

---

# LONGERENONG HOMESTEAD



1 longerenong homestead  
jung via horsham front view



longerenong homestead jung  
via horsham detail front  
window



longerenong homestead jung  
via horsham verandah view

---

## Location

897 BURNT CLAY ROAD LONGERENONG, YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE

## Municipality

YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0290

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO35

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Amendment to Registration

January 19, 1977

## Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### What is significant?

Longerenong homestead is located on the Yarriambiack Creek near the junction with the Wimmera River at Horsham. The land had been first taken up by squatters William Taylor and Dougall McPherson in 1844. Unlike the more fertile country of the south-western district of Victoria, the Wimmera was less easily adapted as profitable grazing country.

The Wilson brothers had immigrated to Victoria from County Antrim, Ireland, and took up the Longerenong pastoral lease in 1856. Sir Samuel Wilson (1832-1895) established himself as a pastoralist and vigneron, and by 1871 had bought out his brothers' interests in the property. Samuel Wilson was a man of innovation and ingenuity. Drawing on the nearby creek, he devised a system of irrigation and drainage channels in the 1850s and 1860s that benefitted his agricultural pursuits. Elements of this system survive.

Samuel Wilson was also a leading proponent of the acclimatisation movement in Victoria in the 1860s, and for a period acclimatised the camels for the Burke and Wills expedition. Wilson pursued his interest in acclimatisation at the property Ercildoune [H313], near Ballarat, which he later purchased. In 1875 he was elected a Member of the Legislative Council for the Western Province. He was also a major philanthropist, who provided funds for building the original Wilson Hall at Melbourne University. In 1886 he was elected a member of the British House of Commons.

The Wilson brothers commissioned the Melbourne firm of Crouch and Wilson to build the axially planned, double-storey brick homestead villa in 1862. The Picturesque Gothic design was adapted from one illustrated in an American pattern-book of Andrew Jackson Downing. However, while the facade of Longerenong is very similar to that of the American model, the interior planning was altered significantly. Rather than the open planning of the American house (based on Continental custom) the architects of Longerenong reverted to closed British corridor planning, which was more acceptable locally, and was a reflection of the British mindset of the settlers in Victoria. Distinctive elements include the decorative timber fretwork, balcony verandah, slate roof and elaborate stained-glass entrance panels. Internal features include a divided staircase; marble floor tiles; cedar doors, architraves, and other fittings; and consistent use of trefoils as decoration to doors, balustrade and some of the fireplace surrounds.

The once extensive park-like homestead garden includes Moreton Bay Figs, Osage Oranges, Bunya Bunya Pines, Stone Pines and Norfolk Island Pines as well as a remnant garden wall. Several outbuildings survive, including the shearing shed and a slab hut claimed to be the original hut on the property which may date from the 1840s. An area set aside for burials on the north bank of the creek includes the grave of Samuel and Jeannie Wilson's first child, as well as graves of members of the McLean and Gregory families.

### How is it significant?

Longerenong homestead is of architectural, historical and scientific (horticultural) significance to the State of Victoria.

### Why is it significant?

Longerenong homestead complex is of historical significance for its association with the early European settlement of Victoria through its role as a pastoral leasehold from 1844, and its subsequent development as an extensive homestead complex that played an important part in the development of the Wimmera district.

Longerenong homestead is also historically significant for its association with the enterprising pioneer settler, Samuel Wilson, and for its demonstration of Wilson's ambition, energy and broad range of talents.

Longerenong homestead is architecturally significant as an important example of the work of the celebrated Melbourne firm Crouch and Wilson. It is one of the finest Picturesque Gothic style villas in Victoria, demonstrating particularly fine design and workmanship. It is also architecturally significant as a rare example of the use of an

American pattern book design for a grand house in Victoria. Its rejection of the open planning which was common in America at the time is also historically significant as a reflection of the British mindset of the wealthy settlers in Victoria in the nineteenth century.

The Longerenong homestead garden is of scientific (horticultural) significance for its rich and diverse collection of species, including a very large Moreton Bay Fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) next to the house, Osage Oranges (*Maclura pomifera*), Bunya Bunya Pines (*Araucaria bidwillii*), Stone Pines (*Pinus pinea*), Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), two rare *Schotia latifolia*, and an unknown *Rhus* sp..

Of associated scientific (technological) significance on the wider property is surviving evidence of earthen embankments and the foundations of an irrigation scheme created in the 1850s and 1860s.

[Data Upgrade Project 2004]

## 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. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works 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 works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding

all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates	1862,
Architect/Designer	Crouch & Wilson,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	597
Property Number	

---

## History

Longerenong homestead is located on the Yarriambiack Creek near the junction with the Wimmera River at Horsham. The land had been first taken up by squatters William Taylor and Dougall McPherson in 1844. Unlike the more fertile country of the south-western district of Victoria, the Wimmera was less easily adapted as profitable grazing country.

The Wilson brothers had immigrated to Victoria from County Antrim, Ireland, and took up the Longerenong pastoral lease in 1856. Sir Samuel Wilson (1832-1895) established himself as a pastoralist and vigneron, and by 1871 had bought out his brothers' interests in the property. Samuel Wilson was a man of innovation and ingenuity. Drawing on the nearby creek, he devised a system of irrigation and drainage channels in the 1850s and 1860s that benefitted his agricultural pursuits. Elements of this system survive.

Samuel Wilson was also a leading proponent of the acclimatisation movement in Victoria in the 1860s, and for a period acclimatised the camels for the Burke and Wills expedition. Wilson pursued his interest in acclimatisation at the property Ercildoune [H313], near Ballarat, which he later purchased. In 1875 he was elected a Member of the Legislative Council for the Western Province. He was also a major philanthropist, who provided funds for building the original Wilson Hall at Melbourne University. In 1886 he was elected a member of the British House of Commons.

The Wilson brothers commissioned the Melbourne firm of Crouch and Wilson to build the axially planned, double-storey brick homestead villa in 1862. The Picturesque Gothic design was adapted from one illustrated in an American pattern-book of Andrew Jackson Downing. However, while the facade of Longerenong is very similar to that of the American model, the interior planning was altered significantly. Rather than the open planning of the American house (based on Continental custom) the architects of Longerenong reverted to closed British corridor planning, which was more acceptable locally, and was a reflection of the British mindset of the settlers in Victoria. Distinctive elements include the decorative timber fretwork, balcony verandah, slate roof and elaborate stained-glass entrance panels. Internal features include a divided staircase; marble floor tiles; cedar doors, architraves, and other fittings; and consistent use of trefoils as decoration to doors, balustrade and some of the fireplace surrounds.

The once extensive park-like homestead garden includes Moreton Bay Figs (*Ficus macrophylla*), Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*), Bunya Bunya Pines (*Araucaria auracaria*) and Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), as well as a remnant garden wall. Several outbuildings survive, including the shearing shed and a slab hut claimed to be the original hut on the property which may date from the 1840s. An area set aside for burials on the north bank of the creek includes the grave of Samuel and Jeannie Wilson's first child, as well as graves of members of the McLean and Gregory families.

**The draft statement of significance and above history were produced as part of an Online Data Upgrade Project 2004. Sources were as follows:**

Kerry Jordan, 'Houses and Status: The Grand Houses of Nineteenth Century Victoria', PhD, University of Melbourne 2004.

George Tibbits, 'Longerenong', in Australian National Trusts, *Historic Homesteads* (1982), pp. 452-61.

*Trust Newsletter*, no. 3, December 1959. 'Squatting in the Wimmera',

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~wvahs/Squatters.htm>

*Longerenong Homestead Open Day*, 1979.

*Longerenong Homestead Open Day*, 1966.

## **Extent of Registration**

No. 290 Longerenong Homestead (excluding the rear brick servants quarters), Dooen via Horsham.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 3, October 19 1977 p.152]

*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/>*