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Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed on the State Heritage Register. The Heritage Branch intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance for these items as resources become available.

Anambah House

Item

Name of Item:	Anambah House
Type of Item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Residential buildings (private)
Category:	House
Location:	Lat: 151.50656543 Long: -32.68939305
Primary Address:	Anambah Road, Gosforth via Rutherford, NSW 2320
Local Govt. Area:	Maitland

Property Description:

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
PART LOT	70	-	DP	714785

All Addresses

Street Address	Suburb/Town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Anambah Road	Gosforth via Rutherford	Maitland	Gosforth	Northumberland	Primary

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
Stephen Berry Consulting	Private	17 May 99

Description

Designer: J.W Pender architect**Construction Years:** 1889 - 1906**Physical Description:**

Gardens:

Anambah House is set on a slight hill above a "lagoon" 5km north west of central Maitland. Its mature araucaria pines and silky oaks (*Grevillea robusta*) make it a prominent element in the surrounding countryside which is generally cleared of tree vegetation. It is approached via a service drive which has been planted with pines, native trees and African olives. The southern side of the formal garden is fenced by a picket fence and Cape plumbago (*P.capensis*) and Cape honeysuckle/ tecoma (*Tecomaria capensis*) hedges. These are punctuated by wrought iron gates hung off elaborate gate posts which lead to

the gravelled carriage loop which has brick edging and drains. The perimeter plantings of African olive, tecoma and silky oak enclose the garden to the east. A lawn tennis court with a recently built pavilion lies to the north of the house. The garden has a collection of Brachychiton trees which include kurrajong (*B. populneus*), Queensland lacebark (*B. discolor*), bottle tree (*B. rupestre*) and an unusual hybrid Brachychiton.

Design Elements. The front garden has a simplified late 19th century layout. It is defined by its enclosing hedges and is dominated by the carriage loop, mature silky oaks, jacarandas, araucarias and brachychitons. More recent additions are tallow trees (*Sapium sebiferum*) which are in the process of being pleached. To the rear of the house are mature figs, stone pines (*Pinus pinea*) and African olives. There is an intimate courtyard featuring palms and a fountain linking the kitchen area and billiard room and which acts as the informal entrance to the main house.

Appropriate Boundary or Curtilage: as recommended in the National Trust Listing for the house and outbuildings. To be bounded by the Hunter River on the east side, the lagoon and outlet on the south side, the road on the west side and the creek on the north side.

Perceptual Elements. Prominent views out of the garden are to the hills to the north. The overall feeling in the garden, however, is one of enclosure with a focus on the strong design of the house and carriage loop. The vertical lines of the araucaria pines complement the height of the house. Small intimate spaces are provided by the billiard room lawn garden, the courtyard and the tennis court area. The sense of a country grazier's property is evoked by the combination of plant material and there is a feeling of quiet retreat into a former era. (AHC)

The formal homestead garden is approached through wrought iron gates hung on elaborately stuccoed brick gate posts set in a timber picket fence. The driveway and paths within this area are brick edged & guttered & were originally gravelled although they are now overgrown. There is an overgrown lawn tennis court and many superb trees, including Bunya pines, silky oaks, jacarandas, orchid trees (*Bauhinia* sp.), frangipanis (*Plumeria rubra* cv.s) & a Queensland bottle tree. The garden was sheltered from the prevailing winds by windbreaks of native olives & hedges of 'Orange Honeysuckle' (Cape honeysuckle/tecoma (*Tecomaria capensis*)). Outlines of formal beds can still be seen in what are now lawns. The house is set on a hill overlooking what is called the 'lagoon'. This is a picturesque small lake which is a habitat for the many water birds which frequent the area. The lagoon & the area between it and the house are considered very important to the house's setting. (NTA, 1986).

Homestead:

Built 1889 for grazier J K Mackay. House: A large two storey Victorian grazier's mansion of sandstock brick & hipped slate roof with two storey cast-iron verandahs on three sides, punctuated by two elaborately stuccoed bays. At the rear is a courtyard enclosed on 3 sides by the main house, kitchen wing and servants' rooms & on the 4th side by the later (1906) billiard room, also to Pender's design. The house is in a good state of preservation internally & features polished cedar joinery throughout including the staircase and large folding doors are filled with small stained-glass panels depicting birds & butterflies. There are also two large stained glass windows & on the stair landing. The plasterwork to arches & ceiling cornices is also in good condition & quite elaborate. There are 2 pressed metal ceilings in upstairs bedrooms replacing earlier plaster ceilings & a pressed metal ceiling & dado in the billiard room. There are 10 fireplaces of pink, black, grey or white marble. All feature different tiles to hearths & grates. The brass, porcelain-tipped picture rails & several of the large brass curtain rods are still in position. The main entrance hallway & verandahs feature floors of encaustic tiles in geometric patterns. Electric servants bell-pushes are still in position in most main rooms, although the original bell-board has disappeared & some of the gas brackets are still intact from the time when the house had its own gas generating plant. The

drawing room & dining rooms still have their original carpets although in somewhat worn condition. Externally the house is in good, if run-down, condition with original cast-iron lace all intact.

Building Material: Sandstock brick, hipped slate roof, cast-iron verandahs, cedar joinery, pressed metal ceilings

Stables:

2 storey, sandstock brick stable block includes grooms quarters & hay loft over buggy room, harness room & horse boxes with original wood-blocked floors.

Barn:

A typical rude timber farm building of the period, with slab sides & iron roof.

Garage & Dairy:

Weatherboard structures important only as part of the homestead group.

Outhouses:

Well constructed of sandstock brick. One for servants & one for family. Built over deep brick-arched pits. The family one is tiled to dado height & is a '2 seater'. (NTA, 1983)

Modifications and Dates:

The house is in a good state of preservation internally. The plasterwork to arches & ceiling cornices is also in good condition. The brass, porcelain-tipped picture rails & several of the large brass curtain rods are still in position. Electric servants bell-pushes are still in position in most main rooms, although the original bell-board has disappeared & some of the gas brackets are still intact from the time when the house had its own gas generating plant. The drawing room & dining rooms still have their original carpets although in somewhat worn condition. Externally the house is in good, if run-down, condition with original cast-iron lace all intact. (NTA, 1983). The garden is in good condition and elements such as the hedges have been progressively restored by the present owners. Its basic layout is intact although there has been a reduction in the number of perennial and annual beds (AHC)] 1906 billiard room, also to Pender's design. 1993 Tennis pavilion and tree house installed at this time and the garden provide a film set. (AHC).

History

Historical Notes:

Anambah House was built in 1889 for grazier J. Mackay by architect J.W Pender of Maitland. Architectural drawings exist but they do not indicate a garden layout. This family is thought to have owned properties in Queensland which may have been the source of the bottle tree, often associated with droving, and the lacebark trees. Oral history sources suggest that cattle drives from Queensland properties terminated at the Anambah property before going to the Sydney markets. Early photos show the established carriage loop, formal garden beds filled with flowers set in the lawn and the tennis court. Over time the layout has become simplified. The courtyard garden was established by the present owners and the brick-edged carriage loop was re-surfaced during the filming of the movie "Country Life" in 1993. The tennis pavilion and a tree house were installed at this time and the garden provide a set. (AHC).


The original grantee, George Cobb's daughter Mary, married Francis White of Edinglassie in 1853 and 4 of their children were born at Anambah (in the earlier house.) These children later established Belltrees at Scone. The Mackay family bought both Anambah & Minimbah (at Singleton) from the Cobbs in the 1870s & built both the present Anambah and Minimbah houses. They also owned Redleaf House in Woollahra (now Woollahra Council Chambers). The Mackay family are descendants of Duncan Forbes Mackay, Superintendent of Prisons and Public Works in Newcastle in 1827, who settled at Dungog. Various famous people have stayed in the house, including Dame Nellie Melba (c1908) & the Governors the Earl of Dudley & Lord Gowrie. In the 1950s Anambah was the home of Hal Lashwood, one of the greats of Australian radio & during this period radio entertainers such as Roy Rene (Mo) & Jack Davey

stayed in the house. (NTA, 1983).

Historic Themes

Australian Theme (abbrev)	New South Wales Theme	Local Theme
4. Settlement - Building settlements, towns and cities	Accommodation - Activities associated with the provision of accommodation, and particular types of accommodation – does not include architectural styles – use the theme of Creative Endeavour for such activities.	Country Villa -

Assessment Criteria

Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended Management

Appropriate Boundary or Curtilage: as recommended in the National Trust Listing for the house and outbuildings. To be bounded by the Hunter River on the east side, the lagoon and outlet on the south side, the road on the west side and the creek on the north side.

Recommendations

Management Category	Description	Date Updated
Recommended Management	Produce a Conservation Management Plan (CMP)	
Recommended Management	Prepare a maintenance schedule or guidelines	

Procedures / Exemptions

Section of Act	Description	Title	Comments	Action Date
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS HERITAGE ACT 1977 Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached. <p>FRANK SARTOR Minister for Planning Sydney, 11 July 2008</p> <p>To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.</p>	Sep 5 2008

 **Standard Exemptions** for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
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<i>Heritage Act - State Heritage Register</i>		00275	02 Apr 99	27	1546
<i>Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former</i>		00275	23 Sep 83	128	4358
<i>Local Environmental Plan</i>			03 Sep 93		
<i>Local Environmental Plan</i>		1993	03 Sep 93	98	5524
<i>National Trust of Australia register</i>	Anambah (including wings, outbuildings & gardens)	3776, 3687	23 May 83		
<i>Register of the National Estate - Interim</i>	Anambah Gardens	101391			

References, Internet links & Images

None

Note: Internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



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