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# Victoria Barracks



Victoria Barracks.jpg



b2950 Victoria Barracks G  
Block St Kilda Rd Southbank

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## Location

St Kilda Road, SOUTHBANK VIC 3006 - Property No B2950

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

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## Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 10, 2006

### CITATION

G Block: A strictly functional bluestone building of great clarity and good proportions. Simple in plan with main elements clearly defined. Special note of stairs and good detail of iron work. Of interest that it has been a military establishment since 1860.

See also File No1255 A Block, File No. 1253 C Block, File No. 1254 F Block, File No. 203 J Block , File No. 204 The Keep. See also File No 1999 Cannon

Hermes Number 125909

Property Number

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## Veterans Description for Public

The Victoria Barracks is bounded by St. Kilda Road, Wadey Street, Wells Street and Coventry Street, Melbourne. The Barracks have consistently played a significant part of Australia's military history, throughout the nineteenth century and twentieth centuries. In the colonial era it accommodated the British Imperial Garrison troops, from 1901 -1958 it housed the Department of Defence and during the Second World War it became the headquarters of the Australian War Cabinet. The Victoria Barracks were also the initial Headquarters of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), on its creation in 1911; and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), from its formation in 1921. Australia's involvement in the Boer War, both World Wars and the war in Korea were planned and coordinated - by government and military staff - from the Barracks.

Construction of the barracks began in 1851, with a second stage of works between 1856-1864, costing approximately £96,000. "The Keep" at the rear of G Block in the Victoria Barracks, erected in c.1860 is a stone fortification built from a design prepared in the Public Works Department. "The Keep" at Victoria Barracks is the sole surviving remnant of a once extensive fortified wall forming the western boundary to the barracks compound. Although the fortifications were re-erected immediately after the "Russian Scare" of the 1850's, the role of the keep has been symbolic rather than strategic.

The J" Block of the Barracks was erected in 1860 served as the Barracks hospital and accommodated the 40th Regiment of the Imperial garrison in Victoria. This two storey regular coursed basalt structure, with restrained fine axed stone mouldings, was designed by P.W.D. architect, Gustav Joachimi, in a style based upon colonial Georgian architectural traditions and generally adopted for military barracks in the mid 19th century. The composite timber and iron verandah was erected after 1878.

Since the Second World War, the barracks have become the headquarters 3 Division (CMF/Army Reserve), the Soldier Career Management Agency, the Defence Signals Directorate, Army Logistics Command, Headquarters 3rd Military District, Defence Centre - Melbourne, and - currently - Headquarters Support Command Australia. The Federal Cabinet has met in Victoria Barracks twice in recent years, in part to commemorate the Second World War cabinet meetings. The Keating Cabinet met in 1995 (as part of 'Australia Remembers' 1945-1995), and the Howard Cabinet in 1996.

*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/>*