

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: CLUNIE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Glenferrie Road HARROW

STUDY NUMBER: 058

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

PARISH: PARISH OF MURYRTYM

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 347 E-16 , VicRoads 54 B4 , On Glenferrie Road, approximately 1.5 km south west of the intersection with Coleraine-Edenhope Road, 3 km from the township of Harrow.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: State



Clunie Homestead Complex, Glenferrie Road, Harrow. Front Verandah

Image Date: 04/12/01

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings including the original homestead site, the main house and its outbuildings, the stables, the woolshed and its outbuildings and the garden.

The buildings on the station, including those for consideration in the Scope of Registration are:

Homestead and 1940s Billiard room. Unsympathetic additions include 1940s fibro-cement sheet laundry, bedroom (at end of verandah) and bathroom, and 1960s concrete block office - EXEMPT these additions

Homestead garden, which includes three structures, a meat house, a store room and the 45,000 gallon underground tank, and perimeter fences - EXEMPT these structures

Cow shed and yards, modern - EXCLUDE

Stables, stone, with lattice panels

Two corrugated iron huts, c. 20th century, but perhaps recycling older materials, lower one known as a Labourer's hut, with exterior bathroom at rear. - EXCLUDE

Garage, 20th century, corrugated iron - EXCLUDE

Machinery shed, modern - EXCLUDE

Top shed, corrugated iron and various timbers, including timber in the round and vertical boards

Woolshed

Foundations of Manager's Quarters, ruined, some of the stone used to make the footings for the Billiard room

Old shearers' quarters, built of ironstone, 4 large rooms, with storage loft above, unroofed, ruinous

Cook's quarters, substantially intact, ironstone with corrugated iron roof, four rooms, two rooms with brick tiled floors, one featuring a large oven and open fireplace, partially unroofed

Site of first homestead on drive near front gate

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The main house is a long single storey stone building raised on a podium and aligned from northwest to southeast. It is sited on a rise some distance from the entrance and the original homestead site. On a perpendicular axis, it overlooks a tributary creek of the Glenelg River and on a diagonal axis towards Harrow and the north, it overlooks the river valley and the Old Adelaide Road beyond. Although larger and more refined, the form, siting and detailing of the main house are similar to Blair Mona, a farm near Portland, which was Blair's country residence and which is thought to date from the 1840s. The bungalow form with access to rooms off the verandah is particularly similar.

The house is built in large grey granite blocks, which were quarried on the property. The roof is a simple gable covered in short sheets of corrugated iron. (The existing iron is old but no brand names have yet been identified.) A door in the southeast gable provides access to the roof space, possibly intended for storage above the room at that end. The timber verandah runs along the facade and returns around both ends. It has a simple double ogee curved valence, paired chamfered posts and a single balustrade rail. Several doors and windows open onto the verandah. Two are framed with simple pilasters and shallow arches with projecting keystones. The front windows are four-paned double hung sashes. The rear windows are twelve-paned double hung sashes. The various chimneys are brick, those at the northern end being rendered. It may be that the house was extended at some time, probably towards the southeast.

The plan of the house is unusual in that it is comprised of three 'cells' each accessed separately from the verandah, two from the front and one from the northern end. The two main cells are two-rooms deep. The central cell includes a front room and two smaller rooms, probably bedrooms, at the rear. The southern cell includes across the front, a large front room, used as a dining room, a smaller front room possibly used as a breakfast room, and a servant's room. Across the rear there are smaller rooms used as bedrooms and the kitchen. The interiors are largely intact with some original built-in furniture but they show evidence of a modernisation after 1900 and again, in the service areas, after 1960. There is a later weatherboard building on the north-east side of the house and just beyond the verandah, which was apparently used as a sleep out. Its chimney is built from recycled hand-made bricks and it is raised on a high brick plinth. Another room, used as an office, has been constructed in masonry under the southern end of the verandah. The northern end of the verandah has been filled in with timber framing and cement sheeting to form a bathroom. A laundry wing extending from the kitchen and similar outbuildings in the rear garden date from the same period. The brick meat house, however, appears to be original.

The garden around the house is enclosed by a simple timber and wire fence, the most distinctive plantings being the Californian fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) and Canary Island palms (*Phoenix canariensis*). Beyond this there is a park with a range of exotic and native plantings. Some surviving plantings beyond the front garden indicate a large circle. Others might be aligned with the circle's diameter parallel to the facade. While a hedge of hawthorns, in a smaller circle possibly indicates an earlier drive. There is an orchard located within the park on the south side of the main house.

Stone stables are located on the north- side of the house. These are made from a different stone, large openings filled with timber trellis for ventilation and a loft under the corrugated iron roof for storing fodder.

The woolshed is located some distance from the house. It is T-shaped in plan, built from a granitic stone stained by iron oxide laid as coursed random rubble and with well-constructed stone arches. There are nine stands in each of the two wings of the board and the processing area in the centre wing retains original equipment including several wool presses.

There are other stone outbuildings, now in various stages of ruin, including men's quarters, a dining room and kitchen with a large stove and baker's oven and a workman's hut. Approximately 100 metres inside the front

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gate of Clunie, the scant remains of a flower garden mark the location of the original homestead, thought to have been built prior to 1853.

HISTORY:

Thomas Ricketts who had arrived in Port Phillip in 1837 first took up the Clunie run. It was described as comprising 32,000 acres with 50 head of cattle and 12,000 sheep (Billis & Kenyon, 191). He had first taken up land at Rickett's Marsh on the Barwon in 1838, land that was resumed by the government for the Buntingdale Mission Station. He obtained the lease for Clunie in October 1840 and held it until October 1844 (*ibid.*, 130). The next and most important holder of the lease was James Blair (1813-1889). Blair arrived in NSW from Ireland in 1835 and assumed various administrative positions including that of Police Magistrate at the Vale of Clwydd (Hartley) at a salary of 250 pounds (Thompson, in Pike, 111-2). In 1840 he was transferred to the Port Phillip District and became the first Police Magistrate at the township of Portland, then about six years old. Garryowen states in his memoirs that Thomas Ricketts and James Blair were both committee members of the largely ineffectual Immigration Association founded in 1840. From 1843 to 1846 Blair was one of the Commissioners for Crown Lands, taking over from Capt. Foster Fyans, a critically important role during the establishment of squatting runs in the vast Portland Bay district. Blair held various minor offices as well as becoming Police Magistrate for Bourke. Beyond his official duties, Blair was a local director of the Union Bank in 1846 and of the Bank of Victoria in 1863-66, and a patron of many charities. He retired in 1866 and moved to Melbourne in 1867. From 1867-78 he was a director of the Bank of Victoria and its deputy-chairman from 1875.

In Portland, Blair lived in a picturesque Gothic revival house, since demolished called Greenmount, which was close to the port. He had a farm called Blair Mona (or Blair Gowan) at Trewella, south west of Portland, (HRVH 1897) and other properties. On retirement in 1867, Blair moved to Melbourne and lived in a house also called Greenmount in Toorak, now demolished. Paul de Serville (147) observes that Blair was one of the few pre-gold rush pioneers who lived in the fashionable suburb. He also states that Blair was asked, at that time to put his name forward as President of the Melbourne Club. Blair returned to Dublin in 1884 and died there in 1888.

William Moodie, the owner of Wando Dale homestead states in his memoirs, that "Mr Blair was a good magistrate but a bad bushman, and in coming up once a year to look at his station he was sure to lose his way and find himself at Wando Dale and I had to put him so far on the track that he could not go wrong again" (Moodie, in Palmer (ed.), 45). Although he praises one manager, Thomas Carmichael, he is critical of the management of the place before and after. "It was never managed until the late Thomas Carmichael, afterwards of Argyle, took it in hand. I bought sheep there in Carmichael's time, and went to look at it some few years after, and could hardly believe that a flock could have been so mismanaged in the time" (*ibid.*).

It seems that an early house, kitchen, woolshed and outbuildings at Clunie homestead were built by 1853 although the main house was not built until 1864 (NER Citation No. 3918). The property continued to be developed including the establishment of a homestead garden with distinctive *Washingtonia* and Canary Island palms, probably planted about 1900.

After Blair's death, Clunie passed to his son, who died only a short time later, the property then passing to his wife, who returned to England in 1906. The decision was made to subdivide and auction the property, and the purchasers of the homestead block were the Fitzgerald Brothers (Tucker, 2003). The sale papers had to be sent to Mrs. Blair to be signed, and by the time they reached her, she had remarried, and the papers were to be made out in her new married name. During this lengthy process, the Fitzgerald's decided not to purchase the homestead block, which was purchased by James Daly (*ibid.*).

Daly arrived in Australia from Ireland with his family at age 10. A short time after arrival, a falling tree killed his father, and James went to work in a dairy. As a result of withdrawing from education at such a young age, he was illiterate, although both his parents were able to read and write. He came to work on Clunie while a

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teenager, and determined that one day he would own it. By 1909, he had realised his dream of owning the property (ibid.). James Daly also donated the land which St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harrow stands on, and was an important member of the Harrow Catholic Church.

Daly's son, also named James took over the property on his father's death in 1927 (his mother, Margaret having died in 1916). James married Margaret Edgar Minogue of nearby Pine Hills, and they had two children, Mary and Margaret (jnr.). Mary married Pat McGennisken and had three children, Patricia, James and Jack. The McGennisken family still own and run Clunie.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

CONDITION:

The main house, its extensions and sleepout, the stables, the worker's cottage and the woolshed are in good condition. The top shed is in fair condition. The more distant outbuildings, the men's quarters and cookhouse are in ruins to varying degrees.

INTEGRITY:

The complex as a whole, the individual buildings and the garden and park retain a very high degree of integrity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Clunie Homestead complex, is located three kilometres south of the township of Harrow overlooking the Glenelg River. Its most important owner was James Blair, the Police Magistrate at Portland, a Commissioner for Crown Lands and the holder of many other public and private positions. The complex comprises: the site of the original homestead, now demolished, adjacent to the main gate and close to the river; the main house which is sited on a rise about 1.5km from the original and set in a landscaped front and rear garden within a park; the meat house; the stables; the cow shed and yards; the worker's cottage and bathroom; the garage; the modern shed; the top shed or barn; and, at a distance, the woolshed, men's quarters and cookhouse. The homestead complex and some outbuildings are built from local stone. Other outbuildings are timber and iron. The main house (except for a weatherboard sleepout dating from about 1900 [double check date] and some later cement sheet additions) and the stables use a grey granite. The other stone buildings, including the woolshed, the men's quarters and cookhouse use a different granitic stone deeply stained by iron oxide. The top shed combines in-the-round timber posts, pit-sawn timber beams and joists, and machine dressed tongue and groove boards. Bricks for chimneys and other structures were made on the property. The forms and detailing of all of the buildings are simple and vernacular, suggesting that there was no professional contribution to their design. The dates of construction are not yet certain. The earliest homestead site may date from the early 1840s. Blair had erected a house and kitchen by 1853 or extended an existing building. From its detailing and materials, the main house appears to date from after 1864 but its bungalow form evokes an earlier period. The woolshed was built in the 1880s. The complex is substantially intact, most of the buildings are in good condition and all retain a very high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The Clunie Homestead Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the state of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

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The Clunie Homestead complex is of historical significance as one of the earliest, most intact and extensive homestead complexes surviving in Western Victoria and in particular for its association with James Blair. It is of architectural significance for its early forms of construction, simple detailing and its setting. The woolshed is of particular interest for its size and quality of construction. The whole is representative of the north-western squatting runs which were distant from centres of population, located in a much drier climate and less subject to the closer settlement movement.

Extract of Statement of Significance taken from the Register of the National Estate:

Clunie Homestead, woolshed and stables at Harrow are typical homestead structures dating from the early years of pastoral development in western Victoria. James Blair was a distinguished district pioneer, being Commissioner for Crown Lands (1843-46) and a long serving Justice of the Peace. The house is most notable for the unusual plan and distinctive verandah valences. The use of different stone for the various homestead structures is also of interest.

(The Commission is in the process of developing and/or upgrading official statements for places listed prior to 1991. The above data was mainly provided by the nominator and has not yet been revised by the Commission.)

Description: Clunie Homestead pastoral run was established by Thomas Ricketts in August 1840. James Blair acquired the lease in October 1844 and had erected a house with kitchen, woolshed and outbuildings by 1853. The present single storey, coursed granite house with long north verandah and French door fenestration was apparently erected c 1864. The T-plan bluestone woolshed and sandstone stables are of unknown date.

COMPARISON:

052 Kolor Woolshed, Penshurst/Warrnambool Road, Penshurst
001 Muntham Homestead Complex, Glenelg Highway, Carapook
078 Gringegalgona Homestead Complex, Gringe Dip Road, Gringegalgona (for the garden plan in particular)
313 Riverside, Falkenberg Road, Wannon, (for the garden plan in particular)

ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

07-Oct-01

EXISTING LISTINGS:

Name

Southern Grampians Shire Planning Scheme

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Garryowen, or Edmund Finn	Chronicles of Early Melbourne, Vol. 1		52, 439
Kathleen Thompson, in Douglas Pike (ed.)	Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 1	1983	111-2
Paul de Serville	Pounds and Pedigrees	1991	var.
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	var.