
COONANGA HOMESTEAD



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SOHE 2008



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mywee rd strathmerton front
view apr1989

Location

575 BEARII-MYWEE ROAD STRATHMERTON, MOIRA SHIRE

Municipality

MOIRA SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0329

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO21

VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 2, 2021

What is significant?

The homestead was impacted by fire in 2018

The exploration of Hamilton Hume and William Hilton Hovell into inland New South Wales and Victoria on route to the Port Phillip District in 1824-25 and the favourable reports of the land they had seen was a significant event in the colonization of Victoria. The Hume and Hovell exploration proved to be instrumental in drawing attention to the potential of the vast grazing lands sighted during their expedition.

European settlement in the Numurkah district of Northern Victoria began in the 1830s led by Victorian pastoralists and New South Wales overlanders. The Strathmerton [or Ulupna] run on which the Coonanga homestead stands was first taken up by a pastoralist named Mundy in 1840. Benjamin Boyd, whose ambitious pastoral schemes in the Australian colonies were funded by the Royal Bank of Australia, with which he was closely associated, took over the run in 1842 and named it Strathmerton. Boyd also had substantial pastoral interests elsewhere and as a result of difficulties within his complicated company structures, shareholders put Strathmerton in the control of his brother William Sprott Boyd. During the 1840s and the 1850s, the property changed hands many times. In 1873, a portion of the run given the name Strathmerton West [or Ulupna West] passed into control of a partnership which included the Western District pastoralist George Currie. Currie had initially commenced pastoral activities in partnership with his brother John Currie on the Larra run in the Western District which became one of the foremost merino studs in Australia. George Currie also became well known in pastoral circles as an enthusiastic breeder of high class fine wool merinos. In May 1874, Currie completed construction of a sawn timber slab house with the detached kitchen and school room wings at the rear. Currie called his new residence Coonanga. Currie sold Coonanga to James Stewart in 1886. Stewart held the property until 1889 when he sold it to schoolteacher William Whyte, a well-known local figure in the district. In 1933 the property passed to his son William Adam Campbell Whyte. Whyte, who was a leading member of the Numurkah Methodist Church, lived at Coonanga until 1952. Whyte sold Coonanga to Henry J Lang who did not live on the property and frequently worked abroad. In its unoccupied state, the house fell into disrepair. The Numurkah Historical Society approached Lang, who was by this time living in Israel, with a view to preserving the old house. In 1976, Lang's widow donated Coonanga on a reduced area to the society.

How is it significant?

Coonanga Homestead is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Coonanga Homestead is of architectural significance as one of the largest timber slab homesteads in Victoria and also significant for the refinement of its sawn horizontal timber slab construction. Coonanga Homestead is notable for the unusual use of stud framing to the interior for the fixing of the conventional lathe and plaster internal linings. The canted bay form to the principal rooms is rarely seen in buildings employing horizontal timber slab construction.

Coonanga Homestead is of historical significance for its associations with its first owner pastoralist George Currie through his partnership with his brother John Currie at Larra station, the home of one of the foremost merino studs in Australia. George Currie also had a strong association with the merino breed and was well known in pastoral circles as an enthusiastic breeder of high class fine wool merinos. The site is of historical interest as part of the Strathmerton (or Ulupna) pastoral run owned from the early 1840s by entrepreneur Benjamin Boyd.

[Online Data Upgrade Project 2005]

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 Heritage Victoria 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 the Executive Director, 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 all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan 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 determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. 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 must 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.

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| Construction dates | 1873, |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place, |
| Hermes Number | 1129 |
| Property Number | |

History

The exploration of Hamilton Hume and William Hilton Hovell into inland New South Wales and Victoria on route to the Port Phillip District in 1824-25 and the favourable reports of the land they had seen was a significant event in the colonization of Victoria. The Hume and Hovell exploration proved to be instrumental in drawing attention to the potential of the vast grazing lands sighted during their expedition.

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[Online Data Upgrade Project 2005]

Sources

J & T O'Connor & C Kellaway. *Coonanga Building Conservation Analysis and Plan [Draft]*. 1988
Australian Heritage Commission. *Register of the National Estate Database*.

Extent of Registration

Shire of Numurkah. No.329. Coonanga Homestead, Bearii-Mywhee Road, Strathmerton.
[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3650]

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/>