
AUCHOLZIE HOMESTEAD

Location

185-215 MCNABS ROAD MELBOURNE AIRPORT, HUME CITY

Municipality

HUME CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-2336

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site The existing brick house is clearly the 1889 home built by Malcolm Ritchie when he took over the farm. Surrounding sheds are from the early to mid-twentieth century, as indicated by most of them being evident on 1940s aerial photographs. A collection of cut bluestone to the West of the farm yard, and a possible group of foundations with slate immediately behind the house, are possibly remains of the original 1850s homestead. There is potential for a cellar under this, but not within the later house. The area to the North and West of the house is also likely to contain the domestic refuse from the household, which would have been deposited there.

Archaeological Significance The standing house is of 1889 on stone foundations with no evidence of a cellar as reported by locals. However, to the immediate west is a pile of rubble with hand-made brick and slate, some bluestone and a later cemented and bricked pit to the north. This is potentially the location of the previous 1960s house which may have had a cellar.

Historical
Significance

Aucholzie is of historical significance as an early farm settlement marking the initial phase of occupation and improvement in the Tullamarine area under the notable family of livestock improvers, and part of the Melbourne Establishment, the Ritchie family. The site has considerable archaeological evidence for the arrangement of the farm and material culture related to its occupation and operation in the period 1850 to 1960. The potential of intact archaeological deposits related to the 1850s house and cellar and underfloor areas from both periods is very high. Given the anecdotal history of an association with Aboriginal contact, there is potential for Aboriginal archaeological significance.

Hermes
Number 197424

Property
Number

History

The Ritchie brothers acquired extensive landholdings in the Tullamarine district in the 1850s and 60s. By 1883 they had about 1005 acres encompassing part of Section 11 B, all of 128, and parts of Section 13A and 138 - which was known as Aucholzie. James Ritchie died in August 1883 the following year John and Charles Ritchie were living at Cobaw near Lancefield. It appears that Malcolm then became the principal owner of the land the brothers had jointly acquired. In 1889 architect, A E Duguid advertised for tenders for the erection of a residence at 'Augholzie' [sic]. the notice stating:

A.E. DUGUID Architect, 816 Collins street, Invites TENDERS for RESIDENCE at Aucholzie Tullamarine, for Malcolm Ritchie, esq. Alternative tenders required for stone or brick.

This homestead was built for Malcolm Ritchie, probably because his relatively wealthy status and family were not suited to the nearly 50 year old probably bluestone and mud mortared original house on the site. Duguid's accepted the tender to erect a substantial brick villa in June 1889. The house was located in Section 138 Parish of Tullamarine.

Malcolm Ritchie appears to have been the most successful and socially prominent of the brothers getting a brief listing in Victoria and its Metropolis, which notes that he was born in Scotland and landed in Melbourne in 1849 at the age of about 21. In 1851 he was employed by George Coghill on his station at Bulla and shortly afterwards he went to the gold diggings in New South Wales staying about two years. On his return he bought land in the Tullamarine area and by 1888 his property covered some 1000 acres, on which, like his neighbours the McNabs and Richard Gibson, he bred prize shorthorn and Ayrshire cattle and draught horses. Malcolm Ritchie was a member of the Keilor Council for at least twenty-four years, twice acting as Chairman.

Ritchie put the Aucholzie estate up for sale in 1886, when it was described as 1,060 acres of rich agricultural land grazing land, situate on the Deep and Jackson's creeks, to which it has double frontages, adjoining the well known Glenara, Keilor, Barbiston, and Gowrie-park Estates. It is all well fenced and subdivided, and has a comfortable homestead of eight rooms, all necessary outhouses, &c. The country is of rich alluvial soil, part of which has been ploughed, and yielded splendid hay crops, and it is not to be excelled for fattening purposes. It is picturesquely situated on the valley of the Deep Creek, and has a good climate. Interestingly the sale was handled by his neighbour from nearby Barbiston Farm, Richard Gibson of the real estate agents Richard Gibson & Co. (in conjunction with William GLOVER, of Woodend).

The property must have eventually sold, as in 1905 it was on the market, "under instructions from Messrs. J. and E. McNamara, but now only containing 406 acres. Ray Gibb records that Pat Murphy was on Aucholzie by 1913. In 1935, it was again up for sale, described as "405 ACRES of Sound Country of Volcanic Origin, as Previously Fully Advertised. Under Instructions from Mr. W. Cusack. Who is Definitely Retiring."9 The buildings were described as comprising: "brick dwelling containing 11 spacious rooms, l and p, including kitchen, bathroom, pantries, &c. under slate roof, with minor outbuildings and sheep yards: also two small cottages- on the river

flats." The adamant nature of the advertisement suggests that there may have been some doubt about the sale or retirement by Cusack. This seems to have been well founded as the estate did not sell:

Aucholzie Estate Not Sold: An offer of £17 an acre was made at the auction last week of the Aucholzie Estate or 405 acres at Tullamarine, but It was not accepted. Subsequently the estate was offered in two lots, one of 295 acres, on which an 11-roomed brick homestead is erected, and the other of 110 acres. For both these lots £171101 an acre was bid, and they were withdrawn for sale by private treaty. The auctioneers were A. E. Gibson and Co., selling in conjunction with Watts, Turnbull, and Co.

Malcolm and Jane Ritchie had a son, also Malcolm Ritchie, who, when he died on 20 January, at Melbourne, of 196 Pilgrim street, Footscray, was described as "eldest son of the late Malcolm and Jane Ritchie late of Aucholzie, Tullamarine, aged 85 years."

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/>