

<b>Place name</b> Barkly River Bridge	<b>Survey Date:</b> 9/02/1999
<b>Other name</b> Barkly River Bridge	<b>Id:</b> 132
<b>Street</b> Licola Glencairn Road	<b>Last Update</b>
<b>Locality</b> Glencairn	<b>Postcode</b>
<b>Official Locality</b>	<b>Property No</b>
<b>Local Government Area</b> Wellington Shire	<b>Property Info</b>
<b>Precinct:</b> Not in precinct	
<b>Easting</b> 461800	<b>Northing</b> 5842710
<b>Map</b> Licola-Wellington 8222-N	
<b>Workshop number</b> Primary - H3/23	<b>Workshop votes</b> 1
<b>Field survey number</b>	<b>Community priority</b>
<b>Designer</b>	<b>Builder</b>
<b>Ownership</b> Public	<b>Built Date</b> <b>Change Date</b>

**Description** Physical Description: The Barkley (sic) River bridge has historical significance and the picnic area is a quiet and beautiful spot. The bridge would be 60-70 years old and opened the area to logging the farming. (Heyfield workshop)

Located on the Licola - Glencairn Rd, 6.5km from Mt. Skene Rd junction.

A single lane timber decked bridge, approx. 25m in length, 5m above the stream bed. 2 trestle sets, with timber stringers and handrails. Wooden abutments. Standard angle-rail hardwood balustrade has been used but has been struck by vehicles. Set in native forest.

National Trust Bridges Study

The following description from this study is believed to be of the Barkly River Bridge:

Deck length (m): 23.2

Deck width (m): 3.4

All spans: 3 main spans: 3 timber spans: 3 minor spans: 0

Max span (m): 8.0 max ti span (m): 8.0 corbel type: rs relieving beams: 0

Date of construction: unknown

Exists: 1 in use: yes

Detail of spans: 3 @ 8.0 m

Representative of typical smaller all timber bridge with well documented social history. Picturesque setting; provides only access to farming community.

(National Trust Register, I1827)

Road bridge crossing Barkly River. Deck length: 23.5, deck width: 3.4, area: 79.5, load limit: 44, spans: 3. (Wellington Shire Timber Bridges Register)

**Condition**

**Integrity**

Structure

**History**

‘Built in 1931, the Barkly River Bridge is historically, socially and aesthetically significant at the State level. It is an all-timber three-span stringer bridge, with longitudinal timber deck 23 metres long and 3 metres wide, complete with timber kerbs and side-rails. Its two timber piers are of the simplest type, consisting of three driven-log piles with one waling and cross-stays. It also possesses traditional solid-timber abutments and wing walls, and features traditional early-twentieth-century squaring of outer-stringer faces.

This is a traditional medium-sized all-timber road-over-river bridge, built for ordinary Victorian farmers who fought hard and long to get it. Its heritage claim lies in its very representativeness. The crossing place has a much longer history than the bridge, and it has an unusually rich photographic record for such a remote river crossing. Few such rural river crossings can boast photographs of early rustic low-level pedestrian bridges and of alternative flying fox river-crossing technology, as well as the opening ceremony for a first bridge. The story of

the long struggle to obtain this simple timber bridge that was first opened in 1931, has become a significant element in the recorded folklore associated with the high country that sprawls between Licola and Jamieson.

The Barkly River Bridge is today one of a fast-shrinking group of medium-sized all-timber road-over-river bridges in Victoria. It is the best example of its type to survive in the Macalister Valley, and a good intact representative example of a type of bridge once found almost universally across the State. It gains added significance because of its position as one of a group of historic timber bridges adorning the Macalister River Valley, along with Cheynes Bridge and the Glenmaggie Truss Bridge on the Heyfield-Licola Road.

Aesthetically, this rustic all-timber structure combines well with its forested high-country environs on a clear and fast-flowing mountain stream, to constitute a very pleasing visual experience. This exceptionally beautiful part of our State must increasingly attract nature lovers and other visitors. The historic old river-crossing site that in days past provided a not-so-pleasant enforced camping spot for many settlers barred from crossing by its violently surging floodwaters, today provides an attractive picnic, fishing and camping spot.

It is fitting to give the last word on the Barkly River Bridge to the prominent Gippsland historian whose painstaking research uncovered its colourful story, and put it on the historical and social map: Given the hazards of floods and log trucks, it is amazing the bridge has survived so long. Of rough timber construction, it is one of the last of its type in the shire. It is also a powerful symbol of the struggles of the families at Glencairn. (National Trust Register, 6841)

The book 'Macalister Landscapes' describes some of the intense labours focussed on achieving a safe crossing place of the Barkly River at this point. It was picked out by the Public Works Department engineer, Catani, in 1912 as a treacherous crossing. In 1925 another inspection inspired selectors who had been in the area some 20 years to beg that something might be done here, stating that they had been promised this when they had pegged out their land. Four years later it was observed that many trees along the bank had been cut down to achieve some form of crossing and now the supply was almost spent. A flying fox, a cage on a wire allowed some to cross but not animals. Tenders were called by the Shire in 1930, with the contract price at £416. In 1931, selectors who had been in the area for 63 years attended the opening of the first formal bridge across the river. At the time of writing it was thought to be among the last of its type in the Maffra Shire { Aitken: 95 }.

Heritage Protections Register	Reference	Zoning	Status
National Trust Register	I1827		Listed
Planning Scheme	HO108		Listed

National Estate Code	Assessment Detail
G	The Barkly River bridge has been identified as of historical significance for its age and use by farmers and logging contractors and as a quiet and beautiful spot in the 1998 RFA Heyfield workshop, widely valued by today's community, specifically cattlemen and loggers. It has also been identified in the National Trust of Australia timber bridges survey as a place significant within the State. This site has been portrayed over a long period as a picturesque crossing place and valued picnic area..

### Research Required

**Recommendations** Classified by the National Trust as of State significance.

### Fieldwork priority?

**Stage 1 Ranking** Assessed & protected **Stage 2 priority** No Action: Already include

**Final Ranking** Regional significance **Final Recommendation** Amendment C26

**Statement of significance** As an all-timber three-span bridge, complete with timber kerbs and side-rails, two timber trestles with three driven-log piles, traditional timber abutments and wing walls, and early-twentieth-century squaring of outer-stringer faces, the Barkly River Bridge is well preserved and good example of its type and era within the State context. (criterion D2)

The high integrity of this bridge allows a faithful representation of both early timber bridge construction and the means of travel when the district was being opened up for grazing and farming. (criterion A4)

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workshop, widely valued by today's community, specifically cattlemen and loggers. It has also been identified in the National Trust of Australia timber bridges survey as a place significant within the State. (criterion G1)

**Extent of designation** The extent of the bridge (25x3)

**Informant** Bill Kelly

**Notes**

**Follow up**

**Bibliography** Aitken, R. (Ed.), (1994), 'Macalister Landscapes: History and Heritage in Maffra Shire', Kapana Press, Bairnsdale, Victoria.: 95

National Trust of Australia (Vic) timber bridges survey

Wellington Shire, (28/8/2001), Timber Bridges Register (No. 81201)

