

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: APEX PARK

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Glendinning Street Stirling Street BALMORAL

STUDY NUMBER: 174

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: SQUATTER'S ARMS HOTEL, DAVIDSON'S INN, LANG'S INN, MCKINNON'S INN

PRECINCT: Balmoral

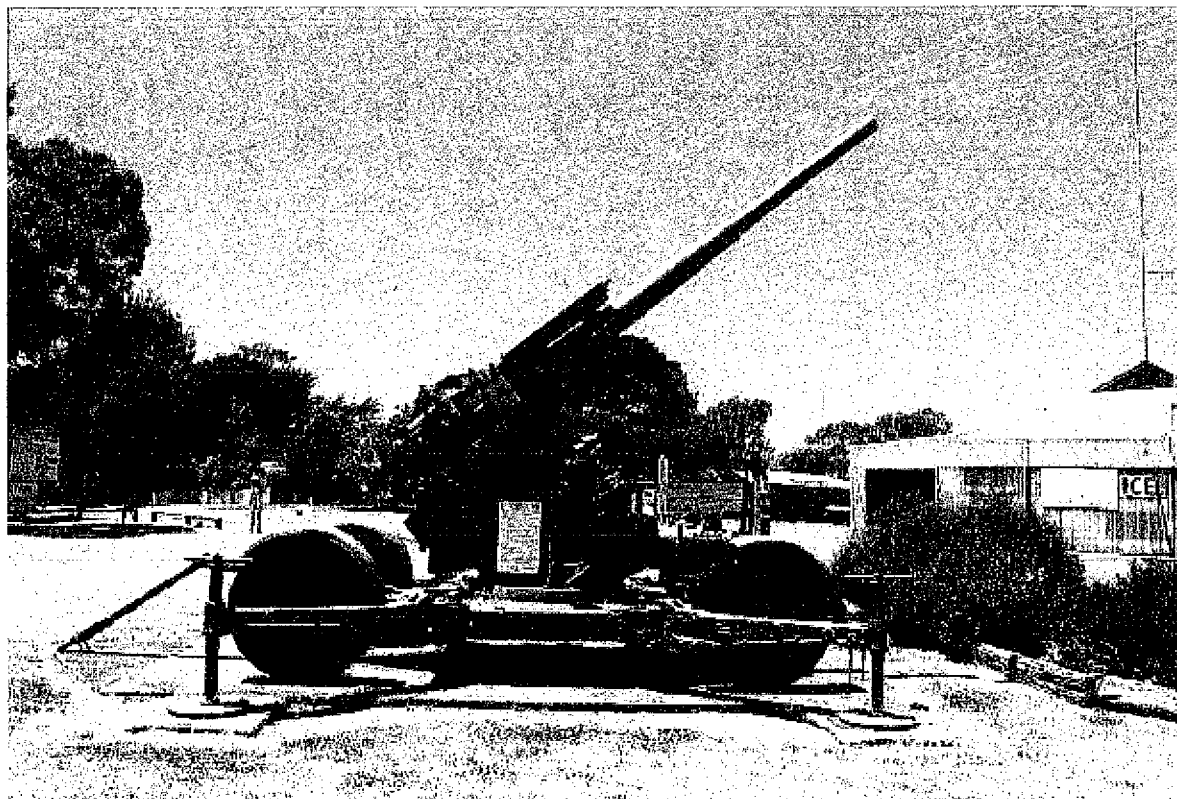
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 1 **SECTION:** 4

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 338J C4; VicRoads 227 T3; located on the northern corner of Glendinning and Stirling Streets at the crossroads of the township of Balmoral

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



WW2 Anti-aircraft gun used in Darwin, 1940-1942

Image Date: 09/01/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the objects, including the WW2 gun and the Billis horse trough and all of the land.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Apex Park is a large roughly square site in the centre of Balmoral. It is located on the junction of Glendinning and Stirling Streets, the extension of which are the roads to Adelaide and Hamilton. The Park is planted with low native shrubs set in beds surrounded by timber restraints. The whole area is covered in mown turf. There are several objects within the park, including a Billis Horse Trough in the northern corner and an MK 11 anti aircraft gun used in Darwin in the Second World War is situated on the southern boundary of the park. There is a rustic shadehouse in the centre of the park constructed from local timbers with ferns inside it.

HISTORY:

The land which now comprises Apex Park was purchased from the Crown by J. J. Watson on 7th December 1855 according to the 1866 plan of the 'Township of Balmoral' (Department of Lands and Survey, 1958). His name also appears on the early survey plan of 1860 as owner or occupier. It seems that the land was used as an inn or hotel from the earliest times.

No inn is marked (or listed in the legend) on Thomas Ham's 1847 'Map of Australia Felix' at the point where the Adelaide Road crosses Mather's Creek near its junction with the Glenelg River at the future site of Balmoral. The Squatters' Arms was established at least by 1851 by a Mr. Davidson. Delicensed in 1920 and burnt down in 1962, it was located opposite the Western Hotel on what is now Apex Park. It was operated by Davidson until 1862 when it was purchased by John Lang, formerly of Branxholme and Braybrook, who held it until the end of the nineteenth century. Lang owned other land in the town, including the riverside block where 100,000 bricks were made and wood fired during the summer of 1890 to 1891 for the construction of the Anglican and Catholic churches. In the early 1920s the hotel was still known as Lang's Hotel. The hotel was the official stopping point for Cobb and Co. coaches.

After the hotel was burnt down the vacant site was developed by the Apex Club for public purposes. Various improvements were made including landscaping with natives and the introduction of worthy objects. The Bills horse trough, a very familiar feature of country towns, was placed in the northern corner after being moved from Glendinning Street (Balmoral Historical Society, File Note). It was one of many thousands provided during the Interwar years by Annis and George Bills, a philanthropic couple who had taken pity on the condition of horses in the streets. George Bills was a mattress manufacturer and a driving force in the RSPCA. The tradition is that the Bills bequeathed some 70,000 horse troughs which were used all over Australia.

In 1985 an MK11 anti-aircraft gun, of a type first produced in 1938, was donated by the Balmoral RSL. This gun was made in Canada by G.E. Co. in 1940 and was used in Darwin between 1942 and 1943.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.8.7 Building and maintaining roads

3.22 Lodging people

3.23 Catering for tourists

Theme 8: Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.1 Organising recreation

8.1.13 Developing public parks and gardens

8.8 Remembering the fallen

CONDITION:

Fair

INTEGRITY:

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none as the former hotel site

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Apex Park is located at the junction of Stirling and Glendinning Streets in the centre of the township of Balmoral. It is the site of the earliest Hotel in Balmoral, dating from 1851. This Hotel was known as the Squatter's Arms Hotel (also known as Davidson's Hotel and Lang's Hotel). The Apex park has several important objects within it, including the Billis water trough to the far north of the site and the MK11 anti-aircraft gun located on the east of the site facing Stirling Street.

How is it significant?

The Apex Park, Balmoral is of social, archaeological and historical significance to the township of Balmoral and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Apex Park is of historical significance to the township of Balmoral as it was the site of the earliest and perhaps most important Hotel in Balmoral. It is historically significant for its associations with individuals such as Davidson and Lang who owned the Hotel at subsequent periods and were important local people. It has historical importance for its location at the junction of the two main roads which have intersected Balmoral from the 1840s, the roads to Adelaide and Hamilton. The objects within the Park are also historically important. The Billis Horse Trough is associated with the important philanthropist Billis who donated 70 000 horse troughs throughout Australia to improve the plight of horses in the street. On another level, Billis' horse troughs are historically important as a representative object of a past way of life where animals were the main method of transport.

The MK11 anti aircraft gun is historically important as a reminder of the part Australia and Australians played in World War Two. The gun is historically and socially important as it was donated to the community by the Returned Soldiers League as a reminder of those that served and fell in World War Two. The fact that this gun was used to defend Australia when under attack in 1942-1943 makes the gun more important as a part of our history.

The Apex Park is of archaeological significance for any physical fabric which may remain of the former Hotel.

The Apex Park is important socially as it demonstrates members of a community working together for a common good.

COMPARISON:

437 Memorial Park and Hall, Barker Street, Cavendish
096 Glenthompson War Memorial, Glenelg Highway, Glenthompson

ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

26-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
Alexander Sutherland, ed.	Victoria and Its Metropolis, Vol. 2A	1888	64

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Department of Crown Lands and Survey	The Township of Balmoral and Suburban Allotments in the County of Dundas	1866
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Balmoral Parish of Balmoral County Dundas	1958
Jack Rogers	Balmoral	1967
Lyall Harris with the Balmoral Historical Society	Welcome Back to Balmoral	1975 17
Thomas Ham	A Map of Australia Felix - compiled and carefully revised from the Colonial Government Surveys, Crown Lands Commissioners & Explorers Maps, Private Surveys etc.	1847