Victorian Heritage Database Report

Church of England Boys Training Farm





Location:
Lysterfield Reservoir / Wellington Rd, Lysterfield VIC 3156 - Property No S03535 62803

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:
Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:
Listing Authority: HI

Heritage Overlay Number: HO216

Statement of Significance:
This historic property has high local significance, if any physical evidence remains, as an early pastoral, orchard and horse-breeding property, known as Sweet Hills from the 1870s to the mid-1930s. It has significance, also, as a Church of England Boys Training Farm between 1935 and 1945. The property has historical significance as the home of Abraham Strettle, pioneer settler and orchardist, and from 1908-1925, its associations with Gus Powell, pastoralist, philanthropist, horse breeder and trainer, and supplier of Indian and African horses to the British Army.

Description

The site of the former Church of England Boys Home is located within Lysterfield Park, to the north of the Lake and close to Farm Track. The area that was once the Boys Farm contains a number of distinct features within the woodland landscape created by the replanting of the catchment by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC).

At the southern end of the area is a complex comprising the site of the canning factory (of which no apparent evidence survives); a Sunshine engine used to drive a chaff cutter and the site of the chaff building; a large covered in-ground tank built of bricks and rendered; remains of the dairy building (concrete floor, some of the bails, steriliser room). Further along the track to the north is Gus Powell's homestead comprising the homestead site, in-ground tank, and plants (Canary Island palm, row of hawthorns and some garden plants such as agapanthus). The Boys Farm Dormitory is located further east. The site is marked by the base of a brick fireplace, a pit lined with bricks and concrete and containing Cornwell clay drainage/sewerage pipes. A plan of the building survives and is held by Parks Victoria. Nearby is the water supply system (a cement-lined open dam) set up to feed water from Eummemering Creek to the dairy.

All of the surviving features have been damaged by the process of planting the reservoir catchment from the mid 1940s, and possibly by land management practices prior to the area becoming a public park. Parks Victoria recognises the significance of these features and have been working to ensure their protection and interpretation. Further work is desirable however, especially detailed site/archaeological survey to definitively identify and map all the features that survive. This would provide a good basis for a conservation management plan for the site.

Some farm relics are held at the Lysterfield Lake Park office at the Visitors' Centre.

There are also other features of historical interest remaining within Lysterfield Park including the tramway, quarry and blacksmith's shop associated with the building of the dam, an old farmhouse removed from its original site to a location near the dam wall, and the SRWSC nursery building.

Fair

Minor Modifications

Heritage Study / Consultant	Yarra Ranges - Shire of Yarra Ranges Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2000
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	YARRA RANGES SHIRE

Other names	
Hermes number	115223
Property number	S03535

This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online