

Heritage Listing

Golden Plains Shire

Statement of Significance

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What is significant?

The Emu Hill Estate at 680 Linton - Naringal Road, Mannibadar, was once part of the 15,000 acres (6,000ha) Emu Hill run taken up in the late 1830s by district pioneer, Joseph Linton. The name 'Emu Hill' was most probably given to the Emu Hill Estate because of its proximity to Emu Hill, a geographical feature shown on district maps. Historical records confirm that, during its early history, the Emu Hill Estate was associated for many years with the Clarke family, prominent district pastoralists. In 1866 John Clarke (1836-1919), after his marriage to Mary Jane Newcomen, moved to the Emu Hill Station, owned by his father, David Clarke of Piggoreet West. The Clarke family was also associated with Linton Park, the run to the north. The original timber part of the homestead, now demolished, may have dated from this time. John managed both properties. John became a JP in 1870 and was a Councillor in the West Riding of Grenville Shire for 47 years. The Clarke family was Scottish and Presbyterian. A substantial brick extension, including a two-storey service wing, was made sometime in the 1870s. The encircling verandah overlooked what was by then a mature garden. The new house was conservative in its style and very likely to have been designed by an architect but no name has been associated with the design. By 1886 the Emu Hill Estate was described as consisting of 'a House partly brick and partly Wood, outhouses, Wool Shed, Brick Stables and fencing' occupied by John Clarke, rated at 359 pounds per annum and standing on 2017 acres (816.3ha). A 1870s watercolour by the Victorian artists William Tibbits (1837-1906) depicting Emu Hill survives. The only substantial outbuilding to survive is the handsome brick stables, set some distance up the hill from the rear of the main house. While standard for its accommodation and detailing in both the main and service wings, the main house is irregular in plan and has some unusual features, partly stemming from the fact that it was an extension. When his father died, John Clarke returned to Piggoreet West and Emu Hill was sold in the early 1890s. The new owner of Emu Hill was the Hon Edward Morey (1832-1907), mining and civic leader. Morey was English, and aged 13, he joined the merchant navy. In 1852, he signed on for Hobart, and later went to Adelaide and then to Melbourne. In 1853, Morey joined a party of gold-seeking sailors and went to Ballarat. The group had great success and 'the sailors became wealthy enough to go their different ways.' During the 1860s, Morey became Ballarat's 'most spectacular investor and land holder.' In 1868, he is said to have become involved in pastoral pursuits, 'purchasing 1000 acres of rich land, known as Linton Park, near Linton, which he held to his death . and 8,000 acres of land from the Mt Emu Estate.' He was mayor of Ballarat in 1894. After Morey's death, the Emu Hill Estate was auctioned in 1909, the land being subdivided into 24 farm lots. John Clarke's son, John B. Clarke and his wife, Ellen, purchased 2048 acres of Emu Hill Estate land (Lot 1), which included the brick homestead and outbuildings but their tenure must have been brief. The next owner was Robert Carstairs Bell and the homestead was occupied by his son, Rex Bell. After the Second World War, the Emu Hill Estate was subdivided and leased as part of the Soldier Settlement Scheme by Leslie Bird, a retired serviceman. The property was sold to the present owners in 1964. The house fell into disrepair and was eventually abandoned for a new residence. Some materials have been removed. Although retaining a relatively high degree of integrity, it remains in very poor condition and is ruinous in sections. The verandah has collapsed. The garden is gone.

How is it significant?

The Emu Hill Estate, comprising the main house and the stables, is of historical, social and architectural significance to the Golden Plains Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Emu Hill Estate is of historical significance as the home of John Clarke, son of David Clarke, an important pioneer pastoralist. It is of social significance for its role as one of several homesteads linked by family ties across

many generations within the north-west quarter of the Shire, particularly Piggoreet West and Linton Park. Emu Hill is of further significance for its association with Edward Morey, investor, land holder and Mayor of Ballarat. The Emu Hill Estate is of architectural significance for its conservative style, its traditional form, certain use of materials and details and relatively modest homestead scale.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 2, Heritage Matters P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	31680
Property Number	

Integrity

The Emu Hill homestead complex retains a relatively high degree of integrity notwithstanding its ruinous condition. The major loss is the demolition of what was probably the earliest wing of the homestead, a single storey timber building to the south west of the surviving brick wing. This appears in early photographs. The second serious loss is the partial demolition of the timber verandah of the brick wing. Internally the surviving fabric reflects its integrity to the immediate post-WW2 period with little or no earlier decoration. An extension to the side of the rear wing appears to have been rebuilt in part. The original stables also retain a good degree of integrity. Very little survives from the original garden.

Physical Conditions

The Emu Hill homestead complex is generally in a ruinous condition, but still retrievable. (Photographs taken by John Collins in 1976 and now held at the State Library of Victoria show it in poor condition then.) Severe and long term water penetration through the roof of the house, especially in the rear two-storey section, has caused serious failure. There are substantial cracks in the brick walls and most of the windows are broken or lost. The verandah is partly demolished and collapsing. The one building which is still in a serviceable condition is the original stables located some distance from the main house.

Physical Description 1

The Emu Hill homestead complex comprises a main house now of two wings. The front wing faces approximately north down a slope and formerly looked across a garden towards a small body of water. It is symmetrical and single-storey with a verandah across the front and on two sides. The walls are constructed from solid brick with rendered and painted quoins at the main corners which sit on a matching plinth. Rendered and painted architraves surround the front door and front and side windows. The front door is slightly recessed beyond a segmental arched opening. The two front windows are shallow bays with double hung sashes. The side windows are single double hung sashes. Chimneys which are rendered but not painted are positioned opposite the front windows. Internally the planning of the rooms is not symmetrical, probably as a result of the pre-existing timber wing, now demolished. The two-storey rear wing is also brick but is without any elaboration. It contains large rooms on the ground floor and smaller rooms on the upper floor. The two wings are linked by a transverse passageway, possibly a later enclosure. The roofs of both wings are slate, the front wing having four alternating bands of grey and purple slates. The roof of the verandah is concave corrugated iron. The roof of the single storey extension of the rear wing is roofed in corrugated iron. The stables, some distance to the rear of the house and on higher ground, are also brick with large arched doors and windows. The gabled roof is clad with corrugated iron.

Usage/Former Usage

The homestead complex was previously used for a range of rural residential purposes. Immediately after WW2 the main house may have been used for storage by the successful Soldier Settler. Its most recent occupation was by tenants. The main house is now abandoned. The stables are still used.

Historical Australian Themes

The Australian Heritage Commission devised the Australian Historic Themes in 2001. The following themes have influenced the historical development of Emu Hill Homestead Complex.

3 Developing Local, Regional And National Economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

5 Working

5.8 Working on the land

8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.14 Living in the county and rural settlements

Physical Description 2

Emu Hill Homestead Complex to the extent of the whole of the homestead building including the exterior and interiors, the outbuildings and stables and all of the land comprising a polygon extending from 100.0 metres in front of the original house, 50.0 metres to either side and to 20.0 metres behind the stables. [This extent of area should be seen as indicative only and is subject to discussion and confirmation.]

Extent of Registration

Not to be published until confirmed.

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/>