Australian Heritage Database
Places for Decision
Class : Historic

Item: 1

Identification
List:	**National Heritage List**
Name of Place:	Bonegilla Migrant Camp - Block 19
Other Names:	Latchford Barracks (part)
Place ID:	105845
File No:	2/08/246/0004

Nomination Date:	06/07/2005
Principal Group:	Government and Administration

Status
Legal Status:	11/07/2005 - Nominated place
Admin Status:	03/12/2007 - Assessment by AHC completed

Assessment

Recommendation:	Place meets one or more NHL criteria
Assessor's Comments:	
Other Assessments:	:

Location
Nearest Town:	Bonegilla
Distance from town (km):	1
Direction from town:	N
Area (ha):	14.5
Address:	Bonegilla Rd, Bonegilla, VIC, 3691
LGA:	Wodonga Rural City VIC

Location/Boundaries:
About 14.5ha, 1km north of Bonegilla, located at 76 Bonegilla Road, comprising the whole of Lot 1 PS428603.

Assessor's Summary of Significance:
Set up in a former army camp, Block 19 Bonegilla was a part of the Bonegilla Reception and Training Centre which operated between 1947 and 1971.

Australia has a very long history of migration. The settlement in Australia of migrants

from Europe after the Second World War has had a major impact on the nation's economy, society and culture. Post-war immigration is considered to be an important factor in shaping the nation. It completely changed the composition and size of the Australian population and is responsible for the second largest demographic change in the nation's history. The largest change in Australia's history was the gold rush migration of 1851-1860.

Bonegilla was the largest and longest operating migrant reception and training centre of the post-war era. Altogether over 300 000 people, mainly from Europe, came through Bonegilla between 1947 and 1971.

Bonegilla is very important as a place which demonstrates a defining change in Australia's immigration policy. After the Second World War the Australian government saw the need to rapidly increase Australia's population for economic and defence reasons. Previously, immigration was subject to the White Australia Policy. A change in government policy now enabled large numbers of non-English speaking Europeans displaced by war to emigrate. More than half the 'Displaced Persons' from war torn Europe who came to Australia were sent to Bonegilla where they were given courses in English and the Australian way of life.

Migrant centres were set up in former army camps. Block 19, Bonegilla is a rare example of a post-war migration centre which retains considerable extant fabric. The existing buildings at Block 19 form a group of timber framed 'P' Series World War II army huts laid out symmetrically in a grid pattern, and used as migrant and staff housing, office accommodation, recreation and mess halls, kitchens and ablution blocks. The buildings illustrate the use of former war time army camps as migrant reception and training centres. The rudimentary barracks buildings demonstrate the basic conditions typical of migrant reception places. Other typical features included the separate accommodation of men from women and children, purpose built recreation halls and planting of native and exotic species in an attempt to 'civilise' the place. Block 19 retains a strong sense of what the migrant experience would have been like.

Bonegilla holds powerful connections for many people in Australia. It forms an important part of Australia's recent collective memory and symbolises the central role of Bonegilla in the peopling of Australia with immigrants in the post-war years. It is estimated that there are over 1.5 million descendents of migrants who spent time at Bonegilla. It represents the role of Australia as the 'host' nation.

Bonegilla is used in literature and drama as a metaphor for the lived migrant experience in Australia from the post war period. Les Murray highlighted Bonegilla in his poem 'Immigrant Voyage'. James McQueen, in a short story 'Josef in Transit' on the migrant experience uses Bonegilla as the place where Josef feels both alienated and part of a community. A range of Australian films and documentaries explore migrant experiences, their working lives, feelings of alienation and community attitudes.

For the migrants who spent time at the migrant reception and training centre and their descendants, Block 19, Bonegilla is important as their first home in Australia. For the broader Australian community, Bonegilla represents the arrival of the post-war

migration which has transformed the nation economically, socially and culturally. *I have come to understand, as have so many others, that it is truly an iconic place in the land where the 'journey' takes on so much significance for the new Australians as well as the original ones*' (Skowronska 2004:11).

Bonegilla and the oral and written records which relate to the place provide valuable evidence and insights into post-war migration and refugee experiences.

Draft Values:

Criterion	Values	Rating
A Events, Processes	Block 19 Bonegilla formed part of the Bonegilla Reception and Training Centre which operated between 1947 and 1971.	AT
	The settlement in Australia of post-war immigrants has had a major impact on the nation's economy, society and culture and is regarded as an important factor in shaping the nation. Post-war immigration transformed the composition and size of the Australian population and is responsible for the second largest demographic change in the nation's history (the largest being the gold rush migration of 1851-1860).	
	Bonegilla was the largest and longest operating migrant reception and training centre of the post-war era. Altogether over 300 000 people, principally from Europe, spent time at Bonegilla between 1947 and 1971.	
	Bonegilla is highly significant as a place which demonstrates a defining change in Australia's immigration policy. Previously, immigration was subject to the White Australia Policy but after the Second World War with the perceived need to rapidly increase Australia's population for economic and defence reasons, government policy enabled large numbers of non-English speaking Europeans displaced by war to emigrate. The majority of 'Displaced Persons' were sent to Bonegilla where they were given courses in English and the Australian way of life.	
B Rarity	Block 19, Bonegilla is a rare remnant of a post-war migration centre which retains extant fabric, in an open space setting. Block 19 contains 23 buildings, including a group of timber framed 'P' Series World War II army huts laid out symmetrically in a grid pattern and used as migrant and staff housing, office accommodation, recreation and mess halls, kitchens and ablution blocks. The physical fabric of Block 19, the buildings, road layout, remnant paths and concrete slabs marking former building sites, within their open space setting, reflect the use of former war-time army camps as migrant reception and training centres. The rudimentary barracks buildings and existing layout of Block 19 demonstrate the	AT

basic conditions typical of migrant reception places. Other typical features included the separate accommodation of men from women and children, purpose-built recreation halls, and planting of native and exotic species in an attempt to 'civilise' the place. Block 19 retains a strong sense of what migrant life would have been like.

G Social value   Bonegilla holds powerful connections for many people in   AT
Australia. Currently, there are an estimated 1.5 million descendents of migrants who spent time at Bonegilla.

Bonegilla forms an important part of Australia's recent collective memory and has become a symbol of post-World War II migration. It represents the role of Australia as the 'host' nation.

For the migrants who spent time at the migrant reception and training centre and their descendants, Block 19, Bonegilla is representative of their first home in Australia. For the broader Australian community, Bonegilla represents the post war migration which transformed the nation economically, socially and culturally: *I have come to understand, as have so many others, that it is truly an iconic place in the land where the 'journey' takes on so much significance for the new Australians as well as the original ones*' (Skowronska 2004:11).

Bonegilla and its associated oral and written records yield insights into post-war migration and refugee experiences.

Historic Themes:
Group: 02 Peopling Australia
  Themes: 02.04 Migrating
    Sub-Themes: 02.04.02 Migrating to seek opportunity

Group: 02 Peopling Australia
  Themes: 02.04 Migrating
    Sub-Themes: 02.04.03 Migrating to escape oppression
Group: 02 Peopling Australia
  Themes: 02.04 Migrating
    Sub-Themes:

Nominator's Summary of Significance:
Block 19, is a heritage place of national significance as a remnant of the Bonegilla Reception and Training Centre, which played a central role in the peopling of Australia in the post-war years with immigrants, principally from Europe. It has close, rare and representative association with the most significant demographic change in twentieth century Australia. It is more closely associated with changes in the size and character of the Australian population than any other item on the Register of the

National Estate, with perhaps the exception of those related to the nineteenth century gold rushes. It helps define a critical moment in our development as a nation. It reflects the achievements, joys, trials and sorrows of a large number of people who had the courage to migrate to this land.

Bonegilla was one of the first, and the largest and longest-lived migrant reception and training centre. Altogether over 300 000 people spent some time at Bonegilla, before the centre closed in 1971. Most were from non-English speaking European countries, and their arrival changed the composition as well as the size of the national population.

The site is significant to migrants and refugees. It yields insights into post-war migrant and refugee experiences. The migrant centre was separated geographically and socially from Wodonga and Albury, as well as the rest of the nation. Living conditions were Spartan.

The site is significant to the whole nation as a host society. It invites exploration of the mixed community responses to newcomers, prompting examination and explanation of the expressions of feelings such as wariness, hostility, compassion, neighbourliness and indifference associated with 'taking in strangers'.

Block 19 is a remnant of the Bonegilla Army Camp, which played an important in defending Australia. As a site illustrative of the defence of Australia, Bonegilla points to the strategic importance of the break-of-gauge in defending the nation and preparing to resist a possible invasion. The Army base also related to the nation's involvement in the Vietnam War. It is valued by the Army community.

The significance of the site as an Army Camp in itself meets perhaps a lower threshold level than that required for an item on the National Heritage List. However, an understanding of the army presence is a prerequisite to understanding not only the layering of the site physically, but also the social setting of the migrant centre, especially when there was conjoint use of the facilities by migrants and soldiers from 1947 to 1949 and after 1966.

Further, the construction of an army camp in 1940 and its subsequent conversion into a migrant centre in 1947, both, separately and together, indicate attempts to cope with national vulnerability during and after the Second World War.

Description:
Block 19 is a collection of 23 buildings, most of them standard P1 timber and corrugated iron army-type huts, and some concrete footings remain of accommodation or service buildings. Many of the roofs of the original buildings were corrugated asbestos which have been replaced with corrugated iron. The buildings comprise:
Building 68 Ablutions Block; corrugated galvanised iron walls fixed to a timber framed structure, 62 x 24 ft (206. x 8m). Low pitched gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated galvanised iron.
Building 79 Recreation Room; army style 'P' type hut constructed in 1940, 81 x 25ft (27.5 x 7.6m). The walls are corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated asbestos. The building is a different 'P' type to

the accommodation buildings and relates to the central facility buildings (Freeman Leeson 1996, vol 2).

Building 80, **Building 81**, **Building 84, Building 96** Accommodation Huts; of the original accommodation army style 'P' type huts constructed in 1940, 61 x 19ft (18.3 x 5.7m). The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated galvanised iron. The walls of some huts are lined with painted canite sheeting. Building 96 has interior walls of painted fibre board lining. In some buildings the painted timber trusses are visible. Each building is divided lengthwise, and each side divided into five rooms approximately 12 x 10 ft (3.6 x 2.8m). The internal subdivisions and individual entrances may be modifications undertaken for migrant use c1950.

Building 82 Store; army style 'P1E' type store hut constructed in 1940, 61 x 19ft (18.3 x 5.7m). The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated asbestos. There are no internal subdivisions and the only modifications appear to be the addition of some interior painted canite lining.

Building 85 Comprising three Mess buildings and central kitchen block constructed 1940-42. The East and West wings are army style 'P' type huts constructed 1940-42, 72 x 25ft (21.95 x 7.62m) which flank the central kitchen block.. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated asbestos. There are no internal divisions. The walls are lined with painted masonite and canite sheet. Lining and painted occurred during the migrant occupancy period. The Southern wing is a 'P' type hut constructed 1950-64, with similar dimensions and building construction as the East wing. Internal alterations include a suspended plasterboard ceiling. The central kitchen block is an army style 'P' type hut, originally constructed in 1940-42, 49 x 29ft (18.3 x 9.6m). It is a gabled brick building with a corrugated iron roof fixed to a timber frame. The walls are cement rendered. A series of small rooms line the walls. The building was reconstructed for army use from 1967 and 1972.

Building 91 Staff Flat; army style 'P' type hut constructed in 1940. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated asbestos. The walls are lined with painted masonite and canite sheet. There are some internal partitions. The building functioned as a RPA Regimental Aid Post and continued its role as a RPA during some of the migrant camp years. It functioned as a medical centre for the treatment of outpatients. By 1964 it was used as a staff flat and after 1967 was used as the Sergeants Mess.

Building 93 Tudor Hall; army type 'P' type hut constructed 1940-42, 120 x 44ft (36.6 x 13.4m). The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The gabled roof is sheeted with corrugated iron. A large rectangular hall located centrally in the camp opposite the kitchen and mess building which has been modified internally for Army use. It was used in 1948 as a large lecture hall for the migrants, as an adult education centre, and as an emergency registration for aliens. It is likely it was used as a cinema in 1950 and was used during the migrant era for social functions including dances.

Building 94 Toilet; constructed c 1948 the walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame, and sits on a concrete slab on ground. The skillion roof is sheeted with corrugated galvanised iron.

Building 95 Supervisor's Flat; army type 'P' type hut 49 x 34ft (14.9 x 10.7m), constructed 1940-41. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame. The iron is laid horizontally. The roof is sheeted with corrugated iron.

The interior lining is fibrous sheet with batten cover sheets, painted. The western section is the original 'P' hut with additions made to the eastern side in 1941. Built as a canteen the building was modified to accommodate the Supervising Officer's Flat during the occupation of the site by the Department of Immigration.

Building 97 Administrative Offices; army type 'P' type hut 64.96 x 34.4ft (19.8 x 10.5m), constructed 1941-42. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame with a corrugated galvanised iron roof. The building was used jointly as the Administrative Offices for the Commandant and Department of Immigration, and as a staff kitchen. In 1964 it was a migrant staff flat, and by 1968was used as an army Officers Mess. The building has been modified and modernised.

Building 98 Nurse's Quarters; rectangular building 30 x 13ft (9.1 x 4m) with Hardiplank external cladding and corrugated galvanised iron roof. Constructed in 1950 as nurses accommodation, by 1964 it was used by camp staff for accommodation. The building has a substantially modified appearance.

Building 99, Building 101, Building 102 A group of east- west accommodation huts; army type 'P' type hut 81 x 234ft (24.7 x7m), constructed 1940-42. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame with a gabled corrugated galvanised iron roof. The walls of Building 99 are lined with painted canite sheeting and the painted roof trusses are visible. The internal walls of Building 101 are fibrous lining and Building 102 is lined with plywood, both buildings having batten cover strips with partly exposed timber roof trusses. Internal subdivisions modifications c 1950 were undertaken for migrant use. Buildings 99, 101 and 102 have a shower block on the northern end constructed prior to 1964.

Building 100 Accommodation hut; army type hut 81 x 23.4ft (24.7 x7m), constructed by 1948. The walls are weatherboard with battened fibro above, fixed to a timber frame with a gabled corrugated galvanised iron roof. Internal materials are fibreboard lining with batten cover strips. This hut differs in construction to the army 'P' type and is similar to that used by other branches of the Defence forces such as the Air Force. Used for accommodation during the Department of Immigration occupancy, it was occupied by the Army Survey Regiment from 1971-1985.

Building 104 Staff Flat; army type 'P' type hut 73.2 x 17.7ft (22.3 x 5.4m), constructed c1941, relocated 1954-1964. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame with the corrugations laid horizontally, and a gabled corrugated galvanised iron roof. The interior is lined with fibreboard, canite and masonite with batten cover strips. The building is divided into 6 rooms. The hut was portioned for migrant use. It is likely this building was relocated from another block after migrant numbers peaked and some blocks were closed.

Building 105 Staff Flat; army type 'P' type hut 65 x 19 ft (18.3 x 5.8m), constructed c1941, relocated 1954-1964. The construction and relocation is similar to Building 104. In 1964 it was recorded as being used for staff accommodation and may have housed medical staff.

Building 107 Boiler House; 13 x 11ft (4.2 x 3.6m), built c1948. The walls are corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame with the corrugations laid horizontally, and a skillion corrugated galvanised iron roof, concrete slab on ground.

Building 108 Laundry; 24 x 13ft (3.7 x 2.7m), built c1948. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame with the corrugations laid vertically, and a gable corrugated galvanised iron roof, concrete slab on ground.

Building 176 Hume Club; army type 'P' type hut 121 x 19ft (36.9x9.4m), constructed 1940-42. A gabled building with an 'L' shaped plan which comprises an early 'p ' type

rectangular building with a large addition to the east prior to 1964, which may have been relocated. The walls are painted corrugated galvanised iron fixed to a timber frame with the corrugations laid horizontally, and a gabled corrugated galvanised iron roof. The walls and ceiling are sheeted in canite and battened. Alterations were made in 1954 to install partitions, connection of water and the installation of lavatories. Porches were added to the east and west. In 1948 the building was used by the Quartermaster and the Department of Labour and National Service. Known as the Hume Club it was a social focus of Block 19 during the later migrant years. The building has been modified.

Hard and soft landscaping features include roads, paths, concrete slabs, garden beds and mature native and exotic trees.

Views extend out from the place to open paddocks on two sides of Block 19. Lake Hume is situated to the East. A new interpretive centre and a café building effectively screen off a residential area for married army personnel to the North-North-East.

Analysis:
(*a*) ***The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history;***

Nominator's claims
The nominator does not make any claim against criterion (a). Claims made against criterion (d) that the place was one of the first, the largest and longest-lived migrant reception and training centres; that it is significant for its central role in the peopling of Australia in the post-World War 11 years; and that it is closely associated with changes in the size and character of the Australian population are assessed against criteria (a) and (b). The reason is that the place does not exhibit all the principal characteristics of a migration reception and training centre.

Block 19 is highly significant to the nation because of its tangible association with post-war migration.

With the end of World War 11, Australia was suffering a desperate shortage of labour. Substantial population growth was considered essential to the nation's future. It was required for economic development and to defend the country against possible invasion. The government of the day signed agreements with European governments to assist migrants to come to Australia. The preference was still for migrants from Britain and they provided 50 percent of intended settlers, rising from 30 000 in 1947 to approximately 170 000 in 1949 (Dictionary of Biography: entry for Arthur Calwell). However, in 1947, Arthur Calwell, Australia's first Minister for Immigration, signed an agreement with the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) to allow Displaced Persons from war torn Europe to come to Australia, marking the beginning of mass emigration of non-English speaking Europeans. Previous to this, and from the time of Federation, immigration policy was subject to the White Australia Policy which required migrants to meet a language test. This effectively restricted migration to English-speaking people.

The agreements with European governments and the IRO required that migrants enter

into a two year directed labour contract in exchange for their passage to Australia. This provided the Australian Government with a large workforce that they could direct towards infrastructure development and industry expansion. With agreements in place, army camps across Australia were converted for use as migrant reception centres to process and house the migrants. Migrants were to be given courses in English language and the Australian way of life (Freeman 1999:40).

Bonegilla Army Camp was selected as the site for the second migrant camp for Displaced Persons (the first being Graylands, Western Australia). 839 Displaced Persons arrived in December 1947 and Bonegilla soon became Australia's major migrant camp. Its location midway between Sydney and Melbourne meant that it was within reach of Australia's two main employment centres but also far enough removed from population centres to ensure proper control of migrant's integration into the workforce and society.

Between 1947 and 1953, 170 700 Displaced Persons came to Australia from war-torn Europe. They were mainly refugees from Southern and Eastern Europe (mainly the Baltic States) and survivors of the Holocaust. They were culturally diverse and for the most part non-English speaking. Arthur Calwell called these arrivals 'New Australians'. Bonegilla received and processed more than half of these (Pennay 2007b:1) and is therefore closely associated with this defining change in immigration policy.

Economic, social and cultural impacts of post-war migration
Successive governments would pursue economically driven immigration policies based on industrial labour requirements. Between 1947 and 1973, the Australian workforce increased from 2.6 million to 5.8 million. Migrants contributed half of this increase. Most European migrants between the 1950s and 1970s were employed in industries. The growth of industries such as steel, motor vehicles, building and construction and public utilities depended on the skills and labour of migrant workers. The new wealth of secondary industries helped increase the national income from an estimated $2 700 million in 1946-7 to $37 000 in 1972-73 (Department of Labour and Immigration 1975:31). Migrants played a major role in the development of the steel industry and the construction of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme. At the peak of its construction, 60 percent of the workforce was migrant labour.

The economic impacts of post-war migration were also matched with the effects on the growth of Australian cities. Four out of five migrants settled in capital cities, particularly Sydney and Melbourne. Some nationalities congregated together forming precincts within those cities. Australia changed from having only two percent of its population in 1947 using a foreign language other than English to having 14 percent doing so in 1986 (Jupp 1991:96).

The economic, social and cultural impacts of post-war migration were profound. Bonegilla was the largest and longest operating reception centre. It functioned for the period of post-war immigration until the early 1970s and at times was the only national reception centre. Over 300 000 migrants (the highest number of any migrant centre) were processed through its doors making it the flagship of migrant camps in Australia. Bonegilla is therefore outstanding for its close and tangible association with post-war migration.

Significant demographic change

The claim that Bonegilla is associated with a significant demographic change in the population is supported. The number of migrants to Australia increased in the post-war period more significantly than at any other period except during the gold rushes of the nineteenth century. However, post-war immigration brought with it a significant change in the migration mix, the result of which has been the emergence of a multicultural society in Australia.

During the period 1851-1860, there were 602 200 free immigrants to the Australian colony, and their numbers swamped the Australian born population. In 1861 Australia's population was 1.15 million, 54 percent were immigrants from the United Kingdom and Ireland compared to 37 percent Australian born, the remained being a mix of immigrants with the Chinese being the largest group at over three percent (adapted from Price in Vamplew 1987:11).

In contrast, in 1947, Australia had a population of 7.6 million, ten percent of which were born overseas with the main groups being from England, Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand. It is estimated that from Federation until this time only 20 000 refugees were admitted and these were mainly Jewish people arriving from Germany and Austria in the 1930s (Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia 1953:567).

The small intake of refugees changed with the IRO's Displaced Persons Scheme which operated in Australia from 1947-1953 and as mentioned previously, saw 170 700 people emigrate. The main groups were Poles, Yugoslavs, Latvians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Czechs and Estonians. In addition, people arrived in Australia as a result of assisted passage agreements with governments such as Malta (1952), Finland, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark (1954).

Australia's population at the time of the 1954 census was approximately 8.9 million with 14 percent (or over a million people) born overseas. The biggest groups were the English, Scots, Italians, Germans and Poles. In the seven years since the decision to aggressively pursue immigration, Australia's population had increased by 17 percent, the number of overseas born people had increased by four percent and the composition of the population had begun to change.

In the 1961 census, Australia's population was 10 million with 17 percent born overseas. Half the population increase since 1947 was due to immigration (as above). In 1971 when Bonegilla closed, Australia's population is recorded in the census at 12.7 million of which 20 percent were born overseas. This trend has continued into the 21st century. In 2001 about 4.5 million people (23 percent of the population) and 2.4 million workers (or 25 percent of the workforce) were born overseas (Productivity Commission 2005). In 2007 with a population of just over 21 million, 75 percent of the population is Australian born (Immigration 2007c).

Bonegilla as the largest and longest operating migrant reception and training centre has strong claims to an association with this significant demographic change.

The Army base

The nominator claims that Block 19 is a remnant of the Bonegilla Army Camp which

played an important role in defending Australia. The nominator notes that 'the significance of the site as an Army Camp in itself meets perhaps a lower threshold level than that required for an item on the National Heritage List. However, an understanding of the army presence is a prerequisite to understanding not only the layering of the site physically, but also the social setting of the migrant centre, especially when there was conjoint use of the facilities by migrants and soldiers from 1947 to 1949 and after 1966. Further, the construction of an army camp in 1940 and its subsequent conversion into a migrant centre in 1947, both separately and together, indicate attempts to cope with national vulnerability during and after the Second World War' (Nomination 2005:3).

As a site illustrative of the defence of Australia, Bonegilla points to the strategic importance of the break-of-gauge in defending the nation and preparing to resist a possible invasion. Albury-Wodonga became strategically important and munitions depots, ordinance stores and army units were based at Bonegilla, Bandiana, Wirlinga and Ettamogah, so that if an invasion were to occur troops and their equipment could be easily dispatched north or south.

Bonegilla is cited in the report, *Australians at War* as being 'one of the more highly developed camps for many of the troops in training' (Deakin University 2005:24). In the section on the development of Indicators of Significance national training bases are evaluated. Bonegilla is not mentioned while Puckapunyal and Seymour Site 17 are considered 'important complexes and, even though considerably reduced in size and importance today, still reflect the two World Wars and the Vietnam War (Deakin University 2005:70). The report identified 13 Australian and nine offshore places that appeared to meet the requirements for National Heritage listing. Puckapunyal Army Camp was assessed as being an exemplary representative of the *Australians at War* theme, with a high degree of authenticity and/or integrity, and which has significance for the Australian community as a whole (Deakin University 2005:154-158).

Understanding the army presence is important to understand the physical layering of the site and the social setting for the use of the former army base as a migrant camp. However this is not of outstanding significance at a national level to meet threshold for criterion (a).

Conclusion

Block 19 as a part of the Bonegilla Reception and Training Centre is significant for its close and important association with post-war migration. It represents the transforming role the place played in the development of the Australian nation. The commitment to bring migrants to Australia who could not speak English and had little knowledge or understanding of British or Australian life has been viewed as the most important change in government immigration policy (Jupp 1990:286) since Federation. Bonegilla played a central role in this change in Australia in the post-war years with immigrants, principally from Europe. It is closely associated with the most significant demographic change in twentieth century Australia. The physical fabric of Block 19, a surviving remnant of the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre, expresses the policies and lived experiences of this transforming role. Block 19 Bonegilla **might have** outstanding value for criterion (a).

(b) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's

possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history;

Nominator's claims
The nominator does not make any specific claim against criterion (b). Claims made that the site has a close, rare and representative association with the most significant demographic change in 20th century Australia, and against criterion (d) that the place is a fairly rare remnant of the expansion in defence building activity at the beginning of the war are assessed against criteria (b) and (d).

Bonegilla is a rare remnant of a significant post-war migration and reception training centre. The post-war era saw many former army camps used to accommodate and process new arrivals. Accommodation was provided at training camps, training and reception centres, holding centres and hostels. In 1951 at the peak period of non-British immigration there were three reception and training centres to accommodate the new arrivals and 20 holding centres to house the wives and families of contracted workers, also mostly located in isolated areas (Hutchison 2004:71).

The distinction between hostels and migrant accommodation intended to separate British and non-British migrants became blurred because of fluctuating accommodation requirements. From 1952 onwards demands for migrant accommodation decreased when the Displaced Persons scheme finished. Bonegilla was the only major reception centre in operation during the 1950s and about two-thirds of all assisted non-British migrants were passing through the centre. By 1958 Bonegilla was the only reception centre in operation and six places were operating as holding centres: Holden (WA), the Reception Centres at Greta (NSW), Scheyville (NSW), Wacol (Qld), Benalla (Vic) and Woodside (SA). These remaining holding centres were all closed during the 1960s (Hutchison 2004:71) and Bonegilla remained in operation until closed in 1971.

In addition to Bonegilla, over eight other significant migrant camps or hostels were identified in Victoria, in New South Wales five migrant camps or centres and thirty migrant hostels, in Queensland four main camps, in Tasmania one migrant hostel, in South Australia two and in Western Australia over 23 centres catering for migrants in 1951 (Peters 1996:10). Of these, the most significant in terms of size and length of operation besides Bonegilla were Benalla in Victoria, Bathurst and Greta Migrant Camp in New South Wales, Woodside in South Australia and Northam in Western Australia.

Comparative analysis
Former army camps were generally used to accommodate and process the new arrivals. The migrant camps varied in size and length of operation. The Department of Immigration ran all the migrant camps and living conditions were standardised. Implementation of government policies and basic living conditions created conditions similar to those at Bonegilla.

The Elementary Flying Training School No 11 (former) at Benalla was converted in 1949 into the Benalla Migrant Accommodation Centre. Following its closure in 1965 it was estimated that 60 000 people had passed through the centre (RNE AHDB No:103190). In Defence ownership, it is not listed on the Defence Heritage Register

and it is not known if any of the buildings remain
(http://www.defence.gov.au/environment/register.htm).

Bathurst army camp was used as a migrant camp from 1948-1952. In the period it operated it was the second largest migrant camp after Bonegilla. As many as 8 000 people lived at any one time in the Bathurst camp and by the time it closed in 1952 over 80 000 migrants had passed through the camp. At the time of its closure there were 11 blocks of former army huts accommodating just over 6 000 people. Most of the buildings have been demolished. Concrete footings and rubble and some of the original buildings used on a farm provide evidence of the former migrant camp. A memorial has been erected on the site now known as 'Rossmore Park' (Bathurst region 2007).

Greta Migrant Camp in the Hunter Valley was housed in a former army camp constructed in 1939. The first Displaced Persons arrived in June 1949 and it closed in 1960. It has been estimated that some 100 000 migrants passed through the camp which is now demolished (OzeUkes 2007:2).

The Woodside Army Base, converted into the Woodside Immigration Centre in 1949, held about 3 000 migrants at its peak (sa.unions 2007:1). From 1952 until 1963 it was a Commonwealth Government Reception and Training Centre, housing assisted and fare paying migrants from Europe. When it closed in 1963 it had accommodated approximately 26 000 people. In 1996 it was understood that one or two remnant Second World War buildings may remain (Freeman Leeson 1996:50).

Northam Army Camp in Western Australia was converted into the Northam Migrant Centre and operated from 1949-51 with a capacity of 850. It had housed 15 000 Displaced Persons when it closed in 1951. Northam Army Camp formed part of the Holden Immigration Holding Centre (1949-57 and 1962-63), with a capacity 4 500 and 500 staff, one of the largest immigration camps in WA and the third largest in Australia (RNE AHDB No:100879). The Northam Army Camp Heritage Association Inc 'estimate that the descendants of the migrants whose first place of residence in WA was Northam would now number around 100 000 persons' (Peters 1996:10).

Block 19, Bonegilla
The temporary nature of migration reception centres has meant that many have been demolished, dismantled or redeveloped. Block 19, Bonegilla survives as an example of a post-war migration centre which retains considerable intact fabric. It operated from 1947 to 1971.

The buildings, sites of former buildings, pathways and landscaping of Block 19 illustrate the characteristic arrangement of army camps and the subsequent use as migrant camps during the post-war period. The 23 extant buildings demonstrate the characteristics of the 'P' type huts that were built in the early 1940s which are becoming increasingly uncommon. These include the use of former army camps as reception and training centres, a symmetrical grid lay out with rudimentary barracks accommodation, simple and basic conditions which reflect changes in government policy such as the separation of men from women and children, recreation buildings, a physical geographic and social separation from the local community; plantings of native and exotic species. Conjoint use of the facilities by migrants and soldiers, at

Bonegilla from 1947 to 1949 and after 1966 is another representative feature characteristic of several migrant hostels/camps.

Block 19 is rare in its ability to vividly express the history of post-war migration camps in Australia. As the second camp established, it was the largest and longest-lived migrant reception and training centre in Australia. Block 19 demonstrates the harsh physical conditions experienced by migrants following their arrival in a new land. Initially men and women were housed separately. Many families were separated. Men assessed as suitable for employment were dispatched to jobs wherever they were needed in remote areas, industrial centres or capital city factories. Women and children remained in the camp until accommodation could be found where the husband had work. The average stay in the holding centres was about four months.

The basic nature of the buildings and the renovation during the 1950s with basic work to line the walls and ceilings in the former army huts illustrates the harsh conditions, as do the remnant plantings which testify to attempts to soften the landscape.

Conclusion

Block 19, Bonegilla is rare as the most intact precinct used for migrant and refugee accommodation in the post World War 11 period. As the second camp established for non-British migrants, it was the largest and longest-lived migrant reception and training centre in Australia. It has an outstanding capacity to demonstrate to all Australians the physical environment faced by hundreds of thousands of migrants who were accommodated in former army camps utilised as migrant reception and training centre or holding centres. Block 19 Bonegilla **might have** outstanding value for criterion (b).

(c) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history;

The nominator does not make any claim against criterion (c). There is no evidence to demonstrate that the place might have outstanding value for criterion (c)

(d) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of:
    (i) a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or
    (ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments;

The nominator claims against criterion (d) that the site has a close, rare and representative association with the most significant demographic change in 20th century Australia and that the place is a fairly rare remnant of the expansion in defence building activity at the beginning of the war. These claims are assessed against criteria (a) and (b).

Bonegilla was the largest migrant reception centre in Australia and Block 19 is most intact example evidencing the use of former wartime army camps for migrant accommodation in the post-war World War II period. The fabric has sufficient integrity to demonstrate rare aspects of Australia's cultural history against criterion (b).

Block 19 was one of 24 blocks which comprised Bonegilla. However, Block 19 does not exhibit all the principal characteristics of a post-war migrant reception centre. None of the remaining 23 buildings at Block 19 were used for language instruction, children's schooling or child care. Training in English and in the Australian way of life was part of the 'integration' of non-English speaking Europeans into Australian society. No buildings remain that were related to all the important elements of post-war immigration policy. Bonegilla often housed women and children while male members of the family were sent to work in industries, often at distant or remote places. Many of the elements no longer exist that made up the township, including the hospital, schools, kindergarten, three churches. cinema, a creative and leisure centre, tennis courts, and a youth centre.

Block 19 Bonegilla is a good representative example of migrant camps/reception. However it does not demonstrate the full range of characteristic features of a migrant camp and reception centre and is unlikely to meet threshold for criterion (d).

(e) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;

The nominator does not make any claim against criterion (e). There is no evidence to demonstrate that the place might meet threshold for criterion (e)

(f) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;

The nominator does not make any claim against criterion (f). There is no evidence to demonstrate that the place might meet threshold for criterion (f).

(g) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;

Nominator's claims
The claim against criterion (g) is the place is significant to migrants, assisted immigrants and refugees, to other migrants for its association with the theme of migration and nurses, national servicemen and army personnel associated with the place. It reflects the achievements, joys, trials and sorrows of a large number of people who had the courage to migrate to this land. The place is significant to the whole nation as a host society and to groups who feel they have a strong or special association a demonstrated by their post-war migrant and refugee experiences.

Migrant associations with the place
The nominator's claims that 'the site is significant to migrants and refugees' are supported. The site yields insights into post-war migrant and refugee experiences and has come to symbolise the importance of post-war migration to Australia. Between 1945 and 1975, Australia's population almost doubled to 3 million and migrations arrived, half from Britain and half from other European countries. These post-war

migrants have made an enormous contribution to the Australian economy, society and culture. It is estimated that there are currently over 1.5 million descendents of migrants who spent time at Bonegilla.

The strength of migrant associations with the place is well demonstrated. Bonegilla Immigration Museum Committee was formed in 1984 to establish a national immigration museum and to celebrate the contribution of post-war migrants to the nation (Maroya 1988:228). The Committee was supported by the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia Inc and at least 19 other individuals or organisations (Freeman Leeson 1996:30). Back to Bonegilla celebrations in 1987, 1997, 1999 and 2005 led to the formation of 'Friends of Bonegilla' and the development of the Albury Regional Museum's Bonegilla Collection. From July 2007 the Albury Library will permanently exhibit the Bonegilla Collection which contains photographs, documents, objects, oral history and written accounts that explore and interpret the diversity of the Bonegilla experience. The Collection complements Block 19 in providing an additional layer of meaning and interpretive value.

The nominator claims that the site is significant to the whole nation as a host society. Community responses to newcomers were mixed, prompting examination and explanation of the expressions of feelings such as wariness, hostility, compassion, neighbourliness and indifference associated with `taking in strangers' (Pennay 2004:7). From the local to the national, communities across the nation were transformed by the influx of 'new' Australians with different and varied social and cultural experiences and ways of living.

Bonegilla is used in literature and drama as a metaphor for the lived migrant experience in Australia from the post war period. Les Murray highlighted Bonegilla in his poem 'Immigrant Voyage'. James McQueen, in a short story 'Josef in Transit' on the migrant experience, published in *Uphill Runner*, uses Bonegilla as the place where Josef feels both alienated and part of a community. In an anthology of multicultural writing *Joseph's Coat,* the poem 'Bonegilla 1961' by Manfred Jurgensen portrays the migrant experiences and political problems. The Australian Cinema of the Migrant experience explores contemporary attitudes and feelings of alienation and community. Contributions include the pioneering *The Contract (Ill Contratto)* by Italian film maker Giorgio Mangiamele about the experiences of young, single Italian migrant men looking for work in early 1950s Melbourne (Turnour 2007). Mangiamele's films The Brothers (1958) and The Spag (1962) explored migrant life in Australia. Maslyn Williams' film *Mike and Stefani* (1952) which depicted a migrant couple undergoing an emotionally gruelling interview by an actual immigration official, while not widely distributed has been acclaimed as an Australian neo-realist landmark (Australian Film Commission 2007). Director Sophia Turkiewicz's two films Letters From Poland (1978) and *Silver* City (1984) looked at very different experiences by women migrants. Documentaries like *Snowy Hydro – Where Men and Mountains Meet* (1963), produced by the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electricity Authority photographic unit showed the spectrum of male work involved in the Snowy Mountains Scheme while *Bitter Herbs and Honey* (1981) explored the story of Jewish migrants who settled in the Melbourne suburb of Carlton. *Romulus My Father* (2007), based on Raimond Gaita's acclaimed autobiographical memoir, explores the migrant experience through the child narrator. Michael Powell's film of the book written by John O'Grady under the pseudonym of Nino Culottta, They're a Weird Mob (1966) dramatised the

migrant experience and the importance of idiomatic language in Australia. Two plays by Tes Lyssiotis *Hotel Bonegilla* and *The Journey* present the experiences and attitudes of the post-war period (Sluga 1989:156-159). Sluga claims that Bonegilla is a metaphor for the migrant experience. She writes that Bonegilla '*continues to exist as a trigger word for that whole period and set of experiences*' (Sluga 1989:156).

The strength of the association of Bonegilla with migrant communities was demonstrated nationally when it was voted as the second most favourite place in the Australian Heritage Commission's *Places in the Heart Competition*, after Uluru (Skowronska 2004:11). The strength of the association of Bonegilla for migrants is recorded in the Conservation Management Plan:
'*The depth of concern for the precinct which has been expressed from a number of different migrant groups and concerned individuals and organisations has been an extraordinary feature of our work on this Plan...The Bonegilla experience, although often brief, appears to have left a profound impression on a significant proportion of Australia's population*' (Freeman Leeson 1996:1).

Block 19 Bonegilla is entered in the Victorian Heritage Register for its historical and social significance to the people of Victoria.
'*It has the capacity to demonstrate to all Australians the physical environment faced by hundreds of thousands of migrants who were accommodated in the former army camps utilised as Reception and Training Centres*' (Victorian Heritage Register No:H1835).

The *Bonegilla Block 19 Interpretation Plan* also found that
'*There is a strong sense of ownership by the local community in the Block 19 site. There is also a vast array of groups across Australia representing the migrants who passed through the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre*' (David Lock 1996:10).

The travelling exhibition *From the Steps of Bonegilla* attracted over 90 000 people in the three years that it toured including 12 879 visitors who saw the exhibition at the National Archives of Australia, 11 July - 26 October 2003.

Entries from a visitor comment book which accompanied the *From the Steps of Bonegilla* touring exhibition (2003) indicate groups that feel they have a strong or special association with the place were:
-       migrants who arrived at Bonegilla as Displaced Persons, assisted immigrants or refuges together with their friends, spouses, children and grandchildren were the most frequent visitors to the exhibition and the most common visitors to Block 19;
-       the place's connection with the overall theme of migration attracted other immigrants who did not come via Bonegilla; and
-       nurses from the former army hospital, national servicemen and army personnel associated with the place (Cox, Sanderson Ness 2007:25).

Groups who support the Bonegilla Steering Committee's nomination for National Heritage listing include the Albury Regional Museum, Albury City Council and Wodonga City Council, ethnic groups associated with Darebin and Moreland Councils, Victoria, the Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council, Multicultural Resource and Information Centre Inc, Albury, the Albury & District Historical Society & the Wodonga Historical Society, the Albury-Wodonga Branch of the

Military History Society, the Army Museum Bandiana, Director of Heritage and Environment Department of Defence, Bonegilla Former Residents Association (Vic) Inc, the Blacktown Migrant Recourse Centre (NSW), the Australian Polish Community Services group (Footscray, Vic) and the Victorian Multicultural Commission (Melbourne).

The migrants

The nominator's claim that Block 19 Bonegilla reflects the experiences of a large number of people who migrated to Australia is supported.

The 170 000 migrants who arrived in Australia as Displaced Persons between 1947-1952 came from a war-devastated Europe. For many new arrivals there were no regrets.
'We never regretted it even for a second. We got away from the displaced persons camp. We were pleased that the Australian government brought us here and gave us a chance for life. We were the first New Australians.' – Hilja Öpik (National Archives 2003:8).

For others the experience of migration was more complicated
'They travelled alone or with their families, and arrived by air and sea to what seemed a strange but promised land. In the conservative and closed society of the 1940s many Australians were suspicious of the 'New Australians'. The new arrivals had to endure not only the hardships of a new land and language but also names like 'Dago', 'Reffo' or 'Balt' (Mason 1992:270).

Living conditions were basic. While improvements were slowly undertaken the policy of austerity was continued to ensure that the migrants did not live in better conditions than Australians. Newcomers to the camps found a bewildering array of languages and customs and there were many complaints that camp authorities gave preferential treatment to some nationalities. Migrant recollections vary considerably about conditions at Bonegilla but the migrant responses to the camp food are the most trenchant.
'It seemed to some critics that the food provided was part of the assimilation process: migrants were expected to become accustomed to the way food was selected, cooked and served in Australia' (Young 2003:6).

Two major riots occurred at Bonegilla in 1952 and 1961. Sluga claims that
'The migrants who demonstrated, up to two thousand on each occasion, had gone into debt or given up jobs on the expectation that employment would be available to them in Australia; after all, that was supposed to be why they were invited. Instead their skills went unrecognised and they were placed in Bonegilla where they had little chance of finding employment. Conditions at the camp were primitive, particularly in 1952, and many migrants felt they were being treated unjustly' (Sluga 1989:155).

The site is significant to migrants and refugees for the diversity of the experiences it represents. It yields insights into the complexity of post-war migrant and refugee experiences. In the relatively short period migrants were housed at Bonegilla it was characterised by difference – different cultures, different languages and different opinions. Multiple histories relate to each of the various cultural groups that passed

through the camp. The migrant centre was separated geographically and socially from Wodonga and Albury, as well as the rest of the nation (Pennay 2005).
 'The post war migration program was to prove to be a very important factor in the social development of Australia but for many migrants the camps were a tough introduction to their new life' (john.curtin 2007:5).

Oral histories underscore the contradictions experienced by many of the migrants who passed though Bonegilla – gratitude that many migrants felt on their arrival in Australia from war-torn Europe and the hardships of camp life, the loneliness, remoteness and enforced separations of families (Anna and Giovanni Tomc; Silvano Strazzari, Joop Mul, Luigi Mainente, Migrationheritage 2007).

In developing the *Bonegilla Block 19 Interpretation Plan* around 150 responses were received from some 500 relevant migrant bodies surveyed. While the variation and difference in perception of life at Bonegilla were common topics of discussion and debate the Plan notes that
'The overriding response gained from the community consultation was one of a positive view of the migration experience, in hindsight' (David Lock 1999:6).

The migrant experiences recorded in oral histories and the Bonegilla visitor books refer frequently to migrants' varied responses to the unfamiliarity of the surrounding environment, the seemingly vast open spaces and views. Many echoed the feeling of Marita Blows/Jarymowkz, Ukraine 1949,
'There was nothing there to uplift the spirit or claim to be civilised….just lots of people put into the vastness of Australia' (Pennay 2007:2).
'The huge sun…the space…the sound of a magpie.. Enzo Banrone
'[E]ven the frogs croaked differently to those in the Ukraine, Dmytro, 1949
"Bonegilla was just paddocks and a lagoon' Bruno, Yugoslavia, 1951
'We arrived late at night in the middle of nowhere. The train did not stop at a station but somewhere in a paddock', Alice Netherlands, 1955 (in Pennay 2007:2).

The Interpretation Plan reported that some of the migrants fondest and most frequently mentioned memories were reflections on 'the bush', and 'wonder at the sights and sounds' of Australian birds, animals wildflowers and space (Lock 1999:22). The open spaces and views out from Bonegilla are significant spaces that are associated with the migrant experience in the same degree that the remnant buildings and plantings bear witness to their occupation.

While a remnant of the much larger migrant camp complex at Bonegilla, Block 19 holds powerful connections for many people and symbolises the post World War 11 migrant experience. It forms an important part of Australia's recent collective memory and symbolises the beginnings of multicultural Australia. The associations continue to evoke strong emotional reactions with migrant communities and their families across Australia. For the migrants who spent time at the migrant reception and training centre and their descendants Bonegilla is important as their first home in Australia. For the broader Australian community Bonegilla represents the arrival of the post war migration which has transformed the nation demographically, socially and culturally.
'Migration has played a critical role in shaping Australia's society and economy' (Productivity Commission 2006:iii). *'Migration has been an important influence on Australian society and the economy – affecting the size, composition and geographic*

composition of the population and workforce (Productivity Commission 2006:22).

It **might have** outstanding value for criterion (g).

(h) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history.

The nominator claims that over 300 000 people had their first 'landfall' at Bonegilla. Many people are mentioned who have gone on to win fame or notoriety for their achievement. Sir Arvi Parbo, Franca Arena, Arman Alexander Opitz are cited in heritage registrations of the place.

Colonel EW Latchford MBE MC was officer in charge of the Allied Land Headquarters Small Arms School and his name is recognised in the naming of the 'Latchford Barracks' component of the former Bonegilla Army Camp.

The nominator has listed other names of migrants and people associated with the site: Ahmed Skaka, later imam of the Adelaide mosque; Pastor Bruno Muetzelfeldt who founded the Australian Lutheran World Service; Dr Ralph Crossley who helped shape the work of the Adult Migrant Education Program; Kondads Kalejs was fighting extradition to Latvia for war crimes when he died; Tibor Paul became principal conductor with the ABC Symphony Orchestra; Fritz Suendermann was an architect with responsibilities for the Melbourne Theatre Arts Centre and West Point Casino; Michael Cigler was an historian with interests in ethnic heritage.

While each of the above may have had an association with Bonegilla, or Block 19 in particular, their life or work has not had a sufficiently strong association with Bonegilla to merit the place meeting threshold for criterion (h).

(i) The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance as part of Indigenous tradition.
There is no evidence to demonstrate that the place might meet threshold for criterion (i).

History:
Overview of Australia migration
European immigration to Australia commenced with the transportation of convicts in 1788, followed by the arrival of free settlers from the early 1790s. The depression after the Napoleonic wars and the social upheavals of industrialisation in Britain resulted in many people emigrating to escape poverty and unemployment in the Australian colonies of New South Wales and Tasmania, especially in the 1820s and 1830s when the rapid growth of the wool industry created a significant demand for labour.

The gold rushes were the period of greatest migration to Australia in the 19th century. In the decade 1851-1860, 602 200 free immigrants and 230 596 assisted immigrants came to the Australian colonies. During this period Chinese immigrants were the largest non-British group.

The States administered their own immigration programmes prior to Federation, when the newly federated Commonwealth Government took over responsibility for migration. One of the Commonwealth first acts was to pass the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, *The Pacific Islanders Labourers Act 1901* and *The Naturalisation Act 1903,* known collectively as the White Australia Policy, which restricted immigration, enabling Australia to eliminate non-European migration. *'This formal implementation was welcomed by most of the community, Implementation of the policy included the 'Dictation Test' which was used to exclude certain applicants by requiring them to pass a dictation test in a European language, with which they were not necessarily familiar'* (Immigration Department 2007, b:1).

Britain remained the traditional source of migration throughout the first half of the 20th century. The population had passed 4 million in the early years of Federation. Between 1905 and the outbreak of World War 1 approximately 390 000 migrants arrived, principally from Britain. The population rose to almost 5 million.

In World War I, 65 000 men died fighting and migration virtually ceased. After the war the Australian Government engaged in an active immigration policy including participating in the 'Empire Settlement Scheme'. Under this scheme Britain and the immigrant receiving dominions[1] contributed equally to the cost of promoting migration from Britain. In the 1920s more than 300 000 immigrants arrived, two thirds being 'Assisted' with the Australian Government paying the cost of the fare to Australia. These migrants were principally from Britain but there was growing interest from Italians and Greeks. The population passed 6 million.

Until World War II all political parties in Australia supported the White Australia policy and immigration had been based largely on migration from Britain. This was based on the belief that people from Britain and north western Europe 'would more easily accept the Australian way of life' (john.curtin.edu2007:1). The war brought home Australia's vulnerability. Frank Forde, the acting Prime Minister, said in 1945 *'History will some day record how close Australia was to being overrun'* (Dept of Immigration 2007b:3).

From 1945 onwards, driven by the requirements of defence and labour essential to Australia's expansion after the war, the government embarked on ambitious post-war expansion combined with an extensive immigration programme. Australia showed great potential for growth and could offer people from war-torn Europe an optimistic future. Perceptions of threats to Australia in World War II and the need for a much larger population to defend itself led to the popular expression 'Populate or Perish'. *'The days of our isolation are over... The call to all Australians is to realise that, without adequate numbers, this wide brown land may not be held in another clash of arms, and to give their maximum assistance to every effort to expand its economy and assimilate more and more people who will come from overseas to link their fate with our destiny'* (Minister for Immigration Arthur Calwell's speech to the House of Representatives, November 1946 quoted in Freeman 1999:39).

In 1945 the Australian Government established the Department of Immigration and launched the first 'Migration Program'. The objective was an increase in population of two percent per annum, one percent to be by natural population growth and one percent (70 000 persons) through immigration, which included for the first time

migrants of non-British origin. The scale of the project was unprecedented (Hutchison 2004:64).

The Assisted Passage Scheme, introduced in 1946 was initially for British ex-servicemen and their dependents, selected British migrants who could travel for a fare of £10 ($20), Polish ex-servicemen and later that year extended to the Netherlands. In 1947 the assisted passage scheme was extended to Norway, France, Belgium and Denmark. In 1947, under an agreement signed with the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) to settle war refugees who were being held in camps in Germany, Austria and France awaiting repatriation, Australia agreed to settle 12 000 Displaced Persons each year with provision to increase the number. In the first year of the scheme from November 1947 – June 1948 5 138 Displaced Persons, 3 680 men and 1 458 women, were brought to Australia (Zipfel 2007). The IRO programme operated from 1947 to early 1952 and approximately 170 700 displaced persons were brought to Australia (Ward 2003:7).

Displaced Persons and other non-British migrants were subject to tighter labour arrangements and different controlling activities (Hutchison 2004:67). Voluntary and refugee migrants were offered a two year directed-labour contract in return for their passage to Australia. Under this contract there were two classes of worker - men were 'labourers' and women were 'domestics', who were to be assigned to work in 'critical areas of the economy'. Initially they were to be housed in a reception and training centre where they would be given courses in the English language and the Australian way of life (Freeman 1999:40).

The post-war period was one of scarcity for Australians. There were extreme housing and building material shortages. In June 1948 wartime rationing of meat and clothing finally ended and February 1950 petrol rationing ended in Australia (Mason 1992:266). The lack of available ships to transport migrants to Australia was a major problem. The Australian Government spent millions of pounds repairing damaged ships and by the end of 1948, ten ships were being used exclusively to bring migrants while commercial shipping was also being used (Dept of Immigration 2007b:4).

Unlike other countries that accepted European refugees, Australia established specially designated centres to receive the new arrivals (Pennay 2007b:1). Migrant camps were set up to act as reception and training centres to process the new arrivals and help newcomers adjust to Australia. Graylands WA, received Australia's first intake of Displaced Persons from the Baltic States in September 1947. Bonegilla was the second migrant reception centre, receiving the second contingent in December 1947 (known as Calwell's 'Beautiful Balts'). Simple instruction in English language reading and writing skills, civics, hygiene and information about Australian weights and measures was taught. The tuition of new arrivals in English was seen as a key factor in immigration policy.

In 1949 more than 118 800 assisted migrants came to Australia, more than four times the arrivals in 1948. From June 1949 to June 1950 67 000 migrants were received at Bonegilla. Work commenced on the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme in 1949, which employed a considerable number of migrants during its construction and operation. In that year the government created Good Neighbour Councils and the Australian Citizenship Conventions to assimilate migrants into the 'Australian Way of

Life' and help educate Australians to welcome newcomers (Tavan :77). Within most states, churches and voluntary organisations were linked through committees and branches.

In 1950 the net overseas migration was 153 685, the highest number of migrants entering Australia during the Bonegilla period, and the third highest figure of the century. The highest net overseas migration was 172 794 in 1988 and the second most in 1919, when 166 303 troops returned home from World War 1. From 1951 onwards assisted passage schemes were signed with European countries including the Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Spain and West Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland and the United States of America. In the same year the migration programme was revised due to significant unemployment. The numbers of workers was reduced and more family groups were brought to Australia. By 1955 Australia's millionth post-war migrant arrived (Dept of Immigration 2007b:5).

By 1951, the government had established three migrant reception centres for non-English speaking displaced persons from Europe, and twenty holding centres, principally to house non-working dependants, when the pressure of arrival numbers on the reception centres was too great to keep families together. The reception and training centres, like Bonegilla, were to provide for 'general medical examination and x-ray of migrants, issue of necessary clothing, payment of social service benefits, interview to determine employment potential, instruction in English and the Australian way of life generally'. Through the reception centres, the government was directly involved in community building at a time when assimilation was the prevailing ethos.

New assisted passage schemes were signed with the Netherlands and Italy in 1951. In 1952 the Japanese wives of Australian servicemen were allowed entry, and also the entry of 800 non-European refugees. These were the first elements of an immigration policy not focused on Europe (Dept of Immigration 2007b:5). As a member of the newly established *Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration*, Australia made arrangements with Austria, Belgium, Greece and Spain for assisted migration from these countries. An Assisted Migration Agreement with West Germany was signed.

In 1952 the migration programme was revised to reduce the intake of workers and bring in more family groups. In 1954 General Assisted Passage Schemes were started with migrants coming from the United States of America, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. In 1955 Australia's millionth post-war migrant arrived (Dept of Immigration 2007b:5). In 1956 the scheme 'Operation Reunion' signed with the United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and other East European countries reunited migrants with relatives in Australia. Around 30 000 migrants arrived from the countries and regions of Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, USSR, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. 14 000 refugees came to Australia following an uprising in Hungary in 1956. In 1957 and 1959 new schemes were introduced to encourage more British migration. By 1957 250 000 immigrants had come to Bonegilla.

Church and voluntary groups were encouraged to assist in the process of assimilating

migrants into the 'Australian Way of Life'. Government representatives constantly emphasised the significant contribution migrants were making to the Australian economy (Tavan 1997:83). In 1958 the *Revised Migration Act 1958* introduced a simpler system of entry permits and abolished the controversial Dictation Test (Dept of Immigration 2007b:6). This represented a further liberalising of the White Australia Policy.

Immigrants coming to Australia in the 1950s and 1960s were seeking new opportunities. Periods of economic recession and unemployment were difficult and migrants were disadvantaged. In 1961 the Italian Government did not renew the assisted migration scheme which did not start again until 1967. In 1963 the Spanish Government suspended assisted migration to Australia following unemployment problems in Australia. Some Spanish workers arrived under specific conditions (Dept of Immigration 2007b:6). In 1965 an agreement was signed with Malta for assisted migration to Australia. In that year the Australian population passed 14 million.

Following a review of non-European migration policy in 1966 the Government considered applications on the basis of suitability as settlers, ability to integrate readily and possession of useful qualifications. Also that year a 'Special Passage Assistance Program' assisted with the migration of guest workers who had completed their European work contracts. This included migrants from Scandinavia, Switzerland, France and the Americas. The scheme became the largest outside the British-Australia programme with 11 000 migrants in the first year (Dept of Immigration 2007, b:7). In 1968 refugees came to Australia as a result of the intervention by the Warsaw Pact countries into Czechoslovakia. Victims of earthquakes in Sicily came to Australia.

Policy changes were also reflected in the Good Neighbour Council's work in the 1960s. Society was becoming culturally and ethnically mixed and people were beginning to redefine the meaning of Australian national identity (Tavan 1997:89). Immigration practices based on the idea of 'White Australia' were criticised as being racially discriminatory and the policy of 'assimilation' was replaced with the term' integration'. Changes to the integration policy of the mid-60s until 1972 were brought about through recognition that
'large numbers of people whose first language was not English were suffering hardships in settling in Australia. Most were Europeans of non-British origin who had come to Australia after World War II (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2007).

In 1973, two years after Bonegilla had closed, the Labour Government's Minister for Immigration announced an immigration policy based on 'multiculturism' (Hutchison 2004:65) *'By 1973, the word 'multiculturalism' had been introduced and minority groups were forming local and national associations to promote their language and heritage within the mainstream. Now it has progressed to the point where it is central to Australian society*' (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2007).

From 1947 to 1954, the Italian-born population in Australia more than trebled to nearly 120 000 people. By 1961 it had reached over 228 000, peaking at around 288 300 in 1971. The massive influx of Italian migrants in the 1950s contributed to the expansion of what came to be known as 'Little Italys' in the major cities. By the

1960s, whole precincts were devoted to Italian businesses, shops, entertainments, coffee bars and restaurants. Italian social clubs sprang up across the country (Fact sheet Italian migration). The number of Greek born migrants, 160 200 also peaked in 1971 having increased sixfold since 1954. The number of Dutch born migrants, 102 083 peaked earlier in 1961, doubling since 1954 and 50 times since 1947. German born migrants reached 110 000, between 1961 and 1986 while after 1968 30 000 Turkish migrants arrived (Jupp 1991:77).

Australian society has been enriched by the changed composition and great diversity the post-war migration programme has stimulated.
'*Immigration has given Australia a rich cultural and ethnic diversity and the variety of cultures has added to the quality of Australian life'* (Mason 1992:320).

Block 19 Bonegilla
There is archaeological evidence that large numbers of indigenous people occupied land about the junction of the Mitta Mitta River with the Murray River prior to white settlement. In 1835 Charles Ebden established 'Bonegilla' as one of several large pastoral runs close to the principal Murray River Crossing Place on the route between Sydney and Port Phillip. That run was subsequently subdivided into smaller farms. By the time of the Second World War the area was a cleared grazing landscape.

During the Second World War army installations and war-related industries were moved to country districts away from vulnerable capital cities and coastal centres. Albury-Wodonga was strategically important at the break-of-gauge. Munitions depots, ordnance stores and army units were based nearby at Bonegilla, Bandiana, Wirlinga and Ettamogah, so that men and their equipment might be easily dispatched north or south in case of invasion.

Construction of over 800 buildings for a 'hutted military camp' on 240ha (620 acres) of resumed land at Bonegilla proceeded rapidly through late 1940. The camp consisted of twenty-four blocks of huts, each generally containing rows of huts centred upon a kitchen and messes, with ablution and laundry buildings to service each block. The buildings were mostly standard 'P1' army-type huts, which were usually unlined, timber-framed huts with corrugated iron cladding and low-pitched, gabled roofs clad either with corrugated iron or asbestos cement. They commonly accommodated twenty men and had no internal partitions.

An advance party moved into the camp on 23 September 1940. By the end of the month 3 204 officers and other ranks from various infantry battalions under Southern Command had been mustered there. Among the various units more permanently located at Bonegilla were an Infantry Officers Training School, a Signals Training Group, an Army Gas School, a Small Arms School and a Bomb Disposal Unit.

Members of the Australian Women's Army Service were stationed at the camp from about 1942. The camp also housed 106 General Hospital, which, with 1 200 beds, was one of the nation's larger military hospitals, and, towards the end of the war, specialised in treating soldiers suffering from tuberculosis. Italian prisoners-of-war were accommodated at Bonegilla from May 1944 to March 1946. Block 19 was initially used as an Officer Training School. Through most of the war it was home to the Allied Land Headquarters Small Arms School led by Colonel Latchford.

Army camps across Australia were converted for use as migrant reception centres. Bonegilla was the second, the largest and longest-lived migrant reception and training centre. Bonegilla was the second migrant camp with the first intake of Displaced Persons 839 immigrants, arriving in December 1947. It was capable of accommodating 7 000 people, with another 1 000 in tents (Hutchison 2004:64). Its location was considered ideal as it was remote from Sydney and Melbourne, yet accessible by rail to both metropolitan centres and other work sites.

The camp layout in 1940 for Block 19 comprised a symmetrical arrangement of 22 standard 'P' type army huts. The most common arrangement was the 20 man sleeping hut, 'P1' with no partitions. For officer accommodation the 'P1' hut would be provided with separate cubicles. There were other standard type army structures for use as drying rooms, ablutions, laundries, latrines, garages, stores and an assembly hall. By 1945 additional buildings had been added including the central kitchen, mess and hall (CMP 1996).

Most buildings in the training camps were the army 'P' series, designed to be constructed by local labour using readily available timber.
'*Standardised, cheap and reliable, the 'P' hut was adapted to become messes, laundries, guard houses, headquarters, W\Quartermaster (Q) stores and aid stations*' (Nolan 2007:3).

While these buildings were designed as short term structures, many survived as they were adapted for new uses in a changing Australia. Nolan, in an analysis of Second World War timber buildings, found it difficult to estimate the number of huts that remain. He concluded that '*Examples in original condition are becoming increasingly rare*' (Nolan 2007:1).

The first 839 newcomers at Bonegilla entered a camp that with primitive amenities and was controlled by the Army. Groups from Albury and Wodonga, such as the Lutheran and Catholic churches, the YWCA, the CWA, Rotary and Apex arranged welcomes and provided some support. At Block 19 in 1948, there was a hall, kitchen and messes, a Department of Labour and National Service office, quartermaster, ration store, linen store, post office, regimental aid post, lecture room and accommodation for administrative staff as well as migrants. Each person was given an allocation of linen and grey woollen blankets and crockery, cutlery and other items needed for their stay at Bonegilla, to be returned on their departure. Apart from providing accommodation the main function of the centre was to provide Alien Registration and allocate employment. Migrants were placed in work and accommodation and transport provided. Families were often separated as men were sent to work on large infrastructure projects, while women and children remained in holding centres like Bonegilla.

The number of immigrants increased rapidly once shipping became available in late 1948, and the Army withdrew from Bonegilla in April 1949. From June 1949 to June 1950 67 000 migrants were received at Bonegilla. The flow of Displaced Persons slowed in late 1951, and Bonegilla received assisted migrants, at first from Britain, the Netherlands and Italy. Immigration agreements were signed with countries which extended the programme across Europe to Turkey in 1968. Many refugees stayed at

Bonegilla (Hutchison 2004:64).

Improvements were made to the centre to receive the assisted migrants. The buildings in Block 19 were relined and painted. Septic tanks were added to some blocks, but additional deep-pit latrines were built in other parts of the camp. By 1953 many of the open plan accommodation buildings had been converted into cubicles. Typically a cubicle was equipped with two wire stretchers, one camp folding table, one chest of drawers, one folding canvas chair, two fibre mattresses, one bedside mat and one pair of curtains (Freeman Leeson 1996:23). Later in the 1950s the accommodation was classified as primary, secondary or unserviceable. Primary blocks at Bonegilla included Blocks 12-19, 21 and 23. The camp as a whole had all the amenities of a country town with a school, kindergarten, creative and leisure centre, tennis courts, cinema, recreation halls, a youth centre, banks, post office, railway platform, canteen and three churches. Concerts' plays, processions, dances and movies all added flavour to life at Bonegilla. Pictures were screened at the theatre three times a week or more if the centre was full. Festivals, anniversaries, birthday and name days were celebrated with love and ingenuity (From the Steps of Bonegilla 2005:13).

The landscape was gradually transformed from a windy, scrubby, uninviting place to a gentler environment of trees and shrubs. This included creating domestic scale gardens around the huts, broad scale horticultural gardens providing food for the camp and tree planting for beautification, shade and wind protection (Freeman Leeson 1996:42). White painted stone edging around garden beds and road edges was characteristic of the camp. Large areas of vegetables were planted and avenue and windbreak plantings established in the 1950s, including screen planting of eucalypts to the north of the ablution block and a linear planting of cottonwood in front of Tudor Hall. A number of trees were commemorative plantings, marking the coronation year in 1953. Large numbers of pines were planted as windbreaks in the 1960s.

The national press and the parliament paid close attention to the conditions at Bonegilla in 1949 when thirteen children, recently arrived, died from malnutrition. The centre captured national attention again in 1952 and 1961 when, in times of economic recession, migrants protested against the lack of employment available to them. The 1961 Bonegilla riot caused the non-renewal of the Italo-Australian immigration agreement. Following the 1961 riot by discontented migrants the Department of Immigration purchased the camp from the Department of the Army.

In the 1950s when Bonegilla was the only major reception and training centre operating about two thirds of all assisted 'non-British' migrants were passing through Bonegilla. The system generally still in place was that bread winners were allocated to employment and families accommodated in holding centres (Sluga 1988:92). During the financial year 1960-61, a period of recession and a difficult labour market, 52% of assisted male migrants were first placed in manufacturing work, 13% in rural production, 22% in building and construction, while women had mostly been given jobs in domestic work or remained in the camps (Sluga 1988:103).

The number of migrants at Bonegilla at any one time fluctuated between 1 500 and 8 500 through the 1950s and 1960s. By 1958, 196 000 migrants and refugees had passed through Bonegilla, including a large number of Hungarian refugees in 1957.

The annual immigration intakes declined sharply to 3 500 in 1965. They lifted again in 1967 and 1968 with an influx of refugees from Czechoslovakia, when Bonegilla was the only migrant centre still operating in Australia. Only 1 200 migrants arrived in 1971, and the centre was closed at the end of that year. Migrants expected a better standard of living than a military style camp. Officials preferred to house them in hostels close to employment opportunities and saw no need to continue with language instruction or to offer resettlement support at a designated reception centre.

About half of the 170 000 Displaced People Australia took from post-war Europe passed through Bonegilla. Altogether over 300 000 people spent some time at Bonegilla before the centre closed in 1971, for periods varying from a few days to ten years. These migrants and their descendants now number over 1.5 million Australians (David Lock 1999:2). Since 1945 almost six million people have emigrated to Australia and later become Australian citizens (Migrationheritage fields of memory 2007:5). Prior to the post war migration policy the great majority of immigrants were British. The change in immigration policy was an outstanding representation of post-war migration which changed the nature of Australian society.

The second intake of Displaced Persons arrived at Perth on the *General Heintzlman* on 26 November 1947, were accommodated at the Graylands and Swanbourne hostels, continued their journey on the *Kanimbla* to Melbourne and train to Bonegilla. Bonegilla Army Camp had been selected as the site for the second migrant camp with 839 Displaced Persons arriving in December 1947. Its location was considered ideal as it was remote from Sydney and Melbourne, yet accessible by rail to both metropolitan centres and other work sites. It was capable of accommodating 7 000 people, with another 1 000 in tents (Hutchison 2004:64).

At Block 19 in 1948 there was a hall, kitchen and messes, a Department of Labour and National Service office, quartermaster, ration store, linen store, post office, regimental aid post, lecture room and accommodation for administrative staff as well as migrants. Groups from Albury and Wodonga, such as the Lutheran and Catholic churches, the YWCA, the CWA, Rotary and Apex arranged welcomes and provided some support to newly arrived immigrants.

The Army withdrew from Bonegilla in April 1949. In that year more than 118 800 assisted migrants came to Australia, more than four times the arrivals in 1948. From June 1949 to June 1950 67 000 migrants were received at Bonegilla. In 1950 the net overseas migration was 153 685, the highest number of migrants entering Australia during the Bonegilla period, and the third highest figure of the century. Between 1947 and 1953 more than 170 000 Displaced Persons came to Australia from war-torn Europe. Bonegilla received and processed more than half of all the Displaced Persons that arrived before 1953 (Pennay 2007b:1).

Following the cessation of the Displaced Persons scheme in 1951 Bonegilla started to receive assisted migrants and was used as a holding centre for dependents, which allowed families to stay together (Pennay 2001:12). At first the migrants came from Britain, the Netherlands and Italy and later from some of the seventeen European countries with which Australia had entered agreements. Eventually in 1968 the programme extended across Europe to Turkey. As the numbers of migrants arriving on the assisted migration programme increased British migrants were not usually sent

to Bonegilla as they did not require the English language training that the centre provided for non-English speakers (Pennay 2004 :18). Several groups of refugees came to Australia, including those from Hungary after the 1956 uprising, 'White Russians' from China in the early 1960s and Christian Armenians from Egypt in the later 1960s. Many of these assisted migrants stayed at Bonegilla (Hutchison 2004:64).

The basic unlined timber framed 'P' series World War 11 army huts with corrugated iron cladding and low-pitched gabled roofs clad either with corrugated iron or asbestos cement were utilised at Block 19 as migrant and staff housing, office accommodation, recreation and mess halls, kitchens and ablution blocks. The huts usually accommodated 20 men and had no internal partitions. Little was done to prepare the facilities for housing migrants in 1947 (Pennay 2007b:2). Used as an officer's school during the war, Block 19 had a good kitchen, messes and sewer link. As a favoured block, it was used as an initial administrative centre and for accommodating the female members of the first contingent of Displaced Persons. Records show that the army and immigration department were flexible and inventive in moving buildings around and putting them to different uses as required.

Improvements were made to the centre to receive the assisted migrants who were not hardened to camp life as the Displaced Persons had been, coming from refugee camps in Europe. Canteens were lined, huts painted and gravel spread between the buildings in preparation for the first British arrivals. The process of demolishing, relocating and modifying the buildings started in 1951 and continued to 1964. The building known later as the Hume Club (Building 176) was used as a quartermaster store and an employment office in 1947. Employment interviewing and issuing of tickets to Wollongong, Newcastle, the SA railways and the Cairns cane fields took place there before upgrading with the inclusion of a dance floor and its later designation. In addition to the improvements to the buildings, changes were made to the cooking arrangements. In some blocks migrants were segregated by nationality so that different food preferences and national tastes could be catered for. This was considered a great improvement from the standard fare previously provided. Colonel Guinn, who took over as director in 1954, saw staff as having an important role in community building exercises and immigrants were employed at Bonegilla. Married couples with two jobs could avoid separation. At any one time there could be over 400 migrants employed in a variety of occupations such as kitchen, garden, works, hospital, transport, recreation or office staff or supervisors.

In 1967 the army requisitioned the eastern section of Bonegilla and Block 19 was reoccupied by the Army Catering Corps cooking school and the Royal Army Service Corps transport training unit. The Block 19 kitchen and eating halls had been changed prior to 1967 when the central dining area was constructed, with the three messes separately serving officers, sergeants and other ranks. 16 buildings in Block 19 were demolished by the Army between 1968 and 1970 (CMP 1996). Following the closure of the Bonegilla Migrant Centre in 1971 the Army Survey Corps occupied some buildings between 1970 and 1985 (Young 2003:3). The remaining path layout and concrete slabs reflect the earlier greater building density.

By 1986 the Defence Department declared the remaining buildings at Block 19 surplus to its requirements. A Bonegilla Immigration Museum Committee was formed in 1984 to establish a national immigration museum and celebrate the role of

migration which culminated in the transfer of Block 19 by Defence to the State of Victoria in 2002.

The number of migrants at Bonegilla at any one time fluctuated between 1 500 and 8 500 through the 1950s and 1960s. By 1958, 196 000 migrants and refugees had passed through Bonegilla, including a large number of Hungarian refugees in 1957. The annual immigration intakes declined sharply to 3 500 in 1965. They lifted again in 1967 and 1968 with an influx of refugees from Czechoslovakia, when Bonegilla was the only migrant centre still operating in Australia. Many migrants in each intake in the 1960s only stayed for two or three weeks as they could find accommodation closer to their workplaces. As the army involvement in the Vietnam War increased pressures on accommodation could be met by surplus migrant buildings. In 1966 the eastern section of the Bonegilla migrant camp was requisitioned by the Army and a fence separated the migrants from the military personnel. Only 1 200 migrants arrived in 1971, and the centre was closed at the end of that year. Altogether over 300 000 people spent some time at Bonegilla before the centre closed, for periods varying from a few days to ten years. These migrants and their descendants now number over 1.5 million Australians (David Lock 1999:2). Since 1945 almost six million people have emigrated to Australia and later become Australian citizens (Migrationheritage fields of memory 2007:5).

'The great departure which Calwell initiated, was in assisting large numbers of Europeans to immigrate with the support of public funds. This meant organising transport, accommodation and employment to an even greater extent than had been needed by British immigrants in the 1920s' (Jupp 1990:286).

The large number of immigrants at Bonegilla had a significant effect on the economy, demographic composition and way of life of the regional communities of Albury and Wodonga. As a large migrant reception centre Bonegilla could accommodate up to 7 000 people at any one time. It had all the amenities of a country town and, occasionally, had more people than nearby Wodonga. In 1965 the *Border Morning Mail* reported very favourably on the civic centre with its cinema, three churches, a creative and leisure centre, tennis courts, a youth centre and kindergarten (Pennay 2004 :13). There was a railway platform, banks, post office, recreation halls, school and hospital. Block 19 remains as a representative of one of the 24 blocks, each block with its accommodation and administrative buildings and its own dining room and kitchen.

The large number of immigrants accommodated at Bonegilla meant that there were often more people in Bonegilla than there were in Wodonga. The new settlers contributed to the local economy in many ways. The commercial value of the Bonegilla Centre was stressed when community unease grew in 1949 as the numbers of occupants increased (Pennay 2001:8). The economic stimulus to the local community was evident. Perishable foods were provided from the immediate district for an average 4 000 people. The value of food and firewood required was estimated at £30 000 ($60 000) a month. Bonegilla meant 200 sheep or 20 bullocks per day from the local farmers. The new Council abattoir in Albury had difficulty coping with the increased activity and it closed shortly after Bonegilla closed in 1971 (Young 2003:4). More than 1 000 passenger fares were paid to the local bus proprietors each week. Clothing, electrical appliances, tools, bicycles and wool were popular purchases from the local retailers, as was wine from the local vineyards. It seems that the

availability of a large workforce attracted new industries to Wodonga (Pennay 2004:8).

Bonegilla was isolated socially from the local townships. As a transit camp most migrants passed through and did not become part of the community. Many migrants however did settle locally, finding work at Bonegilla, at Bandiana and in the nearby towns. The population of Albury Wodonga nearly doubled between 1947 and 1971 while the number of overseas-born in the district increased eight-fold. Most migrants who settled in Wodonga were born in Germany or the former Yugoslavia while settlers in Albury were from Latvia and Lithuania. The migrants who settled at Lavington, a small village north of Albury, were mainly from the Netherlands and Germany. Both Wodonga and Lavington offered new settlers cheap land and low rates. In 1958 the headmaster of the Lavington School estimated that 100 pupils out of 300 had New Australian parents (Pennay 2004 21).

Between 1947 and 1973 Australia's workforce increased by 2.6 million to 5.8 million. Migrants contributed half this increase. Immigration was an economic success: providing 50% of labour force growth from 1947 to 1973 and giving Australia with the highest rate of increase of any OECD country (Castles 1988 :24). Most European migrants between the 1950s and 1970s were employed in industry. The growth of industries such as steel, motor vehicles, building and construction and public utilities has depended largely on the skills and energy of migrant workers. Factory production grew level with the output from primary industry in 1953-54, and continued to forge ahead. The new wealth of secondary industries helped increase the national income from an estimated $2 768 million in 1946-47 to $37 047 million in 1972-73. Factories increased from more than 31 200 employing 745 000 people to about 62 600 employing more than 1 381 000. Immigrants supplied more than 70% of the extra workers needed in the steel industry in the early post-war years. A large proportion of migrants worked in the motor vehicle industry and an estimated one third of building trade employees were migrants. From the first intake of male Displaced Persons at Bonegilla, 180 were directed to the construction industry, 74 to mining or quarrying, 190 to the timber industry, 22 to salt harvesting, 15 to flax production and 200 to fruit picking (Freeman Leeson 1996:19). Migrants played a major part in the development of the $800 million Snowy Mountain Hydro Electric Scheme. At the peak of construction 60% of the work force were migrants. The 1971 census recorded a workforce of 5 240 414, of which 1 403 778 or 26.8% were born overseas. Of these migrants, nearly 37% were employed as tradesmen, production and process workers and labourers, over 19% were clerical workers, nearly 24% professional or technically relate workers, and 30% working in services, sport or recreation (Department of Labour and Immigration 1975:31). Many thousands of women were employed in clothing, footwear and textiles.
'They were a dynamic influence on Australia's growth.....Their presence could not be ignored in the major cities, the unions, or the education and welfare systems (Jupp 1991:80).

The effects of migration on the growth of Australian cities is very significant. About four out of five migrants settled in capital cities, particularly Sydney and Melbourne. About half the growth of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth between 1966 and 1971 was from the new settlers. They contributed to a third of the growth of Brisbane and one quarter to Hobart. Most of the remaining migrants settled in other large non-

metropolitan cities. By 1971 80% of all overseas born people were living in the largest ten cities, compared with 60% of the Australian born population (National Population Inquiry 1978:14).

About 1966, the Army requisitioned some blocks to re-occupy for military purposes so as to meet accommodation pressures placed on it with the nation's increasing involvement in the Vietnam War and its commitment to a National Service Scheme. The Royal Australian Army Service Corps and the Royal Australian Survey Corps occupied Block 19 and adjacent blocks. During the 1970s most buildings at Bonegilla were demolished except Block 19.

A Back to Bonegilla Reunion was held in 1987, followed by Bonegilla Festivals in 1997, 1999 and 2005. A Conservation Management Plan was developed in 1996. In 2000 the Victorian Government granted $2 million for a commemorative centre and in 2002 the Army transferred Block 19 to the Victorian Government. The site has on-going use by ethnic groups and community organisations.

Principal changes to the site
Alterations to the fabric of the place are held in the records of the *Border Morning Mail* (now *Border Mail),* National Archives of Australia and the Albury Regional Museum Bonegilla Collection held at the Albury Library. No other migrant centre is so well documented with such good research potential.

Places associated with Block 19's use as migrant centre include the Army Theatre within Latchford Barracks, Bonegilla Hall (part of the former hospital) and the Bonegilla railway platform where many immigrants first arrived.

The principal changes to the Block 19 site as an army camp and migrant centre are detailed through a series of sequential plans (Freeman Leeson and Daniell, 1996).

Many of the corrugated asbestos roofs have been replaced by corrugated iron. Demolition of buildings has occurred over time.

[1] 'By the mid-19th century, the term *dominion* was most commonly used for wholly or virtually self-governing states of the British Empire, particularly for nations which reached that stage of constitutional development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Newfoundland' (Wikipedia, 2007)

Condition:
Block 19 has remained intact because it was comparatively well appointed and used initially and subsequently as a prime accommodation site. From the beginning it served as an Officers Training School and, unlike many of the other blocks, it was sewered. It still presented comparatively well in 1951-52 and was used to house the first assisted migrants, who were not recruited from European refugee camps and were expected to require a style of accommodation better than that in other blocks. The Army continued to use Block 19 when it had abandoned all other blocks. This continued use meant it was comparatively well maintained.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment provided a report on the condition of the site when the Army transferred the site to the Victorian Government in 2002.

The Victorian State Government provided $2 million in small increments over three financial years, 2001-2002. They have been spent in developing a masterplan document and business plans for operation of the site and development of basic visitor infrastructure including a approach road and carparking, contextual landscaping, an interpretive structure, interpretation materials, a café structure with visitor facilities. It has also commissioned a commemorative artwork. None of the Victorian funds were spent on the conservation of the fragile light timber huts.

Funds were provided in 2002 from the Cultural Heritage Projects Program for refurbishing the kitchen, the messes, Tudor Hall and three former staff flats (buildings 85, 93, 91, 104 and 105). The Victorian State Government provided $2 million over three financial years, 2001-2002 to develop a master plan document and business plans for operation of the site and development of basic visitor infrastructure including an approach road and car parking, contextual landscaping, an interpretive structure, interpretation materials, a café structure with visitor facilities and a commemorative artwork. None of the Victorian funds were spent on the conservation of the fragile light timber huts.

The condition of the buildings is generally fair to good externally and poor to good internally. Urgent conservation work is being undertaken on the Hume Building and the ablution block (Building 68) (2007).

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