
Bendigo Technical College - Group Classification



B1650 Library Bendigo Tech
College School of Mines

Location

136 McCrae Street, BENDIGO VIC 3550 - Property No B1650

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1505

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 22, 2008

Library Bendigo Technical College Statement of Significance: Designed for the Mechanics' Institute by W C Vahland, this tall octagonal brick building was opened in April 1887. The external treatment is very plain with no ornamentation at all but the interior has eight free standing corinthian columns and very ornate plasterwork which was designed by Otto Maschatz who lectured in art and modelling at the the School of Mines. He was also responsible for the internal decoration work in the Melbourne Public Library, Melbourne Town Hall, Spencer Street Railway Building and the Bendigo Town Hall.

The library has considerable local historic and social significance associated with the School of Mines and early technical education generally.

Part of School of Mines Group Classification. Group Statement of Significance: This group of four separate buildings, all of which have been individually Classified were all designed by W C Vahland and built between 1864 and 1891, and although situated quite close together they are quite different in character, size and style. The first building was completed in 1865 for the Mechanics Institute and Free Library and a two-storey extension for the School of Mines was added in 1873.

In 1879 Vahland added a new facade linking these two building on the McCrae Street frontage and at the same time the first part of the single storey Chemical and Metallurgical Laboratory at the rear was completed. The next building to be completed was the classrooms and workshops block which faces onto Hargreaves Street. This was completed in 1884 and the classrooms were used for geometry, architectural drawing and building construction which were taught by Vahland.

In 1890 a new three-storey extension to the McCrae Street building was completed and in 1891 major alterations and additions were carried out to the Laboratories.

Born in Germany, W C Vahland arrived in Australia in 1854 and after gold digging for a time he set up as an architect in Bendigo . He became closely associated with public life in the city, and was responsible for designing many of its important buildings. In addition to teaching in the School he served on the Council and eventually became President of the School of Mines.

Although these four different structures were designed by the same architect they do not read as a sympathetic group of buildings but they are all associated with the early history of Mechanics' Institutes and Free Libraries and also with early technical education in the mining industry, and they are of considerable local, social and historic significance.

See File Numbers B4762, B1900, B5052, B5053, B5054.

First classified: 08/10/1964

Revised State: 03/08/1998

Hermes Number 68218

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 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/>