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Name: Hardwick House
Status: Provisionally Registered
Tier: State

THR ID Number: 12040
Municipality: Southern Midlands Council
Date Listed: 10-April-2013

Boundary:

Location Addresses

2495 Colebrook RD, , Colebrook 7027 TAS

Title References

123549/1

Property Id

3606737



Hardwick House as an operating flour mill
Private collection



General view of complex
©DPIPWE 2021



Eastern facade, Hardwick House
©DPIPWE 2018



Hardwick House from the south, showing modern addi
©DPIPWE 2021



Old flour mill doorway, Hardwick House
©DPIPWE 2021



Shearing shed, Hardwick House
©DPIPWE 2021



Timber barn or granary, Hardwick House
©DPIPWE 2021



Shearing shed, Hardwick House
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Setting: Hardwick House is in the Coal River Valley near Colebrook, southern Midlands. It stands on the bank of Jerusalem Creek and fronts onto Colebrook Road. The creek feeds into the Craighourne Dam, the irrigation project which borders the property. Rows of mature green European plantings serving as windbreaks on both sides of the creek, along the road and between paddocks on the Hardwick property contrast with the dry pasture and hills. Shearing sheds, stockyards and other farm buildings contribute to the rural setting. The Main Line Railway between Hobart and Launceston passes through the property, within 400 metres of Hardwick House itself.

Description: Hardwick House includes a nineteenth-century stone mill building, associated additions, outbuildings and structures. The former mill building is of unusually refined architectural presentation for a flour mill although it has the same basic form as other steam-powered flour mills. It also has twentieth-century additions. The clue to its former use is the asymmetrical window openings on the ground floor of its eastern facade.

Features of high historical significance:

The **historic original building (c1857)**, a two-storey symmetrical sandstone building with a concrete tile hipped roof, boxed eaves and a corniced chimney. The first floor has four identical double-hung arched sash windows on the eastern elevation. The ground floor differs in having asymmetrical fenestration, with two double-hung arched windows, a door and a larger segmental window which once served as a vehicular entrance/exit to/from the flour mill. The northern and southern elevations have double-hung sash windows on both floors. There are rusticated stone blocks around each window and door and rusticated quoins at each corner of the building. A string course divides the storeys on three sides of the building. All elevations apart from the front are rendered. Aside from the one original chimney, there are three later red brick chimneys serving the two early rooms which protrude from the back of the building. One room is likely to have been the kitchen, the other, smaller room the dairy. There is a six-panelled blackwood door with fanlight and a stone and concrete porch in the front elevation of the building (Corney 2019, pp.3 and 13).

A concrete path connects the front door to the front gate set in a mid-twentieth-century fence. (Corney 2019, pp.11–19). Water tanks and an outdoor toilet were added to the back of the building in the twentieth century.

Within the building there is little fabric that is verifiably original or of early date. Possible surviving original features include window sills and plastered window reveals. Intrusive twentieth-century features include a modern stone fireplace with oil heater, a timber stairwell to the second storey and a sandstone arch between rooms. Several internal doors are non-original (Corney 2019, pp. 11–19). An old well, now filled-in, is located within the building, a hearth and chimney being established above it.

Features of contributory significance:

The **garage and workshop (converted stable)**, created c1946 out of a c1857 sandstone-walled stable building by bricking up windows and placing concrete bricks on top of the original random rubble walls. It has a flagstone floor and a gabled roof which retains its shingles under the concrete tiles. The garage and workshop were converted to monastic cells c2020. While the external appearance of this building is mid twentieth century, the intact interior elements still demonstrate the earlier use as a stable.

2. The large, c1905 timber **shearing shed** with a gabled, corrugated iron roof and a c1950 addition.

Features of low heritage significance include:

3. The remaining **twentieth-century additions** to the main house. These consist of a rusticated concrete brick **single-storey house** attached to the rear of the original building, with a concrete-tile, hipped roof.

4. The c1905 gabled **timber barn or granary** with sliding doors, designed for the easy loading of produce onto a flat tray vehicle. This building was moved to the property c1950 (Corney 2019, p.35).

5. The remaining outbuildings, including a c1950 timber **loading hopper with silo** (Corney 2019, p.35), plus the recently relocated **former St Leonards Church**.

6. The **rendered stone yard wall with coping stones** which is a twentieth-century addition to the property.

Archaeological potential

The site of the original timber farmhouse and associated outbuildings is unknown (Corney 2019, p.10), but the filled-in well under Hardwick House may have served a previous house on the same or a similar footprint to the present building. **The registered area of Hardwick House** may include surface and subsurface structures, ruins and deposits that have the potential to contribute to an understanding of the spatial configuration, functioning and evolution of the property during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These resources may include:

- Buildings, outbuildings and huts (their design, materials, construction methods),
- incomplete and ruinous buildings and masonry walls,
- structures (including fences, walling, possible sawpits, lime kilns, brick pits, water distribution infrastructure etc.),

- gardens, remnant plantings and hedges,
- modified topography, and
- sub-surface remains and deposits including those associated with buildings and structures that are no longer extant, ceiling, wall and floor cavities of extant buildings, cesspits, privies, refuse piles and scatters.

History:

Hardwick House is located within the country of the Oyster Bay nation (Ryan 2012, p.15), being part of a landscape managed and kept open using fire by Aboriginal people before European occupation. Thousands of years of Aboriginal land management and about 200 years of European occupation are imprinted on the landscape in the form of open hills, grasslands and paddocks created by regular burning and stock grazing.

In October 1836, on the eve of his departure from Van Diemen's Land (as Tasmania was known until 1856), Lieutenant-Governor George Arthur officially took possession of more than 3000 acres at Jerusalem (later Colebrook) acquired on his behalf by his private secretary William Thomas Parramore (conveyances 2/230, 231 and 233). Arthur appointed Parramore to manage his large land holdings in the colony during his absence (Young 2019, p.1) and, accordingly, in November 1837 Parramore sold much of Arthur's Jerusalem Estate to George Stokell, including a 766-acre parcel (conveyance 2/1266). Hardwick House was part of this parcel.

English-born Stokell (1787–1874) was a remarkably enterprising free immigrant who established himself at Rokeby House (THR#11941) on the Clarence Plains, but his connection to the Hardwick Mill was confined to conveying the land on which it would be built to his son John Stokell (1821–63) and probably naming the property. The complex terms of settlement for the 766 acres, including George Stokell's mortgage to Sir George Arthur, only released the land to John Stokell in October 1853 (conveyance 3/9875). It is believed that by then a timber farmhouse and accompanying outbuildings stood on the property, none of which survive today. Their location is unknown (Corney 2019, p.10).

John Stokell opens a wood-fired flour mill

In the 1850s Victoria was a major export market for Van Diemen's Land grain and flour. The Coal River Valley was particularly suited to wheat growing, having ranked with Pittwater and Clarence Plains as 'the granary of Van Diemen's Land' (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.122). It is possible that, having endured high flour prices at the Victorian gold rushes as a digger in 1852, John Stokell returned to Van Diemen's Land with a determination to exploit the Victorian demand, but if that was the case he missed his opportunity by taking too long to establish his mill. Stokell appears to have commissioned the mill c1857 (Young 2019, pp.5–6). The year 1860 represents the high point of the Tasmanian four-milling industry in terms of the number of mills in operation, but by then Victoria was producing its own flour and did not need the Tasmanian product (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.16).

It is also possible that Stokell simply aimed to meet the local demand for flour (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.132). Either way, he commissioned a mill building which included a five-room miller's quarters. Stokell installed an eight-horsepower portable steam engine with an enlarged firebox to allow the mill boiler to be fired using timber instead of coal. The mill also featured a portable saw bench with circular saws, presumably used to cut up the firewood ('For sale' 1863). While eschewing coal may have saved money, depletion of the local timber supply would have gradually increased costs as timber had to be carted further and further to the site. The continued burning of wood to heat the boilers is suggested by the statement 'There is an abundance of the fuel in the neighbourhood' in an 1870 'for sale' advertisement for the mill ('For sale by private contract' 1870). Ironically, the Coal River valley had its own coal, which was judged by at least one user as 'superior coal to the Newcastle for steam purposes' ('The Jerusalem coal' 1876).

Henrietta Stokell continues in a declining industry

The name Hardwick seems to have been applied to the property for the first time in 1863, soon after John Stokell's death. It was probably named by his father George Stokell after the estate near his native village in Durham, England (Young 2019, p.9). By then the property had passed to George Stokell's eldest child Henrietta Stokell, who found millers to lease the mill. Several failed efforts to sell the mill suggest that, at a time of rationalisation of the Tasmanian flour-milling industry, it was not a profitable operation for either miller or owner ('For sale by private contract' 1870; 'Preliminary notice' 1874; 'HARDWICK FLOUR MILLS' 1880).

Competition for trade with the only nearby mill, at Jerusalem Park, was possibly the least of their problems. Tasmanian flour producers may have benefited from ruinous local wheat prices but not from the poor local harvests of the early 1870s. By then mainland tariffs effectively excluded Tasmanian flour from intra-colonial trade, confining Tasmanian producers to a local market (Townesley, pp.35-46).

Improved transport infrastructure, especially the arrival of the Main Line Railway in 1876, reduced the competitive advantage of rural flour millers by allowing wheat growers to get better prices for their produce at larger Hobart and Launceston mills (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.17). Additionally, rural areas lost population to the cities at this time, perhaps the result of both an agricultural downturn and the new availability of efficient transport ('The census returns' 1881). The conversion of larger mills to more efficient roller technology from about 1885 also hastened the decline of small mills (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.17). Henrietta Stokell probably noticed the advent of Henry Brock's Campania Mill (THR#5413) at this time, a nearby country mill bearing a striking resemblance to her own externally but featuring far more efficient technology.

Some rural flour millers like David Ritchie and Thomas Affleck in the north and William Gibson in the south

prospered by re-establishing themselves in Launceston and Hobart respectively, but many other small rural mills simply shut down. Things didn't improve after Federation, when Tasmanian flour proved uncompetitive with the mainland product and the local strain of wheat proved inferior to that grown elsewhere (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.18; editorial, *Examiner* 1927).

The mill is decommissioned

The Hardwick Mill appears to have ceased operation before 1903, when the separate 2-acre site of the mill was recorded on the assessment roll as 'old mill & dwelling'. It is believed that around this time the milling machinery was dismantled and removed (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.132). A portable steam engine could easily be removed when redundant.

After this, the disused mill became part of a large wool-growing, mixed farming property. Improvements made on the farm, including the building of a large shearing shed, increased the property's rateable value (Young 2019, p.12). In 1921 Henrietta Stokell sold the Hardwick property to Leslie Reynolds (conveyance 15/3276). Forty years of timber cutting to feed the mill boiler had already diminished the vegetation around the mill site, and Reynolds cleared the little that remained (Corney 2019, p.7).

Conversion of the mill to a house

In about 1946 Leslie Reynolds had the former mill/miller's quarters building converted into a residence for his son Claude Reynolds (Young 2019, p.13), who apparently renamed it Brooklyn (Corney 2019, p.8). The enclosed rear verandah was demolished to make way for a single-storey extension to the back of the building. Existing stable outbuildings were converted into a garage and workshop. It was probably at this time that the original vehicular doorway to the mill in the eastern facade was converted into a wide, segmented window. An old well was filled in, with a hearth and chimney being established above it. After Charles Headlam bought the property in 1974, a stone and concrete porch and a six-panelled door were added to the front elevation of the building (Corney 2019, pp.3 and 13).

Comparative analysis: steam flour mills

Hardwick House has the same basic exterior form of some other former steam flour mills, that is, a multi-storey rectangular building which incorporates both the mill and miller's quarters. The Old Emerald Mill (THR#5156, two-storey) and Affleck's Old Flour Mill (THR#5153, four-storey) at Longford, the Crown Mill (THR#3923, four-storey) in Launceston and Bowerbank (THR#4760, three-storey) at Deloraine demonstrate the same basic form, the only major differences being that Hardwick House has a hipped roof instead of a gable and has a more architecturally refined exterior than the others.

Cassidy & Preston in their rating of the 55 surviving historic Tasmanian flour mill sites suggested that Hardwick House was reasonably significant (Cassidy & Preston 2000, p.249). They rated Hardwick 3 for age, 3 for the condition of the building (meaning that it had undergone considerable modification since being used as a flour mill), 0 for power source, drive machinery and ancillary equipment, giving it a rating of 6 overall for heritage significance. That rating put it in the middle of the list of 55 sites. It ranked lower than 20 surviving mills and above seventeen others.

Former Tasmanian steam mills are uncommon, with only 21 surviving. The significance of the Hardwick Mill becomes more apparent when only those mills established as steam mills are considered, that is, the mills which operated largely or solely as steam mills. Of those, Cassidy & Preston rated only Bowerbank at Deloraine, the Emerald Mill and Affleck's (Union) Mill at Longford, plus the Crown Mill in Launceston higher (7) than Hardwick House (6). Cassidy & Preston note no other Tasmanian flour mill as being timber-fuelled, making Hardwick House a rare example of a surviving timber-fuelled, steam-powered flour mill with miller's quarters.

Bibliography:

Cassidy, Jill and Preston, Keith 2000, *Thematic study of the Tasmanian flour milling industry*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.

Corney, Graeme 2019, 'Hardwick House, part of the 1830s Jerusalem Estate, 2495 Colebrook Road, Colebrook: conservation management plan'.

Editorial 1927, *Examiner*, 4 August 1927, p.4.

'For sale', *Mercury*, 12 January 1863, p.1.

'For sale by private contract' 1870, *Mercury*, 27 August 1870, p.1.

'HARDWICK FLOUR MILLS' 1880, *Mercury*, 22 October 1880, p.4.

Notre Dame Priory website,

'Preliminary notice' 1874, *Mercury*, 18 April 1874, p.4.

'The census returns' 1881, *Launceston Examiner*, 12 May 1881, p.2.

'The Jerusalem coal' 1876, *Launceston Examiner*, 9 November 1876, p.3.

Townsley, WA 1955, 'Tasmania and the Great Economic Depression, 1858-1872', *Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp.35-46.

Young, David (2019), 'Hardwick House, 2495 Colebrook Road, Colebrook: a history'.

Statement of Significance:
(non-statutory summary)

Hardwick House demonstrates a time when Tasmania, and the Coal River valley in particular, was a significant grain producer. The substantial nature of the flour mill building and the size of the investment suggests confidence in the future of that industry. The mill's conversion to a farmhouse during the twentieth century demonstrates the changing nature of the Midlands economy, with the wheat industry abandoned and pastoralism dominant. This is a rare example of a former timber-fuelled, steam-powered flour mill with attached miller's residence. Hardwick House is likely to have surface and subsurface remains and deposits, that may have the potential to yield information about the design, construction and functioning of the place as a nineteenth-century steam-driven mill and miller's residence as well as the lives and experience of its residents and workers.

Significance:

The Heritage Council may enter a place in the Heritage Register if it meets one or more of the following criteria from the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995:

a) The place is important to the course or pattern of Tasmania's history.

Hardwick House provides evidence of a time when Tasmania, and the Coal River valley in particular, was a significant grain producer. The substantial nature of the building and the size of the investment suggests confidence in the future of that industry. The mill's conversion to a farmhouse during the twentieth century demonstrates the changing nature of the Midlands economy, with the wheat industry abandoned and pastoralism dominant.

b) The place possesses uncommon or rare aspects of Tasmania's history.

Steam-powered flour mills are uncommon in Tasmania. Cassidy & Preston list only 21 primarily steam-driven flour mills remaining in Tasmania, and while they only rate Hardwick House in the middle of these in terms of significance, it is actually a rare example of a timber-fuelled, steam-powered flour mill with miller's quarters.

c) The place has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Tasmania's history.

Hardwick House is likely to have surface and subsurface remains and deposits that have the potential to yield information related to the design, construction and functioning of the place as a nineteenth-century steam-driven mill and miller's residence as well as the lives and experience of its residents and workers.

d) The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of place in Tasmania's history.

Hardwick House demonstrates the principal characteristics of a nineteenth-century steam-powered flour mill with miller's quarters. Hardwick House is a good, relatively intact example of the form and configuration for a steam mill, which was usually a rectangular building two or three stories high with a hipped roof.

e) The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement.

No Data Recorded

f) The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social or spiritual reasons.

No Data Recorded

g) The place has a special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Tasmania's history.

No Data Recorded

h) The place is important in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

No Data Recorded

PLEASE NOTE This data sheet is intended to provide sufficient information and justification for listing the place on the Heritage Register. Under the legislation, only one of the criteria needs to be met. The data sheet is not intended to be a comprehensive inventory of the heritage values of the place, there may be other heritage values of interest to the Heritage Council not currently acknowledged.

Note

1. Lot 1 represents the registered boundary for 'Hardwick House', #12040 on the Tasmanian Heritage Register.
2. Lot 1 is the partial parcel of FR 123549/1 the boundaries of which are marked by a heavy black line.
3. All boundaries are parcel boundaries, details of individual land parcel boundaries may be accessed through the Land Information System Tasmania (LIST).

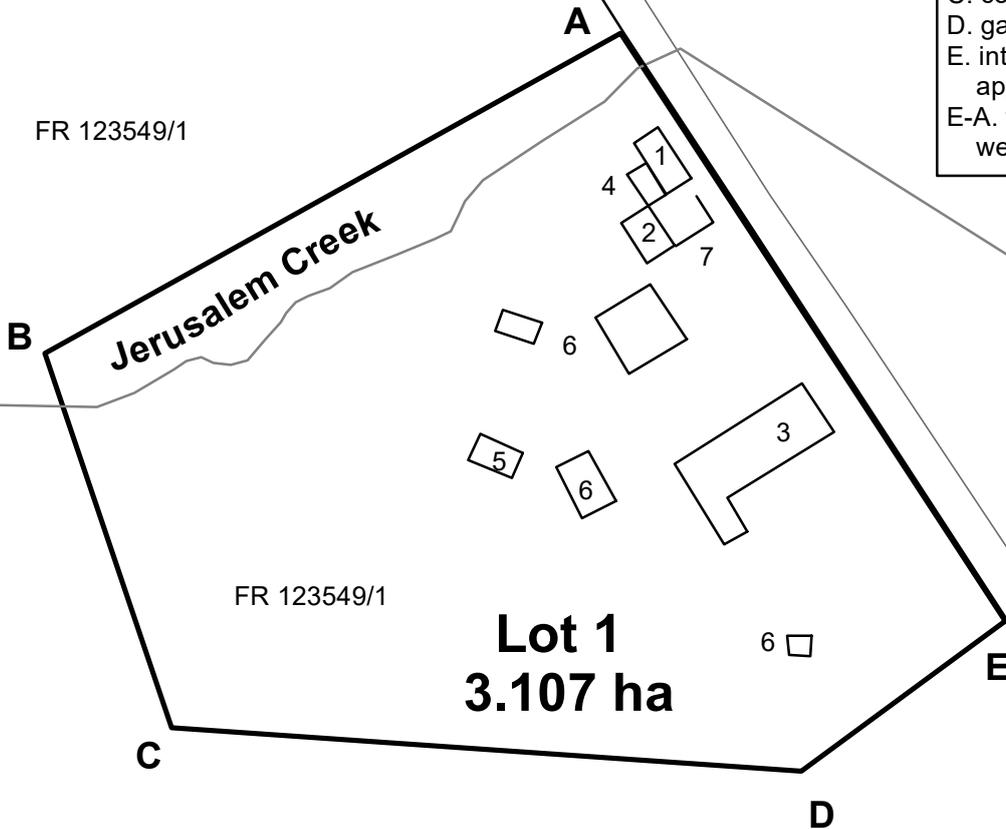
Point & Boundary Description

- A. corner post. A-B. fence line
- B. corner post. B-C. straight line
- C. corner post. C-D. fence line
- D. gate post. D-E. straight line
- E. intersect of straight line & fence approx 530905E, 5289295N
- E-A. fence line running parallel to western edge of Colbrook Rd

FR 123549/1

FR 100489/1

Jerusalem Creek



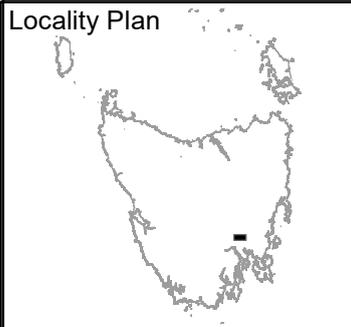
FR 123549/1

Lot 1
3.107 ha

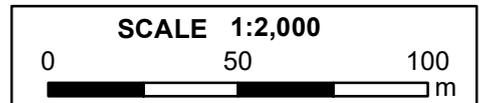
FR 100489/1

Colebrook Road

FR 123549/1



Key	
1.	Hardwick House
2.	Garage & workshop (converted stable)
3.	Shearing shed
4.	Twentieth-century additions to main house
5.	barn/ granary
6.	Remaining outbuildings
7.	Rendered stone yard wall



TASMAP: BAINS - 5228		GRID: MGA94 / ZONE 55		DATUM: AHD		CONTOUR INTERVAL: N/A	
No.	PRODUCTION / AMENDMENT	AUTHORITY	REFERENCE	DRAWN	APPROVED	DATE	 Tasmania
1	Production	THC	12040	AW	A.ROBERTS	24.11.21	

Hardwick House,
2495 Colebrook Road, Colebrook

PREPARED BY
HERITAGE TASMANIA



CENTRAL PLAN REGISTER

p.p. Surveyor General: 

Date Registered: 24.11.21



CPR
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