
HEATHERLIE QUARRY

Location

GRAMPIANS NATIONAL PARK HALLS GAP, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7323-0012

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO26

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 3, 2005

In 1861 or 1862, Francis Walkins, stonemason of Stawell discovered an outcrop of freestone in the Mount Difficult range while on a shooting trip and realised that the stone was extremely durable. By the 1870s the stone was being quarried for use in Stawell. But, such was the potential of the quarry that a tramway was built to link it to the main railway at Stawell, and a township was gazetted adjacent to the quarry. In 1879, the Stawell freestone was unanimously recommended for the construction of Parliament House. The stone was also used for the Melbourne town hall and various other important buildings. The construction of the tramway link from Stawell to the quarry had facilitated the use of the stone in areas other than just locally.

The quarry is significant because of its association with several important Melbourne buildings. It is also of local importance in that the stone from the quarry was extensively used in the rebuilding of Main Street in Stawell after a major fire in the 1870s. The quarry is also important because there remains a fund of tangible evidence of the operations of the quarry in the form of buildings, machinery and worked rock faces.

[Source: Victorian Heritage Register]

Hermes Number 6738

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site: Discovered in the 1860s. By the 1880s the stone was accepted as being of a high quality and later a tramway was built from Stawell to the quarry by the Public Works Department. Control was later transferred to the Victorian railways. The production of the stone peaked in the 1880s. In 1886/7 over 100 men, many were Italians, were employed at the quarry and lived in crude stone and timber huts adjacent to the quarry. The township of Heatherlie was declared and surveyed, and in 1888 a schoolhouse was moved from Darra to cater for 33 children, although by October the following year there were only 4 children remaining and the school was closed. It seems most of the families were established in Stawell. The quarry closed in 1893, was later reopened at the turn of the century, and closed again in 1938, and only minor extractions have been made since. The rail line was closed in 1949 and all but a few pieces were removed in 1951.

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/>