

KOLOR HOMESTEAD COMPLEX



H0541 Kolor Penshurst dining room 0843



H0541 Kolor Penshurst drawing room 0846



H0541 Kolor Penshurst entrance elevation 0842



H0541 Kolor Penshurst entrance tower 0844



H0541 Kolor Penshurst entrance tower 0845

Location

Penshurst-Warrnambool Road, PENSHURST VIC 3289 - Property No 001

Municipality

Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0541

Heritage Listing

Southern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Kolor Homestead complex is located on the western shoulder of Mount Rouse, some three kilometres south of the township of Penshurst. The complex consists of a large picturesque bluestone homestead, surrounded by bluestone outbuildings. The complex is set in a well-established garden with extended parkland. The complex is approached by a sinuous driveway planed with a range of exotic deciduous and coniferous trees. In 1838, John Cox took up the land which was to become Kolor. At this time, it was known as the Mount Rouse run. After a short time, the Government evicted Cox, when the Mount Rouse Aboriginal Protectorate comprising 100 square miles centred on the mount and the adjacent permanent spring. By 1851, the Protectorate had failed, and the squatting licence was purchased by John Twomey, as Purdeet, or Kolor. The first homestead appears to have been located to the southwest of the Mount on the west side of the Penshurst-Warrnambool Road.

Twomey's son Daniel built the present house in 1868 to the design of Reed & Barnes architects. The design of the garden was strongly influenced by Edward La Trobe Bateman. The Twomey family was a major influence in the Western District, owning nearby Langulac and Banemore, and remained at Kolor until 1928. Reed & Barnes were leading architects in Melbourne and Victoria. Bateman was the foremost landscape designer in the colony until the late 1860s. The very skilful design, which integrates the villa into its landscape, makes Kolor perhaps the most picturesque homestead in the Western District. The use of a Romanesque revival version of the fashionable Italianate style is rare. It can be compared with the equally rare use of the Gothic revival style at Narrapumelap, Wickliffe by the architects Davidson & Henderson of Geelong. The house and garden of Kolor are in excellent condition overall and are substantially intact. The adjoining outbuildings, drive and yards form part of the homestead complex.

How is it significant?

The Kolor Homestead complex is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Kolor Homestead complex is of historical significance as one of the earliest and most important squatting runs in the Western District, for its association with the failed Aboriginal settlement at Mount Rouse and the influential Twomey family. It is of architectural significance as one of the most important domestic designs by Reed and Barnes, for the very likely influence of Edward La Trobe Bateman, its rare use of the Romanesque revival style.

Construction dates	1868,
Architect/Designer	Reed & Barnes,
Other Names	COLOR, COLLORRER, PURDEET STATION, MOUNT ROUSE,
Hermes Number	23124
Property Number	

Physical Conditions

The house is in relatively good condition. Other outbuildings are in a range of conditions. The garden is intact although a tennis court to the north of the house and some garden structures are now lost.

Physical Description 1

The Kolor Homestead Complex is located three kilometres south of Penshurst, on the Penshurst-Warrnambool Road. The Homestead and outbuildings are located 600 metres east of the main road, on the western shoulder of Mount Rouse. The homestead is a single storey, asymmetrical bluestone house, which assumes the form of a villa set within an extensive landscaped garden. The architects were the leading Melbourne firm, Reed and Barnes almost certainly with a contribution towards the landscape from the designer and artist, Edward La Trobe Bateman. The design is dominated by a three-storey tower, which is balanced, on the west side, by a timber verandah and bow window for the drawing room and, on the north side, by a projecting gable and polygonal bay window for the dining room. Three axes are generated by this design: one to the north which terminates on the Grampians, specifically Mounts Sturgeon and Abrupt; one to the west which terminates on Mount Napier; and a vertical axis through the tower which marks the entrance and fixes the villa within the landscape. The style of the house is Romanesque revival, a rare choice in the mid-Victorian period. Its plan and form, but not its style, can be compared with the homestead Narrapumelap at Wickliffe, where the equally rare French Gothic revival style was adopted. (The architects for Narrapumelap were Davidson and Henderson of Geelong.) A bedroom wing extends to the south. A service wing extends to the east beyond a courtyard a range of outbuildings of comparable quality to the house itself.

The garden exhibits a wide range of exotic species including conifers, deciduous trees and traditional shrubberies. Detailed bluestone piers and an olive tree mark the entrance gate. The approach to the house is by a typically sinuous drive, winding and rising towards it and providing glimpses of the house through Hawthorn hedges, Oaks, Pines and other exotic trees. An extensive terrace stands before the entrance and the drive continues past the stables and coach house. To the south of the homestead there is a large circular yard defined by a dry-stone wall and with Stone pines planted at its centre.

Historical Australian Themes

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

Usage/Former Usage

Continuing as a pastoral property.

Integrity

High degree of Integrity

Physical Description 2

John Cox, first lease holder of Mount Rouse run (1839-1842)

George Augustus Robinson, Protector of Aborigines, Administrator of the Mount Rouse Protectorate

Dr John Watton, Medical Officer to the Mount Rouse Protectorate

Daniel and John Twomey, first owners of the freehold title and house

Joseph Reed, architect and partner of Reed and Barnes

Edward La Trobe Bateman, designer landscape architect and artist

Physical Description 3

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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.

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