
May Day Hills Hospital

Location

Off Albert Road, BEECHWORTH VIC 3747 - Property No G13063

Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 29, 2005

May Day Hills Hospital, developed as the Beechworth Lunatic Asylum in 1864-67, the garden and grounds laid out at this time and rejuvenated from c.1913, is of State significance:

- for its retention of early design elements typical of mid nineteenth century asylum planning; these include remnants of the ha-ha or sunk wall, gate lodge, axially planned buildings, wards with airing courts; informal tree planting, main front and rear drives, impressive entrance to the grounds and also to the administration block; extensive area for farm and vegetable garden;
- for its retention of buildings from the period 1864-67 which demonstrate the earliest phase of development on the site and typified barrack planning of mid-nineteenth century asylums; these include the gate lodge and fencing, administration block, wards, central amenity block, verandahs and covered ways, former chapel, artisans workshop, remnants of the rear gate lodge and sunk wall;
- for its retention of buildings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which demonstrate the continuing development of this site and shifts in attitudes to the treatment of psychiatric illness; these include the cottage wards, kiosk, residence (McCarthy House), stables, cricket pavilion, nurses' hostel, and former women's ward ('Turquoise');
- for its collection of mature trees and plants, many dating from the mid to late nineteenth century and others from the post-1913 work of Hugh Linaker and later curators; these include indigenous species, large collection of conifers, and extensive hawthorn hedges which mark the original site boundary;
- as an integral part of Beechworth, widely recognised as an intact example of a town developed as a consequence of the nineteenth century gold rush;

- for its considerable aesthetic qualities principally derived from the mature planting, distant views of the site (which is located on a prominent rise south of the town), views from the site to surrounding land, the impressive scale and detailing of the early buildings;
- for its continuity of use as a psychiatric institution;
- socially, as a major component of a town whose post gold rush economy relied (and still relies) on institutions such as the Benevolent Asylum, Lunatic Asylum and Gaol.

Other Names Beechworth Lunatic Asylum,

Hermes Number 70219

Property Number

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/>