
RANGES HOTEL & TREES



Ranges Hotel



Early Ranges Hotel

Location

Main Street GEMBROOK, Cardinia Shire

Municipality

CARDINIA SHIRE

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO62

Heritage Listing

Cardinia Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The Ranges Hotel, which in a lesser form was first owned in 1894 by Jessie Sykes, is of significance to the Cardinia Shire as an important early hotel associated with Gembrook's development as a major resort. The hotel has significance, too, for its associations with the arrival of rail services to the area when the hotel appears to have doubled in size. It has associations with the Pitt brothers and Peter Patroni, hotel keeper, who ran the Ranges Hotel as a major tourist attraction during its heyday in the 1920s.

Despite many alterations and additions in the 1980s to accommodate a motel extension, the 1890s hotel, with the

former Gembrook store and coffee palace nearby, retains something of the character of early Gembrook.

The dining room and the mature trees are regionally notable.

Regional Significance

Heritage Study/Consultant	Cardinia - Cardinia Shire Heritage Study 1996, Graeme Butler & Associates, 1996;
Construction dates	1894,
Other Names	Main Street, Gembrook,
Hermes Number	30101
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

This is a long weatherboarded gabled roof structure which once faced its wide verandah to the south down the hill away from the street. This verandah is now enclosed and added to leaving the main facade facing towards the former railway station ground, with its new convex street verandah. The roofline shows the apex of a hipped roof section in the main ridge which has been absorbed by additions to the east and west. The corbel-top brick chimney is early and presumably has also been absorbed in a new roof leve at an early date. Much of the exterior and interior have been rebuilt or renovated although the openings along the street retain the character of an early hotel building, with multiple doors and double-hung windows. New picket fencing has been erected to the side of the hotel.

Photographs from the 1920s show the main elevated south-facing verandah with its fretted and panelled frieze, shallow timber brackets, turned verandah posts with square bases, a gablet set centrally into the verandah roof, and a slatted balustrade. Views of the 1950s also show a skillion profile north-facing street verandah supported on brick piers, presumably replacing the earlier bullnose verandah (gone). Another undated view of the hotel, from the corner of Redwood Road, shows a much smaller building (minus the eastern extension and enclosed and added to verandah) bushy side garden, a paling fence with a picket gate set between tall capped posts and verandah striping to the street verandah and the return shaped verandah on the south and east faces⁶.

Inside, there is the notable dining room with its chamfered ceiling, painted decoration and the fireplace, with its iron grate depicting fire gods in cast-iron. This space is one of the few well preserved elements in the hotel and is unmatched in the Shire.

The east side garden survives in part in the form of *Trachycarpus fortuneii* (Chusan palm), a large *Ulmus x hollandica* (Dutch elm), large *Camellia japonica* (camellia) and the tree ferns may also be original or early plantings.

Physical Conditions

Given the above major changes, the hotel is good external condition but dates from a number of stages, with enclosed verandahs and a new convex street verandah. There have been changes in detail inside and out.

Historical Australian Themes

Historical Themes

8.1 Timber townships, e.g. Cockatoo, Gembrook

8.5 Tourist centres, e.g. Upper Beaconsfield, Gembrook

Physical Description 2

Associations - Sykes, Jessie

Physical Description 3

Trees: east side garden survives in part in the form of *Trachycarpus fortuneii* (Chusan palm), a large *Ulmus x hollandica* (Dutch elm), large *Camellia japonica* (camellia) and the tree ferns may also be original or early plantings.

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/>