



Geelong Girls High School 385 Ryrie Street

History

According to the official history of the Victorian Education Department, *Vision and Realisation* Volume Two, p.1068, Geelong High School was established in 1910 and initially occupied rooms in the Gordon Technical College. In 1915 a new brick school was built on four acres of land excised from Eastern Park gardens. Alterations to the school commenced in July 1945 but work was delayed due to a materials shortage caused by the Second World War. The new two storey front to the school was completed in 1947. The new building provided extra office space, expanded staff accommodation, a new library and two first floor classrooms. The older central building was gutted by fire in 1965 however the 1940s front of the school escaped damage.

Description

The Geelong Girls High School has as its main Ryrie Street frontage a double storey building with a reasonably intact symmetrical facade. The rendered facade is divided into three main forms with wings flanking a central recessed bay. It features typical Inter-War details, including large unadorned parapets and double height steel framed windows with small panes. The strong relationship between the massing and the voids created by the windows is characteristic of the period. The windows are separated by double height triangular shaped piers and on the east and west facade they extend up through sculptured parapet details. An administration wing is attached to the front of the eastern end of the facade and the exterior wall of the main building forms the interior wall of the corridor. The newer wing has a strong horizontal emphasis and is similar in form to the main structure, however, it disrupts the symmetrical nature of the facade. Earlier 1915 brick classrooms are attached to the west side of the main building. They feature double hung sash windows with highlights and small panes, cream string courses and a tiled gable roof. This section retains many exterior features despite fire damage resulting in internal alterations.

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Significance

The Geelong Girls High School has architectural and historic significance at a local level. The 1940s wing is an excellent example of institutional architecture in Geelong. The building is reasonably intact and retains its characteristic siting, form and relationship of massing to glazing, as well as a number of Inter-War details on the side facades. The exterior of the 1915 section also retains some original features. The Geelong Girls High School has historical importance having served as a community school since 1910.