

Victorian Heritage Database Report
Ferny Creek Tea Rooms



Location:

70 One Tree Hill Road, Ferny Creek VIC 3786 - Property No 58141

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:

Listing Authority: HI

Heritage Overlay Number: HO146

Statement of Significance:

The Ferny Creek Tearoom (or Murphys Chalet) has local significance for its role in the early recreational activities of the area, marking the culmination in one spot of the steep ascent of a series of tracks and steps from the adjacent forest. (RNE criterion A.4)

The remnant structural frame of the original building is now contained within a timber dwelling in Bungalow style that has developed in stages and been constantly altered since the Tearoom structure was absorbed. The remnant bush pole structure gives a rare insight into the building techniques of the turn of the century in

localities where processed materials were difficult to obtain and where the bushman's ingenuity was valued. (RNE criterion B.2)

Description

The structural remnants of the former Ferny Creek Tearoom are contained within the existing dwelling on the site. This dwelling is of historicised bungalow character and contains evidence of additional historic structures post-dating the Tearoom. The many additions and constant layering of change in the structure makes interpretation of the evidence extremely difficult.

However, a bush pole structure of some extent is very apparent in the west end of the existing dwelling and it is probable that this formed part of the early tearooms.

Only the one externally visible post on the west elevation remains. Internally, more is evident and the owner wishes to reveal even more in due course. Basically what remains of the original bush pole structure within the existing fabric is a grid of horizontal bush poles at roughly 2300-2400 (8 feet) intervals, supported at ceiling level about 2400 from the existing floor level. These cover an area of roughly 9m x 7.5m at the western end of the existing building, ie, four by three bays. The external bush pole posts are generally, but not always, at the intersections of the grid. Any original internal supports have been removed or are hidden in existing walls. The largest open area, comprising six bays, is supported within the living room at one point by an inverted turned verandah post. Most of the pole frame is hidden above the ceiling or boxed in by plasterboard. However in the bays closest to One Tree Hill Road the horizontal elements are revealed below a coved ceiling.

To the east of the bush pole frame approximately 2.4m distant and below the floor of the current bedroom is a chimney base.

Also to the east of the bush pole frame, in an area of higher ceilings and in line with the north wall, is a typical kitchen range brick alcove and chimney facing south into the outline of a large room, clearly a former kitchen. The building then extends further east to terminate in a hipped verandah end, partly built in.

The roof structure is a long transverse gable terminating in a cross gable at the western end. The latter generally covers the bush pole grid. However, these roofs bear no direct relationship with the grid. There is no evidence of an earlier roof structure within the existing roof space. The additions probably proceeded in a west to east sequence, but the specific dates of each can only be guessed (except for that of the pole structure). However, the west and central sections of the building, ie, the pole grid and the kitchen chimney are clearly historic structures.

The original tearoom is illustrated in a c1920 photograph (Rose Series post card P4102), presumably taken from the south-east (based on the slope of the land to the rear) from what is now One Tree Hill Road, facing the view across the National Park. This shows a modular bush pole verandah structure encasing a transverse gabled inner section with a chimney at the east end of the gable. Based on a 2300 module, the external footprint of the structure would be about 9200 by 8000, roughly corresponding with the dimensions of the remnant structure but rotated 90 degrees. Also visible are some rafter or beam ends at about 1200 spacing. It is unclear whether the gabled element sits on an open pole structure or has supporting walls. It is probable that the floor was of earth.

A 1998 photograph of the dwelling shows elements of lattice infill and a spacing of posts in the west end of the south wall that are similar to the dimension and detail shown in the 1920s photograph. These elements, along with dado panels of vertical boards, are reported in the original citation. However, they were removed or built-in by October 2002 and the elevation has been further modified by the recent addition of a bay window. Since the latter date, three vertical posts visible in the north elevation have also been enclosed.

Good

Major Alterations

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	115312
Property number	58141

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