

Shops and Residences, 141-147 Hopkins Street

History

Constructed in 1889-90 for Hopkins Street storekeeper and boom-years councillor, Hugh Morris, these three shops and residences housed few long-term tenants in the next decade.¹ Alfred Ford, a baker, and George Coxhead, a bootmaker, were among them, also Charlotte Rider (148) carried on the photographic arts made famous earlier by another Rider in Williamstown. Ward Symons Studios also operated in the row (147) during the period c1910-45.²

Another long-term occupant was the renowned jeweller, Norman Griffin, who had started at Hopkins Street, in 1923, and moved to number 141 in the period c1925-30. Griffin made the first Footscray Mayoral Chain (Cr. Hanmer) at these premises, in 1936, created at the advent of the new Town Hall. Another of his community roles included a sixteen year term as Parkside Football Club president, begun in 1925. His son, Alan, carried on the jewellery business at 141, in later years.³

Description

An impressive two and three-storey shop and residence trio, ornately ornamented in cement and elevated to a balustraded parapeted roof-line. The centre building is arcaded (dog-toothed and segment-arched) at first-floor level and rises to a third level with a central raised and arched entablature, bearing a shell motif. Below this, the detailing is sparsely but effectively arranged with swags, fluer-de-lis and spandrel rosettes among them. The flanking shops have pediments over each window, balustraded balconette motifs and banded architraves. Ionic order pilasters used here are subservient to the Corinthian order pilaster applied centrally to 143-5. The cement work of 143-5 is unpainted.

External Integrity

Shopfronts have been replaced (sympathetic in plan to the original at 143-7), a cantilever canopy added and the post verandah demolished. Urns at the parapet are gone, as is the balustrading to 147. Signs and sign brackets have been added. Note that most of the missing detail is restorable, given its survival on other parts of the building. Griffin's 141 shopfront no longer expresses his occupation (new aluminium suite).

Streetscape

Adjoins the similar row 135-9 and the Edwardian pair at 131-133 but much of the remaining streetscape has been altered or replaced on this side, until the commencement of Barkly Street.

Significance

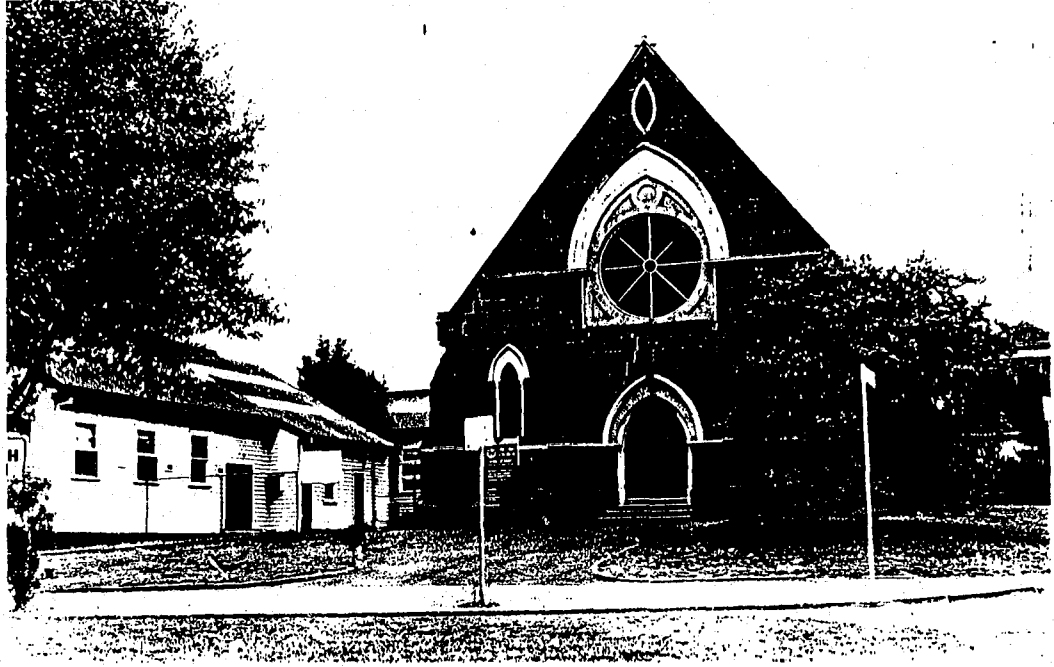
Architecturally, among the few three-storey shop and residence rows in Footscray City and still expressive of its upper-level residential function by the survival of the richly detailed arcade (143-5). As a group, its stepped height emphasizes the symmetry of the design and promotes it as the most distinctive group in the commercial centre.

Wesleyan Church 10A Hyde Street

History

On the Hyde Street reserve (finalized only two years earlier), this stone church was opened in October 1871 by the Revs. J. Bickford, J. Eggleston and R.C. Flockart.⁴ Prior to this, services had been reputedly conducted at a timber building in Napier Street, near the river (c1865). This structure was itself preceded by a tent and, before that, a private (stone) house in Albert Street.⁵ The timber church was moved to the reserve to act as a Sunday School, then located to the south of reserves originally created for a mechanics institute and courthouse but soon to be used for municipal purposes.⁶

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- 1 RB1890.12911f
 - 2 D1895-1955
 - 3 FFOY p.184
 - 4 F.ST.21/12/69; Crown Lands File 1869-V.26596
 - 5 Benson p.412; *The Argus* 3/12/53
 - 6 FFOY Plan c1857.p.15



4 - 67 Wesleyan Church, Hobbs Street



4 - 68 Wesleyan Church, Hobbs Street

The stone church was enlarged and the earlier wooden school at its rear 'removed' in 1888 (probably to Polain's design), in response to a greatly enlarged congregation, the trustees and the 'energetic minister', Rev. E.O. Knee. The timber structure was reborn as 'a handsome and commodious school' cum lecture hall, located beside the church; it was burnt down in 1953. The church itself was enlarged by 36 feet in 'the original Gothic design' and a vestry placed at the rear. The interior had a new reading desk and communion rail, the ceiling was lined in Kauri pine and the new seats were unexpectedly comfortable. At the rear, facing Railway Parade, was the new two-storey verandahed brick parsonage, designed by local architect, C.J. Polain, in 1887, but since altered and finally demolished (1988 by Footscray Council).¹

Morris & McNaughton were the contractors.² A new organ was installed in 1890³.

Description

This church differs slightly from the other three basalt Early English Gothic revival churches in the city, in that

within a giant pointed architrave built from brick. A similar architrave surrounds the door and the bands of red brick taken across the gabled end are also unusual. Unusual attributes may well be the design of Polain in his 1888 extensions and the unusual gabled vestry (rear) is almost certainly his.

External Integrity

The front and side fence (presumed picket) has been removed, the residence demolished and the rose window sheeted over.

Streetscape

Contributory to a valuable civic precinct which includes the municipal offices, school and, across Napier Street, the former National Bank.

Significance

Built of local stone but in an originally conservative design, the church gains distinction only from what is thought to be Polain's 1888 detailing. Otherwise it has



4 - 69 State School, 1912 Hobbs Street (1877 wing from west)

the main nave window is large and circular and is set

long served as a local social gathering place and is a

- 1 *Argus* 7/5/87/14
- 2 *Footscray Independent* 4/2/88-3; MMBW RP6
- 3 *The Independent* 15.2.90