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## Burke Museum & Library



B0389 Burke Museum & Library



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### Location

Loch Street,, BEECHWORTH VIC 3747 - Property No B389

### Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

### Level of significance

State

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0345

### Heritage Listing

National Trust

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 22, 2008

The Burke Museum was erected in 1857 by the Young Men's Association as a lecture hall and reading room. It was later known as the Athenaeum Hall and in 1859 became the Beechworth Public Library. In 1863 the Museum was added to the original building and there were further additions in 1874. The facade of the single storey rendered brick structure has simply moulded openings, stylized doric pilasters and a central entrance expressed by a projecting vestibule.

The Museum is a notable example of provincial conservative classicism. The facade is simply composed and decorated. Athenaeum Halls were a distinctive feature of most nineteenth century towns. The Beechworth

example is typical of these small institutes and is important in that several of its early records and collection of books still survive. The original items from the Burke Museum are also important. The building survives from early times and is a feature of one of Victoria's most historic towns. Recent additions and renovations, particularly to the interior, have destroyed the original character of the museum.

Classified: 'Local' 09/04/1959

Revised: 'Regional' 28/01/1960

Revised: 03/08/1998

Historic Area Statement of Significance: Beechworth is a picturesque nineteenth Century provincial town. It is a well preserved example of Government and private building, which resulted from the town's important historical role as the administrative and commercial centre of Victoria's north-eastern goldfields. Beechworth was once significant for its position on an early overland route from Melbourne to Sydney.

The town is located sympathetically to the topography, in an area of considerable landscape interest. Set amidst forested undulating country, there remain many relics of the mining era in and about Beechworth. It is a rich field for the industrial archaeology.

There are within the town a large number of historical and architecturally significant buildings. These display a quality of form and richness of material and detail, which make Beechworth one of the most significant of Australia's goldfield towns. Of particular interest is the common usage of local granite in construction. Its honey colour imparts a quality distinctive to Beechworth.

The highlights of Beechworth are the grid of wide streets flanked with granite kerbing; the streetscapes of considerable integrity with groups of homogeneous buildings set off by mature elms and other exotic trees; and the remnants of historic Victorian gardens. About the town there are many examples of nineteenth century street furniture, signs and fences. Beechworth's historical wealth is of national significance.

Classified: April, 1963

Hermes Number 68710

Property Number

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*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/>*