
FORMER ROYAL MAIL HOTEL

Location

100 GOLDEN POINT ROAD BLACKWOOD, MOORABOOL SHIRE

Municipality

MOORABOOL SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7723-1233

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO29

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site

The remains of the site represent a complex sequence of building, modification, *renovation* and demolition. The standing sections of the building include a front verandah, two front bedrooms, an old billiard room, two rear bedrooms, a rear reception room and a lean-to kitchen. Footings of demolished parts of the building include two rear bedrooms, a piano and card room, a front billiard room, rear parlour and the front bar with a cellar beneath. At the rear of the building near the kitchen is flat stone *paving* and a filled-in well.

Archaeological Significance

The site of the Royal Mail Hotel, Blackwood, has archaeological significance for its potential to provide artefacts and important information relating to the operation, owners, customers and residents of a 19th-century goldfields hotel.

Historical Significance	The Royal Mail Hotel site at Blackwood is locally significant as a relatively intact example of a 19th-century goldfields hotel, and an early-20th-century guest house. The extant remains of the wooden building <i>have</i> the potential to provide important information about the construction and modification of commercial (hotel) buildings in the colonial period. The surface and sub-surface features and sub-floor archaeological deposits <i>have</i> the potential to provide important information about vernacular building techniques, as well as <i>evidence</i> relating to the operation of a 19th-century goldfields hotel and the consumer habits of hotel patrons.
Hermes Number	193009
Property Number	

History

Gold was first discovered in the Blackwood area in December 1851 . The Royal Mail Hotel was constructed and operating by 1865, with James Millyard as the first known publican. Millyard also served as the mail contractor between Blackwood and Kyneton via Tylden, Trentham and Newbury. He was succeeded as hotelkeeper by his son-in-law, John Cann, who had married Rebecca Millyard. Cann was the Royal Mail publican until 1877. The hotel was almost destroyed by fire in 1878. The Bacchus Marsh Express (2 March 1878) reported that 'Fire broke out at the 'Royal Mail' Hotel, Golden Point and was extinguished before any great damage was done, however, most of the roof was burnt'. There were originally at least seven hotels in the Golden Point area of Blackwood in the 19th century.

The next publican of the Royal Mail was Colin McLellan, who was associated with the hotel until 1889, when he was succeeded by Frederick L Cotton, who remained until 1893. Mrs. Mary Linnehan was the hotelkeeper from 1895 until 1899, when the business was bought by William Byres, who held the license until his death in July 1913. The license to operate the Royal Mail Hotel was rescinded by the Victorian government at the end of 1913, and the family of William Byres was awarded 175 pounds in compensation. From 1914 the seven daughters of William Byres (and his wife, Annie) ran the old hotel as a guest house. Christmas time was very popular with visitors from Melbourne, and many had to be accommodated in tents on the back lawn (Robertson 1978:8-9).

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/>