
School Of Mines Building - Group Classification



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Location

McCrae Street,, BENDIGO VIC 3550 - Property No B5052

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Regional

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 22, 2008

Individual Statement of Significance: The first building on this site was a single storey timber and canvas Sandhurst Mechanics' Institute which was erected in the early 1850s.

The first part of the existing building was designed by Vahland and Getzschmann in 1863 for the Mechanics Institute & Free Library and was built by Hassall , Daly and Harlow. In 1873 a two-storey extension designed by W C Vahl and and built by G Adams was erected for the School of Mines. In 1879 there were alterations and additions which included a new Italianate style rendered brick facade to the whole of the McCrae Street frontage designed by W C Vahland. A substantial three-storey extension with a corner tower also designed by W C Vahland was completed in 1890 for the School of Mines.

W C Vahland who was the architect for many of the public buildings in Bendigo served on the council of the School of Mines, was its President, a part-time lecturer and designed all the early buildings on the site.

The building has considerable local significance not only because of its association with the early history of

Mechanics' Institutes and Free Public Libraries but also with early technical education in the mining industry.

Classified: 15/10/1981

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.

Group Classified: 29/10/1981

See File Numbers B4762, B1650, B1900, B5053, B5054.

Hermes Number 70111

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/>