

Victorian War Heritage Database Place Details - 17/5/2025

Rainbow Gully Farm



Location:

519 Olinda Basin Road, Olinda VIC 3786 - Property No 21241

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:

Listing Authority: HI

Description:

Rainbow Gully Farm is located on the western face of the Dandenong Ranges, on a large freehold allotment (22 ha) surrounded by National Park. The property is located within a steep-sided and semi-enclosed valley. Mountain ash forest covers the upper slopes, and magnificent fern gullies follow the creek lines. The lower slopes and centre of the valley are devoted to horticultural plantings, established for cur flowers and foliage. There are extensive areas of hydrangeas and rhododendrons set close to the forest edge, and a diverse range of other shrubs and trees throughout the property. Some of the oldest plantings, probably some camellias, are located close to the present house.

The property has not been burnt during its ownership by the Dodds family, despite a number of serious fires in the area. The 1962 fires stopped on the edge of the property.

The diversity of horticultural plantings and the extensive fern gullies are features of the property, along with its evocative setting within the mountain ash forest and the views to Melbourne. The fern gullies are thought to be 400-500 years old. (L. Swanson pers comm)

A log cabin built by Jack (John) Dodd Snr on the property in the late 1920s survives. It is a simple, single-roomed log cabin, rectangular in plan, with a brick and stone chimney and corrugated iron roof. The corrugated iron bears the trademark Redcliffe. The walls are constructed using logs laid horizontally, overlapping at each corner. The roof framing is made of bush poles. It is unlined and has a single entry door and a window (now unglazed) overlooking the property towards the west. It was lived in while a second house was being built, and later served as a packing shed. Jack Dodd also built two other log cabins, one nearby (see Dodd's Log Cabin which was once within the Rainbow Gully property) and the other at Mt Dandenong (Kate Kelly's restaurant).

The second house is larger than the first. It was built by Allan Percy and Vera Stewart Dodd, parents of Anne Swanson (nee Dodd). It may have been started as early as c1932, but the shortage of materials during the war years delayed its completion for many years. It is a timber and fibro clad bungalow, characteristic of the Interwar years in its design.

Good
Intact