

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: LOWER AIRD HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Suttie's Road BYADUK

STUDY NUMBER: 192

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 2A & B **SECTION:** 16 **PARISH:** PARISH OF BYADUK

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 473 D40; VicRoads 72 H8; located on the north side of Suttie's Road 0.5km east of the intersection with the Hamilton-Port Fairy Road.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Lower Aird Homestead, façade, Sutties Road, Byaduk

Image Date: 08/12/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. The house, laundry and stables (exteriors only), the garden and an area of land 100 x 100 metres around the homestead complex.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Lower Aird homestead consists of an L-shaped structure in a vernacular style, built of rendered bluestone, with quoins at the corners of the facade. The facade is asymmetrical, being three rooms wide across the front. This rather uncommon three quarters plan is present in several bluestone homesteads built at a similar time in this district, suggesting that the same builder may have been employed on each. A number of timber sections have been added at various stages in the 19th and 20th centuries, possibly recycling older materials from the homestead complex. An attached timber verandah runs across the entire façade, uniting later elements with the original stone house. Its simple detailing is typical of the Edwardian period. At the eastern end, the verandah has been enclosed with timber panels and windows, to create a new entrance to the house. This enclosed area appears to have been used as a simple conservatory at some stage. The homestead roof is corrugated iron.

On the east side of the homestead is a free standing stone structure, which may have been a cool room, but which has subsequently been fitted out as a laundry. A large corrugated iron stable or workshop is located a short distance from the house.

The garden at Lower Aird has been laid out with formal paths and beds, and contains a number of mature plantings, including a pair of large *Cupressus sempervirens* either side of the front gate, several Peppercorn (*Schinus molle*) and a substantial Moreton Bay Fig (*Ficus macrophylla*).

HISTORY:

James and Colin Fraser were brothers, who married two sisters. James, Colin and their brother Duncan emigrated to Australia in 1853, while their sisters Margaret and Ann emigrated in 1863. James and Colin Fraser came from the Ararat diggings in 1861 and selected land at Byaduk under the Occupation Licence Land Act. Colin Fraser purchased Allotment 3 Section 16, while James Fraser purchased Allotment 2 Section 16. Their brother Duncan came with them from the diggings but did not take up any land (Black, Pers. Comm., 2002).

After walking to Portland to obtain their licence, the brothers returned to Ararat to collect their possessions. Colin and Duncan and Mrs. James Fraser reached Byaduk on Christmas Eve 1861, and camped on the land. Meantime James Fraser went to Melbourne to collect his iron house and their carpenters tools which they had left in Melbourne when they went to the diggings.

In 1863 they built a wattle and daub house of four rooms, which James Fraser lived in. Colin, who had married in late 1862, lived in half a shed built with iron and slabs, the other half being used as a stable. In 1867 he built a three roomed stone house, which is known as Aird today. This property was acquired by the Christies, another early and important Scots Presbyterian family in the Byaduk area.

James Fraser built the 6 roomed stone house on the property now known as Lower Aird, directly opposite, in about 1867. This created a rare pairing of residences, reflecting the closeness of the families' relationship. James and his wife Mary (nee MacDonald) had 9 children. Lower Aird remained in the Fraser family for many decades, until sold in the late 20th century.

Over subsequent years, the brothers acquired further paddocks and planted wheat and oats. They bought a flock of ewes from the owner of Louth station in 1865 and diversified into wool as well as crops.

The Frasers purchased Brisbane Hill Pre-emptive Right on 1st July 1880, and continued to build up their land holdings over the next 20 years, becoming important members of the Byaduk community. They were instrumental in the establishment of the Byaduk Presbyterian Church, donating land for its construction, and were stalwart members of the congregation for many decades.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

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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

CONDITION:

The condition of the homestead and outbuildings is very good.

INTEGRITY:

High

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The homestead complex at Lower Aird commenced in 1861 with the selection of land by the Fraser brothers. The original 6 roomed stone section of Lower Aird was built in 1867 for James Fraser and his wife Mary. The plan of the house is asymmetrical, and is reminiscent of similar homesteads in the district. This substantial building has been extended during the 20th century with a number of timber extensions. The outbuildings include an early stone cool room, later used as a laundry, various sheds, and the corrugated iron stables. Lower Aird has a well established garden with a number of mature trees, and elements of formal landscaping, mostly dating from the early 20th century.

How is it significant?

The Lower Aird Homestead Complex is of architectural and historical significance to the community of Byaduk and Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

Lower Aird Homestead Complex is of architectural significance as an example of a substantial stone homestead built during a period of considerable growth at Byaduk, following the 1860s land sales. Its asymmetrical three quarter plan is not common, but is similar to several homesteads built in this district at about the same time.

Lower Aird Homestead Complex is of historical significance for its long association with the Fraser family, pioneers of the district and important members of the Byaduk community.

COMPARISON:

193 Aird Homestead Complex, Sutties Road, Byaduk
112 Lyne Homestead, Branxholme-Byaduk Road, Byaduk North
022 Audley Homestead Complex, Branxholme-Byaduk Road, Branxholme
111 Brisbane Hill Homestead Complex, Hamilton-Port Fairy Road, Byaduk North

ASSESSED BY: mgt

ASSESSMENT DATE:

30-Jan-02

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
	Byaduk Presbyterian Church Jubilee 1882-1932	1932	variou

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Ian Black

Ian Black (ed.)

Personal communication, April 2002

Early Byaduk Settlers

2002

1994 1-3

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