
RIVER AND PASSAGE CAMP TRACK, BOUNDARY BEND HISTORICAL ARTEFACT SCATTER

Location

PASSAGE CAMP TRACK AND RIVER TRACK BOUNDARY BEND, SWAN HILL RURAL CITY

Municipality

SWAN HILL RURAL CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7528-0003

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

The presence of clay pipe fragments (at least three) manufactured by McDougall in Glasgow, Scotland between 1846 and 1891 suggests that the scatter dates to the mid to late 19th century (Museum Victoria online 2011 ; Walker & Walker 1969).

Interpretation of Site

The artefacts present at this site suggest that the scatter relates to the pastoral history of the area, and is probably associated with the Narrung Pastoral Run, first taken up by McLeod in 1848. The scatter could date to any time from McLeod's ownership to 1919 when the Narrung Pastoral Licence, which was run by the Creswick family from 1884, was cancelled.

The site probably functioned as a campsite for stockmen. From the artefacts present at the site, it can be inferred that activities that took place at the site included eating, drinking and the smoking of tobacco.

The presence of Aboriginal cultural heritage nearby may indicate contact between pastoralists and local Aboriginal people at the site.

Archaeological Significance

The site is assessed as being of 'medium' archaeological significance. While this type of site is not known to occur in large numbers in the area, the artefacts within the scatter are quite fragmented and the scatter itself appears to have been disturbed by the removal of fencing in addition to wind and water erosion of the sand dune on which it is situated. The site is unlikely to contain any in situ archaeological deposits.

Historical Significance

The site is assessed being of 'medium' historical significance to the local area as it contains tangible evidence for European occupation and in particular relates to the pastoral history of the area (1848-1919).

Hermes Number 183901

Property Number

History

Travelling down the Murrumbidgee in a whaleboat, Captain Charles Sturt and his party of explorers first sighted the Murray River on the 14th of January in 1830.

The second European to the area was Major (and later Sir) Thomas Mitchell (1792-1855), Surveyor-General of what was then New South Wales. On his third expedition into south-eastern Australia, which he referred to as the 'Australia Felix', Mitchell followed the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Darling Rivers to the south-west in search of new grazing land. Mitchell and his party came to the where the Murrumbidgee meets the Murray River and camped there between the 13th and 15th of June in 1836. This camp, is known as 'Passage Camp'.

Following Mitchell's return to Sydney, pastoralists and their stock flocked to the new grazing lands he had identified. Joseph Hawdon, among others was one of the first overlanders, taking 340 head of cattle across during early 1838, making more than one trip. According to Fisher, 'Hawdon wrote of camping about a mile below the Junction of the Murray and Murrumbidgee while droving sheep and cattle to Adelaide' (Fisher 2004:8). Within ten years of Mitchell's expedition, the area was taken up by squatting runs. Narong, Narrung or Neroney run (including the location of the site) was originally taken up by Donald J. McLeod. It was gazetted on 19 July 1848, although it was licenced 12 months prior to the NSW Orders-In-Council (October 1847). The run had an original estimated area of 15,360 acres (Spreadborough & Anderson 1983: 234). The boundaries were formally described by McLeod in his application for lease as,

'... bounded on the North and N.E. by the Murray River and on the South and S. W. by the Mally - an impenetrable scrub. In about the South east direction I am joined by Mr W Coghill and on the N. W. by Alexander MacCallum, Esq'.

In 1848, McLeod ran 900 head of cattle and 6,000 sheep on the run.

In 1851, the run was transferred to James Hamilton who, on 23 August 1859 exercised his pre-emptive right under the 1847 Regulation. and applied to purchase 320 acres of his pastoral licence land at 1 pound per acre. The Narrung P.R. is located some distance to the east of the site location. During his time at Narrung, Hamilton ran 250 head of cattle and 8,000 sheep (Fisher 2004:22).

Following Hamilton's purchase of 320 acres around his homestead, the remainder of the run was transferred to William Walker, William Sloane, James How and Alexander Thomson in 1860, William Sloane & Co. in 1862, William Hamilton in 1865 and the Oriental Bank Corporation in 1870. The licence was forfeited in 1883 (Spread borough & Anderson 1983: 234).

Following the Land Acts of the 1850s - 1870s, all the large squatting and pastoral runs were subdivided into smaller agricultural allotments. In 1884, the original squatting run was divided into three parcels, all of which were bought by the Creswick family and run under the Narrung Pastoral Licence until the lease was cancelled in 1919 (Fisher 2004:22).

The area surrounding the site was designated as state forest sometime during the 20th century and continues to be managed by Parks Victoria today as a Murray River Park.

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/>