

## PRIMARY SCHOOL NO.2815



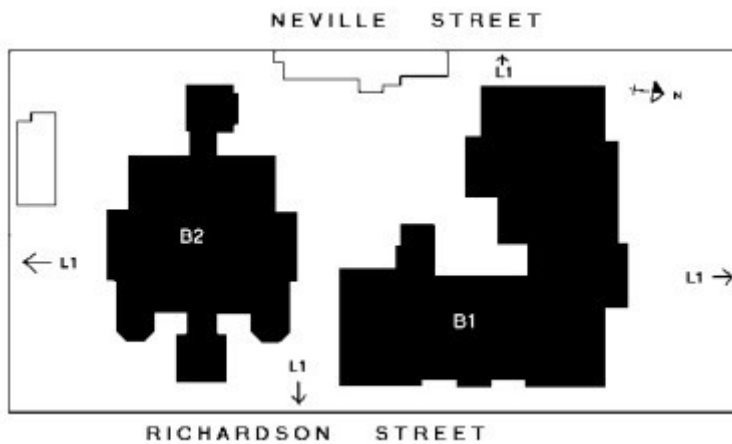
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
NO.2815 SOHE 2008



1 primary school no 2815  
richardson street middle park  
infant school front view  
feb1998



primary school no 2815  
richardson street middle park  
infant school side view feb  
1998



middle park primary school plan

### Location

194 RICHARDSON STREET MIDDLE PARK, PORT PHILLIP CITY

### Municipality

PORT PHILLIP CITY

### Level of significance

Registered

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1711

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO239

## **VHR Registration**

August 20, 1982

## **Amendment to Registration**

June 25, 1998

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - September 23, 1999

What is significant?

The first school in the Middle Park area was School No.2815 which was conducted in the Orderly Room, South Melbourne. This was rented as a temporary school to accommodate 400 children while the permanent one was being built. It closed on 28 July 1887. The new Middle Park Primary School No.2815, designed by Henry Bastow, opened on 1 August 1887 and was constructed in red brick with stone and cement dressings. The school has a series of gabled roofs clad in slate with timber fretwork on the gable ends and banded roughcast render on the chimneys. Middle Park became a central school from 1916 to 1968 and acted as a feeder school for Melbourne High School for boys and girls which was then located in Spring Street, Melbourne. The Infant School was opened on 16 July 1908 and the architect was most likely George Watson and the draughtsman was D Mackenzie. George William Watson (1850-1915) was born and educated in England. He entered the Public Works Department soon after his arrival in Victoria in October 1872. He was promoted to Chief Architect of the Public Works Department in 1910 and died on 26 July 1915. The building is constructed of polychromatic brickwork and has a slate roof with domed roof ventilators. It has leadlight windows and a vaulted pressed metal ceiling with decorative wrought iron tie rods to the main rooms. The floor plan consists of a central hall surrounded by six classrooms, cloakrooms at each end and hexagonal teachers' rooms projecting on either side of the front elevation.

Why is it significant?

Middle Park Primary School No.2815 is of social, historical and architectural importance to the State of Victoria.

How is it significant?

Middle Park Primary School No.2815 is of social and historical importance as it was the earliest central school in Victoria. The Middle Park Central School operated as a feeder school for Melbourne High School from 1916 to 1968, giving the working class families of South Melbourne and nearby suburbs an opportunity to benefit from secondary schooling. Middle Park Infant building constructed in 1908 is of social and historical importance as an example of an infant school which embodies in its plan and decoration the changes in educational philosophy in the early years of the twentieth century to meet the needs of very small children. The decorative scheme for the building, including the leadlight windows and use of pressed metal, represent an attempt to train the children to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of their surroundings.

Middle Park Primary School No.2815 is of architectural importance as the site includes an early example of an Infant Building. Important to note is the unusual floor plan of the Infant Building which includes a cloak room at either end and hexagonal bays which are teachers' rooms at the front of the building. The interior contains particularly elaborate and unusual detailing with its cream brick walls and red brick banding, leadlight windows

and pressed metal ceilings and cornices. The Main School Building is representative of an early Education Department School.

## 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 alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations 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 alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.
4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.
5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

#### Exterior

- \* Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.
- \* Removal of any extraneous items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc, and making good.
- \* Installation or repair of damp-proofing by either injection method or grouted pocket method.
- \* Regular garden maintenance.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of garden watering systems.
- \* Repair, removal or replacement of existing pergolas and other garden structures.

#### Interior

- \* Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.

- \* Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves, skirtings and decorative strapping.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of curtain track, rods, blinds and other window dressings.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted artworks.
- \* Refurbishment of bathrooms, toilets including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers etc and associated plumbing and wiring.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and provided that the location of the heating unit is concealed from view.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ. Note: if wiring original to the place was carried in timber conduits then the conduits should remain in-situ.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of bulk insulation in the roof space.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of smoke detectors.

Construction dates            1887,

Architect/Designer            Bastow, Henry Robert,

Heritage Act Categories    Registered place,

Hermes Number                842

Property Number

## History

### Contextual History:

#### Middle Park

The suburb of Middle Park was not settled until the 1880s as a residential area on Hobsons Bay. The area on which present day Middle Park stands contained a large swamp between Fitzroy Street and what is now Kerferd Road which had to be drained before the land could be used for building. A reserve for a rifle range near Danks and Mills Streets was gazetted in 1861 as an area to be used for military purposes. The rifle range was later moved to Williamstown (George Morris. 1987. P. 9). The Middle Park station on the Melbourne -St Kilda railway line encouraged residential building in Middle Park in the 1880s.

South Melbourne schools were already crowded in the 1880s. In May 1885, Albert Park Primary School numbers reached 1375 pupils and admission was refused to children under six or over fifteen years. Dorcas Street South Melbourne Primary school was also overcrowded.

#### The Architect

The architect of the main building was Henry Bastow. Bastow was born on 3 May 1839. He migrated to Australia from Bridport, Dorset. He practised as an architect and surveyor in Tasmania in 1863 and is known to have designed the Union Chapel in Hobart (illus wood engraving by Samuel Calvert in Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria). He took up an appointment with the Victorian Public Service on 30 April 1866, working as a draughtsman for the Victorian Water Supply and later as an architect and civil engineer for the Railway Department. In 1873 he was appointed to the Education Department as head of the architecture branch (Bibliography File, State Library of Victoria).

The introduction of free compulsory and secular education in Victoria in 1872 led to a wave of building of schools all over the state. As the architect in charge of the provision of school buildings, Henry Bastow left a huge legacy to the State in the form of hundreds of schools of every type and size. Bastow was attached to the Education

Department from 1873 to 1883 when he and his staff were transferred to the Public Works Department as part of the State Schools Division (L. Burchell. Victorian Schools. P. 162). By 1885 he was Senior Architect. He then had responsibility for the design and execution of all architectural works, not just schools (L. Burchell. Victorian Schools. P. 162). Bastow supervised the design of the new Crown Law Offices in Melbourne in 1892. He was retrenched on 30 April 1894, when reductions in the public service were made during the economic depression (Jacobs, Twigg Vol.1 p.35). He worked as an orchardist at Harcourt until his death on 30 September 1920 (Bibliography File, State Library of Victoria).

The additions made in 1915-16 were made under the supervision of S.C. Brittingham. The science laboratory on the first floor, which was necessary for the students of the Central School was designed by S. C. Brittingham.

The architect of the Infant School seems to have been George Watson and the draughtsman was D. Mackenzie. George William Watson (1850-1915) was born and educated in England. He entered the Public Works Department soon after his arrival in Victoria in October 1872. He was an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects and a member of the Society of Architects. He designed and carried out many large and important buildings amongst which were the Lunatic Asylum, Sunbury, the Public Buildings and Law Courts, Bendigo and the Female Prison, Pentridge. He was promoted to Chief Architect of the Public Works Department in 1910 and died on 26 July 1915.

## HISTORY OF PLACE

The first school in the area was School No. 2815 which was conducted in the Orderly Room, South Melbourne. This was rented as a temporary school to accommodate 400 children while the permanent one was being built. It closed on 28 July 1887. When the Middle Park school on the corner of Richardson Street and Mills Street was finished, many of the surrounding streets were unformed and there was an extensive swamp in front of the school (Priestly, South Melbourne, p.150).

The new Middle Park Primary School No. 2815 opened on 1 August 1887 and was constructed in red brick with stone and cement dressings, with a slate roof, The windows were set in Waurn Ponds freestone tracery. It was described as being built in the Gothic style. It is substantially intact despite alterations. The main alteration is the insertion of large units of multi-paned double hung sash windows to improve the lighting. This was a response to changes in policy about lighting and ventilation in the early years of the twentieth century and such changes to the windows were made in most schools at that time. The roof has been reclad in brown roof tiles.

Middle Park was the earliest central school in Victoria: from 1916 it became a feeder school for Melbourne High School for boys and girls which was then located in Spring Street, Melbourne. A central school drew children from a number of surrounding schools to attend classes equivalent to the first two years of high school. By 1929 there were 23 of these schools around the State.(Vision and Realisation Vol 1. P.495). The central classes were closed in 1968, since there was a local high school known as the South Melbourne High School.

The infant school was opened on 16 July 1908.

Centrally located in Middle Park, the school has served an important cultural role for the local community. Associations met at the school on a regular basis in the early years of the twentieth century. The school has been a sporting practice ground and a meeting place for community groups. In the late 1960s a branch library to serve the whole community was set up within the school building. This arrangement was an innovation in library practice in Victoria and was an attempt to use school buildings outside school hours to serve the local community.

Associated People: The architect of the Infant School seems to have been George Watson and George William Watson (1850-1915) architect of infant building.

## Assessment Against Criteria

### Criterion A

The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object.

The main building of the Middle Park Primary School has historical importance as the earliest central school in Victoria. Access to secondary education in Victoria until the mid-twentieth century was mainly restricted to those

families who could afford private school education. The Middle Park Central School operated as a feeder school for Melbourne High School from 1916 to 1968, giving the working class families of South Melbourne and nearby suburbs an opportunity to benefit from secondary schooling.

The Middle Park Primary School infants building is important as an example of an infant school which embodies in its plan and decoration the changes in educational philosophy in the early years of the twentieth century to meet the needs of very small children.

**Criterion B**

The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness.

**Criterion C**

The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage.

**Criterion D**

The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects.

The main School Building is representative of an early Education Department School.

**Criterion E**

The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

Middle Park Primary School No. 2815 is of architectural importance as the site includes an early example of an Infant Building. Important to note is the unusual floor plan of the Infant Building, which includes a cloakroom at both end, and hexagonal bays, which are teachers' rooms at the front of the building. The interior contains particularly elaborate and unusual detailing with its cream brick walls and red brick banding, lead-light windows and pressed metal ceilings and cornices.

**Criterion F**

The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.

**Criterion G**

The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations.

**Criterion H**

Any other matter which the Council considers relevant to the determination of cultural heritage significance

## **Extent of Registration**

### **NOTICE OF REGISTRATION**

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1711 in the category described as a Heritage place:

Middle Park Primary School No. 2815, Richardson Street, Middle Park, Port Phillip City Council.

### **EXTENT:**

1. To the extent of the buildings marked B-1 and B-2 on diagram 602489 held by the Executive Director.
2. To the extent of the land marked L-1 on diagram 602489 held by the Executive Director, being part of the land described as Reserve 5320 Section 430 of Crown Allotment 57 to 66, Government Gazette 13/8/1886 page 2331.

Dated 4 June 1998.

RAY TONKIN

Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette No. G25 25 June 1998 pp.1633-1634]

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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/>*