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## Former St. Arnaud Mercury Offices, 79-81 Napier Street, ST ARNAUD



SD 166a - Building - former St. Arnaud Mercury offices, 79-81 Napier Street, ST ARNAUD



SD 166b - c.1914 Photograph from St. Arnaud, A Pictorial History.



SD 166c - c.1915 Photograph from St. Arnaud, A Pictorial History.

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### Location

79-81 Napier Street ST ARNAUD, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

### Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

### Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 18, 2004

The St. Arnaud Mercury building, 79-81 Napier Street, St. Arnaud, makes an important contribution to the streetscape of the town as a predominantly intact example of Federation Free style commercial design. This building was constructed in 1914 to celebrate the diamond jubilee of the St. Arnaud Mercury newspaper that had been established in 1864 by Evans and Somerton. The building replaced an earlier structure that had also been occupied by the Mercury newspaper. Today, the building is no longer occupied by the St. Arnaud Mercury and is used for other commercial enterprises.

The St. Arnaud Mercury building is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It demonstrates original design qualities of a Federation Free style design. These qualities include the dentillated and curving parapet following a three bayed composition, with the crowning central bay having a roundel (with the curvilinear Free style date plate: "1864") and drip mould and keystone above, and the rendered cement pilasters that span the full length of the first floor. Other intact qualities include the two inverted curved parapets; roughcast parapet walls; face red brick wall construction; stepped rendered stringcourses; large rendered, rectangular floral relief panel with a roundel inscribed with the name "St. Arnaud Mercury"; three timber framed double casement windows with highlights; double bracketed drip moulds; side ground floor doorway with roughcast wall above.

The St. Arnaud Mercury building is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is associated with the development of the St. Arnaud Mercury newspaper, which was established in 1864, and operated from this building from 1914 until the 1970s. The site has particular associations with the founders of the newspaper, Evans and Somerton.

The St. Arnaud Mercury building is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. Although no longer operating as the headquarters of the St. Arnaud Mercury newspaper, it is still recognised by the St. Arnaud Community for its past function.

Overall, the St. Arnaud Mercury building is of **LOCAL** significance.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004;
Other Names	St. Arnaud Mercury offices,
Hermes Number	111572
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

The St. Arnaud Mercury Building, Napier Street, St. Arnaud, makes an important architectural and visual contribution to the predominantly Victorian and Federation commercial streetscape.

The symmetrical, two storey, face brick and cream rendered Federation Free style building is characterised by its dentillated curving parapet and three bayed composition. The central bay of the parapet crowns the building and features a roundel with the curvilinear Free style date plate: "1864". Above the roundel is drip mould punctuated by a keystone, typically conveying the free use of architectural elements. This central bay is distinguished by its rendered cement pilasters that span the full length of the first floor. Flanking the central bay are two inverted curved parapets. The walls of all three bays of the parapets are roughcast and painted cream, with the face red brick wall construction of the building under a stepped rendered stringcourse. A central feature of the first floor is the large rendered, rectangular floral relief panel with a roundel inscribed with the name "St. Arnaud Mercury". The remainder of the first floor is characterised by three timber framed double casement windows with highlights. The windows of the flanking bays also have double bracketed drip moulds. Separating the ground from the first floor is an introduced, cantilevered galvanised corrugated iron verandah, with an inappropriately large hoarding. The ground floor has substantially altered shopfronts, with introduced aluminium framed windows and tiled base walls. The side doorway may however be early, as is the roughcast wall above it.

*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/>*