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# LEICHARDT GOLD CRUSHING BATTERY



leichardt gold crushing battery



h01914 plan

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## Location

ABBOT CREEK TRACK WOODS POINT, MANSFIELD SHIRE

## Municipality

MANSFIELD SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1914

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO74

## VHR Registration

November 13, 2003

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 24, 2003

What is significant?

A party of prospectors found a gold bearing reef near the junction of Wye's and Stander's creeks in 1886. A year later the party was building a large wooden-spoked water wheel and carting to the site a 15-head stamper battery to crush their ore. They mined the reef from various tunnels conveying the ore to the battery along a network of tramways.

The battery treated payable ore until 1891, and following several lean years of mining, the battery was abandoned. A small mining settlement known as Wyeton was located near the battery, at the junction of Wye's and Stander's creeks. The small town was also abandoned when mining ceased in the area during the 1890s. At its peak, Wyeton had a shop and restaurant and enough people lived in the locality to form a cricket team. It was an especially tough spot for the inhabitants during winter as the steepness of the creek valley allowed only two hours of sunlight.

The site contains the largest collection of in situ archaeological features belonging to a nineteenth century water-powered battery yet identified in Victoria. The significant features include:

- 15 head stamping battery with the name Enoch Chalmers, Melbourne & Prahran cast into the side of the boxes.
- cast iron sections of three processing tables.
- bowl of one Berdan pan plus grinding ball.
- towering stone retaining wall which supported the flume that carried water to the wheel.
- waterwheel pit containing the cast iron hub of the wheel.
- substantial heap of battery sand with corrugated iron tanks belonging to a cyanide plant.
- several adits, a water race and carting tracks are located on the hillside above the battery.
- substantial stone fireplaces at the battery site and Wyeton Township site.

### RARITY

The use of waterwheels to power ore-processing machinery was a significant feature of gold mining during the nineteenth century. Of the many hundreds of mines where waterwheels were used, there are now only about twenty sites where substantial evidence survives. Six of the twenty sites are currently listed on the Victorian Heritage Register: Royal Standard (extent of surviving remains); Morning Star, New Chum and Murmungee sites (iron or wooden-spoked wheels survive); and Garfield and Mopoke sites (substantial stone abutments survive). The Leichardt Gold Crushing Battery is a crucial addition to this list due to its technological purity, intact and undisturbed state.

How is it significant?

The Leichardt Gold Crushing Battery is of historic and scientific (technological and archaeological) significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Leichardt Gold Crushing Battery is historically important due to its association with nineteenth century gold

mining. It is also important as a rare and relatively intact example of a once plentiful type.

The Leichardt Gold Crushing Battery is of scientific (technological) significance. It is one of the best preserved examples of the twenty water-powered battery sites identified in Victoria. Crucial to the significance of the place is the purity of the technology, the size of the battery (15 head of stampers) and the presence of a range of other machinery elements that help demonstrate the flow of material through the crushing plant. Other visible elements are a sizeable heap of battery sand and relics of cyaniding operations.

The Leichardt Gold Crushing Battery is archaeologically significant as a snapshot of late nineteenth-century mining technology and domestic life. Unlike many other Alpine sites, the battery had only the one brief period of operation and so was not subject to later modifications and alterations associated with renewed periods of mining. A small village called Wyeton grew up around the battery and remnants of it survive today.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

#### Exemption Review

Permit exemptions will be reviewed in conjunction with a Conservation Management Plan when supplied by the owners and to the satisfaction of the Executive Director.

#### General Conditions of Exemption

- All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.
- If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.
- Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.
- Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

## Exemptions of Permit

No permits are required for the following classes of works provided they are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Burra Charter.

- Safe and controlled access - to restrict vehicular access to the site and minimise foot traffic near foundations.
- Information signage - for interpretation and prevention of public risk.
- On-site works - confined to protective and stabilisation works.
- Preliminary mineral exploration - geological, geophysical and geochemical surveys.

Construction dates 1886,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place, Registered archaeological place,

Hermes Number 6057

Property Number

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## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1914 in the category described as a Archaeological Place, Heritage place:

Leichardt Gold Crushing Battery, Wye's Creek, Pemburthy, Mansfield Shire Council.

### EXTENT:

1. All the Crown land and any mining machinery, mine workings and earthworks, water races, carting tracks, habitation sites and all other archaeological relics within a 750 metre radius of the 15-head of stampers or Australian Map Grid co-ordinates E403 N428 on 1:100,000 map sheet number 8122 Woods Point.

Dated 13 November 2003

RAY TONKIN  
Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G 46 13 November 2003 2848-2849]

*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/>*