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# UNION HOTEL



Union Hotel, - Film 8 / Frame 17 - Ballarat Conservation Study, 1978



Union Hotel c.1870s



Union Hotel in 1887 showing additional floor

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## Location

11 STURT STREET, BALLARAT CENTRAL - PROPERTY NUMBERS 2030704, 2039511, 2039512, BALLARAT CITY

## Municipality

BALLARAT CITY

## Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO109

## Heritage Listing

Ballarat City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 12, 2024

**What is significant?**

**How is it significant?**

**Why is it significant?**

Part of Recommended Area A1.2

No SoS provided in this citation. Please refer to the attachments section in this place record for further information.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Ballarat - Ballarat Conservation Study, Jacobs Lewis Vines Architects, 1978;
Construction dates	1863, 1872,
Architect/Designer	Korn, Frederick O.,
Hermes Number	123548
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

The Union Hotel was built by J. Retallack in 1863 who previously had owned and presumably operated a blacksmith's forge on this site. The building is of an exceptionally pleasing composition. It employs Tuscan Doric engaged columns and pilasters at first floor level and slender Corinthian pilasters to the first and second floors. The building is a composition in five bays, at the first floor level two side bays contain elaborate and interesting relief panels, with central French doors and flanking matching windows. Originally there was a flat open decked verandah with balustrades. At second floor level there are five delicate arched windows. The top floor is surmounted by a balustraded parapet flanking a large name plate. With the exception of the verandah and ground floor doors and windows, the building is externally intact. The building is of major importance as a building type of the late gold rush period that has virtually disappeared, this apparently being the only survivor.

## Intactness

INTACTNESS: verandah removed

## Physical Description 2

The first licence for a Union Hotel was issued in 1851, but the hotel would appear to have been on a different site or lapsed before 1862, as the Council Valuation Book for that year gives the owner of the site as J. Retallack and a Blacksmith operated on the site. In 1863 J. Retallack still owned the site but a brick hotel had been constructed, operated by W. Laurence. The hotel has operated without a change of name since that time.

This building is an exceptionally pleasing Renaissance derived composition. At ground floor level, in a Tuscan Doric order, are a pair of engaged columns flanking the central entrance with a pair of pilasters flanking the two narrow side openings. There are central French doors at the first floor, designed to open onto a deck over the verandah which has since been demolished. This open deck was originally surrounded with a decorative balustrade in a similar manner to the Club Hotel, Clunes. This was apparently an American innovation, at one time quite widespread in Ballarat, as indicated by early photographs and a number of central French doors in existing buildings in Bridge and Sturt Streets.

A pair of windows flank the central French doors, which they are designed to match. In the narrow end bays are interesting decorative panels in relief of urns, foliage and putti. The windows and doors are surmounted by masks and the bays are defined by Corinthian pilasters. In the upper floor, delicate arched windows are placed in all five bays, defined by another order of Corinthian pilasters below a bracketted cornice. The parapet is finished with a balustraded parapet flanking a large name plate above which is a small date plate marked 1863. There is a gabled glass roof lantern located above the stairs, clearly visible from Sturt Street.

The building is externally intact but the ground floor interior has been extensively altered.

In summary a strong, elegant, vertical emphasis is produced by the first and second floor openings and the orders of Corinthian pilasters. The relief panels are of an interesting design, characteristic of this early period.

The building is of state-wide importance as apparently the only surviving example of this style of hotel building of this period; the early part of Craig's Hotel is contemporary to this building, but is of a completely different design.

In addition this is a particularly elegant building of a most attractive design which immediately evokes the atmosphere of the late gold rush period in Ballarat.

*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/>*