
Beaurepaire Building & Leonard French Mural & Mosaic Panels



B6318 Beaurepaire Building

Location

University of Melbourne,, PARKVILLE VIC 3010 - Property No B6318

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1045

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 5, 2005

Beaurepaire Recreation Centre

Statement of Significance: Designed in 1955 as the first major work by architects Egglestone McDonald and Secomb (Roderick McDonald partner in charge), the Beaurepaire Centre at the University of Melbourne is of state architectural and historic significance as being a period exemplar of the meeting of philanthropy, fine art, clearly articulated structure and functional rationalism in mid-1950s architectural design. The complex which comprised an indoor swimming pool, sports centre, gymnasium and Department of Physical Education was the

gift of Sir Frank Beaurepaire, Olympic swimmer, businessman and civic leader. Three rectangular sheds joined but staggered in form, each of glass are adorned externally with a bank of Italian glass mosaic tiles designed by Leonard French and service pods on the north side of the building which are faced with river pebbles. Internally the first floor trophy hall is graced by a huge Leonard French mural entitled "Symmetry of Sport" which has been painted onto a surviving sculptural form concealing a kitchen and storeroom within. In 1958, the Greek Orthodox community of Melbourne donated a copy of a bronzed Zeus form Artemission which was originally located at the southern entrance to the complex. This impressive classical statue is now located at the top of the stair to the trophy hall.

In terms of the development of the University of Melbourne, the Beaurepaire Centre is significant as being part of a series of demonstrably progressive architectural designs that transformed the Library, and the Russell Grimwade School of Biochemistry. The Beaurepaire Centre forms part of a significant post-war group of campus buildings.

The Beaurepaire Centre was opened in late 1956 just months after its patron's death, for use as a training site during the Melbourne Olympics. The complex is a fitting memorial to Sir Frank Beaurepaire's rare combination of sporting and business ability.

The building is remarkably intact and still in active use.

Classified: 20/10/1993

Leonard French Murals

Statement of Significance: These works are worthy of classification at State level. "Symmetry of Sport" is semi-abstract in style, in enamel paint on cement, in the recreation (or trophy) hall of the Beaurepaire Centre, Melbourne University. It is approximately 80 feet in circumference and reaches from the floor to the ceiling of the hall. Much of it is visible from the exterior of the building and a part of it from the swimming pool. The two friezes are in a geometric abstract style, in small glass mosaic along the northern and southern sides of the building. (French also designed an abstract mosaic mural which originally surrounded the base of the enquiry desk at the entrance to the hall. It has since disappeared).

Leonard French is one of Australia's most distinguished artists of recent years. His public commissions in stained glass, mosaic, tapestry, and in painted mural are held in high regard, as are his paintings. The Beaurepaire murals are significant examples of his earlier manner, the interior mural being a particularly admirable work. The works were commissioned in May 1956, the consulting architect being A S Eggelston (later Eggelston, MacDonald and Secomb). The advisory panel of experts commissioning the works consisted of Professor Joseph Burke, Mr Daryl Lindsay, and Mr Victor Greenhalgh.

Classified: 15/04/1992

Hermes Number 65779

Property Number

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