
LADY HOPETOUN MINE

Location

OFF MOUNT BRIDE ROAD WARBURTON, YARRA RANGES SHIRE

Municipality

YARRA RANGES SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8022-0138

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 1900

The hopetoun mine site is of historical and archaeological significance as rare evidence of the gold mining activity in the Yarra Ranges in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The site demonstrates the characteristic form of mining adits, tramway, and spoil dump.

The site is of archaeological significance for its potential to reveal more detailed evidence of structures on the form of footings and benches, post holes and other structural remains, and occupation deposits from the people who worked and lived on the site.

Interpretation of Site	<p>The site has a clearly defined mullock heap which extends from a cutting into the gully, and runs to the north west for about 50 metres on a level, eventually standing about 10 metres above the gully. A further rock spoil heap is evident further down the gully, this is clear evidence of the spoil removed from the mine, and as depicted in the mural (which is understood to have been based on a privately held photograph of the mine)</p> <p>Other level areas to the north west and south east indicate the locations of former tracks, water race and building sites, all terraced into the side of the hill.</p>
Hermes Number	206183
Property Number	

History

Quartz reefing began around Britannia Creek in 1860. During this time, miners opened up reefs across the Upper Yarra Goldfields. Quartz mining within the area was always a small-scaled operation. The largest of these was the Golden Bower and Star Quartz at Donovan's Creek. In 1874 a small rush at the junction of McMahon's Creek and the Yarra led to the establishment of Reefton. New reefs were discovered at Hoddles Creek in 1878, where the Pigtail Company established a battery, pump and winding gear. Also at this time, the Muddy Creek Company cut a six mile water race to supply its battery at McMahon's Creek. By the early 20th century, small scale mining operations consisted of the Lady Hopetoun in Warburton, Hoddles Creek at Hoddles Creek and Mountain Queen at McMahon's Creek. Most of these operations were no longer in existence by 1910 (Department of Natural Resources & Environment, 1999).

The Lady Hopetoun Mine was established in about 1889, when W Wye found gold at the head of Scotchman's Creek and formed a small company called the Lady Hopetoun gold Mining Company which was managed by Mr W Murphy. They initially drove a tunnel into the hill side and flowed this with another 75 feet lower down, and erected a 10 head battery, which was run by water from the 'old water race' which they cleaned out. The mine had to cut through granite boulders to reach the dyke 5 feet wide, while the cost of the race was put at £10,000. However, in October 1890 the shareholders met to consider winding the company up.

A Mr Wildman guided the Upper Yarra tourist club to the site in 1891 and the area remained a local scenic spot for some time, as indicated by postcards of the nearby Lady Hopetoun Fern Gully.

J. Houston was managing in July 1891. In 1892 a third tunnel was being driven and the tramway was being repaired due to having been damaged by floods. In 1892, the company appears to have foundered with the Sherriff's Office taking court action, and by 1905 the mine appears to have been idle. The mine was described as 'long abandoned' when it was still being visited in the late 1930s.

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/>