

Parkville Anzac Hall



ANZAC HALL SOHE 2008



h01747 1 anzac hall brens drive royal park distant view she project 2004



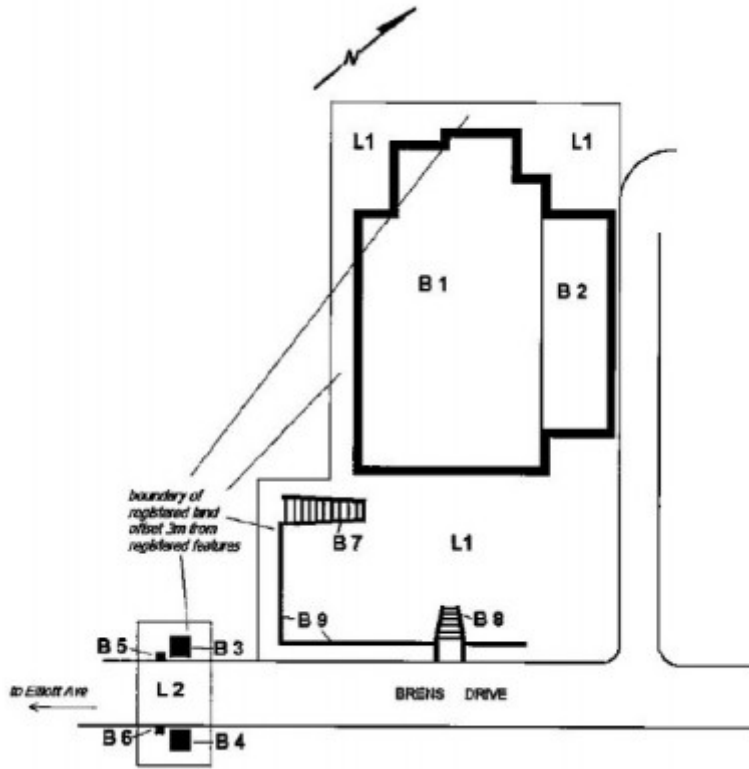
ANZAC Hall Brens Drive
Royal Park Parkville Drive



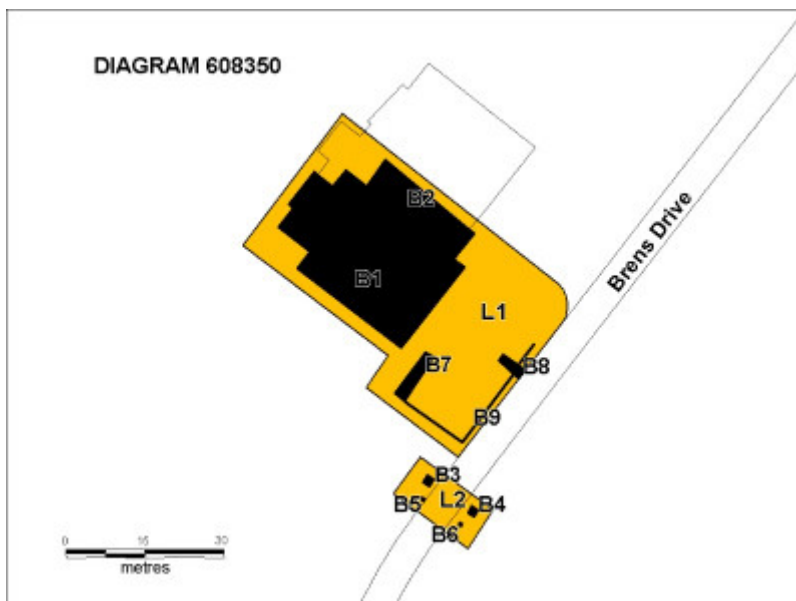
anzac hall brens drive royal park close view she project 2004



anzac hall brens drive royal park parkville front view aug1998



H1747Plan



H1747 plan redrawn 05 07 06

Location

BRENS DRIVE PARKVILLE, Melbourne City

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

-

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1747

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO898

Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 28, 1999

What is significant?

Anzac Hall was built in late 1940 or early 1941 on behalf of the RSL for use as a cinema and recreation hall for troops at Royal Park. In common with parks, showgrounds and racecourses across Australia, Royal Park was taken over early in the Second World War for defence accommodation purposes. Royal Park was offered to the Department of Defence by the City of Melbourne in April 1940 and by June was operating as a recruit reception depot with personnel accommodated in buildings and tents. In early 1942 a large part of Royal Park was used briefly as a staging camp for US troops on route to the Pacific. The Americans called their area Camp Pell, a name which immediately became associated with the military occupation of Royal Park. Anzac Hall is a simple and functional building principally of timber and corrugated iron very like recreation halls at other major encampments, its only unusual features being its composite timber and steel rod roof trusses and its sliding and folding door system. There are also some quaint stone sentry boxes, gateposts, stairs and retaining wall nearby. At the end of the war Royal Park became the principal demobilisation centre for all Victorian service personnel. After the war the larger area known as Camp Pell was used by the Housing Commission as emergency housing until its demolition during a clean up campaign leading up to the 1956 Olympics. The army remained in its corner of Royal Park near Anzac Hall until 1958 when it moved its personnel depot function to Watsonia. The hall has been used ever since by the City of Melbourne for various community uses including the Urban Camp program which provides accommodation for country school children visiting Melbourne. At some stage a surplus army P1 type hut with a veneer of cream brick has been attached on the east side for extra accommodation and amenities.

How is it significant?

Anzac Hall is of historical, social and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Anzac Hall and its nearby sentry boxes, gateposts, stairs and retaining wall are historically important as the last vestiges of the extensive military occupation of Royal Park during the Second World War. The military use of parks, showgrounds and racecourses was a manifestation of "total war" which permeated all facets of everyday life. Physical remains of the once widespread military use of public spaces are now rare, particularly in metropolitan Melbourne.

Anzac Hall is socially significant for its associations with the entertainment of troops during the Second World War and with the benevolent role of the RSL in providing welfare and comforts to service personnel. It was the major recreation facility for a military camp primarily used for recruit reception and later demobilisation and as such was enjoyed by a wide cross section of service personnel.

Anzac Hall is architecturally important as an excellent and now rare example of a Second World War recreation hall. Its simple functional design and economy of materials recall the exigencies of wartime. Structural alterations have been minimal and the hall is still substantially intact. The surplus P1 type army hut which has been attached to the hall, although skinned in brick, further reinforces its military origins. The vernacular stone sentry boxes, gateposts, stairs and retaining wall, while typical of army landscaping, are rare survivors in the context of this public park.

Construction dates 1940,
Heritage Act Categories Registered place,
Hermes Number 125303
Property Number

Physical Description 1

Date Started 1940; Date Finished 1941; Storeys 1; Desc HALL; Walls TIMBER; Roof CORRUGATED IRON

Usage/Former Usage

1940-1941 ; HALL ; CINEMA

Physical Conditions

State of Historical Environment survey-Good condition see events

Veterans Description for Public

The Parkville Anzac Hall, located on Brens Drive, was built in late 1940 or early 1941 on behalf of the RSL for use as a cinema and recreation hall for troops at Royal Park. In common with parks, showgrounds and racecourses across Australia, Royal Park was taken over early in the Second World War for defence accommodation purposes. Royal Park was offered to the Department of Defence by the City of Melbourne in April 1940 and by June was operating as a recruit reception depot with personnel accommodated in buildings and tents.

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Extent of Registration

1. All of the building marked as follows on Diagram 608350 held by the Executive Director:

B1 Anzac Hall
B2 P1 Hut
B3 & 4 Sentry Boxes
B5 & 6 Gate Posts
B7 & 8 Stone Steps
B9 Fence

2. All of the land marked L1 and L2 on diagram 608350 held by the Executive Director being part of the Crown land reserve 5242 Royal Park.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>