
WATER WHEEL & MINE MACHINERY WEONE MINE

Location

FLAGSTAFF ROAD MURMUNGEE, WANGARATTA RURAL CITY

Municipality

WANGARATTA RURAL CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8225-0077

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 10962

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

Gold was discovered in Cunningham's Gully in 1858. Reefs were opened in the vicinity from the mid-1860s, the first of them being McLean's Reef, discovered by alluvial miners in McLean's Gully. A water-powered battery was erected in Cunningham's Gully by Dean & Co. in 1868, to crush for their King, Annandale, Solway reefs. The Murmungee - Bowman's Forest reefs were briefly the major gold producers on the Beechworth field. Operations at that time were short-lived, though, due in part to the scarcity of water in the locality, and the battery was removed in 1871. When the Bowman's Forest reefs were revived in the mid-1880s, a steam-driven battery was erected at Murmungee by George Biddington. Development of the reefs was again limited to surface scratchings, where rich stone was easily procured. The mining registrar wrote of the reefs in 1887 that 'up to the present none of them have developed into good permanent reefs'. There were small parties working on reefs about Murmungee early this century. One of them, Wells and party, erected a small battery on their prospecting claim

on McLean's Reef in 1915. The party was still prospecting in 1917. The fate of the 1915 battery is not known, but according to information cited by the National Trust, the existing plant was erected in 1939 and the mine, known as the Weone, worked (unprofitably) until the late 'forties by Walter Wells and his son Max. They crushed stone, not just from the Weone, but from various quartz shows in the vicinity. The shallow workings evident near the battery today suggest that the Murrumgee quartz workings never progressed much beyond the surface scratchings noted in the mid-1880s. In the early 1980s, the local branch of the National Trust proposed that the waterwheel and other remaining plant be re-sited to Beechworth, after the theft of several components from the Cunningham Gully site. The plant is still owned by Max Wells.

References:

Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906, 1915, 1917,

Flett, p. 68,

LCC, p. 87,

Recommendation N8, National Trust of Australia (Victoria) file no. 3276

Australian Heritage Commission, file no. 004531 2/08/230/0011/02

Mining Surveyors' Reports (Beechworth Subdivision), March & June 1866, December 1867, March - December 1868, December 1870, March - September 1885

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.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>