

# PAVILION CLASSROOM



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SOHE 2008



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h02051 1 natimuk primary  
pavilion



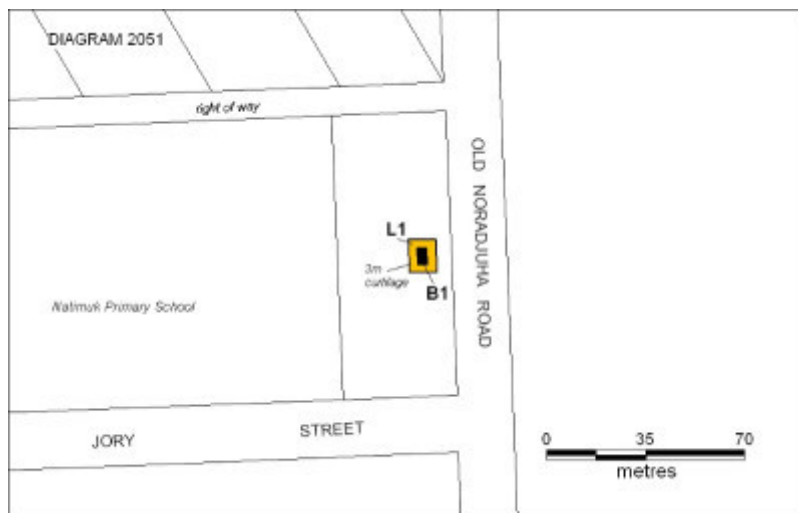
h02051 natimuk primary  
pavilion



h02051 natimuk primary  
pavilion interior



h02051 natimuk primary  
pavilion interior2



h02051 natimuk pavilion plan

## Location

38 OLD NORADJUHA ROAD NATIMUK, HORSHAM RURAL CITY

## Municipality

HORSHAM RURAL CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2051

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO26

## VHR Registration

April 8, 2004

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 26, 2004

### What is significant?

The Natimuk Pavilion Classroom was constructed by the Victorian Public Works Department in 1914 as an open air classroom for school children at Natimuk Primary School. It consisted of a rectangular timber structure with a gabled roof. The dimensions of the classroom were 20 x 30 feet. The room was intended to accommodate 48 children in dual seater desks. Three sides of the classroom are boarded with weatherboards to the height of three feet; above that height, adjustable canvas shutters were fitted right to the roofline. The back wall, on which the blackboard was mounted, is boarded from floor to ceiling. The room was built on sleeper plates for easy removal. A total of forty-four of these classrooms were constructed for Victorian schools between 1911 and 1914, but after World War I, the Education Department discontinued their construction. They were unpopular with teachers in winter weather. However they were used for additional accommodation in schools for many years. The Natimuk Primary School moved to a site in Jory Street in 1961. The Natimuk classroom was relocated in 1988 to the Australian House Museum at Deakin University by the Education Department because it was under threat. The building was returned to Natimuk in 2002 and is now located in the grounds of the present Natimuk Primary School in Jory Street.

Open air classrooms were designed to provide a healthy environment for delicate children, and resulted from the hygiene movement in education at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was hoped that improvements in lighting and ventilation aimed at improving the child's physical conditions would lead to better educational and health outcomes. The open air class room fitted in with current medical opinion favouring fresh air and a bracing environment for all. It derived from the ideas behind the open air sanatoria used for the treatment of tuberculosis patients in Europe. The spread of tuberculosis, particularly in crowded urban environments, was a constant concern. The first open-air recovery school, combining treatment and education for tubercular children, was opened in 1904 in Charlottenburg in Germany. The idea of open air classrooms then spread to target malnourished children or children at risk from tuberculosis, and later still to ordinary healthy children who would benefit from open air education. Tuberculosis, known as the 'white plague', was responsible for one death in nine in Victoria in 1902, and in 1904 was declared a notifiable disease in the State. Before the introduction of antibiotics, the early treatment of tuberculosis involved patients being exposed to fresh air and sunlight as much as possible. Although no section of the community was immune, tuberculosis was particularly associated with poverty, slum housing conditions, overcrowding, and poor nutrition. In 1904 the first school medical service was

established in Victoria, with regular physical examinations of children to diagnose health problems.

### **How is it significant?**

The Natimuk Pavilion Classroom is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria

### **Why is it significant?**

The Natimuk Pavilion Classroom is architecturally significant as the only surviving and relatively intact example of an early twentieth century purpose built portable open air classroom constructed for the Education Department.

The Natimuk Pavilion Classroom is historically significant as a rare example of an open air classroom. It reflects the early twentieth century preoccupation with the benefits of light and fresh air for the health and education of young children. Its design was also influenced by belief in the restorative powers of fresh air and sunlight for the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, prevalent in early twentieth century Victoria.

## **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. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works 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 works shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the

responsible authorities where applicable.

Construction dates	1914,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	Portable School Building, OPEN AIR CLASSROOM,
Hermes Number	4371
Property Number	

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## History

### CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

#### Natimuk

Natimuk was a town in Western Victoria, founded on land which was part of Vectis station. The Horsham Road District, which included Natimuk, was created on 3 March 1862. Natimuk became part of the Wimmera shire in 1864. From the 1850s a large German-speaking population settled in Western Victoria.

#### Natimuk Primary School

The Natimuk Primary School opened on 19 April 1875 with 22 students but by the end of the year 122 students were enrolled. Night classes were held to help German speaking adults with language difficulties. The first two-room building for school and residence was constructed in timber. In 1890 a brick school was built on the site. It was attached to the former wooden school and the residence section was then detached. In 1961 a new four room weatherboard school was constructed at a new site in Jory Street one mile from the old site.

#### Open Air Classrooms or Pavilion Classrooms

This open air classroom was designed to provide a healthy environment for delicate children, and resulted from the hygiene movement in education at the beginning of the twentieth century. This aimed to improve children's health and capacity for learning. It was hoped that measures aimed at improving the child's physical condition would lead to better educational outcomes. The open air class room was an idea which coincided with current medical opinion favouring fresh air and a bracing environment for all. It derived from the open air sanatoria used for the treatment of tuberculosis patients in Europe.

The prevalence of tuberculosis in crowded urban environments was a constant concern. The first open air recovery school, combining treatment and education for tubercular children, was opened in 1904 in Charlottenburg in Germany. The idea then spread to target malnourished children or children at risk from tuberculosis, and later still to ordinary healthy children who would benefit from open air education.

A number of open air schools were constructed for the Queensland Department of Public Instruction between 1914 and 1922. The design differed from the Victorian ones in that the Queensland buildings were open on three sides, with boarding on the weather side and part of the adjoining side and with large canvas roller blinds from roof to floor to protect the other sides where necessary. (Rose-Maree Kubatov. Open-Air ... Schools Without Walls. Thesis submitted for B. Arch 1992. p. iii)

A site was chosen for an open air school in Blackburn, Victoria in 1914, for malnourished and delicate children, some at risk from tuberculosis, from the slums of Richmond and Burnley who would travel by train each day, with a special daily programme for lessons, nourishing meals, sleep or rest periods, and play periods, before the children returned home by train about sunset. This school opened in 1915 with accommodation for 30 and an enrolment of 24. Hot drinks and lunches were provided for the children who stayed at the school for about a year until their health improved. The school remained in operation until 1964. (Vision and Realisation, vol. 1 p. 1012)

Experimental open air classrooms for regular classes were being held in pavilion classrooms by 1913 at Black Rock and Sandringham. These could take up to 48 children with 6 rows of 4 dual desks. These classrooms were described in 1914:

They are built of wood, and have only three walls and no windows, The walls are replaced by a wooden enclosure running on three sides at a height of 3 feet 6 inches , filled in above by a series of shutters, These are made of tightly drawn canvas in a wooden frame and run on ball bearings so that they are very easily moved and can be opened or shut in part or as a whole. A canvas door is placed in one corner.

*The one permanent wall is fitted with hyloplate [for a blackboard] and on it pictures or charts may be hung when necessary. All the woodwork is painted white. The teacher has the usual platform and cupboard, the only other furniture being dual desks for the children. The first room built [at Sandringham] was fitted with canvas blinds but these proved [noisy and distracting, as well as insufficiently durable]. These difficulties have, however, been overcome with the use of shutters. (Education Gazette And Teachers Aid 22 January 1914)*

The open air classrooms were also used as Rural practising schools. Rural practising schools were schools set up for teacher training purposes in Melbourne, with a range of children from beginners to senior primary in the one classroom. The Rural practising school was a model school, to train teachers for the numerous small schools with low enrolments in the remote regions of the State. It contained up to 16 dual desks of varying heights to accommodate the children of each grade. This gave teaching students an opportunity to observe a rural school in action and practise teaching at different levels simultaneously. A Rural School was established at Errol Street Primary School, North Melbourne in 1914 as part of the Victorian teacher training programme. A pavilion classroom was erected for this purpose in the grounds at Errol Street under the auspices of the Teachers College.

Other Rural Schools were at Queensberry Street, North Melbourne, Princes Hill, East Kew and the Model School in the grounds of the Teachers College. (Elaine Warne. *Errol Street: The First Hundred Years, 1857-1957*. Melbourne, Errol Street Centenary Committee, 1975)

A typical pavilion classroom was described as follows:

*Three of the walls in each building are boarded to the height of three feet and above that height, right to the roofline are fitted with stout navy canvas blinds, which are adjustable , and can be opened to any height in bays. The back wall is boarded from floor to ceiling. The rooms are built on sleeper plates and can, therefore, be easily removed. .. without being dismantled.*

The pavilion classrooms were constructed without fireplaces and chimneys, which made them unsuitable for inland areas. (L. Burchell. *Survey of One-Room State Schools 1900-1940*. p.i ).

## **HISTORY OF PLACE**

The Natimuk Pavilion Classroom was constructed in 1914 and is the only surviving example of an open air classroom out of approximately forty four constructed for the Education Department in the early years of the twentieth century.

### **Alterations**

A fireplace and chimney was installed at some time between its first construction and 1948. Asbestos cement sheeting covered the original canvas shutters.

The classroom was relocated in 1988 to of the Australian House Museum at Deakin University by the Education Department because it was under threat. (Geelong Advertiser 28 October 1988; Frank Campbell. *Guide to the Australian House Museum*. 5th ed. Geelong, Deakin University, 1992. p. 42) The building was returned to Natimuk in 2002 and is located in the grounds of the present Natimuk Primary School.

## **Extent of Registration**

1. All the building marked B1 on Diagram Number 2051 held by the Executive Director.
2. All the land marked L1 on Diagram Number 2051 held by the Executive Director .

*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/>*