
MCNAB'S HOMESTEAD RUINS

Location

10 MCNABS ROAD KEILOR, HUME CITY

Municipality

HUME CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-0036

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO257

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 1, 2010

Data has been updated as a result of the Outer Western Metro Project, Context, March 10.

This site contains the ruins of an early original homestead positioned just above the floodplain on the inside of a bend of the Maribyrnong River, so benefitting from good soil and fresh water - factors that determined original European settlement. The structures compare with several other early homestead sites in the Maribyrnong Valley, one of the nearest being the Millbrook Homestead at the Organ Pipes (H7822-0092).

Interpretation of Site

At the top of the landform are bluestone foundations of the house with some walls surviving to about a metre in height. The stonework is of considerably weathered field-stone and mud mortar, indicating likely early date. A modern water-tank stands to the west of the house ruin.

Beneath the house a small terrace is defined by a retaining wall of large bluestone boulders, to the south west of which lies a surface of flag stones and the bluestone foundation of a smaller outbuilding. Further down the slope a bluestone wall forming a deeper terrace appears to represent the revetment wall of a barn or cellared structure constructed into the slope.

The ground surface above the deeper bluestone terracell wall is covered with a layer of lime or plaster suggesting an internal floor. A large number of artefacts were observed on the surface between these features and the house. The suggestion is of a farm yard area extending down the slope, overlooked by the house at the top of the landform.

Archaeological Significance

To the west of the house, a large pile of stones could possibly represent an external toilet although the Hume Heritage Review (Moloney 2003) mentions an in-filled brick-lined well, and this may be that feature.

Remnants of drystone walls are also located nearby.

The site does not appear to have been disturbed since the homestead was demolished, apparently in the 1970s. Although ruinous, the site retains several elements including various structural forms, sufficient of the floor plan to help interpret the function of various parts of the complex, together with considerable artefact material relating to nineteenth century occupation.

Historical Significance

The homestead ruins are of regional historical significance as one of the earliest European occupied sites in the Maribyrnong Valley. The site demonstrates the vernacular building methods and the early historical settlement pattern on the basalt plains in the site location on the edge of the basalt escarpment and river floodplain.

Other Names

UPPER MARIBYRNONG VALLEY,

Hermes Number 8695

Property Number

History

John and Duncan McNab bought land in the Tullamarine area about 1849. John held the Oakbank property and Duncan had Victoria Bank. These were 640 acre blocks to the north, but the brothers leased or bought other blocks in the area. They bred Ayrshire cattle which achieved Australia-wide renown (Moloney 2003: 200). The ruin at the site may represent the McNabs' first homestead on the banks of the Maribyrnong river, in which case the site would date to before the McNabs' other properties and must have been built during a period of leasing land, although there is no clear documentary evidence to confirm this. The homestead was apparently pulled down in 1970.

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/>