

K.G. Luke Pty Ltd. electro plate manufacturers factory (part), 26 Queens Parade, Fitzroy North

Heritage overlay: HO327

City of Yarra Property Number: 247665

What is significant?

The former K.G. Luke Pty Ltd. electro plate manufacturers factory complex (part) at 26 Queens Parade, Fitzroy North was created in 1938 for Kenneth G. Luke and has historical associations with K.G. Luke Pty Ltd. (see also 28-58 Queens Pde)

In 1921 Kenneth Luke became a partner in a small metal-spinning and silverware business at Carlton. By 1925 he was its proprietor and an employer of seven. These employees were still with him thirty years later, with 650 others, making an ever-increasing range of products: silverware, stainless-steel surgical equipment, plated goods and glass-washing machines. In 1929 he bought a larger factory in Queen's Parade, Fitzroy (since redeveloped), doubled his staff and introduced new lines. At the outbreak of World War 2 production was again stepped up and Luke became an honorary adviser to the Department of Supply and Shipping. Luke went on to achieve many major public roles. In 1938-55 he was president of the Carlton Football Club. A delegate (from 1935) to the Victorian Football League, he was its vice-president (1946-55) and president (1956-71). With post-war growth generating record crowds, he consolidated central administration and professionalised the game for players.

The place has a fair integrity to its creation date.

Fabric from the creation date at the K.G. Luke Pty Ltd. electro plate manufacturers factory, former (part) is locally significant within the City of Yarra, compared to other similar places from a similar era.

How is it significant?

The K.G. Luke Pty Ltd. electro plate manufacturers factory, former (part) at 26 Queens Parade, Fitzroy North is historically and architecturally significant to the locality of Fitzroy North and the City of Yarra.

Why is it significant?

The K.G. Luke Pty Ltd. electro plate manufacturers factory, former (part) is significant as:

'An unusual large 'Art Deco' (or Moderne style) factory/warehouse that has a very intact façade of architectural merit especially in its parapet profile' (part 26-58, bricks painted).

This (factory) was co-located on the spur railway line through the Edinburgh Gardens and the Queens Pde 'Fitzroy' rail station which was a lucrative goods railway line from 1891 to 1980, serving this and other interwar industries nearby' (Wight 2001).

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The building is closely associated with the nationally known (Sir) KG Luke and his highly successful business enterprise as well as his sporting links, both local and national.

References:

Municipal rate books:

VPRS 4301/P/0001

City of Fitzroy / Central Ward

Rate year/Rate no./Occupier/Owner/Description /NAV

1944/45; 4288; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, 30 Queen's Parade; 26-42 Queen's Parade, Brick Factory, ; 530

1940-41; 4290; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, manufactures; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, 30 Queen's Parade; 26-42 Queen's Parade, Brick Factory, ; 530

1939/40; 4292; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, manufactures; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, 30 Queen's Parade; 26-42 Queen's Parade, Brick Factory, ; 530

1938/39; 4293; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, manufactures; K.G. Luke Pty Ltd, 30 Queen's Parade; 26-42 Queen's Parade, Brick Factory, ; 530

1937/38; 4294; Luke Kenneth, Manufacturer, D. Carle St, Brunswick; Luke K G Pty Ltd.; 30-42 Brick Factory; 380

4295; Luke Kenneth, Manufacturer, ; Luke K G Pty Ltd.; 26 Queen's parade, Brick House 6 rms, Land 19.7 x 100; 70

1936/37; 4293; McLennan Mary to Luke Kenneth; McLennan Est. to Luke K G Pty Ltd; Land 54 x 200; 27

4294; Luke Kenneth, Manufacturer, De. Carle St, Brunswick; Luke K G; 30 Queen's Parade, Brick Factory ; 170

4295; Bird Thomas Alfred and Tait Archibald John, iron merchants crossed out; Bird and Tait O/O to Luke K. G. Pty Ltd; 26 Queen's Parade, Brick House 6 rms, land 19.7 x 100; 70

Melbourne or Victorian directories:

North Side

1944/45; 26-44 Luke K G., Py Ltd elect plt mnfrs

1940; 26-42 Luke K G., Py Ltd elect plt mnfrs

1935; 26 Storage only

28-34 Luke K G., Py Ltd elect plt mnfrs

1930; 26 Tait and Bird, sht mtl

28-34 Luke K. G., metal spinner

1929; 26 Tait and Bird, sht mtl

28-34 Luke K. G., metal spinner

1928; 26-34 McFarlane Bros. produce merchants

1927; 26-34 McFarlane Bros. produce merchants

1926; 26-34 McFarlane Bros. produce merchants

1925; 26-34 McFarlane Bros. produce merchants.

Other references:

MMBW Detail Plan shows earlier building timber yard, etc

Wight 2001:

'An unusual large 'Art Deco' factory/warehouse that has a very intact façade of architectural merit especially in its parapet profile. This was the K.G.Luke battery manufacturing company (sic) and was co located with the spur railway line thro' the Edinburgh Gardens and the Queens Pde 'Fitzroy' rail station which was a lucrative goods railway line from 1891 to 1980, serving this and other interwar industries nearby.'

<http://carltonfc.com.au/>: 1937 Mr K.G. Luke replaces Mr Dave Crone as President (Carlton Football Club). Club defeats Stanford University in a kicking contest during half time..

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1954 In his 17th year as President of Carlton, K.G. Luke is knighted

1956 Sir Kenneth Luke appointed VFL President. Mr H. Clover becomes President at Carlton.
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A150165b.htm>:

LUKE, SIR KENNETH GEORGE (1896-1971), manufacturer and sporting administrator, was born on 11 November 1896 in Port Melbourne, son of London-born parents George Edwin Luke, labourer, and his wife Minnie Annie, née Bensley. Ken attended South Brunswick State School and Ballarat High School before being apprenticed to an engraver in a silver factory at the age of 14.

Diligent and ambitious, he saved enough from his wages to become a partner (1921) in a small metal-spinning and silverware business at Carlton. By 1925 he was its proprietor and an employer of seven. For them there was no Depression. They were still with him thirty years later—with 650 others—making an ever-increasing range of products: silverware, stainless-steel surgical equipment, plated goods and glass-washing machines. For ten years Luke never knew an evening or a weekend off; he had an alarm clock to wake him at regular intervals at night so that he could keep the machinery going. In 1929 he bought a larger factory in Queen's Parade, Fitzroy, doubled his staff and introduced new lines. At the outbreak of World War II production was again stepped up and Luke became an honorary adviser to the Department of Supply and Shipping. On 11 February 1939 he had married 29-year-old Valda Richardson with Anglican rites at the Church of the Annunciation, St Marylebone, London.

Luke extended his interests after 1945. He had purchased the property, Deepfields, at Romsey as a weekend retreat, but the city-bred industrialist developed a passion for farming and made it a champion Dorset Horn and Poll Hereford stud. In November 1949 the Hollway government appointed him a trustee of the (Royal) Exhibition Building. During his terms as chairman (1954-57 and 1961-63) trade exhibitions came to the fore, the stadium annexe was constructed for the 1956 Olympic Games, unwanted tenants were removed, and a new western annexe was built for an international trade fair in 1963. Luke had founded (1952) the White Ensign Club for sailors. He became a notable supporter of many other charitable causes. In the 1950s and 1960s he travelled abroad to keep abreast of manufacturing trends, such as automation. By then a millionaire, he still maintained a craftsman's as well as a proprietor's eye over the workings of his plants. K. G. Luke (Australasia) Ltd was registered as a public company in 1953.

A cricketer, motorcyclist and yachtsman in his youth, Luke also enjoyed racing and owned the successful 'FF' horses, with names like Fighting Force and Feeling Fine. In his view, sport bred character. He was best known, however, for his involvement with Australian Rules football. In 1938-55 he was president of the Carlton Football Club. A delegate (from 1935) to the Victorian Football League, he was its vice-president (1946-55) and president (1956-71). With post-war growth generating record crowds, he consolidated central administration and professionalized the game for players. In 1962 the V.F.L. bought land at Waverley for a new ground, which Luke envisaged as an alternative to the Melbourne Cricket Ground for football finals. V.F.L. Park, his legacy, opened in 1970.

'KG', as he was known, was a self-made man, hard-working and disciplined, but also far-sighted, courteous and even-tempered. The range of his interests and the number of his involvements was remarkable—he believed that a busy man could always take on another job. He was a councillor of the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria and a member of at least fourteen clubs, including the Savage, the Victoria Racing and the Melbourne Cricket clubs. Luke was appointed C.M.G. in 1954 and knighted in 1962. Survived by his wife and daughter, Sir Kenneth died on 13 June 1971 at his Hawthorn home and was cremated. By that time K. G. Luke Group Industries Ltd, with twelve subsidiaries, had sales of \$17.2 million and an annual profit of nearly \$3 million. Luke's estate was sworn for probate at \$412,156. A stand at Waverley Park is named after him and a portrait by Paul Fitzgerald is held by the Australian Football League.

Select Bibliography

K. Dunstan, *The Paddock that Grew* (Melb, 1974); D. Dunstan, *Victorian Icon* (Melb, 1995); *Herald* (Melbourne), 26 Nov 1955, 13 June 1964; *Age* (Melbourne), 14 June 1971; *Australian*,

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14 June 1971; Sydney Morning Herald, 14 June 1971; Australian Football League Archives, Jolimont; Royal Exhibition Building Archives (Museum Victoria, Melbourne). [more].

Author: David Dunstan

Print Publication Details: David Dunstan, 'Luke, Sir Kenneth George (Ken) (1896 - 1971)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 15, Melbourne University Press, 2000, pp 134-135. '