BUCHAN CAVES RESERVE

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H01978 buchan caves h1978 landscape h1978

H01978 buchan caves h1978 fairy cave entrance sept 2001

Spring Creek Toilet

Buchan Caves Fairy Cave Entrance. May 2007.

Path to Fairy Cave. May 2007.

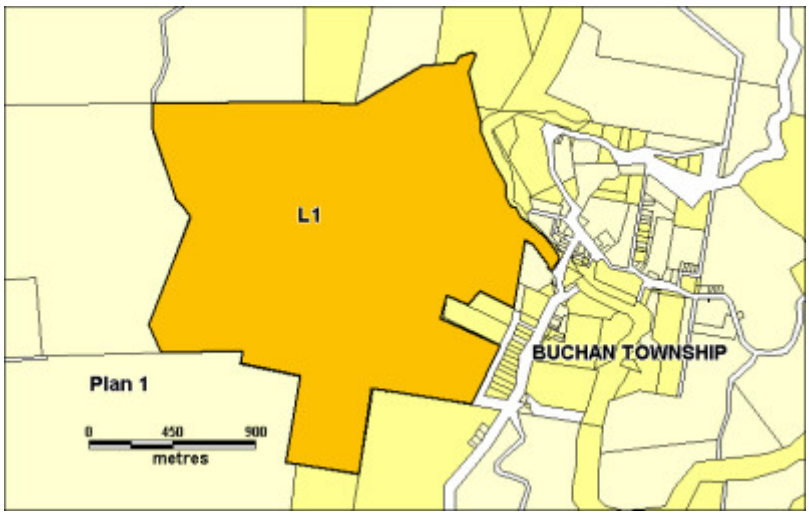
Royal Cave entrance. May 2007.

Royal Cave entrance. May 2007.

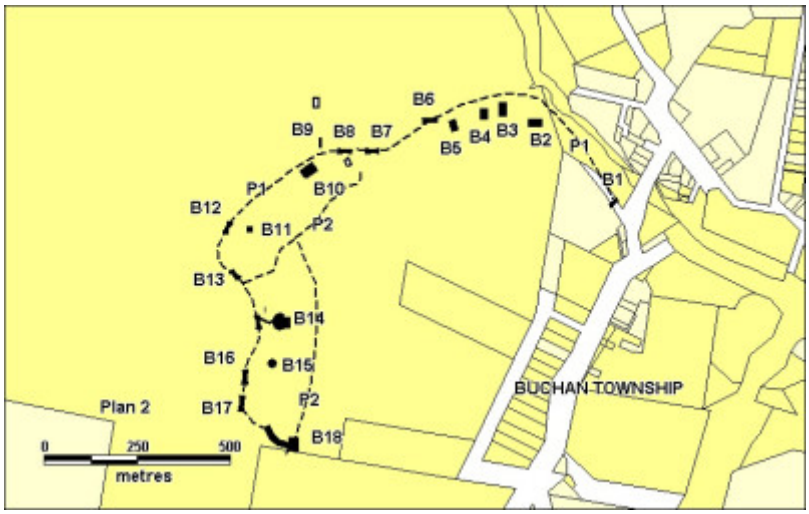
Typical netting inside caves. May 2007.

Exit to Royal Cave. May 2007.

Entrance Arch. May 2007.



H01978 plan 1



H01978 plan 2

Location

CAVES ROAD BUCHAN, EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1978

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO241

VHR Registration

February 27, 2003

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 5, 2003

What is significant?
The 285ha Buchan Caves Reserve is situated in the Buchan-Murrindal cave system, a large outcrop of cave and karst-forming limestones in south-eastern Victoria. The earliest known written reference to the caves is in a report of Gippsland written in 1840. The earliest known tourist reference to the caves was in a guide to the Gippsland Lakes in 1886, but the caves were undoubtedly a visitor curiosity long before then.

The first government reservation was a camping reserve of 19 acres in 1887 along the line of the Buchan-Gelantipy Road, whilst the caves continued to be used unofficially for picnics and functions. In 1889 a government party reported on and photographed Duke's Cave, Wilson Cave, Spring Creek Cave, Dickson's Cave, O'Rourke Cave, and Moon Cave. Buchan had been gazetted as a township in 1873 and in 1901 the remaining unsold land in the township was reserved from sale. The first regulations for protection of the caves was promulgated and from 1903-1910 the Shire of Tambo was appointed as Committee of Management.

In 1906 Frank Moon explored Moon's Cave and subsequently was appointed to officially search for new caves. This led to exploration of Kitson's Cave in 1906 and Fairy Cave in 1907. The same year Frederick Wilson was appointed Caves Supervisor, a position he held until 1921. Wilson had experience from the Jenolan Caves in New South Wales. By the time of the First World War the area was being promoted by, amongst others, the Victorian Railways, and the caves were a very popular tourist attraction. Infrastructure works in the caves before the First World War included some lighting and barriers. After the First World War an electric lighting plant was installed, and tunnelling that facilitated a link for Fairy Cave and Royal Cave.

In 1929 Hugh Linaker prepared a landscape plan. Linaker was a landscaping consultant to mental hospitals, prisons and local governments. His plan showed predominantly exotic trees although natives were not entirely excluded. Work on Linaker?s plan proceeded piecemeal, but in 1938 the existing reserves, and a new camping reserve gazetted in 1930, were consolidated into the Buchan Caves National Park. The committee recommended additional infrastructure works and renewed planting in accordance with Linaker's plan.

The entry to Buchan Caves Reserve lies on the south bank of the Buchan River, and is approached through a stone and timber pole archway erected in 1938. The entry drive runs parallel to the river, and is lined with London Planes (*Platanus* x *acerifolia*) and *Populus* spp. At the confluence of Spring Creek and the Buchan River are small copses of mature specimen trees, including a large Cottonwood (Populus deltoides) and River She-oak (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*). The drive swings west away from the river and into the Spring Creek Valley. Infrastructure from the 1930s along the drive include a manager's residence (weatherboard bungalow), tennis courts, concrete swimming pool (fed directly by a spring), bridges and sundry facilities.

The valley floor is planted with exotic trees to a plan prepared by Hugh Linaker in 1929. The Reserve contains a variety of vegetation, both native and introduced including species that are rare or outstanding trees in Victoria. The trees include a very large *Populus deltoides and* two large River She-oak (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*),two impressive narrow Italian Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens* 'Stricta'), several fine specimens of *Populus nigra* var. *italica*, *Populus* x *canadensis* 'Aurea', Populus alba, *Cupressus macrocarpa* (and 2 unusual single trunk forms), *Cupressus lusitanica, Cupressus torulosa, Cupressus glabra, Chamaecyparis funebris, Pinus radiata, Pinus nigra var. corsicana, Sequoia sempervirens, Tilia cordata, Betula pendula, Liqidambar styraciflua, Faxinus*

ornus, Fraxinus augustifolia subsp. *oxycarpa* 'Raywood', *Salix babylonica*. and rare *Cephalotaxus harringtonia*, *Quercus acuta*, *Tsuga canadensis, Populus balsamifera and Populus yunnanensis*.

Structures from the 1930s period in the valley include the entrance arch, a rustic rotunda, campers kitchen, a campers lounge (now functioning as a visitor centre), and the entrances to Fairy and Royal Caves. By their use of stone, crossed logs and timber these structures have a conscious rustic expression.

How is it significant?
Buchan Caves Reserve is of aesthetic, scientific and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?
Buchan Caves Reserve is aesthetically and scientifically significant for the spectacular caves and geological formations that comprise the underground features of the reserve. The natural features have been exploited by human intervention, particularly in the provision of illumination, and use of barriers to protect the limestone formations. Some of this infrastructure was the work of Frederick Wilson, including the stairway entrance and wire netting in Fairy Cave. As an example of early cave infrastructure, these works are rare in Australia.

The Buchan Caves Reserve is aesthetically significant as an example of the landscape work of Hugh Linaker, a pioneering designer of public landscapes in Victoria. The survival of Linaker's 1929 plan is important in understanding the design theory to beautification of the Reserve. The landscaping and tree planting has been carefully tended and sympathetically augmented in subsequent years. The landscape is characterised by the mature trees, particularly the high proportion of deciduous exotic species of Populus,Fraxinus, Betula,Liquidambar and Ulmus along the valley floor, which provide spectacular Autumn colour and contrast to the surrounding native landscape, which includes Yellow Box, Manna Gum and the rare *Acacia caerulescens*. The *Quercus acuata*is the only known specimen in Victoria and the only other known *Tsuga canadensis trees* occur at Alton and Pirianda. The road, which criss-crosses the creek, and the path layout in the Spring Creek Valley, which provide views within and out of the reserve, contribute to the aesthetic significance of the landscape.

The Buchan Caves Reserve is historically significant for demonstrating the influence of 1930s National Parks landscape ideals. This ideal was influenced particularly by contemporary developments in the United States, and is manifest in the self-conscious rugged design idiom of the log and masonry construction of the entrance arch, campers lounge and kitchen and the entrance to Fairy Cave. Hard landscaping features such as the dry stone walling to the Spring Creek, composite timber-concrete bridges over the creek, and the steps and paving around the cave entrances are intrinsic to the significance.

The Buchan Caves Reserve is historically significant as an example of an early tourist attraction based on natural themes. The provision of a naturally fed swimming pool and a playground demonstrate this commitment to visitors in the late 1930s. The ongoing use of the caves for tourist activities contributes to the significance.

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 alterations 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 alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. 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 authority where applicable.

Landscape
* The planting of plant species to conserve the landscape character of the Reserve as envisaged by Hugh Linaker in the 1930s.
* Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of amenity trees AS 4373.
* Removal of plants listed as noxious weeds in the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.
* Repairs, conservation and maintenance to hard landscape elements, paths and roadways, stone and concrete stepping, dry stone walls, fences and gates.
* Installation, removal or replacement of watering and drainage systems beyond the canopy edge of trees.

Bridges
* Repairs and maintenance to replace like with like.
* Works required for making the bridges safe, including addition of guardrails but excluding demolition

Buildings Exteriors
* Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.
* Painting of previously painted surfaces in the same colour.
* Treatments to stabilise and protect timber, masonry and metal structures.

Buildings Interiors
* Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.
* Removal of paint from originally unpainted masonry.
* Refurbishment of toilets including removal, installation or replacement of fixtures and piping

Cave infrastructure
* Works that do not impact on guard rails, fencing, lighting and other cave infrastructure from the pre-Second World War period.

Construction dates	1887, 1840, 1886, 1906, 1929, 1930,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	11578

Property Number

Extent of Registration

1. All the buildings and structures marked as follows on Diagram 1978 Plan 2 held by theExecutive Director:
B1 Entrance arch
B2 Manager's residence
B3 Tennis Courts
B4 House
B5 Swimming Pool
B8 Bridge
B9 Campers Kitchen
B10 Campers Lounge/Kiosk
B13 Bridge
B14 Royal Cave entrance, steps and toilet
B15 Rotunda
B16 Bridge
B17 Bridge
B18 Fairy Cave entrance and steps

2. All the roads and paths marked as follows on Diagram 1978 Plan 2 held by the Executive Director:
P1 Roadway/track
P2 Path system

3. All the hard landscape elements in the reserve, including concrete and stone steps, and dry stone walls.

4. All the land known as Crown Reserve Rs1288 permanently reserved Public Park and Recreation Purposes marked L1 shown on Diagram 1978 Plan 1 held by the Executive Director.

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/