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# 272-274 CHARMAN ROAD

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## Location

272-274 CHARMAN ROAD CHELTENHAM, BAYSIDE CITY

## Municipality

BAYSIDE CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7922-0503

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 4, 2019

272 Charman Road, Cheltenham is of historical significance as an example of an early 20th century chemist dispensary. It is of historical significance for its association with pharmaceutical and medicinal practices of the 20th century. The site represents theme number 8 of Victoria's framework of historical themes: Building community life: 8.3 Providing health and welfare services; and 8.4 Forming community organisations.

It is of archaeological significance for the potential of the site remains to provide a material record of the dispensary and potential insights into the health and well-being products and strategies of the chemist and Cheltenham community at a local level.

It is a site of local and social significance based on its role as a community-based chemist, having been known and valued by present-day elderly members of the local Cheltenham community and their families for many decades.

Until its recent demolition, the building at 272-274 Charman Road, Cheltenham continued to serve as a pharmacy. The land immediately south of the rail line on Charman Road has had a continued land use as a pharmacy for just under 100 years, as well as portion being used as a florist between 1921 into the 1940s. Dentistry is also known to have practiced on site for a number of decades.

The property parcel is now vacant.

**Interpretation of Site** The site may represent the remnants of activities conducted during the operation of a former chemist dispensary on the premises of 272 Charmans Rd since 1921. The sub-surface brick cistern identified in situ at the rear of the property and the surrounding deposits have the potential to provide insight into the medical and pharmaceutical nature of the site's occupation. However, it is possible that the cistern pre-dates the occupation of the site by the Moorabbin District United Friendly Societies' Dispensary (1921).

In consultation with HV, a sample of dispensary bottles and additional historical artefactual material have been collected from the site and are in storage at the Andrew Long and Associates office (54-58 Smith Street, Collingwood), as of 28/05/2019.

**Archaeological Significance** Demolition and clearing works of a two-storey commercial building, exposed a brick domed top of a cistern which was inadvertently removed, to uncover the circular cavity of the brick cistern (aperture of 2.5 m diameter). The cistern was revealed below the footings of a former carport in the southeast corner of the property. Additional historical artefacts (e.g. glass bottles, ceramic, teeth and animal bone fragments) were identified south of and surrounding the cistern during site clearance works and mechanical excavation of two trenches (2x3m). The land immediately south of the rail line on Charman Road has had a continued land use as a pharmacy for just under 100 years, as well as a portion of the property being used as a florist between 1921 into the 1940s. Dentistry is also known to have been practiced on site for several decades. Beyond what is already uncovered, the site has the potential to demonstrate further historical archaeological features, deposits and artefacts.

**Historical Significance** The site is significant for its ability to provide a material record of the dispensary and potential insights into the health and well-being products and strategies of the chemist and Cheltenham community at a local level. 272 Charman Road is an example of an early 20th century chemist dispensary. The site will provide an opportunity to gain further knowledge of pharmaceutical and medicinal practices of the 20th century.

**Hermes Number** 202798

**Property Number**

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## History

The Moorabbin District United Friendly Societies' Dispensary was created in 1918 with the first dispensary rented at a property adjoining the Cheltenham railway station. The dispensary commenced under the management of A. McNeil. The purpose of the dispensary was to ensure the supply of quality medicines to Friendly Societies' members at affordable prices. Following suggestions of inappropriate dealings, two years later McNeil was replaced as dispenser by William Wilson Courtney. In July 1921 the lease of a shop at Charman Road commenced, with an annual rental fee of £78. Later in 1921 funds were raised in conjunction with a Trust Property Account to facilitate the purchase of the dispensary property. The Dispensary paid rent to the Trust of £6-10s per month from 1 January 1922. On 11 August 1921, Courtney was granted approval by the Dispensary Committee to conduct a private business in the building, allowing his daughter Lorna to conduct a florist business in part of the building. After moving from Cheltenham in 1928, Lorna handed the business to her sister Nellie who

ran the florist into the 1940s. In 1921 Courtney's nephew gave the dispensary address as the location of a branch of his architectural practice. R H Lowe, an optician, advertised in the local newspaper that he was available on alternate Saturdays for consultation at the Dispensary. While Dr Gershwin Bennett, a dental surgeon, advertised that he could be consulted every Tuesday and Saturday at the Dispensary.

From the 1940s an increasing number of dentists used part of the dispensary building to conduct their practices. In October 1954, a contract was let to Ernest Beach for the construction of a dispensary at 272-274 Charman Road. A contract was agreed by Kevin H Roberts in 1957 for the construction of a shop at 268-270 Charman Rd (the property parcel across the laneway to the south). In 1959 extensions to the dispensary building were carried out by Mr. H. Baberton. The premises at 268-270 Charman Rd were converted to a medical surgery and occupied in 1982 by Dr. G. Cramer. 268-270 Charman Rd was also occupied by a dentist from the 1980s. In 1987, the pharmacy and first floor premises at 272-274 were refurbished by Harden Building Constructions Pty Ltd.

The site was still in use as a pharmacy, operated by the Friendly Society Dispensary, when the property was compulsorily acquired for the Charman Road Level Crossing Removal Project in February 2018, continuing through to March 2019 when the pharmacy relocated to another premises in Cheltenham.

*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/>*