

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** HOLMES FLOUR MILL (FORMER)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Penshurst-Byaduk Road BYADUK

**STUDY NUMBER:** 191

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

**PRECINCT:** Byaduk

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** 4      **SECTION:** 2      **PARISH:** PARISH OF BYADUK

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 437K C2; VicRoads 72H9; located on the Penshurst - Byaduk Road over Scott's Creek.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Heritage Inventory



Holmes Flour Mill and Bakery (former), Byaduk

**Image Date:** 30/01/2002

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the surviving below and above ground fabric and all of allotment 4, Section 2 in the Township of Byaduk.

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** HOLMES FLOUR MILL (FORMER)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Penshurst-Byaduk Road BYADUK

**STUDY NUMBER:** 191

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The former mill was located on land fronting the north side of Byaduk-Penshurst Road, about 400 metres east of the intersection of the Hamilton-Port Fairy Road. The site is about 100 metres north of Scotts Creek, on rising land, but below the steep escarpment which is such a dominant feature of the Byaduk landscape. The bluestone footings of some walls survive, together with small amounts of weathered iron and timber. Several large piles of bluestone rubble are located on the site.

At the top of the escarpment, above the mill site, the bluestone footings of a small building are visible. These are believed to be the remnants of Holmes bakery, which was located on the hill above the mill.

A number of mature trees remain on the site, including several large specimens of Lombardy poplar and a row of hawthorns. These trees are visible in early photographs of the mill.

## **HISTORY:**

Peter Learmonth purchased Allotments 4 to 7, 9 and 10 of Section 2, Township of Byaduk, by on 12th February 1867. Learmonth had been well established as a flour miller at Grange Burn, near Hamilton since 1859, and owned mills at Sandford and Penshurst also.

Holmes Mill was not the only flour mill in Byaduk. At least a year before, soon after the land was sold by the crown in February 1867, a Mr Walter had constructed his. The Spectator described it as "A substantially framed timber erection of three stories, in which the machinery has been fixed in place. It is proposed to increase the number of stories as the wants of the district demand. The mill is to be driven by water from the never failing stream known as Scotts' {sic}, on which it is situated, about a mile from the Post Office, on the Belfast Road. The race is three hundred yards long and it has been blasted out of solid rock in places. Fifteen feet of fall has been obtained, and workmen are busy with the water-wheel an over-shot. The owner, Mr Walter, expected to make an early start at the Mill."

The memoir of Peter Fraser (Black, 1994) records that the Byaduk (known as Holmes) Flour Mill was built by Peter Learmonth with George Holmes as manager and miller. The mill prospered until about 1893 when it closed due to a downturn in wheat production in the area. Holmes had worked previously in a flour mill at Port Fairy after landing in Victoria from Manchester, England. Then he managed Learmonth's Mill at Hamilton until the Byaduk mill was built in 1867. He died about 1900. For many years, Byaduk flour was widely known. Port Fairy, Warrnambool and Portland stores were supplied and any surplus flour was forwarded to Melbourne.

The Holmes flour mill used huge stone grinders to process the grain. When roller mills were introduced, the production of wheat in the district had declined, making it uneconomic for the owners of the mill to install the new technology. In the early 20th century the mill was dismantled and the fittings sold, while the building stood vacant (Danaher).

The three storey bluestone mill, with its tall chimney, was the largest structure in Byaduk, and dominated the landscape until its demolition in the 1950s. Some of the dressed bluestone blocks were sold by Mr Tom Power to construct the porch of St Malachy's Catholic Church, Macarthur.

The Holmes family built the first bakery in Byaduk on the hill above the flour mill, but in later years the bakery was conducted from Mr F Holmes' home, which included a bakehouse and shop (Rentsch).

In the early 1950s a number of district residents attended a series of working bees to construct the J A

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** HOLMES FLOUR MILL (FORMER)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Penshurst-Byaduk Road BYADUK

**STUDY NUMBER:** 191

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

Christie Oval, on land near the old mill site. A large quantity of stones were removed, and a stone boundary fence was demolished, to make way for the oval. [It is possible that the stone rubble on the mill site may have come from these works in the 1950s.]

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

Theme 3 Developing Local, Regional and national Economies

3.4 Utilizing natural resources

3.4.4 Tapping natural energy sources

3.12 Feeding People

3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity

## **CONDITION:**

High potential for archaeological survey.

## **INTEGRITY:**

Very low degree of integrity

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

Holmes Flour Mill was located on land fronting the north side of Byaduk-Penshurst Road, about 100 metres north of Scott's Creek. The site of the former mill is identified by remaining bluestone footings of some walls survive, together with small amounts of weathered iron and timber. Bluestone footings of a small building are visible above the mill ruins, believed to be the remnants of Holmes bakery. There are also a number of remnant plantings. Peter Learmonth (manager) and George Holmes (miller) built the mill in 1868 and it operated successfully until about 1893 when it closed due to a downturn in wheat production in the area. The Mill was known as Holmes Flour Mill after the flour miller. When roller mills were introduced, the production of wheat in the district had declined, making it uneconomic for the owners of the mill to install the new technology. In the early 20th century the mill was dismantled and the fittings sold, while the building stood vacant.

The three storey bluestone mill, with its tall chimney, was the largest structure in Byaduk, and dominated the landscape until its demolition in the 1950s. Some of the dressed bluestone blocks were sold by Mr. Tom Power to construct the porch of St Malachy's Catholic Church, Macarthur. There are only ruins remaining of the mill.

How is it significant?

The former Holmes Flour Mill and bakery site is of historical significance to the township of Byaduk and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The site of the former Holmes Flour Mill is of historical significance as it provides a physical representation of a form of industry which was once an important part of the Byaduk district economy. Holmes flour mill was created as a response to the increasing number of selectors who were growing wheat for flour production in the Hamilton district in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Of further historical interest is the size of the flour mill, considering the relatively short period in which it operated (about thirty years), yet it dominated the township of Byaduk, being the largest most substantial building in or around the town for over ninety years. The former Holmes flour mill provides an understanding of a previous way of life, and of an industry which is no longer evident in the area.

## **COMPARISON:**

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** HOLMES FLOUR MILL (FORMER)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Penshurst-Byaduk Road BYADUK

**STUDY NUMBER:** 191

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

232 Prestonholme, Strathkellar Rd, Strathkellar

**ASSESSED BY:** mgt

**ASSESSMENT DATE:**

30/01/2002

**EXISTING LISTINGS:**

**HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Include in VHR**  **Include in RNE**  **Include in Local Planning Scheme**

**No Recommendations for Inclusions**

**REFERENCES:**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Page</b>
Donald Budge and Lloyd Jenkins	Dundas Shire Centenary, 1863-1963	1963	76
Gordon Rentsch	Back to Byaduk School Centenary 1872-1972	1972	
Ian Black (ed.)	Early Byaduk Settlers	1994	
J. V. Danaher	Byaduk	1922	
Lewis and Peggy Jones	The Flour Mills of Victoria 1840-1990, An Historical Record	1990	var.