

67 Sussex Street, LINTON VIC 3360 - Property No 66518017

Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO128

HO99

Heritage Listing

Golden Plains Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant? (See also Linton Heritage Precinct Record)

The Linton Public Library (or Mechanics Institute and Free Library) is located at 67 Sussex Street, Linton in the centre of the township and opposite the Shire offices. It was built in 1874 following a local fund raising drive which raised the cost of £161. No architect or builder has been associated with its construction. The Library is vernacular and, although formally symmetrical, it is much less elaborate than most buildings of the type with little evidence of the usual Classical associations. It is a relatively small timber structure comprising the main reading room, accessed through a recessed porch, and a very small residential section at the rear. The walls are lined with tongue-and-groove pine boards, with a traditional painted dado. The ceiling is coved and similarly lined. The building has fulfilled a wide range of educational and social functions, especially as a meeting place. At least in the twentieth century the librarians were all women, some with families, who lived on site. Mrs. Ella Howard fulfilled the role for over 60 years. The remarkable integrity of the place is due to the length and stability of her role. The walls of the reading room are hung with a number of photographs relating to the early history of Linton. The original furniture also survives. The interiors are remarkably intact with perhaps the best surviving collection of books and memorabilia in a small rural library in Victoria. The building is in very good condition.

How is it significant?

The Linton Public Library is of historical, cultural, social and architectural significance to the township of Linton and the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Linton Public Library is of historical significance as a reflection of the town's status and aspirations in the 19th and early 20th centuries as well as the cooperation of civic leaders. It is of cultural significance not only for its association with the self-improvement of its citizens through reading, lectures and concerts but also for the shared values it represents which is the basis for a sense of community. Its collection of books, photographs and memorabilia is very rare and probably the best surviving of a small library in Victoria. The Library is of social significance because it still provides a focus for traditional community activities. It is of architectural significance as one of the most humble examples of a mechanics institute and free library.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 2, Heritage Matters P/L, 2009;
Other Names	Mechanics Institute,
Hermes Number	31674
Property Number	

Intactness

Extremely rare collection of original mechanics institute library books, all the more significant for remaining in situ. Comparable with the Melbourne Atheneum and Prahran Mechanics Institute libraries; comparable to but better than partial collection held at the Port Fairy (former Mechanics Institute) branch of the Corangamite Library, comparable to the Briagalong Mechanics Institute; comparable to the collection now in storage of the Warrnambool Mechanics Institute. The fittings and fixtures of the library are also rare survivors.

Integrity

The Linton Public Library (Mechanics Institute) building retains an excellent degree of integrity externally and internally. It is all the more important for the surviving residential section at the rear.

Physical Description 1

The Linton Public Library (Mechanics Institute) building is a symmetrical single-storey timber building built to the property line with a frontage of approximately 6.2 metres (20 feet). It is comprised of two wings, one behind the other. The facade is clad with flush weatherboards and framed by rudimentary pilasters. It has a recessed entrance with a ledge and brace front door to the right side. On the opposite side there is a slot for returning books. Immediately in front there is a traditional glass-fronted notice board. There are double-hung sash windows on either side of the entrance. The porch and windows are framed by simple architraves which support simple pediments. The facade has a very simple parapet with a dentilated cornice and rudimentary pediment above. The traditional post supported verandah is new. The side walls are conventional weatherboards and the side windows are simple double hung sashes. The roof of the front wing is hipped at the rear while the front gable is hidden by the parapet and pediment. The roof of the rear wing is transverse and hipped. The rear wing includes a simple residential apartment, now used as offices and kitchen. Internally the building is lined with beaded-edge boards on the walls and coved ceiling. The walls are tied together by iron rods at the top of the walls. The walls are painted as a simple traditional dado with a fine dado line. The floor is tongue and groove 6 inch (150mm) boards. The interior includes important furniture including glazed bookcases, tables, chairs and benches. There are also display cabinets filled with local memorabilia and photographs of local dignitaries. An honour board of the Old Lintonians Association names past presidents is on the rear or east wall. There is a reproduction watercolour of Will Longstaff's 'Menin Gate at Midnight' (Ghosts of Menin Gate) dating from the First World War and a clock in a glass case on the north wall. There is a high level window in the rear wall above the entrance to the residential apartment at the rear. The living room at the rear has a naively carved mantel piece which incorporates a fuel stove.

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Historical Australian Themes

The Australian Heritage Commission devised the Australian Historic Themes in 2001. The following themes have influenced the historical development of the Linton Public Library.

6 Educating

6.1 Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education

6.5 Educating people in remote places

Physical Description 2

Linton Public Library to the extent of the whole of the building including the exterior and interior, the whole of the collection of books, photographs, memorial boards and other memorabilia and all of the land comprising Lots 1 and 2 of TP 222908, Township of Linton and known as 67 Sussex Street, Linton.

Extent of Registration

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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/>