
Darra Homestead,



Source: Victorian Heritage Register



Source: Stepping p



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Location

490 Slate Quarry Road, and Meredith - Durdidwarrah Road MEREDITH, Golden Plains Shire

Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0268

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO11

Heritage Listing

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

National Estate Register

Darra (formerly Durdiwarrah) near Meredith has important associations with the Von Stieglitz family and particularly with Charles Von Stieglitz after whom the gold mining township is named. Darra is a building of the first era of settlement in Victoria and although progressively improved, survives with the essential Colonial Georgian character intact. W T N Champ was the first Premier of Tasmania and later was Inspector-General of penal establishments in Victoria. He died at Darra in 1892.

(The Commission is in the process of developing and/or upgrading official statements for places listed prior to 1991. The above data was mainly provided by the nominator and has not yet been revised by the Commission.

Source: Victorian Heritage Register

What is significant?

Darra, originally known as Durdiwarrah pastoral station, was licensed with 24,000 acres to Charles Augustus Von Stieglitz in 1842. Charles Augustus Von Stieglitz, who arrived in Port Phillip in 1839, was a member of a family whose father and brothers were prominent pastoralists in Tasmania. Stieglitz, after whom the gold mining township is named, sold the run in 1853. In 1854 the property was advertised as containing the Eclipse Hotel.

W T N Champ acquired the run in 1864. In 1856 Champ was first premier of Tasmania when responsible government was granted. Champ, also formerly the commandant of Port Arthur Penal Settlement, came to Victoria in 1857 to be Inspector-General of Penal Establishments, and was to oversee the development of Pentridge Prison. He maintained an interest in farming and pastoralism from his time in Tasmania and when he retired in 1868 he focussed his attention to Darra.

There are two significant buildings at Darra. An 1840s structure, probably an early residence, survives as an outbuilding close to (and formerly linked to) the main house. It is built of rubble sandstone walls, and divided into three rooms including a kitchen with fireplaces and external chimneys. Shingles are visible internally under the later corrugated iron roof. There are a variety of finishes, including hard plaster walls, a hessian lined ceiling with early wallpaper remnants, and a lath and plaster ceiling.

The first date of construction of the main house was in 1849 by a Scottish stonemason, James Watson. It has also been extended at various dates. The core of the house retains the clear plan of four main rooms symmetrically arranged about a central passageway leading to the front door with a graceful Georgian style fanlight. The main rooms have timber dados and panelling with an Edwardian character. The sitting room with a canted bay window located at the south-west corner of the house was added in the c1890s. Any trace of an original rear service wing has gone, replaced by single storey wings added in the 1950s and 1960s. The front verandah is a trellis for a large wisteria, and is overlooked by a pair of large Dutch elms on the front lawn.

How is it significant?

Darra is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Darra is architecturally and historically significant for the intact 1840s outhouse. This structure is evidence of improvements carried out by squatters before security of land tenure was acquired. It is a building from the first era of settlement in Victoria. The simple construction contains important evidence relating to early decorative finishes. The main house, although progressively altered and improved, survives with its essential Colonial Georgian character intact.

Darra is historically significant for its associations with the Von Stieglitz family, particularly with Charles Von Stieglitz after whom the nearby gold mining township of Steiglitz was named. Darra is also historically significant for its associations with W T N Champ, a notable figure in the development of the penal system of Victoria.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 1, Lorraine Huddle P/L, 2003;
Hermes Number	23658
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

National Trust:

CITATION

Darra homestead, originally known as Durdiwarrah pastoral station near Meredith was licensed to Charles Augustus Von Stieglitz in 1842 who built the first substantial homestead of brick and stone prior to 1854, and which at a sale at this time was in occupation as The Eclipse Hotel. WTN Champ, former Premier of Tasmania, acquired this Colonial Georgian style building in 1863.

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Darra homestead near Meredith has been extended at various unknown dates. Elements of the original homestead, including the Georgian front door and fan light, survive intact. The homestead reflects a continuum of development.

Of State significance.

Integrity

Condition and Integrity:

Darra Homestead near Meredith has been extended at various unknown dates. Elements of the original homestead, including the Georgian front door and fan light, survive intact. The homestead reflects a continuum of development.

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/>