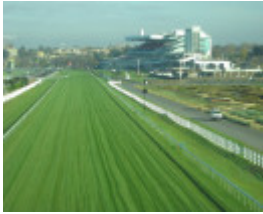


# FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE



Flemington  
Racecourse\_straight and  
stands\_KJ\_15 Jun 09



Flemington  
RACEcourse\_remnants of  
bluestone stand\_KJ\_17 july  
09



Flemington  
racecourse\_former  
Convalescent jockeys  
Lodge\_KJ\_July 09 july 09



Flemington  
Racecourse\_betting ring  
& tote buildings\_KJ\_15  
Jun 09



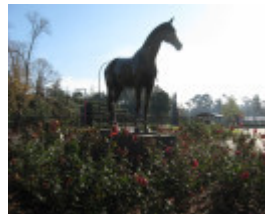
Flemington  
Racecourse\_men's  
toilets\_KJ\_15 Jun 09



Flemington  
Racecourse\_bluestone walls  
near Hill Entrance\_KJ\_15 Jun  
09



Flemington  
Racecourse\_horse walk to  
mounting yard\_KJ 15 Jun 09



Flemington Racecourse\_Phar  
Lap statue\_KJ 15 Jun 09



Flemington Racecourse\_Bart  
Cummings statue\_KJ\_15 Jun  
09



Flemington Racecourse-  
Members Stand & Makybe  
Diva statue\_KJ\_15 Jun



Flemington Racecourse\_rear  
of Members Stand\_KJ\_15  
Jun 09



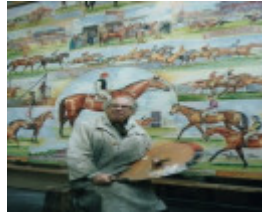
Flemington  
Racecourse\_brass  
bell\_KJ\_15 Jun 09



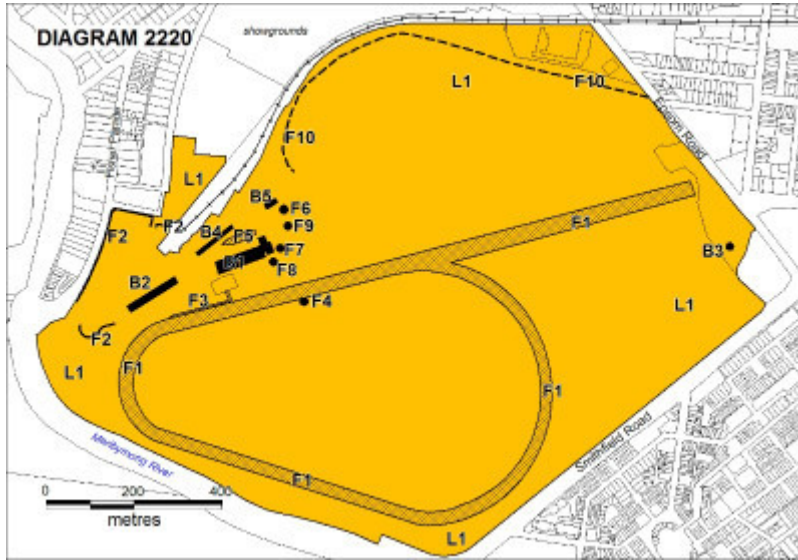
Flemington Racecourse\_entrance to Members Drive & entrance box\_KJ\_15 Jun 09



Flemington Racecourse\_chronographic clock\_KJ\_15 Jun 09



Freedman with part of mural



PROV H2220 flemington racecourse plan

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## Location

EPSOM ROAD AND SMITHFIELD ROAD FLEMINGTON, MELBOURNE CITY

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2220

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO272

## VHR Registration

October 8, 2009

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 21, 2009

What is significant?

Flemington Racecourse has operated continuously since 1840, when the first race meeting was held here on the Maribyrnong River flats north of the city, and in 1848 352 acres of Crown Land was reserved as a public racecourse. Since then the course has undergone continual development and change. In the 1850s racing in Victoria boomed, with many courses established throughout the colony, but the annual autumn meeting at Flemington was already established as the main event on the racing calendar. In 1859 the results of the Australian Championship Sweepstakes were telegraphed to Sydney, a first for an Australian sporting event, and a railway line to the course opened in 1861. In the same year the first Melbourne Cup was run, over a two mile course, an event which has been held annually since then and has become internationally famous. The Victoria Racing Club (VRC) was formed in 1864 to organise racing at Flemington, and major improvements at the racecourse were carried out under the administration of the first two secretaries, Robert Cooper Bagot (secretary 1864-1881) and his successor Henry Byron Moore (secretary 1881-1925). Bagot replaced the coarse grass on the track, graded the lawns, and drained the swampy land in the centre of the course to make 'the Flat', with that area and 'the Hill' becoming the main viewing areas. In 1873 he built a members' grandstand, known as Bagot's Cowshed, at the base of the hill. Moore built four new grandstands, one a bluestone stand built in 1883-86 and incorporating elegant vice-regal facilities, elements of which survive beneath the Old Hill Stand. At the same time the existing bluestone walls were built around the base of the hill and, more extensively, around the northern perimeter of the Hill. Moore also initiated the creation of the impressive lawns and gardens, particularly the rose gardens, which are still an important feature of the course. Three paintings done from 1887 by the Austrian painter Carl Kahler, now in the Committee Rooms, show the appearance of the course at that time. Another initiative of Moore's was to establish a Distressed Jockey's Fund to assist injured jockeys, and in 1893 he built at the course a Jockeys' Convalescent Lodge, designed by the architect William Salway. The first newsreel filmed in Australia was taken at Flemington on Cup Day in 1896. In 1922 the VRC began a radical redevelopment of the course, with the major focus shifting further to the east. Many of the early timber structures were demolished, Bagot's stand became a public stand, and a new Members' Stand, designed by the architects Robertson & Marks, was built in 1924. The legalisation of the totalisator for betting in 1930 required the construction of new tote buildings in 1931, several of which remain (though altered) around the betting ring north of the 1924 Members' Stand. Racing continued at Flemington during both World Wars, though part of the racecourse was occupied by the armed forces during WWII. Further major redevelopment occurred during the 1950s, with the construction of what is now known as the Old Hill Stand and the Lawn Stand replacing Bagot's Cowshed. Fashion has always played an important part in Flemington race meetings, and the 'Fashions in the Field', which has become an institution at the course, was introduced at the Centenary Melbourne Cup in 1960. Many early structures have been demolished to make way for improved facilities. Further expansion has seen the construction of the new Hill Stand in 1978-79 and the Prince of Wales Stand in 1984, with The Grandstand (a new stand for members) built above this in 2000. Further changes have been carried out, particularly in the birdcage (where horses are stabled while awaiting their races) and car parking areas, in the early twenty-first century as part of a new master plan for the course.

The Flemington Racecourse occupies a 127 hectares site on flat land bordered to the south and west by the Maribyrnong River and to the north by a raised escarpment running along the northern boundary, which culminates in the Hill at the north-west corner. Internally there is a road system which accesses all parts of the course, and has entrances from Epsom Road, Leonard Crescent, Fisher Parade and Smithfield Road. The centre of the site contains the course proper, with the Flat and two other tracks and a car parking area inside this. To the north are most of the site infrastructure and public facilities (grandstands, betting facilities, public and members' areas and car parking) and to the east are recently-constructed horse training facilities, the new VRC

Administration Offices and the former Jockeys' Convalescent Lodge. The most significant features are: the main race course, including the old distance post, the oldest feature at the course, and the horse walk from the track to the mounting yard; the 1924 Inter-War Stripped Classical style Members' Stand; the remains of the 1880s bluestone stand (part of which lies beneath the Old Hill Stand terraces); the 1880s bluestone walls at the base of the Hill and along Fisher Parade, Leonard Crescent and adjacent to the Hill Gate (which retain some remnant painted signage); the picturesque octagonal former Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge near Epsom Road; the betting ring with its old elm trees, bordered by the 1930s tote buildings and the 1920s men's toilets; the statues of Phar Lap, Bart Cummings and Makybe Diva; the chronographic clock in the VRC Committee Rooms; the 1870s brass bell near the Racecourse Manager's Office; the murals by Harold Freedman depicting the history of thoroughbred racing in the Hill Stand; the Members' Drive, its extensive plantings, and the entrance box at the Epsom Road end; and the plantings, particularly the roses throughout the public and members' areas and the elms at the western end of the course and in the betting ring.

How is it significant?

Flemington Racecourse is of aesthetic, architectural, historical and social significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Flemington Racecourse is architecturally significant for its collection of structures relating to racing in Victoria since the nineteenth century, which demonstrate the various stages of development of the course. The most significant of these are the remaining nineteenth century structures (the 1880s bluestone stand remnants and bluestone walls and the former Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge), the 1920s Members' Stand and betting ring, and the 1930s tote buildings. The remnant of the 1880s bluestone grandstand, though partly hidden beneath the Old Hill Stand terraces, is an interesting example of a nineteenth century grandstand and demonstrates building techniques of the period. The bluestone walls at the base of The Hill and along Fisher Parade and Leonard Crescent are also of interest as examples of nineteenth century bluestone construction. The former Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge is of significance as a possibly unique example in Victoria of a centralised hospital building, a form which became popular in the 1880s in England. It is an exceptional example of a picturesque structure of the late nineteenth century. The 1924 Members' Stand is significant as an unusual and largely intact example of a 1920s Inter-War Stripped Classical style grandstand.

Flemington Racecourse is historically significant as the oldest racecourse in Victoria, which has operated continuously since 1840. It has been the site of the running of the Melbourne Cup since its inception in 1861 until the present day. This is Australia's most famous horse race, which 'stops the nation' and has been a public holiday in Victoria since 1877. The Melbourne Cup has been a stimulus for the arts, including literature, painting, drama, ballet and fashion design. The 1870s chronograph now in the Committee Room, once used to time the races, is significant as a fine example of nineteenth century clockmaking, and as the most famous work of the Melbourne jeweller Thomas Gaunt, who became a household name in Australia and England for his manufacture of large public clocks.

Flemington Racecourse is of social significance as a venue of Victoria's and Australia's greatest horse races, especially the Melbourne Cup. This is accepted as being one of the world's great horse races with its own distinctive features and is centrepiece of the Victorian spring racing carnival. Racing is one of Australia's major spectator sports, and Derby Day 2006 attracted a crowd of 129,089, one of the largest crowds in Australian sporting history. Flemington racecourse is an important venue for Australian fashion, and the Spring Carnival is a major part of the fashion industry's year. Oaks Day has since as early as the 1880s been seen as a 'ladies' day' and has continued to be recognised as the fashion event of the Melbourne year.

Flemington Racecourse has aesthetic significance as one of the finest racecourses in the world, set in an expansive landscape with views towards the City of Melbourne. It is significant for its works of art, including the Harold Freedman murals in the Hill Stand, which are an extraordinary depiction of the history of thoroughbred racing; for the bronze statues of Phar Lap and Makybe Diva, two of Australia's greatest racehorses; and of Bart Cummings, considered to be Australia's greatest horse trainer. It is also significant for its gardens, particularly the rose displays, which are carefully cultivated to be at their most spectacular during the Spring Racing Carnival, when the Melbourne Cup is run.

## **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:

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. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works 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 works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Landscape Maintenance : The following landscape maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) landscape maintenance works provided the activities do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features; b) watering, mowing, top-dressing and fertilising necessary for the continued health of plants, without damage or major alterations to layout, contours, plant species or other significant landscape features; c) pruning to control size, improve shape, flowering or fruiting and the removal of diseased, dead or dangerous material, not exceeding 20% of the crown of the tree within a period of two years; d) tree surgery by a qualified horticulturalist or tree surgeon necessary for the health of those plants. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Other exemptions: As noted in the Permit Policy all works to non-registered buildings on the site, excluding exterior additions or replacement, are permit exempt; as is the erection of temporary structures, such as marquees, moveable barriers and signage associated with racing events, which do not adversely impact on the heritage place.

Construction dates	1840, 1893,
Architect/Designer	Salway, William Hanlon, HL,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered object integral to a registered place,
Hermes Number	13910
Property Number	

## History

### CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

[Information from Andrew Lemon, *The History of Australian Thoroughbred Racing*, vols 1 (1987) & 2 (1990); and from the 2007 Conservation Management Plan for Flemington Racecourse by Lovell Chen.]

The first race meetings in Victoria were organised by the squatters. Great prestige was associated with owning good horses, especially race horses. The first known horse race in Victoria was held, probably at Batman's Hill (near the present Southern Cross railway station) in 1837, and a formal meeting was held there in 1838. That course was semi-circular, and extended towards the site of the later North Melbourne Railway Station. A second meeting was held there in March 1839, but in 1840 a new site was chosen on the flats of the Salt Water (now Maribyrnong) River.

Race meetings became relatively common in Victoria in the 1840s. The first recorded organised race meeting held outside Melbourne was that of the Pyrenees Turf Club in 1842, held at Mt Emu near Beaufort (though this was in effect a private occasion). Races were often held to further the interests of towns or places, and this was in part the reason for the meetings held in Geelong in 1843; by the licensee of the Brighton Hotel from 1845 until the 1850s; and the annual St Kilda Races held from 1847. Several country towns inaugurated race meetings in the 1840s: Colac in 1845; Portland in 1846; Warrnambool in 1848; Seymour in 1849; and Port Fairy had meetings from 1850.

After the discovery of gold many new towns were surveyed in inland Victoria, and it was usual for land to be set aside for a racecourse. The *Turf Register* (1865) noted about fifty courses in the colony. The older meetings in towns such as Geelong, Port Fairy and Warrnambool now had many rivals. From 1854 Ballarat and Bendigo joined Geelong at the head of provincial racing. Other strong courses established in the 1850s were Wangaratta, Hamilton, Kyneton and Kilmore (as well as others that no longer survive, such as Dandenong, Portland, Beechworth, Carisbrook and Castlemaine).

By the end of the 1850s racing had become a major industry, and the 1860s and 1870s saw a dramatic increase in the number of people involved and the capital invested in the sport. Wealthy men such as the Fishers and Chirnsides outlaid thousand of pounds on race horses. The mania for racing grew in Melbourne and the country, and in 1884-5 seventy nine country towns were conducting race meetings, but while Melbourne had races all year round country centres had fewer meetings.

### HISTORY OF PLACE

[largely taken from the 2007 CMP for Flemington Racecourse by Lovell Chen]

#### The early days

The first race meeting at the new course on the Maribyrnong River, then called the Melbourne Racecourse, was held on 3 March 1840 and attracted a large attendance. The new course was established for the first official meeting and a grandstand of rough scaffolding was erected. The site was ideal, with a large area of flat land and a hill to the north-west for viewing the races.

Early in 1841 the Port Phillip Turf Club, the first racing club formed in the Port Phillip District, was established to assume authoritative functions of annual race meetings. With the ensuing depression however the Club was

disbanded and ad-hoc committees organised the annual races. During the 1840s the most important event was the Town Plate. In 1848, following an application to the Government to authorise an official occupation of the site, the Governor of New South Wales vested 352 acres at the site for the purpose of a public racecourse and appointed six men as trustees. During this year the racecourse was partially fenced and a substantial grandstand was built.

With the gold wealth of the 1850s racing developed into a flourishing industry. In 1852 the Victoria Turf Club (VTC) was established and organised the annual races. Although successful race meetings were already being held throughout Victoria, the annual Melbourne autumn meeting became the unrivalled event of the racing calendar. By 1854 a spring racing meeting was also introduced. In 1857 the Victoria Jockey Club (VJC) was formed, as a rival to the VTC, and held its first race meeting at the course, now known as the Flemington Racecourse, in February the same year.

In 1859 the Australian Championship Sweepstake race was held at Flemington, with horses coming from New Zealand, Tasmania and Sydney, as well as Victoria. Newspapers reported that 30-40,000 people saw the race, and the result was telegraphed to Sydney, a first for an Australian sporting event. By this time two new stands had been built along the river, but most spectators viewed the races from the flat or the hill. In 1860 the layout of the course was changed and the finishing post was relocated to the base of the hill, the river-side stands were demolished, and a new stand, of timber with stone foundations, was built at the base of the hill, low enough to allow spectators on the hill to view the racing over the top of it.

A railway line to Flemington opened in 1861, taking spectators directly to the course.

### The first Melbourne Cup

The VTC introduced a new race, called the Melbourne Cup, in 1861. The two-mile (3.2 km) race was first run on Thursday 7 November 1861 on the first day of a three-day meeting. The race was won by the New South Wales horse Archer, who received the total stake money of £930

By 1864 Victoria's leading sporting newspaper, *Bell's Life in Victoria*, noted that the 'Melbourne Cup has become firmly established as the race par excellence of the Australian colonies'. This was due to the money and thought lavished on improving the Flemington course, and more importantly the phenomenal rise of gambling on the cup. In 1864 the VTC and VJC dissolved to form the Victoria Racing Club (VRC) which took over the running of the fourth Melbourne Cup, which had already become synonymous with racing in the colony. By 1865 attendances were 13,000. Melbourne Cup Day, which was soon tied to the first Tuesday in November, became a public holiday in 1877.

### Developments in the later nineteenth century

Although there had been racing at Flemington for over twenty years, the most important developments took place after the VRC took over the track in 1864. The first secretary of the newly-formed club was Robert Cooper Bagot, an Irish civil engineer and surveyor, who had redesigned the Melbourne Cricket Club ground in 1861, was engaged by the VRC to survey the Flemington Racecourse in 1864, and was appointed secretary, a position he held for seventeen years until his death in 1881.

Bagot completely altered the racecourse, draining the marsh in the centre of the course and making it into 'the Flat', which became a picnic ground for generations of race goers, and replacing the coarse grass on the track to provide a smooth and even course. He was insistent that racing should be a sport of ordinary people, and decided that viewing races from 'the Flat' should be free (though this was reversed in 1913). The high area north of the course became known as the 'Hill'. The lawns were graded and were provided with seats for the ladies. In 1873 a new grandstand costing £13,000 was completed at the foot of the hill. It seated three thousand, and was referred to as 'Bagot's cowshed', because of its utilitarian appearance.

Robert Bagot's successor as Secretary in June 1881 was Henry Byron Moore, also a surveyor, as well as a keen gardener, who during his 45 years in office helped the Club to plan four new grandstands, one at the back of the Hill to accommodate five thousand and one behind Bagot's grandstand to seat 2,500. He also extended the spacious lawns and gardens, especially the plantings of roses, and established nurseries and rosaries. In 1883-86 were built the bluestone structures which are now among the few early structures remaining at the course. The bluestone stand behind Bagot's cowshed, now lying partly beneath the Hill Stand, contained a suite of rooms 600 ft long for vice-regal visitors and their suite, ladies' retiring rooms, refreshment and press rooms, with an open stand above. The *Cyclopedia of Victoria* (vol 2, p 119) described these

elegant suites of apartments hitherto occupied by the Governor of the State, his visitors and their friends during the various race meetings. These are situated underneath the centre of the grand-stand, are handsomely furnished and decorated. Owing to their position they are cool on the hottest day of summer. Between the innermost wall of the rocky face of the hill, which is here vertical, there intervenes a chasm through which a shaft of light falls for the illumination of the rooms on that side. Mr Moore has taken advantage of this chasm . to fill up the space with rockwork, ferns, and basins of water, and amidst these the gorgeous scarlet flowers of the magnificent Poinsettia . introduce a blaze of colour .

This stand is seen in Carl Kahler's 1887 paintings. At the same time a bluestone retaining wall was built extending west along the base of the hill from the bluestone stand. At least one tethering remains embedded in the wall. An external wall enclosing much of the Hill area extends along Fisher Parade and along the northern side of the racecourse past the Hill Entrance. Also in the 1880s the VRC made elaborate improvements to its horse stalls area ('The Birdcage') and betting ring 'under the elms' towards the river end of the course.

Moore also established a Distressed Jockeys' Fund, which provided financial assistance for any jockey incapacitated by injuries received in any part of Victoria; married jockeys received £2 a week single jockeys £1.10.0, until they were able to resume employment. A Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge was also built on the course 'in which those who are thus circumstanced can receive the care and attention they require'. (Smith, *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*, 1904, vol 2, p 119.) This home is an octagonal timber building located in a secluded position in the south-eastern corner of the racecourse, south of the new VRC offices. It is not clear exactly when this was built, as it is not visible in early photographs or seen in its present position in the 1906 MMBW plan, yet its existence is noted in VRC minutes at least as early as 1897. Circular hospital wards became popular in England in the 1880s, following the publication of a paper by John Marshall, Professor of Surgery at University College and Hospital in London, which was reported in the *Builder* in 1878, and which were discussed and illustrated in journals such as the *Builder and the British Medical Journal*. It was thought that circular plans improved light, air and ventilation, as they would receive these from every direction, and would prevent dirt accumulating in corners, and they were also admired for the opportunities they offered for designing a pleasing, picturesque building. The building has for many decades been used as a private residence by the track supervisor at Flemington.

During the 1890s the Hill was redeveloped, with a new stand being constructed at the rear, and other facilities provided. The Hill was famous for its wonderful gardens, and entertainment was provided in the form of brass bands, sideshows and carnival rides, with refreshments available from the 'Temperance pagoda', Swiss Chalet or Chinese teahouse.

The first newsreel film shot in Australia was taken at Flemington on Cup Day in 1896 by Maurice Sestier, a cameraman for the French Lumiere brothers, who invented motion pictures. The film includes the finish of the race and it recorded the arrival of the Governor and scenes around the track. The original is in the Paris archive of the Cinematèque Francaise.

#### The early twentieth century

Despite additions to the stands in 1902, in 1903 the increasing crowds meant that accommodation was still inadequate. An application was made in 1912 to build a new double-storey public grandstand designed by the architect William Pitt to seat 10,000 (demolished to make room for the 1924 stand). This was located in the former carriage paddock.

Racing continued during World War I, as the VRC argued that any suspension of racing would increase unemployment, and pledged its entire profits towards patriotic funds for the duration of the war.

Racegoers had been able to travel to Flemington Racecourse by train since 1861. The electrification of the Melbourne train network began in December 1913, but was delayed by the outbreak of WWI. The first trial of electric trains in Victoria took place from Newmarket station to Flemington Racecourse on 6 October 1916. The next trial was not until 1919, following which electric train service began on a limited basis.

(<http://www.transport.vic.gov.au/doi/internet/transport.nsf/allDocs/RWPE06934B7A6094C844A256AFD001C4975?OpenD>

#### Inter-war developments

In 1922 the VRC adopted a radical plan for redeveloping the course, which involved changes to the Lawns and Birdcage area, and a reconfiguration of the course, undertaken to relieve overcrowding and in the expectation that the totalisator would be legalised in Victoria. An application was approved in 1923 for a new three-storey two-



deck members' grandstand designed by the architects Robertson & Marks, to cost £131,000. At the same time the brick stand in the carriage paddock was demolished, many of the early timber structures were removed, the members' stand, betting ring, bird cage and mounting yard were relocated further to the east, and new car parks created. Two new training tracks were laid inside the course. The Trainers' and Jockeys' Stand (demolished 2006), also designed by Robertson & Marks to relate in style to the new Grandstand, was built in 1924 at a cost of £7,500. The previous members' Grandstand known as Bagot's Cowshed was converted for public use. The 1922-4 redevelopment cost more than a quarter of a million pounds, and changed much of the previous character of the course. It also resulted in an increase in the cost of admission to the course.

#### The totalisator buildings

Totalisator machines for the calculation of bets and dividends were legalised in 1930 in Victoria, the last Australian state to do so, and it became compulsory at the Flemington, Caulfield, Williamstown, Moonee Valley and Ascot courses. In response to this the VRC Committee met frequently throughout 1930 with Sir George Julius, the inventor of an automatic electric totalisator system, to establish the number of selling and paying windows, the positions of totalisator buildings and of the machines and indicator boards. In 1931 tenders were accepted for the construction of five tote buildings, designed by Robertson & Marks, from J E Shillabeer & Sons for £17,775.15.9. The main tote building was located at the rear of the betting ring, and another was between the Members Stand and the Saddling Paddock. Others were on the ground floor of the Members Stand, at the rear of the Hill Stand, and within the Flat. These were operating by October 1931. Two of these buildings remain at the course though in very altered form and adapted for other purposes.

Numbers at race meetings continued to grow, and in 1936 an application was lodged for the erection of a new public grandstand, luncheon room and Members' ladies totalisator sub-station at a cost of £38,000, adjacent to the 1924 grandstand (replaced in the mid 1980s by the Prince of Wales Stand).

#### During and after WWII

During the war racing continued to provide employment and public recreation on a vastly reduced scale, with the profits pledged again to the war effort. By 1942 a considerable part of the racecourse was occupied by the armed forces. The increased use and lack of maintenance of the course during the war years meant that by its end considerable restoration was required.

In January 1948 the middle section of the original wooden Hill Stand was destroyed by fire. It was declared structurally unsound and closed, and in 1951 the roof was blown off in a storm and only the western portion remained. The remainder was destroyed in another fire the following year.

The VRC in the 1950s prepared a Master Plan for the future development of Flemington. This was to result in the most extensive change to the appearance of the racecourse since the 1922-4 alterations. The first section rebuilt was the destroyed Hill Stand and hill terracing, to cost £102,000, which was almost completed for the 1955 Melbourne Cup. In 1958 improvements were made to the track and mobile starting barrier stalls introduced. Most of the 1873 Bagot Stand was replaced and a new grandstand constructed above the footprint and remaining bluestone fabric of the 1883 stand, at a cost of almost £362,000. This became known as the Lawn Stand.

The Centenary Melbourne Cup was held in 1960. Also at this meeting the 'Fashions in the Field' was introduced, an iconic event which has become an institution.

#### More recent developments

Continuous upgrades and extensions have been necessary at Flemington. In 1964 new totalisator equipment was installed costing £110,000. In 1974 another Master Plan was commissioned from the architects Edward Bilson & Assoc. This resulted in the construction of a new Hill Stand, completed in 1979 and costing \$5,000,000. The next stage was the construction of the Prince of Wales Stand (1984) to connect the Hill Stand to the betting ring below via the existing Members' Stand, and involved the demolition of the 1936-37 public grandstand. More seating was provided in 2000 with the completion of the multi-storied new Grandstand over the Prince of Wales Stand. This also was used extensively as a function centre on non race days.

A new Master Plan was completed in the early twenty-first century, involving the construction of new VRC offices near Epsom Road, an improved entrance on Epsom Road, the reconstruction of the race track surface and drainage, new stables to replace the earlier South Community stables, new training facilities and new stripping

sheds, The 1990s saw development of the North Community Stables and the Aquanita, Symbol and Carbine Lodge stables to the east of the racetrack, augmenting the earlier Chicquita Lodge stables south-east of the race track adjacent to Smithfield Road. Large investment was made after 2000 in developing wetlands, improving flood protection from the river, and associated landscape works. Elaborate decorative wrought iron gates were installed at entrances to the Members' Drive, the main drive on Epsom Road and the Hill Enclosure at Leonard Crescent.

## Plaque Citation

This is Victoria's oldest racecourse, the first meeting having been held on these river flats in 1840. It is the venue for Australia's most famous horse race, the Melbourne Cup, which has been run here annually since 1861.

## Assessment Against Criteria

a. Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history

Flemington Racecourse is the oldest racecourse in the state, having operated continuously since 1840. It has been the site of the running of the Melbourne Cup since its inception in 1861 until the present day. This is Australia's most famous horse race, which 'stops the nation' and has been a public holiday in Victoria since 1877. The Melbourne Cup has been a stimulus for the arts in Victoria, including literature, painting, drama, ballet and fashion design.

b. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

c. *Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.*

d. Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.

The structures and features at Flemington Racecourse reflect the development of racing and racing infrastructure in Victoria. The most important of these structures are the remaining nineteenth century bluestone stand remnants and bluestone walls and the former Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge; the 1920s Members' Stand and betting ring; and the 1930s tote buildings. The remnant of the 1880s bluestone grandstand, is an interesting example of a nineteenth century grandstand building and demonstrates building techniques of the period. The bluestone walls around the north side of the course are also of interest as examples of nineteenth century bluestone construction. The former Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge is of significance as a possibly unique example in Victoria of a centralised hospital building, a form which became popular in the 1880s in England, and is an exceptional example of a picturesque structure of the late nineteenth century. The 1924 Members' Stand is significant as an unusual and largely intact example of a 1920s Inter-War Stripped Classical style grandstand.

e. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Flemington Racecourse is one of the finest racecourses in the world, set in an expansive landscape with views towards the City of Melbourne. It contains a number of notable works of art, including the Harold Freedman murals in the Hill Stand, an extraordinary depiction of the history of thoroughbred racing; the bronze statues of Phar Lap and Makybe Diva, two of Australia's greatest racehorses; and of Bart Cummings, considered to be Australia's greatest horse trainer. It is renowned for its fine gardens, particularly the rose displays, which are carefully cultivated to be at their most spectacular during the Spring Racing Carnival, when the Melbourne Cup is run.

f. Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

The 1870s chronograph now in the Committee Room is a fine example of nineteenth century clockmaking, and is the most famous work of the Melbourne jeweller Thomas Gaunt, who became a household name in Australia and England for his manufacture of large public clocks.

g. Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and

developing cultural traditions.

Flemington Racecourse is of social significance as a venue of Victoria's and Australia's greatest horse races, especially the Melbourne Cup. This is accepted as being one of the world's great horse races with its own distinctive features and is centrepiece of the Victorian spring racing carnival. Racing is one of Australia's major spectator sports, and Derby Day 2006 attracted a crowd of 129,089, one of the largest crowds in Australian sporting history. Flemington racecourse is an important venue for Australian fashion, and the Spring Carnival is a major part of the fashion industry's year. Oaks Day has since as early as the 1880s been seen as a 'ladies' day' and has continued to be recognised as the fashion event of the Melbourne year.

h. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

## **Extent of Registration**

1. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 2132 held by the Executive Director, being all of Crown Allotments 2031, 2036 and 28F Parish of Doutta Galla.

2. All the buildings and structures B1-B5, features F1-F10 and objects O1-O2 on Diagram 2132 held by the Executive Director.

General: The landscape and plantings

B1 1924 Members' Stand

B2 Remnants of 1880s bluestone stand

B3 Former Jockeys' Convalescent Lodge

B4 Former tote buildings and scratchings board forming northern boundary of betting ring

B5 Men's toilets near betting ring

F1 Race track

F2 Bluestone walls around base of The Hill, along Fisher Parade and Leonard Crescent and near the Hill Entrance

F3 Horse walk between Mounting Yard and race track

F4 Distance post

F5 Betting Ring near Members' Stand

F6 Statue of Phar Lap

F7 Statue of Bart Cummings

F8 Statue of Makybe Diva

F9 Brass Bell

F10 Members' Drive and Entrance Box

O1 Harold Freedman Murals

O2 Chronographic Clock

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*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/>*