



**National Bank, former
53 Malop Street, 184-190 Moorabool Street**

History

This three-storey bank and offices replaced smaller banking chambers and two shops (49-53) after its completion in 1928¹ to the design of H W & F B Tompkins, Melbourne architects. The Mayor (Alderman T. Walls) opened the building in January, 1928.²

The Tompkins brothers had called tenders in 1926 for the bank and in 1931 for connected flats.³ Until this project, Gibbs Finlay & Moresby had served as the bank's architects in the design of regional offices such as Camperdown, Terang and Sale, throughout the 20th century, while Leonard

Terry had designed the first major Geelong branch in 1861.⁴

The adjoining National Bank Chambers (west of the new bank) contained among others, H C Giles, dentist, a long-term tenant, as was a solicitor, M Kelly, from the 1940s. Laurens P/L, debt collectors, and F G Gargan, a solicitor, were among the other mainly professional occupants in the upper levels.⁵

Description

Greek Revival in detail, the bold rounded-corner form is also typical of many 19th century Renaissance revival examples. This bank differs in the simplification or reinterpretation of period detailing and fenestration, as demanded by greater daylight penetration. Upper windows are vertical slots, with paneled spandrels; lower-level windows fill the Ionic pilastrade with multi-pane metal-framed glazing. The main chamber is typically near double-height, to achieve the monumentality inherent in the style. Stone and cement-render are blended skillfully to achieve a convincing classical character and the saltire-cross, used in balustrading and window mullions, hint at the Green sources.

External Integrity

Generally original, added signs.

Streetscape

Opposite National Mutual Life (c1924), the altered former Solomon's Department Store (1914), Colonial Mutual Chambers (1927) and formerly across from the old Commonwealth Bank and Victoria Hotel (both

1 CTHE open 27.1.28; RB 1927, 373f; RB1928, 378f

2 GA. 28.1.28

3 MUAI

4 Trethowan 'Banks of Victoria'

5 D1930-61

Significance

Architecturally, one of a rare breed in Geelong of the large early 20th century commercial buildings, also seen in Melbourne in greater numbers and larger scale. With its relatively larger scale, goes the amplification of the prevailing, Greek Revival Style into Geelong's best (and only example at this scale).



1902

1981
Terry had designed the first modern bank building
while Leonard
down Torang and 4th, throughout the 1930s
effects in the design of various offices and
Gibbs Fairley & Monrosey had worked in the
bank and in 1931 for connect a bank building
The Tompkins brothers and others had been
opened the building
bourne architects. The Maynard Building
in 1928, to the design of the
ing chambers and two spaces. The building
This three-story bank and

The adjoining National Bank Building (Bank) contained among other things, long-term tenement as well as a 1900 Laurens Bldg. both of which were among the other buildings in the upper level of the complex.

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