

**Building:**

former Forester's Hall

**Address:**

Smith Street, corner Langridge Street



**Allotment Reference:**

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**National Trust Register:**

Recommended

**National Estate Register:**

Recommended

**Historic Buildings Council Register:**

Recommended

**Location within Precinct:**

Collingwood Slope

**Photograph Date:**

9.6.87

**Grantee:**

S.A. Donaldson

**Original Owner:**

Ancient Order of Foresters

**Present Owner:**

**Former Use:**

Foresters Hall

**Present Use:**

"Last Laugh"

**Construction Date:**

1868

Architect:

Builder:

Description:

A stuccoed brick and bluestone Victorian public building, with main facade to Smith Street, retaining its curved central pediment with the words "Forester's Hall 1868" and "Court Perseverance 2727" in low relief. At street level, an original shop front is sheeted over, whilst the main entrance retains its ashlar surround and barrel vaulting. At the rear, the rusticated coursed bluestone walls of the hall and rooms are visible to a small yard contained by a brick fence facing north. The east elevation has "Forester's Hall" painted along the "entablature" of the pedimented brick gable end with a bricked up serlion window below.

Inside, the main hall is substantially intact, along with one of the staircases.

Condition:

Good

Integrity:

Good, forms a visual unit with adjoining nos 70-86 Smith Street.

History:

The first Victorian branch of the Ancient Order of Foresters was established in 1850 and work was begun on the Smith Street buildings in 1868. The Foresters hall became a major social and cultural institution within the municipality. It was used by the local court and was the meeting place for public companies including the Langridge Mutual Permanent Building Society. In 1893 alterations to meet the Board of Health's requirements were undertaken.

Significance:

The Foresters Hall is important regionally as a major social, business and cultural venue for the municipality from 1868 until closure. Its association with eminent Collingwood citizens, including George Langridge, councillor, mayor and M.L.A. is of note whilst the building is remarkably intact and of major regional importance as the largest bluestone structure in the municipality.

Recommendations:

Recommended for inclusion on the Historic Buildings Council Register, National Estate Register and for Planning Scheme Protection.

Reinstatement of the shop front windows is recommended.

References:

National Trust File FN3699  
Green, D., and Bromwell, L., Mutual Aid or Welfare State Australia's Friendly Societies, Allen and Unwin, Sydney  
The Observer 2.11.93

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