

Identification and location

Name of place: **United Friendly Societies (UFS) Dispensary**

Other Name UFS Building, ANA Building

Address 042A Albert Street

Footscray

Place Identifier 21332

Heritage Significance Regional

Creation date(s) 1909

Map (Melway) 42 C5

Boundary description The extent of the building and title land, with emphasis on fabric from the main construction period, and the period of use as a dispensary.

Local Government Area City of Maribyrnong

Ownership Type Private

Description

Site Type: Medical Dispensary or chemist

Physical Description

'Footscray's First Fifty Years' provides an architect's illustration of this building heading the chapter on Footscray's Institutions. It shows a red brick two storey building, with bands of cement render at the parapet line of each level and a quarry-faced stone base to the building. Openings on the ground level were arched, with coloured top lights, and the main entry was through a broad archway in the Romanesque Revival manner. Upper level openings had a flat arch form and were grouped as timber framed casements, with coloured glass top lights. An open upper level terrace is shown over the entry. Each parapet level has a scalloped profile. The side yard is shown fence in a capped corrugated iron form with mature trees growing there as well as in the street: perhaps and idealised view { FFFY: 100}.

As in the above etching the buildings is composed in three-dimensions on a prominent corner site. It is a two-storey Edwardian Freestyle building clad with red brick and horizontal bands of smooth render and roofed with slates with unglazed terra-cotta decorative ridging. The hipped and gabled roofline is enclosed by a parapet which follows one major roof form as a gabled parapet or the faceted form of the other main room bay at the corner. The parapet form is scalloped in a distinctive manner and accommodates the balcony over the entry.

Condition

Externally good (partially disturbed, well preserved).

Integrity

Externally substantially intact/some intrusions. Signs have been added, openings have been altered in detail, and the balcony enclosed.

Context

Now isolated on the fringe of more recent commercial development and surrounded by car parks and busy roads.

Threats:

Increasing development pressure, unrelated environments.

History

The foundation stone was laid in by Edwin Lee 22 May 1909: the architect was FW Thomas of Prahran and the builders Thackwray Bros. Then it was a partly erected structure with bunting draped across the site and a large group of Friendly Society folk, including Edwin Lee, LG Keper, P Fraser, W Willis, and J Greenwood, looked on with expectation { 'The Advertiser'}. The cost of the new building was thought to be around £3000.

'The Advertiser' gave the opening of this building its front page in October 1909. The report outlined the history of the friendly society movement as starting at Footscray in 1881 under John Hood who achieved his aims of opening a UFS dispensary in Nicholson St for nine affiliated friendly societies and 790 members in 1884. The lodges included: Yarraville IOOF, Court Rising Star AOF, Ivy Lodge UAOD, Footscray PAFS, Havelock Tent IOR, Rose of Yarraville GUUOF, and the Footscray OSA { FFFY: 101}. The new UFS dispensary had been launched at a meeting called by the Yarraville IOOF via secretary John Porter. Other UFS pioneers were Edwin Lee, LG Keper, P Fraser, W Willis, and J Greenwood.

By 1909 the founder, Hood, was dead but the number of affiliated societies or lodges at Footscray had grown to 27 and the membership 4296. This rapid growth had meant that the dispensary building had been outgrown and the new structure took its place, boasting the 'last word' among buildings of its type, with its equipment, convenience and sanitation, and a model for the future. It was described as 'absolutely the finest specimen of a modern dispensary building to be found in or around Melbourne.

The rooms were described in turn starting with the 18'x30' 'splendid waiting room - airy and bright with a dado of pale blue Mitcham tiles- 'delightfully cool looking and comfortable'. All water used by the dispensers was passed through high pressure filters while along side the 18'x28' dispensing room was a laboratory and, beside that, a laboratory for bulk storage and

breaking down of medicines. This room had vitrified floor tiles, hot and cold running water and all the latest equipment for bottle cleaning. Upstairs was a meeting room (18' x 30') with retiring rooms and a balcony adjoining. There was also private quarters (7 rooms) for the dispenser.

A grand opening reception was held in St Johns hall after inspection of the building, attended by, among others, the mayor of Glebe (Cr Cole) who was past president of the Sydney UFS, and the president of the local UFS, Bro A Crichton. Cole was able to dispel the rumour during his speech that Friendly Societies used inferior and impure drugs. He said this practice would be counter productive, with members staying on sick benefits for longer than needed and the drugs used being wasted. Part of this high level of service was the dispensary building- it had to be good. In Sydney they were supplying members with measure glasses, throat brushes, etc. to ensure the best result. The government in NSW had also aided in supporting needy members when their cover fell short- he understood that no such practice was evident in Victoria.

Another pioneer of the Footscray UFS was John Lomax, a member of the first committee to conduct the affairs of the society and performed the role of treasurer. Lomax was celebrated for this role in the late 1950s when his family was still represented in the Footscray area { FFOY }.

These friendly societies and their dispensaries were invaluable to working men and women in the Footscray region to alleviate the affects of long hard working days among noxious industries and provide some guarantee against sickness, injury and consequent destitution.

In later years it was associated with the Australian Natives Association.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme	Developing local, regional and national economies	
PAHT Subtheme	Providing medical and dental services	Local Theme(s) Establishing services

Cultural Significance

The United Friendly Societies Dispensary is significant to the Western region because:

- it is the region's most prominent reminder of the friendly societies and their dispensaries which, when it was built, were invaluable to working men and women in the region to alleviate the affects of long hard working days among noxious industries and provide some guarantee against sickness, injury and consequent destitution (Criterion A4, D2);
- its creation involved some of the area's prominent pioneers and personalities (Criterion H1);
- it was claimed at the time of opening as `absolutely the finest specimen of a modern dispensary building to be found in or around Melbourne' (Criterion E1);
- it is among the most architecturally sophisticated Edwardian-era commercial building in the

City of Maribyrnong (Criterion F1); and
- it is an externally well preserved and successfully designed example of the Edwardian Freestyle which is also uncommon as a style in the metropolitan area (Criterion B2, F1) .

Comparative Examples:

Edwardian-era commercial or public buildings in the City of Maribyrnong are typically shopfronts and facades rather than three-dimensional examples such as this one, a trait inherent in Freestyle architecture. Other examples include Barkly Hotel, Footscray; The State Bank at 13 Ballarat St, Mrs Gill's tea rooms, 95 Stephen St, and the north-west corner of Ballarat and Anderson Streets, all in Yarraville. Another Edwardian-era dispensary is at Newport but has been altered.

Recommendations

Heritage Victoria Register

Register of the National Estate:

National Trust Register:

Other Heritage Listings

Planning Scheme Protection

External Paint Controls Apply?:

Internal Alteration Controls Apply?:

Tree Controls Apply?:

Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Act:

Are there Outbuildings or Fences not Exempt?:

Prohibited Uses may be Permitted

Recommendations:

Conserve and enhance the identified significant fabric, with emphasis on fabric from the early 1900s and its period as a dispensary, with enhancement including reinstatement of missing original elements, colours and finishes (for example chemically removing the paint from the brickwork and use of the architect's perspective to restore missing ground level elements and reinstate balcony).

Conserve the public view of the significant fabric.

Promote the continuing original use of the place and its amenity.

Continue historical research into the place and provide public access to the findings.

Assess the interior for significant elements.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

A4 Importance for their association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the

Historic Places - Selected non-industrial significant places in former City of Footscray - not in the Planning Scheme

<i>human occupation and evolution of the nation, state, region or community.</i>
region's most prominent reminder of the friendly societies and their dispensaries which, when it was built, were invaluable to working men and women in the region to alleviate the affects of long hard working days among noxious industries and provide some guarantee against sickness, injury and consequent destitution
<i>B2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practiced, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest.</i>
it is an externally well preserved and example of the Edwardian Freestyle which is also uncommon as a style in the metropolitan area
<i>D2 Importance in demonstrating the principle characteristics of the range of human activities in the Australian environment (including way of life, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique).</i>
Example of type- friendly societies and their dispensaries
<i>E1 Importance for a community for aesthetic characteristics held in high esteem or otherwise valued by the community.</i>
claimed at the time of opening as 'absolutely the finest specimen of a modern dispensary building to be found in or around Melbourne'
<i>F1 Importance for their technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.</i>
among the most architecturally sophisticated Edwardian-era commercial building in the City of Maribyrnong, comparing with the Yarraville SSB as perhaps the only superior example. It is an externally well preserved and successfully designed example of the Edwardian Freestyle

historical significance architectural significance social significance scientific significanc

Documentation

References

Butler, G, 1989, City of Footscray Urban Conservation Study: recommended further site evaluation;
'The Advertiser' 23.10.1909, 29.5.1909;
'Footscray's First Fifty Years' (FFFT);
Lack, 1991: 117, 124;
Barnard, J 2000. Maribyrnong Heritage Review Volume 2 Environmental History City of Maribyrnong..

Data recording

Assessed By:
Assessed Date: