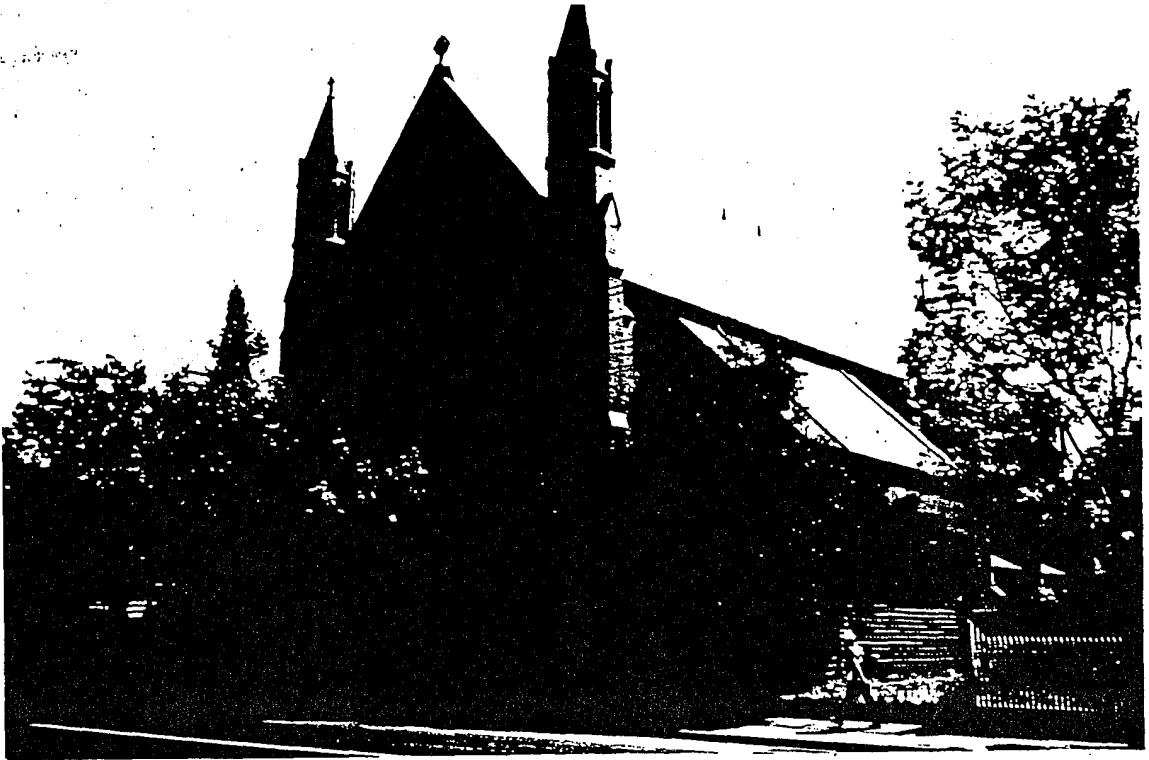

St. Albans Anglican Church and Hall, 583 Orrong Road, Armadale



History and Description

This brick suburban church was built on the corner of Orrong Road and Wynnstay Avenue in 1898-99 from the designs of the architects, Inskip and Butler.²⁸⁹ It was opened on St. Albans Day, 17 June 1899.²⁹⁰ A church hall was shown on the site by 1901 and was most probably designed by the same architects.²⁹¹ Additions made to St. Albans in 1935 were designed by W. R. Butler. The builder was Harry Roberts.²⁹²

The Church building has been described as 'Victoria's first church in the Arts and Crafts mode and perhaps the first really up to date church built in the colony for thirty years'.²⁹³ The Arts and Crafts influence is exemplified in the use of polychrome brickwork plus coloured render in the upper clerestory. The triple arched windows in each bay section are simple in design with diamond leadlight.

The building says Prof. Lewis, is notable for its striking facade incorporating a large five-light lancet window, flanking octagonal turrets and arch, with brickwork in diaper pattern. The roof ridge remains unbroken from east to west and has a distinctive brick interior. It is notable for the stained glass in its east window, for its

289. *BEMJ*, 30 July 1898, p.4).

290. Jill McDougall, *Church Community & Change*, p.40.

291. MMBW House Cover No. 22919.

292. Contract drawing W. R. Butler, Additions St. Alban's Church, Armadale, Picture Collection, SLV.

293. Miles Lewis (ed.), *Victorian Churches*, p. 80.

striking diaper patterned brick interior, and the church's joinery, furniture and fittings including choir stalls, reredos, wrought iron communion rails and encaustic tiles in the chancel.²⁹⁴

An addition to the nave on the northern side has an imitation brick wall. On the southern side, the nave has been widened in additions which were executed at the same time as the tower. These alterations are sympathetic to the original design and are the work of Winstan Widdows whose other ecclesiastical designs at this time include the former Methodist church in Sale (now occupied by the Assembly of God Church) which is an innovative Modern design.

To the rear of the church, the church hall is a simple weatherboard building with broad gabled roof and pairs of pointed arched windows. A skillion addition is attached to the vestry at the rear.

In December 1986 there were alterations to the Church Hall costing £15,000.²⁹⁵ Today, the main body of the church is leased to a community theatre (Abbey Theatre Co.) and the congregation now gathers in the vestry which has been converted into a modern worship area.²⁹⁶



Significance

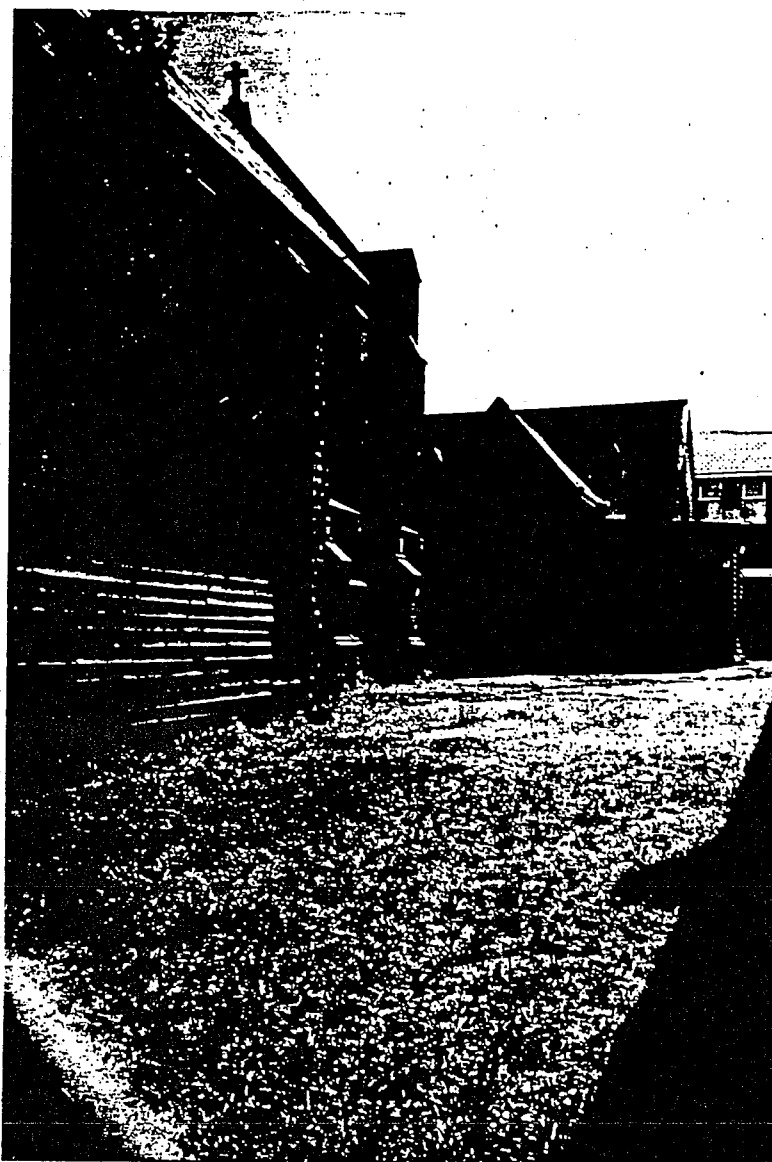
This 1898-99 brick town church has architectural significance as Victoria's first church in the Arts and Crafts made designed by the architects Inskip and Butler, who specialised in this style. It is notable for the stained glass in its east window, for its striking diaper patterned brick interior, and the church's joinery, furniture and fittings

294. Lewis, p.80.

295. City of Prahran Valuer's records, Prahran Ward Book 16P.

296. McDougall, p. 41.

including choir stalls, reredos, wrought iron communion rails and encaustic tiles in the chancel.



Sources

Building, Engineering and Mining Journal (BEMJ) 30 July, 1898.

City of Prahran Valuer's records, Prahran Ward.

Contract drawings W. R. Butler, Picture Collection, SLV.

Lewis, Miles (ed.), *Victorian Churches*, 1992.

McDougall, Jill, *Church, Community and Change*, Religion in Prahran 1836-1984, 1985.

MMBW House Cover. No. 22919.

Analysis & Recommendations

It is recommended that this property be retained at A1 level.