

## **'Miners Right/John Pearce' House**

### **Statement of Significance, November 2021**

<b>Heritage Place:</b>	89 Magpie Street, Golden Point	<b>PS ref no:</b>	HO228
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#### **What is significant?**

The Miner's Right/John Pearce House at 89 Magpie Street, Golden Point is significant. The house, built c1890-91, as well as the north-east side verandah and the (formerly) detached kitchen, is significant.

Additions and alterations made after John Pearce's occupation, which ended in 1924, are not significant. The metal-clad garage is not significant.

#### **How is it significant?**

The house is of historical, including associational, and representative significance to the City of Ballarat.

#### **Why is it significant?**

Historically, it illustrates the importance of mining in this area. Built in 1891-92 on a miner's right for miner William Stephens, the weatherboard Victorian Italianate house is located in the areas of Golden

Point and Mount Pleasant, areas that were the sites of successive waves of intense alluvial mining from the 1850s followed by quartz reef mining from the 1860s.

At the time of its construction, the residence was located within a productive goldmining landscape and surrounded by other miners' residences built on miner's rights. (Criterion A)

The house is representative of houses built on miner's rights and for mine managers during the late nineteenth century. While such houses were once common in mining areas such as the Golden Point/Mount Pleasant area, only a handful survive today. Such houses ranged from tiny miner's cottages, through mid-sized Italianate houses, to highly detailed dwellings and grand mine owner's residences. The house at 89 Magpie Street illustrates the medium-sized type. (Criterion D)

It has significant associations with John Pearce, the son of John Pearce and Jane Bartle of Crowan, Cornwall, who immigrated to Victoria in the early 1850s. The extended Pearce family were active in mining, with John Pearce's (the elder) brothers, Isaiah and James Pearce, also both from Cornwall, establishing a 24-head quartz crushing battery on Sinclair's Hill in Ballarat. John Pearce (junior), the owner of the subject building, was the mining manager of the North Woah Hawp Canton and the New Normanby quartz mining companies, both located in East Ballarat. Pearce knew the geology of East Ballarat well and was very successful in his mine operations. The North Woah Hawp mine, established in 1882, was originally financed by Chinese merchants in Melbourne and employed both Chinese and Australian miners. Pearce was manager of the North Woah Hawp from 1909, and of the New Normanby, established in 1885, from 1891. His uncle, Isaiah Pearce, was a director of both mines. John Pearce continued as mining manager of the New Normanby in 1915 and the North Woah Hawp in 1916 and held the leases to both mines in the latter year, shortly before they finally closed. (Criterion H)

The Pearce family were representative of the significant Cornish migration in the nineteenth century to places such as Australia. Because of their mining knowledge, Cornish immigrants were often employed as managers of mines in Victoria as the alluvial rushes ended and mining technology developed. The Ballarat area received many immigrants from Cornwall, who tended to congregate in particular areas, including at Mount Pleasant/Golden Point, as well as in Sebastopol. (Criterion H)

The house also has significant associations with Peter and Janet Cuffley in 1972, who owned from 1972 to 1976. Peter Cuffley was appointed the first Curator of History at Sovereign Hill in 1972, and is now a well-known social historian and author with an interest in domestic architecture, art, antiques, traditional gardens and Australiana, and has authored a number of books on Australian cultural and social history. (Criterion H)

## **Primary Source**

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*Miners Right John Pearce House Heritage Citation* (Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd., 2021)