

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CENTRE



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h00055 1 east kew baby centre may05



h00055 east kew baby centre may05 rear2



h00055 east kew baby centre may05 side



h00055 east kew baby centre may05 south side2



h00055 east kew baby centre may05 waiting room2



h00055 kew east baby health centre plan

Location

21 STRATHALBYN STREET KEW EAST, BOROONDARA CITY

Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0055

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO486

VHR Registration

September 8, 2005

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 10, 2005

What is significant?

The health of mothers and infants became of increasing concern in the first decades of the twentieth century. The early baby health movement was driven by committed volunteers frustrated at government inaction. Dr Isabella Younger Ross (1887-1956) who had studied infant health in England helped set up Victoria's first baby health clinic in Richmond in 1917. By 1918 the voluntary Victorian Baby Health Centres Association (VBHCA) was formed to oversee the growing number of centres. Financial support also came from local councils and in 1926 the State government formed the Infant Welfare Section of the Public Health Department and appointed Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown as the first Director.

Kew Council opened the municipality's first baby health centre at the Kew Town Hall on 5 November 1920. Some other councils, such as Coburg, were also opening temporary centres around this time apparently prompted by the pneumonic influenza epidemic. The centre built at Kew East is one of the first permanent baby health premises in Victoria. It was opened by the Countess of Stradbroke in December 1925. It was designed by the Kew City Building Surveyor, Mr R. Chipperfield, and built by Messrs Murphy and Pearce at a cost of £1200. The roughcast rendered Californian Bungalow style building has some English Cottage or Arts and Crafts associations and is set in garden surroundings. With its tiled roof, boxed double-hung windows, louvred sliding shutters, heavy piers supporting a large 'L'-shaped verandah, tall chimneys and masonry flower boxes, it exemplifies the trend of early centres to mirror popular domestic architecture.

How is it significant?

The East Kew Maternal and Child Health Centre is of historical, architectural and social significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The East Kew Maternal and Child Health Centre, as one of the earliest purpose-built baby health centres in Victoria, is of historical significance for its associations with the history of maternal and infant welfare in Victoria. It is the oldest known centre surviving in an intact state, and demonstrates the strength of community concern about infant and maternal welfare prior to official government involvement. The building retains its original purpose and function to this day.

The East Kew Maternal and Child Health Centre is of architectural significance as an intact example of an early baby health care centre. As a building constructed in the Californian Bungalow style, it is important for its high degree of external integrity, in particular for its unpainted roughcast rendered exterior and stylistic detailing. Importantly, the building is representative of many subsequent baby health centres of the inter-war period built in the domestic style, a style which demonstrates a philosophical association between early baby health centre designs and the ideal suburban house, both traditionally perceived as the domain of women and children. The building is of further interest for demonstrating a concern for the health of babies by incorporating into its design good floor ventilation, flyscreens on doors and windows, a spacious verandah, and sliding, louvred window shutters.

The East Kew Maternal and Child Health Centre is of social significance for its enduring civic value to the community. As a baby health centre, the building is socially and culturally important for marking phases in the lives of mothers and infants. Designed to resemble a typical middle class suburban house in a garden setting, the purpose-built centre remains a symbol of domesticity and stability. The building of a permanent baby health centre was also symbolic of a culturally progressive caring society, a place associated with new scientific ideas, and professionally designed programs designed to improve the health education of women raising families in the suburbs.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices

without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Exterior:

Removal of extraneous items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc, and making good.

Installation and repairing of damp proofing by either injection method or grout pocket method.

Installation or removal of external fixtures and fittings such as, hot water services and taps.

Interior:

Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of any original paint or other decorative scheme.

Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings.

Installation, removal or replacement of curtain tracks, rods and blinds.

Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted art works.

Demolition or removal of non-original stud/partition walls, suspended ceilings or non-original wall linings (including plasterboard, laminate and Masonite), bathroom partitions and tiling, sanitary fixtures and fittings, kitchen wall tiling and equipment, lights, built-in cupboards, cubicle partitions, computer and office fitout and the like.

Removal or replacement of non-original door and window furniture including, hinges, locks, knobsets and sash lifts.

Installation of stud walls, which are removable.

Refurbishment of existing bathrooms, toilets and kitchens including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings.

Removal of tiling or concrete slabs in wet areas provided there is no damage to or alteration of original structure or fabric.

Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and that the central plant is concealed.

Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring.

Installation, removal or replacement of electric clocks, public address systems, detectors, alarms, emergency lights, exit signs, luminaires and the like on plaster surfaces.

Installation, removal or replacement of bulk insulation in the roof space.

Installation of plant within the roof space.

Installation of new fire hydrant services including sprinklers, fire doors and elements affixed to plaster surfaces.

Landscape:

The process of gardening and maintenance, mowing, hedge clipping, bedding displays, removal of dead plants, disease and weed control, emergency and safety works to care for existing plants and planting themes.

Repairs, conservation and maintenance to hard landscape elements, roads and paths, drainage and irrigation system.

Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of amenity trees AS4373.

Removal of plants listed as noxious weeds in the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.

Installation, removal or replacement of garden watering and drainage systems.

Non-commercial signage, lighting, security fire safety and other safety requirements, provided no structural building occurs.

Resurfacing of existing paths and driveways.

Construction dates 1925,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place,

Other Names BABY HEALTH CENTRE, INFANT WELFARE CENTRE,

Hermes Number 6051

Property Number

History

One of the founders of the baby health movement in Victoria was Dr Isabella Younger Ross (1887-1956) who had been inspired when in Great Britain and the USA of the developments in child health. With the help of volunteers including Mrs JJ Hemphill and Mrs W Ramsay, Dr Younger Ross raised money for the first baby health clinic in Victoria to be opened in a shopfront in Richmond in 1917. By 1918 the voluntary Victorian Baby Health Centres Association (VBHCA) was formed to oversee the growing number of centres. The Public Health Department paid half of the nurses' salaries while local councils and the VBHCA funded the rest. Dr Vera Scantlebury was employed by the Central Committee of the VBHCA to visit centres and examine the children. After funding ran out for this activity Dr Scantlebury trained sisters and worked as an infant welfare medical officer for the Melbourne City Council centres. The State expanded their support when in 1926 Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown was appointed Director of a new unit, the Infant Welfare Section of the Department of Health where she remained until 1946. At first she had to deal with two factions of the infant welfare movement: the VBHCA and the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria (SHWC) (also known as the Truby King Society or the Plunket system). Dr Sir Frederick Truby King of New Zealand began promoting his world-famous methods in mothercraft around the turn of the century, and in about 1913 Sister M.V. Primrose of South Yarra inaugurated the movement in Victoria in conjunction with the Trained Nurses' Association. The strength of the movement grew between 1917 and 1925 from one centre to 71 centres and 52 nurses. By 1996 there were 806 centres throughout Victoria.

Before 1950 the responsibility for the baby health care buildings lay with local councils. After 1950 state funding led to less community input into the construction. Prior to 1950 baby health centres were housed in a variety of makeshift accommodation. Local councils funded half the salaries of the nursing sisters (the Public Health Department paid the rest) and councils provided the accommodation. Local communities lobbied councils to build centres and funding was raised by volunteers, with sometimes councils, individuals and the CWA funding the building.

Summary dates:

1909 Talbot Milk Institute (charitable funding from grants)

1916 Committee report advises on setting up centres

May 1917 3 women open volunteer centre in Richmond

1918 Victorian Baby Health Centres Assoc. (voluntary)

1926 Vic govt forms Infant Welfare Section - Dr Scantlebury Brown

1926 First purpose-built centres open

1946 Dr Barbara Meredith - Director of Maternal & Child Hygiene Section of Health Dept

1948 Government introduces subsidies to councils to establish centres

1960 Dr Betty Wilmot, Director until 1976

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 55 in the category described as a Heritage place:

Maternal & Child Health Centre, 21 Strathalbyn Street, Kew East, Boroondara City Council.

EXTENT:

1. All of the building marked B1 on Diagram 55 held by the Executive Director.

2. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 55 held by the Executive Director being part of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 2208, Folio 512.

Dated 8 September 2005

RAY TONKIN
Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G 36 8 September 2005 1996]

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/>