
DRY CREEK-HARBINGER BATTERY AND MINE WORKINGS



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Location

DRY CREEK JERICHO, BAW BAW SHIRE

Municipality

BAW BAW SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8122-0084

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 10791

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site: The New Chum Reef was opened in 1864. Its prospectors drove a tunnel which, by September 1865, was in 300 ft. Early in 1867, the New Chum Co. undertook 'the necessary works'—a track or tramway?—to enable crushing at the Dry Creek battery (erected in 1864). The following year, a 17-head battery, engine and boiler ('Mr Hodgson's crushing plant on the Red Jacket Creek'—Dry Creek seems to have also gone by that name) were erected 'for the purpose of crushing the stone from the New Chum Reef'—the two main mines being those of the No. 1 South New Chum and Manoa GMCs (the New Chum Co. had dropped from the records). The battery had formerly operated at the Smile of Fortune mine at Jericho (installed 1867), and its new location was below the Moonlight Reef and immediately above the (later discovered) Harbinger. In 1869, the battery was called 'Polglaise's crushing mill' and was the only one on Dry Creek. The Manoa was then the only claim at work on the New Chum Reef. The newly discovered Harbinger Reef was the big news on Dry Creek: in 1870 the Harbinger Co. laid a tramway to the battery. Other mines crushing at the Dry Creek battery were the Commercial and Moonlight. In 1871, only the Harbinger mine was sending stone to the machine: the New Chum and other reefs were abandoned. In 1876, the mine and plant of the Harbinger Co. was sold and the new owner immediately got the steam-engine and battery in thorough working order. By 1878 (and probably earlier) kiln/s operated at the Dry Creek/Harbinger battery, burning the quartz prior to crushing. For several years from that date, work in the Harbinger mine was confined to driving the main tunnel and prospecting, with no crushing taking place. During that period, bushfire 'burned down' the battery and steam engine, and the claim was left idle for a few years. In 1884-5, the battery and engine were repaired, additional gold-saving appliances installed, and (new) quartz-roasting kilns constructed. In 1886, active mining recommenced in the Harbinger, resulting in a few good yields before the gold cut out. A lower tunnel was driven to again cut the reef, and crushing resumed in 1888. A 10-head battery and other plant was erected on another site for the Harbinger mine sometime later, and was removed in the late 1970s to Walhalla where it forms part of the Long Tunnel Extended mine restoration. Adits were worked on the New Chum line, on the opposite site of the spur, and a battery erected there in about 1903. The New Chum was worked until 1915. Although the battery on this site appears to have operated in connection with the Harbinger mine for the greater part of its career, it has generally been recorded as the New Chum battery. The 12 heads of battery, steam engine and boiler remaining on the site are presumably part of the original 17-head crushing plant installed in 1868 (ex-Smile of Fortune, 1867). The missing five stampers may have been discarded when the battery was repaired after bushfire damage in the early 1880s. The substantial kilns would be those constructed by the Harbinger Co. in 1885. Despite their being generally attributed to the New Chum, the battery and plant seem to have never been exclusively associated with that reef. References: Adams, p. 133 Historic Places Section file—source of material unknown Milner (1989/1) Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jordan South and Part of Omeo Subdivisions), June 1864; (Jericho Division), March 1867, September 1869, March 1870, September 1871, June 1876, June & December 1878, June 1881, March–September 1884, June 1885–September 1886, March 1888 Tomlin et al, pp. 110 & 112

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/>