
LONDONDERRY MINE WORKINGS

Location

DONALD TRACK ENOCHS POINT, MANSFIELD SHIRE

Municipality

MANSFIELD SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8123-0003

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO48

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 25, 2022

What is significant?

The Loddonderry Mine workings site is within the Upper Goulburn State Forest. The site was previously recorded in 1989 comprised a three-pass horizontal steam engine, two 4-head stamp batteries and section of penstock piping, several terraces cut into hillside, a water race, a house site, a mullock heap, remains of a blacksmith shop and tramway remains. The submitted site card has identified most of these features. The site was occupied from c.1865 when the Mansen brothers discovered gold and leased the area was mined until c.1913.

How is it significant?

The site is of historical and scientific significance.

Why is it significant?

R Supple (1989: Report 194) previously determined the site is of state-level significance. Archaeological remains from the site have the potential to provide information about the gold rush that took place in the area and information about settlement patterns in the Upper Godburn Goldfields. The site is understood to be well preserved.

Updated: August 2022

Hermes Number 10803

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

The Unknown, on the south slope of Railway Creek, was one of the first reefs discovered at Big River, in 1864. The next year, an 8-head battery was erected, enclosed in a weatherboard building and powered by a 30ft-diameter overshot waterwheel. In 1866, the action of the wheel was reversed, the battery foundations improved, and a further 5-head battery and 16-hp steam engine added to the plant. In 1868, the holders of the Londonderry lease purchased the Unknown Co. battery and constructed a tramway thence from their mine on the flank of Mt Terrible, at the head of Railway Creek. According to the mining registrar, 'the shoots, inclines, and trams, through and over which the stuff must pass before reaching the only available machine on the Railway Creek, add a very material item to the cost of raising'. As a result, the battery was moved higher up the creek, closer to the Londonderry claim, in 1871. Two years later the Londonderry mine was virtually amalgamated with its neighbour, the Retriever, when a party of tributers undertook to work the two mines in unison.

Back on the Unknown Reef, three years' prospecting (after years of abandonment) led to the discovery of rich stone in 1874. Stone was packed to the Londonderry battery for crushing until 1876, when a 5-head battery was again erected on the Unknown Reef. By 1878, the mine was abandoned. The Boscobelle tributers at the Londonderry mine had struggled during the mid-1870s, but again came onto good stone in 1878 and worked profitably until 1882. The Londonderry and Unknown mines were prospected and re-opened in a very small way ('a man and a boy' worked the Unknown) in the mid-1880s. In 1888, the Surprise Co., on the opposite bank of Railway Creek, purchased the 13-head Londonderry battery, apparently conveying ore thence by a connecting tramway. When Murray reviewed the goldfield in 1898, he noted that workings were underway at the Londonderry. The Unknown mine was idle and some of the old main workings had been filled in; about 4,000 oz of gold, he noted, had been won from the mine.

References:

Milner, pp. 21-3

Mining Surveyors' Reports (Gaffney's Creek subdivision), December 1864; (Big River subdivision), September 1865, June 1866, March 1867, June 1868, September 1868, March 1869, June & December 1870, December 1871, September 1873, March 1874, March & June 1876, June 1878, September & December 1882, March & December 1885, December 1887, March 1888, December 1889

Murray, pp. 23-4

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

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