
STEWART AND FARNSWORTH'S RESERVOIR AND WATER RACE

Location

CLUNES-EVANSFORD ROAD EVANSFORD, PYRENEES SHIRE

Municipality

PYRENEES SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7623-0269

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 12167

Property Number

History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

June 1871: The reservoir and races of Messrs Stewart and Farnsworth:

Reservoir.....Cost £4,500

11 miles of head races, capable of carrying 70

sluice heads of water at 20s. per chain.....Cost £880

85 miles of supply races capable of carrying

20 sluice heads at 7s 6d. per chain.....Cost £2,550

150 miles of distribution races, about 50 miles of

which are now in use, and about 100 miles which can be brought into use if required, the whole valued at about 2s. per chain.....Cost £1,200

About 100 miles of distribution races which

Mr. Stewart considers as abandoned.Cost Nil.

Sept 1871: Alluvial mining - There is a falling off in the numbers employed, and also total yield of gold. This is owing to our shallow workings being nearly exhausted, which will not give a living except for sluicing with hose and high pressure water; therefore, all those miners who have been in the position to move have departed for other goldfields, those left behind being, for the most part, married men with families. and who have blocks of ground under the recent Land Acts.

The reservoir and races of Messrs Stewart and Farnsworth will be the same as my former returns.

December 1871: The construction of reservoir, length and cost of water races, will be the same as for Sept 1871 - six sluicing parties, two sluice heads each, at 40s. per week, for 12 weeks, £144, and five puddling machines, one sluice head each, at 20s. per week, £60.

1875: The main water scheme at Back Creek was a reservoir, built by Stewart and Farnsworth on Stony Creek with a head race from McCallum's Creek. It cost £10,000 and began by serving sluicing parties on Ballarat Hill and Hard (White) Hill, but served a number of localities soon after. The charge for water was £9 per day, but despite this the diggers made £20 per week. The scheme began in June 1858.

1875: Dissatisfaction with the Amherst Reservoir led to the purchase of Talbot Reservoir by the Borough of Amherst in July 1875 for £3500.

1876-1878: On 13 December 1876 the council decided to call tenders for raising the reservoir wall and after several problems with tenders and contracts, the price of Isaac Meadows of £3551 2s 11d was recommended to the Government for acceptance. This work was completed by October 1877 and a contract had been let with Blyth and Co. for water pipes to reticulate Talbot in June 1877. Further tenders in connection with the scheme were let; settling ponds on the land of a Mr Jackson (W. Phelan, £1350 14s 11d); repairs to water race from Stony Creek to settling ponds site (Peter MacLeod); and standpipes in Argyle and Oxford Streets were erected by a Mr Hawkins in October 1878. Reticulation of Talbot was extended gradually as the need arose, and both the railways and gardeners were large consumers. The railway used 12,000 gallons a day (charge 1/6 per locomotive) and irrigation for gardens consumed 15,000 gallons during the day and 50,000 gallons at night.

1881: Difficulty with the supply was caused by the offtake at McCallum's Creek, which had become defective since the original construction by Stewart and Farnsworth.

1882: The council accepted the tender of Jones and Crabb (£196 16s 6d) on 17 April 1882 although much heartache was caused by rival Lexton Shire Council's decision to rate the land on which the offtake weir was situated.

1883-1885: The Talbot reservoir was surveyed in August 1884 by Batson prior to fencing and this was undertaken by a Mr Douglas in September 1885. Boating and fishing at the reservoir was subject to much discussion and in 1883 the Victorian Human Society had provided a life buoy in case of boating accidents.

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/>