
DRY CREEK ALLUVIAL WORKINGS

Location

TALLANGAROOK ROAD AND DRY CREEK ROAD ANCONA, MANSFIELD SHIRE

Municipality

MANSFIELD SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8024-0010

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 11653

Property Number

History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

Dry Creek was named for the fact that, except in wet weather, its bed was perfectly dry. The creek was rushed, as part of the Hell's Hole diggings, in 1860, and by the end of the year has been worked from its head to its junction with Hell's Hole (Tallangallook) Creek. Already, at that date, at least one party was preparing to undertake sluicing on a large scale. The Dry Creek Sluicing Co. brought water three miles from Brankeet Creek by a water race cut through rock in some places and flumed in others. They intended fitting their sluice boxes into the rock of the creek bed itself.

Most diggers had deserted the Hell's Hole diggings by the end of 1861, but the field was revived in 1868, first as the Strathbogie, then the Dry Creek diggings. There were 200 miners at Dry Creek in 1869, 100 of them Chinese. The village of Dry Creek was formed near the head of the creek, but the Chinese mostly camped on the opposite

bank of the creek, below the township. The years 1868-70 were the peak period of alluvial gold production at Dry Creek, and a great many fossickers—the majority of them Chinese—continued on in the area through the early–mid seventies. Alluvial gold production was declining by 1877, and energies were instead directed towards reef prospecting on the highlands. The Dry Creek township area was sluiced to bedrock in the late 1870s by the Dry Creek and the Alpine companies, which gave employment to many of the remaining Chinese diggers. Dry Creek township and diggings diminished to a great extent during the late 1880s, as the Tableland/Tallangalook township grew. 'A few persevering Chinamen' remained at 'old' Dry Creek in 1889; five years later, the population of the area comprised eight Chinese and 37 Europeans.

In 1907, a Sludge Board inquiry found that hydraulic sluicing, without elevation, had been carried out for years in Dry Creek, without major ill-effects to waterways. In later years (1910s-30s) bucket-dredging and hydraulic sluicing were carried out on Dry Creek's lower reaches, at Bonnie Doon, but no further records have been found of mining activity towards the head of the creek. Dry Creek village was largely destroyed by bushfire in 1923.

References:

Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907

Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), January 1861; (Dry Creek Subdivision), December 1873, June & September 1874, December 1879, December 1889

Wylie, A., Gold in the Shire of Mansfield: An Outline of the Smaller Discoveries, Mansfield Historical Society, 1987, pp. 5, 7-8, 11, 22-3

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.

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