
Colbinabbin Homestead



B1771 Colbinabbin
Homestead

Location

87 Osment Road,, COLBINABBIN VIC 3559 - Property No B1771

Municipality

CAMPASPE SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1730

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 10, 2005

What is significant? Colbinabbin Homestead, designed by Bendigo based architect, Robert Alexander Love, was built for John Irving Winter in 1867. The Colbinabbin run was established by William Curr in 1843 and was bought by John Winter for his four sons in 1857. John [Jock] Winter, the son of a blacksmith, arrived in Australia with his family from Scotland in 1841 and settled near Ballarat. The discovery of gold on their property transformed the life of the family and provided the basis for sizeable investment in large pastoral areas throughout northern Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

In Victoria the wealth of these property owners was expressed in their homesteads. These include Dhurringile (H1554), built for James Irving Winter in 1877; Noorilim (H0297), built for William Irving Irving in 1879; and William's first homestead, Stanhope, also designed by Love in 1867. John Irving Winter never married but had two illegitimate children, who on Winter's death in 1877 were sent elsewhere by Winter's executors. The property was sold ten years later to Melbourne builder David Mitchell (1829-1916) and was eventually subdivided in response to the *Closer Settlement Act* of 1904.

Colbinabbin Homestead is a single storey solid brick and stucco building in two distinct parts, Italianate in style. The main body of the house is wrapped in a verandah roof with concave galvanised iron with cast iron posts and trim. The external walls of the house rise to a parapet with bracketed cornice in front of a concealed gutter. The second part of the house comprises two wings either side of a service courtyard with a well underneath. The rooms in this area accommodated staff, the kitchen and other domestic functions. The kitchen wing was demolished but was rebuilt in 2004 with materials salvaged from the demolition of Stanhope.

The interiors of the main body of the house are distinguished by an elaborate decorative scheme. The decorative works display a range of high quality nineteenth century decorative techniques including examples of walnut wood graining to the doors, marbling to the fireplaces and hallway walls, painted and stencilled leather grained wallpaper, stencilled pattern work and fine paint detailing to pilaster capitals and plaster cornices. The front door is highlighted by stained glass that also incorporates the family crest and date of construction. The two front rooms of the house are separated by a shared elliptical fireplace and painted panelled doors that slide up into the roof space above.

There are a number of associated structures including a bakehouse, shearing shed and cattle dip. The bakehouse is of cavity brick wall construction. The wall is tied by 37mm wide metal straps, placed at 900mm intervals, whose ends loop around a metal band in each wall. These bands run around the perimeter of the building. There are two sets of these bands, one below sill level and the other above head height. It is not known exactly when the building was built but it is believed to have been built soon after the construction of the house, if not contemporary with it. While various forms of cavity brick walls were built throughout Victoria prior to the late 1860s, Love is credited with the introduction of the wire tied cavity wall to Victoria. The metal tied cavity wall became, and still is, the standard technique for full brick construction in Australia. It is believed to be amongst the earliest known examples of wire tied cavity brick construction in the state. The Stawell Literary and Scientific Institute, also attributed to Love was also constructed by this method in 1868.

The woolshed is constructed of uniform diameter bush poles. The original shingle roof is still apparent under the later corrugated iron roof cladding. The building is believed to have originally accommodated 40 workers. The shearing boards were located down each side of one end of the building and were supplied with sheep from a central race fed from the larger internal sweating pens. It is believed the building was shortened in response to the construction of the adjacent Waranga Western Channel built in the early part of the twentieth century. Close to the woolshed, on the banks of Cornella Creek, the property also once accommodated a substantial wool scouring works. These works were powered by thirty-five horse power steam engine that allowed the woolshed's daily clip to be scoured, dried and pressed within twenty-four hours. In 1864 the works were scouring twenty bales a day. The scouring works was set up as a joint enterprise by the Winter Brothers and also processed wool from the other runs. The works were part of a larger collection of buildings that were believed to also include amongst other activities, a boiling down works and a meat preserving works. Early photographs show a substantial chimney behind the scouring sheds. None of these structures is extant, but some remnant structure is still visible at ground level and it is believed that evidence of the other structures and the activities of the site are below ground level. The bricks from these structures is said to have been taken to Rushworth for use in the mines. Near to the location of the works is an extant brick lined cattle dip. The property also contains a small cemetery to the south of the homestead on the banks of Cornella Creek, where 11 people were buried between 1860 and 1870.

How is it significant? The Colbinabbin Homestead is significant for architectural and historic reasons at a State level.

Why is it significant? Colbinabbin Homestead is of historical significance as an important example of a substantial homestead built on the proceeds of gold discoveries and subsequent pastoral wealth. Colbinabbin Homestead is of historical significance for its associations with its owner John Winter and the prominent Winter and Winter-Irving families who were amongst the largest pastoral landholders in Victoria. Colbinabbin Homestead is of significance for its earlier association with William Curr (1843-1857) and its later association with David Mitchell (1887-1904).

Colbinabbin Homestead is of architectural significance as a fine example of the Victorian Italianate style. The house is also of note for its planning: the main body of the house is based around a "T" hallway form and the servants' rooms and kitchens are located around a small attached courtyard.

Colbinabbin Homestead is of architectural significance for its internal decoration. The decorative scheme is of particularly high quality and represents both the range and high level of skill of its nineteenth century decorators.

Colbinabbin Homestead is of architectural significance as an example of the work of Bendigo based architect, Robert Alexander Love (1814-1876) and for the early use of cavity brick wall construction in the bakehouse. Colbinabbin Homestead is of historic and scientific (technical) significance as the site of a once large agricultural enterprise as represented by the woolshed and cattle dip, and which also included a substantial industrial complex that incorporated a steam driven wool scouring works and is believed to have also included a boiling down works and a meat preserving works.

Colbinabbin Homestead is significant for the archaeological potential for the site to yield import *in situ* remains, including artefact deposits, relating to the 19th Century agricultural industrial complex. The archaeological evidence has the potential to contribute to an informed level of understanding reflecting important information about the history and associated activities of the site.

Classified 'Regional': 28/05/1969

Revised: 03/08/1998

Hermes Number 67511

Property Number

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