1 September 1983

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

Hope Cottage is associated with members of the Calnan family, who are recognised as being amongst South Australia's earliest pioneering families (having arrived aboard the *Africaine* in November 1836) and one of the founders of Kangaroo Island's pastoral and farming industries.

This dwelling is the best surviving example of three similar cottages (*Faith, Hope and Charity*) built by brothers Charles and Michael Calnan in 1858, following their successful return from the Victorian goldfields. Built of local materials, it is a reminder of the early phase of settlement on Kangaroo Island and of the pioneering spirit of the period.



*Hope Cottage, 2007*

### **THE CALNAN FAMILY:**

Jeremiah and Mary Ann Calnan, with their four young children, John, Charles, Michael and Mary Ann, travelled to South Australia aboard the *Africaine*, which was one of the first vessels to arrive in the new province. The barque dropped anchor at Kangaroo Island on 2 November 1836, but remained at Nepean Bay only 5 days before proceeding to Holdfast Bay.

Jeremiah, who is described as a 'cooper in all brands' had been engaged by the South Australian Company to look after their interests on Kangaroo Island, so the family disembarked before the *Africaine* went across to the mainland. Although other SA Company ships had arrived earlier, conditions on Kangaroo Island were still very unsettled at that time, as no-one knew where the headquarters for the SA Company would be located. Consequently no houses had been erected for the immigrants and Mrs Calnan had the unenviable experience of having to sit up all night, with her children beside her and only the shelter of an umbrella!

Jeremiah was soon discouraged by the situation on Kangaroo Island and decided to relinquish his engagement with the SA Company. As soon as he was able, he set off for Adelaide with the intention of handing in his resignation, and left his family at Kingscote. Unfortunately, he became ill on the journey and died soon after reaching Encounter Bay. Mrs Calnan had no choice but to struggle on as best she could on the Island with her three sons and young daughter.

The family engaged in sheep farming, taking over the abandoned Cygnet River lease, previously held by the SA Company and did very well in the stock business. Michael Calnan, who was nine years old when his father died, held five pastoral leases on Kangaroo Island by 1851. Sadly John, the oldest of the three brothers, was drowned in 1853 at the age of 29.

Michael and Charles Calnan ventured to the Victorian goldfields in the mid 1850s and, after returning to Kangaroo Island, built the three cottages – *Faith, Hope and Charity*.

### **FAITH, HOPE & CHARITY:**

In 1857-58, with the help of a ship's carpenter, and using their wealth from the gold-diggings, Michael and Charles constructed three similar houses – *Faith* for their mother (and possibly sister); *Charity* for Charles and his family; and *Hope* for Michael and his family.



*Hope Cottage, 1982*

The three cottages were built of cut stone, quarried from a local quarry. They were symmetrical, with deep hipped roofs, which were originally shingled. The six-roomed cottages had a cellar and an attic and four-paned sash windows. It is believed that bricks in the fireplaces were from the South Australian Company's first settlement buildings at nearby Reeves Point, as they are of a similar dimension and appearance and look to be re-used.

In 1897 a tenant re-roofed both *Faith* and *Hope* with galvanised iron, and in 1917 a new owner removed the timber and iron from *Faith* for his farm. Consequently *Faith* has long since gone, but *Hope* and *Charity* survive.

*Charity* cottage is now a privately-owned dwelling that has been extensively renovated. ***Hope* Cottage, the former home of Michael Calnan, has been restored and is run as [Hope Cottage Museum](#) by the Kangaroo Island Branch of the National Trust (SA).**



*Charity Cottage, 1982  
(Hope in background)*

