

# VAUCLUSE COLLEGE



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SOHE 2008



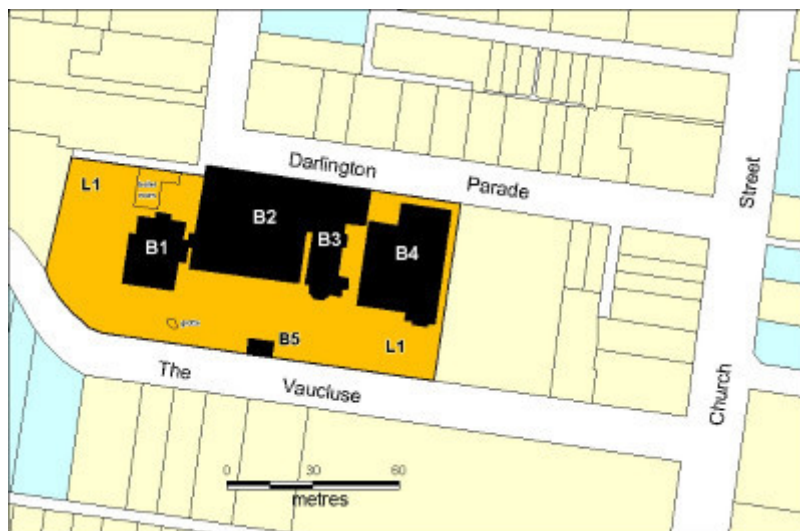
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1 vaucluse college richmond  
convent 1999



vaucluse college plan

## Location

18 DARLINGTON PARADE AND 20A DARLINGTON PARADE AND 20B DARLINGTON PARADE RICHMOND,  
YARRA CITY

## **Municipality**

YARRA CITY

## **Level of significance**

Registered

## **Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H1927

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO346

## **VHR Registration**

March 28, 2002

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - September 13, 2022

### **What is significant?**

Vaucluse College, Richmond, designed by architect GW Vanheems and constructed in stages from 1897 to 1904, is bounded by The Vaucluse, Church Street and Darlington Parade, including "Eurolie" (1874-82), the Convent (1901), the Gatehouse (1900), the Chapel (1897) and the College (1904) including these buildings and the grotto, but excluding the the 1960s - 70s school buildings.

### **How is it significant?**

Vaucluse College, Richmond is historically and architecturally significant to the State of Victoria.

### **Why is it significant?**

Vaucluse College, Richmond is historically significant for its association with the history of education in Victoria and the provision of a parallel system of Catholic education after the introduction of free, compulsory and secular education in Victoria in 1872. The provision of Catholic education for girls by the French order of the Faithful Companions of Jesus from 1882 was part of the formation of a self-funded Catholic system in Victoria in the late nineteenth century. Vaucluse College was the first foundation of the order in Victoria, which provided day and boarding primary and secondary schools for girls as well as staff for parish schools and ran one of the earliest teacher training establishments in Melbourne for Victorian Catholic schools at Vaucluse between 1885 and 1906. The order in France educated girls in separate schools for the rich, middle class and working class according to their family background, unlike some other orders which concentrated on the education of the underprivileged, and to some extent this was reflected in early practice in Australia.

Vaucluse College is architecturally significant in that it exhibits the principal characteristics of a convent school, including the chapel, convent, school, and gatehouse. The gatehouse within Vaucluse College is architecturally significant as a rare example of a convent gatehouse intended to provide a reception place for visitors.

Vaucluse College is architecturally important as a substantially intact complex of buildings with coherence in the design and the relationship of the buildings with each other. In addition parts of the interiors which are original, including tessellated floors and verandahs and some stained glass windows add to the overall significance of the buildings. Collectively the elements of the Vaucluse College site make a significant contribution to the Richmond Hill heritage area and the ecclesiastical precinct contained within it.

The College is set within reasonably spacious grounds for the inner city, which have been used variously as a hard stand car park, ball courts, playgrounds, outdoor assembly and activities, and most recently, for group seating. Being always situated within an active school ground, the gardens were never isolated contemplative spaces. The western end of the property has always been used in conjunction with ball courts and car parking. The fabric of the garden of the garden has changed over time and the existing fabric, other than for the elms and pepper tree (*schinus molle*) along the Vaucluse boundary, is of recent origins.

## 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.
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.

#### Exterior

Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.

Removal of extraneous items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc, and making good.

Installation or repair of damp-proofing by either injection method or grouted pocket method.

Regular garden/yard maintenance, including removal of trees under 3 metres, shrubs and plants.

Installation, removal or replacement of garden watering systems, provided the installation of the watering systems do not cause short or long term moisture problems to the building..

Repair of existing garden/yard structures

Demolition of the perimeter fence along the Vaucluse.

### **Interior**

Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.

Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.

Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves, skirtings and decorative strapping.

Repair of plasterwork provided that all new work matches good adjacent work in style, detail and finish.

Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings, eg vinyl.

Installation, removal or replacement of curtain track, rods, blinds and other window dressings.

Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted artworks.

Refurbishment of bathrooms, and toilets including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings.

Installation, removal or replacement of kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers etc and associated plumbing and wiring.

Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and provided that the location of the heating unit is concealed from view.

Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ. Note: if wiring original to the place was carried in timber conduits then the conduits should remain in-situ.

Installation, removal or replacement of bulk insulation in the roof space.

Installation, removal or replacement of smoke detectors.

Construction dates	1897,
Architect/Designer	Vanheems, GW,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	FCJ CONVENT COMPLEX, EUROLIE,
Hermes Number	4503
Property Number	

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## **History**

### Contextual History:

Vaucluse College, a convent of the order of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, was founded in the late 19th century, a period of rapid expansion for the Catholic Church in Victoria. The Catholic Church was profoundly affected by the 1872 Victorian Education Act which made education free, secular, and compulsory, and led to the withdrawal of state aid to religious schools. In order for the Church to run its own schools, it had to look overseas for help and invited religious teaching orders to set up schools in Australia.

The Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers were already established in Victoria and were to become the largest of the teaching orders. The 1870s saw the arrival of two other important teaching orders: the Loreto sisters at Ballarat and the Presentation sisters at Windsor.

Catholic schools multiplied throughout the state from the 1880s onwards with the arrival of many orders, including the FCJ order, the Religious of the Sacred Heart, and the Brigidine order. The Brigidines started out in Echuca and went on to run 43 primary schools and 16 secondary schools throughout the country and Melbourne. The Australian order founded by Mary McKillop in South Australia in 1866, the Sisters of St Joseph, also established themselves in Victoria towards the end of the century. These 'angels of mercy among the poor and broken hearted' established a suitable education system for the needs of working people.

The order of the Faithful Companions of Jesus was founded in France in 1820 by Madame Madeleine Victoire de Bonnault d'Houet to work in the field of education and to work for souls in foreign countries. F.C.J. convents were founded all over Europe, including Paris and Nice, London, Middlesborough and Liverpool in England, Veyrier in Switzerland, and Limerick in Ireland. They catered for the education of rich, middle-class and poor Catholic girls in separate schools. When a request for their services came from Australia, the foundation of the Richmond convent was the first mission for the order outside Europe.

The French background and international nature of the order gave the new sisters a reputation which preceded them to Melbourne and on arrival, the nuns met many Melbourne women who had been educated in F.C.J. schools in Europe. In the sixty years since its foundation, The order had established schools in poor areas as well as providing education for middle and upper class girls. The establishment at Richmond in 1882 was followed by a select boarding school, Genazzano, at Kew in 1888 and another at Benalla in 1901. The sisters also staffed free parish schools at Kew, Camberwell, Hawthorn, and Williamstown in the 1880s and 1890s. In the twentieth century, the F.C.J. nuns have also conducted parish schools at South Richmond, Benalla, Kew, Hawthorn, Deepdene, Healesville, Seaford, Frankston and Langwarrin, making a significant contribution to Catholic primary education in Victoria.

#### History of Place:

The Jesuit fathers of St Ignatius, Richmond had invited the order of the Faithful Companions of Jesus to set up a school. In June 1882 twelve nuns arrived from a convent in Liverpool. They operated three schools: a high school and an intermediate school for young ladies (paying pupils) and a free school initially from two rented houses. Accommodation soon reached crisis point. In 1884 a large timber classroom was built on the Darlington Street side of the property (demolished in 1971). In 1886 the order purchased the Italianate villa "Eurolie" built between 1874 and 1882 for use as a boarders dormitory. A grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes was built in the convent grounds in 1892 and a fragment of rock from the shrine at Lourdes was added in 1893. The chapel was built in 1897 to the design of architect G. W. Vanheems. The gatehouse on The Vaucluse, also designed by G. W. Vanheems, was built in 1900. The convent building was built by Clements Langford in 1901 to the design of G. W. Vanheems. The school building was built in 1904 and was once again designed by G. W. Vanheems. Another school building was added to the site in the 1970s.

Vaucluse College was founded as Mount St Joseph's Convent in June 1882 when 12 nuns of the F.C.J. order arrived from Liverpool in response to a request from the local Jesuit priest, Father J. Dalton, for assistance in staffing the local Richmond Catholic school. The Christian Brothers had arrived in 1876 to take over the boys' parish school. The F.C. J. nuns took over St Ignatius Girls' School, with over 500 children in 1882.

The sisters were to conduct three schools at Richmond, a high school and an intermediate school for young ladies, both for paying pupils, and a free school known as St Ignatius Girls School. This followed the practice set up in Europe, of providing segregated education for different socio-economic groups. By 1884, 1400 children were attending the parish schools and 100 attending the select ladies school at Richmond. In 1916, there were said to be 600 students at Vaucluse, a large school for that period. (Allom Lovell report p.6 ) This would indicate that the F.C.J. order at Richmond educated a large number of Victorian Catholic women.

In 1885, the sisters were asked by Archbishop Goold to undertake teacher training, The order had been involved in teacher training in England. At Vaucluse, young trainee teachers were accommodated in the convent and assisted at the local parish school associated with St Ignatius Church. As a result, many young women were trained by the sisters to take charge of local parish schools in rural Victoria. This aspect of education at Vaucluse continued until 1906 when the Loreto order opened the Central Catholic Teacher Training College at Albert Park.

Vaucluse College was not purely a local school, although many Richmond girls moved on from St Ignatius' Parish School to Vaucluse for their secondary education. In 1886, the school took boarding students from country areas, a practice which continued until 1970. The fees charged at Vaucluse were significantly less than those at Genazzano, in Kew, in accordance with the F.C.J. tradition of providing education for all classes of Catholic girls.

Many girls attended Vaucluse from the suburbs around Richmond and from the eastern suburbs such as Kew and Balwyn. The French origins of the order and the experience of the nuns who continued to be sent to Europe for their teacher training had an influence on the teaching at Vaucluse, which emphasised French religious practices, music, needlework and manners, as a preparation for lives as Catholic wives and mothers, rather than intellectual or academic achievement.

The expansion of secondary education in the 1960s led to larger student numbers and more emphasis on academic work. The day students at Vaucluse after World War II included a large proportion of migrant girls, attracted by the Catholic religious education provided, low fees and central location. In the early 1980s, over two-thirds of the 500 students were from migrant families. Some of these were from Richmond, where a large number of migrants lived in cheap rental housing and in the Housing Commission flats, but many were from other parts of Melbourne.

The setting of Vaucluse College, which forms part of an ecclesiastical precinct with St Ignatius Church and Presbytery, adds significance to the convent group. The nearby churches of other denominations such as St Stephen's Anglican Church and vicarage reflect the planning of early Melbourne to provide land for religious purposes.

Associated People:

## Assessment Against Criteria

a. The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object  
Vaucluse College, Richmond is associated with the history of education in Victoria and the provision of a parallel system of Catholic education after the introduction of free, compulsory and secular education in Victoria in 1872. The provision of Catholic education for girls in Victoria by the French order of the Faithful Companions of Jesus from 1882 was part of the foundation of the self-funded Catholic system. Vaucluse College was the first foundation of the order in Victoria, which provided day and boarding primary and secondary schools for girls as well as staff for parish schools and ran the earliest teacher training establishment in Melbourne for Victorian Catholic schools at Vaucluse between 1885 and 1906. The order educated girls in separate schools for the rich, poor and middle class according to their family background, unlike some other orders which concentrated on the education of the underprivileged.

b. The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness

The gatehouse within Vaucluse College is a rare example of a convent gatehouse intended to provide a reception place for visitors between the convent and the outside world, reserving the convent as a private space for the semi-enclosed religious order.

c. The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage

N/A

d. The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects

Vaucluse College exhibits the principal characteristics of a convent school, including the chapel, convent, school, and gatehouse.

e. The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features

Vaucluse College is architecturally important for the coherence of its design and the relationship of the buildings with each other, as well as for those parts of the interior which are original, tiled floors and verandahs and some stained glass windows, and for its contribution to the Richmond Hill heritage area and ecclesiastical precinct.

f. The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements

N/A

g. The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations

Vaucluse College demonstrates important social associations with the education of women in Victoria, and with the education of migrants in the post World War II period.

h. Any other matter which the Council deems relevant to the determination of cultural heritage significance

## 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 by including the Heritage Register Number 1927 in the category described as a Heritage place:

Vaucluse College, Darlington Parade, Richmond, Yarra City Council.

### EXTENT:

1. All the building and features marked as follows on diagram 1927 by the Executive Director B1 Eurolie, B2 Convent, B3 Chapel, B4 School, B5 Gatehouse.
2. All the land marked L1 on diagram 1927 held by the Executive Director, being all the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 1925, Folio 932, Volume 2875, Folio 946 and Volume 1775, Folio 842.

Dated 28 March 2002

RAY TONKIN

Executive Director

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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/>*