

Heritage Overlay No.: 039
Citation No.: 062
Place: **House & Bullock Track, 847-1071
Blackhill Road**

Other Names of Place: Kororoit Park Stud
Location: 847-1071 Blackhill Road, Toolern Vale
Critical Dates: 1855 (land granted to John Beaty); c.1926 (house built for Misses Beaty and Robert Beaty).
Existing Heritage Listings: None
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

The house at 847-1071 Blackhill Road, Toolern Vale has significance as a predominantly intact example of an interwar homestead Bungalow style. Built in 1928, the house appears to be in good condition. It is set amongst some mature eucalypts and there are numerous farm fixtures, particularly the Sunshine gates and now rare wooden haystack elevator that contribute to the significance of the place. The visual connections to the remaining evidence of the early ford and bullock track at the foot of the hill are of further significance.

The house at 847-1071 Blackhill Road is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D.2). It demonstrates original design qualities of an interwar homestead Bungalow style. These qualities include the broad, steeply pitched gambrel roof form, together with the minor gable that projects towards the front and the return broken back verandah formed under the main roof. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the asymmetrical composition, single storey height, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding, elongated face red brick chimney, stop chamfered timber verandah posts, rudimentary solid timber verandah brackets, timber framed double hung windows (arranged singularly and in groups), timber framed doorway and the decorative gable infill (panelling and timber battening). The farm fixtures, notably the Sunshine gates and rare wooden haystack elevator also contribute to the significance of the place.

The house at 847-1071 Blackhill Road is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4, H1) for its association with the Beaty family, who have been prominent in the rural history of Toolern Vale and the Shire of Melton. Robert Beaty was a third generation member of this family whose establishment of this Dorset sheep stud property 'Kororoit Park' continued the family's pastoral and farming traditions, and the associations of this land with John Beaty, who purchased it in the 1850s.

The surviving evidence of the former bullock track to the Gisborne district is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC C.2). It has the potential to contribute to a wider understanding of the history of the Post-Contact occupation of the area.

Overall, the house and evidence of the bullock track, 847-1071 Blackhill Road, is of LOCAL significance.

Description:

The house at 847-1071 Blackhill Road, Toolern Vale is set on a large rural, farm site, with open grassed areas, shrubbery and eucalypts surrounding the house garden. Nearby the house are numerous early farm fixtures, including Sunshine gates and a wooden haystack elevator, built locally, and now rare. To the east of the house site is evidence of the early ford and bullock track to the Gisborne district at the foot of the hill.

The asymmetrical, single storey, horizontal timber weatherboard, interwar homestead Bungalow styled house is characterised by a broad, steeply pitched gambrel roof form, together with a minor gable that projects towards the front and a return broken back verandah formed under the main roof. These roof forms are clad in galvanised corrugated steel. An early elongated and face red brick chimney adorns the roofline.

An early feature of the design is the return verandah. It is supported by stop chamfered timber posts and has rudimentary solid timber brackets.

Other early features include the timber framed double hung windows (arranged singularly or in groups), timber framed doorway and the decorative gable infill (panelling and timber battening).

History:

The house is situated very close to the boundary of the original Crown Allotment 8 and Crown Allotment 9, Parish of Yangardook. These allotments were part of a group of allotments that had been purchased by John Beaty from the Crown in the 1850s, some of which remain the possession of his family today.

John Beaty, who apparently arrived in the colony in 1848,¹ purchased a large allotment at one of the first sales of Crown Land in the district. Jointly with a 'John Beattie', in August 1852 he purchased the 482 acre Crown Allotment 20 Parish of Holden at the very good price of £578. Five months later, in January 1853, John Beattie sold John Beaty his half share in this allotment for £1446.² (Beattie may have been a relation of John Beaty, as different branches of the family adopted different spellings. For example John Beaty met his brother Charles when he arrived in Melbourne from their native Co. Tyrone Ireland in 1856, but Charles used the spelling 'Beatty', and his descendents 'Beattie'.³ Beattys Road in Rockbank is named after Charles' branch of the family. Official government records add to the confusion by often spelling John Beaty as 'Beatty', and sometimes 'Beattey'. Confusion is further increased by Henry Beattie, who managed, and eventually partly owned, the adjacent Mt Aitken Station and other nearby property, but who hailed from Scotland⁴ and was presumably no relation to John Beaty. Henry and his sons, including William and John Aitken, became nationally famous breeders of Hereford cattle, Shropshire sheep, and Leicester and Merino crosses. Another son Walter also owned land in the district.⁵)

Beaty had done well to establish in this area, with the very early pastoral station *Green Hills* on his west, the famous early squatter and sheep breeder John Aitken to his north and east, and the notorious WJT (Big) Clarke to his south. By 1854 Beaty had a well-established 'homestead' on his allotment, situated the east bank of the West Branch of Kororoit Creek.⁶ At Crown Land sales between 1854-57, Beaty capitalised on his foothold and purchased the majority of his holding - a further 1547 acres - most of which had been part of the *Green Hills* Station. The majority of this land was situated on the west side of the West Branch of Kororoit Creek, where his new *Pinewood* homestation, his son Andrew's *Glencoe*, and eventually this house, at 847 Black Hill Road, would be built. He purchased 15 separate but contiguous parcels of land, some of which cost, in this gold-rush period, over £4 per acre. In total Batey acquired some 2030 acres (c.820 hectares) in the 1850s Crown sales.

John Beaty senior apportioned his estate between his sons John junior, Andrew and William. John junior was 'granted' (sold for a small sum) the property on West Branch of Kororoit Creek as far west as Blackhill Road, in 1872.⁷ On this land (about 716 acres by the late 1880s) the bluestone homestead *Pinewood* was built by John junior.⁸ It is on this site that 847 Black Hill Road is situated. John senior also transferred land on the east side of the West Branch of Kororoit Creek to son William who built the *Rocklands* homestead there,⁹ and to Andrew the property on which the *Glencoe* homestead was established.¹⁰ John senior retained some 600 acres in his own name,¹¹ which was probably the site of his original homestead, of which all

¹ Starr, *op cit*, p.29. There is some suggestion that the Beaty may have been in possession of the property from 1848 (John Beaty, personal conversation, 8/5/2002)

² PROV Torrens Application file: VPRS 460/P0 (39493).

³ Starr, *loc cit*. International 'Beatty' family websites also encompass all spellings of the surname (although male and female Christian names recur constantly in the nineteenth century).

⁴ Peck, HH, *Memoirs of a Stockman*, (Stock & Land Publishing, Melbourne, 1972), p. 99.

⁵ *ibid*, pp. 50, 99, 179-181; also Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1882-1888.

⁶ Lands Victoria, Put-Away Plan Y27 (1854)

⁷ PROV Torrens Application file: VPRS 460/P0 (39493), Conveyance John Beaty to John Beaty the Younger, 12/2/1872.

⁸ Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1887-1888.

⁹ PROV Torrens Application file: VPRS 460/P0, Unit 817 (48954), Conveyance John Beaty to William Beaty, 19/9/1879; also Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1887-1888.

¹⁰ PROV Torrens Application file: VPRS 460/P0 (37508), Conveyance John Beaty to Andrew Beaty, 20/9/1879; also Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1887-1888.

¹¹ Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1887-1888.

that remains is thought to be three *pinus radiata*, an old pear tree, and a hawthorn bush.¹² John Beaty senior had died on 18th November 1999.

John Beaty junior had at least two sons, one of whom was John III (Jack), and Robert, who established 'Beaty Brothers' Dorset Horn Stud in the 1930s. The partnership was dissolved in 1965, after which Robert and his son John continued the Stud on the *Kororoit Park* property.¹³

Robert's Dorset Horn Stud property, at 783 - 829 Blackhill Road, was called Kororoit Park.¹⁴

Although the house is on the west side of the West Branch of Kororoit Creek, Melton Shire ratebooks reveal that the bulk of the stud property, and the part that he owned, was all located on the east side of the West Branch of Kororoit Creek, and to the south of the house. These show that between 1922 and 1925 Robert Alexander Beaty became the owner of 620 acres, valued at £372, comprising Section 12 and part of Section 11, Parish of Holden.¹⁵ No house had been erected on this property by 1933,¹⁶ and it is unlikely that Robert Beaty ever constructed one here. Instead, he appears to have built the house on 847 Black Hill Road, a property that the ratebooks show to have been owned by the 'Misses Beaty' - Elizabeth A, Marjory C, and Catherine M - who were likely his aunts or perhaps his sisters. These womens' occupations were given as 'home duties', and their place of residence as *Pinewood*.¹⁷

The Misses Beatys' property was described as 273 acres, being part of allotments 7, 8 and 9, Parish of Yangardook. There was no house shown on this property in a 1916 map of the area.¹⁸ The ratebooks do not include any reference to a house or buildings on the property until 1928-29. This ratebook includes (in pencil, and apparently later) the words 'and buildings', suggesting that it was built late in the rate period of that year.¹⁹ However, family sources advise that the house was actually built in 1926.²⁰ It had been built by the owners of the property, the Misses Beaty. While their mother was keen to live in the new house, the sisters were happy living at *Pinewood*. The first occupant was their brother Jack Beaty, until Robert moved in when he married in 1933.²¹ By 1936, the address of 'Robert Alexander Beaty, grazier' was given as *Pinewood*.²² He was still in possession of the land to the south of William Beaty's *Rocklands*. He remained in the property, and his son John still there, carrying on the Dorset Horn Stud.

The house was identified in a previous heritage assessments of the region.²³

Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:

Shire of Melton Historical Themes: 'Pastoral', 'Farming'

¹² John Beaty, personal conversation, 8/5/2002.

¹³ John Beaty, personal conversation, 25/10/2004

¹⁴ John Beaty (8/5/2002).

¹⁵ Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1919-26

¹⁶ Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1933-34

¹⁷ Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1919-1927.

¹⁸ Ordnance Map, 'Sunbury', 1916

¹⁹ Shire of Melton Ratebooks, 1925-1929

²⁰ John Beaty (25/10/04)

²¹ *ibid*

²² Torrens Application 48954, PROV VPRS 460 (Unit 817)

²³ Johnston, C, *Rural Heritage Study: Western Region Melbourne* (Melbourne Western Region Inc, 1994), pp.142-143

Comparable Places in Shire of Melton:

A typical example of an interwar homestead Bungalow style in the Melton Shire, the design draws on the broad hipped roof forms and encircling verandahs of the Victorian and Federation periods. Other comparable dwellings include:

- House, 1229 Gisborne-Melton Road, Toolern Vale (Place Id. 29) This dwelling has the familiar broad and steeply pitched roof form. However the composition is further defined by the minor projecting gable and front verandah, being a variance on the design of Plumpton Park. Other interwar design qualities include the broad eaves with exposed timber rafters, timber framed double hung windows arranged in pairs, rudimentary gable infill and the face brick chimney with streamlined capping.
- Plumpton Park, 412 Plumpton Road, Digers Rest (Place Id. 152). This dwelling, while rudimentary in overall appearance, shares a familiar broad hipped roof form, minor projecting hipped roof and broken back encircling verandah. The usual interwar features are present including the broad eaves with exposed timber rafters, timber framed double hung windows, galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding and horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding.
- Melton Stud, Clarke's Road, Melton South (Place Id. 183). A modest dwelling, the broad hipped roof form extends to form a verandah at the front, having a similar character and appearance as Plumpton Park in this respect. The timber framed windows, and construction of the roof and walls are also similar and overall, the dwelling reflects a familiar interwar homestead design quality.
- House, McCorkells Road, Toolern Vale (Place Id. 44). This house shares a similar Federation/Edwardian composition of broad hipped roof form with projecting minor roofs and encircling verandah, although the minor roofs are gable in form. The other comparable interwar design qualities include the broad eaves with exposed timber rafters, timber framed double hung windows, timber framed doorway and timber and glazed door, rudimentary timber verandah construction and the face brick chimney with a soldier course capping.

Possibly the most intact example of the interwar homestead Bungalow style and of the highest design quality in the Melton Shire is house at 932 Holden Road (Place No.103). It has a different roof composition as the house in 847 Blackhill Road, with a broad hipped roof form and projecting front and side gables linked by a return verandah. It also features prominent face brick chimneys, timber framed windows and similarly constructed roof and wall cladding. However, the dwelling at 932 Holden Road also features round concrete verandah columns supported by rendered brick piers and a projecting faceted bay window. These features are typical of the interwar period.

Condition:

Good

Integrity:

Substantially intact

Recommendations:

Recommended for inclusion in the Melton Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

Recommended Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls:

External Paint Controls:	<i>No</i>
Internal Alteration Controls:	<i>No</i>
Tree Controls:	<i>No</i>
Outbuildings and/or Fences:	<i>Yes – bullock track</i>

Other Recommendations:

- A preliminary archaeological survey of the former bullock track to the Gisborne district has the potential to provide further information regarding the history of the post-contact occupation of the area, and is desirable.