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# Bontharambo House & Garden



B0013 Bontharambo  
Wangaratta

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## Location

387 Boorhaman Road,, WANGARATTA VIC 3677 - Property No B0013

## Municipality

WANGARATTA RURAL CITY

## Level of significance

State

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0359

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 18, 2008

Rev. J. Docker and his family settled at Bontharambo in 1838. The present two storey brick and stone homestead dates from 1858 and was designed by T. Watts. It is dominated by a sixty foot tower and the ground floor is almost encircled by a single storey arcade. The ruins of an earlier homestead are located nearby and several old outbuildings remain. There is also a family graveyard. The skeleton of the extensive landscape grounds, and driveway survive. Bontharambo is indelibly linked with Joseph Docker, a pioneering settler of north-east Victoria and his family who have owned and occupied the property since 1838. The homestead itself is one of the finest in

Australia. It is an outstanding example of early Italianate design and the work of T. Watts. The superb mixture of brick, stone and stucco, and the fine arrangement of the reception rooms, the single storey arcade and tower are distinctive features. The grounds, outbuildings, etc. are also important. The exterior is intact and recent restoration work has improved the condition of the building. Several original pieces of furniture and fittings survive. The original plaster ceilings, cornices etc. have been removed.

Classified: 09/07/1959

Garden significance:

Bontharambo, a pastoral run dating from 1838, developed by the erection of a substantial hut and squared garden c.1844, and more impressively by a large Italianate mansion and garden from 1857-60, and in the continuous management of the Docker family since 1838.

- historically, as a fine example of a pastoral homestead property, exemplifying typical stages of development including the site of the first 1830s hut, the substantial hut of c.1844 and the mansion of 1857-60; garden elements relating to these stages include the spatial relationship between buildings and the Reedy Creek, the remnants of the squared utilitarian garden of the c.1844 hut, the grand picturesque garden associated with the mansion, the driveway, the family cemetery and outbuildings such as the stables and winery;
  - historically, for its integral links with the pioneering Docker family of north-eastern Victoria; their unbroken management of Bontharambo since 1838, now well over 150 years is almost without parallel in this state, and the fabric (including buildings, structures, garden, contents and associated artefacts such as plans and drawings of the property reflects all phases of their occupation;
  - for its retention of typical design elements of a mid-nineteenth century homestead garden; including an elevated site overlooking a creek, an approach drive and avenue, carriage loop, groves of fruit trees (in this case olives and oranges), spatial arrangement of residential and service buildings and facilities, hedging, fencing and gates, a balance between leisure and horticultural pursuits, and the contrast between homestead garden and open farmland;
  - as a seminal example of the adoption of Italianate architecture and garden design in Victoria; this is best represented by the architecture of the homestead, the south terrace and the groves of orange and olive trees bring a Mediterranean touch to this outstanding ensemble;
  - for its retention of trees and plantings from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century, including the approach avenue, specimen trees, hedges, groves, flower beds and lawn areas, and selective retention of indigenous trees as an integral part of the garden design;
  - for its incorporation of a private family cemetery, picturesquely sited overlooking a billabong of the Reedy Creek and planted with species commonly found in nineteenth century cemeteries;
  - aesthetically, for the contrast between the open plains and the oasis of the garden sited close to the Reedy Creek, for the maturity of the garden landscaping, and as the setting for an outstanding Italianate homestead.
- Garden Classified: 09/07/1959

File note 08/02/2011: G13040 (Bontharambo Garden) amalgamated & filed with B0013.

Hermes Number 69839

Property Number

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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/>*