
MOUNT STANLEY BREWSTER BUFFALO WWII AIRCRAFT WRECK SITE

Location

MOUNT STANLEY SCENIC RESERVE, GRANITE CREEK ROAD MUDGEONGA, ALPINE SHIRE

Municipality

ALPINE SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8225-0153

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 30, 2019

This place is included on the Victorian Heritage Inventory, for its potential to contain historical archaeological remains associated with military operations in Victoria during World War II. Under the terms of the Heritage Act 2017 there is protection for all historical archaeology sites and objects in the state.

Please visit the Heritage Victoria website to find out more about the Heritage Inventory

Archaeological Significance	Documented evidence states that an American Brewster Buffalo aircraft crashed on 1 July 1942 during a flight between Laverton, Victoria and Wagga Wagga, New South Wales. An extensive amount of aircraft wreckage can still be found at the site. This aircraft is one of 20 examples of a Buffalo type (Model 339-23) built by the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation in the United States of America. The current site is located at an altitude of approximately 750 metres at the southern end of Mount Stanley in north-eastern Victoria on crown lands (Park Vic). It is unique in its potential for establishing further research values, beyond current historical record. This includes, the correct identity/serial numbers of an aircraft, part numbers of individual Buffalo components, aircraft colours and personal/aircraft related artefacts regarding early days of the war in the south west Pacific. This demonstrates the site's significance for historical archaeological features, deposits and artefacts.
Historical Significance	The site is significant as it offers a connection to the American military operations in Victoria during the early stages of the Pacific theatre of World War II and the contribution Victoria made to the Australian war effort during this time. In addition, it provides an example of a rare aircraft with associated artefacts which was operated in Australia and during the failed defence of Singapore and Malaysia. The site will provide an opportunity to gain further knowledge of the aircraft construction and its occupants relating to Australian, American and Dutch involvement.
Hermes Number	202792
Property Number	

History

On the morning of 1 July 1942 a Brewster Buffalo single-engine fighter aircraft of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) crashed into the southern end of Mount Stanley during a flight between Laverton, west of Melbourne, and Wagga Wagga in New South Wales (Dunn 2018). Witnesses at Barwidgee Creek, near Myrtleford, saw the aircraft collide with the terrain and notified the local Post Office, who in turn notified the Myrtleford Police Station. The wreck was located on the morning of the crash and the body of the pilot - Second Lieutenant Henry Orous Null, Jr - was recovered and taken to Myrtleford Police Station. 2/Lt Null is now buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii (Leahy 2019b).

The aircraft is one of 509 Buffalo type aircraft built by the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation in the United States (Stewart 1998: 30). Only 20 examples of this particular model of Buffalo - the Model 339-23 - were ever built (Baugher 2001). They were intended for use by the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army Air Force (ML-KNIL) in their fight against the Japanese military in what is now Indonesia. The aircraft failed to arrive before the surrender of Java in March 1942 and were instead acquired by the USAAF in Australia. Of these 20 aircraft, 17 are known to have been used by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) before the surviving aircraft were returned to the USAAF in 1943-1944 and were subsequently scrapped (Clarke and Cowan 2014; Dennis et al. 2008: 115).

It is assumed that salvage teams - either from the American or Australian military - may have visited the site during World War II to recover any useable equipment.

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/>