

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: UNITING CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Hamilton-Port Fairy Road BYADUK

STUDY NUMBER: 187

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: BYADUK WESLEYAN CHAPEL, BYADUK METHODIST CHURCH

PRECINCT: Byaduk

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 6 **SECTION:** 19 **PARISH:** PARISH OF BYADUK

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 473K20; VicRoads72 H9. Located on the east side of the Hamilton- Port Fairy Road

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Uniting Church and Sunday School, Hamilton - Port Fairy Road, Byaduk. Front elevation of Church

Image Date: 30/01/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings and all of the land including the original Wesleyan Chapel Reserve.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Byaduk Uniting Church and Sunday School are located on the east side of the Hamilton-Port Fairy Road, approximately 250 metres south of the intersection of the Byaduk-Penshurst Road. The 1864 church is constructed of bluestone with timber framed windows, and a corrugated iron roof. There two lancet windows on either side of the nave, with a Gothic arch in the west wall, on either side of the original entrance arch, are leadlight lancet windows with 20th century yellow tinted glass with a border of green glass. A brick porch was added to the front entrance in the 20th century, which contains a smaller version of the tinted lancet windows in the west facade.

The interior of the church is austere, with no decoration. The ceiling is plain, painted plaster. The painted plaster walls are unadorned except for two timber memorials, one being the Honour Roll. The wooden pulpit, which appears to be of 20th century origin, is modestly decorated with an arched frieze. The present seating is of a recent date.

The Sunday School, erected in 1899, is built of timber, with a brick chimney, and contains a number of decorative Federation era leadlight windows. A granite tablet has been placed in the footings to the left of the front doors. It reads 'Twentieth Century Sabbath School. This stone was laid by Mrs. Ward Oct 18th 1899.'

The grounds of the church contain two large Canary Island palms, and several shrubs.

HISTORY:

The Wesleyan Methodists introduced Methodism into the Port Phillip District in 1838. Joseph Townsend introduced a division of Methodism, the Wesleyan Methodist Association in 1850. This body was formed by Methodists secessionists in large industrial cities in northern England as a protest against the clericalism of Wesleyan Methodism. However, Methodism continued to be fractious in the turbulent years of early Victoria. Being non-hierarchical and at some distance from large centres of population, small groups of Methodists were generally able to come together, form a congregation (or assembly) and build a church (or chapel) without having to refer their actions back to a higher authority.

A preliminary survey of the subdivision of Allotment 6 of Section 19 of the Parish of Byaduk made in 1867 indicates that there was a 'Wesleyan Chapel' located just south of the stone bridge at Byaduk on the Hamilton Port-Fairy Road and in the south-east corner of its intersection with what is still an unmade road. It was located just outside what was to become the Parish of South Byaduk, now known as Byaduk.

It is not known when the present church was built but it is said to have been constructed during the ministry of the Rev E B Burns. Nor has any architect's name been associated with the design. It is interesting to note that the style adopted was Gothic revival which indicates a rejection of the first Methodists' anti-Papist preference for simple Classical chapels. The Gothic revival became an overwhelming fashion which few Protestant denominations could resist.

The driving force behind the congregation must have been a local, John Smith. He is described in the 'Early Story of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Victoria' at length and in glowing terms. He had prodigious physical strength and endurance. He was a fine sportsman and a quiet man in company but "on his knees a prevailing prince with God". He was the leader in Byaduk for many years, services being held in his home prior to the chapel being built. "A strong leaven of vital godliness pervaded the village, and from this place sounded out the word of God." Smith owned two allotments on the hill to the east of the village, being 14 and 17, of Section 2. He also owned land near Yulecart which he gave (or perhaps sold) to the Methodists for the construction of the Muddy Creek

It may be that the 'chapel' indicated on the early plan was replaced by the present Gothic church and that it was

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designed within the more rigorous Classical stream.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 8: Developing Australia's cultural life

8.6 Worshipping

8.6.1 Worshipping together

8.6.4 Making places for worship

CONDITION:

The condition of the church and school are excellent.

INTEGRITY:

Good degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The 1864 Uniting Church is constructed of bluestone with timber framed windows, and a corrugated iron roof. The interior of the church is austere, with no decoration. The Sunday School, erected in 1899, is built of timber, with a brick chimney, and contains a number of decorative Federation era leadlight windows. The Church was erected on land donated by Mr. William Holcombe, and the first services were conducted by the Rev J B Smith who travelled from Hamilton. No architect or builder has been associated with the design of the church or the Sunday school. The church and the Sunday school are in excellent condition and retain a high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The Byaduk Uniting Church and Sunday School is of architectural and historical and social significance to the township of Byaduk.

Why is it significant?

The Byaduk Uniting Church and Sunday School are of historical and social significance for the association they have with the establishment of the Wesleyan and later Uniting church in the area, and for its long association with both religious and secular education in Byaduk. It is of further historical significance for its associations with the important early Wesleyan Leader, John Smith. Of further social significance is the function which the church has served as a communal worship and meeting place for over 100 years. The Church, in particular, is of architectural significance for its used of Gothic revival style in a Wesleyan church. The use of this style indicates a rejection of the first Methodists' anti-Papist preference for simple Classical chapels. The Gothic revival became an overwhelming fashion which few Protestant denomination could resist, illustrating an important part of the history of church architecture in Australia.

COMPARISON:

166 Muddy Creek Memorial Church, Church Road, Yulecart

066 Zion Lutheran Church, Old Crusher Road, Byaduk

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:

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Author	Title	Year	Page
Donald, Budge, and , Lloyd, Jenkins	Dundas Shire Centenary, 1863-1963	1963	75-6
Miles Lewis ed.,	Victorian Churches, Their origins, their story and their architecture	1991	14-16
W. L. Blamires, and John B Smith	The Early Story of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Victoria	1986	265ff