

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** GAZETTE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Macarthur-Penshurst Rd PENSHURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 060

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

**PRECINCT:** outside

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** 2, & 7b **SECTION:** E & D **PARISH:** PARISH OF NAPIER

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA ; VicRoads : located at the junction of the Macarthur-Penshurst Road with the Gazette Woolshed Road and on the west side of the Eumerella River

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** State



Gazette Homestead Complex, Macarthur - Penshurst Road, Penshurst. Gazette Homestead - viewed from north

**Image Date:** 31/10/01

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the homestead, including the interior and exterior, the homestead outbuildings, the drive and gardens, and the woolshed, sheep dip and plant and outbuildings, and areas of land 10,000sq m generally around them.

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** GAZETTE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Macarthur-Penshurst Rd PENSHURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 060

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The homestead at Gazette is a very large rendered brick, asymmetrical, single storey building with a verandah on two sides. It is generally in the Italianate style, although a very late example, and there are clear influences of the contemporary Federation style. An arched masonry porch, with a half-timbered gable, marks the main entrance on the north elevation. Three bays, one associated with the "best bedroom" on the east elevation, one associated with the drawing room and the other with the billiard room project forward to terminate the main elevations. Another bay, also associated with the billiard room, is on the west elevation. These bays provide important views out into the landscape and terminate respectively on Mount Rouse, the Southern Grampians and Mount Napier. The verandah is supported by cast iron columns with timber framing and has cast iron decoration. Coloured leadlighting is used as a frieze, a detail which is very rare. The verandah floor is covered with conventional encaustic tiles. The whole has been painted white while the corrugated iron roofs are painted silver.

The planning of the house is conventional for its asymmetrical villa form, with a central large hall and a transverse passage. It includes a full range of formal rooms which are supported by service areas including a butler's pantry and an office. One room of note is a staff bedroom which is elevated above the main floor level over the cellar below. The interiors of the house have lost their original decoration as a result of modernisations in the early 1960s which also included renovations and other alterations to the service areas. It may be that a tower was intended at the western end of the house. The house is in excellent condition.

The house is surrounded by the structure of a formal garden although some parts have been lost. Originally there was a wide path perpendicular to the main entrance and the path surrounding the house survives. Large mature trees obscure some aspects of the view. The gardens and drive are in fair to good condition.

There are several outbuildings to the side and rear of the main house. The most important are the meat store, the jackaroo's quarters and the stables. The large, well built stables are of particular architectural interest. The outbuildings are in good condition.

The woolshed is at least two kilometres from the main house. It is much older, built of bluestone and, with its historic extensions, it is T-shaped in plan. It is said to have been built over a natural spring. Beside the woolshed there is a yard with an elaborate stone sheep dip. It includes an underground stone tank, a pump, a fireplace and a cauldron. The woolshed is in good condition and the sheepdip is in fair condition. Some distance west of the woolshed there is a range of outbuildings including men's quarters, a cookhouse and a pair of dunnies. One of the later is of interest for have a tiered multiple seat. These outbuildings are in poor condition.

To the north of the woolshed there are the ruins of the manager's residence, which was a single storey, symmetrical house with a surrounding verandah and the remnants of its garden.

## **HISTORY:**

The land which was to become the main part of Gazette was first taken up by William Carmichael as the Blackfellows' Creek Run along the upper reaches of the Eumerella River which he leased from 1844 to 1867. He established a homestead on the south-east side of Harton Hills Run, east of Macarthur and now in the Shire of Moyne, which he leased from 1842 to 1867. Billis and Kenyon give William Hutton as the Gazette Run's owner from 1844 to 1866. The year 1844 marked the turn around from the severe depression of the early 1840s which had ruined many squatters.

Another family with the same surname lived near Penshurst. David Hutton, a civil engineer, had come to Penshurst from Portland in 1846 having arrived in Tasmania in 1832. He established Cheviot Hills immediately to the south-west of Penshurst [not the one mentioned as Cheviot Hills or Killingworth in B&K at

# HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: GAZETTE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Macarthur-Penshurst Rd PENSHURST

STUDY NUMBER: 060

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

---

p. 190 & 227, which was in the Western Port District] and ran it as a sheep station until his death in 1875, when his sons, John Alexander and Thomas, came into possession. Thomas continued at Cheviot Hills and his brother John established the adjacent property called Eden. [Vic & Its Metro, Vol II A, p. 64.] There were also two brothers called Hutton who were merchants at Port Fairy (Powling, 317).

From the early 1860s, as a result of the sale of land under the Land Selection Acts, the Hutton family established a homestead on freehold titles which continued the name Gazette but which took in the north-eastern portion of Carmichael's run. Their homestead was located 10 kilometres south-east of the present homestead, still on the pre-emptive right and now in the Shire of Moyne. The Huttons ran cattle on the southern portion and sheep on the northern portion. So, the stone woolshed, with its elaborate sheep dip, was built on the northern portion about 2.0kms south-east of the present homestead. The timber outbuilding are much later and probably date from about the same time as the present homestead. A William George Hutton had married Elizabeth Ann Whitehead and they had three children, William Joseph (1866), Ernest Hamilton (1867) and George Gerald (1869) all registered at Mount Rouse (PIV, Reg. No. 4097, 17215, and 4295). William George Hutton, who was born in Tasmania, died at the age of 36 in 1869 (PIV, Reg. No. 1454). But it seems that it was his father William who had died in 1862 whose estate, including Gazette, was put up for auction in 1864 'at the time consisting of 8,954 acres of purchased land, 5,264 acres of leased land along with 6,000 sheep and 1,200 head of cattle (Halmarick, 64 quoting HS, 25 March 1864). It was not sold and the property was bought in 1870 by the partnership, Thomas Robertson and Sons, one of the most important pastoral families in Victoria.

After the dissolution of the Robertson Partnership in the early 1870s, John and Mary Robertson continued to live at Gazette. According to the present owners, "John George Robertson bought Gazette except for the southern, or homestead portion. In 1882, his manager built a stone house near the woolshed. At that time the property was still around 8,000ha. Robertson struggled with the land because of liver-fluke parasites in the sheep." The manager's house, a substantial but conventional bluestone residence with a central hall and four principal rooms, is now in ruins. The large stables at the rear of the present may date from this time rather than the turn of the century. Having spent a great deal of money employing Chinese labour to construct drains along the Blackfellows' Creek, he gave up and offered the land for sale. Not getting his terms, he withdrew the sale, divided the property and gave the halves to his two married daughters. His daughter Mary, Mrs A. J. Simpson was given the southern portion with the existing homestead. Eliza, was given the northern portion with the existing woolshed. In 1885, Eliza had married a Canadian surgeon, Dr. William Cross, a graduate of Cambridge University (Halmarick, 239). They too lived at Gazette and, in 1895 [or 1899], having purchased most of her sisters' interests in the property, they commissioned Eliza and her husband, commissioned an architect, Percival (Percy) Selwyn Richards in the office of William Brazenor of Ballarat, to design a new homestead. Richards, who is said to have been an American, also designed Kongbool Homestead at Balmoral in 1896 for James Gordon Robertson and substantial extensions to the Robertson family's base, Mount Mitchell near Ballarat, in 1910. Gazette was built by T. C. Harrison, who was previously suggested as the architect. The house is a very late and conservative example of an Italianate villa. It can be compared with the similar but rather more sophisticated Kongbool Homestead.

Much of the Gazette property was sub-divided for small farms by Government's Land Purchase Board in 1905 which led eventually, in 1925, to the construction of a local school (Garden, pp. 160 & 218). After Mrs Cross died in 1908, Dr Cross moved to Lilydale and his son, Mr John Cross took over Gazette. A bachelor, he lived the rest of his life alone in the house, keeping it exactly as his mother had left it. He had little contact with the local people but he did travel extensively overseas. He ran fine Corriedale sheep and enormous 7-10 year old Shorthorn and Hereford bullocks which topped the various local markets. He died in 1960 at the height of the 'wool boom'. It is said that he had 700 bales of wool in storage unsold.

The homestead portion of the property and 1,000ha passed to his nephew, Anthony Wilson, the only child of his sister Gladys. The Wilsons moved into Gazette in May 1960. Extensive modernisation and renovation changed

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** GAZETTE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Macarthur-Penshurst Rd PENSHURST

**STUDY NUMBER:** 060

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

---

the main house but only superficially.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

## **CONDITION:**

The buildings and gardens range in condition from poor to excellent.

## **INTEGRITY:**

Excellent degree of integrity for whole homestead complex.

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

The present Gazette Homestead complex is located about 10kms south-west of Penshurst, on the edge of the lava flow from Mount Rouse and on the Eumeralla River. The squatting run called Gazette dates from the early 1840s but its homestead was located some distance to the south-west. It was occupied by the Hutton family, which had extensive and continuing pastoral interests centred on Penshurst and commercial interests in Port Fairy. The run was divided into a northern half running sheep and a southern half running cattle. The present site may have been an outstation for the northern half and it includes the original stone shearing shed, sheep dip and associated but later outbuildings. A substantial manager's house, now in ruins, was built in 1882. The freehold and leasehold land of Gazette was acquired in 1870 as the last great purchase of the important pastoral partnership, Thomas Robertson and Sons. After the dissolution of the partnership, John and Mary Robertson owned Gazette. It was their daughter Eliza with her husband, Dr William Cross, who commissioned the Ballarat architect, Percival Richards to design the new homestead in 1895. It can be compared directly with another Robertson property, Kongbool, designed by Richards in 1898. Descendants of Thomas Robertson still occupy the property. The Gazette Homestead Complex remains substantially intact and in good condition, apart from the ruinous manager's residence and the dilapidated timber outbuildings associated with the shearing shed.

How is it significant?

The Gazette Homestead Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Gazette Homestead Complex is of historical significance as the descendent of one of the earliest squatting runs in the Hamilton part of 'Australia Felix' and particularly for its long associations with William Hutton and his family and with John George Robertson and his family, now to the fourth generation. The woolshed is of architectural significance as one of the most complete surviving and still in use (with its historic extensions and alterations, the sheep dip and associated plant, and the nearby outbuildings). The manager's house, although in ruins, demonstrates the role and status of that position. The stables are distinctive for their scale and form. The homestead (with its drive, gardens, orchard and outbuildings) is of architectural significance as an example of very late Victorian architecture, for its setting within a formal but conventional garden and its siting within the broader landscape and as an example of the work of the architect, Percival Richards.

## **COMPARISON:**

050 Kongbool Homestead Complex, Coleraine-Balmoral Rd, Balmoral

# HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: GAZETTE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Macarthur-Penshurst Rd PENSHURST

STUDY NUMBER: 060

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

---

ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

15-Apr-02

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	var.
Diana M Halmarick, comp.	Thos. Robertson & Sons "Mainstays of Our Earliest Days"	2000	var.
Don Garden	Hamilton a Western District History	1984	var.
J W Powling	Port Fairy, the First Fifty Years 1837-1887	1980	var.
James Smith, ed	The Cyclopaedia of Victoria, Vol 1	1905	267, 550
Margaret Bate, in Gordon Forth, ed.	The Biographical Dictionary of the Western District	1998	
Paul de Serville	Pounds and Pedigrees	1991	var.
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	var.