

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: STATE SCHOOL NO. 1978

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Monroe Street BRANXHOLME

STUDY NUMBER: 206

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: Branholme

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

PARISH: PARISH OF BRANXHOLME

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 473J B-11; VicRoads 72 E7;

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



State School No. 1978, Monroe Street, Branholme.

Image Date: 31/01/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

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

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The school is a single storey asymmetrical building, loosely Collegiate Gothic in style and standard in its scale, form and detailing. The walls are constructed of a dark brown brick, probably fired locally, which are similar to those used in other buildings in and around Branhholme, such as Bassett Homestead. The steeply pitched roof is corrugated iron. There is a chimney beside the entrance. The large timber window in the east wall of the school is probably a later alteration. There is a plaque with the school's number in the main gable with an oeil de boeuf ventilator above it and a similar detail in the transverse gable. Various additions have been made and late twentieth century portable classrooms have been added at the rear.

HISTORY:

The first school at Branhholme started as Common School No. 63. It was built in 1856 on the Church of England Reserve, which is allotment 4 of section 9 of the township. In 1860 the building was considered to be too small for the number of pupils and the congregation of the church services held in it. A subscription list was opened to build a larger school. The building was enlarged over several years until it was closed in 1877. The old school building became known as the Parish Room and it was removed in 1891.

The Minister of Public Instruction reserved one acre and two roods in Branhholme Township in July 1873 for state school purposes. This appears to have been the balance of the land, allotments 1, 2 and 3 in section 9. The Public Works Department almost certainly designed the building. In May 1877, the tender of G. and J. Foster of Branhholme was accepted for the erection of a state school at Branhholme at a cost 658 pounds. Isaac Foster and his sons were stonemasons and Foster Brothers were also the town's undertakers. This was the brick building which has served as the school ever since. The bricks were probably made in Branhholme at the Wiltshire Brothers kiln. The building was opened in December 1877. Mr. J. R. Remfrey was the first teacher and he continued for 26 years until he transferred to Geelong in 1891. (There was Remfrey family living at Heywood and another at Chetwynd near Harrow.)

The school has been extended and altered over the years. There was another state school at Branhholme South, or Condah, No. 906, which opened in 1876 and closed in 1913.

There have been several notable pupils. Gordon Fletcher, a son of John Fletcher of Ardachy joined the railways and rose to become a Railways Commissioner. Mr Stan Reid became a Melbourne surgeon and was awarded the OBE. John McLean was awarded the Military Medal for bravery.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 6 Educating
6.2 Establishing schools
6.5 Educating people in remote places

CONDITION:

Good

INTEGRITY:

Good degree of integrity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Branhholme Primary School (State School No. 1978) is a collection of buildings situated on a large site with frontages to both Monroe and Cox Streets. The school is the second site and the second school building. Education began at Branhholme in 1856 with Common School No. 63 built adjacent to the present building. It was superseded by the present building in 1877. The school, which is standard in its scale, form and detailing, was almost certainly designed by the Public Works Department. Local building contractors, Foster Brothers,

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built it. It has been altered and extended over the years, particularly after the Second World War under the policy of consolidation. A number of significant items are displayed in the entrance such as plaques and commemorative items, including Rolls of Honour.

How is it significant?

The Branhholme Primary School (State School No. 1978) is of historic, cultural and architectural significance to the township of Coleraine and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

State School No. 1978 is of historic significance as the expression of the early community's struggle for education, and for its association with over 150 years of schooling in the area. It is of cultural significance as a focus for the community. The school is of architectural significance for its range of traditional classroom forms and outbuildings such as the shelter shed.

COMPARISON:

089 National School, cnr Henty and Church Sts, Coleraine
195 State School No. 1418, Knight's Road, Byaduk North

ASSESSED BY: AEN

ASSESSMENT DATE:

16-Dec-03

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
L J Blake, ed.	Vision and Realisation , Vol 2	1973	17, 34, 65
Walter, Agnes V.	Branxholme 1843-1973	1973	