

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: VICTORIA HOTEL (FORMER)

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: 100-102 Bell St PENSURST

STUDY NUMBER: 121

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: GENERAL MERCHANTS STORE (FORMER); MCNIECE'S TANKS & PLUMBING

PRECINCT: Penshurst

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: CA 45 **SECTION:** 18 **PARISH:** PARISH OF BORAMBORAM

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 475J C11; VicRoads 233 O11; located on the north side of Bell Street immediately to the west of the Post Office in the centre of the township of Penshurst

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Victoria Hotel, 100 Bell St, Penshurst

Image Date: 22/04/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings including the exteriors and interiors and all the land.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The former Victoria Hotel is a complex of many single storey buildings with a bluestone section at the front, a bluestone section behind (separated by a narrow gap subsequently filled in with timber) and further stone and timber sections at the rear. Some timber sections were removed immediately after World War Two for the sake of the Soldier Settlement developments.

The asymmetrical front wing is built of unpainted rock-faced bluestone blocks in fine and well-pointed masonry. A smooth rendered frieze has been painted and remnant signage is still visible. The south-east corner of the front wing is canted in the typical way for pubs and corner stores. This door is in two glazed leaves each with a timber panel below and two panes of glass above. The door in the middle of the Bell Street elevation is not original. (According to the owner, the original was sold and removed to an adjacent pub which subsequently burnt down.) The roof is a simple hip covered with corrugated iron which is possibly quite old. The eaves are narrow and plain. There is one large shop window on the Bell Street elevation, probably created out of two double hung sash windows with the intermediate pier removed. The other fenestration, to the west of the central door and on the east elevation, are still double hung sash windows. These three windows have single panes in each sash which may have replaced six smaller panes. All the windows have painted stone sills. A narrow corrugated iron canopy verandah survives over the south-east corner and along the east elevation. A more modern and wider verandah, constructed before 1948 according to an historic photograph, is over the large window. It is supported by new steel poles which have replaced timber posts. There is no verandah on the western half of the Bell Street elevation. There is one bluestone chimney incorporated into west elevation. A small timber addition has been built on the west elevation gaining access through the former gap between the front and kitchen wings.

What appears to have been a separate kitchen wing is built of coursed random bluestone rubble. It is about one metre lower than the front wing. The roof is a simple hip and covered with corrugated iron. A single bluestone chimney is incorporated into the west wall. An unusual water tank on a metal stand is located beside this chimney on the west elevation.

The interiors of the complex, which have not been inspected, are said to be significantly intact although larger rooms have been subdivided at some stage.

Further extensions or outbuildings are also built of coursed random bluestone rubble. These also have hipped corrugated iron roofs.

HISTORY:

The land on which the former Victoria Hotel stands was purchased from the Crown on 8th September 1852 by W. Hutton, who bought allotments 4 and 5 of section 18, adjacent to the Police Reserve (Department of Lands and Survey, 1955). William Hutton was the owner of the Gazette run, between Penshurst and Macarthur.

The exact date and purpose of construction of this building is not certain, but a lease notice in the Hamilton Spectator (20/05/1871) provides some evidence that it was built as a hotel in 1863, perhaps for a James Murray. The advertisement describes the building as (the) "Victoria Hotel, Penshurst, containing eleven apartments, in excellent repair; large billiard room. In connection with the hotel is the butchering and baking shops, doing good trade; established 1863. Apply to James Murray" (MR&DHS). It seems that no-one rented the property, as by November Mr. Murray gave notice that he would be selling the Victoria Hotel and the whole of his household furniture and effects (ibid.). The property was rated in 1872 as one of six, possibly seven hotels in Penshurst, with Richard Larkin the publican and James Dooley as the owner (SMR RB 1872 #409). It is generally recognised as the staging place for the Cobb & Co coaches and, presumably the surviving stables were used for that purpose (F. A. Saunders).

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Research undertaken by Mount Rouse and District Historical Society has uncovered much about the licencees and the hotel between 1871 and 1901. Richard Larkins held the licence of the hotel until 1878, when for one year, an R. Maguire held the licence. Between 1879 and 1881, T. O'Farrell was publican, he sold the licence to Herbert Denton, who, although he was fined 8/6 costs for selling liquor on a Sunday and 2/6 for allowing an unlawful game (*ibid.*, WA 27/10/1881), retained the licence until 1882. It appears that R. Hayhoe was the longest standing publican, holding the licence from 1883 - 1891 (*ibid.*). In 1889, Mr. Owen McKenna purchased the property, and on his leaving the district in 1891, he sold the property to William Fanning (WA 23/03/1891), who also held the licence for the hotel.

In 1901, William Fanning's wife, Johanna, was the publican of the Victoria Hotel, and ownership had passed to Daniel Meagher and Daniel O'Brien (*ibid.* 1901 #319).

The building appears to have been delicensed and converted into a general store in about 1912-3, possibly because of the statewide review of hotel licenses undertaken at that time. In 1924 the buildings were owned and occupied by David Cook, labourer and described as "late Victoria Hotel" with a substantial reduction in the nett annual value (*ibid.* 1924 #490).

The former Victoria Hotel appears in a photograph from 1948-9 with its current verandahs and fenestration and the word 'MERCHANT' and others which are obscured painted on the frieze. After World War Two, it was purchased by the McNiece family (for 100 pounds) and they ran a plumbing and tank-making business from the outbuildings and yard. Some of the timber outbuildings were removed after World War Two for the sake of Soldier Settlers in the district.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.19 Marketing and retail

3.22 Lodging people

Theme 8: Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.4 Eating and drinking

CONDITION:

All of the various sections of the complex are in poor condition and the roof requires urgent attention.

INTEGRITY:

Significantly intact exterior and interior

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The former Victoria Hotel is located on the north side of Bell Street in the centre of the township of Penshurst. The site contains a complex of many single storey buildings with a bluestone section at the front, a bluestone section behind (separated by a narrow gap subsequently filled in with timber) and further stone and timber sections at the rear. Some timber sections of the complex were removed immediately after World War Two for the sake of the Soldier Settlement developments. The hotel may have been constructed in the 1850s, although it is more likely that it dates from the early 1860s. The complex operated as the Victoria Hotel until it was delicensed in the hotel reforms of the early twentieth century. It has since been used as a private residence, and for many years, a plumbing business was conducted from the complex. The former Victoria Hotel complex is in poor condition, but has a very high degree of internal and external integrity.

How is it significant?

The former Victoria Hotel is of historical significance to the Southern Grampians Shire.

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Why is it significant?

The former Victoria Hotel is of historical significance as one of the few surviving buildings which housed early hotels in Penshurst. Although there is only one hotel still operating in the township, prior to 1907, there were as many as seven in operation. The hotel serves as an important remnant of an earlier, more prosperous period in the history of the town. The early stables which survive within the complex represent its early important role as a Cobb and Co. Stables and Depot, indicating a previous way of life and transport in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

COMPARISON:

122 Penshurst Hotel, N-E corner of Bell and Martin Street, Penshurst

148 Cricketer's Arms Hotel (former), N-E corner of Hamilton Highway and Dickens Street, Penshurst

147 Prince of Wales Hotel (former), 104 Watton Street, Penshurst

ASSESSED BY: TFH

ASSESSMENT DATE:

22-Apr-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
Mount Rouse Shire Council	Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books (entry # 371)	1904-	5
Mount Rouse Shire Council	Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books (entry #490)	1924-	5
Mount Rouse Shire Council	Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books (entry #319)	1901-	2
Mount Rouse Shire Council	Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books (entry #409)	1872	