
Dhurringile Prisoner of War Camp

Location

870 Tatura Murchison Road, Tatura, GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY

Municipality

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY

Level of significance

-

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1554

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO3

Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 1, 2000

Dhurringile was built by James Winter, a brother to William Winter. It is a sixty five roomed two-storied mansion, built as a place of luxury and magnificence. It took three years to build and craftsmen were brought from overseas to work on the building. Imported materials were also used. During the Second World War the mansion housed German officers as prisoners of war, then it became an orphanage and was finally turned into a rehabilitation centre. The house lost many of its interior furnishings of master craftsmanship during the war, despite this the fine polished marbled fireplace and decorative plasterwork still remain in each room. The property has extensive stables, woolshed and large staff quarters. (Register of the National Estate)

HO3 HM Prison Dhurringile, Murchison-Tatura Road, Murchison

Construction dates 1870,

Hermes Number 126155

Property Number

Physical Description 1

"The mansion had sixty five rooms planned in suites and a huge entrance hall which could accommodate 100 dancers. There are four underground rooms at the east end where the winters planned to retire on hot days. Halfway up the staircase, with its hand-carved posts, is a wide platform where once rested a large pipe organ, now in one of Melbourne's churches. Innumerable bedrooms, a large nursery suite and special rooms for distinguished visitors on the first floor. There are three flights of steps in the high tower with a large square room at each landing. The hand-painted windows of the Staircase depict rural scenes and were obviously imported from England, one section of glass carries in colour the figures 1877. In addition to the homestead, the winters built extensive stabling, a woolshed (a memorial of the days when the estate supported 50,000 sheep) and a village of numerous buildings. At the rear of the mansion the gas works stood. Dhurringile was lit by gas as early as 1877." This was a description of Dhurringile before world war II when a barbed-wire fence was put around the house and the Commonwealth government began to use it as a camp for German internees. Many interior furnishings of master craftsmanship were removed, never to be replaced. There are several reports of escape tunnels constructed by the German prisoners timbered with rafters taken from the roof of the mansion.

Historical Australian Themes

Providing administrative structures and authorities - justice

Physical Conditions

Good

Usage/Former Usage

Prison

Veterans Description for Public

The Dhurringile house is located at 870 Tatura Murchison Road. The house was built by James Winter in 1877, as a place of luxury and magnificence comprising of a two-storey mansion with sixty-five rooms. Before the Second World War a barbed-wire fence was put around the house and the Commonwealth government began to use it as a camp for German internees. Twelve months later they were transferred elsewhere, the security measures greatly strengthened, and Dhurringile housed German officers and their batmen. In this preparation many interior furnishings of master craftsmanship were removed, never to be replaced and during the occupation the strongroom was broken open and the safe containing much of the history of Dhurringile was carried away. There are several reports of timbered escape tunnels constructed by the German prisoners, with rafters taken from the roof of the mansion. In 1947 the Presbyterian church purchased the property for £3,150 for use as a home for immigrant boys and in 1965 the government purchased the building and 116 acres of land for a minimum security prison.

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/>