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# Erskine House



B6989 Erskine House



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## Location

35 Mountjoy Parade and Cnr Otway Street,, LORNE VIC 3232 - Property No B6989

## Municipality

SURF COAST SHIRE

## Level of significance

State

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1812

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 8, 2004

Erskine House, which was established in the 1860s with the main building dating from 1939, is of historical, social and architectural significance at State level. Erskine House is historically important as the oldest and largest guesthouse in Victoria. From its beginnings as accommodation in the Mountjoy family home in 1868, it grew and developed into a large guest house in the late 19th century, with extensive grounds, further added to and extended in the early 20th century. After the 1936 and 1939 extensions were completed by Geelong architects Laird and Buchan, the guest house had developed into a large complex with croquet lawns, tennis courts, bowling, swimming pool, golf course, garden pavilions and boathouse in an open setting of lawns, hedges, shrubberies and large trees. Throughout its 130 years of continuous operation, Erskine House has adapted and changed to the various demands of an increasingly leisure- orientated society, as demonstrated by its various accretions.

Erskine House has significance in the history of the State's tourism as one of the first tourist facilities to be developed in Victoria. It pre-dates the Lorne Township as a venue for appreciating the area's scenic beauty, and has contributed to the development of the town as one of the best-known seaside centres in Victoria. When competition from other guesthouses arose in the late 1870s, the Mountjoys encouraged visitors to their remote establishment by operating a coach service from the train at Winchelsea. In the twentieth century, the guest house developed a strong association with the Great Ocean Road, built between 1918 and 1932, with the dramatic road experience contributing to an increased popularity of both town and guest house. The leisured guesthouse grounds along the seaside and their lofty bush coast backdrop reinforce the exclusivity and aesthetic appeal of the Erskine House experience.

Erskine House is representative of the guesthouse as a social phenomenon, which thrived in Victoria throughout the nineteenth century and declined from the 1950s with the advent of motel accommodation. It has social significance for remaining on the same site and for retaining elements that relate to various phases of its development. The guesthouse and its convivial atmosphere have contributed to the happiness and health of many visitors, one of its most prominent being journalist, nature - writer and war correspondent, Donald MacDonald (1857 - 1932).

Classified: 22/11/2004

Other Names      Erskine House Coffee Palace,

Hermes Number   69795

Property Number

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*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/>*