

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** BURNBRAE HOMESTEAD

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Hamilton Highway Burn Brae Lane PENSURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 349

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

**PRECINCT:** outside

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** 5      **SECTION:** 3      **PARISH:** PARISH OF PURDEET

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 475 C39; VicRoads 73 G8; located on the south side of the Hamilton Highway 7.0kms east of Penshurst and opposite the intersection with the North Gums Road.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Burnbrae Hamilton Hwy, Penshurst, façade

**Image Date:** 26/05/02

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the exterior of the house, all of the outbuildings, all of the garden and all of the land within a 25m radius of any edge of the main house.

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** BURNBRAE HOMESTEAD

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Hamilton Highway Burn Brae Lane PENSHURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 349

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

Burnbrae is now a picturesquely asymmetrical, single-storey bluestone house. The many additions, the last in timber, which have been made to it up to 1900 were deliberately rambling with brakes and gables increasing the complexity of the roof and verandahs and bay windows heightening the complexity of the plan. The house appears to have started with a simple small stone cottage at the western end. This was extended to the east in two stages, the last being framed in timber with rounded-edge weatherboards at dado level and roughcast render on lathes above. The overall style is now a modified version of the Domestic Queen Anne. The style is evoked by the use of specific materials and particularly in the projecting half-timbered gables supported on small timber brackets. The gables are faced with roughcast stucco which matches the texture of the walls below. The existing stone walls may have been rendered only in the last 1900 phase. Some door and window reveals survive as finely dressed bluestone. The timber verandah unites the façade with its shallow segmental arches, perforated in the spandrils and supported on simple stilted timber brackets. The verandah floor is laid in ochre and terracotta encaustic tiles. All the roofs are painted corrugated iron except for the sheet iron over the segmental bay window. The bay windows have nine small square panes in their upper sashes and heavy rendered sills. The windows in the 1900 addition have twelve small panes in their upper sashes. The bay windows have wide eaves. The awning over the window in the eastern most wing is very wide and supported on large perforated timber brackets. The several doors opening onto the verandah are conventionally Victorian in style.

The rear of the house is utilitarian and also irregular from the various additions. Interestingly, there are more doors than usual, the result of the additions. One of the earliest gables has been refaced in half-timbering and roughcast render. At the rear there are several standard domestic outbuildings including a two room weatherboard building with a chimney possibly used as accommodation, a meat house with a double roof, another weatherboard building with a chimney possible a converted coachhouse and stable, and a dunny.

The garden is extensive and mature, apparently dating mostly from 1900, and is dominated by Monterey Cypresses, *Cupressus macrocarpa*. Conventional smaller shrubs and trees are planed in a late gardenesque style. The winding drive has two entrances, passes across the façade and is the garden's major feature. A large cleared area to the west of the house may have been used for sport such as tennis or croquet. The garden is surrounded by a substantial dry stone wall. Some distance from the house and beyond the garden are the timber and iron woolshed and the timber men's quarters. The date of construction of the woolshed is not certain but it does not appear to be particularly early. The latter has an all-embracing roof and a timber verandah on three sides. It appears to date from 1900.

## **HISTORY:**

The land on which Burnbrae stands was first taken up in 1839 by John Cox (1813-1853) as part of the Mount Rouse pastoral run (B&K, 51). John Cox was the son of James Cox of Clarendon near Evandale on the River Nile. Cox had whaling and mercantile interests at Port Fairy prior to arriving in the area (*ibid.*). He was ejected from the Mount Rouse run in April 1842, as the land was required to form an Aboriginal Protectorate under the Chief Protector of Aborigines, George Augustus Robinson. The buildings of the Protectorate were located in a compound at the bottom of Mount Rouse, near the later intersection of Cox and Martin Streets in Peshurst. The land associated with the Protectorate however was extensive, nominally 100 square miles and Robinson was responsible for Aborigines throughout the Western District.

The land was selected by a J. Sharrock in 1857 (Department of Lands and Survey, 1955). It may be that this was Joseph Sharrock, or his son James Sharrock. Joseph Sharrock was a well respected early resident of Peshurst. He sat on the first Mount Rouse Roads Board in 1860 and was also one of the first Mount Rouse

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** BURNBRAE HOMESTEAD

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Hamilton Highway Burn Brae Lane PENSHURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 349

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

Shire Councillors. Joseph Sharrock married Mary Annar Faulkner and, with their four children, they emigrated to Australia in 1848. The family settled in Geelong, where Joseph worked as a carpenter. After several moves, including a successful trip to the Goldfields, the Sharrock family settled in Peshurst, taking up land and building a homestead called Lovely Banks.

One of their sons was James Sharrock who may have taken up the land. James married Mary Porter in 1858 and they had their first child, Aner Elizabeth in August the following year. James and Mary went on to have 11 children altogether, 6 boys and 5 girls. Two of the children did not live to adulthood. It is possible that James and Mary built a residence on the land in the late 1850s or early 1860s which may be the basis of the current homestead but this seems unlikely. It appears that, although their first child was born at Peshurst, James and Mary soon moved to the Hawkesdale area, where their next five children were born (VPI). The Shire of Mount Rouse rates books shows that Mary still held land at Mount Rouse in 1870.

Much of the present bluestone homestead was built by the Gubbins family in 1880. The architect is thought to have been William Brazenor, who arrived in Australia from England in 1851. In 1884, another architect, John Montgomery called tenders for "Bluestone additions to residence, Burnbrae, Peshurst for Jas. Alexander, Esq." in the Warrnambool Standard (Tonkin, 1971), indicating that James Alexander, formerly of Woodhouse had purchased the land either in that year or earlier. James Alexander was a member of the first Shire of Mount Rouse Council in 1864, and an important local land holder. Only six years later, in 1900, further extensions were made, including the addition of a ballroom. The architect for these additions was Percy Richards, and the extensions were said to have cost 25 000 pounds (Phil, pers. comm., 2004).

In 1912, Sir John Murray, a Victorian State politician took possession of Burnbrae, and held it for five years, until the McWhae family purchased the property in 1917 (Phil, pers. comm., 2004) The McWhae family were from England. Sir John McWhae was a Victorian Agent General in London. "A notice in the Hamilton Spectator on August 8 1917, describing the sale of Burnbrae to McWhae, gives his address as Collins House, Melbourne, while rate books of the Mt. Rouse Shire Council give his home address as Kooyong. McWhae is said to have made only fleeting visits to Burnbrae. This is contradicted by the above Spectator article, by a photograph and calendar inscription from 1922, according to which McWhae's relations lived at Burnbrae from 1919, and by a private letter, stating that "he had a family of three, Hector, Kenneth, and Margaret". "Several older Peshurst people have fond memories of going to balls there, just after WW I." (Hamilton Spectator, July 12, 1983)." (Phil, pers. comm., 2004).

"Burnbrae was sold to the Krugers in 1926 according to one source, but 1929 according to Charles Kruger. During World War II, there were three Kruger families living in the house, which is said to be 60 squares (in the old scale; a square being 10x10feet). It was partitioned, but the partitioning was subsequently successfully removed. Ida Kruger lived at Burnbrae, and also her son Dick Wally Smith. At the end of the war, Charles Kruger built "Newbrae" some 300m to the West, along Hamilton Highway. Another brother built "Burnbrae Corriedales" 2km to the East, likewise at Hamilton Highway." (Phil, pers. comm., 2004). The Kruger family were descended from German Lutherans who had migrated to the area east of Hamilton in the 1850s.

"In the early 1980s, Andrew and Jane McPherson bought the property and raised a family of three children in the home, before taking possession of the family farm. The McPhersons started extensive renovations." (Phil, pers. comm., 2004)

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

- Theme 3. Developing local, regional and national economies
- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 3.5.1 Grazing stock

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** BURNBRAE HOMESTEAD

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Hamilton Highway Burn Brae Lane PENSURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 349

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

Theme 5 Working

5.8 Working on the land

**CONDITION:**

The whole complex is in very good condition except for the woolshed and men's quarters which are in poor condition.

**INTEGRITY:**

Excellent degree of integrity for the whole complex including the garden to the c.1900 period.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

Burnbrae Homestead complex, located on the south side of the Hamilton Highway 7.0kms east of Penshurst, dates from at least 1880. It appears to have begun as a small stone house which has been added to twice, in 1886 and 1900, to create a large and deliberately picturesque rambling house in a modified Domestic Queen Anne style. Three architects have been associated with its development: William Brazenor in 1880, John Montgomery in 1884, and Percy Richards in 1900. The first owners were the Gubbins family. The next was a pastoralist, James Alexander formerly of nearby Woodhouse who was responsible for the important first and second additions. Woodhouse Homestead was also substantially remodelled about 1900 and both Burnbrae and Woodhouse can be compared with the present Blackwood Homestead, designed and built in early 1890s, and one of the most sophisticated examples of the style in Victoria. The third owner, from 1912 was Sir John Murray MP. The owner from 1917 was Sir John McWhae, Victoria's Agent General in London. By 1929, he had sold to a local family, the Krugers who occupied Burnbrae until the early 1980s. Members of the Kruger family built the neighbouring houses. The whole of the homestead complex is intact to its 1900 period and remains in very good condition except for the woolshed and men's quarters. The house is complemented by its extensive garden and broader landscaping, also dating from 1900.

How is it significant?

Burnbrae Homestead complex is of historical and architectural significance to the community of Penshurst and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

---

Why is it significant?

Burnbrae Homestead complex is of historical significance for its sequence of owners, including: the Gubbins family who began the complex; pastoralist, James Alexander in his retirement from Woodhouse; Sir John Murray MP and was Sir John McWhae, Victoria's Agent General. The next major ownership by the Kruger family reflects the success of the German Lutheran migrants to the area east of Hamilton and conditions for them during the Second World War.

Burnbrae Homestead complex is of architectural significance for its final appearance in 1900, the result of its modification by additions, designed by the architects John Montgomery in 1886 and Percy Richards in 1900. Its modified Domestic Queen Anne style provides a valuable comparison with the sophistication of the final Blackwood Homestead, recently built, and the contemporary modifications to Woodhouse Homestead. This is complemented by the range of outbuildings and working buildings associated with Burnbrae and its garden setting.

**COMPARISON:**

023 Murndal Homestead, Mundal Rd, Wannan

092 Blackwood Homestead, Blackwood-Penshurst Road, Penshurst

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** BURNBRAE HOMESTEAD

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Hamilton Highway Burn Brae Lane PENSHURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 349

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

117 Nareen Homestead Complex, Coleraine-Nareen Rd, Nareen  
331 Lovatdale Homestead Complex, Lovatdale Road, Glenthompson  
334 Sleat Bank Homestead, Murndal Road, Yulecart  
338 Woodhouse Homestead Complex, Woodhouse Road, Woodhouse

**ASSESSED BY:** TFH & MGT

**ASSESSMENT DATE:** 26/05/2002

## 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
Department of Justice Victoria	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888	2001	
Department of Lands and Survey	Parish of Pendeet East, County of Villiers	1939	
Eric Phil	Personal Communication - email February, 2004	2004	
Mount Rouse Shire Council	Shire of Mount Rouse, In the Centre of the Fertile Western District of Victoria: Centenary Celebrated	1966	
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	var.
Ray Tonkin	Tender and Other Notices from the Warrnambool Standard	1971	not numbered