

PORTER PREFABRICATED IRON STORE



Porter prefabricated iron store_North Fitzroy_March 2010



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Iron store Fitzroy_KJ_25 Feb 2010.jpg



1944 Image Showing the Porter Prefab Iron Store on its present site in the Yarra Council Depot. Photographed from the adjacent site.

Location

111 QUEENS PARADE FITZROY NORTH, YARRA CITY

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2243

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO468

VHR Registration

June 10, 2010

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 16, 2010

What is significant?

The Porter prefabricated iron store was manufactured in England, probably between 1853 and 1856, by John Henderson Porter, an early innovator of galvanised corrugated iron buildings and the major manufacturer in the mid-nineteenth century. He established his business in London, and from at least 1839 was exporting various iron products, such as portable iron fences and bedsteads, around the world. He was manufacturing prefabricated iron buildings, including lighthouses and other industrial buildings, from about 1842. In 1850 he transferred his works to Birmingham and by c1853 he had entered into a short-term partnership, Porter Brothers & Stuart, but seems to have discontinued his business by 1856. The date of manufacture, original owner, location, and use of the Porter building now at North Fitzroy are unknown, but it was probably manufactured between 1853 and 1856 and appears to have been moved to its present location from elsewhere.

The Porter prefabricated iron store is a free-standing rectangular-plan shed with a cast and wrought iron frame of standardised components bolted together, is clad with heavy gauge vertical corrugated iron of 5¼ inch (135 mm) pitch, and has a segmental arched corrugated iron roof. It was designed as a modular structure of three equal bays, and is 9.25 m long, 6.1 m wide and 4.02 m high to the top of the roof. At each corner are external wrought iron angle posts, and internally along the long side of the building are two cast iron stanchions, cruciform in section with flanges to allow for the connection of horizontal girts at three levels. The stanchions are branded 'J H PORTER BIRMINGHAM'. A perimeter roof purlin supports the curved iron roof. Three walls of the building are intact, but the wall on the south side has been removed and replaced with a wire mesh gate. In each short side is

a centrally-located door with a window above. In the west end wall on either side of the door are two twelve-pane cast iron sash windows with external sheet iron shutters. At the top of one frame is the brand name 'PORTER BROTHERS & STUART BIRMINGHAM'. The building is painted internally and externally. The former fifteen-pane timber sash window in the west end has been replaced by a plain glazed window.

How is it significant?

The Porter iron store is of historical and technical significance to the state of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Porter prefabricated iron store is historically significant as a now rare example of the many prefabricated iron buildings which were imported into Victoria during the Victorian gold rushes. It is a reflection of the economic and social conditions in the early 1850s, when there was a great increase in population and a rush of labour to the goldfields, and both labour and building materials were scarce. It is an early example of the use of a building material, galvanised corrugated iron, which was to become closely linked with Australian building, especially for utilitarian buildings.

The Porter prefabricated iron store is technically significant as a now rare example of the early use of galvanised corrugated iron for the manufacture of prefabricated buildings, and of the prefabrication system of the major English manufacturer J H Porter. Most of the early manufacturers of corrugated iron buildings were British, and J H Porter was an early innovator of such buildings, and probably the first prefabricator. The Porter prefabricated iron store is the only known surviving example in Victoria of a prefabricated iron building manufactured by J H Porter which is still standing. It is significant as an example of a prefabricated structure with an arched roof, a form with which Porter is particularly associated.

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. 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. 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.

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|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Construction dates | 1853, |
| Architect/Designer | Porter, John Henderson, |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered object, |
| Other Names | IRON STORE, MUNICIPAL DEPOT, |
| Hermes Number | 3957 |
| Property Number | |

History

[From nomination report by Kaye Oddie and a chapter on J H Porter from Miles Lewis's proposed publication on portable buildings.]

Prefabricated iron buildings were manufactured in England from 1848 and in Birmingham from 1850. John Henderson Porter had a long history of manufacturing iron products, and was the first man to hold himself out on any scale as a prefabricator of corrugated iron buildings (Lewis, p 17.1). In 1853 he entered a short-lived partnership, known as Porter Brothers & Stuart, which appeared to have operated from 1854 to 1856. This appears to date the Fitzroy building to that period. Porter buildings imported to Australia include warehouses, stores and schools.

The original location and owner of the iron building in Fitzroy is not known. It was most likely relocated to its present location, given that some of the corrugated iron panels have been trimmed to fit. Local knowledge suggests that it has been on its present site since at least 1944, and that it was moved there from Camp Pell in Royal Park. (Camp Pell was a large military camp established in Royal Park during World War II. The site is now covered with netball/basketball facilities and the new hockey stadium which will be used for the 2006 Commonwealth games.)

The building is now located in Yarra Council's municipal depot and is used for storage. The south wall of the building has been replaced with a wire mesh gate for easy access, and the window above the west doorway has been replaced.

Assessment Against Criteria

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

The Porter prefabricated iron store is a now rare example of the many prefabricated iron buildings which were imported into Victoria during the Victorian gold rushes. It is a reflection of the economic and social conditions in the early 1850s, when there was a great increase in population and a rush of labour to the goldfields, and both labour and building materials were scarce.

b. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

The Porter prefabricated iron store is a now rare example of the early use of galvanised corrugated iron for the manufacture of prefabricated buildings, and of the prefabrication system of the major English manufacturer J H Porter. Most of the early manufacturers of corrugated iron buildings were British, and J H Porter was an early innovator of such buildings, and probably the first prefabricator. The Porter prefabricated iron store is the only known surviving example in Victoria of a prefabricated iron building manufactured by J H Porter which is still standing.

c. Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

d. Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.

The Porter prefabricated iron store is an early example of the use of a building material, galvanised corrugated iron, which was to become closely linked with Australian building, especially for utilitarian buildings. It is an example of a prefabricated structure with an arched roof, a form with which the English manufacturer J H Porter is particularly associated.

e. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

f. Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

g. Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

h. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Plaque Citation

Made in Birmingham c1853 by the major manufacturer J H Porter, this is a now rare example of the many prefabricated buildings brought to Victoria during the gold rushes, and is one of only two known Porter buildings to survive.

Extent of Registration

The object known as the Porter prefabricated iron store, currently on the site of the Yarra Council Municipal Depot, 111 Queens Parade, North Fitzroy.

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/>