

# FORMER RECHABITE HALL



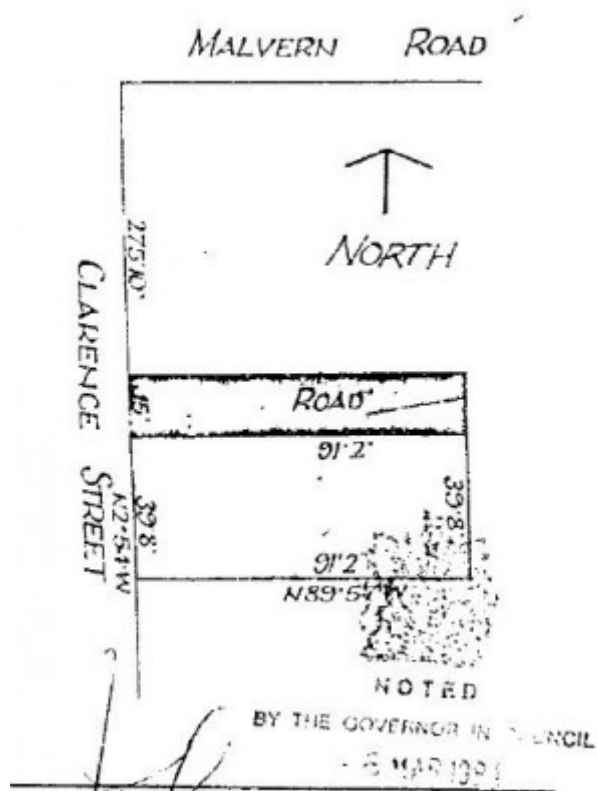
FORMER RECHABITE HALL  
SOHE 2008



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1 former rechabite hall little  
chapel street prahran front  
view



h00575 plan h0575

## Location

10 LITTLE CHAPEL STREET PRAHRAN, STONNINGTON CITY

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0575

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO73

## VHR Registration

March 14, 1984

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 17, 1999

What is significant?

The Former Rechabite Hall was constructed in 1888-1889 to the design of Colin Campbell by the builder Henry Slade. The Hall is a modest-sized building in the Second Empire style, with a large mansarded tower and typical elements such as heavily drafted render on the ground floor (resembling stone), an elaborate tripartite window on the upper floor, decorative elements such as consoles, pilasters and festoons and balustraded parapets broken by eclectic pediments. Bluestone was used for the base courses, and prominence is given to the entrance by a pair of highly polished Harcourt granite columns.

How is it significant?

The Former Rechabite Hall is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Former Rechabite Hall is of historical significance as a rare surviving example of a hall erected by one of the many friendly societies and Temperance movements which played such an important role in 19th-century Melbourne. There is only a handful of such halls remaining in Victoria, and only two or three of them are Rechabite halls. This one is probably the finest surviving example, with particularly distinguished external and internal detailing, reflecting the wealth and influence of the Independent Order of Rechabites (IOR), which was reputedly the wealthiest and most famous of the Temperance organisations. In 1888 the IOR in Victoria claimed to have 10,000 members. The Prahran hall was constructed for the Perseverance Tent No.34 of the IOR at a cost of nearly \$4,000. It replaced an earlier 1871 Prahran Rechabite Hall on the site. The Rechabites, like other similar organisations, served as a mutual assistance and moral improvement organisation, advocating abstinence, paying sick leave to its members, and arranging mortgages for members to help them purchase properties. The cooperative and supportive role of the Rechabites was emphasised by the fact that the contractor, Clerk of Works, designers of the furnishings and suppliers of the gasoliers and brackets for this building were all members of the Order.

The Former Rechabite Hall is of historical significance as a symbol of the influence of the temperance movement, and particularly of one of its most notable members, James Munro.

By the late 19th century the temperance movement had a significant influence on Victorian political and social life, with a number of prominent politicians active in temperance organisations. James Munro (1832-1908) was one such politician who used the Prahran Rechabite Hall as his power base in the Rechabite Order. One of the best known of the land boom generation of developers and politicians, Munro was premier of Victoria prior to the collapse of his personal fortunes and bankruptcy in 1893. As Victorian District Chief Ruler of the Order, his career exhibited the close ties between Temperance organisations, building societies and land speculation that underlay the boom of the 1870s and 1880s. The substance and style of the Prahran Rechabite Hall are clear indicators of the prominence of the Prahran Tent of the Order.

The Former Rechabite Hall is of architectural significance as an outstanding example of the work of Colin Campbell, and, with its elaborately decorated facade, as a notable local landmark since 1889, and an important component in the vista from Carlton Street.

## 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](#).

Construction dates	1888,
Architect/Designer	Campbell, Colin,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	960
Property Number	

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## History

Contextual History:History of Place:

The first benefit (mutual or friendly) societies formed in Australia during the 1830s by tradesmen and skilled workers to provide health, medical and funeral benefits. The first Tent of the Independent Order of Rechabites in Victoria was opened in 1847, and the order claimed 856 lodges and over 56,000 members throughout Australia by 1856. In Victoria in 1888 the order claimed 10,000 members. There have been 14 Rechabite Halls deocumented in Victoria in the 1880s. Other tents met in various secular and non-secular halls.

(National Trust submisison, 2 Novemeber 1983)

Associated People: Assoc.People JAMES MUNRO, POLITICIAN

## Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 575 former Rechabite Hall, 10 Clarence Street, Prahran (to the extent of the whole of the building and the whole of the title, Volume 6480 Folio 915).

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. 32 14 March 1984 p. 822]

*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/>*