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# MEDLEY HALL



MEDLEY HALL SOHE 2008



1 Benvuta Drummond Street  
Carlton front view

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## Location

48 DRUMMOND STREET CARLTON, MELBOURNE CITY

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0409

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO38

## VHR Registration

July 27, 1977

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 11, 1999

What is significant?

Medley Hall was erected in 1893 for Mrs Leah Abrahams by the builder Richard Stockdale to the design of the architect Walter Scott Law. The elaborately decorated two storey rendered brick structure has a two tier arcade. The residence, originally of thirteen rooms, was designed with a free use of classical elements and motifs which has become known as the so-called boom style. The main facade is symmetrically arranged as four bays of two storeys flanking central bay. This central bay appears to project slightly because of prostyle Greek Corinthian and Ionic columns carrying a broken segmental pediment on the ground storey and broken entablature on the first storey. A tower raises the central bay to a third storey. Flanking the tower, the balustraded parapet carries two statues on either side. The interior is richly decorated.

How is it significant?

Medley Hall is of architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Medley Hall is architecturally significant as one of the most outstanding designs of noted Melbourne architect W S Law. Law was the designer of many elaborate houses and terraces during the so-called 'boom period' of the 1880s, including Biltmore and Drummond Terrace. The profusion of fine stucco work and mouldings, both internally and externally, is unsurpassed and epitomizes the boom period.

## 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](#).

Construction dates	1892,
Architect/Designer	Law, Walter Scott,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	BENVENUTA,
Hermes Number	210

Property Number

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## History

History of Place:

Benvenyuta was built for Mrs Leah Abrahams, the wife of Henry Abrahams of Abrahams and Co, gunsmiths. Bevenuta was occupied by Mrs Abrahams until 1914 and the family sold the premises in 1949. During the 1920s the family leased the building to the Federal Attorney General's Department. The Italian Club briefly leased it from 1935 until 1937 when the State Government bought Benvenuta and its neighbour Rosaville for 15,000 pounds. In 1952 the house was presented to the University of Melbourne for student accomodation.

The history of Benvenuta/Medley Hall is full of unsubstantiated rumour. Italian craftsmen were supposedly bought over specifically to work on the house. A bullet hole in the Lady window above the stairwell has been claimed as the detritus of Henry Abrahams committing suicide in the hallway. Alternatively, it has been suggested that the hole was from a gunfight between two 'mobsters' arguing over a woman whilst the house was used as a 'bordello' on the 1930s.

(from Draft history of Conservation Management Plan, Roger Beeston Assocs, 1999)

## Extent of Registration

No. 409 Benvenuta (otherwise known as 'Medley Hall') 48 Drummond Street, Carlton.  
[Victoria Government Gazette No. 64 July 27, 1977 p.2480]

*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/>*