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# Bell's Cottage



Whatmaugh's Cottage

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## Location

off Gellibrand Place (previous) PLENTY and 67 HAPPY HOLLOW DRIVE LOWER PLENTY, NILLUMBIK SHIRE, BANYULE CITY

## Municipality

BANYULE CITY

NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO59

## Heritage Listing

Nillumbik Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 5, 2010

REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, CONTEXT, 2010

### ***What is significant?***

The c1893 Whatmaugh's (later Bell's) Cottage and the surrounding property to the title boundaries.

### ***How is it significant?***

The cottage is historically, technically, socially and aesthetically significant to the Shire of Nillumbik.

### ***Why is it significant?***

The cottage is historically significant because it is associated with the pioneering orchardists Frederick Flintoff, Theodore Flintoff and William Verner, and with the pioneering orchardist and member of the Greensborough District Roads Board, Robert Whatmaugh (after whom a variety of apple- the Whatmaugh Fancy - was named); as such, the cottage is a reminder of the importance of orcharding during the early days of the Shire's existence (Criteria A & H). The cottage is historically and technically significant for its unusual 19th-century construction of wattle and daub, verticals slabs and a bark roof, all inexpensive materials whose use may reflect the influence of the 1890s Depression. Also for its distinctive setting: a rural enclave in close proximity to dense residential development (Criteria B & A).

Heritage Study/Consultant	Nillumbik - Nillumbik Shire Heritage Study, Graeme Butler & Assoc, 1997;
Other Names	formerly Whatmaugh's Cottage,
Hermes Number	64016
Property Number	

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## **Physical Description 1**

This complex includes the central presumed earliest bay, with vertical slab & wattle & daub walls; and with a corrugated iron clad bark-covered hipped roof. Twentieth century fibrous cement I sheet and weatherboard clad wings have been added at either end and an extensive terraced garden located around the complex.

Hawthorn hedge suckers occur along the Plenty River approach to the site while the site itself is picturesquely located on a bend in the river. It is this isolated rural setting and the proximity of dense recent residential development that makes this place distinctive among other similar places in the Shire by virtue of its marked contrast with its immediate neighbourhood, as an island in suburbia.

Evidence taken from the site has proved inconclusive as to the age of the building's parts with most nails being wire cut and thus post 1870, the roofing being c1909 or later, patching and added cladding being twentieth century, some nineteenth century doors were thought relocated and only the slab sections being undated and hence possibly nineteenth century { Eckersley: 23} .Hessian fragments inside indicate papering of walls which are now clad with ply.

Planting .

'Little is known of the original landscape although an early put away plan [PIA N62, CPO] indicates Eucalypts ('gum or box trees') on the river front, presumably after some clearing of native vegetation. Immediately prior to planting with fruit trees the area was farmland.

Presumably as land was settled, it would have been cleared. ' v'An aerial of 1945 was the earliest which clearly showed the Happy Hollow house surrounded by an extensive number of fruit trees {VicImage Quasco, 1945, run 39, frame no.60785, film no.197; project 5}'.

'The majority of plantings (at the cottage) are deciduous exotics and many plants had already lost their leaves in which case identification was based on bark. Many trees were fruit trees, some Malus sp. but usually Prunus sp. which will require leaves and fruit for fuller identification. Bulbs require flowers and more foliage (these were just coming out of the ground) for identification. ' 'There is evidence of the kind of mixture of ornamental and utilitarian

plants that were common in homesteads in the early years of Victorian settlement. This form of subsistence garden became again more common after the war years and during the depression. 'A detailed archaeological survey would be necessary to determine alterations to garden beds, old tree stumps and locations and edges of paths and beds. This is probably not warranted given the garden's level of significance. 'There are no plants or features of individual significance, using the general criteria such as age, rarity, etc ..{- Gilfedder, F extract from report to H Eckersley}

## **Historical Australian Themes**

-Exploring and claiming land- early freeholds

Farming

3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

3.9 Farming for commercial profit

5.8 Working on the land

8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

*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/>*