
BUNINYONG FREEHOLD G.M. CO. NO.1 ORIGINALLY THE BUNINYONG GOLD MINE CO. NO.1

Location

WEBBS HILL ROAD SCOTCHMANS LEAD, BALLARAT CITY

Municipality

BALLARAT CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7622-0241

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Other Names BUNINYONG GOLD MINE CO.,

Hermes Number 11896

Property Number

History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Heritage InventoryHistory of Place:

This mine is one of 9 shafts that were initially part of the Buninyong Freehold Gold Mining Company, which in total produced 1132.979 kg of gold. Subsequently the company became the Buninyong Gold Mining Company producing an additional 1745.186 kg. No. 3 shaft is site No. 378, No. 4 shaft is site No. 379, No. 6 shaft is site No.

399, and No. 8 shaft is site No. 382.

BUNINYONG GOLD MINING Co./

BUNINYONG FREEHOLD GOLD MINING Co./

BUNINYONG ESTATE Co./ (part of their work from September 1884 was on the Desoza Lode on the Hlscok's line of reef) Union Jack, Scotchman's, Devonshire Leads, and Hiscock's Reef, No. 5 or Buninyong Division
BUNINYONG OLD Co.

08.1857: company of 27 shareholders negotiated with Thomas Learmonth for the right mine on the part of the Buninyong Station known as Learmonth's Paddock of 146 acres on condition that they pay 5% of the gross yield of gold for the first year, 7.5% for the second and third years and a rental of 50/- per week for the whole term of the lease; the first shaft was so good and the direction of the lead so well defined that speculators tried to purchase the property from the Learmonth's.

09.1858: the 1160 acres property purchased by the Learmonth's in 1855 was sold to the Buninyong Mining Company for £20,000, by which time the location and direction of the Scotchman's Lead was well known within the property.

the company paid half of the purchase price in cash and the remainder was to be paid over two, three and four years; to fund the purchase an additional 13 shares were created and put on the market for £750 each, the shares were quickly snapped up and the company was able to pay the second £10,000 immediately.

12.1859: purchased the private property which was formerly the pre-emptive property of Messrs. Learmonth; it is apparent that the course of the Scotchman's, Devonshire and Union Jack Leads run through this property.

1861: the forty shares were subdivided by 10 giving a fully paid up capital of £50,000 in 400 shares at £25 each.

12.1863: using vertical double plunger pump for draining mine; first use of this type of machinery

03.1864: holding Learmonth's paddock and working the Scotchman's gutter continues to be the best in the division, paying a dividend of £30 per share per fortnight.

01.1864: No. 3 shaft has a 20 inch by 36 inch steam engine for pumping and puddling, a boiler: 28 feet by 6 feet 8 inches, 2 puddling machines, with cast iron bottoms and wrought iron sides and centre discharge, and tramways fitted with tip cradles to discharge dirt directly into machines; using a 12 inch by 32 inch steam engine for winding and Round's patent flat chains; English flat wire rope, 4 inches by 0.625 inches, has been in use for 4 years. No. 6 shaft has an 18 inch by 33 inch steam engine for pumping and puddling;

Robinson and Thomas cast iron puddling machine for 350 pounds, puddling machine with cast iron bottom and wrought iron sides; an 8 inch pumps with 2 x 8 inch plungers worked side by side at the bottom of the shaft, no draw lift; a 10.5 inch by 26 inch steam winding engine, a boiler: 27 feet by 6 feet 6 inches; Robinson and Thomas to supply steam engine and machinery for underground working of gutter at a cost of 633 pounds; to place steam engine 1000 feet from plat to drain blind shaft and haul trucks to the plat by ropes and pulleys

02.1864: No. 6 shaft: underground pump shaft sunk 40 feet; framework for steam engine set; erecting steam engine and rivetting boiler; permanent tramway laid

03.1864: No. 6 shaft: underground steam engine started with 12 inch pumps

05.1864: Robinson and Thomas, Ballarat, supplying new gearing for driving puddling machine and pumping gear for raising water from the dam

03.1865: erecting very efficient machinery

05.1865: No. 8 shaft: water heavy at 28 feet; a 24 inch cylinder steam engine and two 30 foot by 6 foot 6 inch boilers purchased at a cost of 1150 pounds.

Entire plant of Oriental Gold Mining Company purchased for 1505 pounds 10 shillings; winding engine and a portion of the plant to be erected at No. 8 shaft, part at No. 3 shaft and the remainder sold. Some already sold for 720 pounds. Contracts let for erecting machinery. When this work is completed there will be 7 steam engines installed (190 horsepower total), 6 on the surface for pumping and puddling and the other underground for pumping and hauling trucks along a tramway in the main drive, 440 yards long.

06.1864: 1000 feet from the No. 6 shaft a chamber 40 feet square and 10 feet high was cut, it held an engine which was used to haul trucks up an incline from the gutter to the shaft; the engine was christened 'The Gold Finder' by Miss Cuthbert on the 8 th June 1864; One hundred and twenty men and sixty cramed into the chamber to witness the event.

At its peak the company employed 125 hands; wages were 24/- to 30/- for boys running trucks, 45/- for miners, 50/- to 55/- for shift captains, 70/- to 75/- for blacksmiths, 60/- for an engine driver for a 12 hour shift and 80/- for an engineer.

06.1865: No. 6 shaft: breakage of crank delayed pumping,; No. 8 shaft: down 70 feet in clay; steam engine completed

obtained some of the largest returns of any companies in the Ballarat district.

01.08.1865: No. 8 shaft: shaft down 120 feet in second rock; machinery started, consisting of:-; 24 inch by 48 inch steam engine; 13.5 inch by 28 inch steam engine; 2 boilers: 30 feet by 6 feet 6 inches; 12 inch pumps

08.08.1865: contract with Victoria Foundry to supply pump gearing and pinion at No. 6 shaft for 147 pounds 5

shillings within 14 days

To erect pumping engine at the Excelsior shaft (No. 9)

Breakage of bridles on pump bob at No. 3 shaft

4 puddling machines at No. 3 shaft; erecting another to reduce sludge before passing through buddle; erecting another boiler

22.08.1865: water heavy, more pumping machinery erected

29.08.1865: No. 6 shaft: damaged machinery replaced and pumping resumed

No. 8 shaft: down 142 feet 9 inches; pumps in wash-dirt; to erect new winding gear, trucks, double ropes and third puddling machine

Excelsior shaft (No. 9): timber for machinery on the ground; foundations for boiler setting nearly completed

1858 to 08.1865: recorded production for the Buninyong Gold Mining Co. of 56,107 ozs 14 dwt 20 gr (or 1745.186 kg).

05.09.1865: No. 6 shaft: pumps constantly going, chimney stack nearly finished

Excelsior shaft (No. 9): erecting machinery, engine framework complete, pumping gear framework nearly complete, bob pit finished, poppet heads nearly finished; boiler on the ground

12.09.1865: No. 8 shaft: putting up frames, slabbing and securing the shaft; down 150 feet

No. 9 shaft: to start machinery in a week

26.09.1865: No. 9 shaft: pumps started and water lowered 10 feet in 8 hours; using a 16.5 inch by 36 inch horizontal high pressure steam engine; boiler, 26 feet by 6 feet 6 inches; and 12 inch pumps with brass buckets; machinery supplied by McFarlane and Company, Melbourne, for 986 pounds; contract let for erection of machinery and poppet heads for 276 pounds.

09.1865: the company now has 8 steam engines at work; yields are average but should increase with the new areas being opened.

10.10.1865: machinery working well at the Excelsior shaft (No. 9). Water flow decreasing at No. 6 shaft

07.11.1865: No. 6 shaft: erecting additional puddling machine

No. 9 shaft: to erect puddling machine

14.11.1865: No. 8 shaft: erecting framing for 4 puddling machines

No. 9 shaft: erecting framing for puddling machine

21.11.1865: No. 8 shaft: down 204 feet; tenders called for hewn timber framing for machinery; foundations fixed

No. 9 shaft: foundations for puddling machines prepared and all timber on the ground

28.11.1865: No. 6 shaft: 2 days lost due to accident with pumps

No. 8 shaft: down 209 feet; connecting "feed" with filtering tanks for supplying engines

12.12.1865: No. 6 shaft: 3 pump pipes burst 170 feet from the surface; replaced with new ones

19.12.1865: No. 8 shaft: down 237 feet; tenders called for plunger workings, erecting framework for puddling machines

12.1865: working toward the Union Jack and other leads that are known to traverse the north east portion of their ground, difficulties in working their gutter shafts caused them to lay off some men, still obtained excellent yields.

1858 to 1865: this company won 53,000 ounces, which at 1990's values would be worth \$26.5 million. The operation was enormous, there were eight shafts and miles of underground drives.

Mid 1860's; the Bonshaw Freehold, the Buninyong Freehold, and the Leviathan were huge companies and were financed by speculators and capitalists mostly from Ballarat; these mines employed experienced Welsh and Cornish miners who were prepared to work for wages.

09.01.1866; No. 8 shaft: down 247 feet 6 inches

No. 9 shaft: guides fixed for cages

23.01.1866: No. 9 shaft: cages fitted

13.02.1866: breakage of shaft of winding engine

No. 8 shaft: bed plate laid for plunger workings; erecting framework for tank and puddling machine gearing

No. 9 shaft: waterfall fixed and air pipes connected up to the face to clear away powder smoke more rapidly

06.03.1866: No. 8 shaft: foundations and workings for plunger fixed; new puddling machine and gearing on the ground

20.03.1866: No. 8 shaft: pumps fixed and working; guides for cages nearly fixed; rails laid below

No. 9 shaft: to erect puddling machine

27.03.1866: No. 8 shaft: puddling machine erected; framework for driving gearing erected for another; second wire rope put on

No. 9 shaft: erecting puddling machines

03.1866: driving for the Union Jack and Devonshire Leads, while still getting good yields at their other shafts.

03.04.1866: No. 6 shaft: delays due to repairs to pump and underground engine

No. 8 shaft: puddling machine ready for a trial next week

10.04.1866: No. 9 shaft: puddling machines, sluice boxes and wash-dirt chambers fixed

17.04.1866: No. 9 shaft: puddling machine ready to wash

24.04.1866: No. 8 shaft: one puddling machine working; another to start shortly
01.05.1866; No. 6 shaft: time lost due to repairs to pump in the shaft
No. 8 shaft: awaiting fixing of pump before puddling
08.05.1866: No. 6 shaft: new cast iron puddling machine erected for 190 pounds
No. 8 shaft: new plunger workings and guides for cages fixed; framework for 4 puddling machines, tank and surface pump erected; erecting two cast iron puddling machines with inverted gearing
15.05.1866: No. 8 shaft: surface pump erected, dam finished
29.05.1866: No. 6 shaft: underground boiler overhauled and thoroughly repaired; pumping to be resumed
06.1866: yields improving; sinking for the leads in the north east of their property.
14.08.1866: 2 cast iron puddling machines working; framework for two more fixed; 133,380 trucks raised and washed for the quarter
04.09.1866: No. 6 shaft: breakage of pump gearing
09.1866: general improvement in the companies mines.
16.10.1866: No. 6 shaft: to employ horses underground
No. 9 shaft: horses working underground
12.1866: yields were average.
01.01.1867: No. 3 shaft: usual repairs to machinery]
08.01.1867: No. 6 shaft: machinery and boiler overhauled
09.1867: yields are not as good this quarter.
29.10.1867: No. 6 shaft: underground engine and that portion of the mine abandoned as worked out (new company -not mentioned in the Mining Surveyors and Registrars Reports)
11.1867: new company started
No. 1 shaft worked by horse whim; No. 2 shaft by whip; remainder by steam
12.1867: Buninyong Gold Mining Co. yield of 1898 ounces 5 dwt 14 grs.
18.02.1868: No. 3 shaft: flooded out from other workings on the mine even though the pumps going 14-15 x 4 foot strokes per minute
No. 6 shaft: inburst of water
No. 7 shaft: inburst of water from the old workings
Pumping stopped to allow the water to find its own level; pumping resumed again when the National Company agreed to pay half of the working expenses, wear, tear and breakages
03.1868: yield of 854 ounces 2 dwt 5 grs; the Buninyong Company (Cuthbert and Party) registered an alluvial claim for 4 men at Union Jack.
25.04.1868: No. 6 shaft: 8 inch pumps replaced by 12 inch ones previously at No. 9 shaft
Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5 shafts now let on tribute
06.1868: yield of 522 ounces 7 dwt 16 grs.
09.1868: yield of 855 ounces 12 dwt and 17 grs.
12,1868: barley paying expenses; yield of 560 ounces 9 dwt and 11 grs.
03.1869: very little doing; yield of 36 ounces.
06.1869: yield of 28 ounces.
09.1869: deep ground has been proved in the north east part of their ground and it should provide a large extent of gutter working; preparations are being made to prove the quartz reefs on the west of their ground north of the Homeward-bound Co.; yield 36 ounces 11 dwt 2 grs.
08.1865 to 09.1869: recorded production for the Buninyong Freehold Gold Mining Co. of 36,425 ozs 5 dwt 8 gr (or 1132.979 kg).
17.12.1887: the whole of the property was subdivided into 52 allotments and advertised for sale; the advertisements stressed that the Company had obtained 3.5 tons of gold with the amount remaining estimated to be 'something enormous', while the quartz reefs had scarcely been touched. The auction did not attract any mining speculators and the property reverted to pastoral and farming use.

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