
DOGTOWN (HANS REEF) AREA



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Location

MOOMBA SPUR TRACK STIRLING, EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8423-0011

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 11056

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site: Early in 1884, the Jorgensen brothers (ubiquitous Gippsland prospectors) discovered a rich quartz reef on Haunted Stream, about 5 km upstream from the later Stirling township. Their mine was called the Hans, and it went on to become the most important on the goldfield. Almost immediately, a 10-head battery was erected, powered by a 30-ft diameter waterwheel—soon after, a portable Robey steam engine of 10 or 12 hp. was installed for auxiliary power, and a further 5-head battery (Munro & Co., Melbourne) was added. Early yields from the Hans mine—averaging 7 dwt to the ton—do not sound especially promising, but because the ore was plentiful and easy to treat on site, it was considered fairly payable. Mining operations in the Hans–Dogtown vicinity relied on the processing of large quantities of low-grade ore. The mining settlement that grew up around the Hans mine was known as Dogtown. By early 1887, there was an established feel to the place, with good gardens surrounding the miners' huts. The Commotion Reef was discovered in 1886 in one of the Hans leases, but remained virtually unworked until 1894. At that time, an initial crushing of 50 tons yielded 157 oz. A 5-head water-powered battery was installed downstream from the Hans battery, on the opposite side of the stream. Five more stampers were added to the Commotion battery in 1900. In 1895, the Hans mine was idle, although still held under lease by the Jorgensens. Plant at that time included tramways totalling 2,400 ft in length, bringing ore to the battery, as well a firewood tramway and a 325-ft iron-lined ore chute. Cherry and Co. took up some of the Hans ground in 1895, installing their own 10-head battery (later known as Dominey's battery) a little downstream from the Hans plant. In 1902, a Jorgensen Proprietary Co. was formed to work ground adjoining the Hans mine by tunnelling, and their mine paid well for a number of years. The Hans mine itself became active again during the same period. In 1905-6, a steam-powered 20-head battery with four Wilfley concentrating tables was erected, together with a new winding plant at the shaft. The large investment in plant failed to pay off: after two years, the Hans Co. had obtained just 60 oz of gold from 700 tons of ore. The Jorgensen Co. meanwhile employed more than 20 men and achieved consistent yields of ½ oz to the ton, until 1907 when water in their mine proved too much for their equipment. The Hans Co. recommenced work for a couple of years, working on low-grade ore and prospecting for something better. Their main shaft was 360 ft deep and equipped with a winding winch and air compressor; with the help of a government grant in 1909, they acquired a neighbouring lease (Jorgensen Co.?) on which they erected a winding plant and sank a new shaft to 200 ft. The company failed to find payable gold, though, and operations ceased in 1911. Their battery and plant were sold at auction the following year, but the battery's new owners never took it away. Over the years, scrap dealers broke and blew it up and carted most of it away. The Commotion battery met a similar fate.

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/>