

# MOUNT NAPIER HOMESTEAD



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette first  
house 2223



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette barn  
2224



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette first  
house 2233



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette first  
house 2235



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette first  
house 2236



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette first  
house 2237



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette first  
house 2238



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette former  
meat house 2219



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette former  
meat house 2220



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette front  
2218



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette front  
door 2221



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette new  
cubby house 2228



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette new  
meat house 2225



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette rear  
2226



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette side  
2216



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette side  
2217



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette side  
2222



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette stables  
2215



23129 Mount Napier  
Homestead Gazette stables  
2231

---

## Location

Harmans Road GAZETTE, Southern Grampians Shire

## Municipality

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

## Heritage Listing

Southern Grampians Shire

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Mount Napier squatting run on the Eumerella River about twenty kilometres south-east of Hamilton and six kilometres from Mount Napier was taken up in 1840. The homestead complex has significant associations, firstly with the Scottish pioneering Brown brothers, John and Thomas who built the original stone houses and stables and then with John Matheson from 1862. The latter was the son of a Scottish crofter who became the first general manager of the Bank of Victoria, a position he held until retirement in 1881. The Brown brothers and Matheson were Overstraiters from Van Diemen's Land. The estate was not subdivided after Matheson's death in 1882 nor under the Closer Settlement Scheme but was sold in 1911 to Melbourne interests who did subdivide the land. The original vernacular stone buildings of Mount Napier Homestead survive from the first years of settlement of the property. Their primitive construction technique, their scale and disposition are particularly notable. The present house dates from about 1906 and is one of the finer homesteads from that period in the area. The garden dates from the same period. The original buildings are substantially intact and are in fair condition. The present homestead retains a high degree of integrity and is in excellent condition.

How is it significant?

Mount Napier Homestead Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the shire of southern Grampians.

Why is it significant?

Mount Napier Homestead Complex is of historical significance as one of the earliest established in the Hamilton district, for its associations with the Overstraiters, John and Thomas Brown of Hobart Town who were influential in early Hamilton, and for the period of its ownership by John Matheson, another Overstraiter who, although only the son of a Scottish crofter, became the first general manager of the Bank of Victoria. Mount Napier Homestead is of architectural significance as a modest example from the Federation period, with certain unusual planning and construction details, which is enhanced by its garden setting.

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002; |
| Construction dates        | 1840,  |
| Other Names               | MT. NAPIER HOMESTEAD,  |
| Hermes Number             | 23129  |
| Property Number           |  |

---

## Physical Conditions

The early outbuildings are in fair condition. The present homestead is in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity. The garden is also in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity.

## Physical Description 1

The Mount Napier Homestead complex comprises several very old outbuildings, a turn of the century homestead which replaced the original and an extensive garden with many mature exotic trees and a gazebo. The outbuildings are single storey stone with corrugated iron roofs over timber shingles. One at the rear of the present house, formerly used as stables and coach house, has trellis windows, ledge and brace doors and retains the stalls and paving within. Another some distance from the present house, with small glazed windows and a low ledge and brace door appears to have been used as a kitchen with the fireplaces and oven remaining. These outbuildings almost certainly date from the 1840s. The present homestead appears to date from the early twentieth century from its materials, detailing and plan. It is conservative and might be best described as a

bungalow in a style transitional between late Victorian and Arts and Crafts. Certainly the plain red brick walls and corbelled chimneys are an honest use of materials. The facade is asymmetrical with a projecting room with a boxed bay window on the left side and a simple timber verandah on the right. The plan is of interest because it incorporates a large living room, effectively a 'hall', which opens onto the garden from a large porch creating an alternative garden facade. The interiors of the house, comprising a complete range of rooms, are simple but well finished and survive with a very high degree of integrity and in excellent condition. There is a timber gazebo in the garden. The garden is typical of the Edwardian period with an extensive lawn in front of the house, a shrubbery, hedges enclosing the space and a row of mature *Quercus robur* (English Oak) associated with the outbuildings behind the house.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

## **Usage/Former Usage**

Continuing as a pastoral property

## **Integrity**

high degree of intactness

## **Physical Description 2**

Thomas Brown, first lease holder

John Brown, first lease holder

Thomas Brown Sr., second lease holder

Henry Phillips, third and fifth lease holder

John Hyde de la Hunt, fourth lease holder and owner of pre-emptive right

John Mooney, second owner

Joseph Matheson, third owner

Matheson, William and Joseph, sons of John Matheson, owners

Archibald Simpson, manager

*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/>*