
Masonic Temple, 4 Inkerman Street, ST ARNAUD



SD 072 - Masonic Temple,
Inkerman Street (cnr
McMahon Street), ST
ARNAUD

Location

4 Inkerman Street ST ARNAUD, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 12, 2004

The Masonic Hall, 4 Inkerman Street, St. Arnaud has significance as an intact, interwar Stripped Classical styled Masonic Lodge with esoteric architectural features typical for buildings of the Craft. Constructed by A.E.H. Preece in 1925, the building was consecrated by the Grand Lodge in 1926.

The Masonic Hall at 4 Inkerman Street is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It demonstrates original design qualities and Masonic symbolism of an interwar Stripped Classical style. These qualities include the symmetrical gambrel roof forms, single storey height, unpainted brick wall construction, and the cement rendered temple front supported by square vestigial piers and round concrete Doric columns in-antis, which represent Jachin and Boaz. These columns are highly symbolic and have their origins in the temple front of King Solomon's

temple. Other intact qualities of the design include the terra cotta tile roof cladding, ridge ventilators, wide eaves, other cement rendered vestigial pilasters and associated stripped Classical detailing, vertically boarded double doors with transoms above, timber framed double hung windows with flat arched brick voussoirs above being punctuated by projecting keystones, other timber framed windows with concrete lintels above, and the projecting unpainted brick pilasters along the sides. The unpainted brick and cyclone wire boundary fence and gates, and the symmetrically located poplars and open grassed areas, also contribute to the significance of the place.

The Masonic Hall at 4 Inkerman Street is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is associated with the further development of the Stewart Lodge of St. Arnaud in 1925-26, which had been established in St. Arnaud in 1870. The building is also associated with the prominent local builder, A.E.H. Preece. Further highly symbolic and ancient esoteric associations with Freemasonry are identified throughout the architectural form and function of the building, which, according to legend, emanate from ancient knowledge acquired by Pythagorus and Hermes Trismegistus. Their geometrical truths were used by Masons in the construction of the first true Lodge of Freemasonry, Solomon's Temple (as mentioned in The Bible), and have supposedly passed down the generations of 'speculative' masons throughout the world, including the masons in St. Arnaud.

The Masonic Hall at 4 Inkerman Street is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is highly valued and recognised by Freemasons in the St. Arnaud community for cultural reasons.

Overall, the Masonic Hall, 4 Inkerman Street, St. Arnaud is of **LOCAL** significance.

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| Heritage Study/Consultant | Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004; |
| Hermes Number | 108557 |
| Property Number | |

Physical Description 1

The Masonic Temple, 4 Inkerman Street, St. Arnaud is set on an open site surrounded by grassed areas with two symmetrically located poplars at the front. The site is bound by an early unpainted brick fence with an elevated plinth and regularly spaced piers, infilled by circular hollow steel rails and cyclone wire. The plinths and piers are capped in cement render. Double hollow steel and cyclone wire gates punctuate the fence at the front.

The symmetrical, single storey, unpainted brick Stripped Classical Masonic Hall building is characterised by a recessed gambrel roof form that traverses the site, together with a gambrel and cement rendered temple front that project towards the street frontage. These roof forms are clad in terra cotta tile and have narrow ridge ventilators. Wide overhangs are a feature of the eaves.

The distinctive original symbolic feature of the design is the cement rendered temple front supported by square vestigial piers adorned with rectilinear mouldings and round Doric concrete columns in-antis. The entablature is punctuated by the title "Masonic Hall". The rendered cement Stripped Classical detailing of the temple front extends to the recessed flanking walls, which terminate in vestigial rectilinear pilasters with broadly projecting cornices and rectilinear parapets above. These details are typical of the Stripped Classical work of the period, particularly in the modern Renaissance styled Commonwealth architecture as exemplified in Old Parliament House, Canberra. Further cement rendered rectilinear detailing is evident about the flanking side door openings towards the rear of the building. These door openings - together with the main doors at the front - are early, constructed in vertical boards with rectangular transoms above.

The sides of the Masonic Hall are characterised by simple projecting unpainted brick piers between timber framed windows. The windows of the front hall are double hung and have early decorative flat-arched brick voussoirs punctuated by projecting keystones. The rear windows have concrete lintels.

The interior of the Hall is said to be largely intact with decorative frieze plasterwork, possibly of an Egyptian design typical of Freemasonic interior decoration.

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/>