Murrindindi Shire Heritage Study

Volume 1: Thematic Environmental History

Final revised report
July 2011

CONTEXT

Prepared for
Murrindindi Shire Council

Project Team:

Jackie Donkin (Project Manager, Stage 1), consultant

Natica Schmeder (Project Manager, Stage 2), senior consultant

Libby Riches, consultant

David Helms, senior consultant

Fae Ingledew, project support officer

Context Pty Ltd
22 Merri Street, Brunswick 3056

Phone 03 9380 6933
Facsimile 03 9380 4066

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The *Murrindindi Shire Council Thematic Environmental History 2006* comprised Volume 1 of the *Murrindindi Shire Council Heritage Study (Stage 1) 2006* (the Study). The purpose of the Study was to identify places of potential post-contact cultural significance within Murrindindi Shire (the study area) and to make recommendations for their future assessment.

As described in the following section, this environmental history provides an explanation of the themes and activities that have been important in shaping the study area so as to provide a context to assist with the identification of heritage places that illustrate its rich cultural history.

After the completion of the Stage 2 of the Study – assessment of places and precincts of potential heritage significance identified in Stage 1 – this History was revised to reflect the additional information gathered during Stage 2. A review of themes was made, to confirm that they are pertinent to the development of the study area, and are still evidenced on the ground. New information about the major towns in the study area was added from place and precinct citations, and examples of the places assessed were added to the lists of places that exemplify a given theme. A new section was added, covering the 2009 *Black Saturday* bushfires. Finally, the statement of significance for the Shire of Murrindindi was finalised.

The terms used throughout this report are consistent with *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance*. A glossary of these terms and their meanings is provided at the end of this report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The contributions of the following people and organisations to the completion of the *Murrindindi Shire Heritage Study (Stage 1)* are gratefully acknowledged.

- The project managers for the Study: Melissa Crane and Karen Girvan
- The Steering Committee: Planners Karen Girvan and Melissa Crane, Councillors Drew Coller, Mike Dalmau, Leanne Pleash, and Janet Gilmore.
- The Reference Group: Mavis Bateman, Drew Coller, Mike Dalmau, Bev & David Johns, Reg & Mary Kenealy, Brian

Lloyd, Lorna McDonald, Ian Newman, Annette O'Leary, and John Sharwood.

- Members of local historical societies and other interested individuals who participated in the community workshops held during the Study. In addition, those people who generously gave their time to act as guides during the field surveys: Lindsay Brownell, Joy Burchell, Bev and David Johns, Peter Kerr, Ian Newman, and John Sharwood.
- The owners, managers and custodians of heritage places in Murrindindi Shire for their interest, support and co-operation throughout the preparation of the Study.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This Thematic Environmental History provides an explanation of the themes and activities that have been important in shaping the present day Murrindindi Shire (the study area).

Murrindindi Shire was created in 1994 as a result of the re-defining of Victorian shires, and comprises the former Shires of Yea and Alexandra; the King Parrot and Strath Creek districts of the former Shire of Broadford; the Kinglake district of the former Shire of Eltham; the Kinglake West district of the former City of Whittlesea; the Terip Terip district of the former Shire of Euroa; and the Toolangi and Castella districts of the former Shire of Healesville. While the township of Whittlesea is not in the study area, it is relevant to its development and has, therefore, been referred to in this thematic history.

It is important to understand that a thematic environmental history is not intended as a complete social or political history of the municipality, but rather as a summary of human use and impact upon the landscape in the years since the period of first contact between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous explorers and settlers during the middle of the nineteenth century (referred to as the 'post-contact period'). It is not intended to be a chronological record and has not been written in this way. Rather, the history is organised according to themes so as to provide a context to assist with the identification of heritage places that illustrate the rich cultural history of the study area.

The history encompasses the whole of the study area and the identification of places in the larger centres of

Eildon, Yea, Alexandra, Kinglake, Marysville as well as other smaller townships.

The themes used in this environmental history have been adapted from the Australian Historic Themes (AHT) set down as guidelines by the Australian Heritage Council (AHC) and the *Thematic List of Post Contact Aboriginal Places/Sites* prepared in 1999 for Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and the Australian Heritage Commission. The AHC notes that:

> *The consistent organising principle for the Thematic Framework is activity. By emphasising the human activities that produced the places we value, and the human response to Australia's natural environment, places are related to the processes and stories associated with them, rather than to the type or function of place.*

These heritage places include buildings and structures, precincts, objects, ruins, trees and landscapes. The themes are also embodied in the historic or continuing use of places and people's social and spiritual associations with them.

Finally, it is important to understand that the history will not be arranged as a hierarchy giving priority, weighting and privilege to some themes, nor will it simply be a checklist. One place may be associated with many themes reflecting the integrated, diverse and complex way that places evolve over time.

The process has been an iterative one with the themes and sub themes revised and refined throughout the study based on more detailed research, fieldwork, workshops and consultation.

On this basis, each chapter includes:

- A brief introduction which includes an explanation of which AAV/AHC theme is relevant.
- An outline of the history of the study area associated with the particular theme.
- A discussion of, or list of, the heritage places associated with the theme that have been identified through secondary sources and through fieldwork. The list of heritage places is not exhaustive; rather they are examples of the places that are representative of the many places the Study has identified.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

As described above, this thematic environmental history is set out in a thematic, not chronological, order. The following table is provided to assist in understanding how the historic themes are associated with key dates in the historic development of the study area. Please note that this table is indicative only of broad timeframes associated with each theme, in particular with the key periods that the physical evidence of them was created. Reference should be made to the appropriate chapter in this environmental history for more specific information about the actual periods of influence for each theme.

Theme	**Period of Influence**										
	Pre-1860	**1860s**	**1870s**	**1880s**	**1890s**	**1900s**	**1910s**	**1920s**	**1930s**	**1940s**	**1950s**
First contact & European settlement											
Settling the land											
Utilising natural resources											
Industrialisation & making a region											
Transport & communications											
Building settlements & towns											
The environment & managing public land											
Governing & administration											
Community & cultural life											

	Primary period of influence
	Secondary or continuing period of influence

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AREA

The centre of the Shire of Murrindindi is located approximately 120 kms northeast of Melbourne. The municipality consists of two of the earliest shires in the region, the original Shire of Alexandra and Shire of Yea. The boundaries have moved with the recent re-definition of shires, for example, part of the Kinglake area was once within the Shire of Eltham, yet now forms the southern boundary of the Murrindindi Shire.

The landscape of the Murrindindi Shire is varied. More than one third of the existing Shire is native State Forest. Much of the terrain is mountainous and major rivers and creeks, such as the Goulburn and the Acheron rivers and King Parrot Creek run through the Shire.

The landscape at first contact would have been thickly forested, and European settlement since the early 1830s has had a profound impact. Trees and forests were cleared to make way for squatters who ran sheep and cattle, then selectors who farmed and introduced different forms of agriculture to the region.

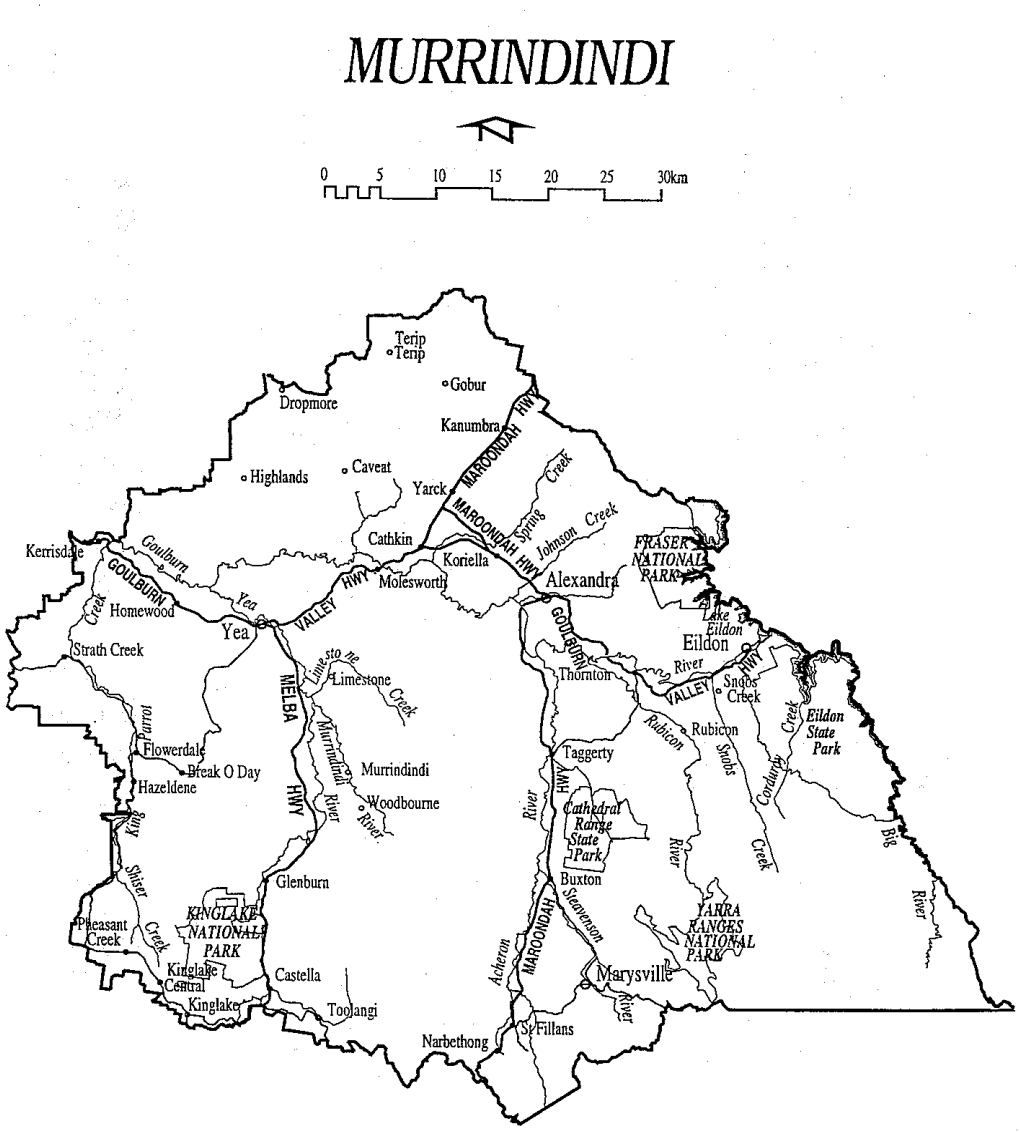


Figure 1 Map of Study Area

Source: Patterns in Local Government, *1998*

1. FIRST CONTACT & EXPLORATION

INTRODUCTION

This section addresses two of the themes defined by the *Australian Historic Themes Framework*. The first theme, living as Australia's earliest inhabitants, will provide a brief overview of the traditional custodians of the land, the clans of the Taungurung language speakers of the Kulin Nation. At the time of the arrival of the first Europeans, the lands of the Kulin Nation are believed to have extended from Healesville to Alexandra, Mansfield and Wangaratta in the north-east, across to Echuca in the north-west and south through to Yea.

The second theme, surveying the continent, addresses European exploration, beginning with the journey of Hume and Hovell in 1824-5. During their journey they travelled over the mountains and rivers, including Mt Disappointment and King Parrot Creek. Closely connected with this theme is the search for fertile pastures on which to run the squatters' sheep and cattle, enriching the squatters while contributing to the economy of the Colony by exporting wool to England.

HISTORY

1.1 Living as Australia's earliest inhabitants

First people

It is difficult to be certain about the nature of Aboriginal society immediately before and at the time of European occupation of their traditional lands. The impact of European occupation was severe and rapid and it is thought that the dispossession of the traditional owners of the Melbourne area and its surrounds may have been complete within ten years of first settlement. The traditional owners of the Shire of Murrindindi are believed to have been the Wujrungeri tribe, from whom the name Murrindindi was borrowed, and Taungurung-language speakers. It is estimated that there were some 1000 Taungurung people at the time of occupation.

The Taungurung were made up of a number of clans, clans being descent groups of people with specific responsibility for certain areas of land. Clan boundaries are typically difficult to reconstruct. However, it is probably true to say that the Lake Eildon area was the traditional country of the Yowang-illam-balluk. South-west of Lake Eildon was the country of the

Waring-illam-balluk. To the west, the country of the Yanan-illam extended to Nagambie, the Benbedora-balluk around Seymour and the Gunung-yellam in the ranges toward Kilmore (Bird, 1992 Ch.3; Barwick, 1984:124-5; Clark, 1990:369; Massola, 1975:3).

The Taungurung belonged to a larger affiliation of five central Victorian tribes known as the Kulin Nation. The other Kulin people were the Woi wurrung, the Wathaurong, the Dja Dja wurrung and the Boon wurrung. The people of the Kulin Nation had similar languages and culture and maintained close economic ties (Hercus, 1969: map, unpaginated). Social structures were organised under what is known as a moiety system. Each of the individual clans of the Kulin Nation belonged to one of two moieties. The moiety groups of the Kulin Nation were named after the important spirit ancestors Bunjil (Eaglehawk) and Waa (Crow). Moities governed many aspects of social and ritual behaviour and amongst the most important of these was marriage. Spouses had to be selected from the opposite moiety. Children inherited their clan and moiety from their father but they also had to maintain ties with the land of their mother's clan. The moiety system therefore ensured that appropriate marriages were made and close ties built between kin (Barwick, 1984:117; Clark ,1990:366-369; Cotter, 2001:2).

The Taungurung were hunter-gatherers and their use of the land revealed their complex understanding of resource availability with people remaining camped for long periods in response to the availability of food sources. People also travelled to participate in ceremonial and economic activities. It is thought that the uplands would have been only occupied on a limited basis during the summer (Lourandos, 1997: 230; McBryde, 1984: 268; Flood, 1995: 239-40). The traditions and daily lives of the local tribes, such as fishing for food and gathering grains, are described in Jones' local history, *Molesworth 1824-1994*. In this work, the writers propose that, although the Goulburn River provided a staple diet of fish, the men did not fish out the river but left enough to breed for the next season; likewise the women collected rhizome grasses from the shallow soil, leaving some to develop for the next season (Jones, 1994:1). The movements and division of labour of Aboriginal tribes was generally noted by William Thomas, Assistant Protector of Aborigines (1839-49). He states that:

> *… they seldom travel more than six miles a day. For their migratory movements all are employed. Children are getting gum, killing bandicoots, getting grubs:*

> *the men hunting and scaling trees for opossums. They are mostly at an encampment an hour before sundown: the women first, who get fire and water; by this time their spouses arrive* (Thomas quoted in Jones, 1994:1).

The Taungurung made tools and implements, such as axe-heads, from greenstone found at a quarry at Mt William, near Lancefield. Scars on the bark of old red gums indicate the removal of bark for fashioning canoes and shields (Jones, 1994:1). Jones and Jones, in their history of the Molesworth area, identify 'Whanregarwan' as a 'canoe tree', associated with the traditional owners (Figure 2). Although much disturbed by flood scouring and farming activities, a more or less continuous distribution of Indigenous cultural material may be expected on the flats and terraces bordering streams and wetlands. In the forested uplands, sites can be expected to be present on the spurs and ridgelines (Bird, 1992).

1.2 European occupation

The arrival of Europeans appears to have had a devastating effect on Aboriginal populations in South-eastern Australia including the study area. Long before European settlers arrived in the Port Phillip District, they were preceded by influenza, chickenpox and smallpox which took a severe toll on the Indigenous population by direct infection and inadequate immunity. In addition, population recovery was inhibited by the effect of greatly reduced fertility as a result of venereal diseases, also spread from infections contracted elsewhere in the earliest European settlements and from coastal contact with itinerant sealers and whalers. Tragically, deaths from introduced disease were interpreted within the cultural understanding of Aboriginal people as having resulted from the supernatural and from sorcery. This, in turn, led to retributive raids and exacerbated traditional conflicts and enmities between different language groups.

The European presence and displacement of Aboriginal people from their country, together with a breakdown in the authority of traditional laws, further increased the level of conflict between Indigenous groups (Broome, 1994:58-9; Kefous, 1988:234; Coutts, 1981:223). However, Hume and Hovell noted the continuing presence of Aboriginal people during their 1824-5 traverses of the study area. The Taungurung, to whom Europeans were no novelty and at that time presented little threat to their lifeways, lit fires to impede their progress (Parris 1950:128, Jones 1994:1, Kabaila 2005:19).

Following the Hume and Hovell expedition, when explorers, overlanders, stockholders and squatters moved into, or simply crossed, the Goulburn River corridor, they also encountered Aboriginal people. The Indigenous population had declined alarmingly and the reduction in numbers was to continue until only 20% of the pre-contact population of the Port Phillip District remained by 1853 (Broome, 1994:61). Despite this, Gardiner, Hawdon and Hepburn, the first overlanders to follow the 1836 track of Major Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, found a large Aboriginal encampment near the Goulburn containing about 70 *mia mias* but the estimated 200 or so natives had fled leaving their fires burning. A nervous Major Mitchell recorded in his published journal how his fear of treacherous attack from a group of Aborigines he met with near the Goulburn crossing place caused him to theatrically frighten them away. On the other hand, surveyor Stapylton, Mitchell's second-in-command, cooled his heels for some considerable time at the Goulburn, waiting for Mitchell, but was not disturbed. Hepburn, during 1838, on his second overland journey, this time with Coghill, encountered a large party of natives at the Goulburn. Initial apprehension on both sides soon gave way to friendly curiosity. Hepburn and Coghill, with their sheep and servants, crossed the river unmolested (Parris, 1950:130-33; Hewitt, 2000:21-2; Mitchell, 1839:289-90; Andrews, 1986:214; Hepburn in Bride (ed.), 1969:62).

This state of affairs did not last. As the squatters began to move in to take over the fertile flats and lower foothills along the Goulburn and its tributaries during the late 1830s, the attitude of the traditional owners hardened. Initially, their behaviour towards European intruders had reflected a willingness to temporarily share the land or allow passage through it on traditional terms; but shortly after John Clark squatted on the Goulburn at the Mitchellstown crossing place, armed resistance to the European invasion had replaced conciliation. The first serious collision occurred in 1838 when Aborigines raided a party of overlanders employed by the Faithfull brothers. At least seven Europeans and an unknown number of Aborigines were killed in this clash at a campsite on the Broken River. In response to this tragedy, the government set up Mounted Police posts along the overland track, together with a Protectorate station at the Goulburn; but, in an escalating round of raids and reprisals, the violence between European settlers and Aborigines went on regardless. A typical incident was the raid during November 1838 by 'at least 400 blacks' on Rutledge and Forster's run on the upper Goulburn, which resulted in

the death of shepherd George Mould. Christian de Villiers and the Native Police were detailed to pursue the attackers; but, in official language, 'none could be captured'. The effect of reprisals, growing despondency and the increasing pressure upon traditional Indigenous lifeways, further reduced native populations until few remained (Christie, 1979:51,63-4; Hewitt, 2000:30, Cannon ed. 1982:ch.12; Broome, 1994:61).

Not all Aboriginal people joined the warfare, however, and the more sympathetic settlers enjoyed reasonable relations with tolerant local Aborigines who 'went on with their lives as best they could' (Broome 1994:64-5). John Cotton, the squatter of *Doogalook* near Molesworth, admired 'the great beauty in the well moulded limbs and forms of the young natives' when they corroboreed on his run (Jones and Jones, 1994:1-2).

The thickly forested ridge located west and south-west of the Dom Dom Saddle is the Blacks Spur, originally known as the Blacks' Spur or Black's Spur. The name reflects the Aboriginal presence in the area. Sinnot proposes there had long been an Aboriginal trail here and it, or one close to it, was opened up as part of the early packhorse track to Woods Point (Sinnott, 2003:21).

When rural labour became scarce during the early years of the gold rush, many squatters relied upon Aboriginal people in the management of their stations and stock. However, Indigenous attempts at continuation of traditional lifeways often frustrated the European settlers who considered the natives unreliable and lacking in the will to adopt European notions of civilisation, Christianity and work ethic.

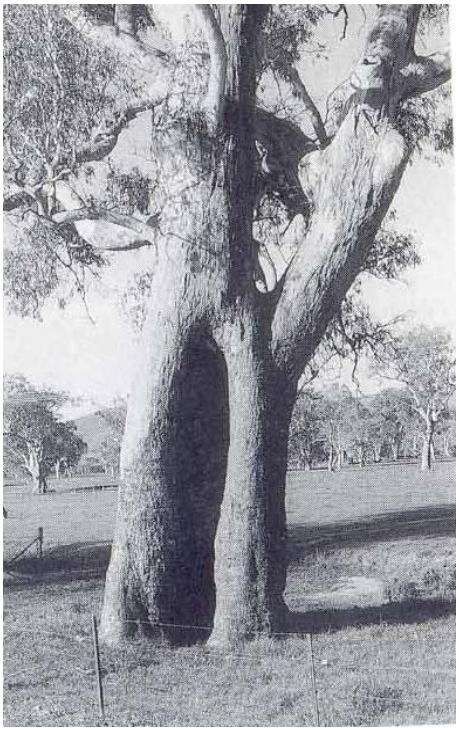


Figure 2 Canoe Tree, Molesworth
Source: Molesworth 1824-1994

In the study area, two canoe trees significant in Aboriginal cultural life have been identified. One is located at Molesworth (Figure 2) and another at Kinglake. Additionally, following the January 2006 bushfires, Aboriginal archaeological sites were located, including scatterings in the Kinglake area (Johns, 2006).

The Port Phillip District of New South Wales

At the time of first European exploration and settlement, the study area was part of the Port Phillip District of the Colony of New South Wales (Figure 3) which extended south of the Murray River to the coast and westwards past Western Port to Portland Bay. It was settled as a result of private action rather than as a result of government policy. The southern tip of the Port Phillip District proved to be strategic for the British in establishing sovereignty over *terra australis incognita*[*] ('Australia (the name)', Davison, 1998:45). In November 1826, the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Ralph Darling (1775-1858) (ADB, Vol.1, 1966:282-6),

[*] *Terra australis incognita*, is a Latin term meaning 'the unknown south land', Davison, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, p. 45.

under instructions from London, sent a party of soldiers and convicts to Western Port (Garden, 1984:20). A similar party was sent to King George Sound, Albany in Western Australia. London wanted evidence of possession of Australia and, in light of the earlier French expeditions, the most likely locations for settlement appeared to be on the coastline of Port Phillip, and on the south-west of Western Australia. The British believed that possession was an essential part of a territorial claim. In settling Western Port and Albany, they were effectively claiming the southern part of the Australian continent.

A determined effort to settle the Port Phillip District was made in 1834 and 1835 (Garden, 1984:23; Doyle, 1998:523). This was due largely to the dissatisfaction felt by the settlers in Van Diemen's Land who resented the fact that neither the Colonial Office in London nor the authorities in Sydney would authorise such a settlement. However, because of the illegal insurgents' claim upon the lands of Port Phillip, Governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke was soon forced to extend his authority to Port Phillip. In 1836 he appointed Captain William Lonsdale as Police Magistrate, the first government authority in the District (Cabena, 1992:1, Garden, 1984:23).

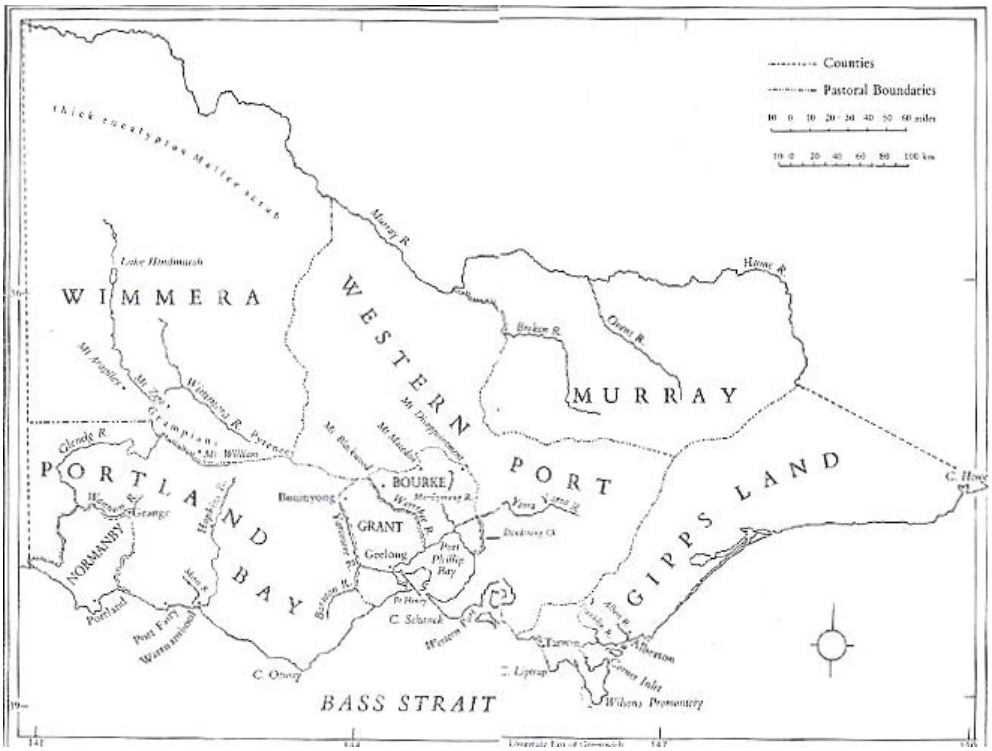


Figure 3 Port Phillip District 1840s

Source: Gipps-La Trobe Correspondence 1839-1846

The Port Phillip District was legally opened for settlement from 1836. A year later, in 1837, Governor Bourke visited the district with Robert Hoddle, who had been appointed Surveyor-in-Charge of the Port Phillip Branch of the Surveyor-General's Department, to inspect the much acclaimed pastoral land. Originally known as 'The Settlement' or 'Bearbrass', it was named Melbourne (after Lord Melbourne, the British Prime Minister 1835-41) by Governor Bourke during his visit to Port Phillip in 1837 (Garden, 1984:23).

Sydney's initial prohibitions against settlement eventually gave way to exploitation of the new District and its developing wool industry. The potential wealth of the District was quickly appreciated by both Sydney and London:

> *With a wide extent of the finest pasture land … it is not surprising that Victoria soon outstripped her neighbours in the production of merino wool of the highest quality. It was noticed by the first colonists that the sheep bred in Victoria grew wool of quite a different character to that produced by Tasmanian or New South Wales flocks (Thomson, 1984:85).*

In 1839, Bourke had appointed Charles Joseph La Trobe as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District; he was later the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony (Figure 4). On separation from New South Wales, the Port Phillip District became the Colony of Victoria on 1 July 1851.

Figure 4 Lieutenant-Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe
Source: Painting by Sir Francis Grant, Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

From as early as the mid-1840s, wool from the Port Phillip District was sought-after and the years 1838-40 represent the major period of economic and pastoral expansion in Victoria. By 1840 nearly all of the readily accessible good quality pastoral land in the western part of the colony had been occupied. The district of Port Phillip was also divided into squatting districts in 1840 (Cabena, 1992:2). The study area spreads across the areas formerly known as the Murray District and the Western Port district.

1.3 Early Exploration

The overland exploration of the study area began with Hamilton Hume and William Hovell's (ADB, 1966:556, 565) journey from Yass in New South Wales which started in October 1824. In early December 1824 they passed through the areas now known as the townships of Yarck, Molesworth and Yea, having named the Goulburn River (Hovell River), the King Parrot Creek and the Yea River (Muddy Creek). The following maps trace their route (Figures 5A & 5B).

The first map (Figure 5A) is an interpretation of Hume & Hovell's journey and is found in the study of early

Australian explorers, *In the Steps of the Explorers.* The second (Figure 5B) is a map derived 'from a sketch of Mr Hume's tour'. The original, drawn in 1825, was a card on linen, folded, and the fold marks are still visible on the photographic reproduction (NLA).

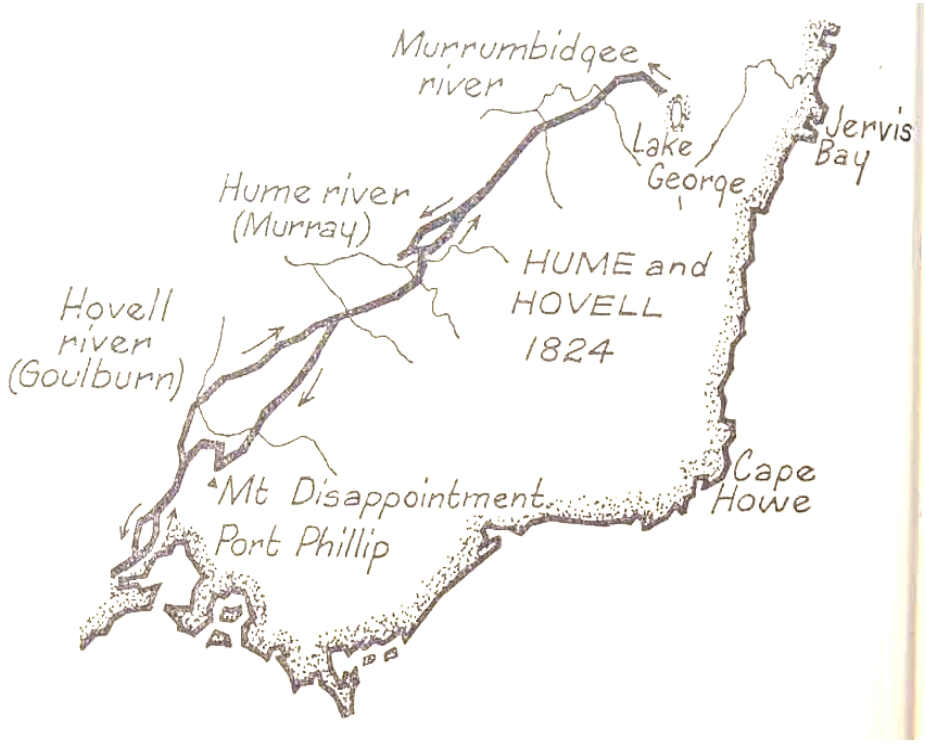


Figure 5A Hume and Hovell's journey
Source: In the Steps of the Explorers

Figure 5B Mr Hume's Sketch
Source: National Library of Australia, http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-f3

Of their journey, the party left no traces and, today, the route they are said to have followed is marked by a series of memorials. The accuracy of the recording of Hume and Hovell's journey, however, remains in dispute. As Alan Andrews, editor of *Hume and Hovell 1824*, states: 'the existing primary sources pose a number of problems' (Andrews, 1981:13).

After their journey, Hume and Hovell did not publish a map of their route. The primary account of their journey was compiled by Dr William Bland in 1831, after the event. He was able to write this account by accessing the individual accounts written by Hume and by Hovell. However, it was never clear whether Hume's diary used by Bland was the entire document: the diary has since been lost and can no longer be compared with Hovell's account. Consequently, as Andrews acknowledges, the details of Hume and Hovell's accomplishment have been 'confused from the time of their return to the present day' (Andrews, 1981:13).

Historian Ernest Scott transcribed Hovell's diaries in 1920, correcting his syntax and spelling. Scott's work is a more readable document than the original and can be compared with Bland's edited account.

Notwithstanding the problems associated with understanding the true path of Hume and Hovell, the party remained in the study area for around one week.

Within this context local researcher, David Johns, has been investigating the accuracy of the compasses used at the time and the implications this has for the records of the journey. His analysis of the descriptions of the exploration of the Mt Disappointment area (recorded in Andrew's edition) within the physical evidence of the landscape, has resulted in the following map, *Hume and Hovell Expedition Route, Woodfield to Strath Creek December 1824* (Figure 7).

According to Johns's examination of the route, he proposes they camped on the creek near Yarck on 2 December. They continued close to the creek at what is now Cathkin, heading west toward Molesworth and camped on the banks of the Goulburn River on 3 December. Until now, previous writers have placed the 3 December crossing at the foot of Cottons Pinch, however, Johns believes this is incorrect. The following map indicates they continued towards Yea, close to Cheviot Tunnel and camped on 4 and 5 December beside the Yea River (Johns, 2006).

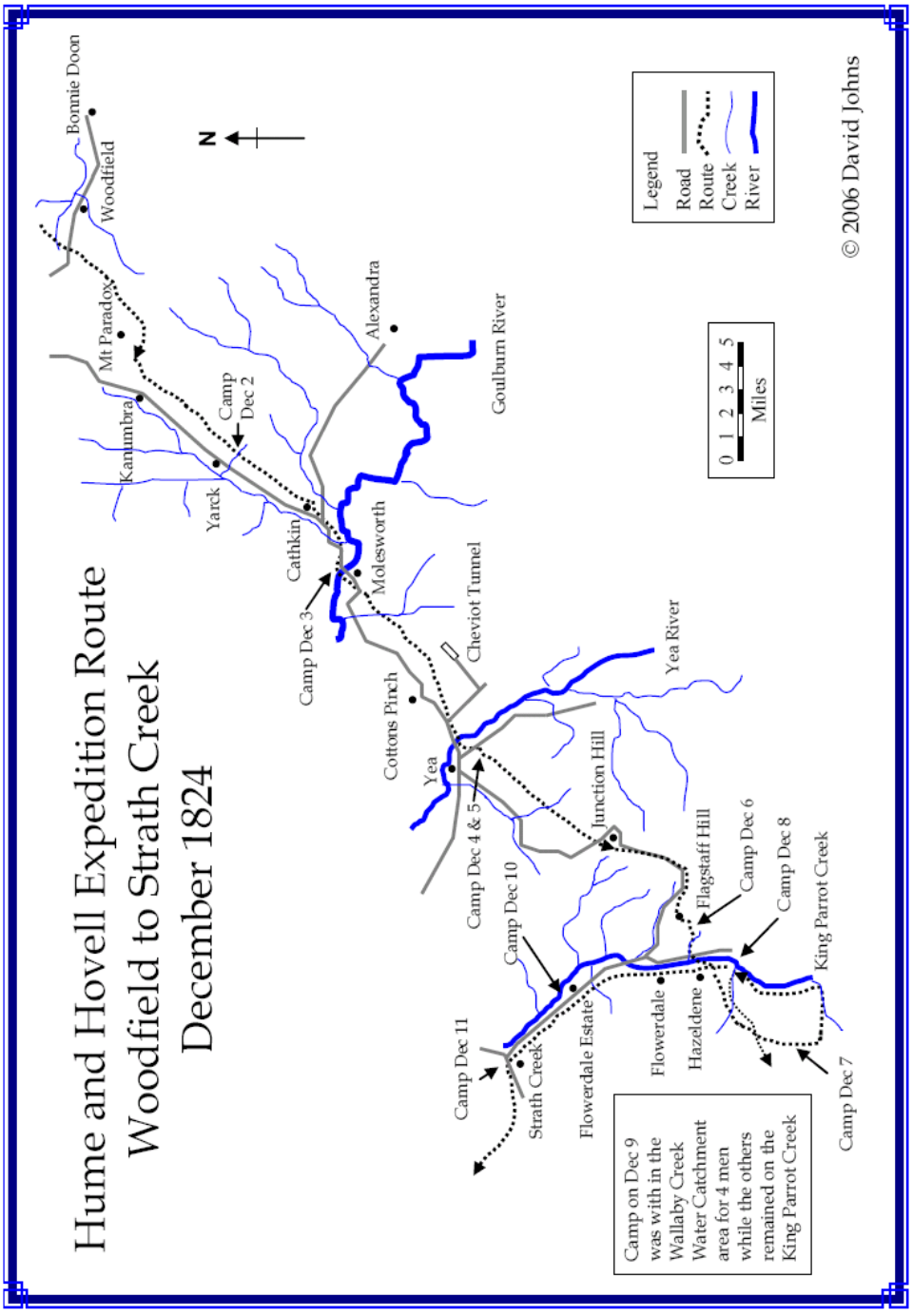


Figure 5C Alternative Map of Hume & Hovell's 1824 Journey

Source: David Johns©, Pheasant Creek, June 2006

On 7 December King Parrot Creek was named when the party saw their first flock of King Parrots since setting out on their explorations. It was in this region of the Shire that they encountered difficulties climbing what was later named Mount Disappointment. Andrews notes

that the mountain proved impenetrable and that they were unable to proceed through the dense canopy, fallen timber and cutting grass, and endured the discomfort of a combination of leeches, mosquitoes and ticks for three days. On 10 December, they gave up their quest and retreated, disappointed – naming the site Mount Disappointment.

Hume and Hovell's party continued their journey from Mount Disappointment and then took a southbound path, arriving on 16 December at Lara, near Geelong on Port Phillip Bay. The party mistakenly thought they had reached Western Port Bay, and their notations with this in mind may be part of the cause of the difficulty in determining their exact route. They returned to Yass, retracing their steps in half the time their outward journey had taken. The Hume Highway is said to follow the approximate route of their journey. However, the highway has changed significantly in recent times so this is probably inaccurate now.

The Hume and Hovell Memorial, located on the Melba Highway at Yea, was one of about forty memorials built in 1924, one hundred years after the explorers passed through the area. A Victorian Commemorative Committee was established to encourage communities along the route taken by Hume and Hovell to erect monuments to their achievement. The commemoration was closely linked with state primary school activities, and many plaques were sited near school grounds.

The Hume and Hovell Memorial in Yea was unveiled on the same day as the Strath Creek Memorial and the official party motored from one unveiling to the next. In Yea, the memorial was unveiled at Yea State School in November 1924 by a grand nephew of Hamilton Hume who was a student there. Located in a prominent position on the Melba Highway, and constructed of bluestone topped with river stone, the memorial cairn contains a plaque commemorating Hume and Hovell's exploration and records the date of the Memorial (VHR, File no. 13087).

Looking for fertile pastures

Hume and Hovell's 'glowing reports' (Noble, 1969:1) of the rich country they had discovered in their overland journey provided the impetus for settlement by would-be pastoralists from both New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (Blanks, 1973:21).

Much of the Port Phillip District was surveyed by Hoddle and his staff of three assistant surveyors from 1837, and many of the counties were named. A Commissioner of Crown Lands was also appointed in 1837 to regulate the

occupation of Crown Lands (Cabena et al, 1992:1). The first land sales occurred in Melbourne in June 1837.

The first pastoralists grazed their animals illegally on vast areas of land – acquiring the name squatters. Over time the term 'squatter' became synonymous with wealthy pastoralists. In 1836 the government formalised their occupation of the land by means of pastoral licences. Squatting licences of £10 per year were issued for any run under the 1839 *Land Sales Act* to restrain the unauthorised occupation of Crown Lands and to provide the means of defraying the cost of a border police.

In 1840 the District of Port Phillip was initially divided into two squatting districts – Portland Bay and Western Port. It was subsequently further subdivided into the Wimmera, Murray and Gippsland districts. Each district was controlled by a Commissioner of Crown Lands (Cabena, 1992:1).

The study area fell within two designated districts. South of the Goulburn River was originally designated as the Western Port region while north of the river formed part of the Murray district. They were the County of Anglesey and the District of the Murray respectively (Cabena, 1992:2; Morgan, 1987:5, 28-9; Jones, 1994:6). Squatters journeyed overland from Sydney and over the straits from Van Diemen's Land to settle in these newly opened areas. Permanent settlement occurred in the study area when licenses were issued from 1838 and the first pastoral runs were taken up.

Some of the earliest pastoral leases in the study area (Figure 6) were Kerrisdale (1838), Ghin Ghin (1838), Kenilworth (1839), Flowerdale (1840), Muddy Creek (1840), Cathkin (1840) Switzerland (1841) Balham Hill (1842) and Doogalook (1843) (Jones, 1994:5), as well as Dropmore (1848) (Spreadborough & Anderson 1983:46).

The first squatting leases

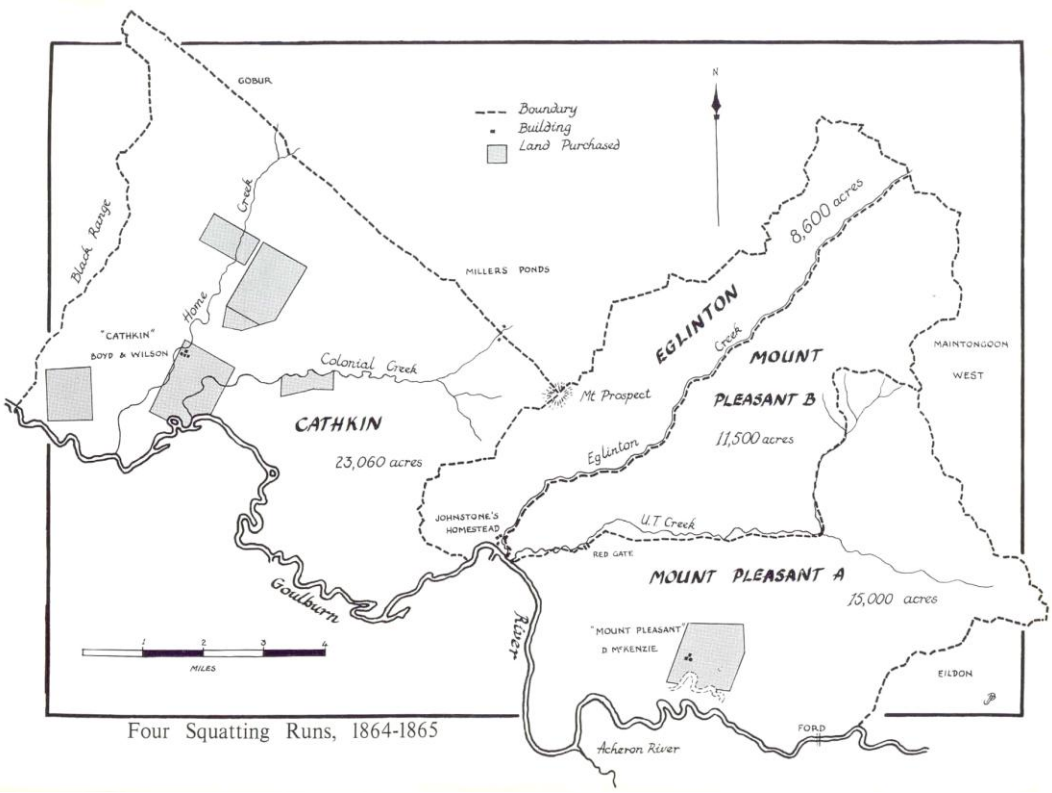


Figure 6 Pastoral Runs 1864-65, after Eglington Run was subdivided to create the Mount Pleasant B Run.
Source The Red Gate: A History of Alexandra

Many of the first squatters to arrive in the district were Scottish immigrants, as the names John Murchison of Kerrisdale of King Parrot Creek; James Henry Campbell of Ghin Ghin, William Leyden Ker of Mt Pleasant; and John Campbell of Doogalook indicate.

The early squatters were generally men of means and education. In particular, Ker's classical education was evident in the naming of some of the rivers across the Shire. For example, the Rubicon River was named after the stream crossed by Julius Caesar when he 'made an irrevocable decision' to 'cross the Rubicon' or seize control of Rome.

The Acheron River was named after one of the rivers of the Underworld or Kingdom of Hades. Hell's Gate was named because the country around Jamieson was so rugged that it was suggested the motto displayed above the entrance to Dante's Inferno 'All hope abandon ye who enter here' should be applied.

Ultima Thule Creek is also said to have been named by William Leyden Ker. *Ultima thule* is Latin for

'furtherest thule' or the 'limit of civilization' (Sinnott, 2003:160; Noble, 1969:2). *Ultima Thule* is also the name of Henry Handle Richardson's third and final book in the trilogy, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahoney*. The novel opens with Mahoney's financial ruin and explores the complete disintegration of his personality. In the novel, the Australian countryside at its worst takes on an almost human form of menace and hostility. Mahoney is finally broken by the countryside, seen by him as the limit of civilisation. Ultima Thule seemed to William Ker to be the 'limit of civilization' (Sinnot, 2003:160).

The names of the rivers are living reminders of the squatting period. A few original homesteads remain, including 'Murrindindi Station', 'Dropmore' homestead, 'Doogalook' homestead and the Killingworth ruins.

HERITAGE

- Cathkin Cemetery
- Hume & Hovell memorials at Yarck, Yea and Strath Creek
- River names, e.g., Rubicon, Acheron
- Doogalook Homestead
- Murrindindi Station
- Dropmore Homestead
- Kerrisdale Estate

2. SETTLING THE LAND

INTRODUCTION

The process of settling the land has led to some of the most profound changes to the landscape in the study area.

Chronologically, the land was occupied by squatters, selectors and, in some areas, soldier settlers. Initially, the large pastoral runs were operated by a small number of men or families. As the settlement process evolved, the land was subdivided and smaller allotments allowed a wider range of enthusiastic settlers to move into the area. At the same time, townships were populated by merchants and traders who also settled the area to support the pastoralists and, later, miners, millers and farmers.

The key phases of development may be summarised as:

Pastoral era

This era began with the arrival of the first squatters in the late 1830s and reached its peak by the 1860s then began to wane as the land was opened up for selection from the 1860s onwards.

As soon as the Port Phillip District was officially opened up to prospective settlers from 1835, the population of the Port Phillip District (1835-1851) increased rapidly. Following the first land sales in 1837, regions outside the settled districts were surveyed and offered for pastoral lease. By 1840 nearly all of the readily accessible good quality pastoral land in the western part of the colony had been occupied. In north-eastern Victoria, some of the mountainous and thickly forested areas of the study area were occupied by the early 1840s.

Selection era

The selection era began with the passing of a series of *Land Acts* from 1860, which allowed the selection and sale of Crown lands. Selection increased the population of the Colony as well as its output of wool and other agricultural products to export to the other Australian colonies as well as overseas.

Under the 1860 *Land Sales Act* three million acres of country lands were surveyed into allotments of 80 to 640 acres (32 to 260 ha) and made available for selection. No person could normally select more than 640 acres

annually. The land had to be paid for outright, or half paid for and half leased.

Further areas were opened up for selection under the *Land Act* of 1862 and the *Amendment Act* of 1865. Finally, the new *Land Act* in 1869 opened up the whole colony of Victoria for selection, including unsurveyed land. The selectors of unsurveyed land pegged out their claims and then applied for survey. Under this *Act* land was held under Licence for three years before it could be purchased. Furthermore, selectors were required to live on, and make improvements to, the land before the final purchase. Improvements included the construction of a house and fences and the cultivation of crops (Cabena; McGae; Bladin, 1989:37).

HISTORY

2.1 Pastoral occupation in the Shires of Yea and Alexandra

In Yea, Murrindindi, Molesworth and Alexandra, 28 squatting licences were granted in the initial allocation of land in the Western Port and Murray Districts, now the study area.

Squatters had no security of tenure over the land and so kept housing and structures to a minimum. However, in 1847, as part of the *Sale of Waste Lands Act*, squatters were allowed to purchase pre-emptive rights to their homestead blocks. Pastoral run holders who previously held grazing leases, sometimes called 'grass rights', were able to purchase up to 640 acres (260 ha) of their runs before any land in the locality was made available for public sale (Peel, 1974:49-53). The consequence of this legislation was that it gave landowners more certainty which, in turn, encouraged them to build more permanent and substantial homes, outbuildings and other structures. These buildings soon began to alter the landscape of the study area, a process further accelerated by the selection era.

As the colonial squatters consolidated their holdings, improved their earlier dwellings, and came to live on their stations with their families, they began to assume the role of landed gentry.

The story of the establishment of the major squatting runs can be seen as a microcosm of the migration of the sons of the British landed gentry, or merely hopefuls, to the antipodes. Family fortunes, originating in England, Ireland and Scotland, were often consolidated or lost on Australian soil. The second and third sons

of the upper class, who in Britain may have turned to the church for a living, had the opportunity to make their fortune in the colonies.

Many members of the British upper class and their dynasties left their mark on the Australian landscape. Emigrating with some funds, the younger sons could purchase substantial tracts of land in the new Colony and if they had luck and good management on their side, could accumulate both land and fortune. Evidence of the idiosyncrasies, enthusiasms and disappointments of the new settlers remain in the landscape. For example, Murrindindi Station, one of the first pastoral runs in the study area, recorded achievements and disappointments due to the unpredictability of life for the enthusiastic pioneering squatters.

The station was acquired in 1838 by Peter Snodgrass (1817-77) who had emigrated from Scotland to Sydney in 1828 (Figure 7). In 1838 he overlanded from Sydney, acquiring Murrindindi Station, a property of 25,000 acres, running 6,000 sheep (Figure 8). His neighbours were Edward Cotton of Balham Hill (Figure 9) and John Cotton of Doogalook and, in 1846, Snodgrass married Charlotte Agnes Cotton, the sister of the Cotton brothers.

Snodgrass, defined by historian Paul de Serville as 'a gentleman in [Melbourne] society', was an early member of the Melbourne Club and became known for his fiery temper and his insistence on duelling (de Serville, 1980:206), most notably with Redmond Barry. Snodgrass challenged Barry (later Sir Redmond) to a duel to be fought at Sandridge which was forfeited because Snodgrass fired before the signal was given (de Serville, 1980:110).

Snodgrass was one of the many squatters whose fortunes were reversed following the depression of the early 1840s, and investment difficulties. He died in poverty in Melbourne in 1877 (ADB, Vol. 2:455).

Figure 7 Peter Snodgrass
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Figure 8 Murrindindi Station
Source: Victorian Heritage Register Online

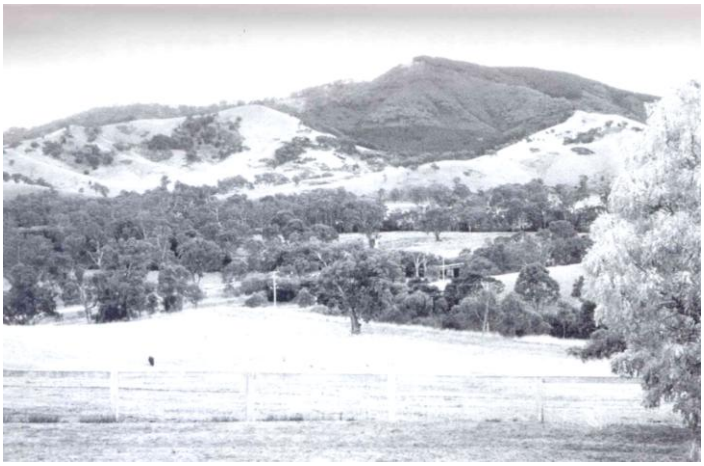


Figure 9 Balham Hill homestead
Source: Victorian Historical Journal

The original house at Murrindindi Station occupied by Snodgrass is thought to have been a bark hut. The current homestead (Figure 8) was built by the run's subsequent owner, Alexander Miller in c.1848. The Miller family owned the property until c.1869 (Billis & Kenyon, 1974:256). The house has been added to the Victorian Heritage Register (H0371) as an example of a pre-separation colonial vernacular homestead. Miller died in 1862 and was buried on the property, to the east of the present woolshed. The visual link between the homestead and the grave of Alexander Miller is noted by the Heritage Victoria in the property's listing on the VHR.

Closely connected to Snodgrass and the Murrindindi Station were nearby Doogalook and the Balham Hill stations. The Balham Hill run was located near the Goulburn River, 6 miles east of Yea (Figure 9). The licence for this run of 14,720 acres with 4,000 sheep was first granted to Edward Cotton in 1842 and was named after the family home, *Balham Hill,* in London.

Edward Cotton and his family had immigrated to the colonies in 1842 and he was followed in 1843 by his brother John and his family. As gentlemen, they were received into the homes of well-known Melbourne socialites Georgiana and Andrew McCrae and the superintendent of the Port Phillip District, Charles Joseph La Trobe and his wife Sophie (Lewis, 2004:192). John Cotton purchased the licence for Doogalook (Muddy Creek) run of 26,800 acres in September 1843 with Peter Snodgrass and it remained in the family until c.1865. The Doogalook Homestead, located on the Goulburn Valley Highway at Homewood and long associated with the early pastoral settlers, is on the register of the National

Trust of Victoria (ID B1980) and protected by the Murrindindi Shire Heritage Overlay (HO3)

In the same way, settlers involved in the establishment of the infrastructure supporting the pastoralists, that is, the facilities found in the nearby townships, also left their mark on the study area. These are discussed in more detail on Section 8 'Building Towns and Settlements'.

2.2 Selection

The theme of selection is closely linked with the squatter period, and flows from the experience and practices of the squatters. Legislation was enacted to stop squatters acquiring the premier tracts of land and larger blocks than their pre-emptive right, thereby maintaining a monopoly over the best land.

Throughout the 1860s, a series of four *Land Acts* clarified the terms and conditions upon which land could be selected and occupied by pastoralists and farmers.

However, until the legislation was refined in the late 1860s, the first *Acts* had the opposite effect to that intended. Over wide areas of land the squatters became the owners of much of the lands they had formerly leased and very few smallholders established themselves (Hirst, 1998:579).

The first *Land Sales Act* 1860 (also known as the *Nicholson Act* – named after the author of the Act) was the first legislation concerning the sale and selection of Crown Land.

Under this *Act,* three million acres of Victorian country were divided into surveyed allotments of 80-640 acres and proclaimed available for selection. Each allotment was divided into two equal portions and the successful applicants were required to pay full purchase money for freehold title or, pay for one half and, either lease the other, or surrender all rights to it. If more than one person applied for the same land, an auction was held between the two applicants. No person could select more than 640 acres each year unless the land had been available or unoccupied for more than one year (Cabena, 1992:3).

The second *Land Act* 1862 (also known as the *Duffy Act* – named after the author) of 1862 set aside ten million acres to be surveyed in allotments of 40-640 acres. In this legislation, if more than one person applied, the matter was decided by lottery rather than by auction. This legislation proved to be a more successful *Act* than

the first as it gave greater opportunities to selectors other than the squatters.

The *Duffy Act* also required selectors to improve their leaseholds by cultivating one tenth of the area within twelve months, erecting a habitable building or enclosing the land with a substantial fence. Pastoral runs could be occupied under annual licence, but the issue of a licence would not prevent the area being made available for selection. This meant that squatters who had previously paid the £10 annual licence fee would not necessarily be guaranteed that piece of land. Licences for existing runs could not be renewed after 1870. Sections 33 and 34 of the *Act* gave selection rights to holders of occupation licences while Section 47 enabled people wishing to introduce 'novel industries' (such as vineyards) to obtain a lease of up to 30 acres of Crown Land for a maximum of 30 years.

In 1865 the *Amending Land Act* (the first Grant Act) only slightly changed the terms and conditions of the selection process. However, this *Act* went a long way toward providing a more equal basis upon which the land was selected. Under this *Act*, the surveyed allotments of 40-640 acres were no longer divided in half and selectors could not automatically obtain freehold title. The lessee had to make improvements to the value of £1 per acre within two years and after three years the land could be purchased either at public auction or, if the lessee had been residing on the land, without competition. The point of this legislation was to increase the number of selectors living on, working and improving the land. Additionally, under Section 42 of the *Act*, people were able to reside on and cultivate land in the goldfields areas under licence. This section of the *Act* also introduced the notion of selection before survey which was further refined in the 1869 Second Grant Act (Cabena, 1992:3).

The first selections in the Upper Goulburn district occurred in 1865 when 19 allotments in the Parish of Eildon, 24 allotments in the Parish of Thornton and 59 at Yarck were selected (Noble, 1969:23). Further allotments in the Parish of Whanregarwen and the Parish of Eildon were advertised at Yea in March 1866.

Finally, the *Land Act* 1869 (the second *Grant Act*) effectively opened up the whole Colony of Victoria for selection including a large portion of unsurveyed land.

Selectors of unsurveyed land pegged out their claim and then applied for surveys. However, a person could only select up to 320 acres. One of the problems of this *Act* was that 320 acres was often too little to make a viable

living, and to get sufficient land and make a successful selection, all members of a family took up a selection, a loophole that worked in the small man's favour (Hirst, 1998:579). The amendments abolished or limited open sale at auction and made dummying by squatters more difficult. It gave more generous terms for repayment and subjected the whole system to closer scrutiny and surveillance.

The experience of selectors is satirised by Steele Rudd and popularised in his novel *On Our Selection*. This novel was later immortalised by the radio serial, *Dad and Dave from Snake Gully*, and was broadcast weekly from 1937-53. It is discussed below beneath the heading 'On Their Selection' (www.screensound.gov.au).

Local historian of the Alexandra area, Gerald W Noble, states that only about 150 applications for selections were received for almost as many blocks. Families were therefore able to build up considerable estates 'in the absence of any competition' (Noble, 1969:25). Some applications were refused and Noble cites the example of Peter Kerr who was refused land at Taggerty in 1876 because it had already been promised to someone else, and W J Nicholas was refused an application because he was not living on his first selection (Noble, 1969:26). In Gobur, land was selected by Frederick Burge who constructed a bark hut, fenced the block and ring-barked the timber. Mrs Burge kept cows and carted the milk around the mining camps. The family prospered on land well selected (Noble, 1969:28).

In some regions the alienation of land under the selection *Acts* is a story of conversion of leasehold Crown Land to freehold empires and principalities. Historian of the study area, Enid Shaw, suggests that Terip Terip was not opened up to selection until 1880, almost a decade after Yarck on the east side of the Black Range. This suggests that, across the Shire, the most desirable, or accessible, land was selected and surveyed first, leaving the less desirable or inaccessible land to be surveyed in the subsequent rounds of selection.

The greater security of tenure provided by selection led to the construction of permanent and more substantial buildings and the erection of fencing and tree windrows, which began to radically alter the landscape. These 'improvements' were a requirement of the selection process and established the selector as bona fide.

By the mid-1870s, each issue of the *Government Gazette* contained long lists of properties selected under the various 1860s *Acts*, surrendered and available for

tender. The squatting era in the Upper Goulburn area essentially ended with many squatters surrendering what had once been large and profitable pastoral runs (Noble 1969:22).

On Their Selection

It's twenty years ago now since we settled on the Creek. Twenty years! I remember well the day we came … – eight of us, and all the things – beds, tubs, a bucket, the two cedar chairs with the pine bottoms and back that Dad put in them, some pint-pots and old Cribb. It was a scorching hot day, too … (*On Our Selection*, Rudd, 1899:3)

Written in 1899 about a poverty-stricken family who selected land on the Darling Downs in Queensland, *On Our Selection* was published by the fiercely nationalistic *Bulletin* newspaper. The novel characterises the life of families who selected land in the hope of achieving a better life. The same decision was taken by Victorian families, many of whom settled in rural Victoria, and in the current Murrindindi region.

In the novel, *On Our Selection*, with both humour and pathos, Steele Rudd tells the story of a typical couple with youngsters and a dream. He tells of the backbreaking business of clearing the selection and planting the first crops, experimenting with livestock, chickens and cows, to survive until the wheat or barley could be sold and money found to feed the family as well as improve their selection. *On Our Selection* evocatively captures the often heartbreaking work undertaken by Australian families who embraced the agrarian dream by becoming selectors.

One local resident has been researching early selector homesteads in the Kinglake, Kinglake West and Pheasant Creek area and has located some selector files at the Public Record Office (Victoria). These files contain letters describing life in the small township near Pheasant Creek. Additional research is required to document the contents of these files and establish connections between the homes and the local families (Bev Johns, 2006).

As we shall see in Section 4 'Utilising Natural Resources', selection of blocks in the study area resulted in the establishment of a range of primary

industries including timber selection, mining, dairying, grazing, agriculture and other farming activities. A number of selectors' homesteads still exist in the Shire, including Summerview in Alexandra, Crathie in Gobur, and St Bee's in Kanumbra.

Given the high average rainfall and the high quality timber in some areas of the Shire, many selectors sought the timber resources. Noble, in his history, *The Red Gate*, proposes that many of the selectors who came to the area may have come from nearby townships of Broadford, Kilmore and Morang to seek for gold but were unsuccessful and later chose selection and remained in the area (Noble, 1969: 20-33).

Timber-getting became important because of the building expansion that began in Melbourne and other settled areas during the 1870s and, later, in the boom of the 1880s. The arrival of the railways enabled transportation of the timber to the metropolis. Locally, timber was transported via a network of tramways. (Note: Tramways associated with the timber industry will be dealt with specifically in Section 8 'Utilising Natural Resources').

After the process of logging came to an end, much of the cleared freehold forest was converted to farmland. At Toolangi, for example, it was first cultivated for berries and then potatoes.

The creek and river flats were used for dairying while grazing presently accounts for much of the cleared former forest. Markets for produce were created by the demands of miners and foresters and these pursuits were inter-related, particularly before the railway arrived.

In conclusion, the transformation of the timbered hills of the study area occurred during the selection period. The land was first cleared for cattle grazing and some cropping of the land. The majority of people who formed the farming community had originally come to the area as the gold generation of the 1850s, and then selected land. Life was hard on the selection, and many selectors gave up the challenge. Others slowly acquired larger tracts of land to make them viable for cattle or agricultural crops. Many of the earliest selection families are still living in the region, generations later, with inter-marriage occurring regularly across the Shire.

HERITAGE

- Homesteads, houses and landscape elements (windrows and hedges) associated with pastoral leases include Murrindindi Homestead, Balham Hill Homestead, Flowerdale Estate, Kerrisdale Estate, Dropmore Homestead, Killingworth Homestead and Doogalook Homestead.
- Police station complex, Yea.
- Switzerland Station Burial Ground, Goulburn River (between Yea and Molesworth) – black and white burial ground
- Old Kanumbra Woolshed in Kanumbra, and Niagarooon Woolshed near Alexandra
- Selectors' homesteads and properties include Eildon Park (aka Neggit's House), Thornton; Summerview, Alexandra; Juverna, Eildon; Topsy Vale, Fawcett; Crathie, Gobur; St Bee's, Kanumbra; and Mundroola, Taggerty.

Figure 10 Sketch Map 1865, Upper Yarra Waters and New Bridle Track to Woods Point

Source: Maps Collection, State Library of Victoria

3. TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

> *Improvements such as the telegraph, the railway, and electricity did not automatically come to the town, but were secured by the constant activity of councillors, ratepayers and interested groups exerting pressure upon the government, petitioning and lobbying Parliament time and again until … needs were met.* (Noble 1969:52)

Early access to the pastoral lands of the study area was overland on horseback or bullock drays from Melbourne or New South Wales. Because of the varying nature of the countryside, the development of roads was a slow and difficult process. Tracks made by men on horses, in wagons, or on foot, were usually named after those who had first blazed them, such as McCrae's Track.

The arrival of the railways to the study area from the 1880s brought a new era of transport and development, as well as access to markets for produce. The railway was essential to the development of the timber, sawmilling and agricultural life of the region.

Telecommunications, too, provided a vital link for the more remote parts of the study area, and a number of post and telegraph offices were opened across the region.

HISTORY

3.1 Developing road networks and bridges

The heavily timbered nature of much of the terrain in the study area meant that pioneers often had to cut tracks and bridle paths through the bush to their destination. Some of these tracks eventually became part of the road system, such as the existing road from Healesville to Marysville via Granton.

Alexandra and Yea, first designated Road Districts in 1868, progressed to Shire Council status in 1869 and 1873 respectively. This change of status allowed the Shires to tender for, and construct, roads and bridges in their locality. However, the construction of roads and bridges in the current study area was not without controversy and appears to have frequently polarised local communities, for example, building the first bridge over the Goulburn River at Molesworth.

The indirect influence of gold mining can be seen in the establishment of routes through the Upper Goulburn Valley used by miners to access goldfields to the east and northeast. The miners used part of the Yarra Track between Narbethong, Fernshaw and Marysville before following the

Steavenson River to Woods Point (in what is now Mitchell Shire).

The construction of roads and the adoption of motor vehicles greatly altered the patterns of transportation in the study area – as it did elsewhere. As selection led to permanent settlement, improvements were made to roads in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Yarra Track

The Yarra Track was a significant breakthrough in communication between Melbourne and the north-east goldfields. It is documented in the pictorial history, *The Last of the Yarra Track Stopping Places*, compiled by local historian, Ann Thomas (Thomas, 1980). Surveyed by Reich, Guerin and Robley with government sponsorship, the route passed through Eltham and the Plenty watershed to follow the Yarra Valley to Yarra Glen. The track then followed the Watts River to Healesville, crossing it at Fernshaw then ascending the Blacks Spur to Narbethong and Marysville. Past Marysville, the Yarra Track route followed the main divide before reaching Matlock and Woods Point. Until Bingley View, the route of the Yarra Track lies within the southern boundary of what is now Murrindindi Shire (Thomas, 1980:28-9; Symonds, 1982:20). Thomas's history includes photographs of bullock wagons delivering stores to the remote district, timber splitters of the early twentieth century and the early settlement of Fernshaw in the 1880s.

Other tracks

As well as the Yarra Track, other tracks, some named after the person who established them, criss-cross the study area. Some of these routes are shown on an 1865 *Sketch Map* of the Upper Yarra Waters showing the new bridle path to Woods Point from Lilydale. The *Sketch Map* also shows a number of tracks located outside the study area. One is a road from Melbourne labelled 'mail road' which ends at the New Chum mine, north of Healesville (shown in Figure 10 at the beginning of this chapter). The two major routes to Woods Point began at Lilydale. The first travels along what is probably close to the current Maroondah Highway to Fernshaw, through the Blacks Spur, Narbethong, Cranton and Marysville and travels east to Woods Point. The second track follows the route of the Yarra River to McMahon township and crosses Alderman's Creek where the route branches off the main track to Woods Point. It is possible that bullock trails and Cobb & Co coaches also used these tracks.

Coach Routes

The rise and decline of Cobb & Co closely follows the rise and fall of horse-drawn transport. The introduction of railways and motor vehicles changed the nature of transport worldwide.

Cobb & Co coaches, one of a small number of coach services established in the nineteenth century, first serviced the Victorian goldfields. From this point, Cobb & Co quickly developed to become the most successful company of its kind. The coach company pioneered transport routes for delivering mail, gold and passengers across Victoria. Cobb & Co later expanded, with a popular series of routes throughout the eastern states. Opening up the country via coach travel contributed greatly to social growth and the expansion of pastoral settlement across Australia.

Established in Melbourne in 1853 by a small group of immigrant Americans – Freeman Cobb, John Murray Peck, John B Lamber and James Swanton – Cobb & Co. was first known as the American Telegraph Line of Coaches. The company's first passenger coach left Melbourne for Forest Creek near Bendigo (now Castlemaine) on 30 January 1854. The list of routes grew and the company's coaches soon had a monopoly over coach and mail routes throughout Victoria.

The arrival of the motor car in the early twentieth century, combined with the political and economic effects of World War One, saw the general decline of the coaching industry and led to the eventual closure of Cobb & Co in Victoria. Most New South Wales coach lines had ceased operating by 1897. The last Cobb & Co coach ran on 14 August 1924 – just over 70 years after the first passenger coach left Melbourne for the goldfields in 1854 (http://www.cobbco.com.au/AboutUs/Heritage.asp).

The crack of the whip was a welcome sound that heralded the arrival of the Cobb & Co coaches to the study area. However, as Jones notes, although during the 1860s most of the coaches running on the Victorian routes did so under the name of Cobb & Co, in 1868 F B Clapp & Co (who later owned the first omnibus tram company) secured the contract for mail delivery from Broadford to Alexandra three days a week. The coach travelled via Reedy Creek, King Parrot Creek, Yea and Molesworth to Alexandra (Jones, 1994:49). By 1869, a competitor, Robertson Wagner and Co, had secured the Alexandra contract and a virtual monopoly of mail contracts throughout Victoria.

Figure 11 Coaches at Narbethong, 1904
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Figure 12 Cobb & Co. coach delivering mail to Coranderrk, c.1907
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Cobb & Co's presence in the study area is captured in the photograph of a coach at Narbethong (Figure 11) and in the postcard which is a photograph of passengers travelling to Coranderrk, the Aboriginal settlement just outside the study area (Figure 12). The postcard itself is unusual because it is produced in sepia yet some of the women's clothing has been coloured in by hand. The postcard, dated c.1907, shows Aboriginal and white passengers in the Cobb & Co coach. The caption reads:

> *The first Cobbs' Coach Imported from America, Delivering H.M. Mail to the Natives at Coranderrk.* (State Library of Victoria)

Bridges

Because of the study area's many rivers, creeks and streams, bridges were vital to the transport system and developed according to the available technology and funds, often sought from the State Government.

The construction of bridges was closely linked to the development of the rail system servicing the timber industry, for example, the bridge over Pheasant Creek near Kinglake was built to bring timber out of the bush. Tram rails are visible on the decking in the photograph (Figure 13).

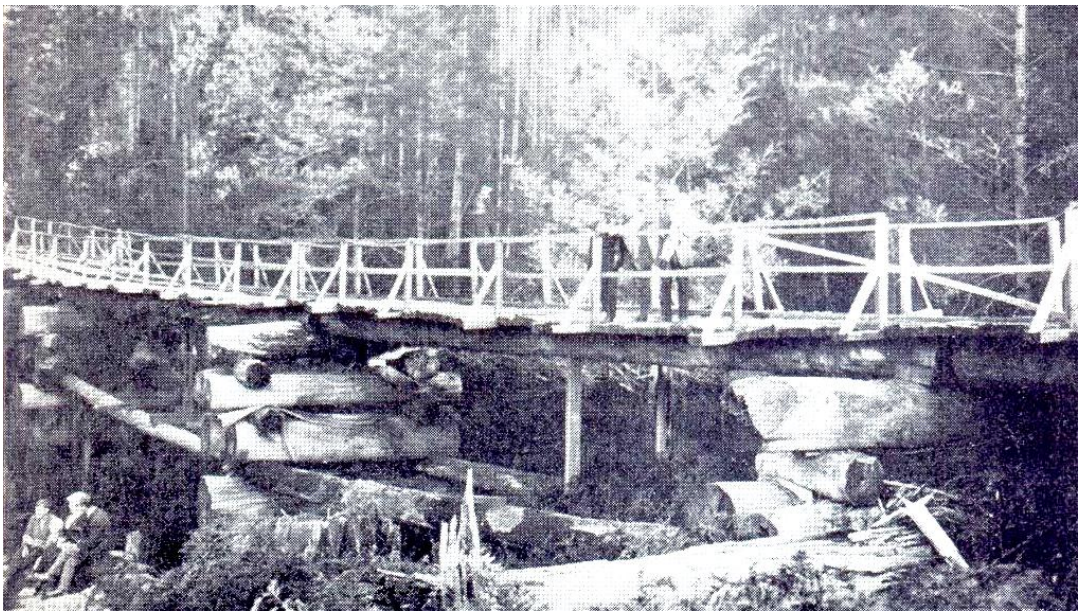


Figure 13 Bridge over Pheasant Creek
Source: The Story of Yea

The first road bridge across the Goulburn at Molesworth was built in 1873, replacing Sloan's Punt. John Hannibal Sloan had started a punt service across the river here in 1858. The service, and the town, were both known as Sloan's Punt (Sinnott, 2003: 141) (Figure 14).

Figure 14 Bridge over the Goulburn at Molesworth, c.1912
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

The controversy over the building of the Molesworth Bridge brought the Yea Shire Council almost to bankruptcy and was an expensive, lengthy and painful saga for the Government, the Roads Board, Councillors and ratepayers alike (Blanks, 1973: 169; Evans, 1994:49-51). The complex negotiations and reliance on colonial funds required to finance the Molesworth Bridge illustrates the ambition of a growing municipality to attract new residents and tourists to the area. In order to ensure that the project went ahead funds were raised for the building of the bridge before tenders were let for its construction.

The bridge opened up the highway to Alexandra, Mansfield and the goldfields at Woods Point. When the old bridge had to be closed for reconstruction in 1898, another punt was built to carry the traffic including carriages, carts, coaches, and 'many thousands of sheep and cattle' (Blanks, 1973:173). The reconstructed bridge remained in use until it was replaced in 1972 by a new concrete bridge built by the then Country Roads Board (Blanks, 1973:174).

On 15 September 1911 the area's most serious rail derailment occurred at Harvey's Bridge, Native Dog Road, Harvey's Gully (south of Molesworth), when the third truck left the line and was followed by several others (Jones, 1994:54) (Figure 15).

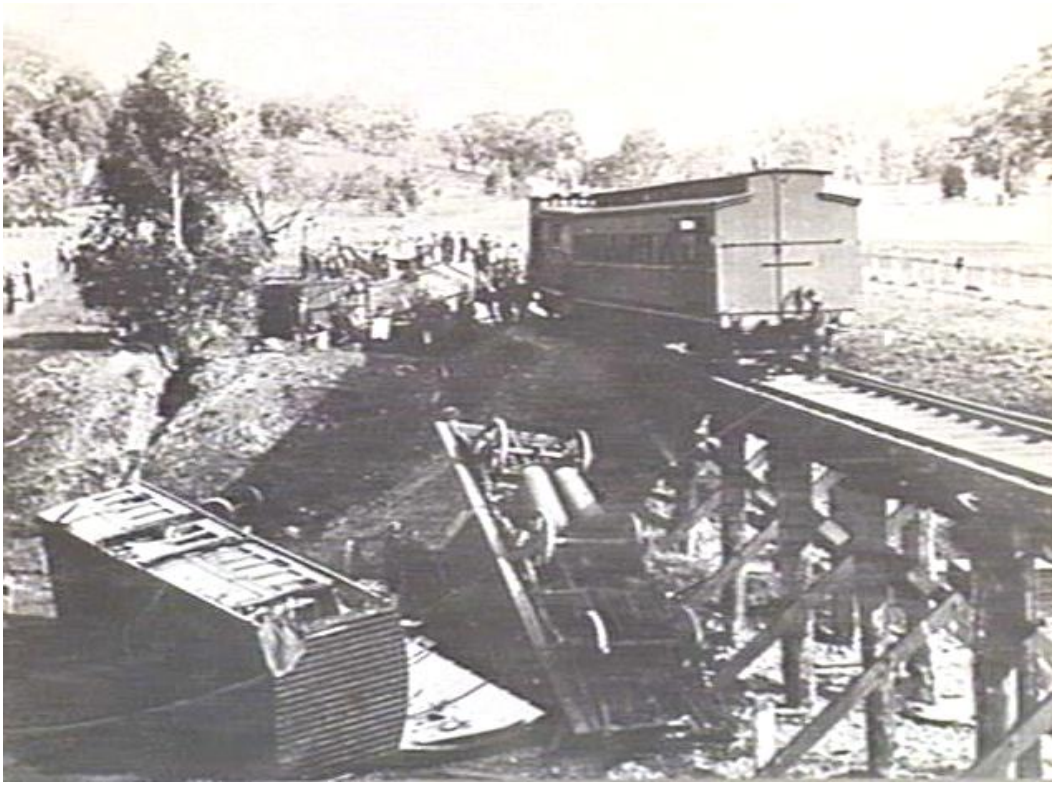


Figure 15 Train derailment, Harvey's Gully, 1911
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Engineer and First World War hero, John Monash, designed the Cremona Bridge (Figure 16) located within the Cremona Estate, acquired by the Closer Settlement Board in 1911. Construction commenced in March 1913 and the bridge opened in October 1913. However, neither the bridge nor the Cremona Estate were truly successful ventures. Before it opened, the bridge showed hair cracks and had to be repaired. By the 1920s, the Cremona Closer Settlement Estate had reverted to one farm. The Goulburn's frequent floods scoured the banks and undermined the inadequate abutment foundations. Maintenance on the bridge was neglected because of its relative unimportance to the traffic of the Shire. The ends of the bridge finally collapsed during the great flood of 1934 (Jones, 1994:32).

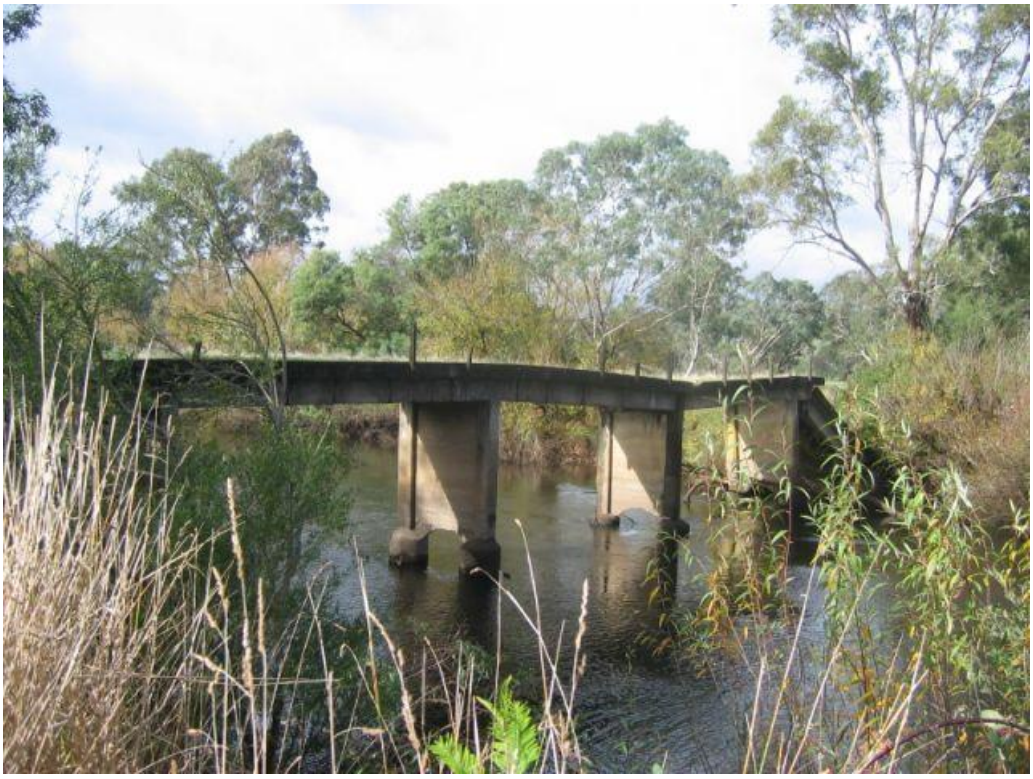


Figure 16 Monash Bridge, Cremona Estate, Cathkin
Source: www.home.vicnet.au/~aholgate/jm/girdertexts/gdrtext4.html

3.2 Railways

As with other regions of Victoria, the railways played a major role in the development of many parts of the study area, especially in the establishment of the timber and sawmilling industries and the development of agriculture.

The railway system flourished in parts of Melbourne and country Victoria during the nineteenth century. However, the initiative to connect the study area to Melbourne by rail took many years as we shall see in this section.

Railway policy, including decisions on where new lines should be built, how much should be borrowed to build them, and who employed to run them, became political questions, subject to the vagaries of factional alliances and the pressures of local lobby groups (Davison, 1998:548).

The development of colonial Australia can be traced through the development of its rail system. Railways harnessed the energy of steam and accelerated the speed of transporting people and goods across inland Australia. Railways influenced the fortunes of towns and regions; became the colonies' largest employer; transformed the relationship between town and country; and introduced new conceptions of distance, time and comfort (Davison, 1998:547). From the first they were primarily agents of development rather than profit-making ventures.

Missing out on a railway could turn a flourishing centre into a ghost-town; but so could getting one if local industries could not meet the competition of city-based manufacturers or producers from competing regions.

In Victoria, the first railways and proposals for lines were initiated by private enterprise. Rail historian, Leo J Harrigan, notes that the first proposed railway for Victoria was drawn up as early as 1835 by Government Surveyor, Robert Hoddle, when he marked out a town site at Port Melbourne (then Sandhurst) and planned a line from Melbourne (Harrigan, 1962:1).

The pastoral industry provided the initial impetus for transport and communication systems. In March 1847, when Queen Victoria signed the Orders-in-Council, it also set down the terms on which Her Majesty's Government would grant land for railway construction purposes despite the fact that there was no provision for government involvement in railway building. By 1850, private shareholders subscribed to a company established to build a line from Melbourne to Geelong.

Figure 17 Entrance to Molesworth Railway Station, c.1914
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Figure 18 Mansfield train leaving Molesworth, c.1914
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

During 1852-3, private companies floated eight Victorian railway schemes, but only three of these received government approval. In 1853 the Legislative Council legislated to enable the building of lines by the Melbourne and Hobsons Bay Railway Company; the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company; and the Melbourne, Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway Company (Garden, 1988:88). The Melbourne and Hobsons Bay Railway Company was the first railway in Australia.

It was the timber industry that persuaded the Railways Department to extend sections of the rail line in the study area. In 1882 the decision to build the Tallarook-Yea railway line was taken by Thomas Hunt, MLA for Kilmore and Anglesey (1877-89) (www.parliament.vic.gov.au/re-member/bioregsearch.cfm) and on 6 May 1882 the Council received a letter advising them that the line would be the next to go through. Construction of the line began, however, and it was not long before it became obvious that the tendered price of £97,368 was inadequate. The former Yea Railway Station is an intact example of a standard Gothic-styled Railway Station building (VHR, H0771). The importance of the branch line from Tallarook to Yea and Alexandra can be seen in the picturesque design of the former Yea Railway Station (Figure 19).

The permanent way traversed difficult terrain, and the line had to be cut into steep hills with the water of the Goulburn so close that stones could easily be dropped from carriage windows into the river below (Blanks, 1973:197). Along the route there were twenty-three bridges over 23 ¾ miles of track, 'innumerable cuttings from which a total of 459,000 cubic yards of stone and gravel had to be shifted'. The project employed over one thousand men, and a small township grew up in a valley of the King Parrot Creek.

Shanty towns also grew up along the route, incorporating sly grog, general stores, butchers, bakers and restaurants providing good cheap meals for the workers and their families (Blanks, 1973:197).

Thomas Bent's infamous 'Octopus Act' of 1884 authorised an extension to Mansfield, with a short branch line from Cathkin to serve Alexandra. The branch line was opened only as far as Alexandra Road or Spring Creek, 4 ½ miles from Alexandra, on 16 September 1890. Subsequently, the depression of the 1890s meant that funds, although initially authorised in 1892, were not available to extend the line to Alexandra (Noble, 1969:53).

Cheviot Station opened in 1889 as part of the Yea to Molesworth extension; Molesworth to Merton opened in 1890, and Merton to Mansfield opened in 1891. From Cheviot Station to the Cheviot Tunnel is a distance of 2 ¼ miles. The Cheviot Tunnel is built under McLoughlins Gap between Cheviot and Molesworth. Accidents, floods and strikes delayed its construction which took two years. The line between Yea and Molesworth did not open until 12 November 1889 (www.tourisminternet.com.au/yeatunel.htm).

It was not until 1906 that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways recommended the completion of the line. This was a prudent move. The Committee considered the importance of the timber industry to the locality and also acknowledged that agricultural production in the region would be increased if the line was extended to Alexandra (Noble, 1969:54).

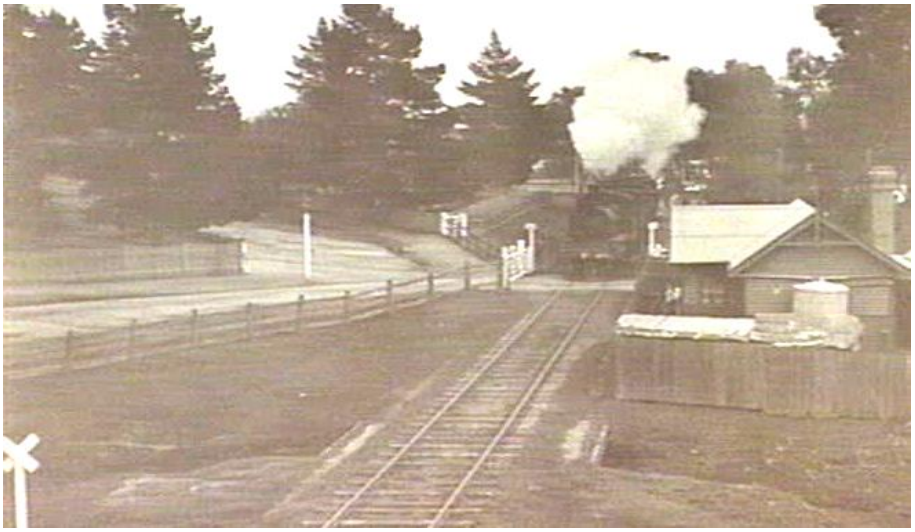


Figure 19 Melbourne train arriving at Yea, 1909
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

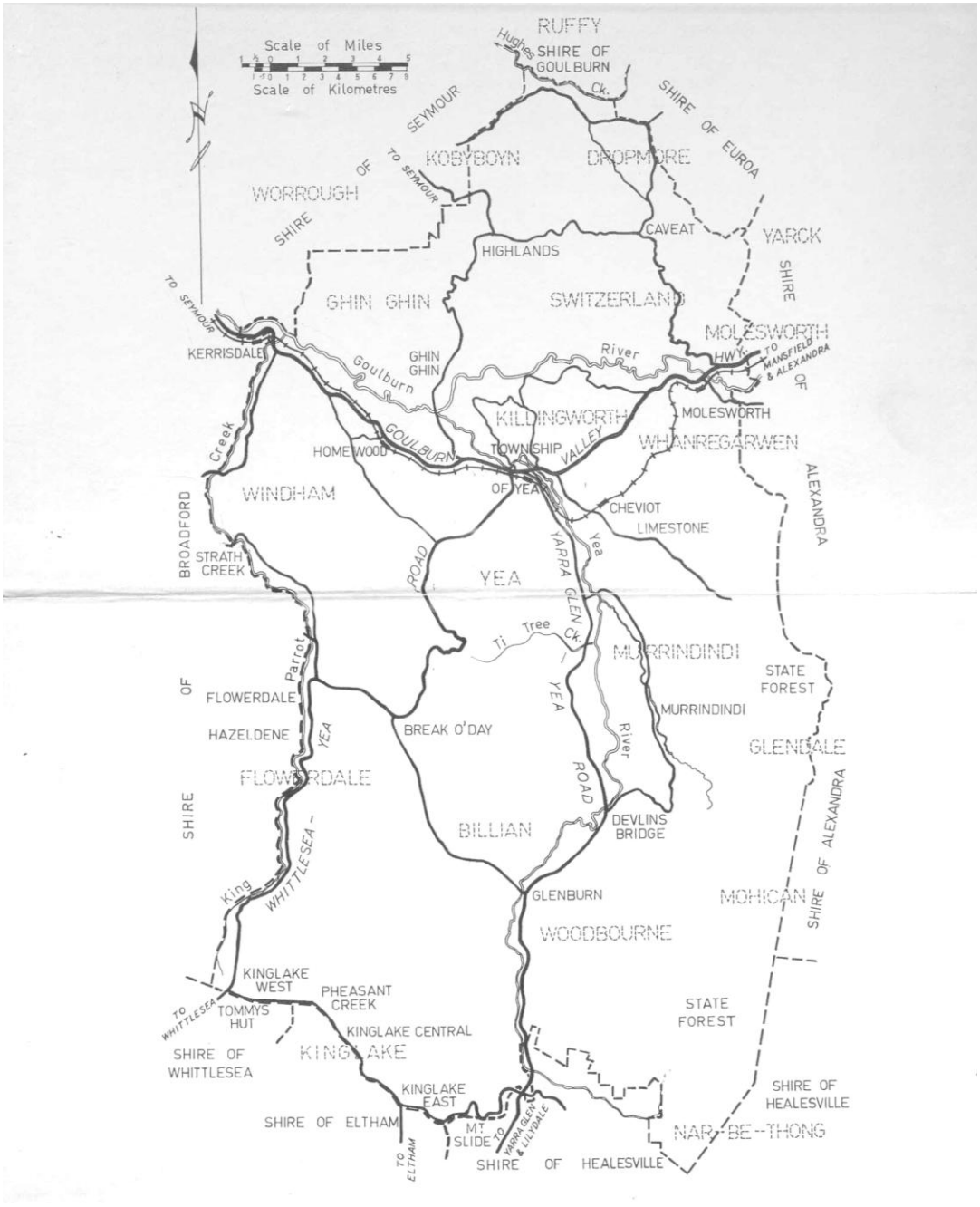


Figure 20 Map of Shire of Yea, showing railway lines
Source: The Story of Yea

The freight revenue to be gained from the expansion of the timber mills in the area was the major consideration in extending the line. In recommending that the line be completed, it was decided that, at the same time, a timber tramway was to be built (by the timber millers) into the Rubicon Forest. Construction took nearly two years.

In October 1909, Minister for Railways, George Billson, declared the new line – from Melbourne to Alexandra – open for traffic. It had taken nearly twenty years to complete (Noble, 1969: 52-54, Blanks, 1973: 159-60, Evans, 1994: 3-4).

The first rail service from Whittlesea to Melbourne ran on Melbourne Show Day in October 1889 when the Whittlesea to Melbourne Line opened.

In his *Reminiscences of Whittlesea*, E M Duffy explained that, although the railway was a welcome mode of transport, the journey to Melbourne was a round-about one. En- route to Flinders Street, the train travelled through North Carlton and North Fitzroy on the Inner Circle line, then through Royal Park, Flemington Bridge, Macaulay and North Melbourne before entering Melbourne's Flinders Street Station (Duffy, 1971:21).

The closure of the railway line in the late 1970s brought an end to one of the most important aspects of the life of the Shire that had existed for nearly 100 years. The railways had transported people and goods around the Shire and to the metropolis. They enabled communities to move between the larger and smaller centres, and had been the impetus for the development of much of the Shire.

3.3 Mail and Telegraph services

Postal and telegraph services were an important means of communication between the early townships and the outside world. The efforts to establish means of communication via mail and telegraph services were of vital importance in isolated regions during the nineteenth century. The study area is no exception.

Postal services were initially a government monopoly, while the distribution of mail throughout the country was undertaken mainly by Cobb & Co. Coach services. By the 1880s, in capital cities at least, mail was delivered three times per day; this was not the case in country areas. The arrival of the railways to smaller remote townships also played a role in establishing postal and telegraph services. As the districts opened up to increasing numbers of farmers, local stores often doubled as post and telegraph offices, and where possible, received the mail via the railway service.

When the Federation of the Australian Colonies occurred on 1 January 1901, the new Commonwealth of Australia took responsibility for the national post and telegraph services. This arrangement lasted until the 1990s when the post and telegraph services were privatised and the Post Master General's Department became Australia Post and Australian Telecom became Telstra.

Local Post and Telegraph Services

An early mail service from Healesville to Marysville began operating in 1865. In Molesworth, it is thought that the first post office was operated from a store on the corner of Pig and Whistle Lane from 1868 (Evans, 1994:67). Then, from 1875, it was operated in another location until it was moved to the railway station in 1889.

Mailmen had to overcome significant obstacles such as inclement weather. In Highlands, for example, local residents recalled how:

> *We have had much rain this winter and one heavy fall of snow – the roofs and ground were white. Our mailman came to grief near the Goulburn in the flood, his horses were washed off their feet and had to be unharnessed, the wagon left in the flood while the mail was brought over in a boat.* (Mrs A. McAlpin and Mrs Mabel Ridd, cited in McCall, 1982)

Mailmen also played an important role in collecting other goods and performing services for isolated settlers and communities. Another mailman in the Highlands district, Mr George Tennant, travelled in a wagon drawn by 'two lovely horses'. He carted cream to the Yea Butter Factory, picked up rabbits trapped by trappers en route and on the return journey delivered 'mail, groceries, parcels from the railway station and whatever folk needed from Yea' (McCall, 1982).

A telegraph facility was introduced in Cathkin in 1890 and Whittlesea in 1891 where the local GP, Dr Day had a telegraph installed in his residence (Duffy, 1971:25). The Yea Post Office (Figure 21) was built in 1890 after deputations to Melbourne for the postal service.

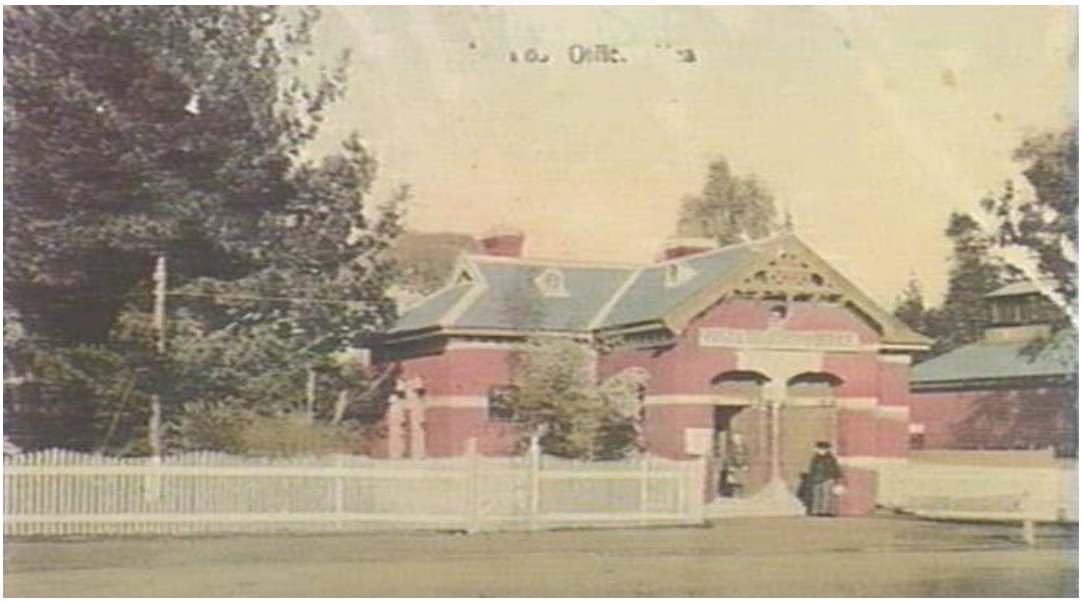


Figure 21 Post Office ,Yea, 1907
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

The Hermitage, Narbethong, the historic home of the internationally renowned anthropological and social photographer John William Lindt, was erected in 1894. It was also used as a guest house and boasted a postal and telegraph office until the early twentieth century (VHR H0303).

HERITAGE

- Wilks Creek Bridge (abutments), Marysville; Cremona Bridge, concrete bridge by John Monash over the Goulburn; and Breakaway Bridge, Acheron
- The importance of the railways coming to the region can be seen in the former Yea Railway Station. Other early railway station grounds are found at Yarck, Koriella, Kanumbra and Cathkin
- The branch line Tallarook to Yea opened in 1872 and to Alexandra in 1909
- Railway Bridges at Molesworth and Cathkin
- Cheviot Tunnel
- The significance of the timber industry is illustrated through the establishment of the Alexandra Railway Station and Alexandra Timber Tramway and Museum.
- Timber tramways, Kinglake and Toolangi

- Old Cathkin Post Office and former Kinglake Post Office
- The Hermitage, Narbethong

4. UTILISING NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Hume and Hovell's 1824 journey reported on the fertile lands of the Port Phillip District and, less than a decade later, the first illegal settlers had journeyed overland and over Bass Strait to explore and exploit *Australia Felix*[*] (Doyle, 1998:44). While it was known that fertile plains would support the pastoralists and their desire to supply wool to the British mills, other resources were, at that stage, unknown.

Settlement by the squatters, who had settled on the best lands, was followed by the selectors from the 1860s. Selectors usually had to clear their acreage before it was viable as farming land. Consequently, timber harvesting often preceded dairy or other farming. However, the discovery of gold was an unexpected bonus to the immigrants seeking a new life in the colonies and many flocked to the area from the 1850s through until the 1880s.

Timber milling became a major industry in the study area and produced substantial and ongoing incomes in the Shire. It also fostered the creation and maintenance of many small townships across the Shire. The bushfires of 1939 resulted in many timber mills being relocated closer to townships rather than in the heart of the forests. Logs were then trucked, or hauled by tractor, from sawmills in the forest, to the mills instead of sawn products being sent to the railheads by tramway. Consequently, the timber tramways were abandoned and the railway entered a terminal decline when mill and agricultural products could be more flexibly transported to markets by road.

Dairy farms were established in the late nineteenth century when milk separators eased the workload somewhat. Butter and cheese factories were soon established and have remained in the area. The pastoralists' main aim was to grow cattle for the local market and sheep for the British wool market. Paddocks were not allowed to be cultivated for profit; this was left to the agriculturalists. Rather, the squatters were allowed only to grow supplies for themselves, their family and their horses – and crops such as wheat, oats, and barley were sown. As local squatter, John Cotton sourly noted:

> *We are precluded from growing any more corn or grain or vegetables than we can consume upon the station; we cannot sell or barter our surplus produce* (Cotton quoted in Noble, 1969:11)

[*] '*Australia Felix*' translates from the Latin 'happy or fortunate southern land' and was the name given to the fertile lands of south-west Victoria by Major Thomas Mitchell on his overland journey from the Murray River to Portland Bay in 1836.

Following the end of the pastoral era, grazing – mainly of dairy and beef cattle – continued to be a mainstay of the study area's economy.

In addition, farmers found that berries flourished in parts of the region. These were replaced by potatoes, of which a few farms remain in the Toolangi area. In recent years, winemaking has become a viable industry in the study area.

HISTORY

4.1 Mining

It was gold that brought an influx of population into the study area in the nineteenth century, and many remained to take up selections.

Alluvial gold was first discovered at Yea in 1851 and in the Thornton, Snobs Creek and Acheron areas in 1854. Reef mining and quartz mining began in 1859. The Alexandra field was not discovered until 1866 when a quartz reef was accidentally found on the Mount Pleasant Run. Mining of the rich Alexandra reefs was soon augmented by alluvial workings in nearby gullies. Rapidly, deep lead and quartz reef mining led to the establishment of rough townships consisting of an assortment of stores and grog shops catering to 500 or so miners.

The study area experienced mining activity both directly and indirectly from 1851. The direct experience was due to the discovery and exploitation, mostly during the second half of the nineteenth century, of a scatter of goldfields throughout the region. Demand for the strategic mineral wolfram during the World Wars of the twentieth century also contributed to the study area's mining experience.

The indirect effect of mining relates to the local economic importance of the routes that, passing through Murrindindi, provided access from Melbourne to the fabulously rich goldfields of Gaffney's Creek (1859), Woods Point (1861) and the Jordan (1862).

The Big River Gold Field

The Upper Goulburn was the focus of much interest by gold prospectors despite the difficulty of access and the inhospitable terrain. A major rush from Beechworth to alluvial workings on the Buckland River during 1853 soon led to the presence of 6,000 hopeful diggers on the overcrowded Buckland field (Flett, 1970:71). A party from the Buckland decided to explore the mountainous country to the south. After testing the Jamieson River and finding patchy gold near the Goulburn-Jamieson confluence, they diverted their attention to the Big River in 1854 and found abundant gold (Pilkington, 1996:7). Miners working alluvial claims on the Big River faced floods, isolation and high costs due to the requirement for all provisions to be brought in by packhorse.

A major alluvial strike at Enoch's Point (just outside the study area) on the Big River during 1857 (Flett, 1970:97) led to the establishment of a small township. Discovery of payable quartz reefs around Enoch's Point during 1864 resulted in the formation of company ventures which invested in crushing machinery brought to the mine sites with enormous effort, risk and expense. The 'Luck's All' mine, above Warner's Creek to the west of the Big River, was the most important of the Big River field quartz mines. Established in 1865, the 'Luck's All' paid dividends of £60,000 in its first years of operation. This mine operated continuously until 1886 and then intermittently until 1915 (Pilkington, 1996:106-11; VHI No. H8123-0005; DNRE, July 1999:138).

Tracks to the Jordan

Until the Yarra Track was surveyed in 1863-4, the major route of access to the Jordan and other major north-east goldfields was McEvoy's Track. This track followed the route from Bald Hills (Seaton) in Gippsland to Jericho and the Upper Thompson, using the ports of Sale or Port Albert (Christie, 1989:12-21; Stacpoole, 1966:51).

An alternative route for traffic to the north-east was by the Sydney Road to Seymour and Trawool, then through Yea, the future site of Alexandra and the Upper Goulburn to Darlingford at the Big River-Goulburn confluence. A packhorse route then followed the Big River to Enoch's Point, climbing over the notorious Mia Mia ridge to Gaffney's Creek, thence to Woods Point, Matlock and Jericho (Christie, 1989:20, 22-41; Stacpoole (ed.) 1973, Lloyd and Combes, 1981:8; Lloyd, 1978:12).

An even more roundabout route to the goldfields was via Longwood on the Sydney Road, then through Merton, Mansfield and Jamieson to Woods Point (Pilkington, 1996:11).

The Yarra Track saw a steady stream of prospectors travelling through Eltham and the Plenty watershed, following the Yarra Valley to Yarra Glen, Healesville, Fernshaw then the Blacks Spur to Narbethong and Marysville. Past Marysville, the Yarra Track route followed the main divide before reaching Matlock and Woods Point. Until Bingley View, the route of the Yarra Track lies within the southern boundary of the study area (Thomas, 1980:28-9; Symonds, 1982:20).

Both the Upper Goulburn route and the Yarra Track led miners, together with their families, equipment and supplies, through different parts of the study area. Fords, punts, bridges and camping places within the study area were nodes on the routes to the north-eastern goldfields and became significant places on the map.

On the Yarra Track, the township of Narbethong was surveyed in 1865 near the rough timber shanty set up by Frederick Fisher as a horse-changing station. A village named Granton was surveyed at the crossing of the Acheron River. Marysville, near where a big culvert was constructed to carry the Yarra Track over the Crinoline Creek, was surveyed close

to Paradise Plains, one of the usual overnight stopping places on the track (Thomas, 1980:6; Waghorn, 1983:8; Thomas, 1992:6). These small townships derived economic benefit only indirectly from gold, having no deposits of their own.

The Warburton-Britannia goldfield on the Upper Yarra was discovered in 1859 and prospectors explored areas towards the Great Dividing Range to the north, finding gold in Walsh's and Donovan's Creeks in 1862. However, no gold had been found to the north of the watershed by 1869. Gold was eventually worked at Cambarville and in the vicinity of Mount Morgan, but these discoveries were just to the south of the present Murrindindi boundary. Nonetheless, persistent prospectors discovered a deposit of the mineral wolfram (an ore of tungsten) on Wilks Creek near Marysville. The lode was mined for this strategically important source of tungsten during World War One and was worked out by the early 1940s.

The Alexandra goldfield and Gobur

Over a period of years, many diggers had travelled through the future site of Alexandra on their way to the north-east, marked by a red-painted gate at the boundary between the 'Mount Pleasant' and 'Eglinton' pastoral runs. However, the Alexandra goldfield was not discovered until 1866 when a quartz reef was accidentally found, near the confluence of Johnson's Creek and the Goulburn, by two workers from 'Mount Pleasant' who were visiting 'Eglinton' homestead. A prospecting lease was quickly taken out for this reef, which the finders named 'Eglinton'. Soon afterwards, the 'Luckie Line' of reef was discovered a little over half a mile to the north-west and forty claims were being worked there. Gold then worth £1,300,000 was taken from the 'Luckie' in seven years. The Ajax Company achieved an above average yield of more than 11 oz of gold per ton of crushed stone. Of the twenty-seven other quartz reefs listed in Brough Smythe (1980:556-7), the 'Homeward Bound' and the 'Mysterious' were particularly noted for giving good yields.

At Alexandra, stone was crushed in steam-powered batteries, for example, Sableberg's fifteen-head stamper on the Ultima Thule (now known as U.T.) Creek. Late in 1866, mining of the rich Alexandra reefs was augmented by alluvial workings in Luckie Gully. The following year, U.T. Creek to the east of Alexandra was rushed and pegged out for 5 miles. A rich shallow alluvial deposit with 'coarse gold and nuggets from one to seven ounces' had been found. Discovery of alluvial placers at Molesworth, Spring Creek and Steel's Creek soon followed. This sequence of events is unusual; normally alluvial discoveries were made first and prospecting for the remains of the reefs that gave rise to the alluvial deposits came later. The township of Alexandra, close to the concentration of workings at the Luckie Reef, was surveyed and sold during April 1867. Over-speculation caused reef mining at Alexandra to slump by 1868 although the Luckie Reef

was successfully worked until 1873 (Flett, 1970:117-8, Bannear, n.d. d:1, Long 1938:54-7).

Alluvial gold was found in the Acheron area with early workings near the junction of the Goulburn and Delatite rivers during 1854. The Acheron Diggings, a southerly extension of the Alexandra field, opened up in 1870 in a gully known as Swamp Creek, and continued for much of the decade (Flett, 1970:117).

In terms of goldfields administration, Alexandra, U.T. Creek, Spring Creek, Molesworth, Ghin Ghin and Godfrey's Creek fell within the Jamieson North Division under the Beechworth District. In the Jamieson North Division, by 1869, thirty five miles of races had been constructed at a cost of over £6,100 and claims were valued at £230,000 with no fewer than twenty nine separate active reefs listed in 'Alexandra and neighbourhood' (Brough Smythe, 1979:527, 556-7).

According to Waghorn's history of the area, *Gobur and the Golden Gate, a history of the Township and Parish of Gobur in the Shire of Alexandra* (1982:2-4) shallow alluvial gold was discovered at Godfrey's Creek on the 'Gobur' pastoral run in August 1868, not far from the site of the present village of Yarck. The discoverer, Ezekial Wilson Pennington, had also been responsible for finding the Ghin Ghin field the previous year (Waghorn, 1982:10, Flett, 1970:119).

Deep lead and quartz reef mining (for antimony as well as gold) rapidly began in the valleys of the Gobur and Godfrey's creeks, leading to the establishment of a rough township consisting of the usual assortment of stores and grog shops catering to 500 or so miners. Some 1,300 ounces of gold was won in the district in three months 'like digging up spuds' (Wylie 1995:42) and the township, a place of rough stringybark buildings, reflected a legendary masculine rip-roaringness with 'twenty fights before noon on Saturday' (Flett, 1970:119). Complementary to such frontier mythologising, the presence of families at Gobur is underlined by an enrolment of 43 children at the Common School in 1869. Waghorn's history includes a map of Gobur township (1982:16) showing the location of the shafts of seven deep lead mines, four puddling machines and a crushing plant together with a sawmill (Figure 23).

Although the Godfrey's Creek field flagged late in 1871 due to a loss of confidence and new discoveries elsewhere in the region, mining at Gobur was revived by a consortium of local squatters and their associates the following year (Waghorn 1982:25). This is an interesting example of the broad diversity of business interests followed by the squatting fraternity that is often unacknowledged by local historians.

Gobur's mining revival lasted for another forty years but the decline of mining inevitably led to the decline of the township. Although Gobur had thirty hotels at various times, it is now almost a ghost town. The only visible traces of the early buildings are exotic trees and garden remnants. A

cairn commemorating the early goldminers acknowledges the large population that once worked the area, as does the old cemetery.

Figure 22 Gobur alluvial workings
Source: Geoff Hewitt, 2005

The photograph opposite (Figure 22) shows the alluvial workings and sluiced gullies at Gobur, to the west of the deep lead. A water race is visible on the left hand hill in the background. Quartz reefs were mined on these hills.

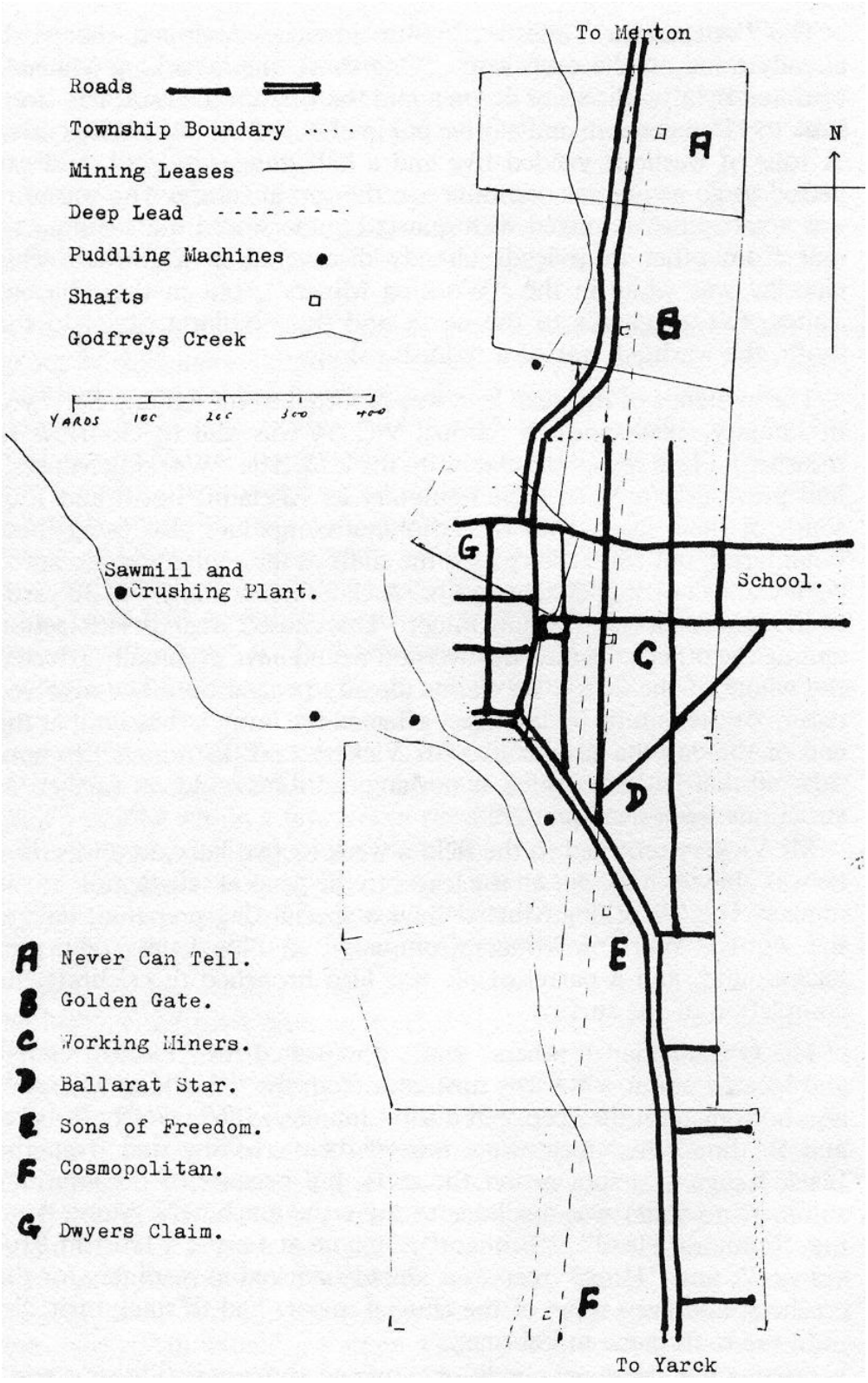


Figure 23 Map of Gobur

Source: Waghorn: Gobur and the Golden Gate

The Kilmore division

According to Brough Smythe in *The gold fields and mineral districts of Victoria*, (1979:35, see also Flett, 1970:116),

the Kilmore Division of the District of Sandhurst included Murrindindi Creek, Yea, Boundary Creek, King Parrot Creek, Strath Creek, Muddy Creek, Rubicon, Thornton, Queen Parrot (now Strath) Creek, Snob's Creek, the Goulburn River and Limpid Creek within a listing of the principle mining localities. Elsewhere, Brough Smythe (1979:548) notes the presence of sixteen miles and forty chains of races within the Kilmore Division, representing an investment of £750 upon a total value of claims of £20,000, which is less than spectacular when compared with Alexandra (see previous section on Alexandra and Gobur goldfields).

Discoveries in the Kilmore Division district were made very early in the Victorian gold rush. Alluvial gold was first discovered in a small way on the Muddy Creek (Yea River) at Yea in 1851. The early diggers were disappointed and the field did not prosper until reef mining commenced there in 1859 at Junction Hill in the headwaters of the Ti Tree Creek. This was an ironic situation similar to that of Alexandra as Yea, too, witnessed a constant stream of diggers and goldfield traffic on the Jordan Track. However, the passing trade was sufficiently important for the township of Yea to be surveyed and sold as early as 1856. Once the quartz outcrops were discovered, the Welcome Reef at Junction Hill attracted five hundred miners and yielded as much as fifty ounces of gold per ton of crushings. The Carriers and Providence lines of reef were discovered just north of Yea in 1859 and Carriers was still producing a decade later. The Providence continued to be profitable during 1888 with average crushings in excess of ten ounces to the ton.

During 1860, alluvial ground was opened up on Ti Tree and Muddy Creeks, but quartz miners outnumbered alluvial diggers by 15 to 1. Unusually, although Chinese interests/miners did not often extend to quartz mining, the rich 'Welcome' Mine was taken over by Ah Mouy and, after several years of profitable operation, it was leased to tributors and continued to pay well. Brough Smythe lists Brown's, Whittaker's, German and the Murchison's reefs 'about 8 miles west of Yea' operating during 1869. Blanks notes that the Iniskillen and Glasgow reefs on Ti Tree were profitable and that the 'Strath lead' '… crushed up to twenty-five ounces to the ton'. Gordon, *Yea: its discovery and development 1825-1920*, also mentions consistent crushings of ten ounces to the ton from the 'Cairns' which too was at Ti Tree. (Flett, 1970:116; Brough, Smythe, 1979:560; Blanks, 1973:136-7; Gordon, 1954:57).

Rich quartz reefs were discovered at 'New Chum', ten miles south of Yea on the Murrindindi River, during 1866 and this location was rushed two years later. The following year, a mining village which boasted diversions such as a club and theatre, had changed its name to Higginbotham (Flett, 1970:116). Named after gold miner George Higginbotham, the town is believed to have been located near the Higginbotham

Creek near the Higginbotham Mine. Sinnot describes the Higginbotham Creek as rising:

> *… in the Black Range State Forest near the junction of Grants and Higginbotham Tracks; joins the Murrindindi river west of the junction of Murrindindi and Shannans Roads.* (Sinnot, 2003:72)

Also during 1866, alluvial gold was discovered at Ghin Ghin (Palestine Creek) to the north-west of Yea, but this field was worked out within two years.

During the early twentieth century, a minor revival occurred at Yea, Flat Lead, Homewood and Kerrisdale. Also at this time, the 'Welcome' mine was reworked without success. An attempt was made to re-open the Providence mine after 1945 but there wasn't enough gold.

A similar pattern to Yea emerged on the King Parrot and Strath Creek areas where substantial but short-lived alluvial rushes occurred during the 1850s when all of the creeks running north from Mount Disappointment were found to be auriferous. According to Flett, gold had been found in the King Parrot Creek as early as 1851, but the substantial discoveries came later in the decade. Quartz gold mining (and ore processing powered by water wheels) followed in 1859 as did exploitation of the Triangle lead and line of reef at King Parrot where 'ten good claims', together with an antimony reef, were being worked in 1864. A further deep lead was discovered on the Strath Creek and mining commenced there in 1860. Ore from the Sailor Jack's Mine, together with mines in Digger's, Lobb's and Lade's Gullies was crushed in at least three water-powered batteries at Strath Creek, one of which was located adjacent to the ford. Quartz outcrops and alluvial placers were found at Flowerdale and Wild Dog Creek; indeed, mining at Strath Creek, the Upper Strath and Wild Dog Creek continued into the twentieth century.

An open-cut mine was developed at Flowerdale as late as 1919, but proved to be unpayable and the old Spion Kop workings were re-explored during 1932. The 'Don Maurice' mine on the Upper Strath was operating as late as 1972. The use of water wheels to drive the crushing machinery allowed small yields to pay good dividends and this type of power was used extensively within this district of Murrindindi as well as the Big River field where water was both reliable and plentiful. In 1869, the Mining Surveyor for the Kilmore Division reported that three pennyweights of gold per ton could 'pay handsomely' when the stone was crushed by waterwheel. Although the reefs near Strath Creek were very large, the ore was of low grade (Bannear, n.d. a:7; Flett, 1970:115; Lade in Fletcher (ed.) 1975:44-5; DNRE, September 1999:8).

Alluvial gold was found at Thornton and in Snobs Creek in 1854. However, serious exploitation did not commence until 1864 when the beds of the Dry and Snobs creeks, together with the bed of the Goulburn and the confluences were all worked.

Thornton was rushed in 1868 when the Goulburn was low (Flett, 1970:117).

St Andrews & Kinglake

The Kinglake goldfield was started in February 1861 at Moore's Rush or Mountain Rush at the head of the Yea River in a series of gullies extending five miles above Mount Slide (Flett, 1970:44, see also Bannear, n.d. b:3, 5). However, Blanks (1973:115) states that the first prospectors in the Kinglake district were exploring the creeks along the south side of the ranges from Smiths Gully, Queenstown and Yarra Glen. Early exploration northward into the ranges from the rich Caledonia and St Andrews diggings on the south side of the Plenty Ranges is supported by 1855 reports of favourable digging to the east of Whittlesea on the Yarra-Goulburn divide (Flett, 1970:44). Five creeks were found to be rich in gold at Moore's Rush and more than fifteen hundred ounces of gold was washed from No.1 Creek at Kinglake East. Reef and alluvial gold was subsequently found at Pheasant Creek and trial crushings of reef quartz at Kinglake by Grimshaw and party, during 1881, yielded one ounce of gold per ton (Bannear, n.d. a:10). The Wallace Gold Mining Company was engaged in driving a tunnel 900 feet to old reef workings during 1886 and 1887. Also during the 1880s, the long abandoned Moore's Rush was re-prospected and further tunnelling was carried out by the Gladstone Company. The Caledonia goldfield was again active after 1939 and success encouraged further prospecting in the region. As a result, the 'Big Ben' Company began mining for gold at Kinglake during 1948. Optimism was sufficient for investment in new crushing machinery and winding plant that year although labour shortages in the immediate post-war boom created difficulties for the company (DNRE, June 1999:14,20; Bannear, n.d. b:9, 16).

4.2 Timber

Timber Industry

Timber extraction, sawmilling and forestry have been, and remain, important industries in the study area. Economically, a significant part of the community relied upon this industry during the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. However, the importance of the vast timber resources in the district to earlier settlers and miners must not be forgotten or underestimated. Exploitation of the timber resources within the present study area has a longer history than just the saw-log industry and covers a range of timber uses other than saw logging.

To the squatter-pastoralists who entered the district from the mid-1830s and to the selectors who took up blocks in the study area a generation or two later, the forests were a mixed blessing as they were hard work to clear even though they provided useful resources.

To the gold miners, the timber resources of the study area were a commodity essential to the profitability of their industry (Griffiths, 1992:17, 28).

More recently, with the growing importance of ecology and tourism, natural and commercial values have been contested within the forests of the study area. This has led to increased protection of remaining old-growth trees and industrial exploitation of plantation timber – the study area's plantations can be seen from space (Google Earth).

Using timber resources

Timber resources were exploited by different groups over time as outlined below:

Forests and squatters

As we have seen in Section 2 ,'Settling the Land', return on a squatter's investment depended directly upon the area available for grazing stock. Thick forest fringing the riparian flats and foothills represented wasted land where stock might become lost.

Before the Order in Council of 1847 that allowed lengthy leaseholds of Crown Lands and the possibility of pre-emptive right purchase of a homestead section, the squatters had no security of tenure over the land they held on grazing licence. Worse still, a squatter, if ejected by Government from the Public Lands, could make no claim for compensation in respect of improvements made to the land. As a consequence, early squatters camped in the roughest of huts. They made do with often ramshackle, temporary woolsheds and outbuildings. Also, squatters maintained only a minimum of fencing; perhaps just enough to keep animals away from a vegetable garden and provide yarding for horses and stock. Otherwise, sheep were watched by shepherds and yarded at night within moveable hurdles. Cattle were allowed to roam but were mustered regularly by the station stockmen.

As a result of this, in the country of the study area, impermanent architecture in the squatting style was based on those resources offered by the forest that required the least possible investment in money and effort. These were saplings and bark which were consumed in huge quantities.

Bark was used in sheets for roofs and walls, supported and retained by earth-fast posts cut from saplings or young trees. Liberally plastered with mud, bark was also used to line fireplaces and chimneys with the pole framing on the outside. Because bark shrank a great deal as it dried, it could not be fastened by nailing. When used for roofing, poles were placed over the bark both to retain it and to keep it flat. Bark was lashed to the roof ridge using strips of rawhide. The method used to collect bark for buildings was to cut through the bark of a suitable tree using an axe or tomahawk and then to loosen it by hammering. The bark could then be peeled from the tree in a continuous sheet limited in size only by the height and diameter of the trunk. Removal of

the bark in this way obviously killed the tree (Lewis, 1977:13-18).

It is possible to gain an impression of the havoc wrought by bark collecting from a letter written by Foster Fyans, in his role of Crown Land Commissioner, to Governor Gipps in 1844:

> *…I beg leave again to state that the destruction of trees by barking to cover huts and sheds is so great that in a short time little of the valuable timber will be left. In most parts of the District it is scarce, and in many parts where there were fine forests there are few good trees left. One wool shed lately erected, no less than 500 trees have been barked and destroyed. In two years this must be done over again…* (Fyans, 1986:271)

Of course, Fyans was writing about the Western District of Victoria which did not have the forest resources of the study area. Nonetheless, both the scale of destruction that alarmed Fyans and the short lifespan of the building material are evident.

The image (Figure 24*)* of Tarcombe shows buildings constructed from vertical timber slabs and roofed with bark. Many dead trees are evident – possibly due to bark-stripping. This image, in Hobby Title (1986:10) is identified as a photograph of Tarcombe head station during the 1873 shearing. The woolshed is in the background, behind what may be much earlier huts and outbuildings.

J Gillison in his history, *Colonial doctor and his town,* (1976:28) cites a useful eyewitness description of early bark, pole, log and earth buildings in the township of Mansfield. The techniques used for construction at Mansfield would certainly also apply to early buildings within the present study area. It is clear that these crude vernacular building methods continued to be used in the district for a long time. In his reminiscences, local timber milling identity Midgley Ogden (c1976:7), recalls the use of large quantities of bark in construction of huts to house workers on the first Eildon Dam project, early in the twentieth century. Ogden noted the many 'dead and dying trees on the hillsides' that resulted from bark gathering.

The 1847 *Wastelands Act*, described in more detail in Section 2.2 'Settling the Land', gave squatters more security and encouraged the building of more permanent structures. Murrindindi Station is an example and was built in 1848, just one year after the passing of the 1847 *Act*.

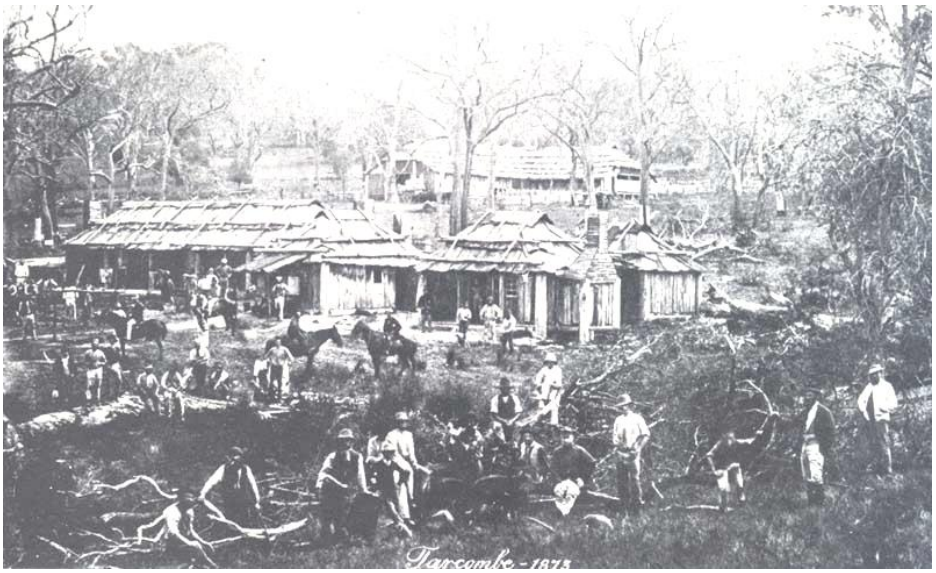


Figure 24 Tarcombe
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Timber millers

The small mill operated by John Tremayne at Yea during the late 1870s, which produced sawn timber for local consumption only, was typical of the early form of this industry. At that time, the market for mill product was limited by poor roads, high transport costs and the seasonality imposed by dry weather operation. The commercial potential of the Murrindindi forest had long been appreciated, however. Occupying a vast area, it made up a large part of what had been called the Victoria Forest, an uninterrupted growth of tall and valuable trees stretching from Wandong to Baw Baw.

While the railway arrived at Yea in 1883, bringing the possibilities of distant markets to the district, the industry took some time to become established. First, the difficulty remained of carting sawn timber from the mills to the railway, an undertaking that became impossible when the rough roads were wet. More importantly, the Wombat Forest (between Geelong and Ballarat) remained in production and mills there were more competitive, being closer to the principal market, the mining centres of Ballarat and Bendigo (Gordon, 1954:86; Houghton, 1986:1, 59; McCarthy, 2001:1).

When the timber reserves of the Wombat Forest became exhausted, harvesting of the mountain ash, peppermint, blue gum, stringybark and messmate to the south and south-east of Yea began in earnest. By then, the railway had reached Healesville, Yarra Glen and Warburton via the Yarra Valley, also Whittlesea via the Plenty and a larger area of the forest became accessible from the southern slopes of the Dividing Range. Construction of light tramways solved the problem of transporting sawn product to the railway from mills located deep in the forest close to stands of timber. The tramways, often with wooden rails, were operated by horse

teams, steam-powered winches, gravity and later with small steam locomotives. The forest to the south and south-east of Yea and to the north of Toolangi was criss-crossed with timber tramways and dotted with sawmills up until 1939 when many were relocated because of the devastation of the January 1939 fires. The railway station at Cheviot, on the Alexandra side of Yea was the main timber siding and the terminus of the two major tramway routes to the south of Yea that followed Limestone Creek and the Murrindindi River.

Some timber workers had their families living close to centres such as Yea, Cheviot, Healesville and Toolangi. However, during the working week, the forestry workers lived in rough camps near the mills and the logging coupes. Others took their families with them into the bush, but all relied on the tramways for transport, supplies and communication with the wider world. The timber tramways were vital networks of transport in the Kinglake area as the line terminated at Whittlesea, allowing two-way transport of people and goods from Kinglake to the Whittlesea area. The potato crop was also transported on the timber tramways around Kinglake (Houghton 1986, McCarthy 2001, Blanks 1973:116). Peter Davies' doctoral research (Davies 2001a and b) presents a comprehensive picture of what life was like for workers and their families in the isolation of the great forests.

The growth in importance of the forest industry led to a greater emphasis on management of the resource, culminating in the founding of the State Forests Department under the 1907 *Forests Act*, followed by the Forests Commission in 1918 (McRae 1994:4). At this time, seven mills were working in the Toolangi region, sending product out via the railway at Yarra Glen. Although labour shortages during World War One temporarily slowed the pace of forest exploitation, the industry peaked again during the 1920s when more then 2.5 million super feet of sawn timber was sent down the tramways to Cheviot; seven mills were operating within the former Shire of Yea and sawmills boomed in Marysville. Labour requirements of the industry resulted in wage payments in the tens of thousands of pounds, which contributed significantly to the economy of the region.

Not all areas were well served with transport, however. Despite much lobbying for a railway to link Healesville to Narbethong, to improve access to the ash forests between Healesville and Mount Dom Dom, the line did not eventuate. Due to the onset of the Great Depression, most building activity ceased after December 1930. Consequently, there were no new orders for timber and the industry stagnated until around 1935. By this time, good all-weather roads and motor trucks had extended their reach into the forests, which allowed output to rise to meet renewed demand (Houghton 1986:5-7, 49, 59-60, Ogden 1976:91-2, Symonds 1982:94).

Bushfires

The bushfires of January 1939 had a catastrophic effect upon the timber industry generally and caused tragic loss of life among the forestry workers and their families. Many of the mills, together with their houses and plant, were destroyed and much valuable timber was burned. Following a Royal Commission inquiry into the fires, the State Forests Department and Forests Commission staff were amalgamated under a new *Forests Act* 1939, with greater responsibilities for fire protection.

Under the *Act*, new policy dictated that mills would not be rebuilt in the forest. Instead, the processing would be done near the towns and sawlogs would be transported from the forests to the mills near town. This new approach radically changed the way that many mill workers lived and, at the same time, changed the landscape within many of the townships in the study area. Sawmilling became a more stable and technologically innovative industry as the mills no longer needed to be located close to the changing sources of the sawlogs (McRae 1994:4, Vines 1985:157-60, Griffiths 1992:56).

A major effort was made to salvage as much timber as possible from the mountain ash trees killed by the 1939 fires. Consequently, the study area's timber industry boomed during World War Two when growing demand for pulp logs was required to feed the paper industry.

The yards at Healesville railway station worked around the clock. After the war, timber, along with all other building materials, was in great demand. During 1947-8, the Forests Commission launched a major project at the Big River and the Reefton Spur Road was constructed principally as a trucking route for sawlogs. Under the management of the Commission's Niagaroon District headquarters at Taggerty, which also controlled forestry at Marysville, Eildon and Alexandra, some of the world's tallest and best quality mountain ash was harvested at that time (Houghton 1986:49, Thomas 1980:51-2).

See also Section 8 'Environment and Managing Public Land'.

Selectors

The notion that a 'little England in Australia' could be created by opening the lands to occupation by energetic and willing settlers of small means, with the intent of thereby creating a class of independent yeoman farmers, was behind the series of land reforms, known as the free selection Acts, beginning in the 1860s (Powell, 1970:64-85). Land selected in the study area during the 1860s tended to be within the fertile corridor of the Upper Goulburn and its tributary confluences, close to villages. Although the need for selectors to demonstrate their bona fides through cultivation and improvements prior to grant was less onerous in places where clearing of heavy timber was not required, forest resources were used in the construction of houses, outbuildings and fences. Much of the timber used was split into slabs, rails, palings and shingles.

Where suitable timber was not available on the selectors' block, the cost and difficulty of transport meant that resources were drawn from the immediate vicinity. Selection in the study area occurred over a long period. The later selectors, in areas where mines were active and particularly after the railway had arrived, had an eye towards the timber on forested blocks as a source of income prior to cultivation. Otherwise, the necessary clearing involved massive heartbreaking and unproductive labour. If no value could be derived from the timber, the larger trees were simply ringbarked and left standing to rot, which was the custom in Toolangi as much as it was in Gippsland (Symonds 1982:87, Committee of the South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966 [1920], Morgan 1997, Griffiths 1992:14-24).

Miners

Deep lead and quartz miners required vast amounts of timber, in the form of posts, capping beams and slabs, to support their underground shafts and workings. Alluvial miners too, even where the wash dirt could be dug from the shallowest of sinkings, had a prodigious appetite for timber to line their shafts and construct their dams, sluices and flumes, together with gear for puddling and winding. In 1869, Brough Smyth expressed concern regarding the consumption, waste and wanton destruction of forests by the gold mining industry that had led to denudation of the landscape surrounding mining centres.

The cost of carting timber from forests even a short distance from the mines threatened the profitability of the mining activity. Some indication of the scale of consumption can be gained from Brough Smyth's estimation that the cost of timber used in Victoria's mines, just for the year 1867, exceeded £560,000. Further, that timber imports amounted to nearly £8.5 million during the preceding 15 years (Brough Smyth 1980:28-9). Mining, in locations such as the Alexandra goldfield where water power could not be used, relied on steam engines for winding and ore-crushing. Large quantities of firewood were consumed in stoking the boilers (Griffiths, 1992:28).

Firewood and charcoal collectors

Firewood for domestic fuel was required by all residents of the study area, whether squatters, miners, selectors or town-dwellers. Once the overpowering problem of transport had been solved by the arrival of railways in the 1880s, the demand for firewood in distant and more urbanised areas was able to be satisfied from the local forests. Local firewood industries now catering to wider markets sprang up wherever railways connected forested areas to Melbourne.

Charcoal was an extremely important forest product and was consumed in large quantities. It fired the blacksmiths' forges in every homestead, small settlement and mine. Working horses in cultivation and road transportation

required regular shoeing. Tools and machines for agriculture and mining needed to be made and maintained – all the work of the blacksmith, which continued well into the twentieth century. Charcoal was produced by burning timber in a restricted supply of air. Kilns were made by cutting timber precisely to length and stacking it almost vertical into a conical heap with just the right amount of air-space. The stack was then covered with clay or turf except for carefully placed apertures. Once lit, the kiln had to be watched continuously, ensuring a high temperature was attained and that the fire did not break through the covering. The process continued until all of the wood was converted to charcoal, which may have taken 'a few days and nights' (Ogden, c.1976:13). Charcoal again became briefly in high demand during World War Two when petrol rationing caused motorists to seek an alternative fuel. Large ungainly charcoal-fired gas producers, bolted onto the vehicles wherever they would fit, provided the substitute (Schmitt, 1992:172).

Tramways

Sawmilling and tramway companies were interlinked and evidence of them remains in the locality. The tramway's existence was essential to the sawmilling operation. The forest to the south of Yea and to the north of Kinglake and Toolangi was crisscrossed with timber tramways and dotted with sawmills. After the major fires of January 1939, some mills that had been burnt down were relocated to regional centres with good transport facilities and the settlements, families, boarding houses and stables that congregated around the mills in their forest settings disappeared. Those mills in the Kinglake area that were not destroyed carried on until the 1960s (Johns, 2006).

Evidence of the timber tramways still exist in the Kinglake, Pheasant Creek and Flowerdale areas of the Shire. Local researcher, David Johns, has compiled a list of seven timber mills in this locality, and a brochure detailing their location provides a brief history of the mills and what is left to see (*Where's the Old Timber Railways?,* 2005).

4.3 Dairying

High rainfall and rich soil, together with the development of technology and transport links, meant the study area was ideally placed to become a major dairying district.

Dairying, often combined with mixed farming, was a favoured option for pioneer farmers. However, until the late nineteenth century, dairymen close to Melbourne concentrated on supplying the growing urban market with fresh milk. Elsewhere, and this includes the study area, milk had to be turned into butter (or cheese) if it was to reach its market in an edible condition (Dingle, 1984: 115).

Dairies were initially unhygienic places, and it was not until the 1880s and 1890s when key technological

breakthroughs occurred, that the quality of butter and cheese production became more consistent and therefore reliable. The first was the introduction of the cream separator in 1891, which led to local farmers separating milk on their farm then sending the cream only to the factory to be made into butter. The second was refrigeration which played a major role in the advancement of butter and cheese production, and refrigerated vats in ships assisted in the export of Australian butter.

Additionally, the Victorian Government appointed its first dairy expert in the late 1880s, and also set up the Vegetable Products Commission to collect information and to make recommendations on several industries, including dairying (Arnold, 1973:114).

Figure 25 Butter Factory Alexandra, c. 1923
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

The Yea and Mansfield Dairy Company Limited, was established in 1891 and the Alexandra Butter Factory was established in 1892 for local butter and cheese production (Figure 25). Although the Yea factory closed in 1993, it is considered a rare example of a continuously operating dairy business in Victoria. It is listed by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) (ID B6389).

Also in the study area, at Crystal Creek, selector and entrepreneur William Nicholson imported Victoria's first Laval separator, which separated milk and cream, and set up a creamery and milk depot at his mill, eliminating the process of skimming milk and transporting it into Alexandra (Noble, 1969:25).

As the dairy industry progressed, some farmers also began breeding their own cattle. The most popular cattle in the area were Jerseys and Ayrshire for cheese production.

4.4 Other Industries

Introduction

As well as mining, timber, trout farming and dairying, other industries utilising the natural resources of the study area have traditionally included agricultural crops such as potatoes, and some fruit growing. However, in recent times, alternatives have had to be sought when markets have declined for a product due to fashion or economic reasons. For example, wine production has accelerated most recently, and the number of wineries has increased across the Shire. Alternative crops provide not only an income from the product, but also act as tourist attractions to the area.

Crops

Development of agricultural crops in the area began with the selectors in the 1860s. At first, potatoes were a viable crop, and selectors toiled to plant and harvest this crop. Toolangi, situated north of the Toolangi State Forest, is mainly known for its potatoes but also as the one-time home of the poet C.J. Dennis, author of the Australian epic, *The Songs of the Sentimental Bloke* (1915). The land around Toolangi was especially good for potato crops, and has remained so. However, in other parts of the study area, the potato has been superseded by the production of berry and grape vines.

Lavender

When the market for Australian wool declined in the 1970s and 1980s, decisions had to be made by some property owners as to whether remaining as farmers on large acreage would remain viable. Many farmers looked for alternative crops that would provide them with a viable income from the land they and their families had been farming for, sometimes, many decades. An alternative to sheep farming was seen by the owners of a property on Ponds Creek, located near Strath Creek, within sight of Mt Disappointment, to be that of lavender farming. While farming is often a lifestyle decision, the establishment of the lavender farm was seen as both a lifestyle and viable return on investment. Today the farm consists of 9,000 commercial lavenders producing fresh lavender flowers in season, a range of lavender products, gardens and a nature trail. Although this working farm is a financial investment that returns an income to its owners, it has also become a tourist attraction to the area.

Timber plantations

In recent decades, the timber plantations, such as stands of blue gums have been established for production of oil and firewood from thinnings. They are visible along the road

between Buxton and Alexandra. Timber and veneer products are derived from harvesting the mature trees. See section 8.4 for more information on this industry.

Fruit growing

The rich soils of the Goulburn and Upper Goulburn Valley and the moderate climate enable the successful growth of the popular summer fruits, among them, cherries and nectarines. In recent years, the nectarine orchards have been abandoned due to the low prices found for the local fruit, because of overseas competition. Cherry orchards have been established across the shire, including at Highlands, Yarck and Acheron. The Tandara Orchards is located 14 km from Alexandra while the Koala Country Orchards are located in Yarck. As well as providing employment and income for local families, these orchards also attract visitors wanting to pick their own cherries and have become an additional attraction to the gourmet tour of the Goulburn Valley.

Other summer fruits produced in the Shire include strawberries, blueberries and raspberries. Toolangi produces 95% of the country's strawberry runners, used for stock. A little further north, at Kinglake and Pheasant Creek, berry growing has traditionally been a major crop, and Kinglake growers supply Melbourne and overseas markets. The Goulburn Strathbogie Olive Growers currently have more than 60,000 trees in production. Together with the salmon and trout farms around the Buxton area, the local produce being grown in the Murrindindi Shire is a reflection of twenty-first century tastes and ability to transport fresh produce all over the world.

Wineries

The soils and cool climate of the Upper Goulburn Valley are conducive to the production of fine Victorian wines. The area is particularly suited to producing chardonnay, sauvignon blanc, riesling and gewürztraminer as well as shiraz, merlot and cabernet sauvignon varieties. Wineries, such as Growlers Gully Wine, Cathedral Lane Vineyard, Rees Miller Estate, Murrindindi Vineyards and Snobs Creek Estate Wine are situated within the study area, and as well as producing and selling their wine at the cellar door, also attract tourists for their food and accommodation.

4.5 Directing the Water supply

Any study of the water catchment areas and the supply of water to Melbourne and Victorian locations must acknowledge the importance of the building of the Yan Yean Reservoir in the mid-nineteenth century. Melbourne lacked a fresh water supply until the Yan Yean system was built. Although not located within the study area, the supply of water to Victorian towns was informed by the construction of the Yan Yean system.

In the study area, the first Eildon Dam, known as the Sugarloaf Weir, was built between 1914 and 1928. The second Eildon Dam was constructed about 200 metres downstream from the first between 1951 and 1956 and involved flooding the first Eildon Dam.

The construction of these dams, and the townships associated with them, changed the landscape of the study area (Figure 26).

Yan Yean

In December 1853, Governor La Trobe turned the first sod on the site of the future Yan Yean Reservoir which was to be the centrepiece of a vast water supply system for the gold-rich town of Melbourne, still less than twenty years old.

As historians of the Yan Yean Reservoir, Tony Dingle and Helen Doyle, note, the Yan Yean scheme was 'visionary and controversial', and when completed in 1857, was the first major public work to be constructed in the newly separated colony of Victoria (Dingle & Doyle, 2003:vii). The construction of the reservoir created what was then one of the world's largest artificial lakes, piping water more than 30 km into Melbourne. At the time, few Australian cities had the capacity to draw their drinking water from such a distance.

In the 1880s extensions were made to the system to harvest water from north of the Great Divide – a series of weirs and aqueducts gathered water from Silver and Wallaby creeks, which are both tributaries of King Parrot Creek and delivered it to a new reservoir north of Whittlesea at Toorourrong. From here the water was supplied to the Yan Yean Reservoir via a new aqueduct known as the Clearwater Channel. This extension, which brought the system right up to the southern boundary of the study area, was the only time that water north of the Great Dividing Range was to be harvested for Melbourne. This is set to change, with the construction of the North-South Pipeline in 2008-10. Despite extensive opposition by Shire residents, the pipeline was constructed to pump water from the Goulburn River to the Melbourne metropolitan area, though it has not been used as of 2011.

The Yan Yean water supply system, although not in the study area, has, nevertheless provided employment and recreation for local residents for more than one hundred and fifty years.

Sugarloaf Weir and Eildon Dam

On the eastern side of the study area another major water catchment has been created to provide water supplies to Melbourne and surrounding districts.

All in a Name

Eildon, or Dickson's Run, was one of the first pastoral licences to be issued in the Murray District. The origin and significance of the name Eildon is disputed but was

originally the pastoral licence granted to Dr James Dickson in 1838. It is described by Billis & Kenyon as '9,600 acres, carrying 600 cattle, located on the right bank of Goulburn river 5 miles east of Alexandra'. Subsequently, from 1848, the run was owned by Archibald Thom who is said to have named it for his wife after the Eildon Hills near Melrose, Scotland (Billis & Kenyon, 1974:58, 203; Sinnott, 2004:52-3).

Eildon Dam Number One

In 1914, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission began the construction of the Sugarloaf Weir at the junction of the Goulburn and Delatite rivers. The township of Darlingford was flooded during the construction and a new township, Eildon, previously known as Upper Thornton, began to grow on the south side of the Goulburn River to house the men working on the dam.

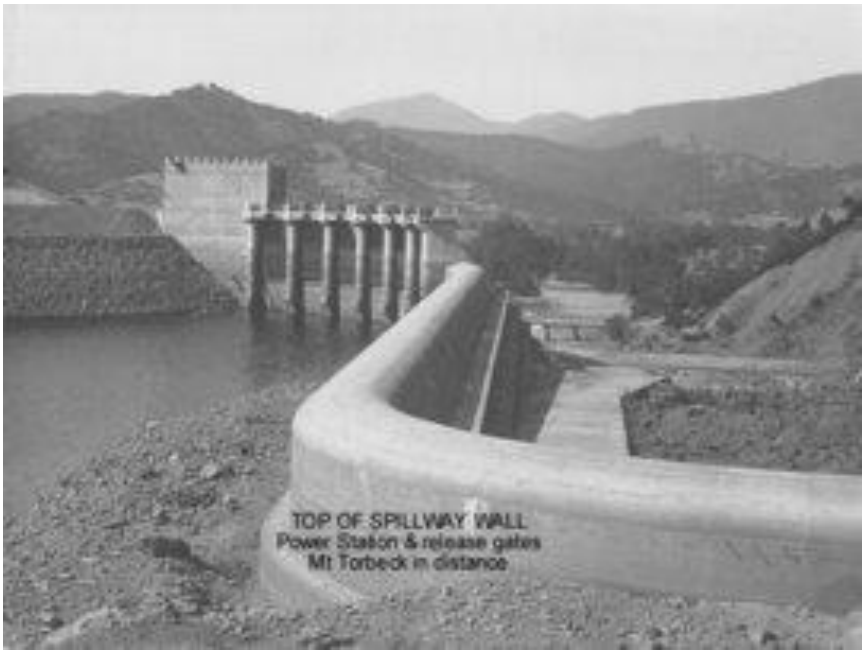


Figure 26 Eildon Dam
Source: Eildon Dam website (http://www.eildonproject.com.au/HistoryofLakeEildon.htm)

Schools were needed to educate children of the workers, and the Sugarloaf Waterworks School was established in 1916. The school was renamed the Eildon Weir Primary School in 1923.

A new Name – Eildon Reservoir

In 1927 the growing township, located about a kilometre beyond the dam wall, the hydro-electricity power house and transformer power house, was renamed Eildon. It had a church, school, post office, recreation ground and numerous other buildings.

Eildon Dam Number Two

Although the Sugarloaf Weir had increased its capacity in the 1930s, it was still not enough to meet the demands for water in the Goulburn Valley and to provide assistance to farmers during drought. The construction of the second Eildon Dam is associated with the rapid expansion of irrigation in Victoria after World War Two, when new farms were established for, and by, returned servicemen and immigrants. After a detailed feasibility study of potential storage sites in the region, it was decided to enlarge the Sugarloaf Weir.

In 1950 work began on the construction of a dam wall downstream from the existing reservoir to enlarge the water storage capacity. The work was carried out by an American company, Utah Construction Company, and, as well as building the dam, they built extensive workshops, housing and hostel accommodation for the workers. Migrants from British, European and some Asian and South American countries came to Australia and were engaged on the Eildon Dam project.

A New Town of Eildon

The construction of the new township, on the opposite side of the river to the original township of Eildon, also began in 1950 to house the 4,000 people who came to work on the Eildon Dam project. The houses, also built by Utah Construction Company, became known as Utah Houses and, 'to eliminate a sameness of appearance' fourteen different plans were used. These houses are still referred to as Utah houses today. They were pre-cut and fabricated in England before being shipped out and assembled in the new town. Some of the houses from the earlier township, which was flooded, were moved to the new site. All services were installed including roads, water supply, drainage, sewerage and electricity.

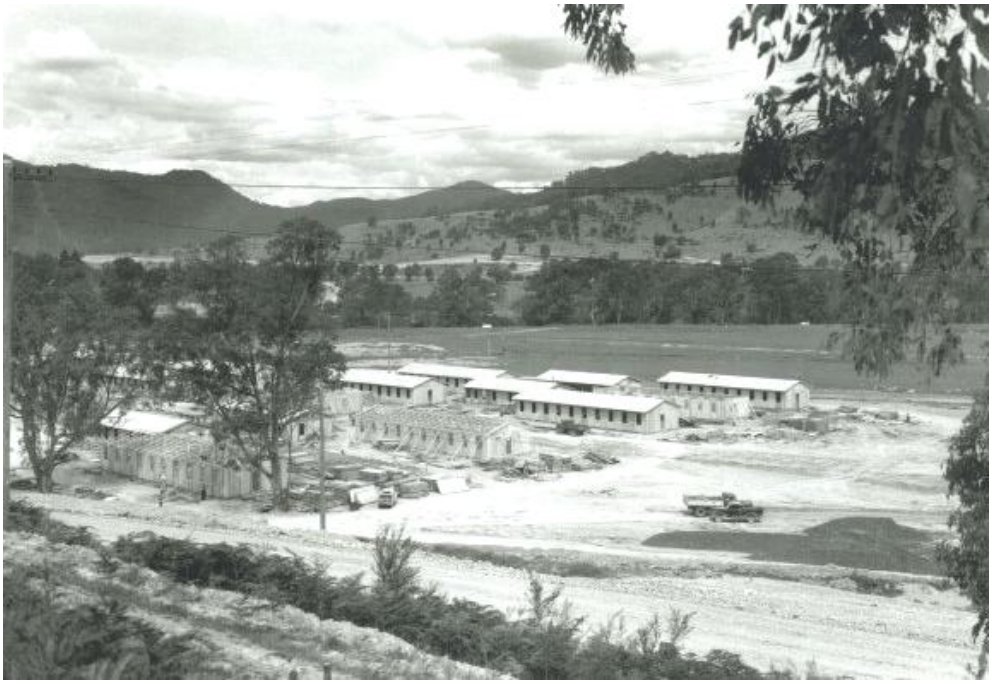


Figure 27 Eildon Dam, British Migrant Camp
Source: Picture Australia Online

Before the project was finished, however, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission investigated the possibility of utilising the resources of the area through a planned growth in tourism. The Commission identified the growth of fishing and water sports. Using the waterways, trout would be released from the nearby Government Fish Hatchery at Snob's Creek. Tourism went on to become the major local industry, with boating on Lake Eildon (138 sq. km.), fishing and recreation in the Fraser National Park. Today, Eildon has a visitor information centre, a hotel, motels, three caravan parks and a camping ground (http://www.eildonproject.com.au/HistoryofLakeEildon).

Rubicon Hydro-Electric Scheme

The Rubicon Hydro-Electric Scheme was commissioned in 1928 to harness the power of the Rubicon and Royston rivers, tributaries of the Goulburn River, and is located near the Eildon Reservoir (Evans, 1994:83-108). It is a small scheme, with a total capacity of 13 megawatts. Its output is highest in winter and spring when water levels are at their highest. The scheme now makes only a very small contribution to total electricity supplies, but when completed in 1928, it accounted for one-fifth of the then Victorian State Electricity Commission's supplies.

It is made up of three small concrete dams, four power stations, racelines (aqueducts), pipelines, siphons, tramways, trestle bridges, and an inclined cable haulage, all set within the Rubicon State Forest.

The Rubicon Hydro-Electric Scheme is considered to be of scientific and historical importance and has been added to the Victorian Heritage Register (ID H1187).

Heritage

- Dairying – Chase Farm dairy, Strath Creek; Acheron Park, Buston
- Gold mining sites – OK Mine, Wilson's Creek Mining Area, Luck's All Mine, Robb's Reward Mine, Black Creek Mines, Kerrisdale Estate water race
- Miners' cottages – Dove Cottage, Alexandra; Log Cabin, Fawcett
- Butter and cheese factories – Yea and Mansfield Dairy Co. Ltd., Alexandra Dairy Co. Ltd
- Charcoal Kiln, Kinglake West (VHI H7923-0012)
- Sawmilling sites and associated infrastructure – Robbie's Mill, Higgs Mill, J & J Feiglin's Mill Site No. 1, Dindi Sawmill, Clarke & Pearce Mills Rubicon (1-5), Vic Oak Sawmilling Company
- Tramways – Whittlesea-Kinglake Tramway, Buxton Sawmilling Co. Mill and Tramway, Murrindindi Wooden Tramline, Cook Mill Site and Tramway, Alexandra-Rubicon Tramway
- Water storage sites – Eildon Dam
- Rubicon-Hydro Electric Scheme

5. TOURISM AND RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

The study area has long been considered a desirable destination for holidaymakers. From the earliest times of settlement, the rolling hills and lush green valleys, steep mountain ranges and majestic mountain ashes have attracted visitors seeking refuge from the city. From the late nineteenth until the mid-twentieth century, rest and recreation, either in the mountains or by the sea, was the most popular form of annual holiday.

In the decades before camping and caravanning holidays came into vogue, or skiing holidays were as popular as they are today, guest houses or hotels were the usual style of accommodation. Enjoying the luxury of guest house accommodation in mountain resorts such as Marysville enabled tourists to experience outdoor activities such as fishing, walking and sightseeing. An additional benefit was the attraction of a homely environment where meals were prepared for guests, beds were made and honeymooners or families could enjoy the great outdoors and the company of other guests.

The study area enjoys an abundance of riches in the forms of activities now available, and many of the towns across the municipality offer some form of tourist attraction. Fresh produce, such as trout and salmon, olives, berries and wine, are all available at the cellar door or at the farm gate, located in the study area. Additionally, where the owners of vineyards or orchards add a bed and breakfast facility, or a bush retreat, the experience becomes more memorable for the visitor. Value adding to the original product increases sales and the tourist dollar.

The difficulty experienced by the first explorers to the area can be imagined when travelling from Melbourne and winding along the road and up through the Blacks Spur amid the giant Mountain Ash trees and tree ferns. The original Yarra Track touches this area around Narbethong, though little remains to remind the visitor of its years of use.

Today Narbethong, Marysville, Buxton, Taggerty, Alexandra, Eildon, Yarck, Yea, Kinglake, Toolangi and Pheasant Creek, all attract visitors to a variety of activities, continuing the hundred year tradition of bringing tourist income to the Shire.

HISTORY

5.1 Early nature appreciation, health and well being

The study area abounds with picture-postcard scenery which attracts visitors to the region. The many national parks

have tracks for bushwalking, and offer fishing, water sports and plentiful opportunities for camping (Figure 28). The Cumberland Camping Ground attracted visitors from Melbourne and other parts of the state. The 1930s photograph shows a group of guests enjoying a walk in the vicinity of Marysville.

Figure 28 Group of campers at the Cumberland Camping Ground, Marysville, 1930.
Source: Murrindindi Library Service

With almost 30% of the region designated national parkland, the study area has attracted visitors interested in outdoor recreation and nature appreciation.

The study area contains some of Victoria's largest and most spectacular national parks, all of which are easily accessible from Melbourne:

- The Yarra Ranges National Park was proclaimed in 1995.
- Lake Eildon State Park was proclaimed in 1997, and includes the former Fraser National Park and Eildon State Park.
- Kinglake National Park, proclaimed in 1928, is one of Victoria's oldest national parks. Covering an area of 21,600 hectares, it is the largest national park close to Melbourne. It includes forests, fern gullies, walking tracks and viewpoints (Parks Victoria, 2006).
- Cathedral Range State Forest was proclaimed in 1979. The area was being used '… as early as the 1930s … by walking clubs, and it was Victoria's first rock climbing area. Walking tracks lead to the high peaks on the range from which spectacular views of the surrounding countryside are obtained.' (Parks Victoria 1998).

Bushwalking

The breathtaking landscape and vistas make the study area an ideal tourist destination where bushwalking has been an

enjoyable pastime since the early twentieth century. Walking tracks in Lake Eildon National Park lead through native forest and bush land, past grazing kangaroos to panoramic views and tranquil campgrounds. Horse-riding trails and hiking tracks also wind through tall forests and lead to scenic river valleys.

Skiing and Fishing

During the planning and construction period of the Lake Eildon Dam, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission had investigated the possibility of utilising the natural resources of the area. The construction of the new township of Eildon in 1950 to house the immigrant workers on the dam-building project meant that the new families needed recreational activities as well as housing and schools. Two aquatic activities, skiing and fishing, were embraced as suitable tourist activities which could be planned to grow tourism in the region.

Water-skiing on the waters of Lake Eildon and fishing in the pristine waters nearby have been popular sports since the 1950s. Indeed, tourism soon became the major local industry, with boating on Lake Eildon (138 sq. km.), fishing and recreation in the Fraser National Park. Today, Eildon has a visitor information centre, a hotel, motels, bed and breakfast accommodation, as well as resorts and apartment accommodation.

With over 500 kilometres of shoreline and excellent facilities for water skiing, fishing and boating, Lake Eildon may be thought of as Victoria's inland water-sport ground.

The study area is famous for its fishing, especially for trout in the rivers around Eildon and Thornton. However, the tourist industry caters for those who prefer to buy their fish from a trout farm, and these are nearby at Buxton and on Back Eildon Road, Thornton.

In winter, skiers and tobogganers can head for the cross-country skiing resort of Lake Mountain near Marysville. The tourist town of Marysville has offered guesthouse accommodation for skiers since the 1920s and '30s and guest houses, together with resorts and other forms of accommodation, such as B&Bs and cottage accommodation, though many were destroyed in the 2009 *Black Saturday* bushfires.

5.2 Guesthouses

Across the Shire, many townships such as Marysville, Alexandra and Kinglake, now thought of only as the gateway to winter resorts, were once more popular as summer holiday destinations.

The peak holiday season was October to February. In the minds of many, the guest houses evoked images of 'starched white table linen, fresh flowers, fresh country food, fresh-caught fish and gourmets-delight meals, ranging from

breakfasts in bed to supper with mouth-watering pastries and feather-light cakes piled with cream' (Pers. Comm., Bev & David Johns, 2005). For families in particular, they represented a comfortable, pampered escape, complete with all the domestic comforts.

The popularity of guesthouses generally peaked around the 1920-30s but declined after the 1960s. Throughout Victoria, the golden age of guest houses appears to have been the 1930s. The building of holiday houses, camping and caravanning also became popular in the 1960s, as new patterns of leisure developed and motels became more fashionable.

As the area became increasingly popular with visitors in the early twentieth century, a series of comfortable guest houses opened, catering for upper and middle-class holidaymakers. Some of the larger guesthouses in Marysville included the Marylands and Marylyn. In the Kinglake area, at least six guest houses were operating in the 1930s, and include the Morella guest house was still operating in 2006, but was destroyed in the 2009 *Black Saturday* bushfire.

The Hermitage, Narbethong

By 1900, several guest houses had been established in the study area, including the Hermitage at Narbethong. The Hermitage had been constructed in 1894 for John William Lindt, the German photographer who had arrived in Melbourne in 1862. He travelled extensively, became a society photographer and, in 1888, was appointed official photographer for the Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition. Narbethong had become a changing point for coaches during the gold rush, and later the journey along the Blacks Spur was very popular. Lindt, who had explored and photographed the area for years, opened The Hermitage (Figure 29) as a guest house, eventually accommodating about 30 guests. He gave lantern slide shows to his guests. The Hermitage was sold after Lindt's death and remained a guest house until the 1950s when it became a private residence. Since 1979 the current owners of the property have progressively undertaken restoration works (VHR, H0303) and the house again provides guest house accommodation.

5.3 Tourism in the Twenty-First Century

Tourism today is really an expansion of the themes we have seen already in this section. To the traditional attractions of the forests, rivers, national parks and farmland scenery, have been added the many facets of gourmet tourism. The growing wine industry, orchard industry, lavender farm and olive groves perform two functions in the area, as they can also be deemed tourist attractions. That is, spending money on wine, or any commodity, is in itself an aspect of tourism. Where wineries or olive groves and the lavender farm include gourmet food and accommodation within their portfolio, the value adding increases the return and income earned for the owner and the municipality.

Figure 29 J W Lindt's The Hermitage, 1910
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Figure 30 Alexandra, a tourist town, c.1940
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Tourism has also seen the adaptation of structures which are no longer used for the purpose for which they were built. A good example is Yea Railway Station. When the railway line arrived in Yea in 1883 it linked the town to Melbourne through goods and passenger services. The line closed in 1979 and the historic and unique Yea Railway Station has been restored.

The numerous nature reserves and walking trails are valued as tourist attractions and measures have been put in place to preserve them.

Visitor Information Centres in Yea, Alexandra and Eildon now direct tourists to sightseeing destinations, tourist walks, accommodation and other activities.

HERITAGE

- The Hermitage, Narbethong
- Alexandra, Taggerty – National Parks
- Eildon Dam and National Park
- Yea – former Railway Station
- Eothen, Kinglake
- National Park Hotel, Kinglake
- Crossways Country Inn, Marysville
- Taggerty House, Taggerty

6. GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION

The current Murrindindi Shire was created in 1994 as a result of the re-defining of Victorian shires, and comprises the former Shires of Yea and Alexandra; the King Parrot and Strath Creek districts of the former Shire of Broadford; parts of the Kinglake district located in the former Shire of Eltham; the Kinglake West district of the former City of Whittlesea; the Terip Terip district of the former Shire of Euroa, and the Toolangi and Castella districts of the former Shire of Healesville.

Yea was created as a road district in 1869; it became a Shire in 1873 and remained so until it became part of the Shire of Murrindindi during amalgamation in 1994.

Alexandra was created as a road district in 1868; proclaimed a Shire in 1869 and redefined by annexation of a portion of Yea Shire in 1914. It remained a shire until 1994 when it was incorporated into the Shire of Murrindindi.

The establishment of the district occurred over decades. As the land changed hands from the squatters and it was opened up to the selectors, the infrastructure was slowly built. The construction of many of the first buildings was as a result of sheer determination by the first settlers to have a shire, or local, town hall, a police station or railway station. Money, or the lack of it, determined the standard of building carried out by the local shires, and evidence exists today to the rise and fall of the fortunes of many townships.

HISTORY

6.1 Administering policy for Indigenous people

Aboriginal Protectorate

The Aboriginal Protectorate is one of the most significant chapters in the history of Australian Government policy. Throughout the 1830s concerns had been voiced in both Australia and Britain over the violent manner in which settlement was proceeding in the colonies. There was clearly a need to manage the conflict arising from the European occupation of traditional lands (Presland, 1985:96). In 1835, a new government was elected in Britain which resulted in the appointment of members of the Humanitarian Reform Movement to the Colonial Office. On advice from Tasmania's Governor Arthur, a House of Commons Select Committee on Native Peoples was established. The Committee made a number of recommendations, among which was the establishment of an Aboriginal Protectorate. The system was to be trialled in the Port Phillip District.

The Aboriginal Protectorate comprised a Chief Protector (George Augustus Robinson) and four Assistant Protectors. The Protectors were required to live and travel with the Aboriginal people in their district, record accurate census data and learn their language and customs. The ultimate aim was to persuade them to settle down on reserved areas of land. Once settled, the people were to be educated and taught Christianity and agriculture. The Protectors were also responsible for the distribution of rations and supplies (Foxcroft, 1941:58).

The study area was originally within the Goulburn District and the Assistant Protector initially assigned to the district was James Dredge. In 1839 Dredge set up a station at Mitchellstown (in the present day Shire of Strathbogie). Many Taungurung people had apparently already moved to the vicinity of Mitchellstown and started to frequent the station. It is thought that most of the Taungurung were living at the Mitchellstown Protectorate Station when, in 1840, supplies ran out and the residents were moved off. William Le Seouf, who replaced Dredge, moved the station to Murchison (in the present day City of Greater Shepparton) (Museum of Victoria, Christie 1979: 95).

Reserves and Missions

After the Aboriginal Protectorate was abolished in 1849, those Aboriginal people who had survived the conflicts of earlier years, found themselves increasingly marginalised. Survival for many meant camping on the fringes of towns, living on ration handouts from the Board for the Protection of Aborigines, but also being exposed to the worst vices of settler society. The plight of Aboriginal people did not go un-noticed. More importantly, Aborigines themselves were not lacking in initiative, recognising that participation in farming for their own subsistence and profit offered the possibility of a successful co-existence.

In response to a request by Taungurung elders in 1859, the Victorian government agreed to set aside land on the Acheron River. The elders had selected 1,820 hectares near a sacred site. Immediately eighty Taungurung people and other remnant members of the Kulin tribes moved to Acheron where, according to Richard Broome (1994:71) without further government support, they pursued the tasks of clearing, fencing and construction. Soon six hectares of vegetables and wheat were under cultivation but lack of cash forced many to seek employment elsewhere. Using political influence, some local European settlers succeeded in having the Aborigines ejected, their improvements burned and their crops destroyed (Broome 1994:71). The now disillusioned Taungurung were relocated to inferior land, without compelling spiritual significance, on the Mohican Run.

More than half of the residents of the Acheron Station refused to move to the Mohican Run. A report was made to the Government in 1861 which advised that the Mohican Run be abandoned and the residents returned to Acheron. This advice

was not accepted and a new station was to be established 5 miles to the north of the existing Mohican Station and still within the boundaries of the run. The Victorian Government was never successful in persuading the Taungurung and other members of the Kulin Nation to settle on the Mohican Run as Aboriginal resistance remained strong. In 1863, the leaders of the Taungurung and Woi wurrung led their people to squat on traditional camping ground at Badgers Creek (near Healesville in the present day Shire of Yarra Ranges) and subsequently petitioned the Government to proclaim the area an Aboriginal Reserve.

Coranderrk at Badgers Creek was proclaimed an Aboriginal Reserve in 1863 and, by the mid 1870s, was an almost self-sustaining model settlement. It was arguably this very success that placed Corranderk under threat because the next decade saw a number of attempts to close the station and open up the land. Legislation passed in 1886 enabled Aboriginal people of part European descent to be expelled from the reserve. By the 1920s most of the residents had been moved to Lake Tyers. The Healesville wildlife sanctuary now occupies part of the former Coranderrk reserve (Broome 1994: chapter 5, Bird 1990, Goulding 1988, Massola 1975, Felton 1981:173,190-2, PROV 1993:15, 24, Billis and Kenyon 1974:89, 284). The site of Coranderrk, at Healesville, is out of the present study area. However, the Coranderrk story begins on the Acheron River within the present Shire of Murrindindi and the pre-Coranderrk locations are important heritage places.

6.2 Public buildings and public works

The construction of public buildings, such as churches and halls, usually began at the instigation of a committee of local residents. In some districts many farmers were isolated from their neighbours and a local church and hall provided the venue for social activities. Some halls doubled as churches until the particular denomination raised funds for the purpose. Similarly, some churches rented their halls to local groups, such as the Country Women's Association, for their regular meetings.

Public buildings such as shire or town halls, community halls and Mechanics' Institutes have been in the past, and remain, essential to the life of any small township. The Yea Shire Hall, erected in 1877, re-modelled in 1894 and extended in 1923, is recognised as a building of heritage significance (Figure 31) and protected under Murrindindi Shire's Heritage Overlay (HO6). Local courts and police stations were also constructed and the discovery of gold in Victoria precipitated the need for these in many parts of regional Victoria. By as early as 1860, portable buildings for the police existed in the township.

Figure 31 Yea Shire Hall
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

In Yea, a Reserve for police purposes was granted in 1886. The Yea Police Station Residence, designed in 1883, was not constructed until 1894.

Shire offices were built to accommodate the workers' needed to collect taxes and rates and to administer local government. Other civic buildings, including banks, post offices, law courts, schools, police stations, fire stations, libraries and Mechanics' Institutes were built to accommodate the growing rural and town population.

HERITAGE

- Yea Police Station and Yea Shire Hall
- Alexandra Post Office, Court House and former Shire Offices
- Alexandra Shire Hall
- Athlone, Alexandra
- Andrew Hill Fire Tower
- Sites associated with Aboriginal Reserves and Missions

7. BUILDING SETTLEMENTS AND TOWNS

INTRODUCTION

A characteristic of the study area generally is the number of somewhat isolated small towns, some set within forests and gorges. Small local centres were established to provide supplies, commercial services, communication links and community support. Some townships developed to service the pastoralists, others were the result of the local dairy industry; some grew up around mining sites and others evolved in the sawmilling districts.

The original 28 pastoral runs were settled by the squatters who bought and ran stock, built shacks, or more elaborate houses, and provided employment for stockmen, cattlemen and labourers. Eventually, the pastoral settlements required the presence of local merchants and services and small townships grew up to support the larger runs.

HISTORY

7.1 Township development

Early towns

With the opening up of the land to squatters, followed by selectors and later by the Closer Settlement Scheme,* townships slowly grew to service the needs of the pastoralists and farmers. When news spread throughout Victoria that new areas were being opened up to settlers, enterprising businessmen saw the potential to earn their living in rural Victoria. Storekeepers, such as E S Purcell (Figure 32), blacksmiths, publicans, punt operators and bakers gravitated to the region.

Kinglake and Kinglake West were originally known as Tommy's Hut and developed in the mid-1800s. They were named after the British historian Alexander Kinglake (1809-91) by John Lindsay Beale. Beale first took up land in the Kinglake district in the County of Anglesey in 1873. He was active in community affairs, was instrumental in the establishment of the school at Kinglake Central and is recognised as a pioneer of the district.

The first post office was established in the district in 1862 at Mountain Rush. The first outward mail left Mountain Rush

* Closer Settlement was a scheme for concentrated and rural settlement through government repurchase, subdivision and reallocation of large estates. Commencing in the 1890s, it had various iterations and names, including Soldier Settlement, introduced after both the First and Second World Wars (Doyle, 1998:133).

at 2pm every Thursday on its 24-hour journey to Melbourne. However, when the gold rush petered out, the mail service was withdrawn and the area remained without postal services until 1883. Land was opened up for selection in 1876. The first Kinglake primary school was opened in 1879, and the first public hall opened in 1897. Church services arrived later in Kinglake, St Mary's Catholic Church opened officially in 1901 and St Peter's Church of England opened in 1922.

Yea developed as a service town occupied by tradesmen who sold to surrounding squatters and settlers. The first settlers in the district were overlanders from New South Wales. They arrived in 1837 and 1838, and included Peter Snodgrass, James Campbell, Farquhar McKenzie, John Murchison, Colonel White and Dr Dickson. The township was surveyed by Surveyor Pinniger, and laid out in 1855 on part of the Murrindindi Run with the first land sale in 1856. It was known as Muddy Creek until 1878 when it was formally renamed Yea after Colonel Lacy Yea who was killed in the Crimean War.

Gold was discovered in the area in 1859 and a number of smaller mining settlements came into existence at this time. Yea expanded and grew as a town with the influx of hopeful prospectors. The Church of England erected Christ Church in 1868 when the population of Yea was 250. When the gold ran out, farming and timber-getting became the main occupations. The Yea sawmilling industry reached its peak between 1907 and 1915. The railway arrived in 1883, with an extension to Molesworth in 1889, chiefly for timber transport to Melbourne. Yea became a popular tourist destination in the 1890s, with trout being released into King Parrot Creek to attract recreational anglers. A Post Office was built in 1890, followed by a Grandstand and a Butter factory in 1891. By 1911 the town's population had increased to 1,126.

Figure 32 E S Purcell, shopkeepers in Yea from 1887
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Mining towns

With news of gold discoveries across Victoria, prospectors arrived in townships such as Yea, Gobur, Strath Creek, Alexandra (Figure 33), Ghin Ghin, Molesworth and around Murrindindi Creek. The townships developed as centres of mining communities and shopkeepers, blacksmiths and publicans, amongst others, arrived to meet the needs of rapidly growing communities.

The township of Alexandra began as a mining camp. Gold was discovered in 1866 and 1867 and the settlement sprang up nearby. The settlement was first known as the Red Gate Diggings, named after a gate in a fence south of the Ultima Thule Creek – originally one of the boundaries between the Mount Pleasant and Eglinton pastoral runs. Part of Grant Street runs close to the site that followed the original miners' track through the gate in the fence between the two runs and on to the diggings further afield. In 1864, the Eglinton Run was subdivided and the southern 11,500 acres became the Mount Pleasant 'B' Run (Shakespear, 1864). Donald McKenzie retained what was now called Mount Pleasant 'A', and Mount Pleasant 'B' was acquired by Henry Johnson (*Victorian Government Gazette*, 08/12/1868:2343). The town was also called McKenzie's Diggings, after Donald McKenzie, the squatter of Mount Pleasant 'A' pastoral run. In 1867 the District Surveyor, John Downey, intended to call the town Eglinton, after the nearby pastoral run, but instead it was named in honour of 'The Rose of Denmark', Princess Alexandra Caroline Marie Charlotte Louise Julie (1844-1925), wife of Albert, Prince of Wales (Noble, 1969:33, 2-3).

Figure 33 Alexandra on the Goulburn River
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Selection towns

One example of a selection town is Strath Creek (Figure 34), originally known as Queen Parrot Creek. The area first attracted squatters in 1838. The largest squatting runs were

the Kerrisdale and Flowerdale Stations taken up by John Murchison and Farquhar MacKenzie respectively. The squatters were followed by gold prospectors. A similar pattern of goldmining to that of Yea emerged on the King Parrot and Strath Creek areas where substantial but short-lived alluvial rushes occurred during the 1850s when all of the creeks running north from Mount Disappointment were found to be auriferous. Quartz gold mining and ore processing, powered by water wheels, followed in 1859. A further deep lead was discovered on Strath Creek and mining commenced there in 1860. With news of gold discoveries across Victoria, prospectors arrived in districts and townships grew. The Strath Creek area was opened up to selectors in the 1870s and farms, from 70 - 200 acres, were selected by enthusiastic would-be farmers. As the township grew, the influx of families often meant an increased number of children which resulted in the establishment of schools and other services to the community. The townships developed as centres of mining communities and shopkeepers, blacksmiths and publicans, amongst others, arrived to meet the needs of rapidly growing communities.

Figure 34 Strath Creek, 1908
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

At the same time, factories had to be built to process the butter or cheese, timber or other commodities. Recreation facilities were also essential to a growing town, and a town hall and at least one hotel was built for travellers passing through or simply for the rest and recreation of the locals.

Timber towns

Early sawmilling operations were carried out in the forests, until the 1939 fires wiped out many mills and their communities. Operations were subsequently transferred to safer township environments.

Figure 35 The Rubicon Lumber & Tramway Company's stacking yard at Alexandra

Source: Rails to Rubicon

Railway Houses

From the inception of Government railways in Victoria, staff residences have been provided at certain stations, crossings, and other places for stationmasters, gatekeepers, gangers and the like. Railway housing reflected the architectural style prevalent at the time, and also reflected the status of the occupant. In the main, they were let to the occupants at a reasonable rental (Harrigan, 1962:148).

A station residence was constructed in Alexandra in the 1920s for the stationmaster. Two former railway houses survive on Oliver Street, Yea, as does a railway ganger's cottage at Cathkin.

HERITAGE

- Purcell's General Store, Lee Gow's Store, Peppercorn Hotel – Yea
- Commercial buildings – former Union (ANZ) Bank, Commercial Hotel, Mia Mia Tea Shop, Beehive Stores, Alexandra,
- Shire Hall, Alexandra
- Free Library, Alexandra
- Railway house in Alexandra, Yea and Cathkin

8. THE ENVIRONMENT AND MANAGING PUBLIC LAND

INTRODUCTION

The forces of nature figure large in the study area: extensive tracts of forest make it one of the most fire-prone regions in the world and an abundance of rivers, streams and creeks mean it is also liable to flooding.

Since the mid-twentieth century, a rising conservation movement has focused on the forests and pitted their arguments against those seeking to use the resources for commercial gain. The establishment of national parks in the study area mean that surviving stands of ancient forest are protected and managed for their natural values. Alongside these grow large pine and blue gum plantations visible from space (http://earth.google.com/).

HISTORY

8.1 Bushfires

Victorian forests are among the most fire-prone in the world. Eucalypts are adapted to and, in many cases, dependant on fire. Before the arrival of Europeans in Australia, fire resulted from both natural causes, such as lightning, and cultural factors, which involved the deliberate burning of plains, woodlands and forest margins by Aboriginal people to promote fresh grass that attracted game animals to hunt.

Victoria has a long history of bushfires. As researcher David Johns notes: in 1851 a huge fire burnt about 25% of the state (Johns, 2006:6). Since 1851, over 26 major fires have ravaged different parts of the state. Perhaps the most well known fires are the 1939, 1983 and 2009 fires.

1939 *Black Friday* Fires

The fires that devastated large parts of Victoria in January 1939 started after a week of high temperatures in the mid 40s C (then over 100°F). The hot northerly winds, coupled with low rainfall, created a dynamic situation.

The recent pamphlet, *The Kinglake Fires January 2006*, documents the destruction of the 1939 fires to the local areas of Toolangi and Kinglake.

> *On 1 January a fire was spotted by a forestry officer at Toolangi in the vicinity of Number 3 Creek, north east of Kinglake. … This fire then moved slowly eastward towards Toolangi. A week later on 8 January two forestry workers lost their lives when they were back-burning to the north of Toolangi near Gutter Creek. They went to check on the*

> *back-burn when they were caught by a south west wind change.* (Johns, 2006:6)

Throughout Victoria, 2,000,000 hectares were burnt out and 71 deaths were recorded (Johns, 2006:7).

The fires continued for a week, and culminated in naming the destruction *Black Friday* because of the devastation occurring on Friday, 13 January 1939. A Royal Commission recommended changes to prevent this catastrophe occurring again and it was from this natural disaster that the Country Fire Authority was formed.

1983 *Ash Wednesday* Fires

On Wednesday, 16 February 1983, a series of fires across Victoria joined together and became known as the *Ash Wednesday* fires. Fires were burning along the Great Ocean Road, in the Mount Macedon region and the Dandenong Ranges. The dry conditions created a dust storm which swept across Melbourne. The soil from the west of the state was blown and dumped on the southern portion of the state. In the summer conditions, and, like the 1939 fires, following a week of high temperatures and strong winds, the fires ravaged the landscape. The prevailing weather conditions were conducive to uncontrolled bushfires, and 210,000 hectares were burnt out, 47 lives and 27,000 head of livestock were lost, and 2,080 buildings destroyed. No lives were lost in the shire during the 1983 *Ash Wednesday* Fires (Johns, 2006:7).

2006 January Fires

> *On Saturday 21 January, an intense lightning storm rolled over the Kinglake Ranges. In the darkness of that evening the flashes of lightning lit up the area like daylight, as thunder, once distant, came closer and closer. When it arrived the sound was deafening and seemed like each strike was landing next door to each house. For about half an hour the storm continued with new thunder and lightning displays following on the heels of the other. It was somewhere amongst this cacophony of sound and light that at least one, possibly three or four, lightning bolts touched the ground about 10 km north of the Kinglake township on the northern border of the Kinglake National Park. It was here that the fires started at two different locations.* (Johns, 2006:10)

This graphic first-hand description begins the account of the January fires in the Kinglake area of the Shire. The following account of the fire is a summary of David Johns' pamphlet, *The Kinglake Fires January 2006*.

It appears the fires were first spotted the following day at around midday from the Mount Despair Fire Tower. The fires were designated as '19' and '20' with their locations south-west of Glenburn. The fire designated '19' was extinguished the following day. Fire '20', located in a less accessible

location, was soon named the 'Burgan Track Fire', reflecting its location.

Given the proximity of the fires to the Kinglake township, many residents left the area when it became evident that the fires were a threat. Those who stayed to defend their properties prepared by cleaning out gutters, mowing grass and tidying up. A sense of quiet came over the township; people stayed home to guard their property. While the fires burned nearby, many residents were actively preparing to fight the fires as they moved south. The Country Fire Authority (CFA) Kinglake Fire Station was a centre of activity. Its proximity to the township meant that it became an operations centre, with food vans and a meals area set up nearby.

Police command operation centres were established at Kinglake, Rosanna and Yea. The Sector Commander for the Kinglake station spoke highly of the community attitude to dealing with the fire situation. The Salvation Army were present and responding with support to the township and its residents as the fire escalated. More than 1,400 meals were provided by the Salvation Army team during the fire.

As with the 1939 and 1983 fires, extreme temperatures and low humidity combined to exacerbate the fire's volatility. On Australia Day, 26 January, at Kinglake, near the fire front, at 4.00 pm the temperature was 39°C with humidity measured at 24%. In comparison, in Melbourne on Ash Wednesday 1983 the temperature was 43°C with 5% humidity. On Black Friday in 1939, the temperature at Kinglake was 45°C with 8% humidity, and at nearby Wangaratta the high temperatures were accompanied by the low humidity of 4%. The hot northerly winds blew the fire over the CFA's containment lines to the east, south and west of the Kinglake area.

An unexpected storm over the area on 26 January grew in intensity and aided the CFA's efforts to extinguish the fire. Observations from Lilydale indicated that the temperature prior to the storms hitting the area was around 38°C with relative humidity at 30% and a northerly wind averaging 30 km/hour. Following the storms, the temperature dropped to 25°C. However, the humidity increased to 75% and the wind became a gusty westerly at 40 km/hour before becoming light and variable later that evening.

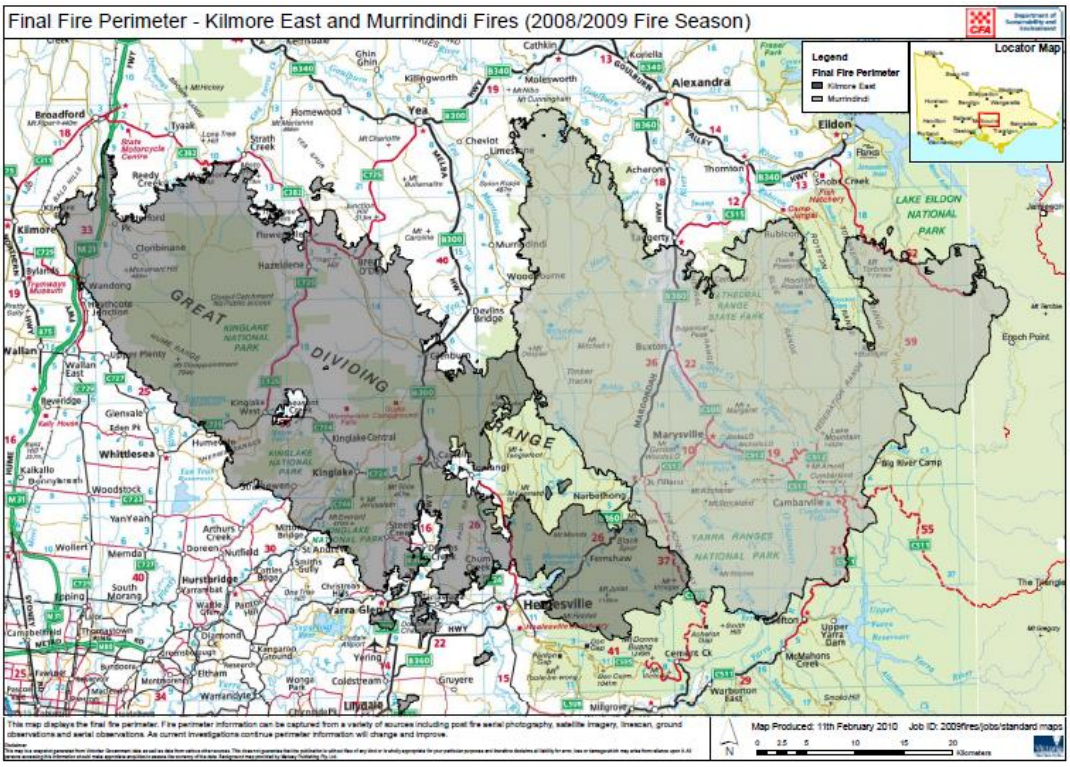
Described as an 'Act of God', the unexpected storm saved the Kinglake area from greater devastation than it had suffered. Assisted by the Salvation Army, the CFA and Police, the local residents demonstrated their commitment to their area and their community.

February 2009 *Black Saturday* Fires

Every time Victoria burns it is the same, especially the weather. It is always hot with a vicious northerly bringing the desert's dryness, parching the air and playing midwife to the flames. Then, inevitably, comes a southerly change – winds that make fronts of what where flanks and sending a much greater destruction raging in entirely new directions.

> *Like the weather, the dates can be fixed […] it is the last half of January and the first weeks of February when the cruellest fires always rise and roar.* (Franklin, 2009:12)

As Franklin and others have argued, the conditions of bushfires in Australia share common features such as those described above, yet those of February 2009 were also distinctive in their intensity, both in terms of destructive and lethal impact, and in terms of the intensity of the conditions which preceded them. As the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (VBRC 2009) reported, 'Victoria endured one of its most severe and prolonged heatwaves during the final week of January 2009. The temperature in Melbourne was above 43°C for three consecutive days for the first time since records had been kept' (VBRC 2009:1). The bush fires of 'Black Saturday' 7 February 2009 became the deadliest bushfire disaster in Australian history to date (Franklin, 2009). The Murrindindi Shire was the worst affected municipality in the state, as the focus of two distinct fires, the 'Murrindindi' fire and the 'Kilmore East' fire. These fires had separate origins, but combined to form the deadliest and most destructive fire fronts of 'Black Saturday', sweeping through most of the southern half of the Shire.



Map showing the extent of the Murrindindi and Kilmore East fires on 'Black Saturday'. Source: Country Fire Authority 2011.

The cause of the Kilmore East fire was established as electrical failure (VBRC 2009:70); to date (in 2011), that of the Murrindindi fire has not been determined. The Murrindindi fire started at about 2.55pm, to the north of a sawmill in Wilhelmina Falls Road. It travelled rapidly and

by 4.30pm was affecting Narbethong (CFA 2011). The Kilmore East fire started earlier that morning at about 11.47am, on top of a rocky hill between two gullies near Saunders Road and spread eastwards into the Shire. Between them, the two fires combined to burn 1,539 square kilometres of land, or 40 percent of the area of the Shire. Some of the deadliest impacts of both fires were felt within the Shire of Murrindindi, particularly around Kinglake, Flowerdale/Hazeldene and Marysville, with the total number of deaths reaching 95 in the Shire – just over half of those suffered in the entire state (Murrindindi Shire, 'Bushfire Statistics', 2011).

Marysville was virtually wiped off the map by a firestorm when the wind changed in the afternoon. Sixty five residents and DSE and CFA fire-fighters retreated and took shelter at the Gallipoli Park oval as the town was engulfed (VBRC 2009:146). The commercial centre of Marysville was almost totally destroyed, as was the core of the town's economic activity in tourism and hospitality. Much of the town's public infrastructure—including the police station, primary school, kindergarten and health clinic—was also destroyed (VBRC 2009:160). The Marylands guesthouse was also razed, as were other heritage places including churches and shops. As well as this, many residential properties were destroyed, especially around Buxton and Narbethong, as well as Marysville.

The Kilmore East fire drove rapidly eastwards and was out of control soon after its ignition by a faulty power line. Because of severe conditions by 4 pm all fire fighting units were advised to 'protect life only', and within the hour the fire raged into the Shire, with heavy smoke and power failure affecting Kinglake (VBRC 2009:73). During the night the fire reached the settlement of Flowerdale/Hazeldene and threatened the Flowerdale Hotel, where many had taken refuge that night (VBRC 2009:83; Johns, 2009:92). The fires also reached the outskirts of Strath Creek. The afternoon wind change also spread intense fires along the Castella–Toolangi–Glenburn area. Fire fighters fought their way into Kinglake from Kinglake West, one of them, David Cooper recalling the scene:

> *There [were] massive amounts of people there … I would say somewhere in the vicinity of 150 to 200 people in the general vicinity of the fire station … They had very seriously burnt and injured people in the fire station at that time. The great majority of them needed immediate transport. It wasn't possible because at that stage all ways in and out of Kinglake were impassable.* (VBRC 2009:83)

Besides the huge losses of homes – 1,397 in all – much of the affected towns lost infrastructure. Along the Kinglake Ranges, for example, the fire destroyed churches, a primary school, kindergarten, numerous shops, and damaged the community centre (Johns, 2009:97). In all, there were 16 community facilities lost and 9 damaged in the Shire, as well

as 75 shops and other businesses destroyed (Murrindindi Shire, 'Bushfire Statistics', 2011).

The Black Saturday bushfires had significant political repercussions, leading to the establishment of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission 2009, which reported in 2010. The fires particularly challenged the state's established policy of 'Stay or Go', advising residents to leave early or stay and defend their properties. The fires also intensified debate about forest conservation and fire mitigation and prevention policies. The Royal Commission came down with 67 recommendations, including greater inter-agency cooperation among emergency services, more community shelter options, more effective warnings and more effective prevention measures. It held that the 'Stay or Go' policy should be modified to emphasise leaving early in certain conditions and from properties that cannot be defended.

Country Fire Authority

A positive outcome of the 1939 fires was the establishment of the Country Fire Authority.

Fire brigade stations and other infrastructure such as lookouts are essential to the region. Memorials to the bushfires are located within the Shire, and include a fire lookout tower built after the 1939 fires.

Lookout towers were an essential part of the public infrastructure. These towers were built after the 1939 fires that devastated much of Victoria. For example, the Andrew Hill Fire Tower was built in 1942 and consists of a stringy bark tree about 25 metres high with spikes driven into it to form a ladder. Remains of a platform at the top of the trunk, as well as several guy wires survive and are attached to the top of the tree (Register of the National Estate indicative place No. 102569).

8.2 Changes to rivers and landscapes

Floods

As the geographer Joseph Powell notes, 'floods feature less prominently than drought in the accounts of explorers and pioneering pastoralists, although their journals include valuable descriptions of so-called 'wild-rivers'' (Powell, 1998:257). However, floods are usually touched upon in local and regional histories written in the twentieth century, and the study area is no exception. Floods are documented in the local histories, *Molesworth 1824-1994* and *The Story of Yea* (Jones, 1994 and Blanks, 1973).

Because of the abundance of rivers and streams in the study area, flooding has been a perennial problem. Floods and bushfires were, and continue to be, a constant threat to people of the study area and their livelihood. This was especially true in early days of settlement before roads and railways had been adequately established.

Major floods struck the study area in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s and again in the 1930s, 1950s, and 1970s.

In the winter of 1889 in Yea, heavy floods caused damage to the already inadequate roads, and 'scores of property holders were marooned for weeks on end'. Blanks reports that many roads were rendered impassable and Council found it necessary to have one hundred '*Danger – Road Closed Until Further Notice*' signs printed and erected around the Yea Shire. Damage appears to have been extensive, and Blanks also notes that the surveyor resigned in despair, saying that one man could not cope with the task (Blanks, 1973:209).

During this event in 1889, stock drowned in the rivers and polluted the water supply, pumping to the railway tank had to cease, and bullock teams were used to drag bucket dredges through High Street to clean silt and mud from the blocked drains. The Public Works Department eventually made a special grant of £300 for repairs (Blanks, 1973:209). The roads were closed; the bridges were blocked because the approaches had been washed away. Eventually the country dried out and the grasses grew again.

In the nineteenth century, floods were also a constant threat to the people of the Molesworth district, damaging town and farm properties on the river flats. Water destroyed stock and seriously disrupted communications and local services for days on end. One story reported by Jones is that, during the 1889 floods in Molesworth, 'regulars rowed their boat into the bar of the hotel' where the publican 'up to his knees in water' would provide his normal service (Jones, 1994:19).

In the twentieth century, the floods of October 1930 were no less devastating and costly to the shires than those of the nineteenth century. In Yea in October 1930, over one inch of rain fell in less than an hour. The floods once again devastated the district, approaches to bridges were washed away and roads disappeared altogether. For more than one week, every road south of the Goulburn River was blocked by trees which had fallen when the soil around their roots was washed away (Blanks, 1973:269).

However, the storms and flooding of 1934 appear to have been one of the most devastating events of the century since European settlement of the area. On 30 November 1934, 168 points of rain (100 points = 1 inch) was recorded at the Yea Post Office and further heavy downpours throughout the day, and the following night, brought the total rainfall for forty-eight hours to 404 points. However, a simultaneous fall deluged Glenburn, Murrindindi and Molesworth, resulting in around 764 points of rain falling in the general area. The level of water proved more than the rivers could take; the Yea River rose quickly. Inevitably, locals were forced to evacuate their homes and the story of resident George Forbes, catching a two-pound bream inside his flooded dining room while cleaning up, remains as part of local folklore (Blanks, 1973:272).

Yea was completely isolated as a result of the 1934 floods; people and vehicles were marooned in the town. In the outlying districts several families had to be rescued by boat. Workers at Jackson's sawmill were said to have had to wade several miles through waist-deep waters to return to their homes. The experience of previous floods was repeated in 1934, and damage to roads and bridges took weeks to repair. As a result of the floods in this area, a total of around 4,000 sheep in the district were lost (Blanks, 1973:273).

In Molesworth, compared to the 1870s floods, the floods of 1934 are considered to be the most devastating to the area. Jones reports that 'The height of the flood can be seen by water marks on the cupboard in the school and by notches on the Church wall' (Jones, 1994: 34). Floods also meant that snakes became a problem: they escaped the flood waters and reportedly turned up in 'unexpected places'.

More recently, the year 1973 saw the district beset once again by devastating floods. In Yea, on 21 February 1973, residents woke to find the whole of the western end of High Street under two feet of water. Blanks reports that the Yea River rose three feet in fifteen minutes, covering the Park by midday and that a valuable herd of cattle belonging to the Howquadale Stud was trapped in the area known as Yea Common. They were eventually rescued by the police who rounded them up using power boats and swam them to safety (Blanks, 1973:290). Inevitably, damage to property occurred across the Shire.

More recently, Alexandra and district suffered widespread flooding at the end of 2009 and early 2010. While heavy rains fell throughout the Shire, 60 millimetres fell in just 20 minutes in Alexandra, and in some nearby areas a combined total of 170 millimetres fell in just a few days. Flood damage to houses, businesses and Council buildings in Alexandra, like the public library, was extensive.

As with bushfires, the regular event of flooding of the various districts of the study area worked to bring the communities in affected townships and areas together. Local histories record these events as part of the living history of the region. These histories include stories of heroism or humour surrounding the event, as a way to commemorate their significance to the building of community in each area.

8.3 The rising conservation movement

Sustainability: 21st century views on forestry, conservationists and tourism

The great forests of the study area have long been a place of contest between nature conservation and commercial opportunism. The power and majesty of the giant mountain ash trees made an impression on the forest workers who marvelled

at the height and girth of the trees then promptly felled them as saw logs.

From the late nineteenth century onwards, fostered by railways publicity, together with the activities of amateur organisations such as the Field Naturalists Club, walking clubs and the League of Tree Lovers, other people, often from the cities, discovered the forests as places of recreation and inspiration. Author C J Dennis wrote his *Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* while in residence at his home in Toolangi, Arden.

Appreciation of the wild qualities of forests remained essentially mystical and romantic but generated cash from tourism long before the turn of the twentieth century. The wide diversity of expression of this romantic relationship between people and nature ranged from the possibility of a vaguely stated 'spiritual regeneration' to an explicitly pagan communion with 'nature spirits'.

More recent ecological perspectives have placed the rationale for the relationship between people and forests within debates about greenhouse gases and global climate change. Post-colonialism as an intellectual force has also characterised the desire for protection of remaining old-growth forests as a response to the perception of forestry as yet another articulation of nineteenth-century notions of 'improvement and civilising'. Conservationists, by this reading, reject 'civilising's' arbitrary imposition of order upon nature by commercial interests at the expense of indigenous values embodied within the flora and fauna (Brough Smyth, 1980:26-7; Griffiths 1992:6-13, 41, 64-5, 76-84; Findhorn Community 1975; Giordano 1987:57; Bergman 1959:62-3).

8.4 Timber Plantations

The notion that timber might be grown and harvested from plantations is by no means new. Brough Smyth advocated softwood production and plantation growing of other valuable timber trees in Victoria as long ago as 1869 (Brough Smyth, 1980:29). The continuation of Narbethong as a sawmilling centre has, in recent years, been due to the establishment of pine plantations (Waghorn, 1983:24). Large areas of pines, together with the more recently planted blue gums, are now clearly visible in the view from space afforded by Google Earth (http://earth.google.com/) of the study area. The harvesting of sustainable and renewable plantation timber promises to ensure that forestry continues its important wealth-generating influence within the study area.

8.5 National and State Parks

The establishment of national and state parks illustrates the growing awareness of the impacts of settlement upon the environment and the desire to set aside parks for both natural and cultural values.

One of the very first in Australia was the Kinglake National Park, proclaimed in 1928. Local resident, William Adolphus Laver, a former music professor at the University of Melbourne, was instrumental in its creation.

Other parks in the study area are the Cathedral Range State Park, Marysville State Park, Toolangi State Forest, The Murrindindi Scenic Reserve, Lake Mountain Alpine Reserve and Lake Eildon National Park some include areas of remnant forest. See section 5, 'Tourism and Recreation' for details of when the parks were formed.

HERITAGE

- Significant exotic trees such as the Canary Island Bay, Red Maple, Lawson Cypress, Golden Lawson Cypress at St Fillan, Narbethong
- Significant exotic and native trees such as the 'Elegans' Japanese Cedar, Mountain Grey Gum, Red Stringybark at The Hermitage, Narbethong
- Significant exotic trees such as the Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea at CJ Dennis' Arden, Toolangi
- Eothen, Kinglake, home of William Laver

9. COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

The gradual settlement of the study area occurred over decades, and as the pastoral runs were divided up and the selectors arrived, sheep and cattle grazing continued or new industries developed, so the number of small and large townships grew, flourished or diminished. The growth of a town meant the establishment of schools, churches and graveyards as well as other cultural institutions essential for the life of the residents.

Stages of development in the study area can be measured by the building of cultural institutions and major local and world events are marked by the erection of monuments, such as World War One memorials. Schools, churches and halls continue to have strong associations for local people, long after they are no longer needed for their original purposes.

HISTORY

9.1 Education in Victoria

Preliminary attempts were made to establish schools in the newly settled Port Phillip District from 1836. The government concluded that elementary education was necessary to create a literate, numerate, and orderly citizenry; the first schools were both privately run and denominational. By the 1850s, it became clear that these attempts were insufficient and the government began to fund the building and staffing of elementary schools and established bureaucracies to supervise them.

The 1862 *Common Schools Act* provided state aid to schools, but the minimum requirement of sixty students prevented the establishment of remoter rural schools. By the 1870s, wearying of the conflict between the churches and the intractability of the disputes over religious instruction, governments withdrew state aid from church schools and religious instruction from the curriculum in government schools. The *Education Act* of 1872 decreed that all schools would henceforth become 'free, compulsory and secular'.

Obtaining a proper education for their children was one of the many challenges faced by the settlers in the remote rural areas of the study area. While the passing of the *Education Act* in 1872 did lead to some improvements, a lack of resources and bureaucratic indifference sometimes created obstacles to the establishment of new schools in the study area. However, despite the difficulties, schools were often among the first buildings to be established by a new community and illustrate the rise and fall of settlements over the years.

Throughout the study area, the first primary schools were constructed in the period 1875-85 (Blake, 1973) although informal schooling may have already existed prior to that time. The last were not erected until the 1920s or early 1930s and reflect the growth of the area, especially in building the Eildon Dam in the late 1920s.

Schools of the Shire

As we have seen, during the second half of the nineteenth century when the larger pastoral runs were broken up, the selectors moved into the region. The small farmer 'hardworking, but often impoverished and ignorant' (Spaull in Blake, V.3 1973:624) became the dominant occupational type, replacing the adventurous miner or affluent pastoralist. Life on the selection could be primitive and austere, especially in the remoter timber settlements.

In the study area, the fortunes of the local educational institutions tend to reflect the economic ups and downs of the region as well as social changes.

The story of the Yea Primary School, No. 699, as well as reflecting the growth and prosperity of the township, is an example of inter-denominational co-operation in the region. The first school began in a tent in 1859 and is one of the earliest recorded schools in the study area. The following year the Denominational Board assumed management of the school.

The school was conducted by the Church of England and Presbyterian Church in the Presbyterian Chapel and was attended by 26 children – very likely Protestants as well as Catholics. By 1861, 39 pupils had registered and it appears to have continued well until 1874 when 30 children died of diphtheria. Classes resumed in the old Presbyterian chapel in 1877 when a newly sited brick school opened.

In 1882 the new railway line cut through the school grounds and additional land was acquired. When enrolments increased to 84 in 1885, additions were made to the building – and by 1892 the attendees reached 164. By 1900 further enrolments saw 190 children attending, and this meant that extensions were again required.

While a new building had been opened in 1923 attendances dropped to 90 in 1941. However, the rapid increase in the enrolment of baby-boomers saw the school numbers increase to 250 by 1960 (Blake, 1973, Vol. 3:640).

In the nineteenth century, the schools were usually small wooden one-room buildings with galvanised iron roofing. Some were built as portable school rooms, or school could be held in a room in a shop or a room in a large farmhouse.

Figure 36 Cathkin State School, c.1905
Source: Molesworth 1824-1994

Education historian of the Upper Goulburn Region, Andrew Spaull writes in the introduction to Les Blake's *Vision and Realisation*, that:

> *These schools, although oven like in summer, and damp and smoky in winter, stood as a cultural beacon in the local society – a reminder that, even in the remotest area of the Region, and removed from the material wonders and gusto of nineteenth century Melbourne, civilisation was only a textbook page away* (Spaull, 1973:625).

In most of the larger towns, the school buildings were more substantial, often made from brick and their architecture may, or may not, have been that of the Public Works Department.

Schools often feature prominently in any local history, and the study area is no exception. The local histories of Yea, Whittlesea, Kinglake West, Alexandra, Cathkin and Molesworth all devote pages to narrative and pictorial memories of school days in these townships, as illustrated by the photograph of school children at Cathkin (Figure 36). Local historian, D.A. Hawkins has written a history of the Kinglake West Primary School.

9.2 Religion

Church and Creed in Victoria

The first religious ministers officially sent to Australia from the British Empire in the early 1800s, were from the Church of England. Roman Catholic priests were not officially recognised in New South Wales until 1820; and the first Presbyterian minister, John Dunmore Lang, arrived in Sydney in 1823. Lang immediately sought a government grant towards the cost of building a church, and was refused. He then set about collecting private funds to build the first Scots Church in Sydney, which was finished in 1826 (Baker, 1969:76). Lang was a major recruiter of farmers, both landed gentry and poorer families, to come to Australia and try their luck as pastoralists.

Land grants and some Government aid was, however, made available to the churches in the early years, but tended to operate in favour of the Church of England. That is, the Church of England received 80% of available funds while the Catholics and Presbyterians together received only 20%. The other denominations received even less, often only a small grant of land for the establishment of a chapel (Lewis, 1994:5).

Governor Bourke recognised this inequity in religious funding and grants, and sought to rectify it through his *Church Act* of 1836. The legislation granted government funds to build churches for the three major denominations – the Church of England, Roman Catholics and Presbyterian Churches. Under its terms, communities which raised £300 in donations towards the cost of a church were subsidised £1 for £1, to a maximum of £2,000.

Land allotments were granted free of charge to all established religions, and the salaries of clergy were also be subsidised. Despite the apparent even-handedness of the legislation, Bourke's *Act* was still seen by the conservative elements of the Church of England as 'a tragic abandonment of the true principles of Church establishment' (Lewis, 1994:5).

Since the time of the first census in New South Wales in 1838, a question on religious adherence has always been included, to provide an indication of the proportion of Australians 'either professing or consciously disavowing religious allegiance' (Phillips, 1998:418-9).

The colonists, officially at least, supported Sunday observance laws, and prayers in Parliament. Denominational leaders had important links with society's elite, newspapers reported religious events in detail, and biblical phrases were common in public discourse. As historian Ian Breward notes, 'important groups saw the churches' approval of their aspirations as a legitimation of the search for wealth and status' (Breward, 200:9).

According to the 1851 statistics for the Port Phillip District, the professed religious affiliation of the populace was:

Church of England	37,433
Roman Catholic	18,014
Presbyterian	11,608
Wesleyan Methodist	4,988
Other Protestant	4,313
Jewish	364
Other	625
Total	77,345 (Cannon, 1988:12)

In 1851, the colony of Victoria provided £6,000 per annum for the support of public worship. This was increased to £30,000 in 1852 (Serle, 1973:139). Victoria was fast becoming 'a colony of churches' (Serle, 1973:139). Yet, while it appears that the Victorians were increasingly assiduous churchgoers, historian Geoffrey Serle has argued that: 'The churches were certainly packed, but this only indicates how few there were' (Serle, 1973:336).

In the formative years of his episcopate, the first Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Rev. Dr James Alipius Goold (Figure 37), assumed firm personal direction of the affairs of his diocese. He developed a positive policy for the social and religious improvement of his flock. As well as recruiting priests for the entire Port Phillip District, he also negotiated with various religious orders to send nuns for his proposed orphanages, hospitals and (after 1872) for teaching in schools.

By the turn of the century, the basic parish structure, of suburban and rural areas of the Archdiocese, had been secured. Most of the study area, including the districts of Yea and Molesworth, Kerrisdale, Strath Creek, Spring Valley, Gobur and Kanumbra were originally part of the Diocese of Melbourne until the formation of the Wangaratta Diocese in 1901 (Jones, 1994:96). By 1899, six religious orders had established nine charitable institutions as an integral link in the Church's social apostolate to the wider community.

Figure 37 James Alipius Goold, Bishop of Melbourne 1848 - 1886

Source: St Patrick's Cathedral: A Life

Rejoicing and Giving Thanks

There is no doubt that the Christian faith, whether it was Roman Catholic, Church of England, Presbyterian or Methodist, was integral to the lives of the many early settlers to the study area. While adherents of the major denominations were represented, a small number of other denominations were also present.

However, during the earliest years of settlement, Catholic and Protestant Churches were conspicuous by their absence. John Cotton, the owner of Doogalook, 'bemoaned the failure of the Church to enquire into the spiritual welfare of the settlers' (Noble, 1969:57). It was not until 1857 that the Muddy Creek Mission was formed at Yea and was a combination of the various Protestant denominations. By 1868 the first permanent Church of England building was erected in Yea: St Luke's, which survives to the present day.

As the number of Church of England worshippers grew in Alexandra it was found necessary to build a church there instead of holding services on week nights in private homes. A church site was reserved on the corner of Webster and Nihil streets, and the first timber Church of St John was erected there. It was officially opened by the Dean of Melbourne, the Very Reverend H B Macartney on 16 March 1868 (Noble, 1969:57-8). Similarly, the first Church of England and Presbyterian churches at Whittlesea were constructed around 1863-66 (Duffy, 1973:10).

Figure 38 Scots' Presbyterian Church, Yea, c.1954
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

According to Alexandra's local historian, Gerald Noble, the Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian churches have all been removed from their original locations and now reside in more central and accessible sites. This, apparently, was due to an incident in 1885, when the township was criticised by the Melbourne journalist, John Julian James (1843-96), who wrote under the pseudonym '*the Vagabond*'. In his journeys through country Victoria, James reported that 'The churches do not make much of a show at Alexandra' (quoted in Noble, 1969:58), a comment directed at the Catholic Church which had been battered in a storm prior to the Vagabond's visit.

The Catholic community had petitioned Archbishop Goold for a resident clergyman and a replacement church. However, this was not achieved until 1886. Consequently, most of the main denominational churches were established by the late nineteenth century. Many are still operating as churches although some have been sold and converted for alternative uses.

9.3 Aboriginal Cultural Practice

Despite the devastating impact of European occupation on traditional Taungurung country, the descendants of the traditional owners (as well as other Aboriginal people with a strong association with the area) continue to be involved in the practice and maintenance of Aboriginal culture. Camp Jungai Holiday Camp was established at Rubicon near Eildon in 1972. Camp Jungai has operated as a cross-cultural holiday camp since 1972 and has provided classes in Aboriginal cultural activities. Camp Jungai has been an important facility providing training opportunities for Aboriginal students, including transition camps for Aboriginal children

leaving Year 6 to start Year 7. Aboriginal people also continue to be involved in management of their cultural heritage through the Local Aboriginal Councils established under Schedule 2A of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Preservation Act 1984* (Commonwealth).

9.4 Institutions of mutual support & helping other people

Mechanics' Institutes

> *You don't have to be born in the bush to appreciate Australian country towns. Each one has its particular qualities, its individual history, its distinctive appearance and its unique character. Yet there is an underlying similarity that makes townships from Geraldton to Jerilderie and from Heberton to Huon recognisably Australian. There will usually be a state school, a couple of churches, a pub or two, a war memorial and, more often than not, a Mechanics' Institute (Baragwanath, 2000:3).*

Mechanics' Institutes were present in Victoria by 1839, only four years after the beginnings of official European settlement. Along with churches and schools, they were an integral part of the community life of towns, whether large or small, and were very often the first public building in a township. Mechanics' Institutes – also known as Schools of Arts, Literary Institutes, Athenaeums or simply 'institutes' – were the first form of adult education in Victoria. They are the first and longest-running libraries in Victoria, creating an intellectual and cultural climate for a town as well as providing a focus and venue for social and community activities. In remote country towns, the ability to access a lending library, attend lectures or join a specific interest group such as a literary society was pivotal in shaping the political opinions and providing an awareness of current affairs for citizens of the new colony.

In their 1998 *Inventory of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria*, Pam Baragwanath and Janette Hodgson document the history of a substantial number of Mechanics' Institutes located throughout Victoria.

In the study area, some former Mechanics' Institutes have survived, and they are located within large and small towns alike. Many of the Mechanics' Institutes in the study area were built in the 1890s, the period when the Mechanics' Institutes movement was gaining momentum in Victoria. Historian Philip Candy concludes that, whatever their failings:

> *there is little doubt that in their broader educative role of providing a tolerant, thoughtful, politically sensible and well-informed population, the Institutes contributed disproportionately to the civic landscape,*

> *and nowhere more effectively or demonstrably than in Victoria (Baragwanath, 2000:5).*

In general, the Mechanics' Institutes built in Victoria were established primarily as libraries, for example the Alexandra Library and the Kinglake West Mechanics' Institute and Library.

The Kinglake West Mechanics' Institute was established to encourage settlers to gather at the local hall and it became a focal point of the local community. The back room was devoted to the Library and people came from miles to attend, read books and socialise (Johns, 2006).

The Kinglake West Mechanics' Institute was built later than many, in 1908, and has provided a venue for community functions since that time. A library was established and functioned until the 1930s. The hall was used as a church, for glee clubs, fancy dress balls, school concerts, dances and for other community meetings such as for the Country Women's Association, Red Cross, Girl Guides and Scouts groups (Baragwanath, 2000:169). The functions of both the Mechanics' Institute Hall and the Post Office have now been relocated to the Neighbourhood House, the contemporary version of the community hall (Johns, 2006).

Built in 1877, the first Committee of the Alexandra Library was formed and enough subscribers were obtained to make the venture viable. Initially, the Old Shire Hall was used for the Library but larger, more permanent, accommodation was soon considered essential, and the new Mechanics' Institute and Free Library was opened in June 1883. The former Institute continued as a lending library and community venue until the 1950s when the Free Library Service Board set up the free regional library service and named it the Upper Goulburn Regional Library. It continued to operate out of the former Institute in Grant Street, the location of the current library. Administrative offices were added behind the library in the 1980s, and in 2005 the library itself was extended. The library service is currently known as the Murrindindi Library Service, with branches at Kinglake and Yea and it operates a mobile service (Baragwanath & Hodgson, 1998:10).

Figure 39 Alexandra Free Library, c.1965
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Unlike the Alexandra Free Library, the Molesworth Public Hall and Mechanics' Institute was founded as a community hall 'for the use of the residents for the purpose of allowing public and social functions' (Jones, 1994:85). The hall has remained a focal point of the township, and has included events such as a post-War 'peace ball' and a ball to raise money following the 1934 floods.

Throughout the history of the Public Hall, the Committee has had to solve difficulties with funding and building maintenance and the Hall continues to serve the Molesworth and local areas.

9.5 Commemorating

From the time of earliest European settlement it has been necessary to have places to bury the dead and to remember them. Before cemeteries were established, or in places remote from cemeteries, burials were in single, isolated graves in the bush or beside the road.

Early cemeteries are memorials to the lives of the early settlers when many people died young through the harshness of life and work in general; mining accidents, bushfires and floods, timber cutting accident or illness.

In the early nineteenth century, it was common for women to die in childbirth and for children to die of childhood diseases.

Cemeteries and burial grounds are a reminder of these people and the harsh conditions they endured in their daily lives.

Sometimes it is the only reminder that there was once community in that particular location. The grave of John Cotton, early pastoralist, is but one example (Figure 40).

Figure 40 The grave of John Cotton of Doogalook
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Memorials

Memorials and monuments are the way by which communities remember past events and honour people and contributions they have made to the community. In the study area there are a range of monuments commemorating past events and people. These include monuments to explorers; cemeteries; war memorials; shire halls; memorials to events - such as the reasons behind naming a township; and, specifically an aeroplane crash site and a fire fatality site.

Figure 41 Hume and Hovell Cairn, Yea
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

HERITAGE

- Schools and former schools such as primary schools at Glenburn, Yea, Kanumbra, Kinglake and Thornton
- Churches, such as Uniting Church Strath Creek; St John's Anglican Church and Organ, Alexandra; St Luke's Anglican Church and Organ, Yea; St Thomas' Anglican, Buxton; Kinglake West Uniting, Christ Church, Molesworth; Sacred Heart, Yea
- Masonic Lodges in Yea and Alexandra, Oddfellows' Hall, Alexandra
- Yarck Mechanics' Institute Hall (now 'Public Hall') and Kinglake West Mechanics' Institute
- Public halls throughout the study area such as Moelsworth Hall, Strath Creek Public Hall, Taggerty Hall
- War memorials throughout the study area including the Narbethong Internment Camp, Kinglake West POW Camp, Marysville War Memorial, Strath Creek War Memorial
- Cemeteries at Cathkin, Yarck, Gobur, Marysville, Yea
- Aeroplane crash site, Rubicon
- Toolangi Fire Fatality site, Toolangi.
- Princess Alexandra Sculpture, Alexandra
- Avenue of Honour, Limestone

10. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This chapter contains the Statement of Significance for Murrindindi Shire. It is based on the information contained within the thematic environmental history and seeks to describe the main reasons for the significance of the Shire. It is intended to be:

> *'…a brief, pithy but comprehensive statement of all the ways in which the place is significant. It should not just be a list of every conceivable reason for significance that the assessor can think up, however, it must state clearly and unequivocally the major reasons why the place is important. It must be supported by the presentation of sufficient evidence to justify the assessment judgement.' (*Pearson and Sullivan 1995).

In assessing the significance of Murrindindi Shire, this chapter considers:

- *What is significant?* The preceding chapters provide information and analysis about the influence of the historic themes in the development of Murrindindi Shire and identify representative places associated with each. This, essentially, describes *what* is significant about Murrindindi Shire in terms of its historic development and the associated heritage places.
- *How and why is it significant?* This provides a summary of the reasons why Murrindindi Shire is significant. In accordance with the definition set out above (Pearson and Sullivan, 1995), this does not attempt to list every reason, but provides an overview of the key reasons having regard to the themes described in the history.

What is significant?

The historical development of Murrindindi Shire can be divided into the following key stages, in order of chronology:

- Aboriginal landscape at first contact (to 1860)
- The pastoral era and settling the land (c 1830s – c1870s)
- Selection and establishing communities (c1860 – c1920s)
- World War One and after (c1914 – c2006)

The legacies of each of these stages are what make up the heritage significance of the Shire of Murrindindi.

Aboriginal landscape at first contact (pre 1860)

The traditional owners of the Shire of Murrindindi are believed to have been the Wujrungeri tribe from whom the name Murrindindi was taken, and the Taungurung language speakers. These people lived on and modified the landscape for thousands of years prior to European contact. The legacy of

the Aboriginal cultural landscape is seen in the naming of the shire; of places such as Blacks Spur, originally known as Blacks' Spur which was an Aboriginal trail and was opened up by Europeans as an early packhorse track; scar trees, canoe trees, tools and implements. Recognising and respecting Aboriginal cultural heritage places is an important aspect in the management of Murrindindi Shire's cultural heritage. The Registered Aboriginal Party for the Shire are the Taungurung people.

Cultural heritage examples:

Canoe trees at Molesworth and Kinglake

Archaeological sites

The pastoral era and settling the land (c1830s – c1870s)

Squatting and Settling

The process of European settlement in the Shire was initiated in 1824-25 when explorers Hume and Hovell travelled through the area. Their glowing reports led to the arrival of would-be settlers and pastoralists from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land during the 1830s and reaching its peak in the 1860s. Many of the first squatters were Scottish immigrants and were generally men of means and education and the large pastoral runs were operated by a small number of men or families. They have left living reminders of the squatting period in the classical names of rivers such as the Rubicon, Acheron, Hell's Gate and Ultima Thule Creek and in the early homesteads Murrindindi Station, Dropmore Homestead, and Doogalook Homestead.

Gold

Gold had a great impact on Murrindindi both directly and indirectly. Gold was discovered in Yea in 1851 and in the Thornton, Snobs Creek and Acheron areas in 1854. It brought with it an influx of population, many of whom stayed in the study area and later took up selections. The indirect effect of mining relates to the local economic importance of the routes which passed through Murrindindi and provided access from Melbourne to the rich goldfields of Gaffney's Creek, Woods Point and the Jordan.

A characteristic of Murrindindi Shire is the number of isolated small towns which were initially formed by early settlers to service the pastoralists and miners travelling through the area to the Victorian goldfields. Examples of early towns established to service the needs of settlers, squatters and miners are: Yea and Strath Creek, Gobur, Alexandra, and Molesworth.

Cultural heritage examples

- Early homesteads associated with the squatting era, e.g., Dropmore (1848); Doogalook (1843); Murrindindi Station (1839)

- River names, e.g., Rubicon, Acheron, Hell's Gate and Ultima Thule Creek
- Gold mining sites, e.g., OK mine, Wilson's Creek Mining Area, Luck's All Mine, Robbs Reward Mine, Black Creek Mine
- Gold access tracks and routes, e.g., Yarra and Jordan tracks

Selection and establishing communities (1860 - 1900s)

The process of settling the land has led to some of the most profound changes to the landscape of the study area. It began in the 1860s with the passing of a series of land acts which, by the end of that decade, had opened up the whole of Victoria for selection. The greater security of tenure led to the construction of permanent and more substantial buildings and the erection of fences and tree windrows which began to radically alter the landscape.

Railways

The arrival of the railway in Murrindindi Shire from the 1880s transformed the economy by making it easier to get products to market. It was particularly significant to the timber and sawmilling industries which lobbied to get the railway into the shire. One of the features of the landscape today is remnants of the rail lines and a substantial number of bridges built to cross the many waterways in Murrindindi and cuttings or tunnels through hills.

Sawmilling & Timber Tramways

Sawmilling and tramways are inter-linked and forest to the south of Yea and north of Toolangi are criss-crossed with tram-lines. Evidence of the tramways exists still in Kinglake, Pheasant Creek and Flowerdale areas of the shire.

Farming

Following on from the harvesting of timber, resulting open land was converted to farming; at first grazing and some cropping then cattle and agricultural crops such as potatoes and berries. Dairying and butter-making was a key industry. Railways provided a ready route to markets.

Tourism

Along with the railways, tourism in the study area had its beginnings in the late nineteenth century as railway companies promoted the delights of the area. Amateur organisations such as the Field Naturalists Club, walking clubs and the League of Tree Lovers regarded the forests as a place of inspiration and recreation. By 1900 several guest houses had been established including The Hermitage, Narbethong.

Public Infrastructure

This era also saw the development of the public buildings and infrastructure essential to small town life, i.e., schools, town halls, Mechanics' Institutes, libraries, post offices,

churches, graveyards, stations, courts and police stations in larger townships such as Yea and Alexandra.

Cultural Heritage examples

- Butter and cheese factories, e.g., Yea and Mansfield Dairy Co. Ltd., Alexandra Dairy Co. Ltd
- Charcoal kilns, e.g., Kinglake West (on VHI)
- Saw-milling sites, e.g., Robbie's Mill, Higgs Mill, J & J Feiglin's Mill Site no 1, Dindi Sawmill, Clarke & Pearce Mills Rubicon (1-5), Vic Oak Sawmilling Company.
- Timber tramways, e.g., Whittlesea-Kinglake Tramway, Buxton Sawmilling Co. Mill and Tramway, Murrindindi Wooden Tramline, Cook Mill Site and Tramway, Alexandra-Rubicon Tramway.
- Railway stations, e.g., Yea and Alexandra; Station master's house, Alexandra; Ganger's house, Cathkin; Railway Houses, Yea
- Bridges, e.g., Cremona Bridge, Molesworth, Cathkin, Timber railway bridges
- Early guesthouses, e.g., The Hermitage, Narbethong; Taggerty House, Taggerty; Crossways Country Inn, Marysville
- Public buildings, e.g., Shire Hall and Free Library, Alexandra; Yea Shire Hall, Yarck Mechanics' Institute; Post Office, Alexandra,
- Schools and former schools, e.g., those at Glenburn, Yea, Kanumbra, Kinglake and Thornton
- Masonic Lodges in Alexandra and Yea
- Commercial buildings, e.g., Purcell's Store, Yea; former Union (ANZ) Bank, Alexandra
- Churches, e.g., Uniting Church, Strath Creek; St John's Anglican Church and organ, Alexandra; St Luke's Anglican Church and organ, Yea
- Memorials, e.g., War memorials in Strath Creek, Yarck and Marysville, Hume & Hovell memorials; aeroplane crash site at Rubicon; Toolangi Fire Fatality Site; Princess Alexandra sculpture in Alexandra.
- Cemeteries, e.g., Cathkin, Gobur, Yarck, Marysville, Yea

World War One and after (c1914 – c2006)

In Murrindindi's rural areas, the main period of growth took place during the selection era. The era from World War One onwards primarily saw development of the tourism industry. Other major changes to Murrindindi Shire's landscape were the result of establishing water supply and power infrastructure for the Melbourne metro area.

Water supply

Murrindindi Shire is the location of three major Victorian water supply initiatives which dramatically altered the landscape. The first Eildon Dam, known as Sugarloaf Weir, was built between 1914 and 1928. The second Eildon Dam was constructed about 200m downstream between 1951 and 1956. The Rubicon Hydro-electric scheme, commissioned in 1928 is of State significance.

Bushfires

The bushfires of January 1939 (Black Friday) had a catastrophic effect on the timber industry with many mills being burned down. New mills were built nearer to towns, meaning that the settlements, families, boarding houses and stables which had been around the mills in their forest settings were abandoned. A legacy of the 1939 fires was the establishment of infrastructure such as fire stations and look-out towers such as the Andrew Hill Fire Tower built in 1942.

Tourism

Tourism has grown from its late nineteenth-century beginnings. Kinglake National Park was proclaimed in 1928 and is one of Victoria's oldest National Parks. Today, thirty per cent of Murrindindi Shire is designated National Park and tourism is an important industry. Guest houses peaked in popularity in the 1920s and 1930s but declined from the 1960s when camping and caravanning became popular. The Hermitage at Narbethong is one of the early guest houses and is still operating.

While the scenic attractions and pursuits popular in the nineteenth century are still enjoyed in the twenty-first century, Murrindindi's tourism industry is growing and developing. Historic buildings, no longer used for the purposes for which they were built, are being adapted for tourism, e.g., the Railway Station at Yea which is a visitor information centre. Vineyards, olive groves and lavender are being planted alongside timber plantations, altering the landscape and meeting the growing markets for regional produce and gourmet tourism.

Cultural Heritage

- National Parks, e.g., Kinglake; Cathedral Ranges
- Eothen, Kinglake (home of William Laver, who helped found Kinglake National Park)
- The Hermitage, Narbethong: house and exotic plantings
- Yea, former railway station
- Water storage sites at Eildon Dam
- Rubicon hydro-electric scheme

Why is it Significant?

Aboriginal landscape at first contact (to pre-1860)

The Aboriginal cultural heritage of Murrindindi is significant as a basis on which other layers and influences have occurred and as a continuous living cultural presence through all periods of the Shire's development.

The pastoral era and settling the land (c1830s – c1870s)

The pastoral era is important to Murrindindi Shire as a time when European explorers and settlers displaced the Aboriginal people from their lands. It is the period which was the foundation of European exploration and expansion and the discovery of gold which, in turn, led the establishment of thriving townships and communities.

Selection and establishing communities (c1860 – c1920s)

This era is particularly important in Murrindindi's development and marks the stage when the Shire became an important timber and agricultural centre and an early nature-tourist destination. Primary industries were established including timber, dairying, grazing and agriculture. Forested areas in the centre of the Shire were cleared for agriculture and, because of the terrain's hilly nature, cuttings and bridges were created for railways and later, roads. The pattern of settlement was established with small rural selections, timber and mining towns being established.

World War One and after (1914 – 2006)

Murrindindi Shire is the location of three major Victorian water and power supply initiatives, Sugarloaf Weir, Eildon Dam and the Rubicon hydro-electric scheme. They dramatically altered the landscape and are still in operation.

Tourism is the growth industry of this era and includes the creation of infrastructure such as guest houses and caravan parks. Changes in the landscape include establishing vineyards, olive groves and lavender. There are also plantations of pine and blue gums which were planted in the late twentieth century.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Cultural significance	*Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric, setting, use associations, meanings, records, related places* and *related objects*.
Conservation	*Conservation* means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its *cultural significance*.
Burra Charter	The *Burra Charter* is the short name given to the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, which was developed by Australia ICOMOS at a meeting in 1979 in the historic South Australian mining town of Burra. It is now widely accepted as the basis for cultural heritage management in Australia. The Burra Charter may be applied to a wide range of places - an archaeological site, a town, building or landscape and defines various terms and identifies principles and procedures that must be observed in conservation work. Although the Burra Charter was drafted by heritage professionals, anyone involved in the care of heritage items and places may use it to guide conservation policy and practice.
ICOMOS	*ICOMOS* (International Council on Monuments and Sites) is a non-governmental professional organisation formed in 1965. ICOMOS is primarily concerned with the philosophy, terminology, methodology and techniques of cultural heritage conservation and is closely linked to UNESCO.
Mia Mia	*Mia Mia* is a shelter.
Place	*Place* means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of building or other work, and may include components, contents, spaces and views.
Placers	A 'placer' is a concentration of gold or other dense metal or ore deposited alluvially within otherwise sterile or low yielding sediment. Placers usually result from a disturbance in stream flow.

Post contact	The period after first contact between indigenous and non-indigenous (sometimes referred to as 'European') individuals or communities.
RNE criteria	The *Register of the National Estate (RNE) criteria* are used to assess whether a place has significant cultural heritage values. A list is provided in Appendix 2.
The study area	The study area is the whole of Murrindindi Shire. However, in documenting the history, the study may sometimes refer to places outside the study area that had an important influence on it, e.g., Whittlesea, Yan Yean.
Tributor	This refers to an arrangement for working a mine where capital may be in short supply and miners do not receive wages. The miners, the "tributors" under this arrangement, are paid a share of the profits if there are any.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways, *Upper Acheron Valley District Connecting Railway*, Victoria, 1918.

Parish Plans, Murrindindi, County of Anglesey; Parish of Yea, County of Anglesey, Windham, County of Anglesey, Eildon, County of Anglesey.

Report of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, Victorian Parliament, July 2010.

Shakespear (surveyor), Plan of Cathkin, Mt Pleasant A & Mt Pleasant B runs, 1864 (PROV VPRS 15899/P2, Unit 8502, Run 3).

Published sources

An index to general newspaper articles from the *Alexandra and Eildon Standard,* 1876-1920, Murrindindi Library Service.

Andrews, E.J. (ed.), 1981, *Hume and Hovell, 1824*, (facsimile ed.) Blubber Head Press, Hobart.

Arnold, V H, *Victorian Year Book 1973*, Victorian Government Publisher, 1973.

Baragwanath, Pam & Hodgson, Janette, *An Inventory of Mechanics'' Institutes in Victoria, Vols 1-3,* Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria, 1998.

Barwick, D., 1984, *Mapping the past: an atlas of Victorian Clans 1835-1904, Aboriginal History,* 8(2):100-131.

Billis, R.V. and A.S. Kenyon, 1932, *Pastoral pioneers of Port Phillip,* MacMillan, Melbourne.

Bicentennial Authority and the Shire of Yea, *Kinglake: A Pictorial History to Celebrate the Bicentenary 1988*, Kinglake, 1988.

Bland, W. (ed.), 1965 (1831), *Journey of discovery to Port Phillip, New South Wales by Messrs. W.H. Hovell, and Hamilton Hume in 1824 and 1825*. (facsimile ed.), Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide.

Blake, L., *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, Education Department of Victoria, 1973.

Blanks, H., 1973, *The story of Yea: A 150 year history of the Shire,* The Hawthorn Press, Melbourne.

Boyes, R., 1984, *Overland to Port Phillip Bay: the story of the epic of exploration by Hume and Hovell, with party, October-December, 1824,* Albury and District Historical Society, Albury.

Brough Smythe, R., 1979, *The gold fields and mineral districts of Victoria*, facsimile ed. (1869), Queensberry Hill Press, Carlton.

Bumbers, I., c.2000, *Lake Eildon: A Record Low*.

Centenary Organizing Committee, 1995, *Toolangi Primary School: The First Hundred Years*.

Christie, R.W., 1989, *Tracks to the Woods Point and Jordan Goldfields*, R.W. Christie, Woods Point.

Clark, I.D. , 1990, *Aboriginal languages and clans: an historical atlas of western and central Victoria, 1800-1900*, Monash Publications in Geography, 37, Department of Geography, Monash University, Melbourne.

Clark, I.D., 1998, *The journals of George Augustus Robinson, Chief Protector, Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate, vol 1: 1 January 1839 – 30 September 1840*, Heritage Matters, Beaconsfield.

Coutts, P.J.F., 1981, *Readings in Victorian prehistory v.2: the Victorian Aboriginals 1800-1860*, Victoria Archaeological Survey, Melbourne.

Coutts, P.J.F., 1976, *The Prehistory of Victoria*, Victoria Archaeological Survey, Melbourne.

Cumpston, J.H.L., 1927, *The history of Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Measles and Whooping Cough in Australia 1788-1925*, Government Printer, Canberra.

Davies, P., 2001b, *A cure for all seasons: health and medicine in a bush community*, Journal of Australian Studies.

de Serville, Paul, 1980, *Port Phillip Gentlemen*¸ Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

de Serville, Paul, 1980, *Pounds and Pedigrees*¸ Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Dingle, Tony, 1984, *The Victorians: Settling*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Assoc. Melbourne.

DNRE, September 1999a, *Victorian Goldfields Project, historic gold mining sites in the Kilmore-Yea Region of Victoria*, report on Cultural Heritage, Department of Natural resources and Environment, Melbourne.

DNRE, September 1999b, *Victorian Goldfields Project, historic gold mining sites in the Kilmore-Yea Region of Victoria*, site gazetteer, Department of Natural resources and Environment, Melbourne.

DNRE, June 1999a, *Victorian Goldfields Project, historic gold mining sites in St Andrews Mining Division, report on Cultural Heritage*, Department of Natural resources and Environment, Melbourne.

DNRE, June 1999b, *Victorian Goldfields Project, historic gold mining sites in St Andrews Mining Division*, site gazetteer, Department of Natural resources and Environment, Melbourne.

DNRE, July 1999, *Victorian Goldfields Project, historic gold mining sites in the north east region of Victoria,* site gazetteer, Department of Natural resources and Environment, Melbourne.

Eildon Primary School, 1986, *Eildon: The Whole Dam Story*, Eildon.

Evans, P., 1994, *Rails to Rubicon: A History of the Rubicon Forest*, Light Rail Research Society of Australia, Melbourne, 1994.

Fletcher, B.J. (ed.), 1975, *Broadford a regional history*, Lowden Publishing, Kilmore.

Flett, 1970, *The history of gold discovery in Victoria*, The Hawthorn Press, Melbourne.

Franklin, (2009), *Inferno, the day Victoria burned*, Slattery Media Group, Melbourne.

Foster, N., 1985, *Whispers in the Valley: A View of Strath Creek from 1838*, Euroa Gazette, 1985.

Gillison, J., 1974, *Colonial doctor and his town*, Cypress Books, Melbourne.

Gordon, H.C., 1954, *Yea: its discovery and development 1825-1920*, Hawthorn Press, Melbourne.

Harrigan, L.J., 1962, *Victorian Railways to '62,* Victorian Railways Public relations and Betterment Board, Melbourne.

Hawkins, D A., 1998, *Middle Kinglake Primary School No. 3315 Centenary History 1898-1998*, Kinglake, 1998.

Hewitt, G., 2000b, *Bayunga Waters: an archaeology of the Goulburn River within Strathbogie Shire*, a report compiled for Strathbogie Shire, Kilpatrick Hewitt, Wandong.

Hobby, J., 1986, *Tales of the tablelands, a history of Ruffy and District (including a history of the Terip Terip Primary School)*, Ruffy Primary School Centenary Committee, Ruffy.

Houghton, N., 1986, *Timber Mountain, a sawmilling history of the Murrindindi Forest 1885-1950,* Light Railway Research Society of Australia, Melbourne.

Howitt, A.W., 1904, *The Native tribes of south east Australia,* MacMillan, London.

James, G.F. and C.G. Lee, 1970, *Walhalla Heyday*, Robertson and Mullens, Melbourne.

Johns, David, 2006, *The Kinglake Fires January,* self-published.

Johns, David, 2009, *A day like no other, Black Saturday on the Kinglake Ranges*, self-published.

Jones, G P & N E, 1994, *Molesworth 1824-1994,* Molesworth Local History Committee, Molesworth.

Kabaila, P., 2005, *High country footprints. Aboriginal pathways and movement in the high country of south eastern Australia, recognising the ancient paths beside modern highways*, Pirion Publishing, Canberra.

Kinglake Pioneering Days, no publishing details.

Kinglake Ranges What's Where Series, 2005, *Where's the Old Timber Tramways?*

Kinglake Ranges What's Where Series, 2005, *Where's the Short Walks in the Kinglake National Park?*

Kinglake Ranges What's Where Series, 2005, *Where's the Unique and Historic Buildings?*

Lloyd, B., 1978, *Gold at the Ten Mile*, Shoestring Bookshop, Wangaratta.

Lloyd, B. and H. Combes, 1981, *Gold at Gaffneys Creek*, Shoestring Bookshop, Wangaratta.

Long, Charles R., 1925, *Victoria: Its Foundation and Development*, Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, Melbourne.

Long, Charles R., *State Primary Education from its foundation to 1872*, Local History Series 14: Murrindindi Library, Alexandra, 2005 (Originally published by the Victorian Historical Magazine, Vol. XIX, June 1942, No. 3).

McCall, Helen, 1982, *Highlands 1882-1982*

Massola, Aldo, 1975, *Coranderrk: A History of the Aboriginal Station*, Lowden Publishing Co, Kilmore.

Massola, Aldo, *The Aborigines of the former Goulburn tribe,* Murrindindi Library Local History Series.

McCarthy, M., 2001, *Mountains of ash: A history of the Sawmills and Tramways of Warburton and District*, LRRSA, Melbourne.

McRae, H., 1994, *Forest History in Victoria a guide to Government records*, Historic Places Section, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Victoria.

Memories of James O'Rourke, Murrindindi Library Local History Series.

Mitchell, Alma, 2001, *Fernshaw the Forgotten Village*, Healsville and District Historical Society Inc, Healesville.

Morgan, M., 1987, *Crown Lands pre-emptive right applications: Victoria 1850-1854*, Marjorie Morgan Publications, Blackburn.

Morris, George, 1952, *Devil's River Country: sections from the history of the Mansfield district*, published by the Advertiser, Shepparton, VIC.

Murrindindi Library Local History Series, Personal memoirs of Midgley Ogden

Noble, G W, 1969, *The Red Gate: A History of Alexandra*, Council of the Shire of Alexandra, Victoria.

Parks Victoria, 1998 *Cathedral Range State Park: Management Plan* (http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/resources/07_0166.pdf, accessed 1 March 2006)

Parks Victoria, 2005 *Kinglake Park Visitor Guide* (http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/resources/05_0354.pdf, accessed 1 March 2006)

Pilkington, John, 1996, *Big River Days: A history of the Big River valley and the golden times of the long gone townships of Enoch's Point and Darlingford*, J Pilkington, Clifton Hill.

Powell, J M, 'Floods' in Davidson G, Hirst, J, Macintyre S, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History,* Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 257-8.

Shaw, E., c1989, *Tall Trees of Terip Terip, a history compiled by Enid Shaw*, Shaw family, Gobur.

Stackpole, H J., *The Discovery of Wood's Point Goldfield*, Local History Series 4: Murrindindi Library, Alexandra, 2002 (A facsimile of an address to the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and to the Historical Society of Ballarat, 17 August 1965).

Spreadborough, R. and H. Anderson, 1983, *Victorian Squatters*, Red Rooster Press, Melbourne.

Taggerty Primary School, Centenary, 1875-1975: A History of the School and the District, no publishing details.

Taylor, R., 1999, *Wild places of Greater Melbourne*, CSIRO and Museum Victoria, Collingwood.

Thomas, A., 1992, *The Big Culvert in the Cumberland Reserve on the Yarra Track*, Steavenson Falls Cumberland Valley and Beauty Spot Scenic Reserve Committee of Management, 1992, reprinted 1998

Turton, K., 1973, *Six and a half inches from destiny: the first hundred years of the Melbourne to Wodonga Railway, 1873-1973*, Australian Railway Historical Society, Melbourne

Vines, J.L., 1981, *Historic buildings survey of the North Central District*, Ministry of Conservation, Melbourne

Waghorn, J.F., 1982, *Gobur and the Golden gate, a history of the Township and Parish of Gobur in the Shire of Alexandra*, J.F. Waghorn, Thomastown

Waghorn, J.F., 1983, *Narbethong Post Office Centenary 1883-1983*, J.F. Waghorn, Thomastown

Wylie, A., 1995, *Gold in the Shire of Mansfield, an outline of the smaller discoveries*, Mansfield Historical Society, Mansfield

Unpublished Sources

Bannear, D., n.d., *Kilmore goldfield historical notes*, Heritage Victoria, Melbourne.

Bannear, D., n.d., *St Andrews-Caledonia goldfield notes*, Heritage Victoria, Melbourne.

Bannear, D., n.d., *Alexandra goldfield historical notes*, Heritage Victoria, Melbourne.

Bannear, D., n.d., *Historic mining sites assessment project north east – Alexandra goldfield*, Heritage Victoria, Melbourne.

Cumming, R., 1982, 'Acheron Primary School: A History 1872-1895', fourth year Bachelor of Education (Primary) thesis, Bendigo College of Advanced Education.

Davies, P., 2001a, 'Isolation and integration: the archaeology of an Otway Forest community', unpublished PhD dissertation, School of Historical and European Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, La Trobe University.

Hewitt, G., 2000a, 'Bayunga Waters: an archaeology of the Goulburn River within Strathbogie Shire', MA preliminary dissertation, La Trobe University, Bundoora.

Hewitt, G., 2003, 'Old Melbourne Gaol Hospital Yard: salvage archaeology at the former Russell Street Police Garage', unpublished MA dissertation, School of European Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, La Trobe University, Bundoora.

Johns, David, 2006, 'Hume and Hovell Expedition Route, Woodfield to Strath Creek, December 1824' map.

Vines, G., 1985, The historical archaeology of forest based sawmilling in Victoria 1855-1940, unpublished BA (Hons) thesis, Department of Archaeology, La Trobe University, Bundoora.

Venn, M.A., 1973, The "Octopus" Act and empire building by the Victorian Railways during the land boom, unpublished MA Preliminary thesis, History School, University of Melbourne.

APPENDIX 1

AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEMES

1 TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT

The environment exists apart from being a construct of human consciousness. However, a thematic approach recognises the human factor in the natural environment, and how our understanding and appreciation of the environment has changed over time.

1.1: Tracing climatic and topographical change

1.2: Tracing the emergence of Australian plants and animals

1.3: Assessing scientifically diverse environments

1.4: Appreciating the natural wonders of Australia

2 PEOPLING AUSTRALIA

This theme group recognises the pre-colonial occupations of Indigenous people, as well as the ongoing history of human occupation from diverse areas.

2.1: Living as Australia's earliest inhabitants

2.2: Adapting to diverse environments

2.3: Coming to Australia as a punishment

2.4: Migrating

2.4.1: Migrating to save or preserve a way of life
2.4.2: Migrating to seek opportunity
2.4.3: Migrating to escape oppression
2.4.4: Migrating through organised colonisation
2.4.5: Changing the face of rural and urban Australia through migration

2.5: Promoting settlement

2.6: Fighting for land

2.6.1: Resisting the advent of Europeans and their animals
2.6.2: Displacing Indigenous people

3 DEVELOPING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES

While Geoffrey Blainey conceived of Australian history as dominated by the 'tyranny of distance' this concept is alien to Indigenous Australians. Eighteenth and nineteenth century developments in technology made it possible to link the continent to distant marketplaces, and the incentive for almost every expedition by the first European 'explorers' was the search for valuable resources. Much subsequent Australian history has revolved around the search for a staple on which to base regional economic development.

3.1: Exploring the coastline

3.2: Constructing capital city economies

3.3: Surveying the continent

3.3.1: Looking for inland seas and waterways
3.3.2: Looking for overland stock routes
3.3.3: Prospecting for precious metals
3.3.4: Looking for land with agricultural potential
3.3.5: Laying out boundaries

3.4: Utilising natural resources

3.4.1: Hunting
3.4.2: Fishing and whaling
3.4.3: Mining
3.4.4: Making forests into a saleable resource
3.4.5: Tapping natural energy sources

3.5: Developing primary production

3.5.1: Grazing stock
3.5.2: Breeding animals
3.5.3: Developing agricultural industries

3.6: Recruiting labour

3.7: Establishing communications

3.7.1: Establishing postal services
3.7.2: Developing electric means of communication

3.8: Moving goods and people

3.8.1: Shipping to and from Australian ports
3.8.2: Safeguarding Australian products for long journeys
3.8.3: Developing harbour facilities
3.8.4: Making economic use of inland waterways
3.8.5: Moving goods and people on land
3.8.6: Building and maintaining railways
3.8.7: Building and maintaining roads
3.8.8: Getting fuel to engines
3.8.9: Moving goods and people by air

3.9: Farming for commercial profit

3.10: Integrating people into the cash economy

3.10.1: Assisting Indigenous people into the cash economy
3.10.2: Encouraging women into employment
3.10.3: Encouraging fringe and alternative businesses

3.11: Altering the environment

3.11.1: Regulating waterways
3.11.2: Reclaiming land
3.11.3: Irrigating land
3.11.4: Clearing vegetation
3.11.5: Establishing water supplies

3.12: Feeding people

3.12.1: Using indigenous foodstuffs
3.12.2: Developing sources of fresh local produce
3.12.3: Importing foodstuffs

3.12.4: Preserving food and beverages
3.12.5: Retailing foods and beverages

3.13: Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity

3.14: Developing an Australian engineering and construction industry

3.14.1: Building to suit Australian conditions
3.14.2: Using Australian materials in construction

3.15: Developing economic links outside Australia

3.16: Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure

3.16.1: Dealing with hazards and disasters

3.17: Inventing devices

3.18: Financing Australia

3.18.1: Raising capital
3.18.2: Banking and lending
3.18.3: Insuring against risk
3.18.4: Cooperating to raise capital (co-ops, building societies, etc.)

3.19: Marketing and retailing

3.20: Informing Australians

3.20.1: Making, printing and distributing newspapers
3.20.2: Broadcasting

3.21: Entertaining for profit

3.22: Lodging people

3.23: Catering for tourists

3.24: Selling companionship and sexual services

3.25: Adorning Australians

3.25.1: Dressing up Australians

3.26: Providing health services

3.26.1: Providing medical and dental services
3.26.2: Providing hospital services
3.26.3: Developing alternative approaches to good health
3.26.4: Providing care for people with disabilities

4 BUILDING SETTLEMENTS, TOWNS AND CITIES

Although many people came to Australia in search of personal gain, they realised the need to co-operate in the building of safe, pleasant urban environments. Australian urbanisation and suburbanisation have special characteristics which set them apart from similar phenomena elsewhere in the world.

4.1: Planning urban settlements

4.1.1: Selecting township sites
4.1.2: Making suburbs
4.1.3: Learning to live with property booms and busts

4.1.4: Creating capital cities
4.1.5: Developing city centres

4.2: Supplying urban services (power, transport, fire prevention, roads, water, light and sewerage)

4.3: Developing institutions

4.4: Living with slums, outcasts and homelessness

4.5: Making settlements to serve rural Australia

4.6: Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities

5 WORKING

Although a lot of what we call work is related to the economy, most of it is not undertaken for profit. A great deal of the work done in the home is neither paid nor counted as part of the national economy. Some of the most interesting recent social history written about Australia concerns work and workplaces.

5.1: Working in harsh conditions

5.1.1: Coping with unemployment
5.1.2: Coping with dangerous jobs and workplaces

5.2: Organising workers and work places

5.3: Caring for workers' dependent children

5.4: Working in offices

5.5: Trying to make crime pay

5.6: Working in the home

5.7: Surviving as Indigenous people in a white-dominated economy

5.8: Working on the land

6 EDUCATING

Every society educates its young. While European education places a great emphasis on the formal schooling system, education encompasses much more.

6.1: Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education

6.2: Establishing schools

6.3: Training people for the workplace

6.4: Building a system of higher education

6.5: Educating people in remote places

6.6: Educating Indigenous people in two cultures

7 GOVERNING

This theme group is as much about self-government as it is about being governed. It includes all the business of politics, including hostility to acts of government.

7.1: Governing Australia as a province of the British Empire

7.2: Developing institutions of self-government and democracy

7.2.1: Protesting
7.2.2: Struggling for inclusion in the political process
7.2.3: Working to promote civil liberties
7.2.4: Forming political associations

7.3: Making City-States

7.4: Federating Australia

7.5: Governing Australia's colonial possessions

7.6: Administering Australia

7.6.1: Developing local government authorities
7.6.2: Controlling entry of persons and disease
7.6.3: Policing Australia
7.6.4: Dispensing justice
7.6.5: Incarcerating people
7.6.6: Providing services and welfare
7.6.7: Enforcing discriminatory legislation
7.6.8: Administering Indigenous Affairs
7.6.9: Conserving Australian resources
7.6.10: Conserving fragile environments
7.6.11: Conserving economically valuable resources
7.6.12: Conserving Australia's heritage

7.7: Defending Australia

7.7.1: Providing for the common defence
7.7.2: Preparing to face invasion
7.7.3: Going to war

7.8: Establishing regional and local identity

8 DEVELOPING AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL LIFE

Australians are more likely to express their sense of identity in terms of a way of life rather than allegiance to an abstract patriotic ideal. One of the achievements of this society has been the creation of a rich existence away from the workplace. While some of the activities encompassed in this theme are pursued for profit - horse racing and cinema, for instance - their reason for being is the sheer enjoyment of spectators. While many people could not pursue careers in art, literature, science, entertainment or the church without being paid, those activities do not fit easily into the categories of economy or workplace.

8.1: Organising recreation

8.1.1: Playing and watching organised sports
8.1.2: Betting

8.1.3: Developing public parks and gardens
8.1.4: Enjoying the natural environment

8.2: Going to the beach

8.3: Going on holiday

8.4: Eating and drinking

8.5: Forming associations

8.5.1: Preserving traditions and group memories
8.5.2: Helping other people
8.5.3: Associating for mutual aid
8.5.4: Pursuing common leisure interests

8.6: Worshipping

8.6.1: Worshipping together
8.6.2: Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies
8.6.3: Founding Australian religious institutions
8.6.4: Making places for worship
8.6.5: Evangelising
8.6.6: Running city missions
8.6.7: Running missions to Australia's indigenous people

8.7: Honouring achievement

8.8: Remembering the fallen

8.9: Commemorating significant events

8.9.1: Remembering disasters
8.9.2: Remembering public spectacles

8.10: Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences

8.10.1: Making music
8.10.2: Creating visual arts
8.10.3: Creating literature
8.10.4: Designing and building fine buildings
8.10.5: Advancing knowledge in science and technology

8.11: Making Australian folklore

8.11.1: Celebrating folk heroes
8.11.2: Myth making and story-telling

8.12: Living in and around Australian homes

8.13: Living in cities and suburbs

8.14: Living in the country and rural settlements

8.15: Being homeless

9 MARKING THE PHASES OF LIFE

Although much of the experience of growing up and growing old does not readily relate to particular heritage sites, there are places that can illustrate this important theme. Most of the phases of life set out below are universal experiences.

9.1: Bringing babies into the world

9.1.1: Providing maternity clinics and hospitals
9.1.2: Promoting mothers' and babies' health

9.2: Growing up

9.2.1: Being children
9.2.2: Joining youth organisations
9.2.3: Being teenagers
9.2.4: Courting

9.3: Forming families and partnerships

9.3.1: Establishing partnerships
9.3.2: Bringing up children

9.4: Being an adult

9.5: Living outside a family/partnership

9.6: Growing old

9.6.1: Retiring
9.6.2: Looking after the infirm and the aged

9.7: Dying

9.7.1: Dealing with human remains
9.7.2: Mourning the dead
9.7.3 Remembering the dead

AAV THEMATIC LIST OF POST-CONTACT ABORIGINAL PLACES/SITES

1 Associations with Pastoralists/Farming/Rural Industry

1.1 Properties where initial contact with pastoralists occurred

1.2 Properties where people are known to have worked

1.3 Properties where people are known to have lived/camped

1.4 Properties where people visited to obtain regular supplies of food/clothing/utensils (other than Honorary Correspondent depots)

1.5 Properties where people are known to have frequented for purposes other than above (or if nature of particular association is unknown)

2 Associations with Settlements/Towns

2.1 Places where people camped/lived around towns

2.2 Places where people congregated around towns (stores, parks, houses etc.)

2.3 Shops/industries/places where people worked around settlements/towns

2.4 Places where people obtained regular supplies of food and goods (not B.P.A. depots)

2.5 Places where people participated in settlement/town activities

2.6 Other facilities used/frequented by people

3 Associations with Forests (not known if association originates in pre-contact period)

3.1 Places where people worked in forest industries

3.2 Places where people lived in forests

4 Places where People Independently Congregated/Frequented/Travelled (not known if association originates in pre-contact period)

4.1 Living camps away from towns and properties

4.2 Ceremonial and formal meeting places

4.3 Places of recreation (played sport, holidays, get togethers)

4.4 Historical travelling routes

4.5 Places where people procured food and/or raw materials

5 Government Administration of Resources for Aboriginal People

5.1 Protectorates

5.2 Government stations

5.3 Locations where Native Police were housed/camped/worked

5.4 Properties/locations of Honorary Correspondents to the Board for Protection of Aborigines

5.5 Locations of Board for the Protection of Aborigines depots

5.6 Places where Aboriginal Affairs have been administered by the government

5.7 Schools

5.8 Housing/shelters

5.9 Hospitals/houses for sick people

6 Associations with the Church

6.1 Missions

6.2 Schools

6.3 Churches

7 Land Reserved for Aboriginal People

7.1 Land reserved for general Aboriginal population use

7.2 Land reserved for specific individuals/families

8 Places of Conflict

8.1 Places where Aboriginal people were killed/assaulted/threatened by Europeans

8.2 Places where Aboriginal people were killed/assaulted by other Aboriginal people

8.3 Places where Europeans were killed/assaulted/threatened by Aboriginal people

8.4 Places where Aboriginal people were imprisoned

9 Places where Aboriginal People have Died or been Buried since Contact

9.1 Location of individual burials outside of formal cemeteries

9.2 Location of burial grounds outside of formal cemeteries

9.3 Location of burials within cemeteries

9.4 Places where people have died

10 Places Linked to Significant People

10.1 Places where known ancestors were born

10.2 Monuments

10.3 Buildings

10.4 Homes

10.5 Natural features associated with significant people

11 Places Linked to a Significant Incident

11.1 Significant incident relating to a significant person

11.2 Significant incident relating to a number of people

12 Attachments to/Associations with Places Known to Precede Contact

12.1 Pre-contact food resources/areas where people continued to procure food (swamps, fish weirs, forests etc.)

12.2 Camp sites/meeting places

12.3 Spiritual places

12.4 Ceremonial places

12.5 Sources of raw materials used for making artefacts post-contact

12.6 Sources of bush medicines

12.7 Travelling routes

12.8 Burial/burial grounds

12.9 Named places

13 Places Relating to Self Determination

13.1 Community resource centres (co-operatives, health services, legal services etc.)

13.2 Community cultural centres (museums, keeping places etc.)

13.3 Tourism endeavours

13.4 Businesses

13.5 Government departments

13.6 Land claimed/reclaimed under Native Title

13.7 Land owned by Aboriginal people

13.8 Places related to a significant individual achievement

APPENDIX 2

Criteria for the Register of the National Estate

CRITERION A: ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE COURSE, OR PATTERN, OF AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL OR CULTURAL HISTORY

A.1 Importance in the evolution of Australian flora, fauna, landscapes or climate.

A.2 Importance in maintaining existing processes or natural systems at the regional or national scale.

A.3 Importance in exhibiting unusual richness or diversity of flora, fauna, landscapes or cultural features.

A.4 Importance for association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, State, region or community.

CRITERION B: ITS POSSESSION OF UNCOMMON, RARE OR ENDANGERED ASPECTS OF AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL OR CULTURAL HISTORY

B.1 Importance for rare, endangered or uncommon flora, fauna, communities, ecosystems, natural landscapes or phenomena, or as a wilderness.

B.2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practised, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest

CRITERION C: ITS POTENTIAL TO YIELD INFORMATION THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL OR CULTURAL HISTORY

C.1 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of Australian natural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality, reference or benchmark site.

C.2 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of Australia.

CRITERION D: ITS IMPORTANCE IN DEMONSTRATING THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS OF: (I) A CLASS OF AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL OR CULTURAL PLACES; OR (II) A CLASS OF AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL OR CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

D.1 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the range of landscapes, environments or ecosystems, the attributes of which identify them as being characteristic of their class.

D.2 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the range of human activities in the Australian environment (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique).

CRITERION E: ITS IMPORTANCE IN EXHIBITING PARTICULAR AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS VALUED BY A COMMUNITY OR CULTURAL GROUP

E.1 Importance for a community for aesthetic characteristics held in high esteem or otherwise valued by the community.

CRITERION F: ITS IMPORTANCE IN DEMONSTRATING A HIGH DEGREE OF CREATIVE OR TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT AT A PARTICULAR PERIOD

F.1 Importance for its technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.

CRITERION G: ITS STRONG OR SPECIAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH A PARTICULAR COMMUNITY OR CULTURAL GROUP FOR SOCIAL, CULTURAL OR SPIRITUAL REASONS

G.1 Importance as a place highly valued by a community for reasons of religious, spiritual, symbolic, cultural, educational, or social associations.

CRITERION H: ITS SPECIAL ASSOCIATION WITH THE LIFE OR WORKS OF A PERSON, OR GROUP OF PERSONS, OF IMPORTANCE IN AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL OR CULTURAL HISTORY

H.1 Importance for close associations with individuals whose activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State or region.