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## WANNON FALLS GATES & RESERVE



23208 Wannon Falls  
Interpretation pavilion 1326



23208 Wannon Falls  
memorial stone 1327



23208 Wannon Falls  
memorial stone 1328



23208 Wannon Falls Reserve  
0007



23208 Wannon Falls Reserve

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### Location

Gleneleg Highway and Morgiana Road WANNON, Southern Grampians Shire

### Municipality

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

### Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

### Heritage Listing

Southern Grampians Shire

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 3, 2002

What is significant?

The Wannon Falls Reserve is located on the south side of the Henty Highway, about 18kms north-west of Hamilton where the highway crosses the Wannon river. The total area reserved is about 174 acres or 71 hectares and comprises bushland, some exotics and recreational facilities. Nearby is the township of Wannon, formerly called Redruth, which was established at a ford as a coaching stop. The Wannon Inn, now demolished, provided accommodation for visitors to the Falls from the 1840s. The Wannon Falls have been the consistent subject of significant art including works by some of Australia's most celebrated colonial artists, such as Nicholas Chevalier, Eugen von Guerard, Louis Buvelot, S. T. Gill and Thomas Clark. The township of Redruth and the Wannon Falls Reserve were gazetted in the mid 1860s. Much of the reserve was originally owned by local publican John Quigley. It has been managed jointly with the Nigretta Falls Reserve under a committee of management. The Reserve has been extended and developed over the years, with changes reflecting different values and fashions, including a Pine plantation for the local State School and football and cricket pitches. In the twentieth century there has been an emphasis on native plantings. The Reserve has a significant post-World War Two entrance incorporating large boomerangs on crazy-stone piers. Most recently, the facilities have been modernised with a contemporary concern for environmental values. The Reserve is substantially intact and in good condition.

How is it significant?

The Gates of the Wannon Falls Reserve are of historical, social and aesthetic significance to the Southern Grampians Shire. The Wannon Falls Reserve is a Significant Landscape, and should be included in the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme as a Significant Landscape Overlay.

Why is it significant?

The Wannon Falls Reserve is of historical significance as one of the earliest beauty spots and tourist destinations established in the Western District. It is of social significance as a recreation reserve. It is of aesthetic significance for its long association with Picturesque sensibility, the dominant aesthetic in colonial Victoria, which continued well into the twentieth century. It is the subject of much important and popular art. The Wannon Falls Reserve is of significance as a comparative pair with the nearby Nigretta Falls Reserve. The gates of the reserve are particularly significant, as an important and dramatic entrance to a suitably dramatic reserve.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002;
Construction dates	1840,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	23208
Property Number	

## Physical Conditions

The reserve remains relatively intact to its 1960s stage of development.

## Physical Description 1

The Wannon Falls Reserve is located south-east corner of the Township of Wannon. The Reserve straddles the Wannon River, and falls into the Parish of Bochara on the eastern side, being the major portion, and the Parish of Redruth on the western side.

The reserve includes several built structures and hard landscaping elements. These are predominately associated with the development of the Wannon Falls Reserve as a popular tourist attraction and picnic area from the late 1950s onwards. Some of the built elements, such as the pathways to the falls and viewing areas date from the late nineteenth century, but the fenced viewing platform, picnic area and more recent timber and stone rotunda and entrance gates featuring large sheet metal boomerangs have been added in the 1960s and more

recently.

A secondary viewing area has been established off the Morgiana Road, to provide access to the point where Thomas Clark painted his famous picture of the Wannon Falls in flood.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.23 Catering for tourists

Theme 8: Developing Australia's cultural life

8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sports

8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens

8.1.4 Enjoying the natural environment

8.3 Going on holiday

8.5.4 Pursuing common leisure interests

8.10 Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences

8.10.2 Creating visual arts

## **Usage/Former Usage**

Continuing as a recreation reserve

## **Integrity**

relatively intact

## **Physical Description 2**

Captain Charles James Tyers (1806-70), a sketcher, surveyor and public servant who became Commissioner of Crown Lands for Portland Bay District in 1842

Eugen von Guerard (1812-1901), Austrian born artist and landscape painter

Nicholas Chevalier (1828-1902), Russian born, artist and landscape painter

Louis Buvelot (1814-88), Swiss born artist landscape painter

Thomas Clark (1814-83), English born artist and landscape painter.

Thomas J Washborne (fl. 1870-1888), photographer

John T Collins (1907-2001), photographer

Thomas Francis O'Neill, founding secretary of the Committee of Management

*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/>*