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# Mount Disappointment Internment Campsites

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## Location

Allison Road Mount Disappointment, WANDONG VIC 3758

## Municipality

MITCHELL SHIRE

## Level of significance

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## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7923-0027

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

## Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2006

Heritage Victoria

Statement of Significance

Heritage Inventory History of Site: This camp, and No 2 camp (D7923-0028), were set up during the later part of WW II to house alien internees and, later, Italian prisoners of war. At the end of the war, the camps were abandoned and all but on of the main huts were removed from the No1 camp.

Description: Large cleared area of about five acres. Terraced with evidence of buildings, the remains of a tennis court and cricket pitch. Now used as a picnic ground.

General References Historic Sites in the Melbourne East Study Area, Griffiths, T., Perham, G. & Supple, R., 1989, LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

National Estate

Nominator's Statement of Significance : Forestry Camps No 1 and 2 in the Mount Disappointment State Forest are associated with the outbreak of World War II and the Government's practice of internment for those considered aliens and for detaining prisoners-of-war in remote forest areas. Their labour was used for cutting firewood and forest maintenance. These sites are relatively uncommon in the region, and represent an important

regional theme relating to use of the forests for camps during wartime. (Criterion A.4, Principal Australian Historic Theme 7.5.6)

It is possible that Indigenous cultural values of national estate significance exist in this place. As yet the Environment Forest Taskforce has not identified, documented or assessed these values.

Heritage Study/Consultant Mitchell - Mitchell Shire Heritage Study, Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd, 2006;

Other Names Forestry Camp No.1,

Hermes Number 127214

Property Number

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## Physical Description 2

Miscellaneous, Relic / Ruin

## Physical Description 1

Terraced area with evidence of buildings. Remnants of tennis courts and a cricket pitch now accommodate a picnic area. Site; 5 acres.

HVI Description: Large cleared area of about five acres. Terraced with evidence of buildings, the remains of a tennis court and cricket pitch. Now used as a picnic ground.

General References Historic Sites in the Melbourne East Study Area, Griffiths, T., Perham, G. & Supple, R., 1989, LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

### National Estate

Description : A group of two sites related to the theme of war. Camps No 1 and 2 were set up in the Mount Disappointment State Forest during the later years of World War II to house alien internees and later Italian prisoners-of-war. At the end of the war the camps were abandoned and all but one of the main huts were removed from Camp No 1. Forestry schools were held there until 1968, and No 2 site has been leased by Camberwell Grammar School for school camps since 1963.

### Description:

Both sites are large cleared areas in the forest, No 1 site being about five acres and No 2 site about three acres. Both areas are terraced and there is evidence of buildings being sited on these terraces, together with exotic plantings.

No 1 site: Remains from most of the camp are distributed within a radius of 150 metres from the intersection of Flowerdale and Allison Roads. The original camp is largely destroyed and the site now used as a picnic ground, but five definable features of the original camp remain: a two-roomed corrugated iron building (explosives magazine) encircled by an earth mound, including log buttressing; two concrete slab foundations of previous buildings; a drain/water race; and a cement water storage tank.

No 2 site: Some of the original huts still remain at this site, and some new buildings have been constructed. Eight structural features remain on the site: a concrete spillway; a weatherboard building formerly used as the 'foreman's residence'; a concrete weir; the concrete slab foundations of the POW mess hall; a concrete septic tank; a concrete drain; a grease trap, a water storage feature consisting of two large riveted boilers; and a cement tankstand.

## Veterans Description for Public

During the later part of the Second World War internment camps were set up in the Mount Disappointment State Forest to house alien internees and Italian prisoners of war. The prisoners' labour was used for cutting firewood and forest maintenance.

There were two main camps, the first was operational and known as either the No. 1 Camp or as Strath Creek. It was located at the intersection of Flowerdale and Two Tees/Alison Roads, and housed Forests Commission staff until they were ordered to leave so that internees could be accommodated there. The Forests staff moved to Regular Camp, which was also in the Mount Disappointment State Forest, and in May 1943 Camp No 1 was occupied by internees. By June 1944 the camp had been converted to house seventy five prisoners of war, and conformed to Geneva Convention standards.

During the latter years of World War Two, two sets of six charcoal kilns were established at Camp No 1, and in 1944 a powder magazine was constructed to store gelignite used in the construction of roads. Five definable features of the original camp remain: a two-roomed corrugated iron building (explosives magazine) encircled by an earth mound, including log buttressing; two concrete slab foundations of previous buildings; a drain/water race; and a cement water storage tank.

A second camp, which was established specifically to house alien internees, was occupied from March 1943. Located on Tree Road 15 off Murchison Road, it was known as No 2 Camp or Reedy Creek Camp. It was taken over by the army and enlarged and converted into a POW camp designed to hold 150 prisoners. By October 1944 it was occupied by prisoners who were to be put to work in the forests. Like No 1 camp, this camp also featured two sets of six charcoal burners, of which there are no remains. Eight structural features remain on the site: a concrete spillway; a weatherboard building formerly used as the 'foreman's residence'; a concrete weir; the concrete slab foundations of the POW mess hall; a concrete septic tank; a concrete drain; a grease trap, a water storage feature consisting of two large riveted boilers; and a cement tank stand.

*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/>*