

Victorian Heritage Database Report

VIOLET CREEK HOMESTEAD COMPLEX



Location:

Hamilton-Dartmoor Road, YULECART VIC 3301 - Property No 031

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Stage 2 Heritage Study Complete

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

The Violet Creek Homestead Complex, Hamilton-Dartmoor Road, Yulecart, dates from 1843 when it was taken up by Angus Cameron. He was in partnership with a Donald Cameron in the later 1840s and the pre-emptive right was issued to them. The licence passed to the latter and was held by him until his death in 1857. His executors, principally his widow, Christina Cameron who lived nearby at Arrandoovong, owned and ran the property until her death in 1881. The Camerons were a large and significant 'clan' in the further Western District. It is very likely that the complex was constructed before 1851 and that it has changed very little since then. The main house is stone, symmetrically planned and vernacular in its construction. Although simple, it is substantial for the period. The house was clearly sited and constructed to take advantage of its setting. It retains all of its original form, planning and details and much of its original detail which is particularly fine. The only changes, and these are superficial apart from the introduction of a new dining room and kitchen, were

undertaken by the McKellar family after the Second World War. This period is of interest because it was the home for the State member for Portland, Donald McKellar for many decades and it remains in that family's ownership. The house is in good condition. The various outbuildings retain less integrity and are in fair condition.

How is it significant?

The Violet Creek Homestead Complex is of historical, architectural significance to the State of Victoria and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Violet Creek Homestead Complex is of historical significance for its connections with the Cameron family, and for its later association with Donald McKellar MP. It is of architectural significance as a little altered and representative example of an 1840s squatting homestead complex.

Description

The condition of the main house is very good, with the only major change being the enclosure of the front verandah in the mid-20th century. There is some cracking in the stone walls, which requires attention.

Violet Creek Homestead is a complex of pre-1850 vernacular buildings, situated on a prominent site overlooking Violet Creek and facing towards Mount Napier and located on the north side of the Hamilton-Dartmoor Road at Yulecart. The main house, consisting of six rooms is built of bluestone and has a low pitched, hipped corrugated iron roof originally covered with shingles which survive beneath the iron. The roof is distinctive for its deep eaves. The house is symmetrical about the central front door and passage with three rooms off either side, those beside the passage opening into the two front rooms. There is a front verandah, the roof of which is contiguous with the main roof, set between projecting rooms on either side. The front door was replaced and the verandah was enclosed after the Second World War but its structure is intact. The timber windows of this section are small, 12-paned double hung sashes.

The interior of the main house, although modernised and redecorated, retains a significant amount of its original joinery, such as skirtings, doors, etc. These are particularly fine, are possibly cedar, and may have been imported as pre-fabricated pieces rather than have been made on-site. Most of the mantelpieces have been replaced. There are no plaster details, as would be expected at this time.

The original detached staff quarters and possibly the kitchen, now used as a bunkroom, were off set to the south of the main wing. Interestingly, this structure is on ground which is higher than the main house. The present kitchen and a modern dining room are located between and link the two wings. Also at the rear but behind the main house there is a former bakery (possibly the original kitchen) and a laundry.

Some distance from the main house and beyond the staff quarters, there is another small stone cottage or hut of one room now used for storage. It has been described as the first house but this is unlikely. It is much more likely to have been more staff quarters. It has a central front door and two windows in the front elevation and a large chimney at the southern end. It has a simple hipped roof now covered in corrugated iron with shingles underneath. This vernacular structure also appears to date from the earliest times because the windows appear to have had shutters or casements rather than glazed sashes. The interior is only roughly finished.

Little appears to remain of the original garden although there are several mature trees, particularly cypresses and pines. It is clear that the house addressed the nearby creek which can be seen, on axis, past the gate in the garden fence. It may be that the creek was planted with exotics to improve this view. There are no other significant plantings.

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

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h Continuing as a pastoral property although very much reduced.

The main house has a high degree of integrity although sections at the rear have been altered and a new section was added after WW2.

Angus and Donald Cameron

Christina Cameron

Thomas Roberston Philip

D McKellar, long-serving MP for the region

Heritage Study / Consultant	Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002
Construction Date Range	1840 -
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	23186
Property number	031

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