<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Myrtleford Library (High Country Library Corporation)</th>
<th>008-006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other names</td>
<td>Shire of Myrtleford Municipal Offices (former)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>14 O'Donnell Avenue (cnr Standish Street)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MYRTLEFORD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Alpine Shire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/s</td>
<td>1965-67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>008 Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>164 Council Chambers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Late Twentieth Century International</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>7.0 Governing Victorians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme</td>
<td>7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect/s</td>
<td>A K Lines, MacFarlane &amp; Marshall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Barry Marshall]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder/s</td>
<td>Leita Brothers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist/s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer/s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General view, showing council chamber (light) and offices (left)**

**Detail of curved facade (with covered walkway) to office block**

**Rear of office block, showing screen walls and glass louvres**

**Interior of Council Chamber; note original furniture**

### Existing Heritage Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AHC</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level of Significance**

- Local

### Proposed Heritage Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VHR</th>
<th>AHC</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level of Significance**

- STATE
History

The Shire of Myrtleford was created on 31 May 1960 by the severance of part of the Shire of Bright. As one of Victoria's newest municipalities, the provision of purpose-built premises was a high priority. In December 1965, the local newspaper reported that “in the very near future Myrtleford Shire Councillors will make a decision that will have a lasting impact on the Shire... they must make a decision as to what form the proposed civic centre will take, and how much it will cost the ratepayers”. To be fair, the two most pertinent decisions — the architect and the site — had already been made. The former was Barry Marshall, of the Melbourne firm of A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall – since the 1950s, the state's leading municipal office specialists. It was to be built on a site that Marshall himself had described as the most outstanding municipal site he had ever seen: a wedge-shaped allotment at the corner of O'Donnell Avenue and Standish Street, elevated above the road, with a row of mature trees forming a stunning backdrop.

The shire was an atypically progressive one, as it hoped to provide ratepayers with a memorable civic premises rather than opting for a low-cost utilitarian one. That same article observed that “whatever type of buildings are erected will cost a lot of money, so it seems pointless in being too austere when planning for an amenity that will serve the community for many years to come. No ratepayer wants to have his rates increased, but no doubt all would like to have a civic centre that they can be proud of”. Marshall's initial plans, presented to council in December 1965, proposed an unusual building in two parts: a circular council chamber, connected by a covered walkway to an office block of matching curvature. This not only responded well to the context — as the local reporter put it, “the whole set-up fitting admirably into the contour of the site” — but also allowed for future expansion. While there was some concern about the project cost, this was resolved when a $100,000 bank loan was secured in July 1966. Tenders were called and, in early August, the contract awarded to Leita Brothers, who (with a tender of $89,000) were not only the lowest tenderers, but also the only ones from Myrtleford. The first sod was turned on 24 August by Shire President, Cr C J Rootsey, and the builders began work the following week. At that time, the official opening was scheduled for 31 May 1967 – fittingly, the seventh anniversary of the shire's foundation. However, the ceremony was delayed, and the official opening (by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe) took place a week later, on 8 June 1967.

With council amalgamations in the mid-1990s, the Shire of Myrtleford became part of the new Alpine Shire Council, which consolidated its administrative functions at Bright. The former premises at Myrtleford was adapted for use as a council service point and local library, with the council chamber retained for occasional official use.

Description

The former Shire of Myrtleford council office is a small flat-roofed single-storey building with a plan form comprising a circle with a larger interlocking quadrant to one side. The latter is bisected by a driveway, which effectively creates two wings: one for the council chamber and another for the offices. The circular part is expressed as a squat cylinder with beige-coloured rough-textured rendered walls and projecting roof beams supported paired steel columns, which define full-height window bays with stippled glass. The first stage of the quadrant wing, to the north, of brown brick construction with deeply raked joints and blue-painted timber fascias. A central entry porch, facing north, is flanked by two alcoves containing pencil conifers. The entry, with paired glazed doors and sidelights, opens onto the bisecting roadway, while a perpendicular covered walkway extends across to the office block, forming a porte cochere. The office block, generated by the same geometry, is a long curved block, also of brown brick with raked joints and timber fascias. While the two end walls are windowless, the south (ie concave) frontage has a low brick plinth, continuous full-height windows, and a curving covered walkway. The facade is broken into five bays, alternately projecting and receding, with the central one having double doors, directly opposite those of the council chamber. The north (ie convex) frontage has wide eaves with a central door (for staff use) flanked by breeze-block screens and thence by continuous horizontal windows with rendered spandrels and, fixed to the far edge of the eaves, operable tinted glass louvres for sun-shading.

Internally, the former office block is divided laterally by a long curving aluminium-framed and timber-panelled partition, with highlight windows and timber veneered doors. The council chamber has brown brick walls and a textured ceiling with exposed beams around the edge and circular white glass light fittings. Its wide doorway has a ventilated lintel with a concertina door (lined with orange fabric on one side, and green vinyl on the other). The room retains its original furniture: a central circular table with two curving benches around it (both finished in polished timber veneer), plus executive chairs and other seating covered with blue vinyl. Some similar furniture (including low couches and a coffee table) also remain in the adjacent office area. Toilet doors retain original plastic signage with the letters M and F.
**Condition and Intactness**

The building remains substantially intact, with its change in use (from council offices to a public library) necessitating few significant alterations. Externally, the building is largely unchanged, retaining its original face brick finish, concrete breeze-block screen walls and other surface treatments. A few of the original external doorways to the office block have been permanently closed, although they have not actually been infilled and thus can still be interpreted as doorways. Along the canted glazed wall, some of the lower panes of glass have been overpainted to create opaque spandrels; this, however, is neither an intrusive nor irreversible alteration. The most obvious external changes have been the construction of two new slate-clad pedestrian ramps, to provide access to the office block and council chamber.

Internally, the former office building has been altered by the removal of the original walls at one end, in order to create an open-planned area for library shelves. While the external faces of original partitions and doors (ie facing the public area) have been overpainted, they retain their timber panelled finish on the internal (ie office) side. The rough-textured cement ceiling is original, and still has (above the door of the former Mayor's office) a small recessed blue lamp, which once indicated when the Mayor was not to be disturbed. Some spaces (including a kitchenette and at least one former office) retain built-in bench units, with timber veneered cupboard doors, and the original council strongroom, with heavy steel-panelled door, also remains unaltered. The former council chamber is virtually untouched, with the bulk of its original furniture (blue leather chairs, curved timber-veneer benches and matching circular table).

**Comparative Analysis**

Even at first glance, the former municipal complex at Myrtleford is an extremely distinctive and unusual building. The specific expression of the council chamber as a discrete and virtually freestanding element has few counterparts in Victoria. The former City of Altona (now City of Hobsons Bay) civic offices in Civic Parade, Altona, is perhaps the most obvious comparator. Here, the council chamber is similarly expressed as a freestanding circular-planned room, albeit with a prominent domed roof rather than the cylindrical form seen at Myrtleford. In this case, however, the striking visual effect has been somewhat diminished by the fact that the remaining portion of the municipal office (originally a fairly conventional flat-roofed glass-fronted modernist block) has since been remodelled beyond recognition. There are certainly other buildings in Victoria, of comparable vintage, that incorporate centrally-planned features as an apparently detached appendage. Examples include shopping centres at Boronia and Avondale Heights (both by Kenneth McDonald, 1959), which provided supermarkets in discrete circular buildings that projected from one end of the complex. Such large-scale projects, however, lack the delicacy evident in the much smaller-scaled building at Myrtleford.

Considered in isolation, the curved form of the office building block is also highly unusual in Victoria. This has a number of significant counterparts in post-war domestic architecture, including the so-called Periwinkle House at Eltham (Alistair Knox, 1948), the Snelleman House in Ivanhoe (Peter & Dionne McIntyre, 1955-56), the lamentably demolished Lloyd House in Brighton (Robin Boyd, 1958) and the Kennedy House in Glen Waverley (David Godsell, 1965-66). Curving plans for houses – ultimately derived from such overseas precedents as Frank Lloyd Wright's Hemicycle Houses of the 1940s – were readily justifiable for reasons of passive solar heating. This, however, was less pertinent for other building types. The curving office block at Myrtleford is thus uncommon in non-residential architecture in Victoria – its closest comparators are probably curved high-office buildings such as BP House in St Kilda Road (Demaine Russell, Trundle, Armstrong & Orton, 1963-65) or the later Shell House in Spring Street (Harry Seidler, 1985-89) – and almost certainly unique within the specific field of civic or municipal architecture.

**References**


“$100,000 loan to Shire”, *Myrtleford Times*, 5 July 1966, p 1.


Statement of Significance

What is Significant?
The former Shire of Myrtleford council offices at 14 O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford, was designed in 1966 by Barry Marshall of A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall, and officially opened in 1967. It is a small flat-roofed single-storey building, dominated by a discrete cylindrical form (containing the council chambers) with a textured rendered perimeter wall, full-height stippled glass windows and pairs steel columns supporting projecting roof beams. To the north is a quadrant-shaped brown-brick wing, bisected by a curving roadway to create two separate parts (containing a foyer to the council chamber, and an office building) that are connected by a covered walkway. The office block has a fully glazed facade to the south, with breeze-block screens and continuous windows bays, with glass louvres, to the north.

How is it Significant?
The building is of architectural and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it Significant?
Architecturally, the former municipal offices are significant for their unusual geometric planning, with the council chamber expressed as a virtually freestanding cylindrical volume, from which a quadrant-shaped wing (centred on the same focus) extends northwards, bisected by a roadway (again following the same arc) to create two separate wings: one providing foyer and amenities to the council chamber, and the other a discrete office block. The expression of a council chamber as a discrete object is uncommon in the design of municipal offices in Victoria (with a noted, if less striking, example at Altona), while the integration of an elongated curving block, although not without some parallels in contemporaneous residential design, is rarely seen in other building types, and almost certainly unique within the sphere of municipal architecture. Architecturally, the building must also be considered as one of the most outstanding municipal complex ever produced by the prolific firm of A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall, which specialised in the design of such buildings for over forty years, from the early 1940s until the 1980s.

Aesthetically, the former municipal offices are significant for their extremely distinctive external appearance. This is not only consequent to the highly atypical plan form (as outlined above) but also to its contrasting textures (ie brown brick and textured render), the use of paired steel columns to support roof beams and define window bays, the glazed curved facade to the office block (with curving covered walkway), and the north-facing breeze-block screens and bays of glass sun-louvres. The pair of pencil conifer trees that flank the council chamber entrance, set into alcoves but “trapped” behind the timber fascia, is another extremely distinctive element. The building is both strongly related to, and enhanced by, its site; described by its original architect as the most outstanding civic centre site he had ever seen, it comprises an elongated triangular block, elevated above a prominent road junction, with a backdrop of mature trees.

Suggested Extent of Registration
The entire building, plus a curtilage extending right to the two street frontages. The extent of registration should include original furniture in the council chamber (and elsewhere), council memorabilia such as the timber honour boards and framed photographs, hard landscaping elements such as retaining walls (including the circular retaining wall that follows the curve of the council chamber), and the two pencil cypress trees that flank the entrance to the council chamber.

Suggested Policy Guidelines
Retain and conserve original furniture, and undertake of an inventory of all remaining items.
Retain original unpainted finish to face brickwork, timber joinery and timber panelling throughout the buildings.
Investigate original external colour scheme, and reinstate when building next requires repainting.

Suggested Permit Exemptions
New fitouts in existing toilet and kitchenette areas in both the council chambers and former office building.
 Identifier | City of Boroondara Council Offices
---|---
**Other names** | The Camberwell Centre; City of Camberwell Civic Centre (former)

| **Address** | 8 Inglesby Street
CAMBERWELL |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LGA</strong></td>
<td>City of Boroondara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Date/s** | 1967-69
1978 (addition) |
| **Architect/s** | Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell
[John Mockridge] |
| **Artist/s** | Michael Meszaros (1982 sculptor) |
| **Group** | 008 Administration |
| **Category** | 164 Council Chambers |
| **Style** | Late Twentieth Century Stripped Classical |
| **Theme** | 7.0 Governing Victorians |
| **Sub-theme** | 7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't |
| **Builder/s** | H T McKern & Sons Pty Ltd (1967-69)
A J Galvin (1978) |
| **Engineers/s** | J L & E M Daly (structural) |

**General view along principal frontage, showing entrance porch**

**Original building (right) and addition (left) viewed across gardens**

**Detail of porch showing wide piers and foundation stone**

**Interior of main entrance foyer (photographed through window)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Existing Heritage Listings</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proposed Heritage Listings</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHC</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HO</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VHR</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level of Significance**

Not previously assessed

**Level of Significance**

STATE
History

The municipality of Camberwell began as a district (1854) and was upgraded to a shire (1871), a borough (1905) and a town (1906) before proclaimed a city (1914). From 1891, it was housed in a grand Boom-era town hall on Camberwell Road, although this was already inadequate by 1923, when the Argus reported that “residents of Camberwell have long felt that their rapidly expanding city is worthy of something better than the small grey building”. An addition, with new council chamber and offices, was completed in 1924, and a clock installed in the hitherto empty tower. This proved only a temporary solution; barely a decade passed before the building's state was again subject to council debate. A £16,000 scheme for “enlarging and remodelling” the town hall was mooted (and rejected) in 1935; five years later, a councillor described the building as “an absolute disgrace”. By the mid-1950s, council had resolved to erect a new civic centre on the adjacent Town Hall Reserve – a choice not popular with all ratepayers – and another decade passed before plans were prepared, with the proviso that the new building be sited “to preserve as many of the existing trees as possible”.

The civic centre was to comprise an “official suite” (council chamber, committee rooms, dining room, kitchen etc), a large hall for 1,250 people (for “concerts, pageants, ballets, large meetings and dances”) and a smaller hall for 500 people (“primarily for stage presentations”). During 1966, plans were drawn up by Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell, who proposed a huge rectangular block (containing the halls and council chamber) with a projecting hexagonal wing (containing a small hall and committee rooms), providing a total of 586m² of space. Externally, the building was to be faced with pre-cast load-bearing units of “reconstituted stone”, which incorporated curved openings with deep reveals and splayed sills. It was later observed that “the design of these elements derived from the architect's desire to complement the character of the existing town hall nearby, which has a stucco finish and arched windows”. The units were manufacturers and installed by the Melocco Brothers Pty Ltd, a former Sydney-based terrazzo company that had expanded in the post-war era to become Australia’s leading exponent of pre-cast concrete.

Tenders were called in March 1967; the contract was duly awarded to H T McKern & Sons Pty Ltd, with construction commencing straight after the contract was signed in June. With an anticipated contract period of 73 weeks, the building was completed in March 1969 at a cost of $1,450,000. The architects were also responsible for the interior design, and specified imported Danish furniture (with a set of Swan Chairs, by Arne Jacobson, in the council chamber) and specially-designed contemporary-style chandeliers in the foyers and main hall. The bold lighting throughout the building, including old-fashioned carbon filament lamps and spotlights mounted on tubular steels grids, was subject to an article in the IES Lighting Review. The new civic centre was officially opened by the Governor-General, Sir Rohan Delacombe, on 12 April 1969. In the late 1970s, the council chamber wing was extended further north, in a matching style; this created a small courtyard, where a bronze statue by Michael Meszaros, entitled The Mayoress, was erected in 1982.

Description

Most of the civic centre is contained in a huge two-storey rectangular concrete building on a battered bluestone plinth. The low roofs (ie curved vault over the main hall, and mansard roofs over council chamber and small hall) were finished with built-up layers of gypsum plaster, fibreglass, cork and white gravel (to reduce noise from rain), with the sides of the mansard clad in vinyl-coated metal tray-deck. External walls are faced with pre-cast concrete units (or “reconstituted stone”), which contain quartz to give an off-white colour and rough texture. Units on the west wall are solid, while those to the north, east and west generally have round-arched windows at first floor and rectangular ones below. All openings have deep reveals, splayed sills, bronze anodised aluminium sashes and tinted glazing. The north (principal) facade has an projecting off-centre entry bay, with large piers supporting a broad copper-clad porte cohere. Steps led up to a recessed porch, flanked by glazed bays and a white marble foundation stone. The south (service) elevation also has some loading bays with roller shutters. The smaller west wing, extended since 1969, is now three storeyed; the original (canted) wall to the south is of solid pre-cast concrete units as elsewhere, while the north, east and west elevations are curtain walled (with matching bronze anodised metal and tinted glazing), set back behind a screen wall of concrete units with arches or rectangular openings. The extension has formed a narrow north-facing courtyard between the main building, which contains Michael Meszaros’ abstract (but vaguely humanoid) bronze sculpture.

Although interior access to semi-public spaces has not been permitted, inspection through windows shows that the hall foyers still have walls of beige-coloured modular brickwork, acoustic tile ceilings and clusters of spherical white glass light fittings. The large hall (not sighted as part of this project, although known from previous experience) is known to still have its dress circle and stepped boxes, niche lighting, curved false ceiling with narrowly-spaced battens of Mountain Ash, acoustic panels of perforated plywood, and four elongated “stalactite” chandeliers.
Condition and Intactness

From the exterior, the Camberwell Civic Centre remains substantially intact. The main block, containing halls and associated spaces, is virtually unchanged and, from the street frontage, looks virtually the same as it did when it first opened in 1969. The “official suite” to the east has been altered; initially by a small two-storey extension to the north (in a matching style, reportedly designed by the same architects) and more recently by the refurbishing of the foyers and the erection of a connecting walkway to the old town hall. Neither of these changes, however, can be considered unsympathetic or intrusive. The original landscaped setting, with bluestone pitching and retaining walls, also remains intact, although the formal pond to the north of the porte cochere has been converted into a garden bed.

An internal inspection of the council chambers, halls and other semi-public areas was not possible; however, interior photographs on the website of the Camberwell Centre (along with this consultant’s own recollections of attendance at public events at the centre in recent years) suggest that the main halls an foyers remain substantially intact, with original wall panelling, light fittings, stair details and so on. No information is available on the current intactness of the the council chamber and whether, for example, the Arne Jacobson chairs still remain in situ.

Comparative Analysis

In his 1994 survey of municipal offices, Andrew Ward described the Camberwell Civic Centre as “one of the last monumental town halls erected in Victoria”. It should be noted that this comment was informed by a slight mis-dating, as Ward cited only the date of the additions (1978) rather than the original building (1967-70). It could be argued that a many monumental municipal offices were erected in Victoria after 1970, including those at Rosebud (Don Hendry Fulton, 1973-76), Wangaratta (Grahame Shaw & Partners, 1979-80) and Glen Waverley (Harry Seidler, 1982-84). Having said that, though, these later examples tend to be monumental in the modernist sense: large buildings of stark masonry construction that exhibit civic grandeur through a sculptural or Brutalist expression. This is a marked contrast to the former Camberwell Civic Centre, where monumentality is simultaneously modern (ie block-like forms and pre-cast concrete units) and traditional (ie bluestone plinth, repetitive round-arched windows and grand entry portico). The historicist fenestration, in particular, brings to mind odd precedents such as the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana in Rome (Marcello Piacentini, 1938-43), or the buildings in surrealist paintings by Giorgio de Chirico. Specifically designed to echo the existing Boom-style Town Hall, the Camberwell Civic Centre is an uncommon and outstanding expression of contextual design in civic architecture in Victoria, evoking a grandeur both historicist and progressive. It can indeed be considered as the last truly monumental town hall – in the nineteenth century sense – erected in Victoria.

When considered within the oeuvre of architects Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell, the Camberwell Civic Centre stands out as a particularly large and important public commission. The firm, established in 1948 by the highly-regarded John Mockridge together with Ross Stahle and George Mitchell, made a name for itself during the 1950s as designers of fine modernist houses and churches in the 1950s and, later, of institutional buildings (most notably at private inner-suburban denominational schools). The present building, however, represents a unique foray into civic architecture by this leading modernist architectural firm. Although the architects designed a number of large block-like buildings of comparative scale – notably the Zoology Building at the University of Melbourne (1962) and the Australian Roads Research Broad headquarters at Vermont (1971-72) – there were much simpler in design and lacked the distinctive historicist articulation that is such a striking part of the character of the Camberwell Civic Centre.

References

*The Argus*, 29 December 1923, p 20; 11 October 1924, p 27; 5 November 1935, p 10; 15 August 1939, p 2


“Civic Centre”, *Architecture Australia*, June 1971, p 444d.
Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The former Camberwell Civic Centre on Camberwell Road, Camberwell, is a monumental two-storey concrete building on a bluestone podium, with a flat roof behind a steel-deck mansard and a repetitive facade of pre-cast concrete (or "artificial stone") units with rectangular windows at ground floor and round-arched windows above, and an off-centre ceremonial entry portico with massive piers, glazed walls and a boldly cantilevered copper-clad canopy. Internally, it contains several large halls (with panelled walls and purpose-made stalactite-like light fittings), offices and a council chamber with imported designer furniture. Designed by architects Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, it was built in 1967-70 as a long-awaited upgrade to the City of Camberwell's existing civic precinct.

Why is it Significant?

The building is of architectural and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

How is it Significant?

Architecturally, the building is significant as the last truly monumental town hall – in the grand traditional sense – to be erected in Victoria. Completed in 1970, the building’s distinctive abstracted historicist expression – specifically adopted to relate to the existing 1891 Town Hall nearby – is extremely rare in the design of post-war municipal offices, and contrasts with the more conventionally modernist approach to monumentality (eg Brutalist concrete) exhibited in council offices of the 1970s. The Camberwell Civic Centre can therefore be considered as a notably early and impressive example of the contextual approach to modern design that, three decades later, has now become the norm. The building is significant not only for the way in which it sensitively responds to the earlier Town Hall, but also as a grand civic monument in its own right. It is also significant as a unique and memorable foray into this type of public architecture by the prominent post-war practice of Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell. Who are more commonly associated with more conventionally modernist buildings.

Aesthetically, the building is significant as an outstanding example of the post-war Stripped Classical style in Victoria. While that idiom is most typically expressed through a modern adaptation of the traditional Greek temple form, the Camberwell Civic Centre – in a deliberate attempt to provide contextual design – instead invoked the Renaissance forms and details of the adjacent Boom-style Town Hall. The building, with its battered bluestone podium, quartzite finished pre-cast panels and distinctive round-arched windows with deeply splayed sills, exhibits an appropriate sense of civic grandeur, further enhanced by its elevated siting, generous setback and landscaped context.

Suggested Extent of Registration

The entire building, comprising the original 1967-70 portion as well as the 1970s addition (which is considered to be a sympathetic addition) but excluding the more recent entry porch and covered walkway at the east end of the complex. The extent of registration should include a generous curtilage to the Camberwell Road frontage, to maintain the garden setting, the Michael Meszaros sculpture, and any original hard landscaping (including bluestone pitching, paving and the former fountain). Internally, all original furniture and light fittings should be included in the registration.

Suggested Policy Guidelines

Retain and conserve all original furniture and light fittings, and create an inventory of remaining items.

The grand auditorium spaces should be retained as such, and not be subdivided by new partitioning or mezzanines.

Any future extensions or additions to the building should be restricted to the south (ie rear) frontage.

The small courtyard to the east end of the north frontage should remain as open space, with the 1982 sculpture retained in situ, and not be infilled.

Suggested Permit Exemptions

None.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Manningham City Council Offices &amp; Manningham Gallery</th>
<th>008-008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other names</td>
<td>City of Doncaster &amp; Templestowe Council Offices (and art gallery)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>699 Doncaster Road DONCASTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>City of Manningham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/s</td>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>1977-79 (extensions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>008 Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>164 Council Chambers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Late Twentieth Century International</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>7.0 Governing Victorians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme</td>
<td>7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect/s</td>
<td>Gerd &amp; Renate Block (1966-67)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder/s</td>
<td>Keith G Hooker Pty Ltd (1966-67)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L U Simon Pty Ltd (1977-79)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists/s</td>
<td>Anthony Pryor (1986 sculpture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers/s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**East side of original 1966-67 building; note concrete blockwork**

**North side of original 1966-67 building; note fixed louvres**

**The street (south)frontage of the 1977-79 additions**

**The rear (north) frontage of the 1977-79 extensions**

**Existing Heritage Listings**
- AHC - NT - HO Yes Study Yes
**Proposed Heritage Listings**
- VHR - AHC - HO Yes

**Level of Significance**
- State
- LOCAL
History

The City of Doncaster & Templestowe (now City of Manningham) was once the Shire of Bulleen, from which one riding was severed in 1890 to create the Shire of Doncaster. Two years later, the remaining part was renamed the Shire of Templestowe and then, after local council reforms in 1915, the two municipalities reunited. Like many districts on the metropolitan fringe, it remained pastoral (mostly dairy and orchards) until after the Second World War, when intensive residential settlement saw the population increase from 3,8000 in 1947, to 11,200 in 1958 and 38,000 in 1966. This development placed enormous pressure on the local council, and its new municipal offices on Doncaster Road – a utilitarian two-storey cream brick building, erected in 1957 – was outgrown within a mere decade. Council's annual Statements of Accounts record two contracts from building contractors Keith G Hooker Pty Ltd: one, worth £13,236, for “erection and addition to municipal offices” in 1965-66, and another, worth £10,120, for “erecting and completing municipal offices” in 1966-67. Both contracts were executed by the prominent building firm of Keith G Hooker Pty Ltd, and the building itself designed by the German-born husband-and-wife team of Gerd & Renate Block. The couple was presumably commissioned because of recent acclaim as first prize winners in a 1964 competition to design a new civic centre for the nearby City of Nunawading.

In February 1972, a special Age newspaper feature on the ever-expanding Doncaster-Templestowe area noted that “the present Council Chambers, with their magnificent setting, looking down on the City of Melbourne on one side and then away on the other to the blue backdrop of the hills and mountains, are regarded as among the most outstanding municipal offices and council chambers in the state”. But such was the district's ongoing population increase – reportedly having the highest annual growth rate of any Australian municipality by 1973 – that the council premises were, once again, rendered inadequate within only a decade. Further expansion, to include new council chambers, reception rooms and committee rooms, was proposed, and the works entrusted to L U Simon Pty Ltd, builders and project managers. Tenders for sub-contractors were called between December 1977 and May 1978, and the building completed in 1979. This work entailed the demolition of the original 1957 building; while the 1970 wing was retained, it was largely engulfed by a series of slick glass and concrete wings in the fashionable Brutalist idiom.

In 1985, part of the complex was adapted as an art gallery, set up by the Doncaster & Templestowe Arts Association with council's support. The following year, a bronze and AusTen steel sculpture by Anthony Pryor, entitled I am a man like you, was installed alongside the building. After council amalgamations in 1994, management of the gallery was handed over to the new City of Manningham, which had taken over the entire premises. In 2001, the Manningham Gallery (as it had become known) was relocated to a purpose-built space within the new function centre at the council complex.

Description

The former City of Doncaster & Templestowe municipal office is expressed as a group of discrete but attached blocks that step down a sloping site. As it was realised in several stages, the complex has an irregular footprint: a squat rectangular block facing Doncaster Road, with an off-centre H-shaped cluster of blocks to the rear. The 1970 office building (itself an addition to the original 1957 shire hall, since demolished) is now only evident from the east and north-west approach to the complex, as it has been otherwise engulfed on three sides by the 1977-78 extensions.

The 1970 block is a two-storey flat-roofed modernist building on an elongated rectangular plan. Its two exposed facades are similarly treated, with random-coursed split concrete block walls at ground level, and conventional brickwork (painted grey) above, with tall metal-framed window bays, arranged in pairs, with small spandrel panels. Elevations are otherwise distinguished by rows of square metal columns that support the broad eaves, with tie-beams at the first floor level. On the north elevation, these columns also include rows of fixed metal louvred that act as a sun-shading device. The 1977-78 extensions are also flat-roofed, double-storey and block-like, although with an entirely different aesthetic. The front wing (on Doncaster Road) comprises a central projecting bay, flanked by two curtain-walled glazed volumes elevated on a windowless concrete podium. To the left, the podium includes a glazed entrance porch with a double-height porte-cochere. At each level, the central bay has full-height windows (with dark-coloured anodised metal frames and dark tinted glazing), delineated by a row of non-structural black-painted universal columns. The side and rear elevations are similar articulated, but with more extensive window bays at both levels, several projecting concrete fire-escape stairwells and, at the first floor, rows of fixed metal louvred, which are supported on tubular steel frames that project well outward from the wall surface to create a distinctive effect.
Condition and Intactness

The substantial additions made in 1977-79 diminished the physical integrity of the 1966-67 building. The latter, which originally had an L-shaped footprint, was reduced to a single elongated rectangular wing, and otherwise engulfed on three sides by the new extensions. Today, the remaining part can only be seen from the north-east of the complex. Other changes, such as the overpainting of the first-floor brickwork, have also been made in more recent times. In themselves, the 1977-79 additions appear to remain in a substantially intact external condition, although some relatively minor changes (such as the double-height porte cochere on the street frontage) have been made. At the time of inspection for this project, the interior of the building was being subjected to a major refurbishment.

Comparative Analysis

Previous assessments of this complex have failed to identify it as two discrete developments: the “original” International Style building designed by Gerd & Renate Block in 1966-67, with substantial additions in the style of a “Miesian pavilion”, added by others in 1977-79. Confirmation that the Blocks were not involved with the second phase (which dominates the complex today) means significance cannot be ascribed to that part of the building as “a notable work by two of Mies’ compatriots”. The fact that the earlier building has been conclusively dated to 1966-67 (as opposed to “circa 1970”) also means that it can no longer be considered as one of the last projects undertaken by the couple before they left for New Zealand in 1974. Partially demolished, altered and engulfed by subsequent additions, the Block's original 1966-67 building can hardly be lauded as a particularly fine or intact example of their work. While the couple are not especially well-known as leading local practitioners of the modernist style, they did complete several projects that won acclaim from the architectural community and would thus be better contenders for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. Their three most celebrated projects in Victoria are: the Biancardi House in Kew (1960), published in Neil Clerehan's Best Australian Houses, and in several local (and even overseas) journals; the Siemens administration building in Church Street, Richmond (1964), which won a commendation in the 1965 Victorian Architecture Awards; the City of Nunawading Civic Centre on Whitehorse Road, Nunawading (1964-68), which won first prize in a much-hyped design competition.

In the City of Doncaster and Templestowe Heritage Study (1991), this building was ascribed with state significance “as the most complex and arguably the finest expression of a Miesian pavilion in the state”. This allusion is to the post-1940 work of the German-born American modernist architect, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1885-1969), which, as typified by Crown Hall at Illinois (1956) or the National Gallery at Berlin (1962), was characterised by a purity of expression with simple block-like forms, a limited palette of materials, and immaculate detailing. By their very minimalist nature, such buildings do not exhibit complexity, so it is ultimately contradictory to ascribe significance to the present building as “the most complex example of a Miesian pavilion in the state”. While the 1977-79 extensions do exhibit some Mies-like qualities (eg the podium-like massing, glazed walls and applied universal columns), certain other elements are alien to Mies' spirit: the irregular footprint, projecting concrete fire-escape stairs and prominent metal-framed sun louvre screens. Moreover, the 1966-67 building, which can still be interpreted from the north-east side of the complex, remains more evocative of the mainstream International Style of the 1960s, with its random-coursed concrete blockwork and repetitive fenestration. Overall, the entire complex exhibits a busy-ness that is antithetical to the stripped-down approach of Mies van der Rohe. There are other buildings in Victoria, notably the South Yarra/Toorak Library (Yuncken Freeman, 1971), the same architects' own offices in West Melbourne (1972) and the former BHP offices in Clayton (Eggleston, McDonald & Second, 1971) that are far more worthy of the title of “the finest example of a Miesian pavilion in the state”.

References

“Doncaster-Templestowe: A Place to Live”, Age, 25 February 1972 (six-page supplement)
“Doncaster-Templestowe: City growth five times the national average”, Age, 23 February 1973, p 15.
“Cradle of the fruit growing industry in Victoria”, Age, 14 March 1975, p 9 (photograph of 1966-67 building)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Morning Peninsula Shire Offices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other names</td>
<td>Shire of Flinders Municipal Administration Building (former)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>90 Besgrove Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ROSEBUD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>008 Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>164 Council Chambers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Shire of Mornington Peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/s</td>
<td>1973-76 (original building)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986 (East Wing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Late Twentieth Century International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>7.0 Governing Victorians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme</td>
<td>7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer/s</td>
<td>Don Hendry Fulton (furniture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carol Frank-Mas &amp; Associates (landscape)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder/s</td>
<td>Simmie &amp; Company Pty Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers/s</td>
<td>Hardcastle &amp; Richards (structural)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W E Bassett &amp; Partners (mech/electrical)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original building (right) and bridge to East Wing (left)

Detail of fenestration to council chamber wing

Interior of the Council Chamber

East Wing

Existing Heritage Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AHC</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of Significance

Not previously assessed

Proposed Heritage Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VHR</th>
<th>AHC</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>LOCAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of Significance

Yes
History

When the Shire of Flinders proposed a new civic centre at Rosebud in the late 1960s, Shire Engineer Peter Parkinson recalled a local building that he admired – the award-winning BP administration block at Crib Point – and suggested that the same architect, Don Hendry Fulton, be engaged. Fulton drew up a masterplan for a civic centre “incorporating a range of community functions including library, community hall and art gallery, each able to contribute an individual image expressive of purpose, but integrated within the whole”. The first stage was to be the municipal office and council chamber, which would, as Fulton put it, be “presented as a prestige building, the image and quality of which the visitor will associate with the organisation for which it was designed”. At the same time, it was designed economically, with modular grid, pre-cast concrete panels (with local aggregate) and low-maintenance (but high quality) finishes. Particular attention was also given to lighting and acoustics. Initial working drawings (plans, sections) were completed in June 1973; documentation continued for two years, with final partition plans dated as late as May 1975. Another year later, on 21 April 1976, council staff moved into the finished building. This milestone was reported in the local press, which noted: “ratepayers and others wishing to do business at the new Civic Centre will find the new offices decidedly different from the old ones in Dromana... they are roomy and comfortable, with every facility for fast and efficient service”. These features included hi-tech audio equipment in the council chamber's control room, and a “push-button illuminated plan console” that was used “as a public relations aid by automatically showing series of slides with taped commentaries”.

The building was to be officially opened two weeks later, on Saturday, 8 May, by the Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser; however, he became unavailable and sent Senator Alan Missen to perform the duty on his behalf (with the memorial plaque amended accordingly). Don Fulton recalls that his friend, noted architect John Mockridge, visited the building and suggested that it should be nominated for the RAIA awards. Fulton, however, was busy on other projects, and did not have time to prepare the required documentation. In any case, the building's distinctive top-lit council chamber went on to receive the 1976 Meritorious Lighting Award from the Illuminating Engineers Society of Australia (Victoria). Fulton's original civic centre masterplan was never fully implemented, although the architect was retained in 1986 to design a major addition to the building. Concerned about the relationship between old and new, he conceived the addition as a freestanding unit connected by an elevated walkway. With a limited budget preventing identical materials from being used, Fulton specified simpler ones, including mirrored glass to literally reflect the original building. The addition was officially opened by the Shire President, Cr Rowland J Brown, on 11 November 1987.

Description

The original (1976) municipal office is a large double-storey reinforced concrete building, expressed as a monumental block-like form (first floor) elevated above a recessed podium (ground floor). It has a square plan (on a modular grid), with a rectangular bay (ie the council chamber) projecting slightly from the north-west corner, where the building is built into a slope. The low hipped roof is concealed by an overscaled concrete fascia, supported on concrete piers that define modular bays, infilled with pre-cast concrete panels and a continuous row of windows with bronzed metal frames. On the council chamber wing, to the north-west, windows are partly screened by matching concrete mullions. All of these pre-cast concrete units have a rough aggregate finish. The recessed ground floor has similar windows (some full-height) and conventional concrete block walls (some of which are not original, as part of the undercroft was originally an open carpark). Matching concrete ramps to the west and north frontages provide access to recessed porches, which constitute the main entry and the “official” entry for functions. A notable element on the north side is a freestanding concrete structure with steep roofline and timber slat screen, which conceals air-conditioning cooling towers.

Internally, some spaces have been altered; the council chamber remains intact, with its timber-panelled walls and ceiling, giant circular recessed light fixture and matching curved timber benches below. Throughout the building, pale-coloured timber (mostly lime-washed Mountain Ash) has been used for wall panelling, joinery, partition spandrels and furniture, with the latter (designed also by Don Fulton) also making use of contrasting black leatherette and laminate finishes, and bronzed metal.

The 1986 extension is also also a block-like flat-roofed double storey building, albeit on a V-shaped plan. It has a beige-coloured concrete plinth, a curtain wall of mirrored glazing, and a fascia of metal sheeting that incorporates sculpted rainwater heads. The end of each wing is punctuated by an expressed concrete staircase of curved sculptural form: an open escape stair to the east, and an enclosed stairwell to the north; the latter, with its large circular window, also forms the point of connection to the original 1976 building, via an elevated walkway with barrel-vaulted tinted plastic roof.
Condition and Intactness

Externally, the 1976 building is largely intact and in fine condition. The original expression of an elevated first floor over a recessed podium has been compromised by partial infilling of the undercroft (formerly a carpark) to create additional storage. Internally, the building remains intact except for the foyer, which was remodelled and reconfigured after council amalgamations in the 1990s. Don Fulton's Brutalist spiral staircase was removed, and the reception area (originally top-lit by a pyramidal skylight) converted into two meeting rooms. The council chamber is mostly intact, although the gallery seating and councillor's chairs have been replaced. Throughout the building, many original finishes and fittings remain, including Mountain Ash panelling, bronzed metal stair handrails, and kitchenette fit-outs with distinctive curved laminate benches. Much of the original furniture also remains (desks, cupboards, shelving and side tables), while Fulton's fastidious detailing remains strongly evident in such ingenious solutions as the concealed concertina partition in the committee room, the recessed towel dispensers in the toilets, and the built-in bar in the Shire President's room.

The 1986 extension is also mostly intact both internally and externally; the enclosed stairwell and pedestrian bridge, with their beige carpeted walls, tinted glazing and brushed aluminium handrails, remain particularly evocative of the period.

Comparative Analysis

With its monumental expression as stark flat-roofed block, elevated on concrete piers, the municipal office at Rosebud can be compared with a number of contemporaneous local government headquarters of similar form. The former shire offices at Davey Street, Frankston (1965) and Fawckner Drive, Benalla (Perrott, Lyon, Timlock & Kesa, 1972) represent two especially pertinent comparators, although both are somewhat smaller in scale, with expressed concrete frames (piers and exposed floor slabs) and conventional brick infill.

The building at Rosebud is a highly significant one within the broader oeuvre of its architect, Don Fulton, who considers it “an extension of the same formula used at Westerport” – referring to the award-winning administration building at the BP Refinery at Crib Point, which not only won the 1966 RAIA Bronze Medal but also, pertinently, brought about the commission for the present building from the Shire of Flinders. The BP building is already included on the Victorian Heritage Register, in which it is lauded as a “remarkably intact building, combining the disciplined structure and detail of classical composition with a distinctive temple-like roof form, stylistically represents a shift away from the strict tenets of the International Style. Austere, rational and elegant, the building is an extraordinary example of Don Hendry Fulton's designs”. The same could also be said of the later building at Rosebud which, if anything, evokes an even more primitive sense of monumentality though its stark pre-cast concrete units.

Ultimately, the municipal office stands on its own merits as a quintessential example of Don Fulton’s distinctive and highly personal architectural style. By his own admission, the architect has “a passion for designing simple forms”, together with a preference for modular planning (both as “an intrinsic insurance of economic optimisation” and to “present a very simple aesthetic formula”) and a tendency toward monumental expression (influenced by long-held admiration for the 12th century Cambodian temple complex of Ankor Wat). Fulton is also a proponent of total design, and considers that landscaping, interior design and furniture are integral components of an overall architectural scheme. He has also stated that, during the peak of his practice in the 1960s and '70s, he and his office staff were known for their fastidious detailing. Notwithstanding alterations to the fabric, all of these qualities or principles remain very strongly imbued in the design of the municipal administration building at Rosebud.

References


“Business as usual”, the Southern Peninsula Gazette, 28 April 1976, p 12


Special acknowledgement is made to architect Don Fulton, who generously supplied copies of the above material and kindly provided additional information about the building in an interview with Simon Reeves on 9 April 2010.
**Identifier**  City of Casey: Main Office and Council Chamber
**Other names**  City of Berwick Municipal Offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group</strong></td>
<td>008 Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
<td>164 Council Chambers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Late Twentieth Century International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td>7.0 Governing Victorians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-theme</strong></td>
<td>7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Architect/s</strong></td>
<td>Jennings Industries Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Builder/s</strong></td>
<td>Jennings Industries Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engineers/s</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address</strong></td>
<td>Magid Drive NARRE WARREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LGA</strong></td>
<td>City of Casey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date/s</strong></td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Significance</strong></td>
<td>Not previously assessed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Existing Heritage Listings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AHC</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proposed Heritage Listings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VHR</th>
<th>AHC</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LOCAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**View from north side, showing enclosed garden at right**

**North-west elevation of office block, showing window bays**

**South-east elevation, showing full-height window bay**

**North-west elevation, showing 1997 additions at right**
History

The municipality of Berwick began as a road distinct (1862) but was soon upgraded to a shire (1868) and remained as such for more than a century. During that long period, one of the original four wards was severed to create the new Shire of Ferntree Gully (1899), and the remaining three wards subsequently re-subdivided on two occasions (1901 and 1965). Finally, in October 1973, the City of Berwick was created from the shire's former Berwick and Doveton Ridings.

The provision of a new civic centre was a high priority, and council entrusted the project to Jennings Industries Ltd – the well-known and long-established Australian construction and development company, formerly known as A V Jennings, which had then only recently been restructured (and renamed) after the retirement of its eponymous founder, Sir Albert Jennings, in 1972. Although mostly associated with housing estates, the firm had, since the 1950s, expanded into the construction of larger-scale commercial, industrial and institutional buildings and, by the late 1970s, was moving even further toward offering full design, construction and project management packages.

The new City of Berwick presumably engaged Jennings Industries Ltd because the company, then based in Mulgrave, had recently undertaken a considerable number of large-scale construction projects in Melbourne's south-eastern fringe, including buildings at La Trobe University and the new VFL Park at Waverley (1966-70). The foundation stone for the new civic centre at Berwick was laid by the Mayor, Cr H B Hodson, on 17 February 1978.

Following council amalgamations in 1994, the former City of Berwick was merged with the City of Cranbourne and part of the City of Knox to form the new City of Casey. The former City of Berwick civic offices at Narre Warren were retained but remodelled, being officially re-opened by the Hon Robert Maclellan, MLA, on 23 July 1997.

Description

The former City of Berwick civic offices, on Magid Drive, Narre Warren, is a large flat-roofed building of tilt-up concrete slab construction with a smooth brown-coloured pebbled finish. Built into a slope, the building comprises two discrete but connected parts: the double-storey square-planned block-like element at the highest point (containing the council chambers, kitchens, committee rooms and such) and the lower but more elongated rectangular office wing, which, owing to the slope of the land, is single storeyed to the east side and double-storeyed to the south. The two parts are connected by a common public foyer, which runs between them with an entrance at either end.

The council chamber wing exhibits an especially monumental character, with thick windowless walls terminated by a narrow recessed band supporting the massive slab-like roof, with broad eaves and concrete fascia. On the north and east sides of the building, the walls return inward to form recessed full-height window bays, with tinted glazing set into bronze anodised metal frames. The north window bay is off-centre, while the east one is centred, and further delineated by a row of concrete piers to define six narrow strips of glazing. The latter facade also incorporates a covered walkway at ground level, with another slab-like roof supported on square piers, which returns along the side of the adjacent office block and extends thence towards the otherwise detached public library building further east. On the opposite (south) frontage, a matching concrete wall defines an enclosed garden and loading dock. There is also a projecting glazed box to the right side, which contains a new staircase that was added as part of the 1997 refurbishments.

The large office wing, although constructed of similar materials, is expressed somewhat differently. The elevations to the east and south have rows of small square or rectangular windows (with matching anodised frames and tinted glazing); at the south-east corner, the walls step inward to create a small garden alcove with bays of full-height windows. The double-storeyed west elevation contains a row of four double-height rectangular alcoves that form recessed window bays, with full-height glazing to each level, a concrete spandrel between, a set of fixed sun-shading louvres above, and landscaping below. The foyer entrance to the left side, which was remodelled in 1997, has full-height doors and contrasting silver-coloured panelling and matching cantilevered canopy roof.

Internally, the building has no spaces of particular architectural merit. The new public foyer and staircase are both typical of the 1990s, with sloping coloured planes, curved walls, highly polished metal and glass. The ground floor meeting rooms have plaster walls, acoustic tile ceilings and operable laminate panel doors between them. The original council chamber, on the first floor, is a large space, more akin to a conference room, with a ceiling of anodised metal slats, operable panels with a light-coloured timber veneer facing, and matching double doors.
**Condition and Intactness**

Externally the former City of Berwick civic offices are substantially intact, except for those alterations made to the south elevation when the building was refurnished in 1997. These changes included the construction of a new staircase (expressed externally as a double-height class-walled projection from the council chamber building) and the new foyer entrance, with its cantilevered canopy and flanking walls in a shiny grey-and-silver colour scheme that contrasts sharply with the brown pebbled concrete finish of the original building. New colonial-style powder-coated metal palisade fencing has also been erected across some of the garden courts on the west frontage of the office wing.

Internally, the principal semi-public spaces (conference rooms, council chamber) appear to remain intact, although the main public foyer has been remodelled.

**Comparative Analysis**

Although A V Jennings Pty Ltd (later Jennings Industries Ltd) is mostly associated with the development of suburban residential estates from the 1930s to the 1980s, the post-war period saw the company expand into the construction of larger non-residential projects such as schools, hospitals and university buildings. From the early 1970s, Jennings completed a number of high-rise city office blocks, such as Nubrik House in William Street (1971), and also begun to experiment with (and then become highly proficient at) the use of the new tilt-up concrete slab system. The firm's Construction Group underwent a lull during 1974-75 (prompted, as noted in the official history, by the "chaotic economic and industrial environment") but subsequently boomed in the latter half of that decade, to the point that, for the first time ever, the Construction Group outshone the Housing Group. The official history further records that:

> In the 1970s an increasing proportion of new work was government rather than private, a reflection of increased government spending in the period as well as the flatness of the private sector. In both sectors, the [Construction] Group sought increasingly to find more design and construction work such as the Kingston Heath Primary School and the Berwick Civic Centre in Victoria. This was the effective start of the move by the company, considerably expanded in the 1980s, to provide all-round project management service rather than just construction.

The Berwick Civic Centre can thus be considered to be of some historic interest as evidence of the new direction taken by Jennings Industries Ltd after the 1970s. This, however, does not necessarily equate with historic significance at the state level, as a number of other buildings in Victoria (eg the Kingston Heath Primary School in Cheltenham) demonstrate this same aspect. The school at Cheltenham, which opened in 1976, not only pre-dates the Berwick Civic Centre by two years, but also, with its cluster of open-planned pyramid-roofed pavilions linked by covered walkways, is probably the more architecturally interesting of the two projects.

Considered on its own merits, the Berwick Civic Centre is of limited architectural significance. While its monumental massing and stark wall surfaces (expressed through the modern medium of textured pre-cast concrete slabs) are certainly of some interest, this aesthetic is better demonstrated by other buildings in Victoria – not least of all by two near-contemporaneous civic centres assessed for the present project: the Camberwell Civic Centre (Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, 1967-70) and the former Shire of Flinders Civic Centre at Rosebud (Don Hendry Fulton, 1973-76).

**References**

| **Identifier** | Wangaratta Government Centre; City of Wangaratta Municipal Offices | **008-011** |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Other names** | Wangaratta Arts Centre (Stages 1 & 2); Education Services Building |
| **Address**     | 62-68 Ovens Street  
WANGARATTA |
| **LGA**         | Rural City of Wangaratta |
| **Date/s**      | 1976-77 (Stage 1)  
1979-80 (Stage 2) |
| **Architect/s** | Grahame Shaw & Partners (both stages) |
| **Artist/s**    | Hans Knorr (1980 sculpture) |
| **Group**       | 008 Administration |
| **Category**    | 164 Council Chambers |
| **Style**       | Late Twentieth Century Brutalist |
| **Theme**       | 7.0 Governing Victorians |
| **Sub-theme**   | 7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't |
| **Builder/s**  | Noel Mealey & Associates P/L (1976-77)  
Citra Constructions Limited (1979-80) |
| **Engineers/s** | 

![The former Education Services Building (1976-77)](image1)  
![The Rural City of Wangaratta Municipal Offices (1980)](image2)  
![Detail of Ovens Street (west) frontage, showing battered base](image3)  
![Rear (east)frontage of the complex](image4)  

### Existing Heritage Listings
- **AHC** -  
- **NT** -  
- **HO** -  
- **Study** -  
- **Level of Significance**: Not previously assessed

### Proposed Heritage Listings
- **VHR** -  
- **AHC** -  
- **HO** Yes  
- **Level of Significance**: LOCAL
History

The origins of this complex of massive concrete buildings date back to the early 1970s, when the Education Department proposed that its various operations in Wangaratta (ie the district inspector's office, the special education section, the physical education section and the audio-visual section) might be consolidated in a single building. This had never been attempted in regional Victoria, and no less innovative was the department's unusual decision to entrust the project to the City of Wangaratta, rather than the PWD. A site was selected beside the existing (1962) municipal offices in Ovens Street, and, in collaboration with council, the project expanded into an ambitious proposal for the Wangaratta Centre for the Arts. Reportedly modelled on the Maison de Culture in Bourges, it was to be realised in three stages: the Education Services Building, new municipal offices, and the conversion of the existing municipal offices into an arts venue. It was later enthusiastically reported that "while none of these stages is unique in itself, it is their interlocking that is exciting". Melbourne architects Grahame Shaw & Partners were commissioned to undertake the project; tenders for Stage One were called in August 1976, and the contract awarded to the lowest tenderer, Noel Mealey & Associates Pty Ltd. The contract was signed in October, and, with completion slated for December 1977, construction began.

Problems emerged in early 1977 when it became apparent that sub-contractors had not been paid. Some tradesmen ceased working and, as the number of creditors increased, the ostensible completion date came and went. Optimistically, the council commissioned a plaque for the opening ceremony on 16 February 1978. However, a few days before, after one supplier had issued a writ to the contractor, the firm of Noel Mealey & Associates went into liquidation. With two weeks to completion, the City of Wangaratta took over the contract; new documents were prepared and most of the sub-contractors agreed to return. The official opening was rescheduled for 12 June 1978, to coincide with a visit to Wangaratta by the Premier, Sir Rupert Hamer. Notwithstanding the problems with the project (which, incidentally, prompted questions in Parliament about the appropriateness of engaging unverified private contractors on government projects), the City of Wangaratta proceeded with Stage Two, for new municipal offices, which were erected alongside and officially opened on 5 June 1980 by the Governor of Victoria, the Honourable Sir Henry Winneke. The same year, a carved wooden sculpture, entitled Out of the Deep, was erected beside the building – a major public work for German-born sculptor Hans Knorr (1915-1987), who had been artist-in-residence at the 1980 Wangaratta Colonial Festival.

In 2009, the City of Wangaratta built a new arts centre elsewhere, and the old municipal offices and Playhouse Theatre on the corner of Ovens and Ford streets were demolished. The former Education Services Building has since been remodelled as the Wangaratta Government Centre, and the front portion of the adjacent municipal office (which included new council chambers) is presently (2010) being gutted and refurbished for new uses.

Description

The former Wangaratta Centre for the Arts (Stages 1 & 2) comprises a cluster of multi-storey buildings that, typical of the Brutalist style of the mid-1970s, are expressed as stark volumetric masses in off-form concrete. The Ovens Street frontage is still interpreted as two separate blocks, built right to the property boundary: the former Education Services Building (to the right) and the former municipal offices (to the left). The former building has a battered base plinth and a recessed ground floor level, which was originally open but has since (as part of the recent refurbishments) been partly infilled by a new window bay, clad with rusted steel plate. Above, the upper levels are contained with a huge and windowless projecting mass, delineated by a series of horizontal grooves. The adjacent municipal office is similarly expressed, with a recessed ground floor (providing space for a pedestrian ramp and steps to the off-centre foyer entry) and a projecting and windowless upper level. To the right side is a projecting double-height canted bay, which presumably contains a stairwell. The north-east (ie left) elevation of the building has a continuous bay of full-height windows (with dark-coloured anodised metal frames) and two large square window openings at the first floor.

The former Education Services Building and municipal office are separated by a recessed portion that defines a landscaped courtyard on the street. Its front wall also has continuous bays of anodised metal-framed windows at each level, and off-form concrete spandrels (where, for contrast, the marks of the timber formwork run horizontally, rather than vertically). There is a second and similar recessed wing to the left of the municipal office, with similar fenestration at the upper level and a double porte-cochere below, supported on square concrete columns. Hans Knorr's sculpture, in the form of a huge C-shaped piece of carved timber, stands to the left side of the double driveway. At the rear of the complex is a large multi-storey office block, with the same facade treatment of continuous window bays alternating with off-form concrete spandrels with horizontal board-marks.
Condition and Intactness

Externally, the complex is substantially intact, although the recent (2009-10) refurbishments have made a number of obvious changes. The original 1962 municipal offices at the corner of Ovens and Ford streets, have been demolished and replaced by a new double-storey wing, which now forms the principal public entry point to the complex. This wing, with its vertical bays of clear glazing, rusted metal plate cladding and fixed louvres mounted on projecting metal frames, represents a lively (and not entirely inappropriate) contrast to the stark concrete of the 1970s building. Similar detailing has been incorporated the new infill on the ground floor of the former Education Services Building. The adjacent municipal office is virtually untouched externally, although it is currently (2010) being gutted internally. The building's principal frontages to the street, and to the rear, retain their original (and quite distinctive) unpainted off-form concrete finishes and dark-coloured anodised metal-framed windows.

Comparative Analysis

Aesthetically, the building can be considered as good and (at least externally) a relatively intact example of the Brutalist style that was widely popular in Victoria for about ten years from the late 1960s. Its extensive use of rough off-form concrete finishes and its expression as a series of large windowless volumes that project over recessed bays is entirely typical of the style. The battered plinth of the former Education Services Building is perhaps a somewhat less common detail, while the contrasting horizontal and vertical board markings on the concrete also produces an interesting effect. However, the complex certainly pales when compared to more celebrated examples of this controversial style, such as the Plumbers & Gasfitters Employees in Melbourne (Graeme Gunn, 1970), which, with its expressed open staircases and splayed volumes, exhibits a far more sculptural use of off-form concrete. The former Wangaratta Centre for the Arts does not stand up as Brutalist building of significance at the state level, especially when there are other more notable examples – such as the remarkable former Western Regional office of the MMBW in St Albans Road, Sunshine North (A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall, 1977) that have yet to be assessed in more detail.

Otherwise, the complex is of architectural and historical interest for its associations with an ambitious and innovative scheme for a regional “Centre of the Arts” that was reportedly inspired by a counterpart in France. The unusual background to the project – as a collaboration between the Education Department and the City of Wangaratta that was undertaken through the private sector rather than the PWD – is also of some interest. These associations, however, are strongest at the local or regional level, and do not equate with a case for state significance. Although recently altered and no longer used for entirely its original purposes, the complex remains as a prominent feature in central Wangaratta and is thus considered to be of heritage significance at the local level.

References

“Crash hits a City in the Centre”, Age, 25 May 1978, p 4.
“Premier voices support for proposed Arts Centre”, Wangaratta Chronicle-Despatch, 12 June 1978, p 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>City of Monash Civic Centre</th>
<th>008-012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other names</td>
<td>City of Waverley Civic Centre (former)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>293 Springvale Road, GLEN WAVERLEY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>City of Monash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/s</td>
<td>1982-84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>008 Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>164 Council Chambers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Late Twentieth Century International</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>7.0 Governing Victorians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme</td>
<td>7.1 Developing Institutions of Self-Govern't</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect/s</td>
<td>Harry Seidler &amp; Associates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder/s</td>
<td>Civil &amp; Civic Pty Ltd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer/s</td>
<td>Michael Johnson (tapestry)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers/s</td>
<td>W L Meinhardt &amp; Partners (structural)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Knowland &amp; Associates (acoustics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Claude Engle (lighting consultant)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General view, showing sculptural front wing and round pool**

**View from north, showing projecting stairwells**

**Entrance foyer/atrium, showing elevated walkway and lift shaft**

**Top-lit Council Chamber, with original chairs and granite bench**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Heritage Listings</th>
<th>Proposed Heritage Listings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHC (Yes) NT HO (Yes) Study Yes</td>
<td>VHR (Yes) AHC (Yes) HO (Yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Level of Significance</td>
<td>STATE Level of Significance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
History

Proclaimed in 1961, the City of Waverley occupied modern premises in Springvale Road for another two decades, when it was moved that a new and larger building was needed. The Civic Centre Sub-Committee first met on 18 May 1981: within seven months, council had engaged Civil & Civic Pty Ltd, Australia's leading building contractors and project managers, to prepare sketch plans for a $5.5million building. The choice of Civil & Civic was no doubt spurred by the firm's recent success with another municipal project, the Karralyka Theatre at Ringwood, which won the 1980 RAIA (Victorian chapter) Bronze Medal. This was built on a project management basis, where, as part of the package, Civil & Civic engaged an architect as their own consultant: esteemed Sydney-based modernist Harry Seidler, whose fruitful association with Civil & Civic went back over two decades (starting in the late 1950s with such projects as Blues Point Tower). Engaged to build the Waverley Civic Centre, Civil & Civic turned again to Seidler to provide architectural input.

For his own part, Seidler was pleased to be working again in Victoria. Of the Waverley job, he later said: "In New South Wales, I have always fought with local government . . but in Victoria, this local council wanted only the most progressive architecture." Because of Seidler's high profile in the Australian (and international) architectural scene, several leading consultants became involved in the project, including Sydney-based acoustic designer Peter Knowland (best known for his work on the Sydney Opera House) and prominent American lighting designer Claude Engle (who worked with Seidler on the Australian Embassy in Paris). Typically, Seidler specified expensive imported materials (eg Norwegian quartzite, Indian granite) and designer furniture, including black leather armchairs by Otto Zapf, GF chairs by David Rowland, and Wassily and Cesca chairs by architect/designer (and Seidler's former employer) Marcel Breuer. Local talent was represented by a raw wool rug by Pat Jarrett and a tapestry by award-winning Sydney-based artist Michael Johnson.

The new Waverley Civic Centre was officially opened by the Governor of Victoria, Rear Admiral Sir Brian Murray, AO, on 22 November 1984. The building was well received by the citizens of Waverley and the architectural community, and was published in local and overseas journals. Like its earlier counterpart at Ringwood, it received kudos from the RAIA (Victorian chapter), winning the Merit Award for Outstanding Architecture (Institutional Building) in 1985. The building remains a much-loved local landmark; when the new amalgamated City of Monash was created in 1994, it adopted a logo based on the curved roofline of the council chamber. The 25th anniversary of the official opening was celebrated in November 2009, with some specially-commissioned public art installed in the building's circular pond.

Description

The Waverley Civic Centre comprises a three-storey block on a canted L-shaped plan, with a projecting two-storey wing at the corner. The rear block, containing two office wings flanking a central atrium, has an exposed concrete frame (delineating floor and parapet lines) infilled with fawn-coloured split concrete block. Windows are screened by large fixed vertical concrete louvres, with rainwater spouts at the base. At the end of each office wing is a projecting enclosed fire stair. The two-storey front wing comprises an elevated volume, clad in white ceramic tile, which projects outward, supported at the end by a single central column that rises from a circular pool. This undercroft forms a portico cochere to the main entry, with a circular driveway around the pool. The parapet of the elevated wing comprises two quadrant-shaped walls, forming a semi-circular vault to admit light into the council chamber through a semi-circular skylight. This striking feature (described in one journal as being “reminiscent of Veronese battlements”) incorporates a boldly projecting rain-spout at the base of the quadrant walls, which drains into the pond below. The main approaches to the building, from east and west, are marked by gate-like elements with large concrete-framed blockwork panels, raised on columns; the path from Springvale Road also incorporates one of Seidler's trademark crinkle-crankle walls.

Internally, the main building is dominated by an atrium defined by a grid of plain columns with stark white-painted walls, large areas of glazing and a grey quartzite floor. A long curved ramp leads up from the main entry to a raised reception area, where access to the upper levels is provided by a freestanding lift shaft and an open staircase of sculptural form, while an elevated walkways extends back across the atrium to the council chamber. All of these elements (along with balustrade walls to the ramp, stairs, mezzanine balconies and walkways) are of rough off-form concrete. The council chamber is rectangular, with roughly rendered walls and a funnel-shaped element at the far end, which rises up to support the semi-circular and turret-like skylight, infilled with translucent glazing. The curved bench, of dark brown Tamin granite from India, is original, as are the black leather Otto Zapf chairs. The gallery seating, however, has been replaced. Most of the office areas still have their original white laminate partitions with glazed highlights, while even the public toilets retain matching laminate partitions, with original grey and white tiling and granite benchtops.
Condition and Intactness

Not surprisingly, given its relatively recent date of construction, the Waverley Civic Centre remains in excellent condition and a highly intact state. Indeed, it has been scrupulously maintained (and virtually unaltered) since its completion in 1984. When seen from outside, the building closely resembles the images published in the 1980s. It is regrettable, however, that new multi-storey buildings to the north and south of the site have compromised its original context.

The building’s interiors also remain notably intact. With the exception of some partition reconfiguration in the open-planned office areas, much of the interior remains as it was in 1984. Even the public toilets retain original tiling, partitions and granite benches to vanity units. The atrium/foyer and council chamber are also intact, although some of the original designer furniture has gone, including the GF chairs (council chamber) and the Wassily Chairs (foyer). The tapestry by Michael Johnson and the wool rug by Pat Jarrett have also been removed from the foyer, although the former (and some of the Wassily chairs) is known to currently be in storage in the City of Monash Art Gallery.

Comparative Analysis

Often cited as Australia’s greatest (and most internationally recognised) architect, Harry Seidler began practice in Sydney in 1949 and, over more than five decades thence, designed buildings across New South Wales, in Canberra and Queensland, and around the world (Hong Kong, Mexico, France, Austria). However, he only designed few buildings in Victoria, of which some – eg schemes for the Chevron Hotel (1969) and the Grollo Tower (1995) – were not built. His five extant projects in Victoria comprise the Karralyka Theatre in Ringwood (1980), the Waverley Civic Centre (1982-84), Shell House in Flinders Street (1985-89) and the Exhibitions Gallery in Waverley (1990). Despite their chronological proximity, the four buildings are quite different and demonstrate contrasting aspects of Seidler’s design approach. Of the four, the gallery (designed also for the City of Waverley) is probably the least notable, not only because it was conceived as the first stage of a larger development that did not eventuate, but also because it has recently been extended to the design of other architects. Shell House in Flinders Street, which is Seidler’s best-known local project, stands as a fine and typical example of his distinctive approach to the design of high-rise towers. The Karralyka Theatre is rather less typical in Seidler’s oeuvre; as Norman Day observed in 1980, the building exhibits “a softening of Seidler’s harsh aesthetic” and, “marks a new phase for him”. This same tendency can be observed in some of Seidler’s later buildings of the 1980s and ’90s.

By contrast, the Waverley Civic Centre stands out as the most quintessential Harry Seidler building in Victoria, in the sense that it illustrates, in one single building, many of the forms, themes, finishes and details that recur throughout the architect’s best work from the 1950s to the 1970s. The use of an exposed concrete frame with block infill recalls projects such as the Victoria Apartments at Potts Point (1962), while overscaled vertical sun-louvres recall the Meller House at Castlecrag (1950) or Seidler’s own offices in Milson Point (1971-73). The elevated pedestrian bridge and freestanding lift shaft recall the Housing Commission flats at Rosebery (1964-67), while the Brutalist off-form concrete and boldly sculpted rainwater spouts echo Seidler’s own house in Killara (1966-67). Other key aspects of the design, including the complex atrium space, projecting fire-escape stairs, textured wall surfaces (ie council chamber), polished marble and granite, beige-coloured split concrete block, European designer furniture, integrated public artwork and low curving walls to define pathways and landscape areas, are all recurring motifs in Seidler’s earlier (and subsequent) works.

References


Statement of Significance

What is Significant?
The Waverley Civic Centre at 293 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, is a flat-roofed building comprising a three storey L-shaped wing (with expressed concrete frame, fawn-coloured split blockwork infill and fixed vertical louvres) and a smaller projecting two-storey wing (clad in white ceramic tile, with a distinctive curved parapet). The interior is dominated by a large double-height atrium with quartzite floors and an open staircase, freestanding lift shaft and elevated walkway in rough off-form concrete, while the council chamber (contained in the projecting front wing) is a unique top-lit space, with granite benches, leather Otto Zapf armchairs, and a funnel-shaped feature that supports a turret-like semi-circular clerestory at the far end. Erected in 1982-84 by leading contractors/project managers Civil & Civic, the building was designed by esteemed Sydney-based modernist, Harry Seidler, as one of his few forays into Victoria.

How is it Significant?
The Waverley Civic Centre is of architectural and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria

Why is it Significant?
Architecturally, the civic centre is significant as a notable example of the work of Harry Seidler, often cited as Australia's greatest (and most internationally recognised) architect. The building is intrinsically rare as one of only four buildings in Victoria ever erected to the design of this prolific (but Sydney-based) designer. Of these four, it stands out as the most quintessential Seidler building in Victoria, as it incorporates many forms, themes elements that recur throughout the architect's finest work from the 1950s to the 1970s. These include the use of an expressed concrete frame with brick or block infill, overscaled fixed vertical sun louvres, highly sculptural forms (exhibited here by the expressed fire escape stairs and the council chamber parapet), crinkle-crankle landscape walls, complex atrium spaces, elevated walkways, freestanding lift shafts, roughly textured internal wall surfaces (ie council chamber interior), off-form concrete, polished marble and granite (atrium floor and benches to council chamber, toilets, etc), imported designer furniture and integrated artwork (some of which has been removed)

Aesthetically, the civic centre is significant as an outstanding example of Late Twentieth Century International Style architecture, designed by Australia's leading exponent of that idiom. The building is illustrated in A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture as a quintessential example of Late Twentieth Century International, exhibiting no fewer than eight of the twelve "style indicators": cubiform overall shape, expressed structural frame, overhang for shade (ie porte cochere), plain wall surfaces, sun control devices (ie fixed louvred), assertive cantilever (ie front wing), contrasting non-rectangular shape (ie curved parapet) and contrasting texture (ie the use of split blockwork). The atrium, by contrast, combines elements of the International Style (plain columns, white walls) with some fine Brutalist details (ie off-form concrete balustrade walls, freestanding lift shafts, open stairs and elevated walkways) to striking effect; the space must be considered as one of the best (and certainly best-preserved) Brutalist interiors in Victoria. The International Style character of the interior is also exhibited by the use of expensive high-quality finishes and items, including the quartzite flooring to the atrium, the granite benches, and the remnant designer furniture.

Proposed Extent of Registration
The entire building and environs (pool, pathways, gates and crinkle-crankle walls), with a curtilage extending to Springvale Road. All of the original designer furniture and integrated artwork should be included in the registration, even in those cases (eg Michael Johnson tapestry and Wassily chairs) where it is currently being stored off site. The framed RAIA award certificate from 1985, presently displayed in the upstairs committee room, should also be included.

Proposed Policy Guidelines
The original furniture and artwork in the foyer (Wassily chairs, tapestry and raw wool rug) should be reinstated.

Proposed Permit Exemptions
New kitchen and toilet fitouts
Partition alterations in the open-planned office areas (provided that original partitions are retained and re-used)
A number of places documented in this study represent the work of architects or firms whose careers are not well documented in readily-available secondary sources. The following provides a brief biographic and professional overview of these architects:

- Douglas Alexandra
- Gerd & Renate Block
- Charles Duncan
- Bernard Evans (Evans Murphy Berg & Hocking)
- Godfrey Spowers Pty Ltd
- A C Leith & Bartlett
- A K Lines MacFarlane & Marshall
- Muir & Shepherd
- Grahame Shaw & Partners
- Horace Tribe
- G Stuart Warmington
- Robert G Warren

Except where otherwise acknowledged, biographical information contained in the above citations has been drawn from private research files maintained by Simon Reeves; many of the citations themselves have been condensed from expanded versions included in the on-line Dictionary of Unsung Architects, maintained by Built Heritage Pty Ltd.

Biographical citations on the following architects or firms were not provided here, as these are considered to be sufficiently well-known (or at least well-documented) through monographs, journal articles, websites or other readily available sources.

- Buchan Laird & Buchan
- Gregory Burgess
- Chancellor & Patrick
- Denton Corker Marshall
- Don Hendry Fulton
- David Godsell
- Jennings Industries Ltd
- Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell
- Harry Seidler
- Dr Enrico Taglietti
- Yuncken Freeman Pty Ltd
DOUGLAS ALEXANDRA

The son of a Greek cafe proprietor, Douglas Alexandra (né Diomedes Alexandratros) was born in Shepparton in 1922. He joined the Australian Army at the age of nineteen years and, after serving for eight months, transferred to the RAAF. In January 1944, Flying Officer Alexandratros embarked on a Lancaster mission to Berlin but never returned; he spent a year as a POW in Germany before being repatriated to London in May 1945. Discharged in 1946, he anglicised his name and gained his Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Melbourne, being admitted as an ARAIA in 1950.

Opening his own office, Alexandra promptly emerged as one of Melbourne’s first post-war modernists. One of his earliest projects, for a pair of maisonettes on a narrow site in Meyer Road, Burwood (1951) was published in the Australian Home Beautiful the following year, lauded for the way in which it “breaks away from the old familiar features of this type of dwelling .. by the pleasantly simple design”. His Klotzman House in Ringwood (1953), expressed as an elevated box, was published even more widely and was considered Melbourne’s answer to the Rose Seidler House in Sydney. Such slick modernist dwellings formed the mainstay of Alexandra’s practice in the 1950s, and they frequently appeared in journals (notably Architecture & Arts), the property column of the Herald newspaper, and slim monographs such as New Australian Homes and Beryl Guertner’s 200 Home Plans. Amongst the projects thus published were the Middleton House in Auburn (1954), the Hattam House in Kew (1955), the Stockdale House in Toorak (1959), the Reidy House in Kew (1959) and the Kauffman House in Beaumaris (1961). Alexandra undertook relatively new non-residential commissions during the 1950s; noted examples including kindergartens at Burwood (1957) and Beaumaris (1955). During this key period, he also found time to lecture in design at the University of Melbourne.

In 1963, Alexandra entered into partnership with fellow Melbourne University lecturer Raymond Berg (1913-1988), established their office in Chelsea House, Flemington Road, North Melbourne. The firm, styled as Berg & Alexandra, went on to design a string of major municipal projects in regional Victoria, including the Shepparton Civic Centre, the Mildura Arts Centre, the Hamilton Art Centre and Regional Library and the Traralgon City Hall and Theatre. They also designed the Raymond Priestly Building on Melbourne University’s Parkville campus (in conjunction with staff architect Rae Featherstone) as well as projects for the Commonwealth Bank, the Church of England Home for the Aged and the Mildura Base Hospital. There were relatively fewer residential commissions during this period, although standout examples included houses at Balywn, Surrey Hills and Croydon, along with Alexandra’s own house on the Boulevard at Ivanhoe (1963), overlooking the Yarra River flats.


BLOCK, GERD & RENATE

Born in Germany, Gerd Block (born 1926) and his wife Renate (1926-84) met while studying architecture at the Karlsruhe Technical University. After graduation and marriage in 1950, the couple migrated to Australia, with their infant son, in 1951. They gained local experience in the office of H A & F L Norris while designing and building a house for their own use in Montmorency. Completed in 1955, the house was published in both the Age newspaper and the Australian Home Beautiful. By that time, the Blocks had already commenced their own home-based architectural practice, specialising in residential projects. The Biancardi House at 20 Yarra Street, Kew (1960), with its striking triple-fronted facade clad in basket-weave brick panels, was published locally (most notably in Neil Clerehan’s Best Australian Houses) and internationally (in the German journal Baumeister). The couple went on to achieve greater fame for some much-publicised non-residential projects, including the new Australian headquarters of Siemens Pty Ltd, in Church Street Richmond (1964), which received a commendation in the General Buildings category in the 1964 Victorian Architects Awards. The following year, they won first prize in a design competition (against Chancellor & Patrick, Berg & Alexandra, Howlett & Bailey and others) for the new Nunawading Civic Centre; the building was completed n 1968.

In 1972, Gerd Block completed a PhD on industrial building, which was said to be the first time in Australia that a doctorate in architecture had been awarded for a subject not connected with history. Block himself taught at Melbourne University until 1974, when he accepted the Foundation Chair of Architecture at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand. The couple remained in New Zealand for about a decade, during which, in addition to Dr Block’s academic duties, he and his wife maintained a private practice, designing several houses in Wellington.
CHARLES DUNCAN

Born in 1933, Charles Duncan matriculated from Melbourne Grammar School in 1951 and then completed his Diploma of Architecture at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology between 1951 and 1959. During and immediately after that time, he gained experience in several prominent city architectural offices, including L Hume Sherrard, Chancellor & Patrick, Eggleston McDonald & Secombe, Peter Jorgensen, McGlashan & Everist, and Hassell & McConnell, before opening his own office in July 1962. His first commission for a new house, designed and built for the Williams family in Glenard Drive, Heidelberg, was completed in 1963. This striking dwelling, with planar walls of blue clinker brick, full-height glazing and a stepped flat roof with clerestory windows and stained timber fascias, won the Victorian Architectural Medal in 1965 and was still much admired ten years later, when it appeared in Norman Day’s book, Modern Houses: Melbourne. Its earthy Wrightian character became a hallmark of Duncan’s subsequent output, which consisted almost entirely of single dwellings in the leafy outer eastern suburbs (Heidelberg, Eltham, Lower Plenty, etc). His design for the Eltham South Kindergarten – a rare non-residential commission – was included in an exhibition of recent work by Melbourne architects under the age of 35 years (curated by the Young Members Committee of the Victorian Chapter of the RAIA), and was subsequently published in in Architecture Australia in October 1967.

During the later 1960s and early 1970s, Charles Duncan's houses often appeared in magazines and daily newspapers. One especially notable project, the Tozer Homestead at Beaconsfield (1964) won him another architectural award and was published in the Age, the Australian Women’s Weekly and Architecture Australia. Several other residential designs, including the the Walsh House in Heidelberg (1967) and the Okalyi House at Lower Plenty (1968), received Age/RAIA citation awards, while others, such as the Knott House in Heidelberg (1969) and the Lovering House in Kew (1971), were profiled as “House of the Week” in the Australian Women’s Weekly. Duncan’s reputation as a producer of fine organic houses saw him engaged, along with Daryl Jackson, Graeme Gun and McGlashan & Everist, to design the houses at the award-winning Merchant Builders estate of Elliston, at Rosanna (1969).

References


BERNARD EVANS

Born in Manchester in 1905, Bernard Evans migrated to Australia with his family when he was eight years old. Evans began his professional career under his father, a builder, for whom he worked for four years while studying at the Prahran Technical Art School. He went on to work for MMTB architect George Monsborough (1926-29) and then for Box Hill timber merchants A E Weston Ltd (1929), for whom he designed low-cost timber dwellings. Evans commenced his own practice around 1930, concentrating initially on residential projects. He designed a number of apartment blocks including several on the fringe of the CBD (Queens Road, St Kilda Road and Royal Parade), in a variety of eclectic styles including Moderne and Tudor Revival. Some of these were built for Western Australian property developer Claude de Bernales, who subsequently retained Evans to remodel several properties in Western Australia, to design the London Court Arcade (1937) in Perth, and even his firm’s London headquarters, Westralia House (1938). Registered as an architect (somewhat belatedly) in 1940, Bernard Evans enlisted with the AIF and served at Tobruk and El Alamein, discharged with the rank of Brigadier.

After the War, Evans re-established his Melbourne office as Bernard Evans & Associates, which became one of the largest post-war firms in Victoria. It was responsible for many multi-storey buildings in the CBD, including the Legal & General building (1956) and CRA House (1965), both on Collins Street, and London Assurance House on Bourke Street. He built many more on St Kilda Road: an office block at No 505 (1959), the Sheridan Court flats at No 485 (1959), the Stanton Flats at No 622 (1960) and the impressive class-walled VACC headquarters at No 464 (1962). During this period, Evans was also well-known for his innovative ideas; he pioneered of strata-title legislation in the 1950s, and was an early champion of the West Gate Bridge and City Square projects. He served as a councillor on the Melbourne City Council for more than 25 years (from 1948 to 1971), with a stint as Lord Mayor (1958-60). He was knighted in 1962.

In 1971, Bernard Evans, retired from architectural practice to devote himself to public activities. His firm continued under the name of Bernard Evans, Murphy, Berg & Hocking (with Evans still serving as a consultant) until it ceased four years later. Evans suffered a mild stroke in 1978, and died in February 1981.
A C Leith had undertaken municipal projects as early as 1927, when he designed a shire hall at Ringwood. However, his head its architecture school. However, Bartlett held the post only briefly before joining A C Leith in partnership. "extensive experience abroad" during the 1920s and early 1930s before being invited back to his alma mater. Flemington (1956) and Moonee Valley (1959) racecourses. the Victorian Racing Commission, designing its headquarters at 418 St Kilda Road (1958) as well as grandstands at the Flemington (1956) and Moonee Valley (1959) racecourses. During the firm's heyday of the 1950s and '60s, its staff included a number of younger associates who were part of the emerging generation of post-war architects, including Sisalkraft scholar John Davidson, pioneer female architect Babs Delaney (and her husband W W Delaney), Ken Hardcastle and Norman Payne. By the mid-1970s, Davidson, Delaney and Hardcastle all become directors of the firm alongside a septuagenarian Race Godfrey (whose accolades by that time included the 1967 RAIA Gold Medal and an OBE for services to architecture). Godfrey retired in 1979, followed by Lobb in 1982 and Mewton in 1985. Although this marked the end of an era, the firm nevertheless continued, and it remains in operation to this day under the name of Spowers Architects.

A C LEITH & BARTLETT

Arthur Cedric Leith (1897-1975) came from a family of architects. His Scottish-born father, George Brown Leith (1858-1937) settled in Melbourne in 1879 and worked as a builder for twenty years before turning to architecture. A long-time resident (and one-time mayor) of Essendon, he designed many houses and shops in Melbourne’s northern suburbs. In 1912, he was joined by his eldest son, George Burridge Leith (1888-1969), who won a Bronze Medal for measured drawing in 1905, and the two men practised as G B & G Burridge Leith until 1922, when the latter became Chief Architect of the State Savings Bank. By the end of the decade, George Burridge’s half-brother, Arthur Cedric, had begun his own practice under the name A C Leith & Associates. Towards the end of 1934, he was joined by Harold Edward Bartlett (1902-1994). The first diplomat from Geelong’s Gordon Institute of Technology, Bartlett had undertaken "extensive experience abroad" during the 1920s and early 1930s before being invited back to his alma mater in 1933 to head its architecture school. However, Bartlett held the post only briefly before joining A C Leith in partnership.

A C Leith had undertaken municipal projects as early as 1927, when he designed a shire hall at Ringwood. However, his firm’s subsequent commission for the new Heidelberg Town Hall (1934-37) won such acclaim (including the 1939 RVIA Street Architecture Medal) that the practice of A C Leith & Bartlett was soon in demand as Victoria’s leading specialists in the design of local government buildings. The office went on to design municipal offices at Morwell (1936), Wycheproof (1937), Numurkah (1938), Mirboo North (1938) and elsewhere, and to remodel or rebuild countless other. This trend continued well into the post-war era with such projects as the Kew Civic Centre (1959), the Lilydale Town Hall (1961) and the municipal complex at Burnie in Tasmania (1973). During the post-war period, Leith & Bartlett also completed many significant non-municipal projects, including a several high-rise Collins Street office developments: a building for Underhill Investments Pty Ltd (1959), the ANZ head office (1960) and, in conjunction with Godfrey, Spowers, Hughes, Mewton & Lobb, the ambitious National Mutual complex (1963-65). The office also maintained a fruitful association with the Victorian Racing Commission, designing its headquarters at 418 St Kilda Road (1958) as well as grandstands at the Flemington (1956) and Moonee Valley (1959) racecourses.
A K LINES, MACFARLANE & MARSHALL

The prominent post-war firm of A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall grew from the inter-war practice of Albert Keith Lines (1897-1981), whose career began before 1916 as an articled pupil of Claude Merritt. After wartime service, Lines returned to Melbourne to work for Morewood & Rogers, a prolific house building firm, for whom he designed and supervised many commercial, retail and residential projects. In 1923, Lines opened his own office and, five years later, took on a teenaged Jessica MacFarlane (1911-95) as an articled pupil. The prestige of the small firm increased during the 1930s with a stream of large-scale residential projects in the prosperous middle-class suburbs of Balwyn, Camberwell and Kew. Several houses (some designed and supervised by MacFarlane) were published in the *Australian Home Beautiful*. The practice was briefly suspended during the Second World War, but re-opened in 1945 with MacFarlane as a full partner. Three years later, they were joined by Bruce Marshall, ex-RAN, who was himself elevated to partnership in 1952. Although MacFarlane left the office in 1954 (when she married and moved to South Australia), her surname was retained in the firm's title.

Much of the subsequent output of A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall was guided by Bruce Marshall, whose expertise was in larger-scale commercial and industrial work. This new direction was evident in such projects as the factories for Ruston & Hornsby at Dandenong Road, Clayton (1954), and Yakka Overalls Pty Ltd at Ballarat Street, Brunswick (1955). From the late 1950s, the firm also became one of Victoria's leading specialists in the design of municipal offices. This trend had actually begun just before the War, when Lines & Marshall (as it was then known) designed the new Eltham Shire Offices (1941). After restrictions on building activity were relaxed in the 1950s, the firm was commissioned to design a new modern headquarters for the Shire of Benalla (1958-59). For more than three decades thence, the provision of council offices and related municipal buildings formed the mainstay of the office of A K Lines, MacFarlane & Marshall, with notable examples being built at Oakleigh (1962), Myrtleford (1967), Ringwood (1970) and elsewhere.

Albert Lines retired in 1967, but his firm continued, and remains in operation to this day.

MUIR & SHEPHERD

John William Muir (born 1911) was born in Ballarat, where he commenced his own architectural practice in 1933 and subsequently undertook a number of small-scale local projects including the rebuilding of the Jubilee Sunday School and the remodelling of the premises of Greenfields Pty Ltd, auctioneers. Muir later moved to Melbourne, where he joined the office of the top-drawer modernists Stephenson & Turner; by the end of the decade, he had risen to the position of Senior Draftsman, working on such projects as the pathology block at the Women's Hospital (1937-39) and the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (1939) at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. Also employed by Stephenson & Turner at that time was a younger architect, Arthur Redmond Shepherd (1914-1999). As was typical of the time, the careers of both men were interrupted by the Second World War. Shepherd enlisted in 1943 and served with the 2/1 Field Company before being discharged in 1946 with the rank of Captain. He and John Muir then entered into partnership as Muir & Shepherd. The office began (and evidently remained) a small one, with three young employees: Ted Gillies, Richard Allen and James Earle (the last of these later to become a well-known Melbourne architect in his own right).

Residential commissions comprised the bulk of the firm's output during the 1950s; several were published in popular housing journals of the day, such as the Jacobson House in Brighton (1953) and the Pickering House in Ivanhoe East (1956). Probably the firm's best-known residential project was the home of G W Fraser in Balwyn (1956), lauded by the *Australian House & Garden* as “a modified contemporary home – that is, a house which combines the good ideas in modern architecture with the softer finish of the traditional”. A simple gable-roofed cream brick dwelling, this presented a fully-glazed north-facing facade to the street, with full-height glass sliding doors opening onto a paved terrace with eggcrate pergola, and a projecting flat-roofed bay with matching eggcrate window wall. A slightly later and more purely modernist dwelling was the Hunt House at 439 Beach Road, Beaumaris (1960), which was published in the *Herald* property column. With its volumetric massing, inward-sloping skillion roof and balustraded sun deck, this steel-framed brick-veneer beach house remains a landmark on the esplanade. Research to date has identified few non-residential projects carried out by Muir & Shepherd. The funeral home for W G & Apps & Sons (1952-53) is certainly the most notable of these; others appear to have been more prosaic, such as the tenancy fitouts for Brighter Homes and Downyflakes Donuts at the new Chadstone Shopping Centre (1960).

The firm of Muir & Shepherd ceased in 1980, although John Muir did not retire fully for another seven years thence.
GRAHAME SHAW & PARTNERS

The son of a nurseryman from Geelong, Grahame Richard John Shaw (1928-1985) obtained his Diploma of Architecture from Gordon Institute of Technology and later travelled to London, where he worked in the office of Riches & Blythin. Returning to Melbourne, Shaw obtained a position with the Housing Commission of Victoria and was elected as an ARAIA in 1960. Shaw subsequently developed an interest in town planning and landscape architecture; he became the first graduate in the new Bachelor of Town & Regional Planning course (B TRP) at the University of Melbourne, and later became an associate of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA).

In 1967, while stile employed by the Housing Commission, Shaw worked on the preparation of a planning scheme for the City of Footscray in conjunction with architects Earle & Partners. At the conclusion of the project, he accepted Jim Earle's offer to join the firm permanently. Earle's practice, founded in 1954, was then best known as designers of single residences and ecclesiastical buildings. With his expertise in town planning and landscape architecture, Grahame Steer steered the firm in an entirely new direction, introducing larger-scaled multi-dwelling projects such as the Cross Street townhouses in Carlton (1970-71), which was Melbourne's first co-operative housing development. Shaw left Earle's office in 1972 to form a partnership with two recent Melbourne University graduates, John Denton and Bill Corker, who, two years later, would team up with Barrie Marshall to form Denton Corker Marshall. Shaw then established his own office, styled as Grahame Shaw & Partners, and went on to complete such projects as the Wangaratta Arts Centre (1976-80) and the much-published World Trade Centre on the bank of the Yarra River (1981). In 1985, the year of his sudden death, Shaw was working on an ambitious (but ultimately unimplemented) master plan for Royal Park.

References


HORACE J TRIBE

Horace James Tribe (1908-1992) began his career in 1924 as an articled pupil of H W & F B Tompkins. In 1930, he transferred to the office of Stephenson & Meldrum, where he worked on large interstate hospital and industrial projects as well as the Spirit of Progress fitout. During this time, he also worked as a relieving draftsman for Oakley & Parkes (and married Percy Oakley's only daughter, Florence, in 1935) and Hudson & Wardrop. In 1933, the young Tribe won a design competition for a house to cost £850; the following year, he narrowly missed out on winning the inaugural Robert & Ada Haddon Travelling Scholarship. In late 1938, he went into partnership with prominent society architect Marcus Martin (1892-1981). Styled as Marcus Martin & Tribe, the firm initially specialised in the sort of high-class residences (mostly in Toorak and South Yarra) that characterised Martin's pre-War career; four fine examples later appeared in George Bier's Houses of Australia (1948). Martin & Tribe also fostered an interest in buildings for social welfare, and specifically an association with the Free Kindergarten movement. This began with a commission to design the prototypical Lady Gowrie Childcare Centre in Carlton (1939) and led on to several other suburban kindergarten projects. The partnership was interrupted by the Second World War, during which Tribe served with the RAAF then worked as a technical adviser to the Commonwealth Directorate of Housing before re-joining Martin in private practice.

The partnership of Martin & Tribe was dissolved in mid-1949, when Horace Tribe left to start his own practice. Outstanding commissions that had been received by the partnership were subsequently divided amongst the two men, who completed them under their own names: Martin finished off the Boys' Home in Highett and two kindergartens in Burwood and Fitzroy, while Tribe carried on with the Robert Cochrane Kindergarten in Auburn and some additions to the Ware Holiday Home in East Ringwood. Tribe maintained this kindergarten association in his sole practice, designing examples at Swan Hill (1953), Korumburra (1954), Ringwood (1955) and elsewhere. In 1955, it was noted in Architecture & Arts journal that Horace Tribe maintained "an extensive practice in pre-school and preventive health services, good quality domestic work and industrial buildings". Projects from this phase of his career included a house in Springvale Road, Mitcham (1950), an office/warehouse for J C Hutton Pty Ltd in High Street, Preston (1954) and a block of flats in Pleasant Road, Hawthorn (1960). During this time, he also served as architect to the South Melbourne City Council, where he designed a children's play centre (1955), remodelled the Trugo Club premises (c.1958) and undertook various other projects.

Horace Tribe retired from practice in the early 1970s, but retained his registration until his death in 1992.
Gordon Stuart Warmington was born in 1922 in Sunshine, where his father, a second cousin of industrialist H V McKay, had settled (after migrating from Ireland to take up a position in McKay's Sunshine Harvester Works. The family later moved to Rosanna, where Stuart Warmington (as he preferred to call himself) matriculated from Ivanhoe Grammar School in 1939 and then commenced the architecture course at Melbourne Technical College. His studies, however, were interrupted by World War II (during which Warmington served with the 42 ALC Company of the Royal Australian Engineers), and he did not complete his qualifications until 1948. Warmington then entered the office of Frederick Romberg, whom he cites as a key influence in his subsequent career. In Romberg's employ, Warmington worked on a number of significant projects, and prepared the working drawings for the important (but since demolished) Hillstan flats on the Nepean Highway. After leaving Romberg's office, Warmington went overseas with some other young graduates; they visited the Festival of Britain in London and travelled through Spain, France and Sweden. On his return to Melbourne, Warmington was briefly associated with John & Phyllis Murphy, whose office he ran while the couple were busy with working the Olympic Swimming Stadium project.

Around 1953, Warmington established his own sole practice. One of his first projects was a house that he designed for himself at Greensborough, which, inspired by the simple timber-clad dwellings he had recently seen in Scandinavia, was published in the Australian Home Maker. Soon afterward, Warmington was approached by the then recently-proclaimed City of Sunshine to undertake a minor project in the absence of the council's usual architects, Armstrong & Orton, whose office had been depleted when several staff travelled overseas. Warmington was subsequently retained by the Sunshine City Council for over twenty years, during which time, he recalls, he worked more than thirty projects for local government and community buildings. This culminated in a master plan for the civic centre, which was realised in several stages between 1962 and 1967. He also undertook a few non-municipal projects in the area, notably the new funeral parlour for Nelson Brothers (1966-67). Such was Warmington's long and fruitful association with the thriving western suburb that he was once loftily described by the local newspaper as "the Burley Griffin of Sunshine".

ROBERT G WARREN

Born in Somerville, Robert George Warren (1920-2002) matriculated from Huntingtower College in 1936 and enrolled in the Diploma of Architecture course at the Melbourne Technical College. Concurrent with his studies, he spent 3½ years in the office of Leslie M Perrott & Partners, during which time he mostly worked, by his own admission, on industrial and hotel projects (the latter, presumably, including Perrott's celebrated Hotel Australia in Collins Street). In 1941, Warren enlisted in the Australian Army and served with the Royal Australian Engineers for the next five years. After studying at the School of Military Engineering in Sydney for four months, he became a commissioned officer and spent 18 months in the pacific Islands and three years in Australia, during which time was involved with "constructional work of all kinds", including camps, hospitals, bridges and roads. Discharged in September 1945 with the rank of Lieutenant, Warren returned to Leslie Perrott's office in Melbourne and continued working there until at least April 1946. By March 1947, he had opened his own office in Black Rock. Relatively little is known of Warren's practice during this period, although he is known to have designed group housing developments at Sandringham, Beaumaris and St Albans. In the early 1950s, Robert Warren and his wife, Joyce, moved to Canberra, although he maintained his registration as an architect in Victoria until 1961. In 1954, Warren's office was one of six architectural firm (along with Grounds Romberg & Boyd, Fowell,Mansfield & Maclurcan, Hassell & McConnell, Borland Murphy & McIntyre and Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell) invited to prepare schemes for the new Academy of Science building at Canberra. Although the commission was ultimately awarded to Roy Grounds, who proposed a bold circular building with shell-concrete dome, Warren was one of two other competitors (along with Borland Murphy & McIntyre) who proposed buildings of similar form and structure. For his part, Warren remained interested in shell concrete domes for some time; a few years later, in 1958, he prepared a scheme for St Phillip's Church of England in the Canberra suburb of O'Connor, which included a circular domed chapel of a blob-like form that "suggests the tense balance of drop of water on a flat surface". The structure, although published on the cover of Architecture & Arts in January 1959, was never built. Warren had more success in 1961, when he revived the dome idea for the council chamber at the Altona Civic Centre – his last known project in his home state of Victoria. Warren went on to undertake a number of significant projects in the ACT, notably the Queanbeyan Recreation & Leisure Centre (1960-61), where shell-concrete domed structures were once again featured. In 1969, he (temporarily) left Canberra to work as a consultant on a low-cost housing development in Indonesia.