

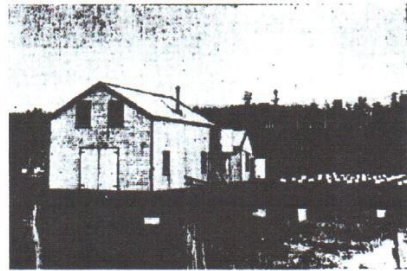
**R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory,
 Apiary, Nuclei and Residence**

THR Identification Number: **11248**

**Corner of 25 Pioneer Drive and 2 McNeill Street and 26 Pioneer Drive,
 Mole Creek 7304**

Status Provisionally Registered

Municipality: Meander Valley Council

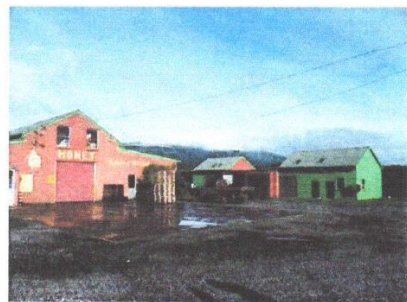


"A Successful Apiary in Tasmania – Factory buildings and hives at Mole Creek, the headquarters of a prosperous industry, established by a returned soldier, Mr R Stephens".

The Mercury 16.8.1929, p.10.



R. Stephens Factory and adjacent garaging with the Western Tiers in the distance. © DPIPWE July 09.



R. Stephens Factory with adjacent historic outbuildings. © DPIPWE July 09.



Ian Stephens outside store. © DPIPWE July 09.

Location:

<i>PID</i>	6267400	<i>CPR No.</i>	
	6267590		
	2579319		
<i>Title:</i>	103662/1	<i>AGD East</i>	450900
	148335/1		450908
	141988/1		450815
<i>UPIN</i>	FGW82	<i>AGD North</i>	5399324
	CXH96		5399080
	FGW89		5399183

Setting:

R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory consists of a group of weatherboard, corrugated iron and brick-clad industrial sheds with gabled, corrugated iron roofs on a large open corner allotment in central Mole Creek, a rural town on the main arterial road for tourists to access Cradle Mountain. There is a substantial cypress hedge to the western side of the buildings. Although set well back from the road the honey factory is a key element in the main street of Mole Creek, and is a well-known landmark with prominent signage. Vacant land surrounding the buildings is used for nuclei (Queen Bee breeding). The road and parallel former railway separate the factory from the residence of the owners. The distinctive Arts and Crafts styled, stone, post-war residence is surrounded by mature introduced species and is a fine example of twentieth century domestic architecture uncharacteristic for Mole Creek. The rear of the garden extends to Limestone Creek and has rural views. Both the factory and the residence have sweeping views of the Western Tiers.

Description:

Factory & Apiary

R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory consists of a group of weatherboard sheds, some of which are brick clad, with gabled corrugated iron roofs, on a large open allotment occupying two titles in central Mole Creek. A c1970s brick façade covers the front of the largest sheds. The original buildings are still evident within the enlarged building. The earliest c1920 timber cottage with a brick chimney is evident at the rear and has been subsumed into the building and later reclad with bricks in 1959. The main two-storey section of the factory was built in 1925 and was extended at the front in 1948. This middle section contains the original staircase and a modern staircase. The western wing was added to the complex in 1970 and the eastern wing, which is the packing room in 2011, was completed in 1960. This section also contains the sales and display area at the front.

To the western side of the main building is another set of three buildings co-joined over time but separated as a precaution against fire. The distinctive green-painted timber building at the front was built in 1930



Rows of Nuclei (Queen bee breeding) at the rear of R. Stephens Honey Factory and cypress hedge. © DPIPWE July 09.



Front view of Stephen's residence from Pioneer Road. © DPIPWE July 09. (100 D x 140)



View of factory from the front of Stephen's residence. © DPIPWE July 09.



Portico of residence. © DPIPWE July 09.

and was used as the office and 'old Store'. The green colour of the buildings is replicated as the company colour for the transport fleet, also housed on site in large modern garages to the western side of the main factory. Original fittings and bee equipment, including records for the bee pedigrees used for bee breeding spanning more than 90 years, are still utilised in this building, and are considered of high heritage value.

The factory site is significant for its extent of uses over a long period of time for every stage of honey production including hive making, honey processing, record storage and packaging, as well as the transportation, marketing and wholesaling of honey. The continual use of these activities on the one site since 1920 is reflected in the expansion of the buildings as the processes were industrialised with modern equipment and the business prospered.

Signage

The corporate logo and signage for the R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory is significantly displayed on the front façade of the building advertising the brands of honey produced on site and also the founder of the business. Additionally, there is a large sign displayed at the entrance of the main driveway advertising the business.

Landscaping

There is an avenue of introduced deciduous trees and hedges lining the main entrance to the industrial site, and sweeping well maintained lawns across the site. There is a substantial mature cypress hedge to the western side of the buildings. There is some evidence of the private railway siding used by the factory adjacent to the road on the site of the former railway line.

Apiaries and Nuclei

Stephens' apiaries are located across Tasmania and the nuclei (Queen bee breeding) are located on surrounding paddocks adjacent to the factory. The apiaries and nuclei contribute to the significance of the overall site as an iconic tourist landmark.

Residence, apartment and garden

The owner's residence was designed by IG Anderson and built by the owners in close proximity to the factory over the main road to allow greater flexibility between private and business activities. The axis between private and public spaces remains uninterrupted and intact. The original 'mock' Arts and Crafts styled home is built from local un-coursed stones in a random rubble style. Originally the hipped roof was shingled but is now slate. At the rear there is a skillion dormer window. The windows are multi-paned with double-hung sashes. The front entrance of the house has a distinctive third-dome bracketed canopy constructed of Ferro-cement. There are two tall brick chimneys.

The rear modern apartment was converted during the initial building stage from the originally planned garage and is now used as an office and visitors' accommodation for the business. In comparison to the traditional form of the house, it has an avant-garde appearance although the un-coursed rubble stone has been retained as a feature on the southern and northern walls and the vertical piers at the rear. Painted vertical boards are used on the walls. The windows are large.

The high-pitched skillion roof of the annex of contrasting modern design



Rear view of main residence. ©DPIPWE July 09.



Rear apartment and storage area under podium lawn. ©DPIPWE July 09.



Podium turf lawn with ha-ha wall. DPIPWE July 09.

was a later development. Utilised as an entertaining area, this semi-carport now connects the two buildings. There are extensive storage sheds at the rear of the garden adjacent to the apartment located under the podium lawn and also beneath the apartment.

The picturesque garden features mature introduced deciduous trees and extensive lawns sweeping back to Limestone Creek at the rear of the block. Small garden beds are located around the main house. The main feature of the garden is the sweeping lawn that forms a turf roof for the storage sheds and acts as a 'ha-ha' wall which provides an uninterrupted rural view from the main house.

<i>Feature Type:</i>	Vernacular
<i>Architectural Style:</i>	Factory: Vernacular House: Post-war Mock Arts & Crafts and Modern
<i>Integrity:</i>	Good
<i>Condition:</i>	Good

Use:

<i>Original or Significant Use(s):</i>	Industrial/ Residential
<i>Current Use(s):</i>	Industrial (Honey Factory)/ Residential



Robert Stephens near Sheffield.
 © I Stephens, Private Collection.

History:

R. Stephens' Apiary at Mole Creek was established by the late Robert Stephens in 1920 and has been continuously operated by his descendants and is now known as the R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory. Commencing as a pre-World War 1 hobby of a few hives it has progressed to a successful apiary business that is a household name throughout Tasmania and also internationally renowned. The Stephens' Honey factory is synonymous with Mole Creek and is arguably an integral part of the development of Mole Creek as a tourist destination. In 2011 the factory produces approximately 35 percent of all Tasmanian honey.

The Stephens family have been active in the community in religious, financial and social spheres and continue to be active in tourism and civic affairs. It also formed a close relationship with the well known architect and artist IG Anderson who designed the domestic building for the Stephens' family as well as the company logo.

Robert Stephens (1896–1977) was the founder of the business, 'R. Stephens Honey'. He was one of six sons of Leonard Stephens, a Methodist missionary stationed at Mole Creek. In 1914 Robert was employed locally as the Mole Creek street lighter



Transporting the honey near Skittleball Plains, Great Lake, c1937. © I Stephens, Private Collection.



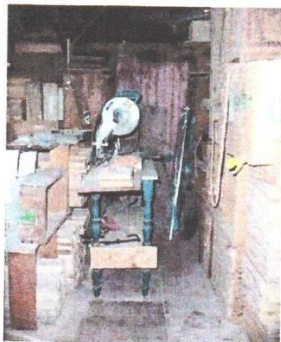
Stephens collecting honey near Paradise. © I Stephens, Private Collection.



Rear view of the Factory & Apiary showing original building (now brick-clad) with original brick chimney. © DPIPWE July 09. *Picture by Clark*



Interior of the original section of the Factory. © DPIPWE July 09.



Interior of 2nd floor of Honey Factory where the honey trays are constructed. © DPIPWE July 09.

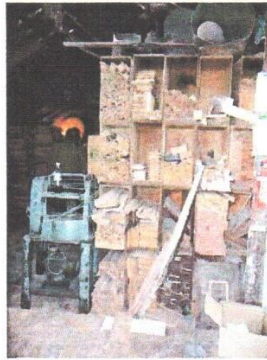
(I. Stephens, PC, 24.05.2011). Stephens was always interested in bees and started a few hives as a hobby. Enlisting in 1916 and described as a 19-year-old labourer, Stephens joined the Tasmanian 19th Reinforcements for the 12th Infantry Battalion as a Private. Fighting in France he was wounded several times and was severely injured at the Battle of the Somme (NAA 1924213). Whilst overseas he managed to undertake some research into bee keeping in France and on his return to Tasmania he expanded his hobby into a business after purchasing 2 acres from T. Clark in 1920 with his Army pension. This is the site of the present apiary and factory (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)).

Stephens sought to improve his queen bee breeding programme by purchasing Golden Italian queens (originally from European stock) from the Pender Brothers in Maitland, NSW in 1925. Individual hive production records were maintained to ensure the best bees were bred. According to the family, the Stephens are "the only commercial beekeepers in Australia to keep meticulous records for breeding purposes" which has contributed to their successful yield and production rates (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)). Originally hives were transported to various locations by horse and spring dray. During the Depression, honey was bottled and sold to shops replacing the kerosene tins that had held sixty pounds of honey usually delivered to farmers (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)). These original tins are still stored on the property today.

A newspaper report celebrated the truly Tasmanian nature of the business in 1933 that is still true today: "A considerable amount of clerical work is entailed in connection with the farm. In the office, filed in alphabetical order, is a record of every hive and every queen. The hives, frames, cases used in marketing the honey are all made at the firm's factory so that the industry is truly Tasmanian" (*Examiner* 24.10.1933: p9).

In 1930 the now famous 'Golden Bee' label was introduced (R Stephens History). In 1951 I. G. Anderson, a Hobart Architect, designed the "'Golden Nectar' Real Leatherwood Honey' label which has since been updated but remains basically the same (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)). Edith Stephens assisted in the design (Stephens, I., PC 2011). This honey remains the favourite of Tasmanians vindicated by a recent nomination to the National Trust Icon Awards. Leatherwood honey is unique to Tasmania and is the main export honey for the company. By 1953 Stephens had 500 hives across Tasmania increasing to 750 hives in 1968, producing leatherwood, blackberry and clover honey (*Examiner* 14.2.1968:p.27 and QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)).

Today the firm employs people to harvest the honey from the West Coast wilderness and across Tasmania. The factory contains three 70-frame radial extractors, and an automatic uncapping machine (invented by Stephens) extracts 5-6 tonnes of honey per day (Stephens Factory leaflet). The honey is then pumped into stainless steel tanks in the packing room. Honey bottling and labelling are also completed on the factory site. A Recopak machine was installed in 2009, increasing the bottling capacity to 13,000 bottles a day (*Tasmanian Country* 9.4. 2010: p.3). In 2009 the factory exported approximately 40 tonnes of honey to the USA per annum (*In Business Tasmania*, Issue 32, June 2009). In 1993 Stephens Honey exported 34 tonnes of leatherwood honey for the month of March to Germany, Lebanon and the US (*Examiner* 8.4.93). Fifty percent of the produce was sold interstate and 30% locally. Export markets include the USA, Germany, Lebanon, Singapore, Micronesia, Korea and Japan which make up 20% of the produce (Stephens, I., PC 2011). In 1990 the annual production of 250 tonnes of honey came from 1800 hives across the state (*Examiner* 20.9.1967). By 2010 the company worked approximately 2,500 hives and produced 350 tonnes of honey per year contributing to Australia's reputation as one of the largest producers of honey in the world (*In Business*).



Interior of second floor of Honey Factory. © DPIPWE July 09.



Robert Stephens working on pollens. *Examiner* 20.9.1967 p.33.



Original hand-made tins used for bee pedigree information. © DPIPWE July 09.

Medals buzz from bees



Ian and Shirley Stephens with eleven Prizes awarded for their honey. *Sunday Examiner* 25 Sept 1988, p.17.

Stephens Family

In 1929 Robert Stephens married Edith Muriel Drake, a professional stenographer from Hobart. Prior to her marriage, Edith had served as typist and stenographer to Sir John. H. Butters, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Hydro Electric Department in Hobart from 1912 until 1919, and then held the position of confidential stenographer to the manager of the Australian General Electric Company in Melbourne. With her business experience Edith managed the finances and administration of the business. Edith was an active member of the Deloraine Presbyterian Church, inaugural president of the local branch of the CWA, founding member of and Secretary of the Mole Creek Bush Nursing Centre (later District Nursing Centre) and instrumental in the building of the Centre, Secretary of the local Red Cross during World War 2 and a member of the School Parents and Friends during the time of establishing the school (*Advocate* 1969). She was well-known within the local community and highly respected.

Their first and only surviving child, Ian, the owner of the business in 2011, was born in 1930 (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)). Robert Stephens was responsible for getting the electricity supply brought to Mole Creek in 1939. He was local representative on the Deloraine Council for six years, during which time the local water scheme and street lighting was initiated.

Robert continued to research Tasmanian pollens until his death in 1977. This research included detecting pollen varieties from honey samples and was later subsidised by the Australian Honey Board. Research also aided the breeding of bees and the examination of sugar qualities and the types and effects of enzymes and acids straight from the flowers not the honey.

Ian Robert Stephens, the son of Robert and Edith, took over the business of the factory in 1966 and continues to update and expand it. In 1951 the family moved into the present stone house which was built during the off-periods of beekeeping. Ian and Shirley married in 1958 and had four children. In 2011 Shirley is the Sales Manager and their sons Ewan, Neal and Kenneth Stephens, operate the business. Ewan Stephens is the operations manager; Neal Stephens is a bee-keeper and Kenneth Stephens is in charge of the queen bee breeding program.

The Tasmanian Beekeepers Association awarded three members of the Stephens family (namely Robert, Ian and Shirley) Life Memberships in recognition of their outstanding achievements and invaluable service to the State Association and the Australian Honey Industry. The Award of Excellence 2006, one of the highest awards in the Australian Industry, was awarded to Shirley and Ian Stephens by the Australian Honey Bee Industries Council for the provision of outstanding services to the Apiary Industry in Australia (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)).

Robert Stephens was an original member of the Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association and served on the executive from 1950 to 1971. Ian Stephens served on the executive from 1968 and is a life member. He also serves on the Apiary Liaison Committee, is a past president of the Australian Honey Packers' Association and is an executive member of the Australian Honeybee Industry Council (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC)).

Shirley Stephens joined the executive of the Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association in 1994 and served as president for three years until 2003. She remains an executive member. She has served as a delegate and vice-president to the Honey Industry Marketing Forum, vice-president to the Federal Council of Australian Apiarist Association and the Australian Honeybee Industry Council (QVMAG 2005 OH 4 (MC) and Stephens, I., PC, 2011).

*To date
 Modern era*



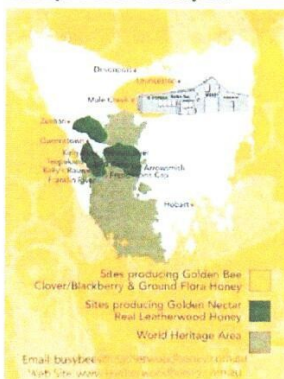
Interior of modern addition of factory. © DPIPWE July 09.



Honey Awards displayed on site at the factory. © DPIPWE July 09.



Marketing and Display area of factory. © DPIPWE July 09.



<http://www.leatherwoodhoney.com.au/>



Mr Ian Stephens outside his home at Pioneer Drive Mole Creek. © DPIPWE July 09.

Iilfe Gordon Anderson, Architect (1890-1963)

The Stephens' family home across the road from the Mole Creek Honey factory was designed by the architect, Iilfe Gordon Anderson, in the late 1940s. According to Robin Grow (President of the Art Deco & Modernism Society of Australia), Anderson "played an important part in the history of Victorian and Tasmanian art and architecture" (Grow, R., 'I G Anderson; Supporting Documentation for Hearing on Lonsdale House, 2009').

Born in South Yarra in 1890, I.G. Anderson moved to Geelong in 1910. Listed as a carpenter in 1912, he later studied architecture at the Gordon Institute of Technology under George King and later at the University of Melbourne Architectural Atelier. Early projects included remodelling of the Grammar School Mansions at the Old Geelong Grammar School. He began designing residential houses in 1917. His first notable commission came in 1919, when he designed the Mildura Club in Mildura, Victoria. During the 1920s his firm was responsible for the designs of many substantial buildings in Geelong, including the Geelong West Town Hall, the 'O'Connell Block' of commercial buildings in Little Malop Street, CML Insurance building and Belcher's Corner building. By 1924, he was associated with the Melbourne architectural firm of Irwin and Stephenson for the design of the Corio Garden Suburb (Grow, R., 2009 and Fleming, R., 'A Forgotten Artist, A Biography of I G Anderson and His Work', Architectural Research Project, 1999). During the 1930s, Anderson's Geelong practice was commissioned for works in Melbourne including Lonsdale House (since demolished). During the Second World War between 1939 and 1945, Anderson served as Chief Architect to the United States Army in Victoria (Grow, R., 2009 and Fleming, R., 1999).

In 1947 Anderson established his practice in Hobart in partnership with his son, Leslie Gordon. Other known examples of his work include: Transport Department Building, Hobart; Hobart Swimming Pool; Lilydale Chalet Hotel (demolished); Richardson's Building, Murray St., Hobart, 1954; the Manhattan café (opened 1955) and the Tattler Theatre; Criterion building, cnr. Criterion & Liverpool Sts., Hobart; Magnet Court Shopping Centre, Sandy Bay; Family home, 78 Nelson Rd., Sandy Bay, 1954; Additions to Hobart Railway Station, 1950s; Blue Hills Motel, Battery Point, Hobart, 1960; Blue Waters Motel, Orford; Motel, Bicheno; Motel, Scamander; Motel Derwent, Berridale; Motel Hobart, Brooker Highway; Motel Marine; 153 Risdon Rd., Hobart ('Waterfront Motel'); Howrah Methodist Church, 1960; Council Chambers, Ulverstone; Broad Arrow café, Port Arthur (demolished); RSL Hall, South Arms; Community Hall, Kempton; Community Hall, Woodsbridge; Motel, Scottsdale; Council Chambers, Glenorchy; remodelling of the Palfreyman's building in Burnie; Tasmanian Tyre Service building, 182 Brisbane St, Launceston and numerous houses in the suburb of Mt. Nelson, Hobart (Grow, R., 2009).

Anderson was also an artist, exhibiting works in Melbourne and Tasmania that included photo-lithographic etchings, watercolours and pencil drawings. Anderson participated in the Sesquicentennial Art Exhibition of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in 1954 and one of his watercolours of 'The reconstruction of Port Arthur in 1856' was purchased by the Tasmanian Art Gallery (Newtown Heritage Study Review, July 2009 – Volume 3). He was honoured with a fellowship to the Royal Society of Arts.

As a fellow of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects (Victorian Chapter) since the 1920s, Anderson later joined the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Tasmanian Chapter). Anderson also became a Fellow and Honorary Treasurer of the Australian Branch of the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors, London, and a member of the Victorian Artists Society and the Tasmanian Artists Society (Fleming, p.16). He served as an Alderman for Hobart Council from 1950-54. During his time as an Alderman, he designed the Hobart City Council Coat of



Illife Gordon Anderson, Architect.
© R. Fleming.

Arms. Anderson was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Architects (London) and a member of the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors (London) (*Mercury* 3 Aug 1963, p.7). He died in 1963 aged 73. His legacy and connection with the R Stephens Honey bee Factory continues with the Stephens' family home and logo.

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<http://www.leatherwoodhoney.com.au/>

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QVMAG, QVM Exhibition files 1952, description of I.G. Anderson and exhibition, Launceston, Tasmania, 1952.

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www.hobartcity.com.au/HCC/STANDARD/1966727246/HOBART_COAT_OF_ARMS.html

ASSESSED HISTORIC CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance:

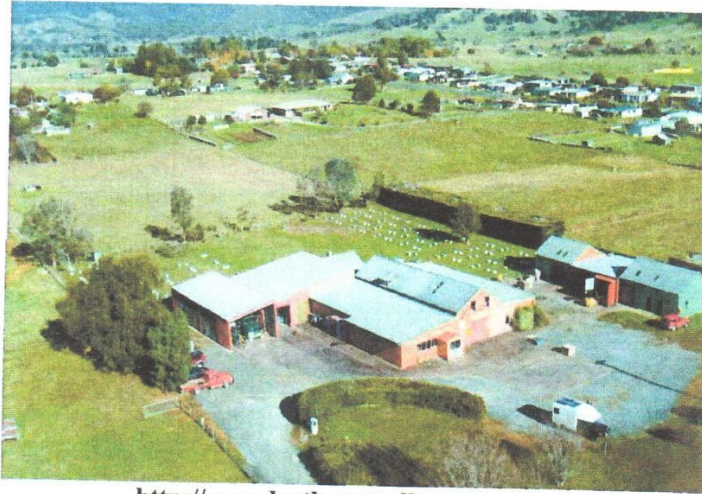
R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory demonstrates an early commercial honey factory in Tasmania. The factory was one of the first producers of leatherwood honey in the state, and is a rare example of an early 20th century integrated Tasmanian honey factory. The place has a special meaning for the Tasmanian community, by whom the factory and its produce are widely known. It also has special associations with its founder, the honey industry pioneer, Robert Stephens; with the designer of the residence and company logo, the well known Australian architect I.G. Anderson; and with the three generations of the Anderson family who have owned and operated the business throughout its existence. Additionally, surface and subsurface deposits at the factory have the potential to yield information on historic honey producing methods.

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:

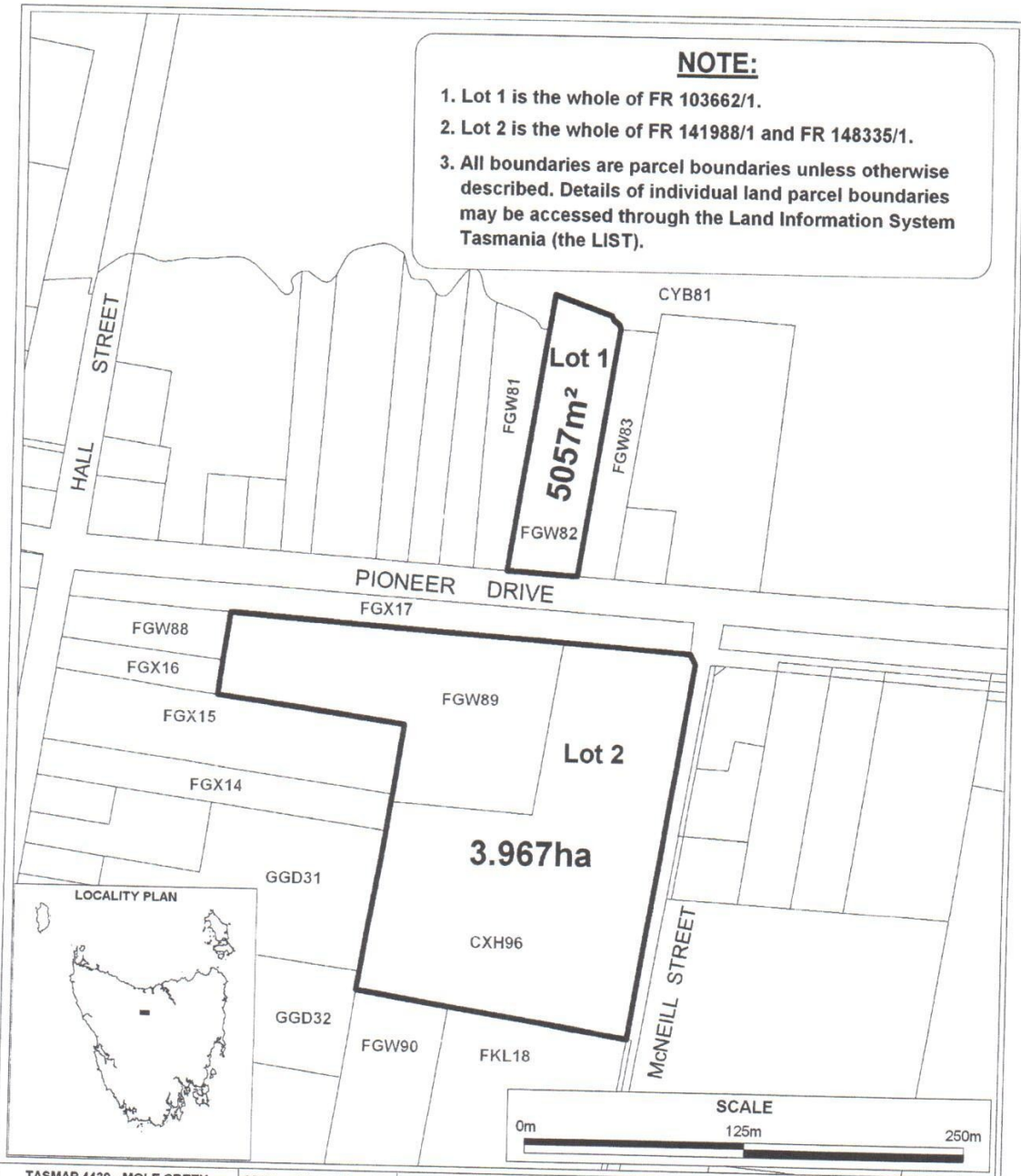
- a) "It is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Tasmania's history"
R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory demonstrates an early commercial honey factory in Tasmania and is one of the first producers of leatherwood honey in the state. The site has been a honey factory since its establishment in 1920 and since that time has spearheaded advances made in the honey industry, producing 35 per cent of Tasmania's honey. The company is a major Tasmanian exporter and an important contributor to the food tourism industry. The factory, the honey and the Stephens family are well-known throughout the state.
- b) "It demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Tasmania's heritage"
R Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory is a rare example of an early 20th century integrated Tasmanian honey factory. The factory has functioned on the same site since 1920, and throughout its existence has been managed by three generations of the one family. Many of the factory's original buildings remain in use.
- c) "It has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Tasmania's history"
Surface and subsurface deposits at R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory have the potential to yield information on historic methods of extracting and producing honey and on early leatherwood honey production techniques.
- d) "It is important as a representative in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of cultural places"
- e) "It is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement"
- f) "It has strong or special meaning for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations"
R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory has special meaning for the Tasmanian community because of its association with the company itself, which is well known as the state's major producer of honey. The factory buildings are included in the company's advertising and logos, and are a familiar image even to those Tasmanians who have not seen the buildings themselves.
- g) "It has a special association with the life or work of a person, a group or an organisation that was important in Tasmania's history"
The R. Stephens Golden Bee Honey Factory at Mole Creek has a special association with its founder, the leatherwood honey industry pioneer, Robert Stephens; with the designer of the family house and company logo, I.G. Anderson, a significant Australian architect; and with the two generations of the Stephens family who followed Robert Stephens. Like him, they have all owned and operated the business and are well known industry pioneers, internationally acclaimed for their products.

PLEASE NOTE This datasheet is intended to provide sufficient information and justification for listing the place on the Heritage Register. It is not intended to be a comprehensive historical record or inventory of the heritage values of the place.

Assessed by: MB 30 March 2011
Cleared by: DY, 12 April 2011



<http://www.leatherwoodhoney.com.au/>



NOTE:

1. Lot 1 is the whole of FR 103662/1.
2. Lot 2 is the whole of FR 141988/1 and FR 148335/1.
3. All boundaries are parcel boundaries unless otherwise described. Details of individual land parcel boundaries may be accessed through the Land Information System Tasmania (the LIST).

TASMAP 4439 - MOLE CREEK		GRID: MGA94 Zone 55	DATUM(V): AHD		CONTOUR:		SCALE: 1 : 3,000
No.	PRODUCTION / AMENDMENT	AUTHORITY	REFERENCE	DRAWN	APPROVED	DATE	
1.	PRODUCTION	THC	11202	D.Y.			



R STEPHENS GOLDEN BEE HONEY FACTORY
 CORNER OF 25 PIONEER DVE AND 2 McNEILL ST
 AND 26 PIONEER DRIVE, MOLE CREEK

PREPARED BY
 HERITAGE TASMANIA FOR

CENTRAL PLAN REGISTER
 Surveyor General _____
 Date Registered _____

CPR
?????