

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** MORGIANA HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Morgiana Road MORGIANA

**STUDY NUMBER:** 107

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**PRECINCT:** outside

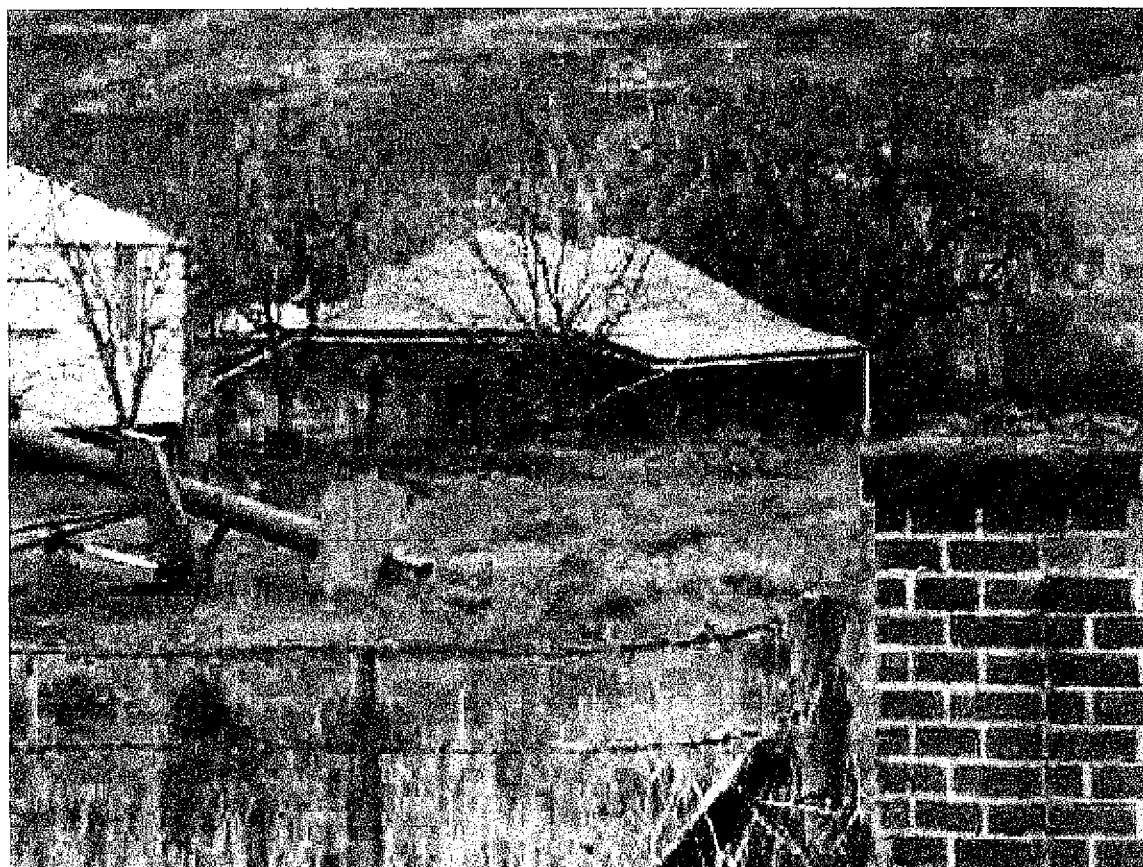
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**PARISH:** PARISH OF YULECART

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 431 E26; VicRoads ; located to the immediate south-east of the crossing of the Morgiana Road over the Grange Burn.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Morgiana Homestead Complex, Morgiana Road, Morgiana. View of second homestead from the driveway

**Image Date:** 29/07/01

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings including the original stone homestead, the later residence, and the corrugated iron men's quarters but excluding the modern farm buildings, and their immediate curtilage bounded by the river, the road and an area of 10,000 square metres.

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## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The complex includes the original single storey stone homestead of six rooms now converted to a double garage and store; the later (third) timber residence now veneered with red brick with a timber verandah and used as the current residence; corrugated iron men's quarters and other outbuildings. A new garden has been established in front of the current residence.

## HISTORY:

Alex Cameron established the Morgiana squatting run, located near the junction of the Grange Burn with the Wannon River, in 1842 as Number 63 in the Portland Bay District (B&K, 38, 246). It comprised 8,640 acres and ran 600 head of cattle, although no sheep are recorded. The origin of the name is not certain but Morgiana was the [female?] servant of Ali Baba, of the forty thieves, and she saved his life. It appears not to be a Scottish name. In 1846, Morgiana passed to Donald Cameron, the nephew of Alexander 'Black Sandy' Cameron. In 1856, the licence was held by "A. Cameron" (B&K, 38, 246). By 1867 it carried 10,000 sheep on 8,000 acres with 50 dairy cattle and 10 horses (HHC, Morgiana file). The Cameron family had extensive interests and was very influential in the area around Hamilton. It also maintained close links, from the earliest times, with the area north-west of Melbourne.

Cameron is an extremely common surname in the area, with many of the men having the initial "A" including at least two Alexander's, so confusion is frequent. According to Paul de Serville, this Alexander Cameron was born in 1810 in Inverness, Scotland to John Cameron and his wife Margaret, nee Fraser and died in 1881 (de Serville, 463). According to Billis and Kenyon, he had arrived in the Port Phillip District in January 1839, taking up Mount Sturgeon first, then Morgiana and had an interest alone and with others in as many as seven other properties. He was known as 'Black Sandy' Cameron. He also had interests in South Australia, owning the Penola run. He married twice, firstly to Margaret McKillop and secondly to Ellen Keogh. He died in retirement aged 72 at his Melbourne home, Moreland Hall in Coburg (PIV, Reg. No. 6994) with at least fifteen offspring, several of whom married into important squatting families.

There are many people with the name, Donald Cameron. This person seems to have held similar properties as Alexander, including Mt Sturgeon Plains North, was probably in partnership with him. Donald Cameron's date of birth is not certain. When Donald died in 1870, he was described as 58 years of age and the son of Duncan and Isabella Cameron, and from Inverness (PIV, Reg. No. 5191). He is buried in the Will Will Rook cemetery, Broadmeadows (HHC, Morgiana file). When he arrived in New South Wales, he was described in the passenger list "as being 23 years of age, from Kilmalle, occupation shepherd, in very good health, religion Presbyterian, and able to read and write" (HHC, Morgiana file). He married a woman called Christina and they had three children, Donald (1845), Ann Isabella (1846), and John (1847) (PIV, Reg. No. 7943, 34029 & 8020, and 34070).

No record has been found of Christina's death which must have been before 1854 because "Donald Cameron married a widow, Mrs. Sarah MacDonald, in the All Saints' Church at Portland on 28 April 1854" which can be confirmed (PIV, Reg. No. 1462). "Mrs. MacDonald, who was the widow of Archibald MacDonald, was a sister of Alexander 'King of Penola' Cameron. Her husband died in 1844 shortly after being associated with the establishment of Morgiana station on the Wannon River" (HHC, Morgiana notes; PIV, Reg. No. 1462). She and her first husband had also arrived on the SS 'Boyne' and she was Donald Cameron's cousin (HHC, Morgiana file).

In fact, over 100 Camerons had arrived on the SS 'Boyne' at Parramatta in 1839, not all of them related. The clan leaders brought sheep with them and "when the flock was added to and large enough they were overlanded to Port Phillip where they founded the Glenroy Station" (HS, 4 March 1999). The Glenroy Station squatting licence, on the Moonee Ponds Creek at Broadmeadows, was held by Duncan Cameron from 1840 to 1846 (B&K, 214).

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Donald Cameron also held the important early runs at Bochara and Hilgay. Perhaps to resolve confusion even then, Garden notes that "Donald eventually took over Morgiana and became known as 'Morgiana Cameron', while Alexander held Mount Sturgeon Plains for a period in the 1850s" (Garden, 24). Donald Cameron is listed as the owner of Morgiana and Bochara in the 1855 Portland Bay District Stock Assessment Rolls (Fawcett, Genseek). He continued his interest there until 1860 according to Garden but Billis and Kenyon say that the run's licence went to an 'A. Cameron' in 1858 with no further information. To add to the confusion "Archibald Cameron who was one of the Morgiana Camerons married Christina Cameron who was one of the Violet Creek, Narawong and Arrandoovong Camerons" (Garden, 51-2). The daughter of Jonathan McGillivray and Ann McGinnis, she had five children. She died at Hamilton in 1881 aged 67 (PIV, Reg. No. 4693).

As Garden writes, "The various Camerons were among the successful squatters who arrived in the district early and carved their properties out of the bush, although relatively little is known of them. They did not achieve the same prominence as such men as French, Kennedy and other wealthy pastoralists who took up runs in the late 1840s and early 1850s. There appear to have been at least two main branches of the Camerons. Donald Cameron, who founded Mount Sturgeon Plains, became involved with John (1808-80) and Alexander (c1811-65) Cameron who were sons of Ewen Cameron. They came from Inverness-shire with their father and other members of the family to Port Phillip in the 1840s and developed widespread pastoral interests in the Western District and in South Australia. They established Morgiana in 1842, but subsequently became involved in joint ventures with Donald Cameron at Mount Sturgeon Plains and swapped around their leases in a confusing way" (Garden, 24).

One stone structure survives from the earliest times. It is located close to the Grange Burn, just before it joins the Wannon. This may have been built by Alexander Cameron but more likely by his successor, Donald Cameron who occupied Morgiana until at least 1858 (HS, 4 March 1999).

A second homestead was built near the original, possibly about the time the licence changed hands between 1858 and 1860. Morgiana was put up for sale in February 1867 but the auction was postponed. The advertisement describes Morgiana in detail and mentions "Two homesteads of seven rooms each, with store-rooms, kitchen and stables, coachhouse, &c" and that "the principal homestead has an excellent garden well stocked with fruit trees" (HHC, Morgiana file). This second fell into disrepair and was demolished. The present house dates from the late nineteenth century. Originally weatherboard, it has been veneered with brick. The present house is the third homestead. It is conventional for its time being symmetrical, with a standard plan and addressing the road rather than the river.

Morgiana was one of the many Hamilton runs subdivided under the 1862 Lands Act but, as in most cases, the former licensee was able to hold the majority of the property (Garden, 101). This may have been the original Alexander or the 'new' Archibald or even someone else. An Archibald Cameron, whose parents are not named in his death certificate, died in 1877 aged 42 (PIV, Reg. No. 9905). He was born in Argyllshire in 1835. He had married a Catherine McCaul in 1858 (PIV, Reg. No. 2123). They subsequently had seven children, the first a son called Alexander, between 1859 and 1870.

Paul de Serville states that Donald Cameron married Christina McGillivray who was born in Inverness about 1819 (de Serville, 463). He states that she married a second time to Angus Cameron but de Serville seems to have confused the wives of Archibald and Donald Cameron. He writes "Under the instructions in Mrs Cameron's will that Morgiana be disposed of when her eldest child came of age and the proceeds be distributed among her family, Morgiana was also sold in 1885. At first it was arranged to sell the run to H. N. Thornley, pastoralist and one of the Western Province representatives in the Legislative Council, who intended to subdivide the land into small farms. The deal collapsed and Morgiana also was then acquired by James Trangmar. The Spectator was disappointed that Morgiana had not been broken up, nor the homestead acquired for an agricultural college as the paper had advocated" (Garden, 143). Donald and Christina Cameron's

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youngest child came of age in 1868 before his father died.

By 1912, J. McKellar owned Morgiana when it consisted of 3,700 acres (Fawcett, Genseek). It seems by this time the run was managed and the manager lived in the present house. What remained of the Morgiana estate was subdivided for Soldier Settlement after World War 2 in 1951. Ten families were settled on the estate.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

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 stone homestead has been much altered although its overall form and plan survive and, most importantly, its relationship with the Grange Burn. The second residence was demolished in the earlier twentieth century. It was superseded by the current residence the exterior of which has been much altered.

## **INTEGRITY:**

The integrity of the original homestead has been compromised by its conversion into a garage and store. The integrity of the third homestead has been compromised by its veneering. The two main buildings still express the historical sequence of development at Morgiana.

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

Morgiana, located near the junction of the Grange Burn and the Wannon River, was settled as early as 1842 by Alexander Cameron and soon taken over by his nephew Donald Cameron. With other members of what amounted to a clan, they overlanded from Sydney and seem to have remained closely associated in business. Donald held the Morgiana licence until 1858 when it was taken over by another Cameron, possibly Archibald, whose widow's estate sold it in 1885. The original stone homestead must date from before 1850. Although relatively small and conventionally vernacular in its construction, it is of interest because of its double plan. A second timber homestead was built nearby which has been demolished. The present house, originally weatherboard and now brick veneer, is the third homestead and dates from about 1900. The first homestead remains in fair condition and with fair integrity. The third homestead remains in excellent condition and with fair integrity.

How is it significant?

Morgiana Homestead Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

Morgiana Homestead Complex is of historical significance for its long and complicated association with the large and influential Cameron family, who are of particular interest as Overlanders rather than Overstraiters, like most squatters in the area. The original homestead is of architectural significance for its unusual form and plan and for its setting.

## **COMPARISON:**

125 Bochara Farm Homestead Complex, Clayton's Road, Bochara

041 Hilgay Homestead (Former), Cnr of Top & Middle Hilgay Road, Coleraine

108 Violet Creek Homestead Complex, Dartmoor-Hamilton Road, Yulecart

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ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

16-Nov-03

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
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J. M. C. Watson	Selectors and Squatters in the Hamilton District in the 1860s	1957	176 ff.
Macbeth Genealogical Services	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888 (reg. No. 1505)	1998	
Paul de Serville	Pounds and Pedigrees	1991	463
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	38, 246