

CAMPASPE PARK



CAMPASPE PARK SOHE
2008



campaspe park extent january 2001

Location

300 ELLIS ROAD GOORNONG, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1923

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO459

VHR Registration

April 19, 2001

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 14, 2000

What is significant?

Campaspe Park is a large two storey homestead sited on the west bank of the Campaspe River. It was built in two phases, the first probably in the early to mid 1860s, the second in the early 1890s. No architect has been identified for either phase.

The house was built for Thomas Robertson, son of James Robertson, a squatter who took up the Campaspe River run in 1847. After Thomas inherited the run in 1853, it amounted to about 48,000 acres of pasture extending from Elmore in the north to Barnedown in the south. The pre-emptive right of 640 acres and the original home station were located on the east bank of the Campaspe River, but Robertson built the current house on the opposite bank on freehold land he acquired in 1862.

The house is constructed of brick, stuccoed over. The front of the house, facing towards the river, is in a distinctive pattern-book style, similar to examples published in the 1850s by J C Loudon or Francis Goodwin. It incorporates elements of the Gothick, Italianate and classical styles. The buttressed porch with pinnacles, drip moulds, narrow windows to the side elevations with concave reveals, quatrefoil motifs and intricate fretted bargeboards create a distinctive and individual appearance for the house.

Internally, the most unusual room is the master bedroom, finished in the Gothick style complete with shallow recesses framed by depressed pointed arches, a coffered ceiling, corbels, bosses, a distinctive and unusual ceiling rose and plaster representations of various flowers, including thistles, set into the cornice.

The hallway contains four small wall paintings, executed with a high degree of skill and detail by an unknown artist at an unknown date. The paintings, surrounded by elaborate painted frames, depict nautical scenes, possibly of Scotland.

Throughout the house there is a variety of decorative finishes, including a partially revealed faux marble scheme in the hallway and later pressed metal ceilings. The cellar area, fitted out for servants, contains two rooms with a fireplace and lath and plaster walls and ceilings. The later rear wing of the house, in a sympathetic style to the original section and linked via a breezeway, contains a billiard room and additional bedrooms.

In the grounds there are three notable outbuildings, being the laundry, smoke house and stables with coach house. They are constructed of brick and are stuccoed over. Their date is not clear, although the use of Tupper and Co galvanised iron tiles on the stables could date this building as c1857, when these tiles are first known to have appeared. However it is quite possible that the stables are later and that the tiles were recycled from an earlier building. The coach house ceiling is constructed from bark sheets.

The garden, in a picturesque position extending from the house to the river, incorporates an unusual fountain, possibly dating from the 1890s, constructed of local basalt mortared with cement. The garden plantings include four palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), a rare *Jubaea chilensis*, and a golden privet hedge.

How is it significant?

Campaspe Park is of architectural, historical and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Campaspe Park is architecturally significant as an unusual and distinctive example of a pastoral homestead, which skilfully combines the pattern book influences of the classical, Italianate and Gothick styles to produce a distinctive and picturesque country villa.

Campaspe Park is historically significant as one of the grandest pastoral homesteads in the Bendigo region. It is significant for its associations with the Robertson family, one of the early pastoral families in the region. The house has a high degree of structural integrity that allows an understanding of planning for servants and master, and in particular is notable for the well-preserved servant rooms beneath the front of the house.

Campaspe Park is of aesthetic significance for the quality of the hallway paintings. The paintings have been predominantly revealed from beneath later decorative layers of paint, and potentially could be fully restored. The paintings possibly date to the construction of the house in the 1860s, making them an early surviving example of naïve painting. They are unusual in the context of Victorian decorative taste. The iconography of the paintings is not yet understood but they clearly have a personal theme specific to the Robertson family.

The garden is aesthetically significant for its picturesque location on the edge of the Campaspe River. The form of the fountain, with its grotto-style character, is unusual.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must [notify](#) the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

General Conditions:

1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance

with it.

4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

House

- * Painting or wallpapering of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of earlier paint or other decorative scheme. Evidence of earlier schemes should be reported to Heritage Victoria.
- * Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves, skirtings and decorative strapping.
- * Replacement of carpets and floor coverings.
- * Removal or replacement of curtain track, rods, blinds and other window dressings.
- * Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted artworks.
- * Refurbishment of existing bathrooms, toilets and en suites including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings. Alterations to the bathroom in the rear wing (containing lead floor and walls) should not be undertaken without prior consultation with Heritage Victoria.
- * Removal and replacement of existing kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers etc and associated plumbing and wiring.
- * Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ. Note: if wiring original to the place was carried in timber conduits then the conduits should remain in-situ.
- * Installation, removal or replacement of smoke detectors and security alarms.

Garden

- * The process of gardening and maintenance, mowing, hedge clipping, bedding displays, removal of dead plants, disease and weed control, emergency and safety works to care for existing plants and planting themes
- * Removal of vegetation that is not significant to maintain fire safety and to conserve significant buildings and structures
- * The replanting of plant species to conserve the landscape character and plant collections and themes

Construction dates 1860,
Heritage Act Categories Registered place,
Hermes Number 3309
Property Number

History

History

In January 1846 James Robertson of Upper Keilor Station acquired the Campaspe River station from Robert Ogilby (Campaspe Park: Historic Background, no date, HV file).

In February 1848 James Robertson applied for a lease of waste lands that he had already held as licensed occupier for 21 months. There was some dispute with a Henry Grey Bennett, who objected in December 1848 to Robertson's claim for a lease, as listed in the advertised claims published in the Government Gazette (Pastoral Run Papers, PRO).

However in the early 1850s Robertson was making six-monthly returns for the assessment of his livestock, listing 9,000 sheep on his 48,000 acres. When James died in 1853 his son James inherited Upper Keilor whilst Campaspe River station passed to his second son Thomas (Campaspe Park: Historic Background). By 1855 Thomas declared the number of sheep to be just over 6,500, supplemented by 70 cattle (Pastoral Run Papers, PRO). Thomas acquired the pre-emptive right of 640 acres, on the east side of the river and known as Section A,

for £640 in October 1857. (A parish plan of Nolan at the Lands Department has been overwritten in one direction

'APPN.6050'
CO 24484

and in the other direction '31134'.

'31134' is a search notes reference. The notes detail various allotments and sections, including Thomas Robertson's Section 8 Allotment 12 of 78 acres and 7 roods for £312.3.6. It also records "Section A [the pre-emptive right] 640 acres £640, 23 October 1857 Reg 28 June 1850 page 46539."

In December 1863 Thomas Robertson wrote from Cloughs' Wool Warehouses in Melbourne to the President of the Board of Land and Works requesting a proportionate reduction in rental payable on his run as a consequence of it being diminished to 1113 acres. He cited the certificate of S (?)Langston of the Land Office dated 28 February 1863 in support of his request (Pastoral Run Papers, PRO).

In November 1864 Robertson purchased the freehold to many of the surveyed allotments on the west side of the river, including allotment 6 section 8 of the Parish of Nolan, on which the Campaspe Park house now sits. In 186? Robertson wrote to the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands in Melbourne requesting another reduction in his licence fee. This was on account of a great portion of his run on the west bank of the Campaspe River, including nearly all the river frontage, being sold "some three or four years ago" (Pastoral Run Papers, PRO).

A parish plan of Goornong, Egerton, Elmore and Nolan (G98) shows Robertson's pre-emptive right of 640 acres on the east side of the Campaspe. Clearly marked within the section and adjacent to the river is 'Thom. Robertson's Home Station' but several nondescript small markings, presumably being buildings.

Thomas Robertson drowned in the Campaspe River in December 1891. After Thomas Robertson's death in 1891 his executors put up his estate for auction. The current house was offered as one lot with allotments 4,6,8 and 12 of section 8 plus the pre-emptive right on the opposite side of the river.

However the house was not sold but remained in the hands of Robertson's descendants until it was sold to John Kneale in 1926.

Thomas Robertson also had a pre-emptive right on his run known as Barsedown, located a few kilometres south of the Campaspe River house (Auction Plan by Alan M Mendell, Licensed Surveyor for J C Walker & Co and J J Hayes & Co, auctioneers in conjunction).

Associated People:

Extent of Registration

1. All the land marked L1 shown on Diagram 1923 held by the Executive Director, being part of the land described in Vol 9880 Fol 759, Crown Allotments 6, 8 and 12, Section 8, Parish of Nolan.

2. All the buildings and structures marked as follows on Diagram 1923 held by the Executive Director.

B1 House

B2 Laundry

B3 Smoke house

B4 Stables and coach house

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/>