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## RSL Memorial Hall



RSL Hall, 293-303 High Street, South Yarra



RSL Hall Honour board



RSL Hall stage banner.jpg

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### Location

301 High Street PRAHRAN, STONNINGTON CITY

### Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO417

### Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 6, 2010

#### *What is significant?*

The Returned Soldiers' League (RSL) Memorial Hall at 301 High Street, Prahran, constructed 1920-21 and the assembly hall at the rear of 1926. Inside, the Honour Board and the interior of the assembly hall - including the 1949 stage banner - are also significant.

### *How is it significant?*

The RSL Memorial Hall is of local historical, social, and architectural significance to the City of Stonnington.

### *Why is it significant?*

Historically and socially, as the focus for the activities of the Returned Servicemen's League and the commemoration of those who served and died in active service since 1921. This aspect of significance is further illustrated and enhanced by the original Honour Board, which is an original part of the entrance hall design, and the stage banner painted by RW Bridges in 1949 which bears the inscription 'We will remember them' (Criteria A & G).

Architecturally, as a bold and assured design by leading architectural firm, Haddon & Henderson, which is a local landmark. Its architectural value is enhanced by its high level of intactness. Also for its associations with architects Robert J Haddon and William A Henderson. Haddon had been one of the most original designers in Victoria, known best for his Arts & Crafts style. He was joined by Henderson, who added practical interests to Haddon's flair for design, shortly before the hall was commissioned (Criteria E & H).

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - Churches and Halls in the City of Stonnington - Heritage Citations Project 2010, Context Pty Ltd, 2010;
Hermes Number	155221
Property Number	

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## **Physical Description 1**

The Returned Soldiers' League (RSL) Memorial Hall at 293-303 High Street, South Yarra, is a two-storey building with a rendered facade in the Beaux Arts style. It is articulated by four rusticated pilasters. One is at either corner and terminates in a rendered globe above the cornice. The central two pilasters define the entry and their tops flank a segmentally arched pediment which shows influence of the Arts & Crafts style. The pediment conceals a gabled roof clad in corrugated metal.

The central entranceway is arched with exaggerated L-shaped voussoirs. A wrought-iron grille survives in the arch. The doorway is inset behind this arch. The door retains an arched leadlight at the top (the doors have been replaced with frameless glass).

Windows to the ground and first floors of the facade are tripartite double-hung sashes. The upper sash is about half the size of the lower, providing a vertical emphasis. The spandrels to the two outer bays are flat render with a raised wreath at the centre. The central bay has a curved, solid render balcony below the first-floor windows. An exaggerated keystone to the entrance arch below is incorporated into its face.

The east side elevation, which overlooks a car park, is utilitarian in comparison with the facade. It is finished in red facebrick with concrete lintels. The openings are distributed irregularly. The single-storey assembly hall with a gabled roof is visible at the rear of the building.

Inside, the entire west wall of the entrance hall is covered by an attractive Blackwood honour board. There is a doorway set into the middle of it, above which are two carved wreaths. The double doors are of matching varnished timber and have nine lights each at the top. Other doors in the entrance hall appear to have been replaced with standard four-panel doors.

At the rear of the ground floor is the assembly hall, added in 1926. It retains a raised stage at the rear. The proscenium arch is set within a trabeated portico on Doric columns. The stage has a painted backdrop dating from 1949. It bears the inscription "We will remember them", and shows the Shrine of Remembrance, flags and the crest of the RSL.

In all, the hall is highly intact externally, and retains significant early features inside.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Themes from Stonnington Thematic Environmental History:

10.5 Preserving traditions and group memories

*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/>*