

DELGANY



Delgany Castle



DELGANY SOHE 2008



Delgany Castle with formal gardens



h02058 1 delgany portsea 1925 house sept03 mz



Delgany Castle



h02058 delgany portsea 1925 1953 1968 wings sept03 mz



Delgany Castle



h02058 delgany portsea 1925 windows sept03 mz



Delgany Castle



h02058 delgany portsea garage sept03 mz



Delgany Garage



Delgany Garage image 3



Delgany Portsea 1925 House
September 2003



Delgany Garage image 1



Delgany Portsea 1925 House
September 2003



Delgany Portsea 1925 House
September 2003



Delgany Portsea 1925 House
Windows and Doors
September 2003



Delgany Portsea 1953 Wing
September 2003



Delgany Portsea Drive
September 2003



Delgany Portsea Garage
September 2003



Delgany Portsea Garage and
Drive September 2003



Delgany Portsea Join of 1953
and 1925 House September
2003



Delgany Portsea Rear of
1925, 1953 and 1968 Wings
House September 2003



Delgany Castle image 4



h02058 delgany portsea plan dec03 mz

Location

3809 POINT NEPEAN ROAD AND 2, 3 & 4 DESBROWE ANNEAR WAY AND 2-28 ARMYTAGE DRIVE AND 1-29 ARMYTAGE DRIVE AND 20-22 DELGANY AVENUE PORTSEA, MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE

Municipality

MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2058

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO207

VHR Registration

March 11, 2004

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 11, 2004

What is Significant?

Delgany, Nepean Highway, Portsea is a large limestone building with prominent castellated parapets and towers incorporating an eclectic mix of Gothic and Medieval elements. It is set in an expansive and largely informal landscaped setting. The building was built in three stages; the original house in 1925 with additions in 1953 and 1968. Delgany was designed by Harold Desbrowe Annear as a large country house for Harold Armytage and his sisters. Melbourne's establishment families constructed many large country houses on the Mornington Peninsula as rural retreats and Delgany in its prominent location, was intended to be one of the grandest of these. During the Second World War, from 1942 to 1946, the house was used as the 62nd Australian Army Camp Hospital. In 1947 Delgany was sold to the Dominican Sisters who converted (and extended) the house for use as a deaf school with on-site dormitory facilities. The building was again sold in 1985, undergoing conversions to open in 1988 as a restaurant and luxury country retreat.

The main building complex is situated in an elevated position at the south end of the property with panoramic views over the surrounding landscape and coastal area. The entrance to the site is off the Nepean Highway (also known as Point Nepean Road) where a serpentine drive leads to the building through a treed landscape. Originally the main entrance was a little further to the west but this was moved in the mid 1950s to its current location. To facilitate this change a new section of driveway and the tear drop shaped turning circle were also built. The tear shaped turning circle replaced the original driveway layout, which with the garage formed an integral unit, as the garage was designed for the drive to pass through it. It is unclear where the current gates and gate post came from but is thought that they may have been the gates to a large house built on the site during the 1880s by the judge Sir Thomas a'Beckett.

The exterior of the 1925 building is an eclectic mix of elements including Tudor castellation, an Italianate loggia with terrace, Voysean buttresses and a tower. This eclecticism is augmented by the addition a number of Annear's signature details including sliding sash windows recessing into the wall space and a distinct chimney design. The external walls are unusually thick (incorporating limestone, reinforced concrete and concrete bricks). The 1953 and 1968 wings are faced in limestone and match the castellated style of the original structure. While not of any particular architectural merit in themselves, the later components come together with the original building to form a largely coherent whole. The interiors of all sections of the main building have been altered, although the 1925 wing retains some of its original plan form and principal spaces. The 1925 garage is a key element of the original Desbrowe Annear design, and retains a formal relationship to the main house.

The Delgany landscape also provides a largely informal and naturalistic setting for the buildings, with a park-like surrounds featuring numerous Moonah interplanted with scattered pines and conifers. The immediate setting for the hotel, however, which was established after 1988, is considered to be uncharacteristically formal and ornamental.

How is it Significant?

Delgany is considered to be of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it Significant?
Delgany is of architectural significance as an ambitious and unusual example of the later work of noted Victorian architect Harold Desbrowe Annear and is considered to be the most ambitious and spectacular of the ten or so Mornington Peninsula houses designed (or upgraded) by him.

Delgany is of historical significance for its association with the prominent Armytage family, and with Harold Armytage in particular. Although his ownership of the property was brief, Harold was the driving force behind the construction of the castle and its establishment as a large and distinctive seaside residence in an area noted for substantial rural retreats.

Delgany is of historical significance for demonstrating the lifestyles of the wealthy and the expression of status provided by owning such a prominent holiday house in an area noted for the presence of many holiday retreats of Victoria's wealthy establishment families. More so than the statement made by the house itself, this aspect of the place's significance is best encapsulated in the garage. Built at a time when car ownership was limited and generally to those with a higher income, such a prominently placed and well designed building as this garage is a demonstration of both the novelty of the car and the expression of the status that it represented. The garage is also a further expression of the leisure lifestyle that the house provided and which car ownership would have assisted in accessing.

Delgany is of historical significance for its role in the education and care of the physically handicapped in Victoria due to its association, from the 1940s to the 1980s, with the Dominican Sisters St Mary's School for the Deaf and Dumb. The latter was a major initiative of the Catholic Church at the time, and when it opened was the only Catholic boarding school for deaf children in Australia. The form that Delgany takes today is a result of major

additions made during the Dominican Sisters' ownership.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. **General Conditions:** 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible. **Note:** All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. **General Conditions:** 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. **Note:** The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. **General Conditions:** 4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. **General Conditions:** 5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable.

Regular Site Maintenance :

The following site maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) regular site maintenance provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the maintenance of an item to retain its conditions or operation without the removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the introduction of new materials; c) cleaning including the removal of surface deposits, organic growths, or graffiti by the use of low pressure water and natural detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing; d) repairs, conservation and maintenance to plaques, memorials, roads and paths, fences and gates and drainage and irrigation. e) the replacement of existing services such as cabling, plumbing, wiring and fire services that uses existing routes, conduits or voids, and does not involve damage to or the removal of significant fabric. **Note:** Surface patina which has developed on the fabric

may be an important part of the item's significance and if so needs to be preserved during maintenance and cleaning. Note: Any new materials used for repair must not exacerbate the decay of existing fabric due to chemical incompatibility, obscure existing fabric or limit access to existing fabric for future maintenance. Repair must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements.

Fire Suppression Duties :

The following fire suppression duties are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) Fire suppression and fire fighting duties provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) Fire suppression activities such as fuel reduction burns, and fire control line construction, provided all significant historical and archaeological features are appropriately recognised and protected; Note: Fire management authorities should be aware of the location, extent and significance of historical and archaeological places when developing fire suppression and fire fighting strategies. The importance of places listed in the Heritage Register must be considered when strategies for fire suppression and management are being developed.

Weed and Vermin Control :

The following weed and vermin control activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) Weed and vermin control activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; Note: Particular care must be taken with weed and vermin control works where such activities may have a detrimental affect on the significant fabric of a place. Such works may include the removal of ivy, moss or lichen from an historic structure or feature, or the removal of burrows from a site that has archaeological values.

Landscape Maintenance

The following landscape maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995:

*Landscape maintenance works provided the activities do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits.

*The process of gardening; watering, top-dressing, fertilising, mowing, hedge clipping, bedding displays, removal of dead plants and disease, emergency and safety works and weed control necessary for the continued health of plants. Landscaping and planting to retain the existing landscape character, without damage or major alterations to layout, contours, plant species or other significant landscape features.

*Pruning to control size, improve shape, flowering or fruiting and the removal of diseased, dead or dangerous material, not exceeding 20% of the crown of the tree within a period of two years.

*Tree surgery by a qualified horticulturalist or tree surgeon necessary for the health of those plants.

*Repairs, conservation, and maintenance to hard landscape elements, buildings and structures, sculptures, fountains and monuments, steps, paths, roadways and gutters, drainage and irrigation systems, edging, fences and gates.

*New or replacement planting which conserves the landscape character, elm, oak, avenues and rows.

*In the event of the loss of any tree specified in the Extent of Registration, replanting with the same species of tree as that removed.

*Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of Amenity Trees AS 4373.

*Vegetation protection and management of the possum population.

*Removal of plants listed as noxious weeds in the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.

*Maintenance and replacement of play equipment to meet Australian Standards; Playground equipment for parks, schools and domestic use AS 1924; Playgrounds - Guide to siting and to installation and maintenance of equipment AS 2155;and Playground surfacing - Specifications, requirements and test method AS 4422.

*Installation, removal or replacement of garden watering and drainage systems.

Public Safety and Security :

The following public safety and security activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) public safety and security activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structures or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the erection of temporary security fencing, scaffolding, hoardings or surveillance systems to prevent unauthorised access or secure public safety which will not adversely affect significant fabric of the place including archaeological features; c) development including emergency stabilisation necessary to secure safety where a site feature has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and represents a safety risk to its users or the public. Note: Urgent or emergency site works are to be undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist such as a structural engineer, or other heritage professional.

Signage and Site Interpretation :

The following Signage and Site Interpretation activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) signage and site interpretation activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structures or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the erection of non-illuminated signage for the purpose of ensuring public safety or to assist in the interpretation of the heritage significance of the place or object and which will not adversely affect significant fabric including landscape or archaeological features of the place or obstruct significant views of and from heritage values or items; c) signage and site interpretation products must be located and be of a suitable size so as not to obscure or damage significant fabric of the place; d) signage and site interpretation products must be able to be later removed without causing damage to the significant fabric of the place; Note: The development of signage and site interpretation products must be consistent in the use of format, text, logos, themes and other display materials. Note: Where possible, the signage and interpretation material should be consistent with other schemes developed on similar or associated sites. It may be necessary to consult with land managers and other stakeholders concerning existing schemes and strategies for signage and site interpretation.

Minor Works :

Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Demolition of 1980s additions and modifications including the removal of covered walkway and 1980s carpark.

All works including demolition and internal modification (but not) additions to the adjacent buildings not listed in the extent of registration.

Construction dates	1923,
Architect/Designer	Annear, Harold Desbrowe,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	2505
Property Number	

History

Built: 1925

Sept 1926 Harold Armytage dies

62nd Australian Camp Hospital 1942-1946

Sold to the Dominican Sisters in 1947

Opens as St Mary's Home for the Deaf and Dumb January 1948, opened by Archbishop Daniel Mannix. Only Catholic run boarding school for the deaf and dumb in Australia at the time.

First set of additions: 1953, architect: Joseph Plottel

Second set of additions: 1968

Sold in 1985 and opened in 1988 after extensive alterations and refurbishment as a restaurant and guest house. Described in 1985 as a maze of small bedrooms, dormitories, classrooms and corridors.

Has been Peppers, Delgany Country House Hotel since 1998.

Harold Desbrowe-Annear was a major figure in Australian architecture during the first decades of the twentieth century, and designer of many private residences in Melbourne, as well as country houses on the Mornington Peninsula. Annear's plans were sought after by 'society' clients, who in addition to the Armytages, included the Myer, Baillieu, Murdoch and Grimwade families.

Harold Armytage was the grandson of George Armytage (Western District grazier), and the son of Charles and Caroline Armytage (of Como in Toorak). The Armytage sisters, Laura and Leila, were also part owners of Delgany, and retained the property for approximately 20 years after Harold's death.

Extent of Registration

1. All of the land shown L1 on Diagram 2058 held by the Executive Director being all of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 10463 Folio 738

2. All of the buildings and features marked as follows on Diagram 2058 held by the Executive Director:

B1 House

B2 Garage

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/>