

# HISTORY

The Moreton Bay Fig at 138 Cranbourne Road, Frankston is a landmark Frankston tree, one of the oldest and certainly largest trees in the City.

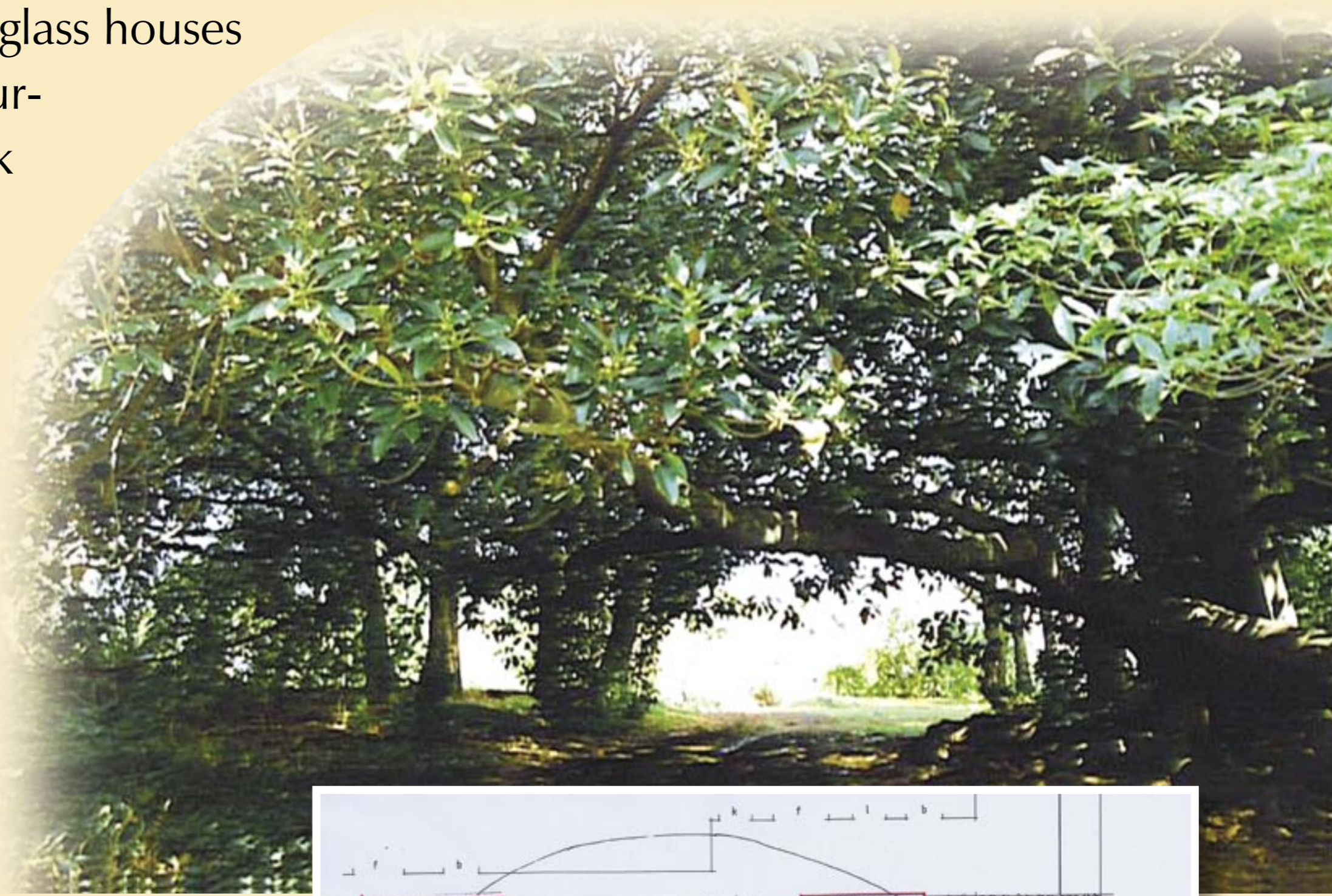
It was planted no later than 1890 as a feature tree in the grounds of what was to

become one of Frankston's earliest economic success stories, the Frankston Nursery.

By the early 1900's the Frankston Nursery was seven acres of glass houses and shade houses on Cranbourne Road. Not the modern, four-lane carriageway that is there now, but a modest country track running down to a little bridge about where Kelman Street is today. Seven acres with a creek and springs, maidenhair fern in the glass houses, bulbs and ferns, slipper orchids, lavender, native heath, and seedlings.

1890 is a conservative planting date for the Fig. When the Bailey family moved to the site in 1910 the Fig was already a substantial tree. The largest lower branch was already so enormous that the four grown-up Bailey daughters could all rest in hammocks swung off this one lateral!

The Fig is a large, venerable, highly visible landmark well known to generations of Frankston people.



## Saving Moreton Bay

Archicentre, the building advisory service of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, in partnership with the Frankston City Council, Devine Homes and the community, is undertaking a major demonstration project to protect a threatened 100 year old Moreton Bay Fig Tree at 138 Cranbourne Road, Frankston.

As part the Year of the Built Environment 2004, two specially designed houses, each with a distinctive theme, will be built on the land allotment featuring the tree to demonstrate best practice in preserving significant trees.

One home will have an environmental theme and the other will be built as a KIDSAFE home to promote child accident prevention in the home. The design is contemporary, drawing on the historical context of the original beach house suburb of Frankston, and reflecting the neighbourhood character of the area.

The tree dominates the site in a pocket of unfenced open space between the two homes and will always remain visible and accessible from Cranbourne Road.

Once completed the homes will be auctioned with the profits being allocated to Kidsafe for Child Accident Prevention programs and the Environment Fund of Frankston City Council.

