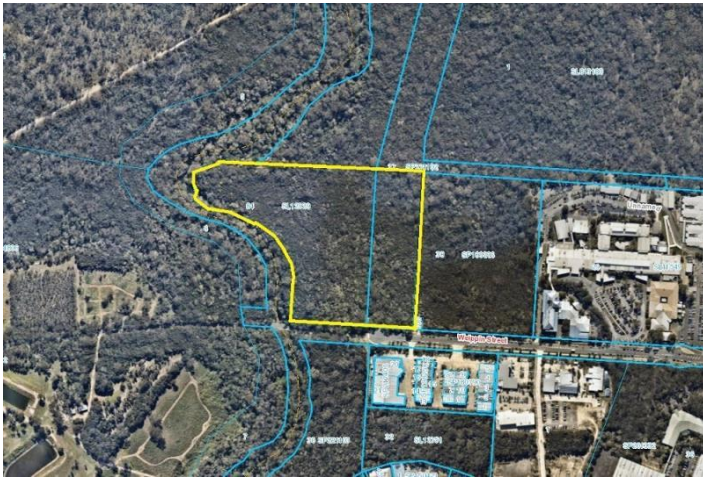
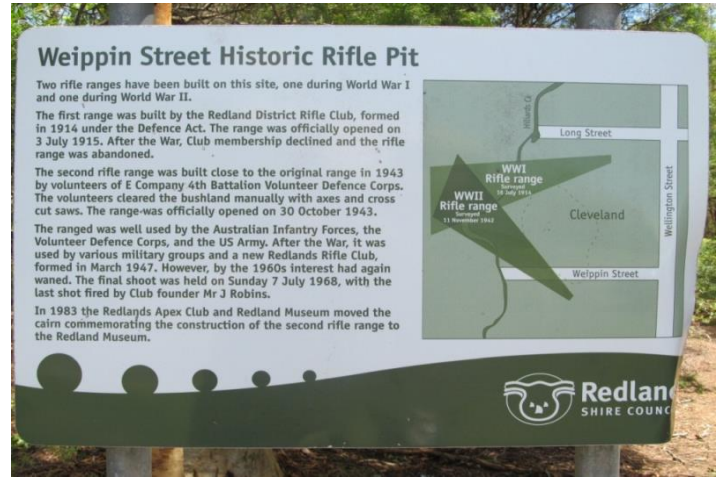


7 - CLEVELAND: WWI and WWII Rifle Ranges

Street Address	31-51 Weippin Street and 242-250 Long Street, Cleveland
GPS/RPD	L37 SP221102 & L84 SL12329
Place Type	Built



Red-e-map (RCC, 2016).



Rifle Ranges, Cleveland (AHS, 2017).

Condition	Fair	Integrity	Fair
Statutory Listings	Local Heritage Place		
Non-Statutory Listings	No current listing		
Inspection Date	24/04/2017		

Historical Context

The First Rifle Range:

The Redland Districts Rifle Club, formed in 1914 under the Defence Act, constructed Cleveland's first rifle range on 198 acres in Cleveland and Capalaba.[1]

The range was officially opened on 3 July 1915 by the Club's Vice-Patron, Louis Hugonin. It was a big occasion, with the Dunwich Rifle Club and every resident of the Redlands district invited. Refreshments were sold, and a ball was held in the School of Arts Hall. The Club's first trophy, the W. H. Moore Trophy, was also presented.[2]

The rifle range was slowly improved over the years, with additional targets installed in 1916, and a telephone by 1917.[3]

The Club was popular throughout WWI, however when the war ended in 1918 interest and memberships declined, and at the Annual General Meeting in August 1921, the Club resolved to disband, which was completed by March the following year.[4]

The Second Rifle Range:

The second Cleveland rifle range was built near the site of the first range in 1943 by volunteers of E Company 4th Battalion Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC). The first rifle range had all but disappeared at this stage and the volunteers had to clear the bushland manually with axes and cross cut saws, using their own equipment. The range was used by the Australian Infantry Forces, the Volunteer Defence Corp, and the U.S. Army stationed at Wellington Point. Among the first firing detail was Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, then Governor of Queensland, as well as several prominent locals. The range was officially opened 30 October 1943.

After the war, various groups such as the Citizens Military Forces used the rifle range. These groups were formed during the times of the Korean War and comprised volunteers from the Wynnum, Manly, and Cleveland areas. The range was also used by a new Redlands Rifle Club, formed in March 1947 at a meeting held in the Memorial Hall in Cleveland. It was convened by Harding C. Dean and J. A. Robins. All VDC members who attended Club meetings and who held rifles were accepted as members of the Club.

The range and the Club relied on volunteers, and in 1949 an entertainment committee was formed to raise funds. Among the functions held were dances at the Thornlands Hall, a 'Crazy Revue', and a benefit event at the Cleveland Picture Theatre. Working bees were held regularly on the range itself. By 1952 road access to the range was under discussion, with proposals to clear Wellington Road. In 1953, the Club resolved to apply for approval to extend the range to 700 yards to the Supervisor of Rifle Clubs, and in 1954 a new telephone line was erected on the range. Around November 1954, a retaining wall was built on the site. The 700 yard firing mound was ready for inspection by the Superintendent of Rifle Clubs by February 1957.

By 1962, interest in the Club was waning and at the AGM in December the committee resolved to review the Club's position in six months' time. However, maintenance continued and in 1964 grading of the road on the range was carried out. The same year saw a

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fire on the range: "It was announced by the Captain that the target shed and all contents were destroyed by fired on Saturday night October 24 1964. Building and contents were not insured." [5] At this meeting the Club also agreed to take steps to stop the illegal use of the range by non-members breaking in.

Interest seems to have picked up around this time and by 1965 the Club resolved to erect new frames for targets because, "frames in use at present cannot handle the increase in numbers attending shoots". [6] A small target shed was built in the Butts and regular working bees were held on the range to clear the undergrowth.

On November 7 1965, the first shoot of the J. Robins Shield was held. Nine shooters competed and Kev Bowring of Acacia Ridge won. The following year the Club arranged to make the small bore section a separate body within the Club with its own captain to manage and organise shooting. George Renn was nominated captain, and at the same time, target sheds were extended and shelters erected over firing points. However, interest continued to wane, and in July 1968 the Club decided to close the range. As was reported:

"After an inspection of the range and danger area by Messrs Koch and Willis on Wednesday 3rd July 1968 the range was declared unsafe and would be closed to all shooting. Permission was granted to hold a closing down shoot on Sunday July 7th 1968. This final shoot held over 300 yards was won by W. R. Mitchell, second R. M. Warne, third D. Olm. Present were several well-known past members of the Redlands Club, such as Mr J. Robins, Mr E. K. Burns and Mr C. Kruger. The last shot was fired by Mr J. Robins. The cartridge from this shot will be chrome plated and mounted on a presentation stand and presented to Mr Robins. Redlands Rifle Range is now closed to all shooting." [7]

For a few more years, a small section of the range saw some activity by the Small Bore Rifle Club, but the days of the well patronised Cleveland Rifle Range were over. [8] In 1983 the Redlands Apex Club and Redland Museum moved a cairn commemorating the construction of the rifle range to the Redland Museum, partly because they were concerned about vandalism at the rifle range.

Physical Description

The site abuts Hilliards Creek reserve at the north west side of Weippen Street and comprises partly cleared bushland with a track to the site of the target mounds and inspection pits. The concrete pits were covered with soil in c.2003 due to safety concerns for site users, however these were known to be generally intact at that time. [9] The mounds are clearly evident on the perimeter of the inspection pits. An interpretive sign exists at the location.

Statement of Significance

The Cleveland World War I and World War II Rifle Ranges have historic and social significance to the Cleveland and the Redlands. The site is of local heritage significance and provides evidence of community effort during World War I and II, and as a base for local organisations.

Criteria A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history.

The Cleveland World War I and World War II Rifle Ranges site demonstrates an important pattern in Redland's history by providing evidence of volunteers from the District and their war preparations. It has historical associations with the local Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC), which comprised members of the local community as well as members of the armed forces who used the range before being sent to the front.

Criteria G

The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons important to the region.

As the only surviving remnant of the Cleveland Rifle Range, the place has a special association with the Redlands Rifle Club.

Primary Themes

7.0 Maintaining Order	7.06 Defending the country
8.0 Creating Social and Cultural Institutions	8.03 Organisations and societies

References

- [1] Cleveland Shire Council minutes, 3 November 1914.
- [2] RDRC minutes, 12 June 1915.
- [3] RDRC minutes, 10 October 1916; RDRC minutes, 10 July 1917.
- [4] CDRC minutes, 27 August 1921.
- [5] Redlands Rifle Club minutes, AGM, 4 November 1964.
- [6] Redlands Rifle Club minutes, 31 March 1965.
- [7] Redlands Rifle Club minutes, 7 July 1968.
- [8] Correspondence, Land Property Section, Dept. of the Interior, July 1971, QL793, National Archives.
- [9] Pers. Comm., Benjamin Gall 24 April 2017. (Ben assisted Redland City Council with the filling project in c.2003).

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Rifle Ranges, Cleveland (AHS, 2017).



Rifle Ranges, Cleveland (AHS, 2017).