

# VELVET SOAP ADVERTISING SIGN



VELVET SOAP  
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2008



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01\_Velvet Soap  
Sign\_Kyneton 9 Feb 2007 mz



Velvet Soap Sign Kyneton  
View Down Piper Street 9  
Feb 2007 mz



Velvet Soap Sign Kyneton  
Detail 01 9 Feb 2007 mz



Velvet Soap Sign Kyneton Plan April 2007 mz

## Location

38 PIPER STREET KYNETON, MACEDON RANGES SHIRE

## Municipality

MACEDON RANGES SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1969

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO263

## VHR Registration

July 12, 2007

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 18, 2006

### What is Significant?

The Velvet Soap sign in Kyneton is a painted advertising sign on the eastern wall of 38 Piper Street. The sign comprises of the word '*VELVET*' in large white letters and flanked on one side with the word '*PURE*' and the word '*SOAP*' on the other. Both these words are painted in yellow. The background to the sign is a deep brown and is bordered and underlined with a yellow and an orange strip.

It appears the sign has been repainted at least once. Under the brown paint are traces of an earlier colour scheme whose background used the vibrant dark blue that was the Velvet Soap trade mark background colour. The name of the sign writer, Edgar Hook, appears twice in the bottom right hand corner sign. The later name is in yellow with an earlier signing in white.

Velvet Soap was a widely used laundry bar soap launched in 1906, produced by J. Kitchen & Sons, owned by John Ambrose Kitchen (1835 - 1922). Kitchen was born in Britain and emigrated to Victoria in 1854. After a less than successful period at the Caledonian and Blackwood diggings, Kitchen returned to Melbourne and joined his father and brothers in establishing a tallow candle making works. Through merger and expansion the company became the pre-eminent manufacturer of soap and candles in the eastern colonies in the mid to late 19th century. Kitchen also speculated in a number of enterprises but suffered financial setbacks as a result of the 1890s bank crashes. Despite this, the company continued to grow in the early twentieth century with the introduction of products such as Velvet Soap and Solvol. The company merged with the British company Lever Bros in 1914 who eventually took full control of the company in 1924, becoming Lever and Kitchen.

Advertising for Velvet Soap in Australia was extensive and pervasive. All manner of surfaces were used to advertise the product such as building walls, roofs, and most commonly, enamelled sheet metal signs which were fastened to any available surface internally and externally.

The most common form of sign that Velvet Soap used was the words 'PURE VELVET SOAP' in white lettering within a vivid dark blue, elongated Maltese cross. On the enamelled metal signs the Maltese cross sat on a red background with a yellow border. While this was the dominant form for Velvet Soap signs, there were variations from the standard, as this sign demonstrates, that took advantage of , or adapted to, the location of the sign.

Piper Street used to be part of the main route from Melbourne to Bendigo until the town was bypassed by the Calder Freeway in 1995. The sign was well placed to take advantage of traffic on this major route, broadening its message to an audience beyond the local population of Kyneton.

### **How is it Significant?**

The Velvet Soap sign in Piper Street Kyneton is of historical and technical (scientific) significance to the State of Victoria.

### **Why is it Significant?**

The Velvet Soap sign is of historical significance as a representative of painted signs that were once a common form of advertising during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Expanses of walls were used in a manner similar to billboards where it was common to paint advertising for a range of products. The use of large painted advertising signs was eventually superseded by printed bill boards and illuminated signs. Despite being widely used, the number of extant painted advertising signs has decreased through deterioration, demolition and removal and now few good examples remain. The Velvet Soap sign in Kyneton is believed to be one of very few known extant examples of its type and the one in the best condition. This sign is one of the last examples of a painted advertising sign for one of Australia's most widely used products.

The Velvet Soap sign in Piper Street Kyneton is of historical significance for its association with John Ambrose Kitchen and the company J. Kitchen & Sons, a Victorian company that became the pre-eminent soap and candle manufacturers throughout Australia from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

The Velvet Soap sign in Piper Street Kyneton is of historical significance for its ability demonstrate changes in social culture by documenting the use of a popular consumer product.

The Velvet Soap Sign is of technical (scientific) significance as a good and extant example of painted sign writing and the locations chosen to display them.

## **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:

#### General Conditions: 1.

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. **General Conditions: 2.**

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. **General Conditions: 3.**

If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. **General Conditions: 4.**

Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. **General Conditions: 5.**

Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. **Regular Site Maintenance :**

The following site maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995:

a) regular site maintenance provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant features

b) the maintenance of an item to retain its conditions or operation without the removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the introduction of new materials;

**Note:** Surface patina which has developed on the fabric may be an important part of the item's significance and if so needs to be preserved during maintenance and cleaning. Note: Any new materials used for repair must not exacerbate the decay of existing fabric due to chemical incompatibility, obscure existing fabric or limit access to existing fabric for future maintenance. Repair must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. **Minor Works :**

Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

\* All internal works to 38 Piper Street, that will not affect the structure of the place, are permit exempt.

Construction dates	1920,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	VELVET SOAP SIGN, ADVERTISING SIGN,
Hermes Number	14447

Property Number

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## Plaque Citation

Originally painted during the 1920s, the Velvet Soap Sign is one of the best and largest remaining examples of its type. Painted advertising signs were once a common feature throughout Victoria.

## Extent of Registration

1. All of the Velvet Soap advertising sign shown as F1 on Diagram 1969 held by the Executive Director.
2. All of the structure located at 38 Piper Street, Kyneton shown as B1 on Diagram 1969 held by the Executive Director.
3. All of the land shown as L1 on Diagram 1969 held by the Executive Director being part of Crown Allotment 5 Section 13 Parish of Lauriston.
4. All of the land shown as L2 on Diagram 1969 held by the Executive Director being part of Crown Allotment 5 Section 13 Parish of Lauriston.

*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/>*