
CAPE SCHANCK LIGHTHOUSE 1

Location

CAPE SCHANCK ROAD CAPE SCHANCK, MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE

Municipality

MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7821-0058

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 17, 2005

What is significant?

The Cape Schanck Lightstation was constructed in 1857-59 as part of the second campaign of highway or ocean (as opposed to harbour) lighthouse building in Victoria which also produced lights at Wilson's Promontory and Gabo Island. The early buildings are constructed of locally quarried limestone and are similar in design to those at Wilson's Promontory and Gabo Island as well as the later quarters at Cape Otway all of which were designed within the Victorian Public Works Department probably by Charles Maplestone. Like Cape Otway there was also a stone signal station but this has been demolished leaving only archaeological remains. Other demolished buildings include the stables and stone privies. Unusual features of Cape Schanck Lightstation are the dispersed layout of the buildings around a central lawn and the retention within the tower of an early clockwork mechanism (despite conversion to automatic operation) and the original 1859 Chance Bros lens. As well as the early buildings there is a red brick 1938 residence and some later utility buildings. One half of the early duplex assistants' quarters has been converted to a museum while the other has been converted to a generator room. A separate weatherboard kitchen block was built in 1887 for these tiny dwellings but was itself converted to a spare residence in the 1960s. Cape Schanck, along with other Victorian ocean lightstations, was handed over to the Commonwealth after Federation. All the transferred lightstations, now automated, were returned to Victoria in 1995.

How is it significant?

The Cape Schanck Lightstation is of historical, architectural, scientific, social and archaeological importance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Cape Schanck Lightstation is historically and architecturally important as a complex of lighthouse and lightkeepers' quarters which has been in continuous operation since 1859. It is a manifestation of the increasing importance of Bass Strait as a shipping route in the 1850s and was a direct result of Intercolonial co-operation which presaged Federation. The limestone tower and quarters are architecturally significant as relatively intact purpose designed buildings designed in the Victorian Public Works Department probably by Charles Maplestone.

The Cape Schanck Lightstation is scientifically (technologically) important as a fine example of nineteenth century lighthouse technology, particularly the 1859 lens array manufactured by famous lighthouse manufacturer Chance Bros of Birmingham, the first of its type imported into Victoria.

The Cape Schanck Lightstation is socially important because its location, layout and design contribute to an understanding of the isolated life and critically important function of lightkeepers, particularly in the nineteenth century.

The Cape Schanck Lightstation is archaeologically important for its potential to reveal significant artefact remains pertaining to the use of the place as a lightstation and signal station. There are several recorded sites of former rubbish dumps which have already yielded household artefacts. As well there are the sites of demolished buildings, in particular the signal station, which have a high archaeological potential.

[Source: Victorian Heritage Register]

Interpretation of Site	Heritage Inventory Interpretation: Refuse relates to very late 19th and first half of 20th century habitation of lighthouse at Cape Schank. Although not detected, earlier household refuse may be present, as well as pre lighthouse occupation (pre 1859), which may survive in the vicinity.
Hermes Number	8661
Property Number	

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/>