



## **Attachment 3 to Item 3.1.3.**

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Terry Kass History for 394 George Street,  
Windsor

Date of meeting: 6 March 2025

Location: Council Chambers

Time: 5:00pm



## George Street Windsor No 394 history

An auction of Crown lands was held at Windsor on 10 August 1892. George Anderson Robertson, monumental mason of Windsor, bid £90 for Lot 2 Section K, facing George Street, Windsor, immediately adjacent to the Roman Catholic burial ground. (CT 1167 f 234)

According to his obituary, George Anderson Robertson was a native of Glasgow, Scotland, who arrived in Australia about 1884. After marrying, his wife had two daughters and one son. The obituary noted that he later built a substantial stone house and shop near the railway station which he occupied, and where his wife conducted a shop. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 9 August 1918, p 9)

In September 1892, George Robertson asked Windsor Council to supply him with the details of the street alignment so that he could erect his shop. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 24 Sept 1892 p 1). It was reported on 1 October 1892 that George Robertson was preparing foundations for a shop that he would build adjoining his current residence. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 1 Oct 1892, p 3)

George Robertson's new premises at the far end of town were reported to be 'quite attractive' on 7 January 1892. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 7 Jan 1892, p 5) In December 1893, Windsor Borough Council voted to spend £2 repairing the footpath in front of George Robertson's new building in George Street in South Ward. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 2 Dec 1893, p 10). Robertson advertised his premises noting that he was both builder and contractor as well as a monumental mason. His wife Elizabeth Robertson, conducted a clothing and drapery store adjacent.

A Certificate of Title was issued to George Anderson Robertson on 8 July 1895 after he had paid the purchase price of Lot 2. On 4 May 1895, Robertson mortgaged this lot to Reverend Bernard Keenan, Windsor, headmaster of the Grammar School. The loan was discharged on 27 April 1896. Further loans were taken out in succeeding years bolstering Robertson's hold on the property (CT 1167 f 234)

The National Trust listing form claimed that the carvings on the building were completed by an Irish stonemason named O'Kelly, who lived opposite and was brought to Australia to work on the Cardinal's Palace at Manly. (NT listing form, 23 October 1978). This information was repeated in the draft form for the North West Sector Heritage study.

That sculptor was probably John Charles O'Kelly, born in Dublin, Ireland, on 30 June 1849. After arriving in Victoria in 1882, he worked as a sculptor for a number of years. He later moved to Windsor remaining an employee of George Robertson for many years, whilst also completing private work. Amongst other work, he completed two lions in front of the residence of R B Walker at Windsor as well as other commissions in Sydney. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 6 July 1907, p 12) Both George Robertson and John O'Kelly were Presbyterian.

In April 1896, George Robertson was reported to be having a promenade erected at the top of his new building. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 25 April 1896, p 3) In 1901, 'George

Kelly' [sic] was reported to be an expert sculptor in George Robertson's yard and probably one of the best in the colony. (Windsor and Richmond Gazette, 19 Jan 1901 p 3)

George Anderson Robertson died on 2 August 1918. The property on Lot 2 Section K was described as a residence with nine rooms with attached shop built of stone. The value was estimated to be £1,200. After his death, his stonework and other materials were valued by William Jeffries of Pennant Hills. Amongst finished headstones and other work, there were a number of damaged pieces as well as rough stone waiting to be worked up. (NRS 13340, Deceased estate file, duty paid 8/11/18, State Archives of New South Wales) Numerous cemeteries across the Hawkesbury, have examples of funerary monuments executed by George A Robertson.

An application for transmission of the title to the property was presented to the Titles Office on 15 December 1920 to register the title in the name of Elizabeth Robertson, of Windsor, widow. Subsequently, on 19 October 1927, an application for transmission was presented to the Titles Office to register the title in the name of Francis Johnson Robertson, of Kogarah, commercial traveller. On 12 February 1938, the property was transferred to John Milne, of Windsor, storekeeper. (CT 1167 f 234)