HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: STANMORE HOMESTEAD

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Harrow-Balmoral Road BALMORAL

STUDY NUMBER: 181   **HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

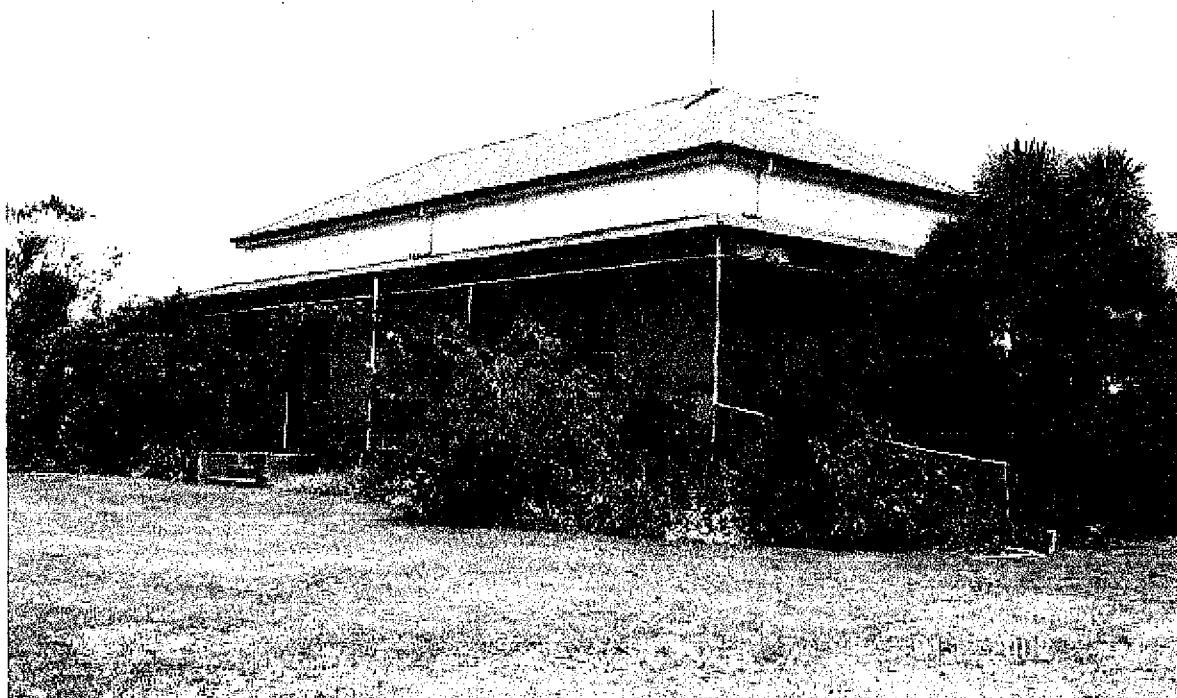**PRECINCT:** Balmoral

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 16   **SECTION:** 22   **PARISH:** PARISH OF KONGBOOL

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 388 A15; VicRoads 54 F5; located on the south side of the Harrow-Balmoral Road, about one kilometre west of the township of Balmoral overlooking Mather's Creek towards the township.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local

Stanmore, Harrow-Balmoral Road, Balmoral façade

Image Date: 01/12/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

1. All of the house and the garden.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Stanmore is a large, single storey, symmetrical, rendered brick house, built in a simple version of the Italianate style. It has a verandah, much altered, on three sides. The roof is low pitched, with shallow, undecorated eaves, and is covered in corrugated iron. The house has been extended at the rear and altered internally. There are important vestiges of the interior decoration including original graining and wallpapers. The garden appears to date from the 1960s.

HISTORY:

Stanmore was constructed by the widow of John George Robertson after his death in 1863. Robertson was a pastoralist and botanist. Born in Glasgow in 1803, he travelled to India as a naturalist in a scientific expedition in 1828. He then removed to Van Diemen's Land in 1831 where he managed the property 'Formosa' near Cressy in Tasmania for seven years. In 'Letters from Victorian Pioneers'(22) he states that he arrived in Van Diemen's Land "with one half crown and sixpence" and that he left with 3,000 pounds when he crossed to Portland Bay in 1840 with equipment costing him 2,481 pounds. He took up the squatting licenses of Wando Vale run, his principal residence, from March 1840 to May 1854, and the Koroite and Dundas runs from November 1843 to February 1845. While at Wando Vale, Robertson sent around 4,000 botanical specimens indigenous to the area to Kew Gardens in London. He retired and returned to Scotland in 1854 and died at Lanark in 1862.

His widow, Mary Robertson, came back to Australia to rejoin her family. She was the sister of William and John McConochie, who held the Konongwootong Creek and Spring Vale runs. One of Robertson's brothers-in-law owned Grassgunyah, a large property to the north-west of Balmoral, which reached to the town's boundary. Stanmore was built on Grassgunyah land, overlooking Mather's Creek towards the town. It is likely that the house was designed by an architect, but no name has yet been associated with its design. Mary Robertson died in 1884, and her sister lived on at Stanmore until 1889.

In 1901 the house and ten acres were sold to Mary Robertson's nephew. Basil McConochie Lyon was a successful local merchant who was also the post master at Balmoral for 26 years. However, by 1906 Basil and Isobel Lyon had moved to Myrniong near Coleraine, and the house was left empty for several years, falling into disrepair.

Joe and Mary (nee Lyon) Shilton came to Stanmore in 1918 and made some repairs. The property was bequeathed to the Presbyterian church in the following year. Dr Crawford Marshall and his family leased Stanmore from the church and opened a medical practice there. The next occupants were the Mutchs from Harrow, who shared the house with people named Perrits.

In March 1927 Percival Carmen and his large family came to Stanmore, and resided there until 1942. Following their departure, the house was again left vacant for several years, during which time it became badly derelict. Verandahs fell down, floors rotted, and joinery and doors were removed from the site.

Thomas Jasper bought the house from the Presbyterian church in 1953, and undertook basic repairs. By 1955 Norman Scarlett was the owner, and in 1968 Arthur and Betty Trotman purchased the property. Stanmore has remained in the possession of the Trotmans, who have restored the house to its present condition.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 4: Building settlements, towns and cities
4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia

Theme 8: Developing Australia's cultural life
8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

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8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

CONDITION:

The house is in good condition.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of interity externally. Interiors have lost some of their original decoration although some graining may survive and wallpapers have been painted over. Plan has been altered by the demolition of some internal walls.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?
Stanmore is a large single storey rendered brick house, with an attached verandah on three sides. The house was built in about 1865, using a simple version of the Italianate style. The house has suffered from periods of neglect, and has lost some of its original fabric. However, some important remnants of the original interior decoration survive. It has been extended and altered internally during the 20th century. The house has been sited on a rise overlooking Mathers Creek, with a view to the nearby town of Balmoral. The garden is a modern design.

How is it significant?
Stanmore is of historical and architectural significance to the township of Balmoral and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?
Stanmore is of historical significance for its association with important pioneering families of the area, in particular the Robertsons, McConochies, and Lyons, and for its long period of ownership by the Balmoral Presbyterian Church. Stanmore is of architectural significance as an example of a large mid-Victorian house, likely to have been designed by an architect, with reference to the Italianate style.

COMPARISON:

164 Grassgunyah, 61 Coleraine Road, Balmoral

ASSESSED BY: tfh   **ASSESSMENT DATE:**   28-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
Betty Trotman	Letter, February 2002	2002	
Gordon Forth, ed.	Biographical Dictionary of the Western District of Victoria	1998	133
H J Gibbney & Ann G Smith	A Biographical Register, 1788-1939, Vol 2	1987	219
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R.V. Billis and A.S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of the Port Phillip	1974	132
T F Bride and C E Sayers, eds.	Letters from Victorian Pioneers	1969	154-170