

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name Ewing Memorial Hall, former Sunday school/hall
Address 32A Manning Road MALVERN EAST 54 Burke Road MALVERN EAST **Significance Level** A2
Place Type Church Hall
Citation Date 2010
Assessment by Context P/L



Recommended VHR - HI - PS Yes
Heritage Protection

History and Historical Context

A background history of the site

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

The first church in Burke Road, Malvern East, dated from c1890, it was converted to use as a Sunday School building in 1911 when a new church was completed across the road. From as early as 1917 the limitations of the building were recognised and "in annual reports, Sunday School Superintendents drew attention to the crowded conditions that teachers and students were forced to work under." However, economic conditions seem to have prevented the church from improving or replacing the hall. It was not until 1934 that approval was granted by the Board of Management for a building appeal to be opened. It was decided that no work would be undertaken until at least £2,000 had been raised. Progress was slow though and by 1938 only £1680 had been gathered. Despite the shortfall, the church decided to proceed. Architect Keith Reid (a former student of the Sunday school) was appointed and tenders were called to construct the building. The winning tender to construct the building came from Archer Brothers, the total cost of construction was £5830.

Keith Reid Architect

Keith Reid was born in 1906 and was appointed as an Associate of the RVIA in 1932. From 1933 to 1939 he practised with John A. Pearson before practising alone from 1939-41. From 1941-43 he worked for the Commonwealth Department of Munitions and from 1943-45 he served in the Army Engineers. On leaving the army at the conclusion of World War II, Reid continued his own practice before M. Murray Foster joined him as a partner in 1949-51. In 1967, Keith's son, John joined the firm as a partner and in 1978, his son Graham also joined, forming the practice Reid Partnership Pty Ltd.

History of the Ewing Memorial Hall

Following the decision to commence construction, the former hall was demolished. The foundation stone for the Ewing Memorial Hall was laid on 29 July 1939 by the Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the Right Rev. Dr John Mackenzie. The building was completed on 25 November 1939 and dedicated by the Right Rev. John Flynn (Flynn of the Inland). By the time of its completion, the Church had succeeded in raising £2242 towards the cost of construction, the outstanding money (by this stage costs had increased slightly) was borrowed from the State Savings Bank.

The Board of Management were pleased with the building and approved a special minute to record their thanks to Mr Keith Reid and Archer Brothers. Following its completion, the building was put to use as a recreation centre by members of the armed forces stationed in the area. Blueprints for the design of the Hall are available from the Stonnington Local History Service, MH 14989.

Sources

The *Argus*, 31 July 1939.

Jenkin, Ian. *In Search of his Kingdom: the Ongoing Mission of Ewing Memorial Church*, East Malvern, Ewing Memorial Church, 1991.

Stonnington Local History Service, MH 14989, Building Plan Ref. 4,4660,02500.

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

Themes from Stonnington Thematic Environmental History:

10.2 Worshipping

Description

Physical Description

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Ewing Memorial Presbyterian Sunday School of 1939 at 54 Burke Road, Malvern East, is a large deep cream-brick building with a varicoloured tile roof. The complex massing of this C-shaped building suggests the multiple uses inside, while allowing the scale to be in keeping with the suburban development around it. Most of the frontage on Burke Road is single-storey in height. The roof is a long transverse gable with several gable-front bays projecting from it. There are two at the north end: the end wall of a hall space lit by a pointed window with Gothic tracery, and a gabled porch set in beside it. The entrance has a low surbase arch. At the south end of the facade rises a two-storey gable suggestive of a church front. The central entrance and tracery window above it are set into heavy brick buttressing with crenulations at the top, giving the impression of a truncated tower.

The rear wing is reached either via ornate wrought iron gates at the north end of the Burke Street elevation, or via a rear drive off Manning Road. This wing has a jerkin-head gable.

There is a flat-roof wing of 1975 at the very rear, which is barely visible from the public domain. There is also a modern toilet block and a modern entry to the Kindergarten wing at the rear of the site. No other alterations to the 1939 building fabric were noted.

Comparative Analysis

Ewing Memorial Presbyterian Sunday School is one of the final works created by the partnership Reid & Pearson (1933-39), before Keith Reid went into sole practice. One of the best known buildings of the joint practice is the Macpherson Building of 1935-6, 546-566 Collins Street, Melbourne, designed in collaboration with Stuart Calder (VHR H0942). While Reid was a prolific designer of religious buildings in sole practice, predominantly Presbyterian, only one other religious building by the partnership has been identified. This is the Footscray Presbyterian Church Hall of 1937 at 300 Barkly Street, Footscray (part of HO30, Maribyrnong City). This is a much more modest building, both in size and detailing. The walls are a dark brown brick with cement dressings and a tiled roof. Visual focus is created by a gabled and buttressed entrance to the front building, with the front door recessed beneath a lancet arch. Of the two, the Ewing Memorial Hall is by far more interesting in massing and detailing.

The Hall is rather conservative in design, though executed in the fashionable cream bricks of the day. This sort of restrained Gothic was popular for seminary or college chapels in the 1930s, like the Scotch College Chapel, Hawthorn (City of Boroondara), of 1933-36 by Scarborough, Robertson & Love. The two buildings are similar in their brickwork and roof tiles, though the Chapel is more striking and powerful with its stripped-back massing. In contrast, the Ewing Memorial Hall also has skilful massing, but is more domestic in scale, in keeping with the site.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Ewing Memorial Presbyterian Sunday School (former Sunday School) at 54 Burke Road and 32A Manning Road, Malvern East, to the extent of the 1939 fabric. The Sunday School was designed by architect Keith Reid, who had attended Sunday School at Ewing Memorial Church as a child.

The later works at the rear of the site, including the 1975 flat-roofed wing, the entry to the kindergarten wing and the toilet block, are not of heritage significance.

How is it significant?

Ewing Memorial Presbyterian Sunday School is of local historic, social and architectural significance to the City of

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Historically and socially, as a centre of community activity since its construction in 1939. To the present day, it houses a kindergarten and other community groups. (Criterion G)

Architecturally, as a conservative Gothic building, similar to collegiate and seminary chapels of its day, with expert massing and high-quality detailing. It is also of interest as one of Keith Reid's early religious designs, when he was still in the practice Reid & Pearson. Reid went on to be a prolific designer for the Presbyterian church. (Criteria D & H)

Recommendations 2010

External Paint Controls

No

Internal Alteration Controls

No

Tree Controls

No

Fences & Outbuildings

No

Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted

No

Incorporated Plan

None specified

Aboriginal Heritage Place

No

This information is provided for guidance only and does not supersede official documents, particularly the planning scheme. Planning controls should be verified by checking the relevant municipal planning scheme.