

HERITAGE PLACE

DUNKELD POST OFFICE

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Wills Street Stirling Street DUNKELD

STUDY NUMBER: 414

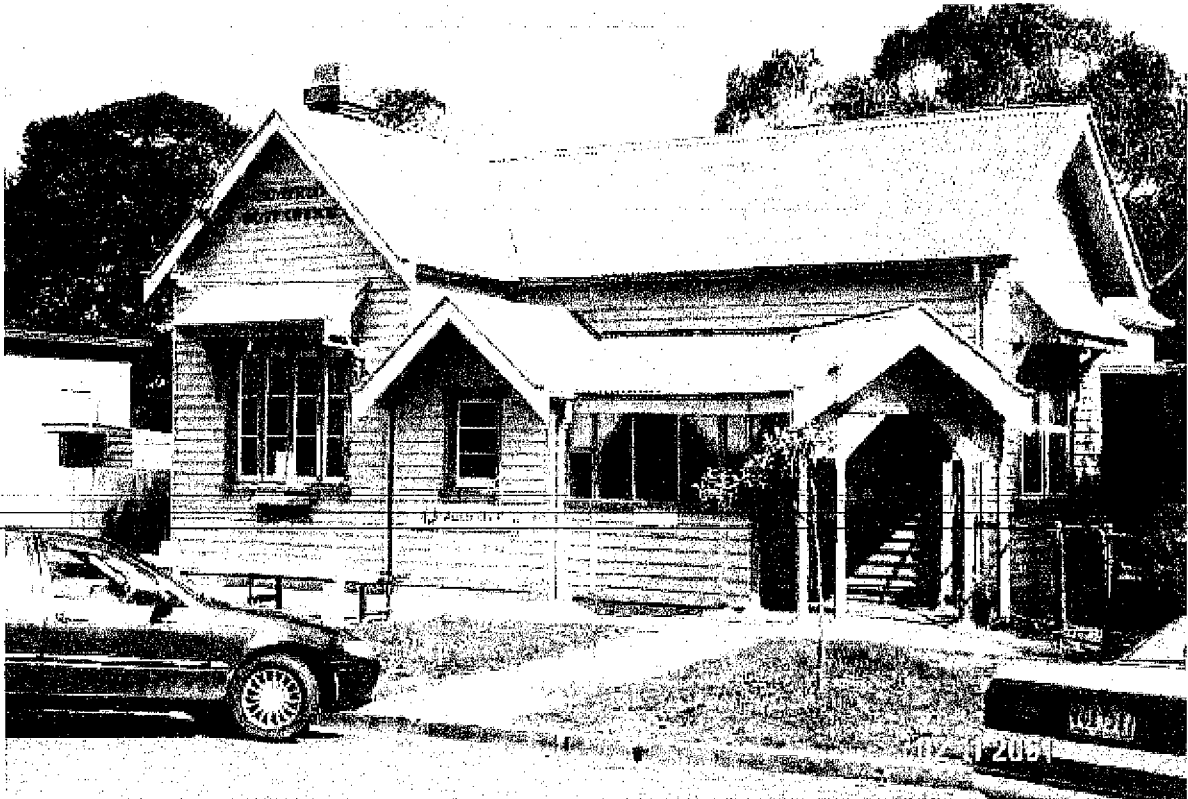
HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 433J 13; VicRoads 229 S4; located in the south-east corner of Wills Street and Sterling Streets, one block south of the Glenelg Highway.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Dunkeld Post Office, Cnr. Wills & Sterling Street, Dunkeld.

Image Date: 02/11/2001

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the building but excluding the interiors and all of the land

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The post office is a single storey asymmetrical timber building with a verandah, subsequently enclosed at dado level, which includes a projecting corner pavilion. The large front gable formerly featured an extended pediment with its own gablet and space for a clock which was never installed. The ventilators in the roof, the finials and the main chimney have been removed. The paired arched timber posts and brackets of the verandah survive as does some of the façade detailing. The building has steep pitched roofs of corrugated iron. There is a residence at the rear which has been altered. The free style of the building is typical of the late nineteenth century and in contrast with the much more sober designs of public buildings before 1877, such as the post offices at Coleraine and Peshurst, and the dismissal of William Wardell as Inspector General of Public Works.

G G Crouch purchased allotments 9 and 10 of section 9 of the Township of Dunkeld comprising 2 roods or half an acre each in 1855. A postal service in Dunkeld began in 1852 and was officially the forty-eighth in the colony. In 1870 and 1872, but not 1871, a Sophia Fisher is rated as "Postmistress" in the "Post Office Dunkeld" on land which she owned in her own right (SMR RB, 1870, No. 127 and 1872, No. 172). The rate doubled in the two years but it was still a modest ten pounds, less than houses in Dunkeld and only twice as much as a hut. It has been suggested that Miss Fisher was the first to hold the position officially (Clabburn, 20). She was noted as late as 1876 as the Registrar of Births (and Deaths and Marriages) and Public Vaccinator (Clabburn, 82). Later post mistresses and masters were Miss Olive Trompf, Miss Olive Stimson and Mr. Reuben Schache, each described as "strong characters". Miss Stimson was born Olivia Alithea in 1887 at Ondit near Colac (VPI, Reg. No. 22401). She gave a remarkable forty years of service, being "a keen promoter of the town and involved in many organisations" and she "controlled the township from the post office -- she could use the telephone plugs to great effect in times of fire or accidents and, with her friend Mrs. A A Young (Milly), was a moving force in community activities" (Clabburn, 21 & 69). Reuben Schache who was born in 1897 and

The present post office was built in the 1890s when it also provided telegraph services. The telegraph had reached Hamilton from Portland as early as 1861 and came through Dunkeld in association with the construction of the railway line late in 1877. The separate government services were amalgamated in 1869.

The building continues to be used as a post office and the Post Master's residence.

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

The building is in good condition.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity externally

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Dunkeld Post Office is a single storey asymmetrical timber building with a verandah, subsequently enclosed at dado level, which includes a projecting corner pavilion. The post office is located on the south east corner of Sterling and Wills Street in the township of Dunkeld. The first post offices were located in insubstantial huts, valued at less than half the rated amount for a simple house in the township. The present post office was not built until the 1890s when it also provided telegraph services. The telegraph had reached Hamilton from

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Portland as early as 1861 and came through Dunkeld in association with the construction of the railway line late in 1877. The post office is in good condition and retains a high degree of external integrity, although the interiors have been much altered and modernised.

How is it significant?

The Dunkeld Post Office is of historical and architectural significance to the township of Dunkeld and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Dunkeld Post Office is of historical significance as the focus for communication services to the community for over 120 years. It is of historical significance because of its earliest associations with the important local identifies, including the first Postmistress, Miss Sophia Fisher, who was followed by a number of "strong characters" including Miss Olive Trompf, Miss Olive Stimson and Mr. Reuben Schache. The Post Office is of architectural significance as the free style of the building is typical of the late nineteenth century. It is of further architectural and historical significance as it reflects the attitude of the Public Works, in moving away from the very sober designs of public buildings upto the 1880s.

COMPARISON:

024 Coleraine Post Office, 80 Whyte Street, Coleraine
198 Post Office (former), Brown Street, Branxholme.
169 Balmoral Post Office, Glendinning Street, Balmoral

ASSESSED BY: AEN & TFH

ASSESSMENT DATE:

20-Jan-04

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Clabburn, Elise, et al.

Dunkeld and District: A Short History

Macbeth Genealogical Services

Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888

Shire of Mount Rouse

Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books 1872

Shire of Mount Rouse

Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books 1871

Shire of Mount Rouse

Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Books 1870