

Victorian Heritage Database Report

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Former Eadies Building & Hydraulic Lift

Location

61 - 69 A'Beckett Street, MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE CITY

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0980

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 8, 2007

What is significant? The warehouse building was built in 1870-71 on the basalt plinth of the earlier c.1850 stone store for McClure Valentine & Co., wholesale grocers and wine & spirit merchants. Inside the warehouse is an operational c.1870s hydraulic goods lift powered by mains pressure water.

How is it significant? The warehouse building is significant for architectural and historical reasons at a State level. The water powered hydraulic goods lift is significant for historic and technical reasons at a State level.

Why is it significant? The building is of architectural significance at a State level because of its rarity as an intact example of a mid 19th century warehouse building. The facade is a well preserved example of an industrial facade and an early use of polychrome brickwork. The internal features of the building include cast iron columns, open timber beams and corbels on the ground floor, and the timber lined roof on the second floor.

The hydraulic goods lift is of technical significance because it is the only known intact example of a hydraulic lift in Melbourne powered by mains pressure water. The lift is thought to date from the time the building was constructed in the 1870s for use in moving goods from the ground floor to the first floor of this two storey building. The maker of the lift is not known.

This hydraulic goods lift is a typical example of the stand alone lift installation used in Melbourne prior to the commencement of the Melbourne Hydraulic Power Company (MHPCo) in 1889 and its 700 psi (4826 kPa) high pressure water supply. It differs in design from the later high-pressure hydraulic lift installations due to the diameter of the piston which is much larger due to the lower pressure used in its operation. The hydraulic supply

pipes of the Melbourne Hydraulic Power Company did not extend to A'Beckett Street so it remained as a stand alone mains pressure hydraulic lift.

It also illustrates the evolution of the provision of the motive power to lifts via the application of hydraulic principles using water, with the resultant motion multiplied using a pulley and cable system. This is a superseded method of powering lifts replaced by the electric motor and cable winding drum. Its significance is further enhanced as it is still in operational condition and used by the present occupiers of the building.

The building and hydraulic goods lift are of historic significance as the only example of a warehouse to retain its original lift in situ. It is a unique early example of the new technology which had a major influence on the skyline of Melbourne because the use of hydraulic lifts allowed for the construction of much taller buildings with the advent of the public hydraulic power supply. This example is also historically significant because it pre-dates the public high pressure system and operates on low pressure mains water.

Classified: 06/06/1994

Revised: 29/01/2007

Hermes Number 64268

Property Number

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 data owner.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>