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# FORMER EMU FLAT HOTEL

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## Location

17 STANLEYS ROAD, MOUNT RICHMOND VIC 3305

## Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7121-0052

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 7, 2020

The archaeological remains of the former Emu Flat Hotel are significant at local level to the Shire of Glenelg as having the potential to yield information regarding the early settlement and commercial activities in the area. As the site of horse racing and stock sales, it also has the possibility of having information relating to these early community activities.

Interpretation of Site	The site had a single phase of occupation over a 50 year period. Activities included accommodation, provision of food and alcohol, horse racing, entertainment and dancing as well as cattle and sheep sales. It was situated on what once was a main road. The site is currently situated within the Lower Glenelg National Park.
Hermes Number	206928
Property Number	

## History

As early as 1878 James Johnstone attempted to obtain a licence to sell alcohol from his home in the Kentbruck area, which was unsuccessful at that time but was later issued in 1882 (Bennett 1997, pp. 37). The establishment became known as the Kentbruck/Emu Flat Hotel. James and Mary were assisted in the construction of the hotel by their son John, who in turn managed the hotel for a brief time after his parent's death ('Obituary', 1930). During this period of time the hotel was used as a centre for horse racing ('Emu Flat Races', 1880) and dances ('Items of News', 1897). In 1896 the licence of the hotel is applied for by the brother in law of John Johnstone, Mark Kerr (Figure 1), who ran the hotel with his wife Mary-Ann Kerr (nee Johnstone, the daughter of James Johnstone and sister to John Johnston, Figure 2). Mark had a long time association with the hotel, as well as being connected by family, he was noted as a steward of a racing meet in 1880 ('Emu Flat Races', 1880). In 1911, the Lieutenant Governor of Victoria, Sir James Thomas Gibson-Carmichael and his party lunched at the hotel during a visit to the area. It was reported then to have been constructed from palings and slab walls and bare hardwood floors (Bennett 1997, pp. 38). The Kerr's were able to provide entertainment in the form of musical performances that brought patrons to the hotel (Bennett 1997, pp. 39). Mark and Mary ran the hotel until the licence was transferred to James 'Jim' Lindsay Dawkins in 1914. In 1915 management of the hotel was returned to the Johnstone family when the licence was transferred from Dawkins to James Johnstone (James Johnston Junior, son of John Johnston and grandson of the James Johnston) who held it for two years despite neither he or his wife having experience ('Portland Pars.', 1915). Johnstone transferred the licence to Patrick Francis Leonard in 1917. It was during Leonard's tenure that local cattle sales occurred out the front of the hotel adding to the importance of this site to the local community ('Advertising, 400 Head Cattle, Sheep at Kentbruck', 1923). Leonard ran the hotel until its eventual delicensing in 1925 (Bennett 1997, pp. 38–39), which was possibly associated with his legal difficulties ('League Matches', 1925). In newspaper articles, from the 1940s onwards it is described as the 'Old Emu Flat Hotel' ('Nature Notes', 1945). No information can be found relating to the demolition of the structure, however, an article using the closed hotel as a landmark was published in 1950 ('Nature Notes', 1950), and it may be assumed that demolition occurred sometime after then. The Emu Flat Hotel operated for almost 50 years, with three generations of the Johnstone family, early settlers of the area, being licencees during this time. It was not only a source of accommodation and refreshment, but also a local community centre, hosting dances, race meets and cattle sales. Although no structural remains are visible, an archaeological material present in subsurface contexts would be valuable in better understanding the hotel and its occupants. Licencee timeline: 1882 – Licence first granted 1882 – 1895 – James Johnstone 1895 – 1896 – John Johnstone 1896 – 1914 – Mark Kerr 1914 – 1915 – James 'Jim' Lindsay Dawkins 1915 – 1917 - James Johnstone (Junior) 1917 – 1925 – Patrick Francis Leonard 1925 – Delicensed

*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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