

<b>Building:</b>	Richmond Baths	<b>Significance:</b>	B
<b>Address:</b>	3 Gleadell Street, Richmond	<b>Melway Map Ref:</b>	2H B5
<b>Building Type:</b>	Swimming Pool	<b>Construction Date:</b>	1936
<b>Architect:</b>	Unknown	<b>Builder:</b>	Unknown



<b>Intactness:</b>		<b>Condition:</b>	
G[ ] F[x] P[ ]		G[x] F[ ] P[ ]	
<b>Existing Heritage Listings:</b>		<b>Recommended Heritage Listings:</b>	
Victorian Heritage Register	[ ]	Victorian Heritage Register	[ ]
Register of the National Estate	[ ]	Register of the National Estate	[x]
National Trust	[ ]	Heritage Overlay Controls	[x]

## History

The first Richmond pool, an outdoor pool, was built in 1897, as a measure to lower the number of drownings which occurred in the Yarra. The pool was segregated: boys could swim every day except Friday, which was reserved for the women. The baths were built as a part of the Jubilee, celebrating Queen Victoria's 60 year reign and were among the largest in the state, measuring 150 feet (45 metres) by 80 feet (24 metres). The baths cost £2,000 to build.<sup>1</sup>

During the Depression many people bathed at the pool, two to three hundred children every week, and the water was 'infested with algae and ... changed only once a week'.<sup>2</sup> The council decided in 1933 to upgrade the facilities and change the water every day. However, in house fighting diverted the Council and the upgrade was not a reality until the present pool was built in the shell of the old in 1936, when it was converted to an indoor pool.

## Description

The Richmond Baths building is a large, shed-like structure, with an unusually-profiled corrugated iron roof, the steel framing of which is visible internally. The Classical Revival style entrance façade, to Gleadell Street, comprises two similar single-storey red brick pavilion-like sections, linked by a central entrance. The original building (1936) comprises the eastern pavilion and the entrance, the former of which has face red brick walls and three tall windows with rendered dressings. A rendered parapet with a Greek wave motif and the words RICHMOND CITY BATHS. The entrance door is set within a rendered door-case beneath a similar, heavy parapet. To the north, the 1980s addition is designed in a similar style. It is also of face red brick, but with four windows, and window dressings and parapet and frieze of cream brick.

## Significance

The Richmond Baths is of local historical, social and architectural significance. The site has been occupied by a swimming pool since 1897, and, with the adjoining Richmond City Reserve—has always been a social and recreational focus for the suburb. Architecturally, the building is notable for its unusual corrugated iron-clad roof. The facade is a restrained inter-War Classical Revival composition, which has been sympathetically re-interpreted in the additions at the north end.

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1 City of Richmond and the Carringbush Regional Library, *Copping it Sweet: Shared Memories of Richmond*, Richmond 1988, p. 231.

2 J McCalman, *Struggletown: Portrait of an Australian Working-Class Community, 1900-1965*, Ringwood (Vic) 1984, p. 168,