FLINDERS RANGES HERITAGE SURVEY

Kanyaka Station Ruins — INQE–SR–03

LOCATION

Address	Main Quorn–Hawker Road, via Quorn
Owner(s)	A.G. Hilder, P.O. Box PMB 4, Carrieton
CL Number	CL.1423/26
Local Government Area	Kanyaka/Quorn
AMG Reference	6533–I 449481

State Heritage Status	State Heritage Register — 10192 — 24 July 1980
Other Assessments	National Trust Classified List — 161

Film/Neg Number	9/4, 5, 6
Photographer	P.F. Donovan

Old Kanyaka Station Ruins

DESCRIPTION

The site contains a small cemetery and extensive ruins, many of which have been consolidated. While the area is now a designated tourist spot, the ruins are noted by a historic marker on the main road which indicates that the area was surveyed in 1863.

A stone memorial stands at the entrance to the ruins on which a bronze plaque has been set. The plaque notes:

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
WAS OPENED BY
THE HON. D.J. HOPGOOD,
B.A., PHD, M.P.,
DEPUTY PREMIER,
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING
TRUSTEE OF THE STATE HERITAGE
ON 9 DECEMBER 1987

HISTORY

The Kanyaka ruins, easily seen from a passing car, are the most poignant in the Flinders Ranges. They stand as a sad reminder of the hardships and isolation that country people endured in remote areas, as well as the futility of cutting up pastoral lands into small blocks for agricultural use.

Hugh Proby, third son of the Earl of Carysfort, established the Kanyaka Station and may have had an Occupation Lease in the area before he was granted the Pastoral Leases 117 and 118 on 1 July 1851. He was also granted the 140 square mile crescent shaped lease of Pastoral Lease 74 which became Coonatto Station. However, his plans to develop his leases were cut short when he was drowned crossing the flooded Willochra Creek on 30 August 1852.

After his death, his Kanyaka leases were transferred to John Randell Phillips who set about building up the Kanyaka Station and extending it to about 360 square miles. He reputedly spent about £10,000 on improvements there which included an enormous woolshed and a 16 roomed homestead. In 1857 George Goyder noted that Kanyaka was 'assuming the appearance of a village'. After a few good years his enterprise was so badly affected by the droughts of the mid 1860s that Kanyaka was abandoned for a year. Later in July 1876 the Hundred of Kanyaka was proclaimed with the pastoral station and its lands subject to resumption.

The *Advertiser* of 28 December 1906 related the sad story concerning the cemetery:

> At the back of the old station homestead one can see the little cemetery, the last resting place of one young broken-hearted wife, and of a bright little lad — the only son of the late James Bale — who wandered away from home and perished in the bush. It was a soul-stirring and pathetic moment of many years ago, which evoked deep sympathy for the parents, and brought in men and horses from miles around to scour the ranges and the country side in hopes of finding the little wanderer. When discovered he had passed away, but it was some consolation to know that the end had come peacefully and without any

Old Kanyaka Station Ruins

sign of struggle. The little fellow was lost among the ranges, and the course of his wanderings bore testimony to the invariable habit of children when lost among hills to keep on mounting upward so long as their puny strength holds out.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

The ruins testify to the size and operations of Kanyaka and are one of the southern Finders Ranges best known historical sites. The station ruins were entered in the State Heritage Register on 24 July 1980.

RELEVANT CRITERIA

(a) the ruins demonstrate important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history, particularly that relating to pastoralism;
(g) the ruins have a special association with the life or work of Hugh Proby.

REFERENCES

Advertiser, 28 December 1906 (quote).
Carrieton Centenary Book Committee, *Carrieton in the Gum Creek Country: A story of one hundred years of the Carrieton District, 1878–1978*, Carrieton Centenary Committee, Adelaide, 1978, pp. 6–8, 16–17, 55.
Cockburn, R., *Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia*, Facsimile Edition, Lynton Publications, Blackwood, undated, vol.2, [1927] p. 251.
Department of Environment and Natural Resources, State Heritage Branch — 10192.
Manning, G.H., *Manning's Place Names of South Australia*, G.H. Manning, Adelaide, 1990, p. 63.
McColl, M., *Historic Quorn: a brief history for visitors*, Quorn, 1994.
Meinig, D.W., *On the margins of the good earth: the South Australian wheat frontier, 1869–1884*, Rigby, 2nd edn., Adelaide, 1970, p. 63.
Mincham, H.,*The story of the Flinders Ranges*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1983, p. 60.
National Trust of South Australia file 161.

Site Surveyor P.F. Donovan/J. Donovan **Date(s) of Survey** 4.6.1994

FILM 81 SOUTHERNMOST HOMESTEAD RUINS KANYAKA
NO 3 FROM WEST 10-3-79

FILM 537
No 6

KANYACKA HOMESTEAD

SEPT '82
lothar

FILM 82
NO 1

KANYAKA WOOLSHED AND SHEARERS QUARTERS FROM SOUTHEAST

KANYAKA
10-3-79

FILM 82 VIEW THROUGH KANYAKA WOOLSHED KANYAKA
NO 2 FROM SOUTH 10-3-79

HISTORIC RESERVE
KANYAKA HOMESTEAD - These Ruins are Historic Relics
FLINDERS RANGE PONIES - VISITORS ARE REQUESTED TO WATCH AND
RESPECT
THESE HISTORIC RELICS.
ERECTED BY NORTHERN NATURALISTS SOCIETY

FILM 537
Nº 2-3

KANYACKA HOMESTEAD

SEPT '82
Lothar

FILM 537
No 9

KANYACKA HOMESTEAD

SEPT. '82
Lothar

HISTORIC RESERVE
KANYAKA HOMESTEAD
FLINDERS RANGE DISTRICT

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
Thick stone walls, small windows and verandahs protected the occupants from the heat. Roofs were generally of split timber shakes or corrugated iron. Although we can only guess at the use of many of the rooms, we know that the main building was occupied by John Phillips and his family, and that Phillips used one room as a surgery because there was no doctor in the area.
By 1862, when this photograph was taken, Kanyaka Homestead and its surrounding buildings had taken on the appearance of a small village. Life here was not a lonely existence because many families lived on the station and the homestead was on the main route to the far north of the State.
For many years the formal postal system stopped here and the station office also doubled as a post office. In 1862 some 23 000 letters were received.
Laundry, Pantry & Cellar
Kitchen
Bed Room
Lean-to's
Store & Cellar
Bedroom
Bedroom
Bedroom
Dining Room
Parlour
Bedroom
Surgery Office
Verandah

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
Thick stone walls, small windows and verandahs protected the occupants from the heat. Roofs were generally of split timber shakes or corrugated iron. Although we can only guess at the use of many of the rooms, we know that the main building was occupied by John Phillips and his family, and that Phillips used one room as a surgery because there was no doctor in the area.
By 1862, when this photograph was taken, Kanyaka Homestead and its surrounding buildings had taken on the appearance of a small village. Life here was not a lonely existence because many families lived on the station and the homestead was on the main route to the far north of the State.
For many years the formal postal system stopped here and the station office also doubled as a post office. In 1862 some 23 000 letters were received.
Laundry, Pantry & Cellar
Kitchen
Lean-to's
Store & Cellar
Bedroom
Bedroom
Bedroom
Dining Room
Parlour
Bedroom
Surgery Office
Verandah

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
KANYAKA WATERHOLE
In the language of the original inhabitants of the Kanyaka area 'Kanyaka' means 'a piece of rock':
Kanya = stone, rock
-aka = (suffix) a piece of
The name is obviously a reference to the rock which is such a striking feature of this place. The significance of Kanyaka to Aboriginal people lay in the fact that it was (and still is) a permanent source of water and therefore an important camp site. The adjacent Kanyaka homestead took its name from this waterhole.
(Source: Consultant Linguist, Adnyamathanha Language and Cultural Project.)
Kanyaka Homestead Historic Site is protected by State legislation and is included in the Register of State Heritage Items. The site is also private property and the waterhole is still used for watering stock. Please respect the area.
For further information about this site contact the
State Heritage Branch
Department of Environment and Planning
55 Grenfell Street
ADELAIDE
or
District Council of Kanyaka/Quorn
QUORN

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
This substantial woolshed is a reminder that in 1864 some 40 000 sheep were shorn on Kanyaka Station. The layout of the woolshed reflects the method of shearing.
Sheep to be shorn were herded into the pens through the large doorway at the Eastern end. The shearers, each of whom had their own 'stand', would take sheep from the central pens, shear, and put them into separated outer pens. The sheep were then counted for the 'tally' and the shearers were paid accordingly.
The wool was taken from the shearer's stand, classed and then pressed into bales in the bale well. The bales were stored in the Dumping Room to await dispatch to Port Augusta by bullock drays.
The woolshed was constructed with local stone and mortar made from local limestone. The floor boards, roofing timbers and pens were constructed from the river red gums growing in the creek.

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
These extensive ruins are a legacy of the great pastoral sheep runs that marked the early settlement of South Australia.
In 1851 Hugh Proby, the third son of the Earl of Carysfort, took up the leases that were the beginning of Kanyaka Run. After his death in 1852—he drowned crossing the flooded Willochra Creek—his leases were taken over and enlarged by partners Alexander Grant and John Phillips. It was John Phillips who settled here and built the homestead, woolshed and surrounding dwellings during the mid 1850s.
In these early years, the Kanyaka Run grew to over 360 square miles in area and carried up to 50 000 sheep with up to seventy men and their families living at the homestead.
During the widespread and devastating drought from 1864-67, 20 000 sheep were lost and the Kanyaka Run was temporarily abandoned, the surviving sheep being driven to the Coorong area south of Adelaide.
The droughts of the mid 1860s heralded the end of these great pastoral runs, and although Phillips returned in 1867 with 10 000 sheep and fifteen single men the run was eventually divided into smaller holdings, and the homestead was finally abandoned by Phillips in 1888.
The Kanyaka Homestead Historic Site is on the Register of State Heritage Items. The site is also private property. Please respect the area.
For further information about this site contact the
State Heritage Branch
Department for Environment and Planning
75 Grenfell Street
ADELAIDE
or
District Council of Kanyaka/Quorn
QUORN

KANYAKA HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
Carpenter's Shop and Carshed
If you look closely at the stone walls you can see two different structures—the stone walling that enclosed the garden and homestead area, and the stone walls of the building. All walls were bedded in mortar, made from the local limestone.
Dry stone walling was also used to mark boundaries or paddocks—labour was cheap, stones lay everywhere and timber was scarce. If you look closely at the far hills you will see the remains of dry stone boundary walls.
A Ground Plan of the Homestead
Former Well
A.. Dining Room
B.. Parlour
C
D
E
Bedrooms
F.. Lean-to Store
G.. Kitchen
H.. Bedroom
J.. Laundry, Pantry & Cellar
K.. Store & Cellar
L.. Bedroom
M.. Back Kitchen-Later Bedroom
N.. Surgery
O.. Office
T.. Toilet
Verandah
Gate
Cobblestones
Lean-to
Dry Stone Wall
You Are Here