





burnam beeches extent plan B.JPG



burnam beeches air photo.JPG

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## Location

1 SHERBROOKE ROAD SHERBROOKE, YARRA RANGES SHIRE

## **Municipality**

YARRA RANGES SHIRE

## **Level of significance**

Registered

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

H0868

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO5

## **VHR Registration**

March 27, 1991

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - July 2, 1999

Burnham Beeches was constructed in 1930-33 as a rural retreat for the wealthy Aspro king Alfred Nicholas. The property was taken over by the Nicholas institute for medical and veterinary research in 1955, and in the early 1980s converted to provide guest-house accommodation.

1. Burnham Beeches is a significant example of a retreat built in the tradition of a colonial hill station. The property includes sporting recreational facilities, utilitarian outbuildings and picturesque gardens and farmland in addition to the main house. Of hill station type homesteads in Victoria, only Duniera at Mt Macedon has comparable gardens and no other example has farmlands on the same scale.
2. The use of the Moderne style at Burnham Beeches is a particularly early example in Victoria and reflects contemporaneous developments in American architecture. It is a successful synthesis of the ornament and styling of the 1920s Jazz period with Streamlined Moderne which was to become popular in the 1930s in Australia.
3. Burnham Beeches is a rare domestic example of the Moderne genre and was designed by Harry Norris, one of the leading commercial architects in Melbourne between the wars.
4. The use of advanced reinforced concrete technology at Burnham Beeches is significant in that it generated the unusual streamlined appearance of the main house and allowed architectural devices such as cantilevered balconies, wide spans and continuous windows to be achieved.
5. The use of the design analogy of a ship in the sea was particularly appropriate for the retreat. The house sits in a contrived garden landscape with farmlands and outbuildings conveying modernity, reflecting a belief that progress and technology were necessarily good. In contrast, the utilitarian outbuildings suggest confidence in a self-reliant future. Such a successful design analogy is rare in Australian architecture.
6. The Burnham Beeches estate is historically important for its associations with the wealthy business man Alfred Nicholas, co-founder of the Nicholas Company which developed the famous Aspro formula. The estate is

able to provide evidence of the aspirations and values of the first generation Australian who "made-good".

7. The mansion provides an example of "up-to-the-minute" high style living and entertainment of the 1930s in Australia, contrasting with the traditional nineteenth century layout of the estate. The estate also demonstrates the social demarcations which existed in pre-Second World War Australia and those changes which occurred following World War 2 with the development of secondary industry and a trend towards reduction in social barriers.

## Permit Exemptions

<span class="c1">All internal works to the 1980s Forest and Garden wings of the property, as long as they have no impact upon the exterior of the place in any way</span>

Construction dates	1930,
Architect/Designer	Norris, Harry A,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	1013
Property Number	

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## Extent of Registration

### AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 868:

Burnham Beeches, Sherbrooke Road, Sassafras.

(To the extent of the former house (including the extensions), the silo and dairy buildings, the cottage, the garage with attached cottage, the calf shed, the greenhouses and the machinery shed and part of the land entered in the Register Book Certificate of Title Volume 9746 Folio 599, as shown hatched in Plans A and B, endorsed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council.)

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G12 27 March 1991 p.797]

*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/>*