

---

## Former Mitchell Valley Motel



B7310 Mitchell Valley Motel



B7310 Mitchell Valley Motel

---

### Location

620 Main Street,, BAIRNSDALE VIC 3875 - Property No B7310

### Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

### Level of significance

Demolished/Removed

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO90

### Heritage Listing

National Trust

---

### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 8, 2005

What is significant? The former Mitchell Valley Motel was built by the prominent builder, later conservationist, environmentalist and academic, David Yencken. It was designed by the distinguished Melbourne architect John Mockridge, and opened in late 1957. It was the second motel to be opened in Victoria, and the first in country Victoria. In contrast to other Australian motels of the late 1950s, it was simple in design and was an inspiration to Robin Boyd in his design of the Black Dolphin Motel, Merimbula, in 1961.

The former Mitchell Valley Motel consists of three single storey buildings: two blocks of motel rooms, and a reception building (which was extended in 1971). The 1957 buildings are timber framed, sawtooth gable-roofed

pavilions, allowing high-light windows, all linked by flat roofed covered walkways. The external wall lining is vertical timber boarding and the roofs are corrugated asbestos cement sheets. The dividing walls between units are concrete blocks, for sound insulation, and all sit on concrete slabs. Services are slung beneath the roofs of the covered walkways, which are supported by timber posts on metal stirrups.

How is it significant? The former Mitchell Valley Motel in Bairnsdale is significant for architectural and historical reasons at a State level.

Why is it significant? The former Mitchell Valley Motel is architecturally significant as one of the earliest motels in Australia, the second in Victoria and the first in country Victoria. It is significant as an early example of a new building type which arose in the United States in the 1940s and was adopted in Australia in response to the dramatic rise on car ownership and travel in Australia in the 1950s. It is architecturally significant as the first motel in Victoria to be designed by an architect, and is a direct antecedent of the most significant motel building in Australia, Robin Boyd's Black Dolphin Motel at Merimbula, developed by David Yencken four years later. The Mitchell Valley Motel is historically significant as the second motel built in Victoria, as the first in country Victoria and amongst the first in Australia. It is significant as a reflection of the social and economic changes which were occurring in post WWII Australia, particularly the dramatic rise in family travel by private car in Australia in the 1950s. It is significant for its association with the prominent Melbourne architect John Mockridge and with the builder, academic and conservationist David Yencken.

Classified: 'State' 28/02/2005

Demolished: 2008

Other Names Wander Inn Motel, Bairnsdale Caravilla Motel,

Hermes Number 71635

Property Number

---

## Physical Description 1

The former Mitchell Valley Motel consists of three single storey buildings: two long blocks of motel rooms, and a reception building (which was extended in 1971 to appear more modern). The 1957 buildings are timber framed, sawtooth gable-roofed parallel pavilions, allowing a high-light window, all linked by flat roofed covered walkways. The external wall lining is vertical timber boarding and the roofs are corrugated asbestos cement. The dividing walls between units are concrete blocks for sound isolation and all sit on concrete slabs. Services are slung beneath the roofs of the covered walkways, which are supported by timber posts on metal stirrups.

## Intactness

Largely intact, although the 1971 addition facing the highway obscures views of the original motel.

*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/>*