altered.[1] Internally, the bank vault, monogrammed door mat and office remain.

Description

Today the building is a combination of two eras, both far-removed chronologically but nevertheless mutually sympathetic. The dominant feature of the original design remains in the form of the three-arch upper arcade although the parapet from this era has been severely treated. At ground the bank facade is bland but respectful of the tripartite nature of the floor above. Architrave mouldings from the first period are distinctive and those from the second, bland.

External Integrity

Given the changes already outlined, the parapet entablature has been removed, the upper level stucco also.

Streetscape

The focus of a long vista up Ballarat Street, itself a repository of individually notable buildings. Its two-storey form is dominant but its upper arcade suggests some transparency and accentuates the European townscape character of that part of the precinct.

Significance

Architecturally, altered and expressive of two eras but successful as a streetscape termination. Historically, given the two eras, it is expressive of the public building status it once possessed, the boom era speculation of its first form and thus a slender link with the renowned Mr. Roberts.

4-80 *28 Napier Street*

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1   Frances Smith photographs c1927.c1931
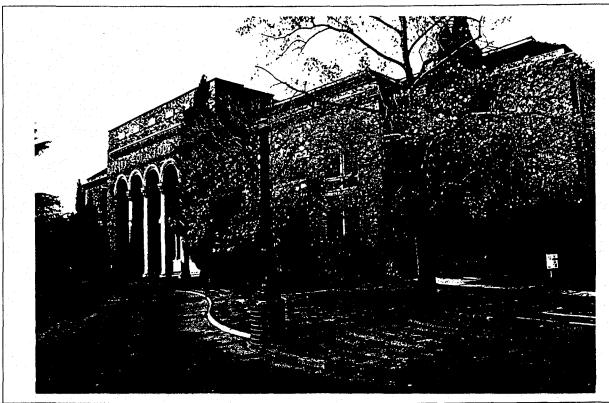
Exchange Hotel
28 Napier Street

History

William Highett, a merchant and pastoralist, purchased this Crown allotment in 1851. However, the site remained vacant until 1876 when the present hotel was opened under licensee Jonas Brown; the baker, David Mitchell, apparently being the owner since the 1850s.[1]

Mitchell remained so through the 1880s along with a succession of hoteliers which included Charles Clack, Sophia and Michael Gleeson.[2] Others were M.A. Kent (c1890), O. Leehane (c1895), Mrs. Annie Conway (c1940), W.H. Booker, Mrs. Charlotte Greenwood (1920s) and Mrs. M. Griggs (1940-50S).[3]

William and David Mitchell opened their nearby Moreland Street bakery (see 98-100 Moreland Street) in 1854, thriving for many years to come, on what was said to be a 'secret recipe for bread-making.' David was early in introducing the eight-hour day (claimed as the first) in his bakery and paid good wages for 'the most competent tradesmen.'[4] Around 1914 Mitchell sold out to a Mr. Stein.[5] Mitchell was mayor 1878-9, 1882-4, and a councillor 1877-1893.[6]

Thomas Kelly, the architect responsible for the Footscray Town Hall (first) and Catholic Church, called tenders for an hotel early in 1876. This may be the one.[7]

4-81 *61 Napier Street*

1   RB1876- 7-
2   RB1883,1454; RB1886,1712
3   d1885-1955
4   FFOY p.119
5   ibid.
6   Lack
7   The *Argus* 25-3-76/3

Description

Set out in the traditional manner, the hotel has long frontages to two streets, a slated and hipped roof and the archetypical splayed corner entrance. It is two-storey and, atop the basalt base course, has cemented walls, sparsely adorned with the then fashionable Italian Renaissance revival detail. Adjoining on the north is an Edwardian parapeted and gabled face-brick, former factory (?), now serving as an extension to the hotel.

External Integrity

One upper level, and ground level openings and detailing, have been altered, also diverse plumbing and signs have been added. The stone plinth has been painted but the cemented facade is a sympathetic colour for the period. The brick structure adjoining has also been painted. An unsympathetic addition has been made to the east (bottle shop and lounge).

Streetscape

A traditional corner building and the start of a period streetscape going north along Whitehall Street.

Significance

Architecturally, a typical conservative Italian Renaissance revival hotel design which possesses fair integrity and a key corner site. Historically, a meeting place since the beginnings of urbanization in Footscray.

Footscray Civic Offices and Council Chambers
61 Napier Street

History

The Governor, Lord Huntingfield, opened, this complex in November 1936 with the Mayor and Mayoress, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hanmer, in attendance, the Mayor being adorned with his new mayoral chain.

Rather than acquire a new site, Council had decided that the new building should replace, in brick, the stone solidity of Thomas Kelly's impressive 1875 town hall

design, but not without some controversy. This was in 1933. Sixty years after the commencement of the old town hall (post office and courthouse), the new building's design was approved and its creator, Joseph Plottel, commissioned. Plottel had a long association with the West (Barnet Glass Co. complex) and had previously designed Williamstown's municipal buildings.[1] The opening souvenir spoke the following words, evidently with an American accent:

'Bold in proportions, the exterior of Footscray's new civic edifice has been treated after the Romanesque manner, the walls being built of specially selected bricks of variegated color (sic), the colors (sic) ranging from browns to red, and buff architectural terra-cotta has been used to the main portio (sic), columns, balconies, arches and elsewhere where accents or color (sic) contrasts were necessary.[2]

Footscray's Norman Griffin (q.v.) had provided the mayoral chain, the Australian Natives Association the two forecourt lamp standards, George Gordon & Son the hardware equipment, the Colonial Gas Association Ltd. all of the kitchen and committee room urns and Bunting & Tickell built the new office furniture as well as renovating the old.[3] Outside suppliers included the Australian Tessellated Tile Company Pty. Ltd., who made the mosaic Footscray Coat of Arms and Wunderlich Ltd. provided the architectural terra-cotta applied to the walls.

Plottel's two-level plan had offices (town clerk, auditor, health inspector, rates, electricity supply and electrical engineer) at ground level and the generously sized engineer's offices at the upper. The rest of this level was taken up with the councillors' chamber and rooms and a large supper room with adjoining reception hall. Queensland Maple, a popular timber veneer for most 1930s interiors, was used extensively here, no more so than in the council chamber, with its high dado paneling and mayoral throne. Another internal focal point was the relocated Roll of Honour, which had been constructed in the old town hall to commemorate the fallen in the First World War.[4]

'... This imposing edifice rises, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the fine old building ... Modern in every detail, it represents a new eager age - just as its bluestone predecessor was symbolic in its day of one of the district's basic industries.[5]

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1   SCO p.4
2   ibid.
3   ibid.
4   SCO p.3
5   ibid.