
TOOMBON BATTERY SITE

Location

DONNELLYS CREEK TOOMBON, BAW BAW SHIRE

Municipality

BAW BAW SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8122-0029

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 10746

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site: A reef was first worked on Mt Lookout in 1864 by a prospector named Jessop. In 1868, two residence leases were taken up at Mt Lookout under the new 42nd section of the Lands Act, and the original prospectors of BB Creek worked the land as a market garden known as The Farm. Jessop persevered with his reef for years, sinking shafts and driving tunnels and 'obtaining such encouraging results that he underwent great privations rather than relinquish his hold on the ground, in consequence of which,' according to a report in 1871, 'he died about twelve months ago.' He did not live to see the success of the reef which would be worked variously as Jessop's, Fleming's, the Aberfeldy, Lily of the Valley, and Toombon. Just after Jessop's death it was announced that, 'A new reef on the Aberfeldy, containing fine gold, and of considerable width, has been taken up within the last week, situated four miles below the crossing of the Gippsland road.' Fleming was the discoverer, and a rush ensued. In 1871, Fleming's party was cutting a race in preparation for a battery, and the next year, as the Aberfeldy Co., they erected a 'powerful' water-powered battery of ten heads near the mouth

of their tunnel. The returns were not much good and the shareholders were in disagreement about how best to develop the mine, so its performance during the 'seventies was. In 1881 the Toombon GMC was formed and a new main shaft commenced north of the road. The next year, a Languard's Cornish boiler, 33-hp steam engine, double winding drum, and pumping gear were installed near the shaft. A good-looking reef was struck in 1883, causing many new claims to be pegged out in the vicinity. In 1886, the Toombon Co.'s battery was increased to twenty heads, powered by a larger (40-ft) waterwheel, but with an auxiliary steam engine of 35 horsepower. The Toombon mine closed down in 1898, having reached a depth of nearly 1,000 ft. With a total yield of 50,844 oz from 61,888 tons, it had been the largest gold-producer in the Aberfeldy/Donnelly's Creek district. Another Toombon Co. was formed in 1934 to re-open the mine. Thirty thousand pounds was spent on clearing out the main shaft and winzes, but poor prospects closed the mine in 1940. Of the plant installed in the 'thirties, only the water tube boiler remains. References: Ainsworth Bailey & Bailey, p. 10 Baragwanath, pp. 10-11 Kenny Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), September 1872, September 1879, June 1881; (Stringer's Creek Subdivision), June & September 1872, March 1874, ; (Aberfeldy Subdivision), 1876-83; (Donnelly's Creek Division), September 1875, December 1882, September 1886 Supple et al, after Milner (1989/1)

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.

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