HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: GLENTHOMPSON POST OFFICE & RESIDENCE

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: 33 Memorial Road GLENTHOMPSON

STUDY NUMBER: 361 **HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**
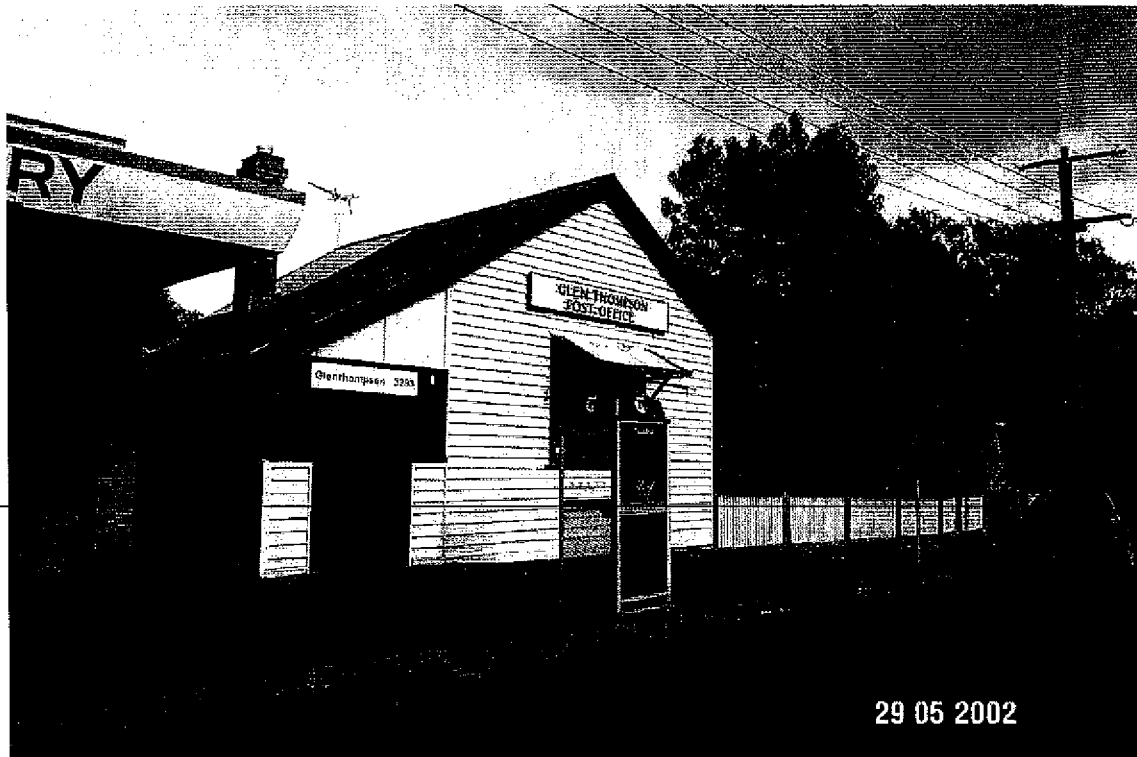
PRECINCT: Glenthompson

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: pt. 9 **SECTION:** 1 **PARISH:** PARISH OF YUPPECKIAR

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 434J 5; VicRoads 229 M10; located on the south side of Memorial Drive (Glenelg Highway) on the western side of the township and opposite the Uniting Church.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local

Post Office & Residence, Memorial Road, Glenthompson

Image Date: 29/05/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All of the exterior of the Post Office and Residence, the interior of the main Post Office chamber, and all of the land, being part allotment 9, section 1, township of Glenthompson.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The post office building is s small timber structure, built to the street boundary with a pair of double hung sashes forming the main window. The entrance is to the east side with access through a door from a porch. The porch roof is continuous with the main roof and both are corrugated iron. The post boxes and a community notice board are located within the porch. The main office is in the front with a relatively rare original timber counter, bench and equipment. The room is lined with bead-edged boards. There is a work room behind the main office. It is a rare surving example of an intact post office chamber interior in Southern Grampians Shire.

The contiguous residence is located on the west side of the post office. It is also weatherboard and has a simple façade with a central door and double hung sash windows. The façade is set back from the property line and there is a timber front verandah.

The style of the buildings is very simple and is best described as bungalow.

HISTORY:

The first postal service for Glenthompson is said to have been a hole cut in a large tree covered with a cloth. The Shire of Mount Rouse rate books for the early 1870s note only one store in Glenthompson, other than the hotel, stables, a bootmaker and a blacksmith (SMRRB, 1871 and 1872, #77 and #87).

The first name which Glenthompson had (unofficially) in the mid nineteeth century was 'Mail Tent', as Mr. Bowden, the mail man pitched a tent there to serve as a depot and post office in conjuction with the above mentioned tree. The first postal service to operate from a building was undertaken by John McLennan, free of charge, from his hotel, store and post office which fronted the highway. There is an historical photograph of "John McLennan's combined hotel, post office and store - Glenthompson's first building of substance" reproduced in the 'Shire of Mount Rouse Centenary History'.   According to Hope Henry in 'Glenthompson History', "Mr. McLennan was the first white man to build a house in Glenthompson in 1866, having applied for a rural site. He built a Hotel and Store and carried on the duties of Postmaster free of charge."

John McLennan is considered to be the founding father of Glenthompson. He arrived in Glenthompson from Ballarat in 1862 to take over duties in connection with the coach horses of Cobb and Co., and established the first hotel in Glenthompson (the hotel is still known as Mac's Hotel), and store, as well as acting as Postmaster.   John McLennan and his first wife Rebecca had only one daughter, Mary Ann who died in infancy (1863 -1869). Rebecca died soon after, in 1871. It appears that John McLennan married his cousin or niece, Jessie McLennan in 1872 (VPI, Reg. No.4321). Jessie acted as Post Mistress when a new Post Office was built (Clabburn et. al, 28) for many years until her death in 1895, and John died in 1907, with no living issue.

The exact date of construction of the current Post Office and residence is not known, although it is likely to be post World War One. The Commonwealth Bank agency was located at the Post Office for many years.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies
3.7 Establishing communications
3.7.1 Establishing postal services
3.7.2 Developing electrical means of communication

CONDITION:

The buildings are in good condition.

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INTEGRITY:

Good degree of integrity externally

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?
The Glenthompson Post Office is single storey timber building located on the south side of Memorial Road in the centre of the township of Glenthompson. The building is possibly the third to be used as a post office, as the first building to house the postal service was Mac's Hotel, and the second was a purpose built structure, of an unknown location. The post office building is a small timber structure, built to the street boundary The main office is in the front with a relatively rare original timber counter, bench and equipment. The room is lined with bead-edged boards. There is a work room behind the main office. It is a rare surving example of an intact post office chamber interior in Southern Grampians Shire. The contiguous residence is located on the west side of the post office. It is also weatherboard and has a simple façade with a central door and double hung sash windows. The façade is set back from the property line and there is a timber front verandah.
.There has been no architect or builder associated with the design. The post office is in good condition and retains a good degree of external integrity.

How is it significant?
The Glenthompson Post Office is of historical and architectural significance to the Southern Grampians Shire and to the community of Balmoral.

Why is it significant?
The Glenthompson Post Office is of historical significance as it represents the focus for postal and telecommunications services to the community from the 1860s to the present day. It is of architectural significance for its comparison with the post offices in the other communities of the Shire. The interiors are a rare surviving example within Southern Grampians of an early twentieth century Post Office chamber, with original fittings and fixtures. It allows us to understand a previous way of working, and a previous way of life, prior to the mechanisation and computerisation of our postal service. It represents a particular period in the history of Post Office buildings designed and built by the State.

COMPARISON:

198 Post Office, Brown Street, Branxholme

ASSESSED BY: AEN **ASSESSMENT DATE:** 12/01/2003

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
Department of Justice Victoria	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888	2001	
Elise Clabburn, Iris Field, Betty Gordon & Kath Dickie	Dunkeld and District: A short history	1995	28
Shire of Mount Rouse	Mount Rouse Rate Books 1872	1872	var.
Shire of Mount Rouse	Mount Rouse Rate Books 1871	1871	var.
Shire of Mount Rouse	Mount Rouse Rate Books 1870	1870	var.

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Trethowan, Bruce   The Public Works Department, 1851-1900   1975