

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** KOROITE HOMESTEAD (ORIGINAL SITE) & BUVELOT TREE

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** off Glenelg Highway COLERAINE

**STUDY NUMBER:** 356

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**PRECINCT:** outside

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** no      **SECTION:** no      **PARISH:** PARISH OF KONONG WOOTONG  
                  number                    number

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 430J E4; VicRoads 288 A9; located on the bank of Bryan's (Koroite) Creek immediately east of the junction with Konong Wootong Creek about 1.75 km west of Henty Street, Coleraine.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** H.I & SLO



Looking west over the surviving elements of the scene depicted in Louis Buvelot's 1871 painting 'Waterpool a

**Image Date:** 26/03/03

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

The Heritage Inventory Site should be: To the extent of: 1. All the original homestead site and 10,000 square metres surrounding it. This includes all un-numbered sections to the south of Showgrounds Reserve on the Parish of Konong Wootong Plans.

The Significant Landscape Overlay should cover: To the extent of: The two Eucalyptus camaldulensis

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## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The site of the former Koroite Homestead and Buvelot Tree lies in a paddock to the south of the Coleraine Showgrounds, on the northern bank of Bryant's Creek. The former homestead site is located approximately 1.75km from Henty Street in Coleraine and .45km north of the Lower Hilgay Road. The super-imposition of the 1855 Plan and the 1872 Plan indicates that the homestead was on or just outside the bottom south-west boundary of the Showgrounds Reserve.

There is no physical fabric above ground to show where the once extensive homestead complex was located, but much archeological potential may exist below ground. The complex as shown in a Plan of Suburban Lands adjoining the Township of Coleraine County of Dundas, dated 1855 includes a homestead and large garden, located a short distance to the north of Koroite (Bryans) Creek. To the north west of this there is a woolshed, located on a track from Coleraine and a sheepwash to the west of the homestead on a swollen part of the creek. The homestead is surrounded by several ponds, or billabongs of water, one of which was immortalised by Louis Buvelot in his painting "Waterpool at Coleraine" which was one of a series of images painted by the artist in the early 1870s in Coleraine and the surrounding area.

The waterpool and one of the Eucalyptus camaldulensis (River Red Gum) depicted on the north side of the pool in the painting still survives, however, they have been damaged over time by grazing practices and stock pressure. Two large River Red Gums on the south side of the pool, which were included only for their contributory foliage in the painting have died several decades ago. Climatic conditions and grazing practices have also changed the waterpool. It is no longer wide but is now a small waterpool which has almost totally dried up. In the painting, the waterpool stretches from the trees on one side to the trees on the other (which have since died). This would be a distance of about 15 metres. The current pool is only about 5 metres across although permanent watermarks on the trees indicate that it has been much larger in previous times.

## HISTORY:

Abraham Louis (Louis) Buvelot is described as being the 'Grandfather of Australian Art' (McCulloch, 108). He arrived in Australia from Switzerland in 1865 at the age of 51, after being ordered to emigrate to a warmer climate for reasons of poor health. Although he had enjoyed a very successful career as a painter in Europe and South America, he set up a photography shop in Melbourne where he was discovered by the art critic for the Argus, James Smith (ibid., 108). Buvelot's painting was typical of the landscapes produced in the European style, and he is credited with being the main source of inspiration to the founders of the Heidelberg School (ibid.).

There is some dispute regarding the first occupant of the land which came to be known as Koroite Run (P.B 299). The Coleraine Centenary Celebrations (Centenary Celebrations Committee, 5) state the land was originally taken up by John Bryant while he was accompanying his brothers-in-law (the Henty's) on their second trip to Muntham. The booklet goes on to describe how Bryant took up a small station on the creek to the east, called by the natives "Coroit", and the name was later changed to "Koroite". The Coleraine Centenary Celebrations booklet was published in 1939, and it refers to the remains of the original Koroite Homestead site being marked by some old fruit trees which Bryant planted, on the north bank of the creek, just south of the showgrounds. It is almost certain that the trees which are referred were the last remaining evidence of the Koroite Homestead Complex, although there is no evidence to suggest that trees which currently exist in this location are in any way associated with the original Koroite Homestead Complex.

According to historical documentation regarding pastoral ownership and pre-emptive rights, the archaeological site of the former Koroite Homestead and the trees and waterhole depicted by Louis Buvelot was first occupied by the Whyte Brothers, as part of the very large Konongwootong Run. When

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Konongwootong was broken into smaller runs in July 1845, one of the brothers (C. J Whyte) took ownership of 8000 acres of land and named it Korite (PB 299). The land was Gazetted on 23rd February 1849, although it had been licensed 12 months prior (Spreadborough, 1983). C.J Whyte held the Koroite run until 1851, when it was purchased by John Norman McLeod and his partner (and brother in law) George Frederick Read. McLeod and Read held the Koroite run until 1852, when it passed into the ownership of their father in law, Alexander Patterson (Billis & Kenyon, 230). Patterson only held the land for two years, until 1854, when the ownership passed to John and Francis Egan (ibid.).

It is not known if any improvements were made, or buildings constructed on the land prior to the Egan's ownership. It is certain that by 1855, substantial improvements had been made, and the 'Plan of Suburban Lands adjoining the Township of Coleraine, County Dundas' for that year shows Koroite P.B 299, owned by Francis Egan as being a substantial homestead complex. The plan includes a garden, hut, woolshed, sheepwash, ford and several fences and tracks. John Egan had already purchased several other runs in other parts of Victoria in partnership with his brother Michael and John Leahy, as well as by himself. As Francis Egan is the only name which appears on the 1855 Suburban Lands Adjoining the Township of Coleraine, it seems likely that although the run was held in the name of both brothers, it was Francis who perhaps resided at the property and had most control. John and Francis Egan only held Koroite for two years, until February 1857 when it was sold to Stephen George Henty, one of the Henty Brothers who are famed for being the first pastoralists in Victoria.

Stephen George Henty was the fifth son of the Henty family famed as being the first settlers in Victoria. Stephen was born in Sussex 1811 and arrived in Western Australia in 1829 (Shaw, in Forth (ed.) 66). S. G Henty established the famous Merino Downs, as well as being a prominent land owner in and around Hamilton, and described as 'Portland's leading merchant' (ibid., 66). Between 1852 and 1864, Stephen George Henty owned the pastoral runs of Ardachy, Kadnood, Koroite, Mt. Sturgeon Plains North and Mt Sturgeon Plains South, Strathfillan, Talangour, Wando Vale B, and Bongmire (with William Learmonth).

Henty was considered to be a very important local man, a member of the Legislative Council from 1856-1870, commissioner of the State Savings Bank, President of the City and Suburban Investment company. He died in Tarrington in 1870 (ibid., 66). It is not known whether Henty made any improvements to the pastoral run during the time that he owned Koroite Station.

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In June 1860, John Cameron purchased Koroite Station from Henty. John Cameron with his brother Donald (later known as 'Morgiana Cameron') were the first leaseholders for Mount Sturgeon Plains (1849 - 1851), which Stephen George Henty went on to purchase after disposing of Koroite to Cameron in 1860 (Billis & Kenyon). Little is known about John Cameron, he seems to have been overshadowed in history by his more famous Cameron brothers and relations. Cameron sold Koroite to John McKinnon in 1864, and by 1865, it was listed in Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer as "Koroite Home Station (Co. Dundas); on the Koroite {Bryant} Creek, 1 mile N.E of Coleraine; occupier, McKinnon, J; area 2 300 acres; grazing capacity 2 300 sheep" (Whitworth, 213). Although John McKinnon is formally listed as the owner of Koroite from 1864 (Billis & Kenyon, 230) he is not listed in this publication as one of the property owners. This may be an oversight, or he may not have owned any other pastoral properties at this time.

The Wannon Shire Centenary states that McKinnon sold Koroite Station to William Swan, who incorporated the land into his larger Konongwootong run (McGaffin, 27). Although there is no longer any physical fabric above ground which can conclusively be associated with the homestead, McGaffin (ibid.) states that the original Koroite Homestead was made of Wattle and Daub and remained unoccupied on the site until 1886 when it collapsed in a severe gale. If the homestead were constructed of Wattle and daub, then is unlikely that any of the construction materials would survive, even as archaeological remains.

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Buvelot painted his famous 'Waterpool at Coleraine' in 1871, when according to McGaffin, William Swan was the owner of the land. Swan's homestead Konongwootong was painted by Buvelot at the same time that 'Waterpool at Coleraine' was painted. The painting is a detailed depiction of the original Konongwootong (Konong) homestead complex, sited looking over the water body to the west of current homestead (pers. com. Jessica Sutherland, 20/11/02). It is possible that Buvelot may have stayed with Swan on one of his extensive sketching tours of the Western District, and depicted 'Waterpool at Coleraine' at this time, which was then on land owned by Swan.

The Koroite Pre-emptive right has been used for farming and grazing purposes since the 1880s, when the homestead was blown over. A small primitive abattoir was constructed on the eastern part of the Pre-emptive right in the early part of the twentieth century, and the current showgrounds reserve which is located in the centre of the Pre-emptive right was Gazetted sometime prior to the turn of the Century.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

Theme 8: Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.10 Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences

## **CONDITION:**

The original homestead site has significant archaeological potential. The *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (River Red Gum) trees on either side of the pool are in poor condition, and the pool itself is in fair condition.

## **INTEGRITY:**

Homestead has archaeological potential only, but Buvelot tree and waterhole are retain a reasonable degree of integrity.

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## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

The original site of the Koroite Homestead complex, as part of the Koroite squatting run and the water pool and trees depicted in Louis Buvelot's 'Waterpool at Coleraine' are both located in the same area. This site is located 1.75 kilometers north east of the township of Coleraine, on the north side of Bryants creek, about 800 metres to the south behind the Coleraine Showgrounds Reserve. These sites were both once included in the original Koroite Station's Pre-emptive right (P.B 299). The Koroite run originally a part of the Whyte Brothers huge run, Konongwootong. In 1845, Konongwootong underwent a division, and one of the Whyte Brothers (C.J Whyte) took ownership of 8000 acres of land, based 1 mile north east of the Coleraine township, and named it Koroite. Between 1850 and 1870 the station went through a variety of owners, including Stephen George Henty (of the Henty Brothers) and finally being purchased in 1870 by William Swan. It was around 1871 when Louis Buvelot, the famous landscape painter visited the Coleraine district on a painting expedition. While in the area, he painted William Swan's Homestead, Konongwootong, and also painted 'Waterpool at Coleraine', on land owned by Swan. There is no surviving evidence of the once substantial homestead complex which is evident from an 1855 survey by the Department of Lands and Survey, although there may be archaeological potential. The elements of the homestead complex, including a homestead (said to have been wattle and daub), a woolshed, garden, sheepwash, hut, ford, fences and tracks

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covered about one hectare. The Buvelot scene, including the waterhole and *Eucalyptus camadulensis* (River Red Gums) has survived, and is recognisable, although the trees are in poor condition and the waterpool has been damaged by cattle.

How is it significant?

The site of the former Koroite Homestead complex is of historic and archaeological significance to the township of Coleraine and the Southern Grampians Shire as a Heritage Inventory Site. The site of the scene depicted in Louis Buvelot's 'Waterpool at Coleraine' is of aesthetic and cultural significance to the Southern Grampians Shire as a Significant Landscape

Why is it significant?

The site of the original Koroite Homestead is of historical significance for its associations with important early local pastoralists, including C.J Whyte, Stephen George Henty and William Swan. It is historically important as one of the earliest runs in the district, and for its location, strategically situated close to the township of Coleraine. It is a representative example of how early pastoral homestead complexes thrived and declined, in that by 1855 it was a fully functioning homestead complex with a variety of elements, yet by 1886 the last surviving element (a wattle and daub homestead) blew down in a strong gale. It is of archaeological significance for the information it may reveal about the ways in which early pastoralists lived and construction materials and techniques of their buildings.

The surviving elements of the scene depicted in Louis Buvelot's 1871 painting, 'Waterpool at Coleraine' is aesthetically important to the State of Victoria as a rare surviving example of what an artist depicted in the 1870s. It is aesthetically important as an example of landscape tradition which was used by Buvelot, and went on to influence many of Australia's famous artists from the Heidelberg School.

## COMPARISON:

041 Hilgay Station (former)

045 Park Hill Homestead Site (original)

343 Mt. Koroite Homestead (original site)

**ASSESSED BY:** AEN

**ASSESSMENT DATE:** 15/06/2003

## 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
	Victorian Men of the Time	1878	26-7
Allan McCulloch	Encyclopedia of Australian Art	1977	108-9
Centenary Celebrations Committee	Coleraine Centenary Celebrations, October 7 to 14 1939	1939	5
Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne	Special and Country Lands, Parish of Konong Wootong, County of Dundas	1862	
Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne	Konong Wootong, County of Dundas	1922	
Don Garden	Hamilton A Western District History	1984	
G. McGaffin	The Wannon Shire Centenary 1872-1972, A Brief History of the Shire of Wannon	1972	24-5

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Jessica Sutherland	Personal Communication 20/11/02	2002
Leon Goerge Stubbings, in Gordon Forth ed.	Biographical Dictionary of the Western District of Victoria	1998 66
Paul de Serville	Pounds and Pedigrees	1991
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974
Robert Spreadborough & Hugh Anderson	Victorian Squatters	1983
Robert. P. Whitworth, comp.	Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer and Road Guide, containing the most recent and accurate information as to every place in the colony	1865 212
Surveyor General's Office, Melbourne	Plan Suburban Lands adjoining the Township of Coleraine, County of Dundas	1855