

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: ENGLEFIELD SAWMILL HUT (AND SCHOOL SITE (FORMER))

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Coleraine-Balmoral Road BALMORAL

STUDY NUMBER: 226

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

PARISH: PARISH OF PAWBYMBYR

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 473 A14; VicRoads 72 F6; located in Gorries Road in the north-west corner of its intersection with Chrome Road

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Englefield Sawmill Hut Balmoral

Image Date: 11/01/03

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the hut and all of the land within 10m of the edge of the hut. A further area of 50m radius beyond this should be viewed as a Heritage Inventory Site.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The hut is located some distance from the roadside amongst regrowth trees. It is a single roomed timber building with a skillion lean-to addition in timber on the south side and a large timber and iron chimney on the east side. The walls are made from sawmill off-cuts and the roof is corrugated iron. There is a primitive floor. Nothing of the former school, which was located at some distance from the hut, remains above ground.

HISTORY:

The squatting run, Englefield, dating from 1841, was one of the earliest established in the area (B &K, 25, 205). It was purchased by the state government and sold for Closer Settlement in the early twentieth century (Rogers, 15). About the same time, the Hamilton to Horsham railway line via Cavendish, Toolondo, Balmoral and Kanagulk was finally opened with a siding established at Englefield. This increased the population of settlers with young families who required a school. In 1926, William Philip commented that 'from Hamilton to Harrow, a distance of 60 miles, instead of the large pastoral holdings which a few years ago occupied the whole of his territory, the traveller now passes through small holdings devoted to mixed farming' (Rogers, 15). The school's correspondent noted in 1928 that 'the first move toward establishing a school at Englefield was made at a meeting held at the Post Office, Englefield, when the following were present - Mr. Barfield, Mr. and Mrs. A. Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. P. Hobbs and Mr. Nicholls' (Rogers, 44). It was established as S.S. No. 4292 in 1926 in a room leased from the Camerons, who were parents as well as members of the committee, and run on a part time basis sharing with a small school at Gringegalga, S.S. No. 4349 (Blake). The committee resolved to erect a new school on land adjacent to the Englefield railway siding. Because the land was owned by the Closer Settlement Board, the Education Department was asked to assist in procuring it and also to contribute to the cost of the school building. The Department declined but offered five years' rent. By October 1930, a combined hall and school were erected by voluntary labour on the site adjacent to the railway siding. The timber for the building was cut by the Western Sawmill Co. from logs provided by some parents of pupils and hauled by others. The sawmilling expenses were paid by supplying a greater number of red gum logs than required to cut the school timber.

Closer settlement also prompted the clearing of land for more intensive grazing and agriculture providing wood for sawmills. Timber was an important source of income for settlers who needed an immediate cash flow. There were already sawmills in the general area, ephemeral establishments which capitalised on the clearing of good timber. These became more permanent with the advent of increasingly heavy machinery. The sawmills produced timber sleepers for the railways and the railways could carry the sawmills' other products to their markets.

According to W. J. Rogers, two separate mills worked at Englefield railway siding. One was owned and run by Bosch and Evans, the other was owned by the Western Sawmilling Co. and managed by Mr. J. Nicholls. (Mr. Francis H. Nicholls was the second school correspondent.) This mill was later owned by J. Lilburn who eventually shifted it to the Gringe sheep wash for a year or two (Rogers, 49). The population was such that a boarding house was built within the mill yard conducted as a successful enterprise for a number of years, it was however, no Grand Hotel.

It is not known when the surviving hut was built, but it probably dates from the early 1920s. Its primitive form of construction, using off cuts from the sawmill rather like slab construction, and its impoverished living conditions suggest the hard times of the Depression. The Chief Engineer was Victor Russell in the early 1920s, and the Manager may have been a Mr. Kennett. The other workers are likely to have been itinerants working for the sawmills. It is significant that the hut was built on the road reserve rather than on private land.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

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Theme 3 Developing Local, Regional and National Economies

3.4 Utilising natural resources

3.4.4 Making forests into a saleable resource

Theme 5: Working

5.2.1 Timber getting (sawmills, tramway camps etc)

Theme 6 Educating

6.2 Establishing schools

6.5 Educating people in remote places

CONDITION:

Nothing remains above ground of the sawmills or the school and those sites may have little archaeological potential. The sawmill hut is in a poor condition.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Englefield Sawmill Hut and associated former sawmill and school sites, are located around the Coleraine-Balmoral and Englefield Roads intersection about 8.0kms south of Balmoral. The settlement at Englefield dates from the early 1920s when the surrounding land was subdivided for Closer Settlement, the Hamilton to Horsham railway was opened and sawmills were located near the siding. The sawmills were ephemeral and eventually moved on but the management took an keen interest in their children's education. A small school was established in 1926 and by 1930 a timber schoolroom cum public hall was built by volunteer labour using local materials. It became State School No. 4292 and it was typical of its type, both in form and in history. The school closed in 1945 under the policy of consolidation and the building was removed. At some early stage, the hut was built on the roadside. It is vernacular in its form, scale, detailing and use of materials, specifically off cuts from the sawmills and is a very late example of an early tradition. Nothing is known of its occupants who are likely to have been itinerants. The hut remains significantly intact but in poor condition. It is all that remains of the former sawmilling industry of Englefield.

How is it significant?

The Englefield Sawmill Hut and associated former sawmill and school sites are of historical and architectural significance to the community of Balmoral and to the shire of southern Grampians.

Why is it significant?

The Englefield Sawmill Hut and associated former sawmill and school sites are of historical significance as markers of important changes in the occupation and use of the area and a passed way of life. The Englefield Sawmill Hut is of architectural significance as a very late example of the early vernacular tradition of hut building and as a rare surviving example of housing for itinerant workers.

COMPARISON:

314 Hynes Woolshed and Outbuildings, Hynes Road, Glenisla

172 Timber Kiln and Sawmill Site, Station Street, Balmoral

0323 Green Creek Road, Sawmill, Green Creek Road and Glenelg River Road, Victoria Valley,

0454 Rowe's Sawmill site, off Mill Lane, Whoolpoor

ASSESSED BY: tfh & mgt

ASSESSMENT DATE:

11/01/2003

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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
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	166
W. J. Rogers	History of Balmoral	2003	var.
William Philip [of 'Braeside']	'Hamilton District' in Denney's Lascelles Annual	1926	