
Former Wesleyan Church, Sunday School & Organ



B5623 Frmr Wesleyan Church



B5623 Frme Wesleyan Sunday School

Location

340 Sydney Road, BRUNSWICK VIC 3056 - Property No B5623

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1144

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 31, 2005

Church Statement of Significance: A Wesleyan church built in 1872, of exceptional quality and integrity, and the first in the important series of polychrome churches designed by Percy Oakden. Oakden won the commission in competition in 1871, and used it as the vehicle to move from his Ballarat partnership of Fox and Oakden to join Leonard Terry in Melbourne from the end of 1873.

The building is distinguished by the quality of its brickwork, with cream and red dressings and diamond surface patterns against a body of brown, while other details like water tables and impost blocks are executed in cement. The picturesque design is largely French-inspired in detail, probably through the influence of Viollet-le Duc, and

includes an octagonal belfry with open Gothic arcading and a spire of lucarne vents, a miniscule square pavilion set at the top of a diagonal buttress, a circular oculus created by allowing the upper curve to come forward of the lower one and to read as an arch, and a triple arcade of portico, with all of which are associated cast iron columns or colonettes carrying what are best described as Romanesque capitals.

Internally the quality is maintained in the banded arches carried on slender Romanesque columns, timber boarded roof, wooden pulpit and curved chancel rail, and associated furniture.

Church Classified: 15/05/1986

Model Sunday School Statement of Significance: An innovatively planned Sunday School of 1887 in which class rooms are placed on two levels around the perimeter of a U-plan, the upper ones with ramped floors, so that when their folding doors are thrown open they all look to the centre stage.

The principle is that of the panopticon, and resembles that of prison chapels on the separate system which are arranged so that each inmate can see to the front but cannot communicate with his neighbours. The design was consciously innovative and was conceived as a model by the church and by the gifted young architect Alfred Dunn, and it results in an unusual space like a galleried theatre. Details like the iron balustrade of the gallery are carefully designed and elegant, but the exterior is relatively austere and unremarkable.

Sunday School Classified: 15/05/1986.

Organ Statement of Significance: A two-manual organ of 13 speaking stops built in 1942 by the Melbourne organbuilder C W Andrewartha and incorporating the windchest and pipework of an earlier organ in the church built in 1871 by George Fincham for Holy Trinity, Balaclava. The instrument remains intact, retaining its tubular-pneumatic action, console and pipework and is believed to be the only example of its builder's work to remain unaltered.

Organ Classified: 16/02/1994.

Other Names Uniting Church,

Hermes Number 66247

Property Number

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/>