
WILLIAM FANCY MINE

Location

SYKES ROAD BERRINGA, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7622-0103

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 13, 2024

What is significant?

The site is significant due to the survival of well preserved machinery foundations demonstrating at least two different technologies - steam and gas power. The site also has a large mullock heap and remnants of a tailings dump.

How is it significant?

The site has significance because of its:

Intactness: retains evidence of the key aspects of a quartz mine – an arrangement of foundations associated with mining, mullock heap, and main and air shafts; and ore processing – foundations for a 30-head battery that was originally powered by steam and then later by a gas producing plant.

Integrity: a compact arrangement of mining relics which demonstrates the basic outlay and development of a large quartz mine

Condition: retained fabric in a condition that can be understood and interpreted

Why is it significant?

The site is significant because of its outstanding preservation, one of the most intact historic quartz mines in Victoria

Interpretation of Site	Large quartz mine that was worked from the 1870s until 1907. It is one of the most intact mines of this era in Victoria. It is located on private property. The site is used for grazing so there is little impact. The battery site is very overgrown.
Hermes Number	11998
Property Number	

History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

William's Fancy Reef (or Nil Desperandum Reef), Kangaroo (later Berringa), Southern Division,

EARLY DAWN COMPANY

WILLIAM'S FANCY COMPANY

WILLIAM'S FANCY AMALGAMATED QUARTZ MINING COMPANY

NORTH BIRTHDAY CO.

WILLIAM'S FANCY CO.

1877: co-operative party of 13 men formed to secure an area north of the Nil Desperandum Company and formerly held by the Williams' Fancy and Early Dawn companies.

30.09.1877: 58 ounces 11 pennyweight of gold obtained from a trial crushing of 141 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 8 feet wide at 90 feet from the surface

31.12.1877: 250 ounces 18 pennyweight 15 grains of gold obtained from 1003 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 103 feet from the surface.

03.1878: erecting 10 head battery.

13.05.1878: plant erected crushing commenced.

30.06.1878: 190 ounces 3 pennyweight of gold obtained from 620 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 140 feet from the surface.

30.09.1878: 261 ounces 14 pennyweight 2 grains of gold obtained from 1605 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 8 feet wide at 140 feet from the surface.

31.12.1878: 221 ounces 4 pennyweight 12 grains of gold obtained from 1350 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 8 feet wide at 130 feet from the surface.

1878: After Dark claim to the north purchased in order to secure a further 600 feet along the line of the reef; now in possession of 1050 feet along the reef.

31.03.1879: 177 ounces 16 pennyweight 3 grains of gold obtained from 1270 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 6 feet wide at 140 feet from the surface.

30.06.1879: 215 ounces 13 pennyweight 18 grains of gold obtained from 1400 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 10 feet wide at 130 feet from the surface.

30.09.1879: 154 ounces 5 pennyweight 18 grains of gold obtained from 900 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 6 feet wide at 130 feet from the surface.

struck some excellent stone in a winze at the bottom level will have to deepen the shaft to work it.

31.12.1879: 161 ounces 15 pennyweight 18 grains of gold obtained from 1145 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 140 feet from the surface.

1879: profitable results obtained and the claim paid good wages.

31.03.1880: 18 ounces 0 pennyweight 3 grains of gold obtained from 250 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 6 feet wide at 140 feet from the surface.

operations delayed because of a lack of water.

30.06.1880: 76 ounces 6 pennyweight 6 grains of gold obtained from 840 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 150 feet from the surface.

30.09.1880: 21 ounces 19 pennyweight 14 grains of gold obtained from 600 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 150 feet from the surface.

mine let to tributers who sank the shaft 20 feet opened out and are now driving for the lode in very hard ground.

31.12.1880: 104 ounces 14 pennyweight 6 grains of gold obtained from 987 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 150 feet from the surface.

1880: yields decreased and the mine was let on tribute.

12.1880: tributers struck the lode, but gold is very scarce.

31.03.1881: 165 ounces 2 pennyweight 15 grains of gold obtained from 880 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 7 feet wide at 150 feet from the surface; tributers sank the shaft further and eventually obtained payable stone 20 feet wide at a depth of 190 feet.

tributers are getting better yields; the last crushing gave them £5 4s per man for the fortnight.

30.06.1881: 155 ounces 11 pennyweight 6 grains of gold obtained from 1100 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 8 feet wide at 170 feet from the surface.

tributers have worked out the present level and are sinking deeper.

09.1880: tributers have sunk the shaft to 190 feet and struck a lode showing gold which went a further 20 in depth.

31.12.1881: 271 ounces 14 pennyweight 18 grains of gold obtained from 760 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 20 feet wide at 190 feet from the surface.

31.03.1882: 160 ounces 6 pennyweight 6 grains of gold obtained from 450 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 6 feet wide at 190 feet from the surface.

quantity raised by tributers is less than usual because of the foul air.

31.06.1882: 177 ounces 4 pennyweight 22 grains of gold obtained from 1090 tons of stone crushed.

30.09.1882: 184 ounces 18 pennyweight 17 grains of gold obtained from 403 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 8 feet wide at 190 feet from the surface.

09.1882: yields began to decrease as the upper levels became worked out.

preparing to sink deeper; purchased a winding and pumping plant.

12.1882: winding and pumping plant erected; mine let on tribute to a party of 14 men who have cleared out and repaired the old shaft down 190 feet; they intend sinking to 232 feet.

03.1883: shaft sunk to 232 feet; opening out for the lode which is expected at 85 to 90 feet; ground is very hard and wet.

30.06.1883: 68 ounces 17 pennyweight 21 grains of gold obtained from 389 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 8 feet wide at 220 feet from the surface.

tributers have struck the lode which is 8 foot wide.

30.09.1883: 219 ounces 10 pennyweight 15 grains of gold obtained from 817 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 10 feet wide at 220 feet from the surface.

the stone is being raised by the tributers and it is improving as it goes south.

31.12.1883: 361 ounces 12 pennyweight 18 grains of gold obtained from 1020 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 10 feet wide at 220 feet from the surface.

tributers have done remarkably well and their prospects are excellent.

31.03.1884: 270 ounces 0 pennyweight 3 grains of gold obtained from 859 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 12 feet wide at 220 feet from the surface.

30.06.1884: 175 ounces 19 pennyweight 0 grains of gold obtained from 865 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 10 feet wide at 215 feet from the surface.

06.1884: shaft sunk to 232 feet where, in a cross cut, payable stone was obtained in a crosscut which improved southwards and yielded highly profitable results up to this time.

30.09.1884: 43 ounces 10 pennyweight 0 grains of gold obtained from 145 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 10 feet wide at 220 feet from the surface.

tribute given up and the mine has been idle for the past 2 months of this last quarter; company are pumping water out of the mine and preparing to resume work.

31.12.1884: 70 ounces 15 pennyweight 12 grains of gold obtained from 222 tons of stone crushed; taken from a formation 10 feet wide at 220 feet from the surface.

suspended operations.

1885: the payable run of stone dipped underfoot, the tributers abandoned their work, the company commenced to prospect, but finding nothing payable, suspended operations.

03.1886: winding and crushing plant were sold and removed to Smythesdale

23.08.1895: taken up again by a Ballarat party.

23.03.1900: will put in pumps to allow sinking to resume.

20.07.1900: company successfully floated; a pumping plant has been acquired and will be removed and re-erected, and a 9 inch lift will be used.

(new company - Williams' Fancy Company)

1900: company formed to work the Williams' Fancy or Nil Desperandum Reef between the Birthday lease on the south and the Kangaroo lease on the north. The area of the lease was 118 acres 3 roods and 11 perches, with a length along the reef of about 50 chains. A new shaft was sunk and equipped with winding and pumping machinery.

27.07.1900: preparing pump foundations.

31.08.1900: engine foundations and bob pit are finished.
09.11.1900: pumping plant is complete and work will be resumed toward the end of the week.
31.12.1900 : erecting suitable machinery.
26.04.1901: a new working barrel has been put in and pumping will be resumed.
12.10.1901: a small battery - Banham's - has been purchased and will be utilised until the permanent mill is completed.
26.10.1901: the Hoare Brothers have won the contract to dismantle the battery from the Rice's Freehold mine and re-erect it at the mine.
16.11.1901: cleaned up the small battery; parts of the permanent battery have arrived at the site.
07.12.1901: the Hoare Bros are making good progress erecting the new battery.
12.1901: 169 ounces 18 pennyweight 12 grains obtained from a trial crushing of 389.5 tons of stone taken from No. 1 level.
1901: a 6 head battery was purchased, situated some distance from the mine, and used for trial crushings.
01.03.1902: both batteries are crushing material from the lode.
06.1902: 1236 ounces 13 pennyweight of gold obtained from 3588 tons of stone taken from Nos. 1 and 2 levels and stopes.
27.09.1902: additional 10 head of stampers to the battery are almost complete.
03.11.1902: fault found by the original company is expected to be met soon; north slope continuant seems better than south; extending crosscut in bottom level to determine where water is draining from; a drive was started south on the course of the lode; the face is continuing slope and slate, and favourable prospects for gold are obtained.
10.11.1902: manager reports that gold has been found.
17.11.1902: very low yields are expected to improve when the new equipment is ready.
24.11.1902: battery boiler has sprung a leak and crushing has been delayed; hope to resume operations today; operations underground have been limited as a result; there is not sufficient storage capacity in the battery to keep the men fully employed.
29.11.1902: additions to the battery to be finished in three weeks.
08.12.1902: battery boiler built in and housed; erection of additional stamps well forward.
12.1902: 1131 ounces 5 pennyweight of gold obtained from 6055 tons of stone taken from Nos. 1 and 2 levels.
1902: during the year as the yield from the trial crushings proved satisfactory a 10 head battery was purchased and erected near the shaft.
the underground workings showed the existence of a large body of low grade ore which could only be treated successfully by increasing the battery by an additional 10 heads.
trial crushing from a body of stone 12 feet wide left by the Kangaroo Company on the lease boundary yielded 52 ounces 3 pennyweights from 321.5 tons of stone. As this was not as rich as stone obtained nearer to the shaft, this block of ground was let to the Kangaroo Company on tribute in 1904.
10.01.1903: additional 10 head of stamps nearly complete, when finished it will reduce the costs of treatment to 3 dwt per ton.
19.01.1903: another boiler has been added and within a fortnight they expect to have 20 head of stamps running.
31.01.1903: commenced crushing with the 20 head battery on Tuesday, the increased power will reduce the cost of crushing.
06.1903: 1794 ounces of gold obtained from 9152 tons of stone taken from a reef 4 feet wide in the stopes between Nos. 1 and 2 levels.
12.1903: 2188 ounces of gold obtained from 10,560 tons of stone taken from the stopes between Nos. 1 and 2 levels, and from the drives at these levels.
1903: 20 head battery .
30.04.1904: two new steel ropes 1500 foot by 0.825 inches in diameter have been put onto the drums.
06.1904: 2296 ounces of gold obtained from 10,058 tons of stone taken from the stopes above No. 1 level and between Nos. 1 and 2 levels, and from the drives.
11.1904: 2418 ounces of gold obtained from 9958 tons of stone taken from a reef averaging 4 feet wide in the stopes above No. 1 level and between Nos. 1 and 2 levels, and from the drive at No. 3 level.
28.11.1904: the mine will shortly be fitted with electric light; the plant has arrived and it is likely that it will be installed within a fortnight.
1904 : 20 head battery; a second block of about 56 acres was obtained on the western side.
08.05.1905: to reduce the cost of handling the stone at the battery, the company is negotiating to introduce stone crushers, elevators and self-feeders; there was a short stoppage at the mill when one of the spur wheels broke.
10.06.1905: developing well.
24.06.1905: yielding 6 dwt per ton, with the cost of treatment at 14/- per ton giving 2.5 dwt per ton as profit and resulting in a dividend of 6d per month.
06.1905: 3180 ounces 15 pennyweight of gold obtained from 11,401 tons of stone taken from level Nos. 1 to 4,

and from the stopes between Nos. 1 and 3 levels.

14,295 ounces 9 pennyweights of gold obtained from 53,691 tons of stone crushed to date, with £7,800 paid in dividends.

11.12.1905: old pinion wheel stripped, will have a new one in before today.

1905: 20 head battery.

during 1905 rock breaker and self feeders added.

02.04.1906: putting in opening sets in the main shaft.

16.04.1906: the west plat in the main shaft was cut-off and the mine closed down for 2 days.

22.06.1906: 3348 ounces 16 pennyweight of gold obtained from 12,763 tons of stone.

26.07.1906: built the pier for the condenser and the foundation for the boiler.

13.08.1906: good progress with the new battery; boiler built in.

27.08.1906: good progress with the battery housing; the hopper frames are nearly complete.

10.09.1906: battery and mine closed down while repairs are made to the battery.

24.09.1906: battery repaired and started work below in the 20 September; the 20 head battery was also working with condenser attached; the new battery will be completed in five weeks.

13.11.1906: main shaft stopped while repairing the winder.

18.12.1906: 2710 ounces 3 pennyweight of gold obtained from 11,563 tons of stone.

1906: 20 head battery; 10 head of stampers added to the battery together with the necessary economical additions to the plant making it very complete and up-to-date.

shaft sunk to a depth of 600 feet and No. 5 level opened at 597 feet. £3,600 was paid in dividends and extensive additions were made to the plant; an extra 10 head of stampers were added to the battery to increase the number to 30.

1907: 30 head battery.

No. 4 level down 498 feet from the surface; equipped with complete crushing and gold-saving appliances; surface works lit by electric light; pumping machinery erected.

16.06.1908: 2184 ounces 14 pennyweight of gold obtained from 10,871 tons of stone.

15.12.1908: 2454 ounces 9 pennyweight of gold obtained from 14,489 tons of stone.

1908 : 30 head battery.

15.06.1909: 2172 ounces 5 pennyweight of gold obtained from 14,966 tons of stone.

02.08.1909: a suction gas plant has been delivered and good progress is being made erecting the plant; most of the heavy plant has arrive and in a week or two a public trial will be made; the following advertisement also appeared in the same edition:

"As manufactured by Tangye, Ltd. The cheapest motive power known; working successfully in your own city; particulars from site representatives; Benning Tear and Co., Abbeckett St. Melbourne."

06.09.1909: trial of the suction gas plant was successful; the concentration machinery with the battery is expected to arrive today or tomorrow.

12.09.1909: connection nearly finished and everyone is interested in how well the suction gas plant will perform.

04.10.1909: the suction gas plant has operated successfully during the week; the 30 head of battery is working smoothly, and there is sufficient power generated by the engine for another 30 head of stamps.

05.11.1909: ropes from the gas plant are causing a problem; need to be respiced and adjusted.

13.11.1909: held up for 30 hours after an accident to the gas plant.

12.1909: 1850 ounces 8 pennyweight of gold obtained from 12,670 tons of stone.

1909 : 30 head battery.

a suction gas plant was installed during the year and proved a success in reducing operating costs.

11.06.1910: 1835 ounces 14 pennyweight of gold obtained from 15,265 tons of stone.

10.12.1910: 2372 ounces 2 pennyweight of gold obtained from 14,095 tons of stone.

1910 : 30 head battery.

11.06.1911: 2053 ounces 9 pennyweight of gold obtained from 12,752 tons of stone.

10.12.1911: 1835 ounces 7 pennyweight of gold obtained from 12,989 tons of stone.

1911: 30 head battery.

10.06.1912: 1507 ounces 15 pennyweight of gold obtained from 8948 tons of stone.

10.12.1912: 2444 ounces 11 pennyweight of gold obtained from 8748 tons of stone.

1912: 30 head battery.

the shaft was deepened and No. 7 level opened at a depth of 800 feet.

06.06.1913: 3075 ounces 14 pennyweight of gold obtained from 9761 tons of stone.

12.1913: 4436 ounces 10 pennyweight of gold obtained from 13,260 tons of stone.

1913 : 30 head battery.

05.06.1914: 3944 ounces 17 pennyweight of gold obtained from 10,323 tons of stone.

05.12.1914: 4155 ounces 16 pennyweight of gold obtained from 11,777 tons of stone.

1914 : 30 head battery; the stamp battery was remodelled; new winding machinery erected and the shaft

deepened by a lift of 200 feet; prosperity seems assured judging by the ore reserves in sight. operations during the year were particularly successful; £12,600 were paid in dividends. An air compressor, a Root's blower and engine, and two high pressure boilers were added to the plant.

06.1915: 2997 ounces 4 pennyweight of gold obtained from 12,004 tons of stone.
12.1915: 2946 ounces 14 pennyweight of gold obtained from 10,683 tons of stone.
1915: £4,200 were paid in dividends and a new winding engine was erected.
10.06.1916: 2092 ounces 2 pennyweight of gold obtained from 6436 tons of stone.
13.12.1916: 1613 ounces 17 pennyweight of gold obtained from 5879 tons of stone.
07.1917 : mine closed down, with existing stopes exhausted.
1917: mine closed; machinery and plant sold off .

1897 to 1917: an example of low mining costs when in operation, for many years these low costs largely responsible for the mines continuing to operate; from June 1906 to June 1913 no dividends were paid but the mine continued to work with comparatively large crushings; in 1912 better grade ore was located south of he shaft and in three years the shareholders were paid better returns than for the previous ten years; the plant was remodelled and a vigorous prospecting and development scheme entered into, but the value of the ore fell away rapidly and the mine closed down; in the twenty years of operation a large amount of driving and cross cutting was carried out; 1200 feet of drives were put in both north and south, and crosscuts embraced over 1000 feet were put out; from its inception until 1907: calls totalled £12,000, dividends amounted to £15,600, total yield of 28,690 ozs from 114,728 tons of ore; then between 1907 and 1917: calls totalled £12,000, dividends amounted to £47,400, total yield of 76,912 ozs from 315,735 tons of ore, and wages paid during this period amounted to £200,000. SiteCard data copied on 13/08/2024: The mine was first worked in the late 1870s and ore was extracted from a shaft which paid for being crushed. In the late 1880s, the mine was taken up by a Ballarat Company. Pumping machinery was installed to sink below the 220 foot level. This involved preparing pumping engine foundations and a bob pit. A battery was also installed which was initially 6-head of stamps. The crushing capacity was increased in 1902 with an additional 10-head of stamps. The machinery at this stage was powered by steam. By 1904 the company had 20-head of stamps and the mine was fitted with electric lights. By 1904 the mine had 30-head of stamps. In 1909 a suction gas plant was added and it proved to be a successful addition to the plant. The following summary of the mine's gold producing history was provided in 1917: The mine was an example of low mining costs when in operation, for many years these low costs largely responsible for the mines continuing to operate; from June 1906 to June 1913 no dividends were paid but the mine continued to work with comparatively large crushings; in 1912 better grade ore was located south of he shaft and in three years the shareholders were paid better returns than for the previous ten years; the plant was remodelled and a vigorous prospecting and development scheme entered into, but the value of the ore fell away rapidly and the mine closed down; in the twenty years of operation a large amount of driving and cross cutting was carried out; 1200 feet of drives were put in both north and south, and crosscuts embraced over 1000 feet were put out; from its inception until 1907: calls totaled £12,000, dividends amounted to £15,600, total yield of 28,690 ozs from 114,728 tons of ore; then between 1907 and 1917: calls totaled £12,000, dividends amounted to £47,400, total yield of 76,912 ozs from 315,735 tons of ore, and wages paid during this period amounted to £200,000. [W. Baragwanath, Some Victorian Goldfields - No.3 Berringa District, Mining and Geological Journal, vol. 5 No. 3, March 1949, Department of Mines, p.17.]

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