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# Brain's Building, 118-122 Napier Street, ST ARNAUD



SD 182 - Brain's Building,  
120-122 Napier Street, ST  
ARNAUD

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## Location

118-122 Napier Street ST ARNAUD, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

## Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 18, 2004

The two-storey building at 118-122 Napier Street, St. Arnaud, makes a significant architectural and visual contribution to the predominantly Victorian and Federation streetscape. This store has significance as an intact example of commercial Federation Free style design, constructed in 1907 for Richard Brain and designed by prolific Ballarat based architect William G. Kell, who was born in St. Arnaud. The Brain family were early settlers in the district and, after first leasing the building to an importing and dressmaking company called Tregs, operated a Furniture Store there for many decades until they sold the building to a former Shire. councillor, Maurie McGrath, in the mid to late 1970s.

The two-storey building at 118-122 Napier Street is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It demonstrates original design qualities of a commercial Federation Free style. These qualities include the two storey

composition and the dominant, picturesque parapet roof form having stylised pediments and piers surmounted by stylised urns. Other intact qualities including the projecting cornice located beneath the parapet and punctuated by decorative motifs on consoles, unpainted brick wall construction with cement dressing, decorative corner construction, incised rectangular signage panels which read: "Maurie McGrath Farm Machinery, Machinery", single, timber framed double hung windows with a white painted rendered band at sill level, broadly projecting bullnosed verandah clad in striped painted galvanised corrugated iron, cast iron verandah columns on bluestone pedestals and decorated with capital moulds, unusual brackets with trefoil motifs and other unusual ornate ironwork, shopfronts with large plate glass wall planes having nickel-plated frames surrounded by glazed tiles and highlights, together with ingoes and glazed doors, and the parapeted, unpainted brick rear wing fronting Jones Street.

The two-storey building at 118-122 Napier Street is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is associated with commercial developments in St. Arnaud in the early 20th century and more particularly with Richard Brain, an hotelier and the son of an early settler in the district, from 1907. The building is also associated with millinery, dressmaking and costume making, as well as a bakery in the early years of the 20th century. It has further associations with the Furniture Store operated by the Brain family, from c.1919 until the mid-late 1970s and with the McGrath family from the mid-late 1970s until the present day. The building is also particularly associated with its designer, Ballarat based architect William G. Kell, who was born in St. Arnaud.

The two-storey building at 118-122 Napier Street is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is recognised by the St. Arnaud community as an early and major 20th century commercial enterprise in the town owned first by the Brain family, early settlers in the district, and then by Maurie McGrath, a former Shire councillor.

Overall, the two-storey building at 118-122 Napier Street, St. Arnaud, 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;
Hermes Number	111697
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

The two-storey building at 118-122 Napier Street, St. Arnaud, makes an important architectural and visual contribution to the predominantly Victorian and Federation streetscape.

The two storey, unpainted brick (with cement dressings), Federation Free style building is characterised by a dominant, picturesque parapet roof form having stylised pediments and piers surmounted by stylised urns. A projecting cornice is located beneath the parapet and is punctuated by early decorative motifs on consoles. The corner is emphasised by similar decorative construction. The remaining upper reaches of the building have incised rectangular signage panels which read: "Maurie McGrath Farm Machinery, Machinery". The first floor is characterised by unpainted brick walls and a regular arrangement of early single, timber framed double hung windows, with a white rendered band at sill level. Another distinctive feature of the design is the broadly projecting bullnosed verandah, clad in striped painted galvanised corrugated iron. The verandah is supported by early cast iron columns on pedestals and decorated with capital moulds, unusual brackets with trefoil motifs and other unusual ornate ironwork. The shopfronts also appear to be early, with large plate glass wall planes having nickel-plated frames surrounded by glazed tiles and highlights, together with ingoes and early glazed doors. At the rear of the building on the Jones Street frontage is a parapeted, unpainted brick wing with early timber framed double hung windows.

*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/>*