

## RAIL BRIDGE



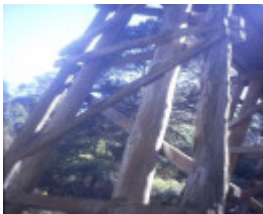
RAIL BRIDGE SOHE 2008



1 railway trestle bridge over  
monbulk creek selby side  
elevation apr1997



h01439 rail bridge over  
monbulk creek selby docking  
from underneath she project  
she



h01439 rail bridge over  
monbulk creek selby  
supporting beam she project  
she



h01439 rail bridge over  
monbulk creek selby towards  
menzies creek she project  
she

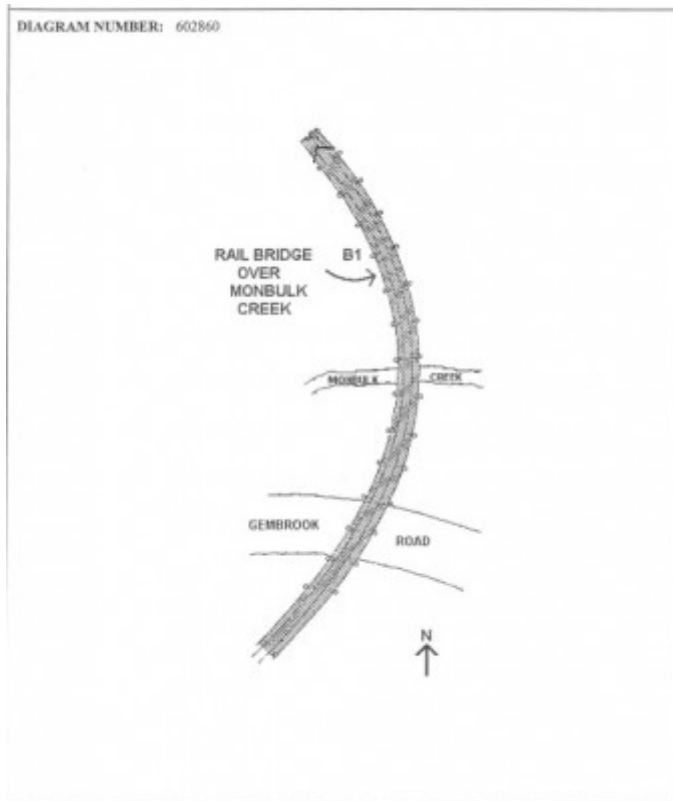


Diagram 602860

## Location

MONBULK CREEK, BELGRAVE-GEMBROOK ROAD BELGRAVE, YARRA RANGES SHIRE

## Municipality

YARRA RANGES SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1439

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO32

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

January 7, 1999

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 1, 1999

What is significant?

In 1899 construction of the Ferntree Gully-Gembrook Line began which included the Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek, Selby. Victoria Railways architects designed the line and The Board of Lands and Works Construction Branch employed one hundred and eighty men for a period of sixteen months, many of them local timber workers, as labour. One of the features of the construction of the railway, and in particular the Trestle Bridge, was the use of construction methods which utilised native bush timbers. These were not in ready supply at this time as the area had been devastated by bushfire in 1898. The narrow gauge line supplied local people with goods and services on a regular basis and provided reliable access to markets for local industries as well as revitalising the tourist industry in the picturesque hills. In 1954 the narrow gauge line was closed and in 1958 management of the line was handed over to The Puffing Billy Preservation Society. The Puffing Billy steam train services began on the line in 1965 as a tourist concern. In 1977 the ownership of the line was handed over to the Tourist Railway Board. The Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek, Selby is a curved, timber trestle bridge carrying a single narrow gauge track which spans the Monbulk Creek and the Belgrave Emerald Rd. A viewing bay has been constructed for tourists, off Belgrave-Emerald Rd. The bridge is 85 metres long, 12 metres high at its highest point and comprises 14 spans of 6 metres, curved to a radius of 20 metres. The bridge has a tight 3 chain curvature. It was constructed from local, native bush timbers. The bridge has undergone progressive replacement of damaged timbers. Major structural repair and conservation works were carried out in 1983 and 1988.

How is it significant?

The Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek, Selby is of historical, social and architectural importance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek is of historical importance for its association with the construction of narrow gauge railway lines in Victoria. During the 1890s depression, broad gauge railway line construction was not considered economically viable and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways in 1896 considered alternative railway construction techniques. Following the committee's recommendations, four narrow gauge rail lines were built in Victoria between 1899 and 1916. The Rail Bridge is an important component of the former narrow gauge Ferntree Gully-Gembrook Line. The bridge is also of historical importance for its association with the economic stimulus the narrow gauge railway generated in the Dandenongs. Businesses that benefited included the Nobelius Nurseries, which became the largest nursery in the Southern Hemisphere in the pre World War One period. The timber, tourism and soft fruit industries also benefited from the lines' construction.

The Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek is historically and socially important for its association with the recreational tourism industry in Victoria. The journey into the hills, including the ride over this famous bridge, became a popular weekend recreational activity enjoyed by local and overseas visitors from the lines' initial construction in 1899, and after its reopening as the Puffing Billy Line in 1965. The bridge is socially important for its associations with the community movement to protect and restore the narrow gauge line from the 1950s. This movement is an example of community concern over heritage issues which developed within parts of the Victorian community in the post war period.

The Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek is architecturally important because it is an essentially intact example of a timber trestle bridge and is possibly the most extremely curved surviving bridge in Victoria. It is also significant as an example of trestle bridge construction, using construction methods which utilised local native timbers.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

**Places of worship:** In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

**Subdivision/consolidation:** Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

#### EXEMPTIONS FROM PERMITS:

(Classes of works or activities which may be undertaken without a permit under Part 4 of the Heritage Act 1995)

#### General Conditions

1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.
4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.
5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

\* No permit required for routine maintenance of the Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek

\* No permit required to replace like with like on the Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek

Construction dates	1899,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	HORSESHOE BRIDGE, MONBULK TRESTLE BRIDGE, PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY TRESTLE BRIDGE,
Hermes Number	1016
Property Number	

## History

The bridge is historically significant as an important element on the historic 'Puffing Billy', narrow gauge railway line and in the surrounding landscape. The opening of the line was significant for its role in providing a stimulus for primary producers such as Carl Alex Nobelius, whose nursery became the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. (Beeston, 1995)

The Railway Bridge over Monbulk Creek, Selby was constructed in 1899 on the narrow gauge Ferntree Gully - Gembrook Line, by the Board of Land and Works. It consists of 14, 20' spans supported on timber trestles on a tight curvature, carrying the historic Puffing Billy single narrow gauge railway line over Monbulk Creek and the Belgrave-Emerald Road .

The Railway Trestle Bridge over Monbulk Creek near Selby is of significance as an important element on the historic 'Puffing Billy' narrow gauge railway line and in the surrounding landscape. It is a representative example of one of the four 2' 6" lines to be constructed in Victoria, all in mountainous locations. The railway structure is a rare and essentially intact example of a timber trestle railway bridge in Victoria. It is also significant as a notable example of timber trestle bridge construction. It demonstrates a distinctive and now rarely used construction method that utilised native bush timbers .

The opening of the line was significant for its role in providing a stimulus for primary producers such as Carl Alex Nobelius, whose nursery became the largest in the southern hemisphere .

### COMPARISON:

Timber Trestle Railway Bridges currently on the Victorian Heritage Register

H1435, Railway Bridge, South of Noojee-Powell Town Rd, Noojee, 1919, timber trestle, 18 span  
H1436, Railway Bridge Orbost-Bairnsdale Line, Nowa Nowa, 1916, timber trestle  
H1442, Railway Bridge over Curdies River, Curdie's Siding, Timboon, 1892, timber trestle, 31 span  
H1695, Railway Bridge over Hanfords Creek, Wandong-Bendigo Railway Line, Pyalong, 1890, timber trestle  
H1451, Railway Bridge over Mollison's Creek, Wandong-Bendigo Railway Line, Pyalong, 1889, timber trestle, 26 span

There are five other timber railway bridges listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. Two located at Pyalong (1889 and 1890), Timboon (1892), Nowa Nowa (1916) and Noojee (1919). The Selby Trestle Bridge is the only trestle bridge on a narrow gauge line which is still in regular use as part of a working steam rail line. It is the most extremely curved timber trestle bridge surviving in Victoria.

Associated People: Carl Alex Nobelius, whose nursery became the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. (Beeston, 1995)

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended in that the Heritage Register Number 1439 in the category described as a Heritage Place is now described as:

Rail Bridge, Monbulk Creek, Belgrave-Selby Line, Selby, Yarra Ranges Shire Council.

EXTENT:

1. To the extent of: All the structure marked B1, known as Rail Bridge, over Monbulk Creek including decking, superstructure, timber trestles and abutments as marked on diagram 602860 held by the Executive Director.

Dated: 3 December 1998.

RAY TONKIN

Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G1 7 January 1999 p.34]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*