



Australian Government

Woolmers Estate



National Heritage List

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Woolmers Estate in Tasmania is one of the most intact 19th century Australian homesteads developed in the convict era. Established by Thomas Archer around 1817 using assigned convict labour, the Estate stayed in the family until 1994. The buildings and artifacts reveal much about life on this significant property. Woolmers Estate received Australia's highest heritage honour when it was included in the National Heritage List on 23 November 2007.

A significant record of colonial pastoral life

- Woolmers Estate is a rare example of a rural property developed using assigned convict labour and remaining in one family for close to 180 years.

- Most convicts transported to Australia were assigned to provide labour to settlers in exchange for food and clothing. Two branches of the Archer family shared labour between their neighbouring properties, Woolmers and Brickendon.

- The house at Woolmers illustrates the architectural evolution of a gentleman's rural residence over time, including modifications made in the 1840s by William Archer, the first architect born in Tasmania.

- The layout and architecture of Woolmers Estate makes a strong distinction between master and servant, which authorities believed to be important in reforming convicts. The grand residence and formal gardens contrast with convict workplaces such as the woolshed, blacksmith's shop, stables, gardens, coach house and the former convict chapel.

A rare farming homestead

- Woolmers Estate was one of the largest privately owned properties in the Tasmanian colony. The outstanding range of intact buildings, fittings, furnishings and artifacts from every period of the Estate's history provides a unique record of the scale and range of operations of this large pastoral property during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Revealing records

- The Estate and associated records paint a vivid picture of life at Woolmers over the years. In particular, many of the early 19th century convict farm workers at Woolmers can be identified from surviving musters, farm diaries, correspondence and conduct records.

Today, Woolmers and Brickendon Estates are popular tourist destinations. A visit to both National Heritage Listed sites tells the complete Archer family story.

The National Heritage List recognises and protects our most valued natural, Indigenous and historic heritage sites. It reflects the story of our development, from our original inhabitants to the present day, Australia's spirit and our ingenuity, and our unique, living landscapes.

Each place in the List has been assessed by the Australian Heritage Council as having outstanding heritage value to the nation, and is protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. This means that approval must be obtained before taking any action that may have a significant impact on the national heritage values of the place. In this way, we can retain our heritage for future generations.

To ensure ongoing protection, each listed place should have a management plan outlining how the heritage values of the site will be conserved and interpreted.

The National Heritage List enables all Australians to celebrate, value and protect our unique heritage.

For further information visit www.heritage.gov.au

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For a copy of this brochure please contact Woolmers directly or email fiona.dewar@northmidlands.tas.gov.au or call 03 6397 7303