

# BANNER OF THE AMALGAMATED MINERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA - MALDON NO. 14 BRANCH



Front face.jpg



Rear.gif



front.jpg



c.1960s parade.jpg



c1920s.jpg



c1900.jpg

## Location

93 HIGH STREET MALDON, MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE

## Municipality

MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2384

## VHR Registration

April 12, 2018

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 1900

#### WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT?

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch.

#### HOW IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is of historical significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criteria for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

##### Criterion A

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

##### Criterion B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects 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 Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 is historically significant for its association with one of the earliest unions in Victoria, the AMA. The AMA became the AMAA, Australia's first national (intercolonial) union in 1884. The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 is important in demonstrating the union's political and social aspirations and well as the non-oppositional labour and capital ethos that was the defining feature of the first Australian gold mining unions. [Criterion A]

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is the earliest known surviving trade union banner in Victoria. An estimated 200 union banners were created between 1856 and 1950 and there are now only twelve union banners known to survive in Victoria. The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is a rare historical document associated with an early intercolonial trade union for which there is little surviving documentary evidence. [Criterion B]

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is a notable example of the class of union banners. It is a fine and highly intact example of a nineteenth century union banner and displays a large number of characteristics which are typical of the class, including the materials, use of symbolic and political images and mottos, and the large scale and design. The design and sewing of the banner and the painting of the imagery and mottos are executed in a highly proficient manner. [Criterion D]

### Permit Exemptions

<p>It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.49(3) of the <i>Heritage Act</i> <i>2017</i>). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.92 of the <i>Heritage Act</i> <i>2017</i>).</p> <p class="c1">General Condition 1</p> <p>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.</p> <p class="c1">General Condition 2</p> <p>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.</p> <p class="c1">General

Condition 3

All works should ideally be informed by the Collection Policy prepared for the object. The Executive Director is not bound by any Collection Policy, and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Collection Policy.

General Condition 4

Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

Conservation

Written notification is required for any proposed conservation activities. The applicant will then be notified by the Executive Director whether the conservation activity requires permit approval pursuant to the *Heritage Act 2017*, or whether it is permit exempt.

## Theme

### 4. Transforming and managing the land 7. Governing Victorians

Construction dates 1888,

Heritage Act Categories Registered object,

Other Names MALDON MINERS BANNER, BANNER OF THE AMALGAMATED MINERS' ASSOCIATION (AMA) OF AUSTRALASIA - MALDON NO. 14 BRANCH,

Hermes Number 201052

Property Number

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## History

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is a trade union banner which was displayed by the Maldon Branch of the AMAA at meetings, events and processions from 1888 until World War I. The AMAA was formed in 1884 and was the first intercolonial union in Australia, with branches in Tasmania, Far North Queensland and New Zealand.

### History of Banners

The tradition of parades where the banners of unions and friendly societies were displayed originated in Britain. The first parades and banners in Victoria focused on the Eight Hour Day Movement, but as unions were formed, banners were created as a means of identity for the various organisations. They were elaborately painted with imagery and wording, usually had tassels and fringing and were of a large scale to allow for their prominent display on horse drawn carts. The imagery included tools and emblems associated with the various trades, and mottos espousing the beliefs and vision of the particular union or organisation. Figures depicted were usually men and if women were included, they were usually depicted as representations of ideals such as truth and wisdom.

### Mining unions

The first mining unions in Victoria were established in the 1860s to protect the conditions and wages of miners on the goldfields when mining evolved from the use of labour intensive, simple surface-focused techniques undertaken by individual miners, to the establishment of large mining companies. Initially established in each mining area, the individual unions united in 1874 to form the AMA. Most branches had large banners which were displayed during parades as symbols of pride and solidarity and as a means of visual identification.

In March 1872, the Bendigo Miners' Association held the first annual Miners' Picnic and Sports Day, an event which was to define the miner's unions. It was held at Ravenswood and an estimated 3,000 people attended. In addition to sports such as quoits, foot racing, and hop, skip and jump; there was an open air meeting where Robert Clark, President of the Bendigo Miners' Association, stated that the picnic was also being held to celebrate the increasing success of the agitation for an eight hour day system. Three months after the Ravenswood Picnic and Sports Day, gold miners at Bendigo were awarded an eight hour working day, reputedly the first miners in the world to win the Eight Hour Day battle. This was one of the most important industrial reforms won by unionists in the nineteenth century. Sports and picnic days became annual events, commencing with a procession in which the union banners were displayed. They were fund raising events, often declared public holidays by the mining companies and attended by huge crowds. For example, the Miners' Association Sports Day at Creswick in 1882 attracted 7,000 people with approximately 1,700 participants in the parade which was 1.2 kilometres in length.

In June 1874, a conference of the individual miners' associations was held at Bendigo. The principal discussion focused on the formation of a union which would combine the multiple district unions and this resulted in the establishment of the AMA. As the *Bendigo Advertiser* reported, the philosophy of mutual satisfaction was to continue to guide the new association - 'there can be no question in the world that it will be better for both masters and

men that a union of the sort to be formed, should exist. So long as one side is not unreasonable we are quite satisfied that the other will not be. the design of men, being selfish and corrupt, must be resisted and defeated'. These sentiments are expressed in the mottos on the Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch.

While upholding reconciliation and industrial harmony, the AMA reserved the right to industrial action if its legitimate claims were denied. Through the AMA, miners had the combined strength to dispute wage reductions, defective equipment and poor working conditions. They went on strike to protect their rights and any miner who filled the place of a union member was disqualified from joining the AMA.

In October 1884, 39 delegates from the 20 branches of the AMA held a conference in the Masonic Hall at Maldon. This meeting resulted in further amalgamation with other unions including the New South Wales Coalminers' Union to form Australia's first intercolonial union, the AMAA. Union rules were based on those of the National Miners' Association of Great Britain with a decentralised organisational structure with branches which were kept in close contact with the union's central committee through stewards appointed at each mine. In 1888, union membership in all Bendigo mines was made compulsory. These were progressive achievements which were later adopted by the emerging rural workers' unions. The AMAA presence spread from central Victorian goldmines, to all Victorian mining fields, and within a decade to Tasmania, Far North Queensland and New Zealand.

## History of the Maldon banner

Maldon AMAA held its first Sports Day in 1883 and borrowed a banner from Creswick Branch. They continued to borrow banners until 1888 when the existing banner was delivered to Maldon by William Guthrie Spence, Secretary of the AMAA. The double-sided banner was designed to be suspended from its upper edge on a horizontal rod and to be viewable from both sides. During parades, it was displayed on the back of a horse drawn cart, and later a truck, when the horizontal rod was supported by vertical rods in combination with supporting stays and rigging.

The gold industry began to decline around World War I when gold production began to decrease. Maldon's main mine, the North British mine closed in 1914 and led to the demise of Maldon's mining industry and the annual sports day parades ceased.

In 1918, the AMAA became part of the Australian Workers' Union. Unlike other unions, no substantial archival records of the AMA or the AMAA survive. The surviving banner, together with the Stawell banner, therefore provides the most tangible record of the union's aspirations and an insight into the character of nineteenth century miners.

Although the AMAA ceased as a union, the banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch continued to be displayed in the town's annual Easter Fair parades until the 1970s. It is likely that this was due to the formation of the Maldon Fraternal Society during World War I and its association from 1918 to 1974 with Maldon's annual Easter Festival. The Fraternal Society was a very active Melbourne-based organisation that held social events to raise money to support organisations in their home town and impart knowledge of their gold mining heritage to the younger generations. Membership was similar to the former Maldon AMAA membership and included W Lewis, unionist, member of the Maldon AMAA, and honorary organiser of the Fraternal Society's first successful association with the Easter Fair.

### KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT

Bannear, D. (2004) 'A symbol of cooperation goes on display' Inherit Heritage Council Victoria, Issue 20, October 2004

Reeves, A. (2007) 'Trade Unionism and the Australian Mining Industry: the influence of Central Victorian goldminers, 1870 - 1920' in K. Reeves & D. Nichols (eds.) Deeper Leads: new approaches to Victorian goldfields history, BHS Publishing, Ballarat, Victoria, 2007

Smith, B. Australian Trades Union Archives Retrieved from URL: <http://www.atua.org.au> 17/01/2012.

Malden Museum and Archive Association, Amalgamated Miners' Association - Maldon Branch Banner [http://maldonmuseum.com.au/?page\\_id=572](http://maldonmuseum.com.au/?page_id=572)

## 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 the following objects in the Heritage Register:

Number: H2384

Category: Heritage Object

Object: Banner of the Amalgamated Miners Association of Australasia, Maldon No. 14 Branch

Location: 93 High Street, Maldon, Mount Alexander Shire

Dated 12 April 2018

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G 15 12 April 2018 679]

*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/>*