

YARRAWONGA SHIRE HALL



IMG 7858



IMG 7825



2022 clocktower



IMG 7795



IMG 7800



IMG 7803



IMG 7801



IMG 7804



IMG 7812



IMG 7768



IMG 7770



IMG 7784



IMG 7790

DIAGRAM 2429

BELMORE STREET



ORR STREET

DIAGRAM 2429

Location

100 BELMORE STREET YARRAWONGA, MOIRA SHIRE

Municipality

MOIRA SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2429

VHR Registration

December 8, 2022

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 6, 2022

What is significant?

The Yarrowonga Shire Hall, a substantial town hall with a rendered brick two-storey administrative building with a clock tower and adjoining red brick auditorium with a fly tower, designed by Harrison & Glaskin and constructed in 1930. It also includes early interior features and objects integral to the council chamber.

How is it significant?

The Yarrawonga Shire Hall is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the VHR:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

Why is it significant?

The Yarrawonga Shire Hall is historically significant as a reflection of continued growth and prosperity in towns across Victoria during the interwar years, despite the social and economic repercussions of the First World War and the Great Depression. It also demonstrates changing values in civic planning during the interwar years, which focused on consolidating municipal and community services under the one roof. [Criterion A]

The Yarrawonga Shire Hall is architecturally significant as a fine and highly intact example of an interwar town hall, built to an impressive scale on Belmore Street with highly decorated interior spaces. It exhibits a comparatively diverse combination of municipal and community services in its extant fabric which includes the council chamber with early painted signage and objects integral on the first floor, bio box and winding room, and expansive auditorium with opera pit, raised stage and a fly tower. It also retains many 1930s interior features including painted door signage to rooms on the first floor, elaborate plasterwork, and timber joinery in the public auditorium and first floor spaces, and war related honour boards. [Criterion D]

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](#).

Specific Exemptions:

Permit Exemptions

The following permit exemptions are not considered to cause harm to the cultural heritage significance of the Yarrowonga Shire Hall.

General

- Minor repairs and maintenance which replaces like with like. Repairs and maintenance must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. Any repairs and maintenance must not exacerbate the decay of fabric due to chemical incompatibility of new materials, obscure fabric or limit access to such fabric for future maintenance.
- Maintenance, repair and replacement of existing external services such as plumbing, electrical cabling, surveillance systems, pipes or fire services which does not involve changes in location or scale.
- Repair to, or removal of items such as antennae; aerials; and air conditioners and associated pipe work, ducting and wiring.
- Works or activities, including emergency stabilisation, necessary to secure safety in an emergency where a structure or part of a structure has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and poses a safety risk to its users or the public. The Executive Director must be notified within seven days of the commencement of these works or activities.
- Painting of previously painted external and internal surfaces in the same colour, finish and product type provided that preparation or painting does not remove all evidence of earlier paint finishes or schemes. This exemption does not apply to areas where there are specialist paint techniques such as graining, marbling, stencilling, hand-painting, murals or signwriting, or to wallpapered surfaces, or to unpainted, oiled or varnished surfaces.
- Cleaning including the removal of surface deposits by the use of low-pressure water (to maximum of 300 psi at the surface being cleaned) and neutral detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing with plastic (not wire) brushes.
- Works in accordance with the plans for the library development endorsed on 08/09/2022 relating to Planning Permit 5/2021/126 issued on 16 June 2021, where these works are located within the extent of registration.

Interiors

- Works to maintain or upgrade existing bathrooms and kitchens including installing new appliances.
- Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings, window furnishings, and devices for mounting wall hung artworks.
- Maintenance and repair of post-1990s light fixtures, tracks and the like.
- Installation, removal or replacement of existing electrical wiring. If wiring is currently exposed, it should remain exposed. If it is fully concealed it should remain fully concealed.
- Removal or replacement of post-1990s light switches or power outlets.
- Removal or replacement of smoke and fire detectors, alarms and the like, of the same size and in existing locations.
- Repair, removal or replacement of existing HVAC, ducted, hydronic, split system or concealed radiant type heating provided that any central plant is concealed, and that the work is done in a manner which does not alter building fabric.
- Installation of plant within the roof space, providing that it does not impact on the external appearance of the building or involve structural changes.
- Installation, removal or replacement of bulk insulation in the roof space.

Registered Objects Integral to the Registered Place (Shire president's chair, Councillors' chairs, Council meeting table, Shire secretary's table, council chamber desk)

- The temporary relocation or movement of the above listed moveable Registered Objects Integral to the Registered Place within the buildings where they are currently located.
- Temporary external movement, relocation or loan of the above moveable Registered Objects Integral to the Registered Place to Australian or Victorian government cultural institutions which have materials conservation departments, where the activity is undertaken or supervised by qualified conservators, and performed in accordance with the accepted standards, policies and procedures of the borrowing organisation concerned. The Executive Director must be notified of all such activities and the before and after loan reports prepared by the materials conservation department of the government cultural institution must be forwarded to the Executive Director.

Clock and chimes

- Routine maintenance of the clock mechanism and associated chimes.

Landscape/ outdoor areas

Hard landscaping and services

- Subsurface works to existing watering and drainage systems provided these are outside the canopy edge of trees and do not involve trenching in new locations. Existing lawns, gardens and hard landscaping, including paving, paths and roadways are to be returned to the original configuration and appearance on completion of works.
- Like for like repair and maintenance of existing hard landscaping including paving and footpaths where the materials, scale, form and design is unchanged.
- Removal or replacement of external directional signage provided the size, location and material remains the same.
- Installation of physical barriers or traps to enable vegetation protection and management of vermin such as rats, mice and possums.

Gardening, trees and plants

- The processes of gardening including mowing, pruning, mulching, fertilising, removal of dead or diseased plants, disease and weed control and maintenance to care for existing plants.
- Removal of tree seedlings and suckers without the use of herbicides.
- Management and maintenance of trees including formative and remedial pruning, removal of deadwood and pest and disease control.
- Emergency tree works to maintain public safety provided the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria is notified within seven days of the removal or works occurring.
- Removal of environmental and noxious weeds.

Public garden area to the north of the Yarrawonga Shire Hall building

- Maintenance, removal and/or replacement of outdoor furniture.

Public toilets on Orr Street

- All internal works to the public toilets on Orr Street.
- Demolition of the public toilets on Orr Street.

Theme

6. Building towns cities and the garden state 7. Governing Victorians

Construction dates	1930,
Architect/Designer	Harrison & Glaskin,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered object integral to a registered place,
Other Names	YARRAWONGA TOWN HALL,
Hermes Number	11802
Property Number	

History

The formation of Yarrawonga Shire

The land comprising Yarrawonga township and its surrounds is on the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta people. The town and district were named in honour of the 'Yarroweya' pastoral run (later Yarrawonga Station) established in 1842.^[1] From the 1840s until the introduction of the *Land Act 1869*, European settlers in the region were typically squatters or representatives of squatting families.^[2]

The township of Yarrawonga was surveyed in 1868 and initially occupied four blocks bounded by Witt, Hume, Orr and Hovell Streets.^[3] Land sales occurred from 1873, allowing free selectors to purchase much of the agricultural land surrounding the township. During Yarrawonga's early years, major local industries included flour milling and sawmilling.^[4]

In 1871, Yarrawonga township became part of the newly established Shire of Echuca, an enormous municipal district comprising approximately 700,000ha. During the 1870s, the Shire of Echuca was progressively divided into smaller municipalities to streamline local governance. In 1878, the Shire of Yarrawonga was formed, and its primary town centres were Yarrawonga, Karrabumet (Lake Rowan), Katamatite, Mucatah and Hill Plain.^[5] During this decade, early public buildings included the courthouse (1874), primary school (1876) and later the mechanics' institute and free library (c.1882).

Yarrawonga township flourished during the late nineteenth century, with the arrival of the railway bringing tourists and new settlers. At this time, the Yarrawonga district became renowned for producing some of the highest quality wheat in Australia. By 1891, the wealth of Yarrawonga had grown to such an extent that the township decided to secede from the Shire of Yarrawonga. The Shire of North Yarrawonga was proclaimed in April 1891, reverting its name to the Shire of Yarrawonga just two years later. The Shire's first municipal hall (still extant) was constructed in 1896 and comprised a two-storey red brick building with a portico and loggia facing Belmore Street. At this time, the population of Yarrawonga was at approximately 1,500 residents with the Shire's population at just over 3,000.^[6]

Interwar town halls in Victoria

Despite the social and economic impacts of the First World War and the Great Depression, town halls continued to be remodelled and built throughout Victoria during the interwar years. During these years, emerging ideas and values in town planning focused on the consolidation of municipal and community facilities. New town halls were increasingly built to accommodate council offices and chambers under the same roof as a selection of public venues such as libraries, mechanics' institutes, cultural centres, auditoriums, and cinemas, situated around picturesque gardens.^[7] The specific combination varied between towns and suburbs, with full projection facilities for screening films becoming more popular from the late 1920s.^[8]

In some instances, interwar town halls also served as the community's war memorial. Although traditional forms of war memorials (for example, obelisks, plaques, statues and avenues of honour) prevailed in the years

immediately following the First World War, functional war memorials increased in popularity during the 1920s.^[9] One of the most common forms of functional war memorials built during the interwar years was the memorial hall, followed by Returned and Services League (RSL) halls and buildings, schools, and war service homes.^[10]

Yarrawonga Shire Hall

Following the First World War, Yarrawonga township commenced several public improvement works, beginning with the proposed construction of a new shire hall.^[11] A site was chosen by Yarrawonga Shire Council in early 1929 – the premises of the Grove Picture Company at the corner of Belmore and Orr Streets. The site had a frontage of 99 feet to Belmore Street by a depth of 330 feet along Orr Street, extending eastwards to Hume Street.^[12]

Tenders were soon accepted for the design and construction of the new shire hall. The proposed design by the Albury-based architects Harrison & Glaskin was selected, with Mr J Keith and Mr Alfred Chappell chosen to commence building works. A block plan dated 1929 indicates the proposed footprint of the shire hall with a store yard and detached supper room to its east.^[13] An article in the *Yarrawonga Chronicle and Riverina Advocate* extensively described the internal layout of the building with the mechanics' institute, water trust and rate collectors' offices on the ground floor; Council Chambers, strong room, and offices of the shire president, secretary and engineer on the first floor.

Construction of the shire hall was supported by a 'judicious pooling of funds' which included contributions from the council, the mechanics' institute and an unconditional gift of almost £300 from the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA).^[14] Although the opening ceremony of the shire hall was not held until 1931, performances and other public events were held in the auditorium from December 1930.^[15] In 1931 a 'talkie plant' supplied by Vocaltone Pty Ltd was installed to facilitate the screening of talking pictures.

Competing financial pressures led to a delay in the shire hall's completion, notably the installation of a clock and chimes in the tower. The Soldiers Memorial Clock was installed in 1937 at a cost of approximately £381 and was dedicated to district soldiers who had fallen in the First World War. The following year, a timber structure was erected on top of the clock tower to house the new chimes which were cast by Gillett & Johnston of Croydon, England.^[16]

From the 1930s, the auditorium in the shire hall was a popular venue for events such as performances, film screenings and dances. The catering of these events was supported by the detached timber supper room, which lay to the east of the shire hall building. Plans to replace the supper room emerged during the 1940s but it was not until 1958-59 that it was demolished and replaced with a new freestanding community hall (non-extant). The mid-century community hall was equipped with a commercial kitchen which played an important role in the civic and social events for residents of the Yarrawonga district.^[17]

[1] Loughnan, A.N. (ed.), *From Ballanda to 1968: the story of Yarrawonga*, Yarrawonga Apex Club, 1968, p.7.

[2] Dunlop, A.J., *Wide horizons: the story of Yarrawonga, Tungamah and Cobram shires*, Imprint, 1978, p.35.

[3] 'Yarrawonga and Yarrawonga Shire', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/yarrawonga-and-yarrawonga-shire>.

[4] Loughnan, 1968, pp.33-35.

[5] Dunlop, 1978, p.53.

[6] Heritage Alliance, *Heritage Assessment: Yarrawonga Community Hall*, May 2020.

[7] Lewi, H. and Jordan, C., 'Commemorating and enhancing the everyday' in Lewi, H and Nichols, D. (eds), *Community: Building Modern Australia*, UNSW Press, 2010, p.208.

[8] Heritage Matters, *Jaffas down the aisles: a survey of cinemas in country Victoria*, 2008, p.16.

[9] Inglis, K., *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Melbourne University Press, 1998, p131.

[10] Rowe, D., *War-related heritage in Victoria*, August 2011, pp.29-31.

[11] Dunlop, 1978, p.178.

[12] *The Yarrawonga Chronicle and Riverina Advocate*, 12 February 1929.

[13] PROV, VPRS 7882/P0001.

[14] *The Yarrawonga Chronicle and Riverina Advocate*, 9 July 1929; *The Yarrawonga Chronicle and Riverina Advocate*, 27 May 1930.

[15] *The Yarrowonga Chronicle and Riverina Advocate*, 16 December 1930.

[16] *The Yarrowonga Chronicle and Riverina Advocate*, 24 December 1937.

[17] Heritage Intelligence, *Heritage Assessment: Yarrowonga Community Hall*, May 2020, p.24.

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 2017**, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H2429

Category: Registered Place, Registered Objects Integral to a Registered Place

Place: Yarrowonga Shire Hall

Location: 100 Belmore Street, Yarrowonga

Municipality: Moira Shire

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2429 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 221379 and Lot 1 on Title Plan 449251 and part of Crown Allotment 10 Section 3 Township of Yarrowonga Parish of Yarrowonga extending 5 metres from the east (rear) wall of the Shire Hall building; and all the registered objects integral to the place which are listed in the inventory held by the Executive Director, being the shire president's chair, councillors' chairs, council meeting table, shire secretary's table and the council chamber desk.

8 December 2022

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

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/>