
Former Congregational Church, 66-72 Peel Street, Windsor



History and Description

This former church building was constructed in 1858 as the second United Methodist Free Church in the Melbourne Circuit. The designing architect is unknown.³³⁷ An earlier galvanised iron building on the site was originally owned by the Independent (or Congregational) church, who sold it to the United Free Methodists. From about 1866, however, the majority of the congregation in the 1858 building, together with the Rev. Middleton, joined the Congregational Church.³³⁸

The only known surviving United Free Methodist Church in Victoria, this building has a pillastered stuccoed facade distinguished by the use of Greek Revival parapet

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

338. Jill McDougall, *Church, Community and Change*, p.18.

block composition in place of the more usual pediment. The facade is largely intact, but the Georgian windows have been replaced. The porch may date from the period when the Congregationalists took over the building.³³⁹

In 1977, the Peel Street Church became part of the Uniting Church with St. Georges (ex-Presbyterian) in Chapel Street and the Hotham Street Church (ex-Methodist) to form the East St. Kilda Parish. The final service in the Peel Street Church was held in December 1979. The former Church building was sold by auction in May 1980 and has since been converted into a private residence. The original ceiling has been restored, the roof replaced, and mezzanine added at the rear.³⁴⁰

Significance

This former 1858 Church has state historical significance as the only known surviving United Methodist Free Church in Victoria. It has architectural significance as a very early church in the district, with distinctive features including the Greek Revival parapet and round arched windows. The architectural integrity of the church has been reduced due to alterations to the windows (formerly Georgian) and additions to the rear and probable internal alterations relating to its conversions to residential use.

Sources

Lewis, Miles, (ed.), *Victorian Churches*, 1991.

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

Analysis & Recommendations

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

339. Miles Lewis, p. 80.

340. Jill McDougall, p.18.