

major contributor to a valuable civic precinct which draws on mainly Medieval styles for its architecture.

Footscray State School 10B Hyde Street

History

In 1873 the Bunbury Street Anglican reserve (corner Hyde Street) was offered for use as a public school site by the trustees but their offer was overruled in the following year by the Anglican Dean. Instead, the Education Department investigated the present site, then located between the Hyde Street 'public reserve' (corner Parker Street) and the Wesleyan reserve. This coincided with a request from the local Board of Advice for school accommodation for at least 1000 students. Ten tenders were received in late 1876 for the school's construction, ranging from £3433 (Thomas Corley) to the successful £2598 (William Spence & Co.). Local builders, Gross & Hopkins, tendered a little over £2900 and Pearson & Downie, £3217.¹ However, the new school only held 400 when completed in mid-1877 and enrollment was already at 550 (typically average attendances were well short of this at 357).

Extensions to hold 150 students were approved in 1878, close to the occasion when the school bell fell from its lofty heights, fortunately injuring no one. (It fell down again seven years later). Two years later extra accommodation was leased from the mechanics institute hall attached to the nearby Town Hall and the schoolyard itself was fenced in 1881. Predictably the cry for more rooms continued for many years, just as at the Yarraville government school where total reconstruction was needed at the end of the land boom period (q.v.). To replace the apparently unsatisfactory mechanics hall, the Wesleyan Sunday School (now rebuilt) was leased in 1891, ten years after head teacher Osbaldeston's request to do so. A letter to the *Footscray Advertiser* in 1886 claimed that for the last two years £1500 (actually £1350) had been included in Public Works estimates to enlarge the school.

The design ... is one of the most beautiful that the Government architects have ever put forth. There is included a spire that would be an ornament to the place, and would command the admiration of all visitors

coming up the river, and the materials being bluestone would give employment to our fellow townsmen.

Tenders called had exceeded the estimates because of the uncertain foundations. The writer called for public subscription.² Fresh tenders were accepted, within four months, from W.D. White of Footscray, to almost achieve the above description by 1887.³

As at Yarraville, the accommodation matter reached another crisis point early this century, when a deputation was sent to the Minister. By 1907 the old police station site, across Parker Street, had been acquired and a new infant school was underway after a tender for 3956 pounds was accepted in 1909: it opened in July 1910. As a response to fickle foundations, the new school (now gone) was timber-framed and clad with expanded metal sheeting. It was plastered over in a manner not far removed from the contemporary Queen Anne style timber villas around Footscray, except for the extra reinforcing provided by the metal lathing.⁴ The design was Medieval domestic revival, with half-timbered walls and overhanging gables (since demolished).⁵

In spite of the improvements made, an article in *The Age* described the school as the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' in 1922 (referring to the 18th century Calcutta cell block). This inspired further remodeling estimates in 1924, including two new classrooms at the main building (£7205) and a new senior school for 200, with science rooms (£8415).⁶ After more accusations of 'death trap school' in *The Herald* of 1925, Lord Somers (governor) opened a revitalized school in November 1926.⁷

William Dargie, a Footscray native and later a renowned painter, taught as a temporary assistant, in 1934, at this school (along with Errol Street, North Melbourne and Williamstown North) where his teaching style won some praise. It is probable that he also was a student at the school.

Description

Following the secular path of the ecclesiastical style used next door on the Wesleyan Church, the school was elevated in basalt Tudor with gabled bays and the makings for a fine spire such as that used on the Geelong Road school. Best viewed from the rear of the

- 1 PRO VPRS795/1181.1 1873-
- 2 ibid. includes *Footscray Advertiser* 13 S.86
- 3 MCAI 10/12/86
- 4 Burchell p.167
- 5 Burchell p.169
- 6 PRO loc. cit.
- 7 ibid.

site, the first wing was T-shape in plan with a transept at the north end. Later additions in a similar basalt Tudor style at the other end, complete the symmetry of the present building. The 1887 wing fronts Hyde Street and presents the public face of the complex. Rather than the more complex forms used in the Geelong Road 1882 wing, the elevations employed here are simply massed and relate well to the connecting older wing. The combination of two main building stages is skillfully concealed in the picturesque arrangement of the massing. To the south, the Junior school's red brick Eastern Bungalow form is similar to that used in Geelong Road but additions conceal the Edwardian form. A mature elm tree at the north east of the site is notable.

External Integrity

Boundary (picket) fence replaced, and many windows enlarged in a very discrete manner by lowering the sills (see Hyde Street elevation).

Streetscape

Part of a valuable civic precinct and shares the Medieval basalt character of the church.

Significance

Built in local basalt the school complex (1877-87) has been designed in a successful and picturesque Tudor revival manner seen at its best in schools in Footscray and Williamstown. It is also part of a valuable civic precinct which relies in part on the Medieval character basalt architecture.

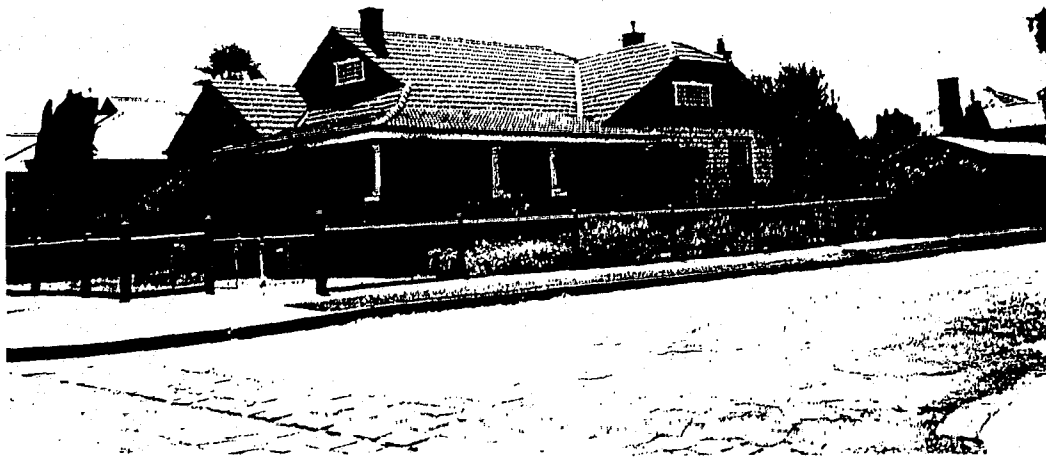
**House
12 Lincoln Street**

History

Alex Carter owned and occupied this house after its construction, in 1932, until at least the mid-1950s.¹

Description

Immaculately maintained, the house exhibits most of the earlier Bungalow style attributes, with its overlapping roof gables, dark stained gable shingles and



4 - 72 12 Lincoln Street

1 MMBW CF186739; D1935-55



4 - 70 State School 1912, Hobbs Street (1887 wing on Hyde Street)



4 - 71 Junior State School 1912, Hobbs Street (1910-)