
FORMER GILBERT HOUSE

Location

176 BULLA ROAD, BULLA 3058

Municipality

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-2413

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 11, 2022

What is significant?

The site was first sold in the 1850s Bulla land sales and was purchased by W.J. Gilbert in 1853. As Gilbert was a resident of Bulla and the local pound-keeper in the 1850s, it appears that he built a house on this property and lived in it from c.1853. A 1901 historical photograph of the Bulla township shows what is most likely the house built at 176 Bulla Road as a weatherboard house with a single gabled roof.

An early 20th century timber weatherboard house presently occupies the property with several timber outbuildings and some lawn and garden beds and a gravel driveway at the west side. In the grassed front yard is a domed brick cistern in an excellent state of preservation. Below the existing timber house, the remains of basalt rubble wall footings or a bluestone base are visible and there are dressed and cut bluestone blocks used as garden edgings around the property. The presence of the domed cistern and the basalt fieldstone footings /base underneath the existing timber house, suggest that the current house is a later replacement of the original house. The intact and well-preserved cistern may have artefact-bearing deposits from the early occupants.

How is it significant?

The site is of local historical and archaeological significance.

Why is it significant?

The site is of historical significance as an early residence of Bulla township that is not a farmhouse or homestead and was the residence of one of the early settlers who was also the pound-keeper.

Interpretation of Site

The site was first sold in the 1850s Bulla land sales and was purchased by W.J. Gilbert in 1853. As Gilbert was a resident of Bulla and the local poundkeeper in the 1850s, it appears that he built a house on this property and lived in it from c.1853. A 1901 historical photograph of the Bulla township shows what is most likely the house built at 176 Bulla Road as a weatherboard house with a single gabled roof (Figure 8 and Figure 9). The 1916 and 1938 Sunbury maps both show a building in the location of 176 Bulla Road. A 1951 aerial photo shows a square building on the property. The 1968 aerial shows the same house, with a hipped roof, not a single gable. The roof on the existing house is hipped and appears to match that shown on the 1951 and 1968 aerial photos. The presence of the domed cistern and the basalt fieldstone footings/base underneath the existing timber house, suggest that the current house is a later replacement of the original house. The intact and well-preserved cistern may have artefact-bearing deposits from the early occupants.

Hermes Number 209238

Property Number

History

176 Bulla Road (formerly known as Mica Street) was originally inhabited by W.J. Gilbert, one of the first poundkeepers in Bulla, as indicated in local newspapers (1910 'History of Bulla'). A 'Village of Bulla' plan from 1855 indicates that W.J. Gilbert was an early settler in the township, and he was the first owner of the property which he purchased in August of 1853 corresponding with the first Bulla land sales in the 1850s (Symonds 1985: 49). The land purchase appears to be part of both the influx of settlers who moved to Bulla in the early 1850s to provide services required by farmers, as well as the Gold Rush-era settlement of Bulla, as the town expanded into a resting stop for diggers on their way to the gold fields at Mt Alexander and Bendigo (Symonds 1985: 49). Most of the structures in the Bulla township in 1853 were 'wooden houses' apart from the brick Deep Creek Inn, and it is likely that the Gilbert House was also constructed of timber (Symonds, 1985: 49). Gilbert worked as a poundkeeper at the Deep Creek Pound, indicating that what is now 176 Bulla Road was his private residence (1853, 'Impoundings', The Argus, 11 October). Tulip Wright, who pioneered the district, was the first poundkeeper in the area, operating the first pound near the Deep Creek Inn on Mica Street (Symonds, 1985: 49). Gilbert took over this 'lucrative position' in 1853, and was succeeded by a William Smith, then William Bethell (Symonds, 1985: 49). Traces of Gilbert's history as a poundkeeper appear in several local newspaper articles in 1853 and 1854; his poundkeeping services were used by numerous members of the local community (1853, 'Impoundings', The Argus, 11 October; 1854, 'Advertising', The Argus, 16 February). It is unclear what happened to the property after Gilbert left.

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/>