

<b>Building:</b>	Hawthorn Bridge	<b>Significance:</b>	A
<b>Address:</b>	Bridge Road, Yarra River, Richmond	<b>Melway Map Ref:</b>	2H E7
<b>Building Type:</b>	Road Bridge	<b>Construction Date:</b>	1861
<b>Architect:</b>	Unknown	<b>Builder:</b>	Unknown



<b>Intactness:</b>		<b>Condition:</b>	
G[ ] F[x] P[ ]		G[x] F[ ] P[ ]	
<b>Existing Heritage Listings:</b>		<b>Recommended Heritage Listings:</b>	
Victorian Heritage Register	[ ]	Victorian Heritage Register	[x]
Register of the National Estate	[x]	Register of the National Estate	[x]
National Trust	[ ]	Heritage Overlay Controls	[x]

## **History**

The Hawthorn Bridge was opened in November 1861 and it is the oldest existing metal truss bridge in Australia. The next oldest surviving metal truss bridges are at Gundagai, New South Wales (1867; 31.4m maximum span), Redesdale, Victoria (1868; 45.7m) and the Denison Bridge at Bathurst, New South Wales (1870, 34.5m). The maximum span of the Hawthorn Bridge was exceeded by the Longford Rail Bridge, Tasmania, in 1871 (64.0m).<sup>1</sup>

The cable tram service was established along Bridge Road in 1885. When the route was electrified in 1916, the present ornamental tram-wire supports were erected on the bridge by the then Hawthorn Tramways Trust. The supports were erected independently of the bridge, and are not incorporated into its structure.<sup>2</sup>

## **Description**

The Hawthorn Bridge is triple-span box-girder bridge over the Yarra River, connecting Richmond and Hawthorn. The four-lane road deck rests on four deck-type lattice trusses at 4.3m centres. The trusses are simply supported, with spans of 21.3m, 45.7m and 21.3m. There are two main supports, constructed of quarry faced bluestone, each with four piers connected by three arches. The deck is not original, and has simple steel balustrading.

The ornamental tram-wire supports on the bridge are simple iron structures with subtly curved top members and typically Edwardian curvilinear decoration.

## **Comparative Examples**

Railway Bridge, Yarra Boulevard, Yarra River, Richmond  
Ornamental Tramwire Supports, Wallen Road (Swan Street) Bridge, Richmond  
Ornamental Tramwire Supports, Dandenong Road  
Ornamental Tramwire Supports, Victoria Parade, Fitzroy

## **Significance**

The Hawthorn Bridge is of outstanding historical significance. Although altered, the bridge may be the oldest 19th century bridge remaining in the metropolitan area. It is also the oldest bridge of its type, a metal truss bridge, surviving in Australia.

The ornamental tramwire supports are of state architectural and historical significance. They are rare and decorative remnants of the early phase of electric tramway development in Melbourne.

## **Original Source**

Register of the National Estate Database No. 016054  
National Trust (Victoria) File No. 6640

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1 Register of the National Estate Database No. 016054.

2 National Trust (Victoria) File No. 6640