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# FORMER SOUTH YARRA POST OFFICE



FORMER SOUTH YARRA  
POST OFFICE SOHE 2008



1 former south yarra post  
office south yarra front view

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## Location

162 TOORAK ROAD SOUTH YARRA, STONNINGTON CITY

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0210

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO107

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 31, 1999

What is significant?

The Former South Yarra Post Office is located on Toorak Road, on a restricted and precipitous site adjacent to the railway cutting. Designed in 1890 by Public Works Department architect, AJ MacDonald, and erected in 1892-3, the three-storey red brick structure combines basic American Romanesque characteristics with Scottish Baronial forms and Art Nouveau and Australian decorative motifs in an asymmetrical picturesque composition.

How is it significant?

The Former South Yarra Post Office is of architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Former South Yarra Post Office is of architectural significance as one of the most important buildings in the evolution of a uniquely Australian style of architecture. While the building reflects the influence of the American Romanesque and Scottish Baronial forms, the use of Australian decorative motifs, such as gum nuts, gum leaves, flowers, birds and marsupials was a new symbolic language for Australian public buildings, and reflected a growing national awareness and the beginning of a distinctive Australian style of architecture in the years preceding Federation.

The Former South Yarra Post Office is of architectural significance as an outstanding and innovative example of the designs of the Public Works Department. It provides evidence of the important role played by the Department in the provision of public infrastructure throughout Victoria. MacDonald's design for the Post Office was one of the most influential to come from the Public Works Department in the 1890s.

## 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      1892,

Architect/Designer Macdonald AJ,  
Heritage Act Categories Registered place,  
Hermes Number 1082  
Property Number

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## History

Contextual History:History of Place:

The former South Yarra Post Office was built at a time of heightened awareness about the search for a national identity and the role that architecture could play. A small body of opinion championed a national architecture based on the Romanesque style popular in the United States at that time, and made popular by H.H.Richardson between the 1860s and 1880s. Terracotta was a material exploited for its decorative possibilities, and native animals and fauna were popular subjects. The depression of the 1890s finished the experimentation, and by the time of recovery c.1900 the dominant influence was the so-called Queen Anne style.

## Extent of Registration

*City of Prahran*. No. 210. Former Post Office, 162 Toorak Road, South Yarra.  
[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3648]

*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/>*