



4-12 154-162 Barkly Street

earlier commercial streetscape, plus an altered contemporary on the opposite corner (154).

Significance

Architecturally, a bold and simple (if not fully orchestrated) example of the streamlined Moderne (cf. United Kingdom Hotel, Clifton Hill). Historically, a long-term hotel site in Footscray and presumably the centre for informal and formal social gatherings.

Union Bank, former 184 Barkly Street

History

Commencing during 1928 in a rented Nicholson Street shop (151 Nicholson Street) the Footscray branch of the Union Bank of Australia (like other contemporary banks) felt the need to expand their operations in the

post- Depression recovery period of the mid-1930s.¹ The architect, Walter Butler, had designed most of the company's 20th century buildings and this was no exception. His Collins Street Union Bank design was another contemporary example in the use of prevailing stylistic sources in contrast with the traditionally conservative revival styles of other banks.

In the same year (1937) architects A. & K. Henderson produced a Bank of Australasia branch design, also in Barkly Street (demolished), adopting their usual Georgian Revival bank style and an illustration of the typical styles used by banks. Five years after the merger of the two banking companies, in 1951 (forming the Australian and New Zealand Bank Ltd.) the Union Bank branch closed in deference to its former rival.² A long-term occupier after this date was Alf Greenwood's real estate company³.

1 FFOY p.113; D1935

2 ibid.

3 D1955, R Cocks



4-13 184 Barkly Street

Description

Parapeted and built with two colours of the newly introduced manganese brick, the bank was Moderne among its many conservative contemporaries. Designed as a banking chamber with residence over, the entry to the latter was achieved through an iron gate via a lane to the east of the building. Its facade composition was near symmetrical, had alternating horizontal bands expressed in three-dimensions down to ground-level, and a central tripartite brick fin at the parapet. Contrasting brickwork (subtly) and bas-relief (of one brick thickness) helped achieve these effects; the facade even extending some four metres down either side as a gesture to the overseas Modernist trends which spurned mere facades in favour of three-dimensional forms.

External Integrity

Externally complete but for the joinery to openings (now bronze-anodized aluminium), the building's interior possesses some cornices and finishes. Bronze opening frames (?) replaced (sympathetically) in aluminium, the difference being particularly noticeable at the door. Many signs have been added.

Streetscape

The Brutalist A.N.Z. next door possesses similarly spare box-like lines but dissimilar dominant wall material, while the 1920s block to the west also relates, albeit at a distance.

Significance

Architecturally, advanced among its bank contemporaries in the use of the Moderne style, it is understandably understated compared to other examples of the style (see the nearby Footscray *Mail* building at Barkly Place). Historically, a major public building in the city until the 1950s.

Shops & Residences 199-207 Barkly Street

History