

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** BATESWORTH HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Batesworth Lane PENSURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 389

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**PRECINCT:** outside

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** R & H **SECTION:** V & **PARISH:** PARISH OF BORAMBORAM  
XII

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 475 A18 & 19; VicRoads 73 F7; located on both sides of Batesworth Lane immediately west of the intersection of the Penshurst-Dunkeld Road.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Batesworth Homestead Complex, Penshurst, former Tabor parsonage

**Image Date:** 21/05/02

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the exterior of the homestead, all of the exterior of the outbuildings, all of the exterior of the corrugated iron shed, the relocated first Tabor parsonage, and the exterior of the woolshed and all of the land within a 20m radius of any edge of all of the above listed buildings.

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## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Batesworth complex straddles Batesworth Road. It comprises the present post World War Two cream brick homestead set within an extensive garden, several adjacent outbuildings including a barn which is clad with corrugated iron recycled from the roofs of the Herrnhut buildings, the relocated timber parsonage from Tabor, a post World War Two off-form concrete woolshed since extended, and timber men's quarters.

The 1909 parsonage is an asymmetrical weatherboard building with an L-shaped timber verandah, now missing some of its detailing. The roof is corrugated iron and has gables over the front projecting room and on the west elevation. The four-panelled front door is typical of the late nineteenth century with side and fan-lights. The main windows are tri-partite double hung sashes also typical of the period. A bull-nosed verandah has been added on the east elevation. The former parsonage is located on the south side of Batesworth Lane opposite the main house and set back some distance from Batesworth Lane.

The woolshed is in two parts under two corrugated iron gable roofs. The pitches of the roofs are slightly different suggesting construction in two stages. The walls are constructed with off-form concrete. The main floor level is well elevated and timber ledge and brace doors provide access to the sub-floor area. Louvre windows above each of the doors provide ventilation. Ramps provide access to and from the yards at the eastern end of the shed. The woolshed is located on the south side of Batesworth Lane and immediately on the boundary.

The men's quarters are weatherboard, irregular in plan and with simple verandahs. They are located south of the woolshed.

The barn, which is clad with the recycled Herrnhut corrugated iron, is a simple timber-framed building. Rectangular in plan, it is located immediately to the west of the main house on the north side of Batesworth Lane.

The main house is single-storey, asymmetrical and built of dark clinker cream bricks. It has large timber windows typical of the period. The roof is clad with terra cotta tiles. It is located on the north side of Batesworth Lane. It is set within a mature garden, with some elements possibly dating from the late nineteenth century. Remnants of an extensive orchard survive on the east side of the house.

## HISTORY:

Charles Bates purchased the land from the Crown on which the property Batesworth now stands before 1870 (SMR RB, 1870 #18). With his wife, Margaret Jane, nee Kettle, they farmed a total of 280 acres freehold and occupied another 75 acres leased from the Crown. Charles Bates who was born in Fermagh, died in 1878 (PI, #3790).

The property was subsequently purchased by the Rentsch family, German immigrants who were members of the Tabor Lutheran congregation. Albert Rentsch was Chairman of the Tabor Building Committee which was responsible for the construction of the new parsonage in 1951. He obtained the old timber parsonage, built in 1909, and moved it to Batesworth. Earlier, the corrugated iron roofing from Herrnhut had been salvaged and used to clad a barn when the communist settlement was abandoned late in the nineteenth century. This is now very rare early corrugated iron, similar to that used on other 1850s buildings such as the side walls of Corio Villa at Eastern Beach Geelong and the fence at Oberwyl at St Kilda.

## THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 2: Peopling Australia

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2.4 Migrating

2.4.2 Migrating to seek opportunity.

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

Theme 5: Working

5.8 working on the land

## **CONDITION:**

The complex is in excellent condition throughout.

## **INTEGRITY:**

Very high degree of integrity to post-WW2 period.

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

The Batesworth homestead complex is located in Batesworth Lane about 3.5kms north of Penshurst off the Penshurst-Dunkeld Road. It comprises: the present post World War Two cream brick homestead set within an extensive garden, several adjacent outbuildings including a barn which is clad with corrugated iron recycled from the roofs of the Herrnhut buildings, the relocated timber parsonage from Tabor, a post World War Two off-form concrete woolshed since extended, and timber men's quarters. Charles Bates, who bought the land before 1870, established the property. The next owner was Joseph Tilley who sold Batesworth to Johann August Rentsch and Johanna Rentsch, nee Huf, third generation German Lutheran settlers. They built a modest and sober single-storey bluestone house with a detached bluestone kitchen, which was extended to accommodate their family of five children. Their son, Albert Edgar Rentsch moved the former 1909 Tabor parsonage to the site in 1951 and a barn incorporates recycled early corrugated iron from the abandoned Herrnhut buildings. Also after the Second World War, a new concrete woolshed was built which can be compared with the woolshed at nearby Torbank. The 1880s house was demolished and replaced with a conventional cream brick house. Men's quarters survive from the late nineteenth century and remnants of an extensive garden. Edwin and Elsie Rentsch who had managed the property retired to Portland in 1867 and the son of Albert Rentsch now manages the farm. The complex survives in excellent condition and with a high degree of integrity to its mid-twentieth century situation.

How is it significant?

The Batesworth homestead complex is of historical and architectural significance to the communities of Penshurst and Tabor and to the southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Batesworth homestead complex is of historical significance for its direct connections with three generations of the important Rentsch family and its branches, and particularly with Johann August Rentsch, his children Albert, Edwin and Elsie Rentsch, and his grandson John Albert, and their wives and children. Specifically, it demonstrates the steady success of the third, fourth and fifth generations of German Lutheran migrants in the area to the south and east of Hamilton in the face of great personal difficulties. The complex is of architectural significance as a group of buildings and in particular for the reconstruction of the Tabor parsonage, the recycling of Herrnhut materials and the concrete woolshed. The mature garden setting of the

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homestead enhances the overall significance.

## COMPARISON:

455 Sylvan Grove, Mibus Lane, Croxton East  
388 Bethlehem Lutheran Church Complex, Tabor Lane, Tabor  
351 Torbank Woolshed, Tobermory Lane, Penshurst

**ASSESSED BY:** TFH

**ASSESSMENT DATE:** 21/05/2002

## 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 Lands and Survey	Parish of Boram Boram, County of Villiers	1880	
Elizabeth (Betty) Huf	Huf: 150 Years in Australia 1847 - 1997	1997	448-50
Port Fairy History House	Tilley Family Research Notes	var.	
Shire of Mount Rouse	Rate Book	1872	
Shire of Mount Rouse	Rate Book	1871	
Shire of Mount Rouse	Rate Book	1870	