

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: WOODHOUSE-NAREEB SOLDIERS MEMORIAL HALL COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Bundoran Lane WOODHOUSE

STUDY NUMBER: 340

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 2 **SECTION:** A **PARISH:** PARISH OF BILPAH

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 476 A10; VicRoads 73 H6; located at the southern end of Bundoran Lane at the corner of the Hamilton-Chatsworth Road in the north-east corner.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: State



Woodhouse-Nareeb Memorial Complex, Woodhouse, viewed from south-west

Image Date: 29/05/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the main hall including the interiors and extensions; the tennis courts, toilets, the oval and the general landscaping, and 2. All the public recreation reserve, and 3. all the small earlier school and allotment 2 of section A of the Parish of Bilpah.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The complex comprises a substantial timber hall with a timber façade but otherwise clad in corrugated iron, an adjacent cream brick toilet block, tennis courts and a sports oval. The hall is distinctive not only for its austere but dramatic use of the Modern style but also for its gabled portico supported on five poles, its fenestration and its use of materials at a time of shortage. The front door is off-set rather than central and beside it there is a bronze plaque to commemorate the opening of the building. The hopper windows of the front and side elevations are set in high level rows. The interior includes a simple stage with access to the rear from two doors, a short flights of steps and two dressing rooms. A memorial board remembering the Soldier Settlers of the Nareeb-Woodhouse area is also located within the hall. The south elevation is extended to form a kitchen wing and includes a cream brick chimney. There are traditional rainwater tanks at the south-east corner. The toilet block on the south side is separate from the hall. Some distance away towards the south-east there is a sports oval delineated by a simple rail fence. On the north side of the hall and apparently separate from the complex there is a small cement sheeting building which was built as a school. It is in poor condition but it is relatively intact.

HISTORY:

The land on which the Woodhouse-Nareeb complex stands is likely to have been part of the Nareeb Nareeb squatting run originally taken up in 1849 by Charles Gray. From 1857, it was leased by the partnership of Horace Flower, Charles Lydiard, Charles Dodd and Thomas Crabbe, which came to be known as Flower, Liddiard and Co. In 1886 it was sold to Mr. Immons, who then sold to George Maslin in 1905. In 1909 Robert Thodore Beggs purchased the property, and the next owner was Hugh Beggs, from 1913.

The modern plan of the Parish of Bilpah shows that the land on which the complex was built, comprising about 11 acres in the recreation reserve and 1 acre in the adjacent allotment, was subdivided under the Soldier Settlement Act of 1946 and Gazetted about 1950. The surrounding allotment of about 614 acres was purchased from the Crown in 1950 by W T Scholfield under the Soldier Settlement Act 1946, whose descendants still own and occupy the land.

The hall was designed by architect, Stewart Handasay, and built by Strachan & Co for 2839 pounds. The hall was opened in 1955 by the famous Sister Vivian Bullwinkle who, according to the plaque on the façade, dedicated it "to the memory of Australian soldiers who were killed or died whilst serving their country during the 1939-1945 War". The memorial planting was dedicated by Sister Betty Jeffrey. The hall represents not just the major social and economic changes triggered by the Second World War but the responses to them through the soldier settlement scheme and the sense of community which emerged from it.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

- 8. Developing Australia's cultural life
- 8.5 Forming associations
- 8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid
- 8.5.4 Pursuing common leisure interests
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

CONDITION:

The main buildings are in good condition. They retains an excellent degree of integrity.

INTEGRITY:

Excellent degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

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What is significant?

The Woodhouse-Nareeb Memorial Complex is located on Bundoran Lane, Woodhouse. It comprises buildings and sporting facilities, sited together, which developed in response to the surge in population caused by Soldier Settlement after World War Two. Probably built by volunteer labour at a time of serious material shortages, the complex represents a strong sense of determination amongst the soldier settler families. It was opened by Sister Vivian Bullwinkle in 1955. Many of the descendents continue to live in the area. The site comprises a large timber hall, simply designed in the Modernist style, with a distinctive structural form and clad in corrugated iron, a cream brick toilet block, tennis courts, sports oval, Memorial Plantation and Nostalgia Plantation and a small cement sheeting building which was briefly a school sponsored by the Begg family of nearby Nareeb Nareeb. The complex is relatively intact and retains a good degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The Woodhouse-Nareeb Memorial Complex is of historical, social and architectural significance to the community of Woodhouse-Nareeb, to the Southern Grampians Shire and to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Woodhouse-Nareeb Memorial Complex is of historical significance for marking a major chapter in post World War 2 repatriation, commemoration and early posterity. It is of social significance as an example of cooperation for community self-improvement and as a continuing focus for that community. It is of architectural significance as an example of Modernism used to express a faith in the future, especially after a world war.

COMPARISON:

286 Public Hall Complex, Victoria Valley Road, Victoria Valley
476 Mirranatwa Public Hall, Mirranatwa School Road, Mirranatwa

ASSESSED BY: AEN

ASSESSMENT DATE:

16-Feb-04

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
Elise Clabburn, et al	Dunkeld & District, A Short History	1989	30
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	var.