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# QUAMBY



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1 quamby glover court toorak  
front view dec1983

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## Location

3 GLOVER COURT TOORAK, STONNINGTON CITY

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0603

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO44

## VHR Registration

March 21, 1985

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 31, 1999

What is significant?

Quamby was designed in 1941 by Roy Grounds for a site left undeveloped for many years because of its difficult terrain. It forms a headland on a bend in the Yarra with wide views to the north. A block of six flats and one maisonette, Quamby was constructed for WE Champion. Internally, the flats have an open kitchen, living and dining areas with wide north-facing windows. The kitchens and bathrooms are well-detailed with built in fittings. Each flat has its own large outside area. The footings of the structure are off-form concrete. The lower walls are built with stone from the site. The upper walls are painted brick, and steel columns support the side balconies. All the roofs are flat.

How is it significant?

Quamby is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Quamby is of architectural significance as one of Roy Grounds' most impressive buildings, an example of the Contemporary style at its best, and as one of the most influential flat designs of its time. The difficult site required a skilful response, and Grounds' solution is particularly dramatic and represents the culmination of his early flat designs. The walls of the flats follow radius and annulus lines calculated from an imaginary point in the turning circle of the street, and the rocky site was accommodated by stepping the flats up and down within this radial formula. Radii and arcs became dominant themes in Grounds' later designs. Quamby established Grounds' reputation as an important 20th century architect, and, together with his other flat blocks built around the same time, Clendon, Clendon Corner and Moonbria, had a dramatic influence on post-war flat design. Innovations in Quamby flats included some of Australia's first linked kitchen and living spaces. Their plain wooden fittings and quiet colour represent an early and isolated move away from contemporary interest in conspicuously industrialised detail. The flats were also a notable example of the burgeoning effort to achieve integration between buildings and the Australian landscape.

Quamby is of architectural significance for its associations with Roy Grounds, one of Melbourne's most influential modern architects, who not only designed the building, but occupied one of the flats between 1941 and 1944. Grounds was born in 1905, and studied architecture at the University of Melbourne before travelling to America where he worked as a set designer. Returning to Australia in 1932, Grounds set up in association with architect Geoffrey Mewton, designing furniture and light fittings and later houses. Grounds' remarkable house designs employed platonic geometries, producing triangle, circle and square floor plans. Between 1953 and 1962 he formed a formidable partnership with Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd. Perhaps Grounds' best known building in Melbourne is the National Gallery of Victoria.

Quamby is of historical significance because the provision of an air raid shelter in the development gives some indication of the effect of the Second World War on Victorian society. Constructed around the time of the bombing of Darwin in 1942, Quamby's air raid shelter reflects the fears excited by the rapid Japanese advances in the early years of the Pacific war.

## 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](#).

Construction dates	1941,
Architect/Designer	Grounds, Roy,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	1160
Property Number	

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## History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Roy Grounds travelled extensively in England and America between 1919 and 1932, and worked as a set designer for RKO and MGM 1930-2. He was one of a number of Australian architects who travelled overseas in the 1930s and brought back ideas that were adapted to Australian conditions. The concept of regional architecture in Australia gained ground in the 1950s and Grounds was influential in this respect. The so-called Melbourne School of the 1950s was especially concerned with geometric structural form and linking to the site, and was contrary to the otherwise pervasive International Style. Concern for the site and organicism was also a particular feature of the so-called Sydney School of the early 1960s and Quamby should also be placed in the context of that later development.

Associated People: Roy Grounds (Architect of Quamby and tenant of one of the units, 1941-44)

## Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 603, Quamby, 3 Glover Court, Toorak (to the extent the whole buildings and the whole of the site).

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. 86 21 August 1985 p. 3222]

*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/>*