

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: STATE SCHOOL NO. 1724 MEMORIAL

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Glenelg Highway BOCHARA

STUDY NUMBER: 387

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: BOCHARA STATE SCHOOL

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: pt 12A **SECTION:** No **PARISH:** PARISH OF BOCHARA
section

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 431F; VicRoads 72 G5; north side of Glenelg Hwy, 150 metres east of McKinnons Creek.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local

State School No 1724 Memorial, Bochara

Image Date: 5/02/03

EXTENT OF LISTING:

The Heritage Overlay should be:

To the extent of: The concrete and bronze memorial, and an area of land within a 5m radius of the memorial.

The Heritage Inventory Site should be:

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The site of the Bochara State School is located on the north side of the Glenelg Highway, adjacent to McKinnon's Creek. A row of Golden Cypress, *Cupressus macrocarpa 'aurea'*, marks the boundary of the school site and the highway. No school buildings survive on the site.

A memorial to the school, erected in 1996, is located at the east end of the row of cypresses. This memorial consists of three upright concrete pillars, the middle one standing approximately 1.5 metres tall, while the flanking pillars are about 1.2 metres. A cast bronze plaque fixed to the middle pillar reads "This plaque commemorates Bochara State School No. 1724. Erected on this site and paid for by the parents of Students who attended on 5th June 1932. Final classes were conducted 7th November 1950. Unveiled 24th March 1996 at the Bochara School Reunion. With support from the Commissioners of the Shire of Southern Grampians. This is also the site of the original School No. 1724 1876 to 1920."

HISTORY:

Les Blake, V&R, Vol 2, p 60

"Thomas Blanchard was the first Head Teacher of SS 1724, Bochara, which opened on 3rd of April 1876. The school closed on 13th of March 1882, re-opened on 18th of October 1882, closed 29th November 1883, reopened between 1914 and 1920, and finally closed its doors on 4th of April 1952."

According to the Hamilton History Centre's file, the residents of the Bochara district met in September 1871 to discuss the establishment of a school. By December 1874 four acres had been reserved by the Government as the site for a state school. The first school opened on 3rd April 1876, with Mr Thomas Blanchard as head teacher, with an enrolment of 19. This school experienced fluctuations in enrolment. It closed in March 1882, reopened in December of that year, and closed again permanently in November 1883. The fate of the school building is unknown. [Or is this the one which was taken to Zion Lutheran Church, Byaduk?]

The subdivision of Bochara Station by the Closer Settlement Board in 1924, with the settlers taking up their blocks in 1925, triggered the need for a state school in the district. Following a period of lobbying, the Education Department agreed to supply a teacher and equipment, but not a building. The local community raised sufficient funds to construct a new school building on the site of the earlier one. The one roomed timber school was built by the parents, with the assistance of a carpenter, who volunteered his labour. The new school was registered as Bochara State School No 1724, using the same number as the original school. It opened on 7th June 1932, with Miss Dorothy Sowden appointed as teacher, and with an enrolment of 13. The land was gazetted as a school reserve in January, 1939.

The Bochara school operated full time for 18 years, providing schooling for some 60 children over that time. The school finally closed on 7th November 1950 due to lack of enrolments. In 1963 the building was purchased by the Zion Lutheran Church at Byaduk, for use as a Sunday School. The one roomed timber building was transported to Byaduk, where it continues to be used today.

In 1996 a reunion of past students was held, and the concrete and bronze memorial was unveiled to commemorate the history of the Bochara State School.

The school at Bochara was one of the few public buildings which marked the Bochara district. There was also an inn at the crossing of the Glenelg Highway over McKinnon Creek which opened in 1866 and closed in 1880. Bochara railway siding was located about 1km east of the school. On 8th September 1910, according to a detailed two page report in the Hamilton Spectator, there was a 'sensational railway disaster' when the Coleraine to Hamilton train fell off the bridge across McKinnon's Creek immediately north of the

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school site. In fact only two people were seriously injured, an elderly lady, Mrs Gallagher of Wannan and Mr Maurice Bolan of Nareen.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 4: Building Settlements, Towns and Cities

4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities

Theme 6: Educating

6.2 Establishing schools

6.5 Educating people in remote places

CONDITION:

The memorial is in excellent condition. The archaeological potential of the school site is fair.

INTEGRITY:

The memorial is highly intact. The second school survives with a high degree of integrity at the Zion Lutheran Church complex, Byaduk.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The former State School No 1724 at Bochara was located at a prominent site on the highway beside the bridge over McKinnons Creek, and was one of the few buildings which marked the presence of a community at Bochara. Two school buildings occupied the site since its inception in the 1870s. The first school, built in 1876, was associated with the development of the pastoral industry in the district. The later school opened in 1932 as a result of the increase in local population triggered by the subdivision of Bochara Station for Closer Settlement. Although no school buildings survive, the existence of the school, with its history, has been commemorated by the erection in 1996 of a concrete and bronze monument. A number of trees, including a row of Golden Cypress, mark the boundaries of the site.

How is it significant?

The State School No 1724 site and concrete and bronze memorial are of historical significance to the Southern-Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The State School No 1724 site and its memorial are of historical significance as physical reminders of the history of school education in the Bochara district. The construction of the two schools were associated with particular periods of closer settlement at Bochara. The erection of the memorial in 1996 is an important signifier of the community's desire to record its history for future generations.

COMPARISON:

297 State School No 947, Memorial Drive, Glenthompson

195 State School No 1418 (former), Knights Road, Byaduk North

160 State School No 4362 (former), Zig Zag Road, Konongwootong North

316 Mirranatwa Public Hall, School Road, Mirranatwa

328 State School No 1835 (former), East West Road, Mooralla

ASSESSED BY: TFH

ASSESSMENT DATE:

7/02/2003

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

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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	60
Gardner, Margaret	Hamilton History Centre Schools file	2000	