

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT



ALPINE SHIRE

name: Upper Gundowring Hall
Address: Gundowring Road GUNDOWRING
Place Type: Hall Public
Citation Date: 2007

File No: AS0492

Significance Level: Local



Upper Gundowring Hall

**Recommended
Heritage Protection** **VHR -**

HI -

PS -

History and Historical Context

Upper Gundowring is a small agricultural community in the Kiewa Valley. The area was the meeting place for Aboriginal groups from Omeo, Ovens, and Devil River. Gundowring squatting run was first taken up in 1838 by Isabella Barber for her son Charles, who was 18 years old (a minor) at the time. By 1839, it had seven persons residing on the run, seven slab huts, and three acres of land had been cleared and under cultivation. After Land Selection in 1870s the run was divided into smaller holdings. A small community grew up, in the late 1800s, around Gundowring with a school, church and a creamery. The Chinese, who turned from mining to farming, grew tobacco at several places in the Kiewa Valley including Gundowring.

In the relatively isolated Kiewa valley, with its agricultural base and small population, development was slow. Upper Gundowring School 2733 opened in 1886. The post-WWII soldier settlement scheme increased the local farming population. All Gundowring rural schools closed when Kiewa Valley Consolidated School opened in 1953 (Temple & Lloyd 1989).

Many rural 'towns' were little more than a hall and a school, with commercial premises rarely developed.



Nevertheless, they developed a strong sense of community, with socials held at halls, and regular sporting events. Upper Gundowring was one of these.

The hall at Upper Gundowring appears to date from the mid 1900s and is the only visual evidence that a community exists in the area.

References:

1878, Ovens & Murray Advertiser

Temple E & Lloyd D, A History of the Kiewa Valley, p. 81 - 91

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

4.5 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns & cities.

4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia.

Description

Physical Description

The hall is of utilitarian design and construction, and its scale reflects the farming community that it serves. It is typical of modest community halls built by small farming communities throughout the State. The building is rectangular in plan with a covered porch addition. The hall is timber framed and clad with weatherboards. It has a gable roof clad with corrugated iron. The windows are aluminium louvres and there is a rectangular timber vent in the gable.

The porch is a later addition and it has been constructed on a concrete slab. It has a skillion roof and is clad with composite fibreboard planks.

Physical Condition

Good

Usage / Former Usage

Mid 1900s - present: Community Hall

Intactness

The condition is good and its integrity is fair. The modifications including the porch should be considered as part of the evolution of a rural public facility that has followed the spare utilitarian design and construction methods of the original building.

Recommended Management

Important to maintain existence of hall as marker of local farming community of Upper Gundowring, even where future use may alter. Allow external and internal modifications that facilitate continued use as a public hall, but preserve external aspects if use alters in the future (ie if building no longer required as a public hall).

Comparative Analysis

Small, modest community halls are common in small rural towns and communities across Victoria. Alpine Shire has a number of halls that today are the only remaining community infrastructure to mark the localities of once



larger communities eg Freeburgh, Gapsted, Happy Valley and Mudgegonga.

Upper Gundowring has never been a large community, but the hall continues to mark the existence of the local farming community, and serve as a focal point for community identity.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Upper Gundowring is a small rural community in the Kiewa Valley, which began with land selection in the late 1800s. The community once supported a school, which was closed in 1953, students being bussed to the larger town of Kiewa. The Upper Gundowring Hall is a small building of utilitarian design and construction that has played an important role in maintaining a strong sense of community in Upper Gundowring. Built circa mid 1900s, the weatherboard building has had several modifications, including the porch. These should be considered as part of the evolution of a rural public facility that has followed the spare utilitarian design and construction methods of the original building.

How is it significant?

The Upper Gundowring Hall is of historical and social significance to the rural community of the Kiewa Valley in the Alpine Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Upper Gundowring Hall is historically and socially significant to the Alpine Shire as the only surviving piece of public infrastructure that marks the existence of the local farming community. The hall has served as a focal point for the local community for many years.

Assessment Against Criteria

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

Recommendations 2007

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Incorporated Plan	-

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT



ALPINE SHIRE

Aboriginal Heritage Place

No



HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

name:	Bonegilla Greek Orthodox Church, former	File No:	AS0352
Address:	Quirk Lane GUNDOWRING		
Place Type:	Church, Hall Public		
Citation Date:	2007	Significance Level:	Local



Bonegilla Greek Orthodox Church, former

Recommended Heritage Protection

VHR -

HI -

PS -



History and Historical Context

Bonegilla Migrant Reception and Training Centre opened in 1947 in part of the Bonegilla army camp, built to accommodate Australian troops at the start of WWII, and became Australia's largest centre for migrants. Over 24 years it housed 320,000 migrants from 31 different ethnic backgrounds. The centre provided accommodation for migrants who had received either assistance or free passage to Australia and in return migrants provided labour for projects such as the Snowy Mountain Hydro Electric Scheme. At its peak occupancy in 1950 Bonegilla housed 7,700 people in huts and 1,600 in tents.

The reception and training centre at Bonegilla had 24 separate accommodation blocks. Each block comprised several long huts arranged around a central kitchen and dining area, with showers, a laundry and pit latrines. The corrugated iron huts were typical Army huts and were unlined.

The former Greek Orthodox Church was situated in Block 22 at Bonegilla, and is a typical Bonegilla hut both in its design and construction. It is a timber-framed building clad with corrugated iron and has a corrugated iron roof. The construction of these buildings was relatively light and this has meant that they were easily transported to other locations. Many of the buildings have been relocated to many parts of north eastern Victoria. They have generally been re-used as halls, some became farm buildings such as shearing sheds.

Of particular importance is the former use of this building as a Greek Orthodox Church and its associated timber carvings to the doors. The doors were carved by Spiro Lyras who arrived from Greece in the early 1950s. He sponsored his brother Alek who joined him at Bonegilla in November 1956. The brothers worked on the garbage collection. Spiro went to work on the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electricity Scheme. The brother ended up living at Canberra and working for the Commonwealth Department of Supply.

The Bonegilla west buildings, including Block 22, were disposed of in piecemeal fashion from 1971 up until the construction of the new Latchford Barracks in 1980, and the church was removed in this period. The precise date of removal of the building to the Gundowring Recreation Reserve has not been ascertained. The building was restumped and repaired, and a verandah added to the front. At a later time a small extension was added to the rear of the building, extending the existing roofline. The building has served the Gundowring community to the present day.

References:

Anna Robbins (Research and Text), 2000, From the Steps of Bonegilla, Bonegilla Migrant Reception & Training Centre 1947 - 1971, Albury Regional Museum Albury 2640

Freeman Leeson Architects & Ruth Daniell, 1996, Block 19 Bonegilla Conservation Management Plan, Unpub. Report prepared for the Australian Heritage Commission

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

2.4 Migrating to seek opportunity

4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns & cities.

Description

Physical Description

The hall which was a Greek Orthodox Church is a typical Bonegilla hut both in its design and construction. It is a timber framed building that has been clad with corrugated iron and it has a corrugated iron, gabled roof. The construction of these buildings was relatively light and this has meant that they were easily transported to other locations. The original part of the building measures 9.40m by 5.75m. A portico has been added to the front of the building and enclosed decking to the rear. The rear addition extends the original roofline.



Of particular importance is the former use of this building - a Greek Orthodox Church and its associated timber carvings to the doors. These carvings consist of four stars in the top panel of each double door, and in three panels set above the doors, a central Latin/Roman cross and three stars in each side panel. The doors themselves have five panels each - horizontal strip panels are at top, centre and bottom, and only the topmost panels have stars (photo of Alek Lyras beside the doors in 1950s shows stars in all these horizontal panels - "From the Steps of Bonegilla", 2000, p17). The two larger panels on each door have vertical lath decoration.

Physical Condition

Good

Usage / Former Usage

c1940 - late 1940s: army building

Late 1940s - early 1950s: migrant camp building

early 1950s - ? (pre 1971): Greek Orthodox Church

1970s - present: Community hall (Rec Reserve)

Intactness

Integrity fair - has additions; intactness good.

Recommended Management

Retain existing form and preserve existing original materials, particularly the carved double entry doors and panels above. Internal alterations exempt.

Comparative Analysis

While many relocated buildings from the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre exist in north east Victoria, the Gundowring Rec Reserve hall stands out because of the strong social connections of its former use as a Greek Orthodox Church, and its special relationship to both Greek Orthodox migrant congregations and Alek Lyras who carved the doors.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The former Greek Orthodox Church now the Gundowring Hall originally came from the Bonegilla Migrant Reception and Training Centre. It is a typical Bonegilla hut both in its design and construction. It is a timber framed building that has been clad with corrugated iron and it has a gabled, corrugated iron roof. In the camp, the building was used by migrants as a Greek Orthodox Church. The doors were carved by Spiro Lyras who arrived from Greece in the early 1950s. After 1971, redundant buildings were disposed of piecemeal, and the former church was relocated to Gundowring Recreation Reserve. It has served the local Gundowring community since that time.

How is it significant?

The former Greek Orthodox Church now the Gundowring Hall is of historical, social and architectural significance to the Alpine Shire.

Why is it significant?

The former Greek Orthodox Church now the Gundowring Hall is historically and socially significant for its strong associations to the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre, and the Greek Orthodox migrant congregations who used it. Post WWII migrants played an important role in the development of the Alpine Shire. The building has



architectural and social significance as a representative example of Army/migrant huts of the era, but more importantly for the unusual carved doors and decorated panels, made by Greek migrant Spiros Lyras as a poignant personal and religious expression in an otherwise regimented and impersonal environment.

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Aboriginal Heritage Place	No