
EUSTACE'S FARM RUINS

Location

1948 BEECHWORTH-CHILTERN ROAD CHILTERN, INDIGO SHIRE

Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8225-0138

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site

Location of a small farm, once a part of the El Dorado Pre-emptive purchase and home of Eustace's Farm. The site was inspected from the road only, and the only obvious traces of earlier occupation were remnants of an old cypress avenue. According to Rex Fuge (Chiltern Athenaeum), the 'slab hut' was located close to the creek line, and while such remains are highly ephemeral, the area is relatively undeveloped, there is potential for structural and/or other material remains in the locality.

Archaeological Significance

The location of Eustace's home is of medium archaeological significance as a landscape associated with one of the regions most prominent artists. It continues to have some archaeological potential and further investigation, through survey and archaeological excavation may provide evidence of the layout of the farm and provide associated material culture that may allow a better understanding of the man himself, but also relating to the life of a shepherd in the latter 19th century.

Historical Significance

The location is significant in relation to 19th century pastoralist history, but more importantly, as the home of the regions most prominent artists: A. W. Eustace.

Hermes Number 162329

History

The history of Eustace's Farm is partly oral and chronicled locally, at the Chiltern Athenaeum and on the web (largely descendants of the Eustace family).

According to the Black Dog Creek Chronicle on the web (<http://eustace.id.au/>):

The first Europeans in the area led by Joseph Hawdon who was involved in overlanding cattle to Port Phillip in 1836. Legend says that he shot a rare 'black' dingo and Black Dog Creek was named in its honour.

The first squatters took up land here in 1839 and a bush inn was established in 1844. Some other buildings developed around the hotel - later transformed into a police outpost and often visited by Robert O'Hara Burke, of the famous Burke and Wills expedition. In 1858 the first gold discovered was at Black Dog Creek, somewhere between the Hume Freeway and Murray River and the 'Federal Standard' newspaper established in 1859, one of the biggest provincial newspaper printeries, and the first edition of the newspaper appeared on 24 August 1859. The railway did not come to the region until 1873.

Alfred Eustace came to Victoria in 1851 and according to the website above he was:

Alfred Eustace [1820-1907] Pioneer bush artist, shepherd (Eldorado Run) , poet & taxidermist of Black Dog Creek and Chiltern, VIC. Alfred painted landscape scenes on White-box eucalypt leaves (see photo). Exhibitions in Albury (1864) and in Melbourne (1884). A long time friend of Jason, Thomas and William Withers, Alfred and his family came to the Black Dog creek district to shepherd sheep. It was here that he learnt to paint.

The Indigo Shire Heritage Study (Freeman 2002:182) also document the story of A. W. Eustace, although the location of his home and farm is not described in detail. A search of the Parish maps and general historical texts also did not reveal further information regarding the location. However amongst the number of his works at the Chiltern Athenaeum, at least one is an example drawn on his own property (Rex Fuge, Chiltern Atheneum, pers. comm.)

The paddocks are formerly part of the Eureka Pre-emptive purchase and more significantly, part of the former location of a slab hut and farm belonging to Alfred William Eustace; a prominent regional gum leaf artist and shepherd for Jason Withers of the Ullina Station (one of the original farms at Chiltern).

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>