

Name	Former Hawthorn Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club	Property No	
Address	605-607 Glenferrie Road Hawthorn	Survey Date	6 April 2011
Place Type	Hall and Shop	Grading	Significant
Date of Construction	1920		
Builder	Roy W Le Leu	Architect	Richardson and Wood
		Extent of Overlay To the extent of the original allotment (the site associated with 609 Glenferrie Road should be excluded).	

Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

History

The land occupied by the former Returned Soldier and Sailors Club was previously occupied by the premises of coachbuilder S A Wiedemann, later the A A Motor Garage. In 1902, however, the MMBW Detail Plan showed the site and that of the adjoining premises today numbered 609-615 Glenferrie Road to be vacant and traversed by the 'Hawthorn drain' a deep storm water channel which still today runs beneath the adjoining shop premises at 609 Glenferrie Road. In 1920, it was determined to construct clubrooms for the use of returned soldiers and sailors of World War I. On Saturday 15 May, the foundation stone – visible today in the Glenferrie Road facade – was laid by Lieutenant-General Harry Chauvel. The account in the *Argus* on the following Monday (17th May 1920) described the proposed building as consisting of a billiard-room, card room, several living rooms and a canteen. Interestingly, the account stated that 'when the building is no longer necessary, the proceeds realized on the sale will be devoted to establishing scholarships for soldiers' children.'¹ In March 1921 a 'Remembrance Carnival' was held at the Glenferrie Cricket Ground to raise funds to complete the building and to establish a number of scholarships, indicating the building was not finished nearly a year after the laying of the stone.² When completed the building incorporated a retail shop with a dwelling behind on the north bay of the main façade. This shop-residence was initially leased by a confectioner.

The building continued to be utilized as a social venue operated by the Hawthorn Returned Services League up until at least the early 1970s.³ In 1979, the newly established Hawthorn Artists' Society were looking for premises to work and exhibit from and the then City of Hawthorn offered the use of the former Club Billiard Room as a studio space. Today the building is shared by the Society with the Hawthorn Band occupying the former Clubroom behind. A café continues to occupy the shop front and dwelling to the bay north of the main entrance.

(Lovell Chen, 2011)

Description & Integrity

605-607 Glenferrie Road is a brick and render single-storey former RSL Hall and shop building, located at the corner of Glenferrie and Manningtree Road. The hall and café shopfront (605 -607 Glenferrie Road) read as a single unit, though the shop front is painted in a contrasting colour.

The façade of 605-607 Glenferrie Road is of rendered brick, with wide-jointed rustication not dissimilar to that of 781 Glenferrie Road (q.v.) framing the central arched entrance and forming the piers or pylons that enclose the building. The two recessed bays either side of the entrance are of smooth render, with that to the north incorporating a modern shopfront. There are original terracotta ventilators set in the rendered plinth. The south bay adjoining Manningtree Road incorporates three timber-framed double hung sash windows. The upper sashes comprise six panes with plate glass to the lower sashes. All glazing is opaque ripple glass. An air conditioner has been installed in the upper sash close to the centre entrance. The basalt foundation stone with incised letters is set beneath the centre window. The north bay comprises a modern anodised aluminium framed fully glazed shop front. The stallboard beneath the shop window is of spalling painted (modern) cement render. A retractable canvas sunblind obscures the upper portion of the shop window. Both the shop window and the sash windows are set below a shallow shelf supported on small rendered brackets.

The central entrance is recessed with the rustication pulled back into the opening and framing the arch-headed painted timber entrance doors. The emblem of the Returned & Services League is affixed to the keystone of the entrance archway. The entry is of terrazzo and there are two shallow steps to the entry doors. The entry doors are of panelled painted wood with multi-paned glazing to the uppers, which when the doors are closed form the iris of an eye. The door is studded with decorative nails and a small hinged panel provides a space for notices. The door hinges, handle and security seal have been replaced in recent years. The glazing to the entrance doors is not the original which is likely to have been bevelled. The inner vestibule doors, which are of the same design, retain their bevelled glazing and Art Nouveau door furniture, albeit over-painted. The parapet is curved on either side of the central bay which is higher and terminates in a rectangular framed panel surmounted by a timber flagpole. Arch-headed framed panels infill the parapet to the flanking bays. Below the central parapet panel a smaller panel carries the date '1920' in pressed cement above the central arch. Similar forms beneath the panels to the flanking bays are left blank. The three-bay form is enclosed by panelled piers or pylons, which rise to enclose the parapet and are capped with small concrete domes.

The south side wall to Manningtree Road is of over-painted face brick with rendered banding that encloses the arched window heads and arched entry points, rendered sloping sills and a smooth rendered parapet, with a narrow cornice capping. The over-painting partly obscures this detailing to this elevation. The rendered and rusticated façade treatment continues for one bay to this elevation and the remainder of the elevation is broken into bays by brick piers which rise through the parapet. Square original metal ventilators are inset into the plinth along this elevation. There are four timber-framed fixed hopper form windows, with fanlights above. The glazing is of opaque ripple glass. There are three entrances from Manningtree Road – none of which are thought to be original, infilling and extending former window openings. Two have pairs of painted panelled timber doors and there is a single panelled door to the corner bay to Glenferrie Road. All these openings have steps of painted concrete, as opposed to the original main entry which has entry steps of terrazzo. Towards the west end of the elevation there is a bracketed ledge above a former pair of windows. Its function is not known.

The return to the west forms the boundary to the residence to 101 Manningtree Road and is of over-painted brick. The parapet largely conceals the roof form which is of renewed corrugated iron. The hall roof is a Dutch gable, with a painted brick chimney with three terracotta pots inset from the southeast corner. A further chimney is set to the rear at the centre of the roof ridge.

The café premises to the immediate north of the Glenferrie Road entrance has a hipped terracotta tiled roof, and the shop is relatively shallow with a residence built behind. There is a triangular garden area to the north side of the site concealed by the shop buildings, and accessible from the café. The café garden plantings include a pittosporum and an elm.

In 1997, minor works were undertaken by the City of Boroondara to improve amenities for the Hawthorn Artists' Society. Work involved the relocation of a window and construction of a partition wall and a set of new doors to the courtyard and adjoining amenities.

Internally, the building appears to retain much of its original plan form, including many of its fixtures and fittings. These include the original timber and glazed doors, albeit over-painted, brick fireplaces, coffered and strapped plaster ceilings as well as a number of Moderne style pendant lights fittings in the former Club room, now utilised by the Hawthorn Band. The former club room also retains the War memorial, in-situ above the brick fireplace. An amenities block, comprising toilets, kitchen and servery infills part of the former courtyard area to the rear of the site.

The extent of the café tenancy-related painting to the façade of the building has a detrimental impact on the presentation of the building, particularly the painting of part of the entry arch.

The property abuts a shop of a similar age (609 Glenferrie Road) which reads as a related but separate unit.⁴ However, this shopfront was constructed in 1917 to plans prepared by architect Albion Walkley and previously adjoined three shops of the same design constructed the previous year, to the north. They have subsequently been demolished.

Historical Context

In memorial terms, the RSL building was a companion piece to Hawthorn's main municipal undertaking, a tall cenotaph in St James' Park, Hawthorn West, built at a cost of £3000 in a fusion of Edwin Lutyens and Bertram Goodhue forms.⁵

Comparative Analysis

The Hawthorn Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club is one of several buildings along Glenferrie and Burwood Roads flavoured by the 'English Renaissance' and other details from the late Renaissance or Baroque. These include Samuel Brittingham's Hawthorn Post Office, 378 Burwood Road, (1908, q.v.), J Harding's Glenferrie Railway Station (c. 1915-17), and the National Bank of Australasia at the corner of Glenferrie Road and Lynch Street (c. 1922). English Renaissance refers primarily to the Baroque architecture of Christopher Wren, Nicholas Hawksmoor, John Vanbrugh and their contemporaries, between c. 1661 and c. 1740, and revived in the 1890s by many including Aston Webb and E Ingress Bell, John Belcher, John Joass and A Beresford Pite, Norman Shaw and John Brydon. Broad, curved pavilion pediments, dentilled cornices, jumping string course lines, exaggerated voussoirs and quoins and rusticated columns were all favoured components. The Ionic order was usually preferred in major colonnading. The movement enjoyed huge popularity in the British Empire, Japan, and, in some instances, appeared in the United States.⁶ The coved and rusticated entry arch to 605-07 Glenferrie Road, for example, recalls Webb and Bell's Great Hall at the University of Birmingham (1900-1909), Belcher and Joass' first floor arcade at Electra House, London (1900-03), the London County Council's Central School of Arts and Crafts at Holborn (1907), and recurs in much later British designs such as John Joass' central section at Royal London House, Finsbury Square, London (1927-30).⁷ Imposing coved arches also marked French Renaissance buildings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In Melbourne, this interest flavoured coved and rusticated entrances such as at SE Bindley's former Records Office, 295 Queen Street, of 1900-1904.⁸ Such designs were primarily efforts at a triumphal grand manner marking Britain's European ascendancy around 1700. As well, imagery from grand manner French architecture of the period, popular in the mid-nineteenth century, regained popularity after the Great War, which had been perceived in part as a battle to preserve French civilisation. For an RSL this imagery was appropriate given the British and French alliance during the Great War, and the location of much of Australia's active service. A similar, more solemn grand manner design was employed on both Australian war memorials and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission buildings in France.⁹

In chronology and grand manner, the subject building compares particularly with Harry Norris' rendered and over-painted Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club at 496 High Street Northcote (c. 1921) and the former red brick Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club hall in Canterbury Road Canterbury, at the corner of Marlowe Street (c. 1922-23, demolished). The use of raised, flat blank panels in dressed cement parallels similar usage on John Smith Murdoch and Horace Mackennal's Canterbury Post Office

(1908-09) at the corner of Maling and Canterbury Roads. These, and the instability expressed in the overlapping panels of the three bays of the subject building that face Glenferrie Road, reflected what Alistair Service called Neo-Mannerism: a revival of similarly unstable and 'disturbed' architecture by Michelangelo, Giulio Romano, Michele Sanmicheli and others in Italy from c. 1515 to 1550 and coming at the end of the Italian High Renaissance. This was revived by John Belcher and John Joass, particularly, as in their Mappin House, Westminster, London, (1906-08) and their Royal Insurance Building, Piccadilly (1907-8).¹⁰ In Melbourne it was re-used by Bates, Peebles and Smart with the furniture and timber components in their Melbourne Public Library Reading Room (1909-11), the Chantry offices, 14-16 Collins Street (1911-12), the former Buckley and Nunn store, 294-312 Bourke Street (1911 ff) and the Leviathan Store 271 Bourke Street at the corner of Swanston Street (1912).¹¹ The general combination of rusticated piers and plain-surfaced spandrel areas seen at Hawthorn is also seen on substantial commemorative buildings of this time, such as Bates Smart and McCutcheon's First Church of Christ, Scientist, 336-8 St Kilda Road, South Melbourne (c. 1919-21).¹²

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria – Criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 7 August 2008 pursuant to Sections 8(1)(c) and 8(2) of the Heritage Act 1995.

Criterion A - Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Boroondara's cultural history.

The former Hawthorn Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club is of historical significance for its association with the Club and for its ability to demonstrate the proliferation of returned servicemen's organisations in the period immediately after WWI.

Criterion B - Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural history.

Not applicable.

Criterion C - Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural history.

Not applicable.

Criterion D - Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Recognising that RSL clubrooms and halls from the interwar period varied widely in their forms, the facilities accommodated within them, and their architectural expression, this example is still considered of significance as a representative and externally intact example of the broad typology. The incorporation of a shop front reflects the location of the building on a major shopping strip and opportunity to generate revenue.

Criterion E - Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

The design is of interest and significance for its vigorous and powerful architectural expression in a relatively modestly scaled suburban hall and clubrooms, employing a combination of heavy rustication to the arched central entry and flanking piers with flat panels and parapet elements.

Criterion F - Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Not applicable.

Criterion G - Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

While not assessed, it is possible that members of the Hawthorn RSL retain a level of attachment to this building, which ceased operation as clubrooms in the 1970s.

Criterion H - Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in City of Boroondara's history.

Not applicable.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

605-607 Glenferrie Road is a brick and render single-storey former RSL Hall and shop building, located at the corner of Glenferrie and Manningtree Road. The hall and café shopfront (605 -607 Glenferrie Road) read as a single unit, though the shop front is painted in a contrasting colour.

The principal façade of 605-607 Glenferrie Road is of rendered brick, with wide-jointed rustication framing the central arched entrance and forming the piers or pylons that enclose the building. The two recessed bays either side of the entrance are of smooth render, with that to the north incorporating a modern shopfront. The south side wall to Manningtree Road is of over-painted face brick with rendered banding that encloses the arched window heads and arched entry points, rendered sloping sills and a smooth rendered parapet, with a narrow cornice capping. The rendered and rusticated façade treatment continues for one bay to this elevation and the remainder of the elevation is broken into bays by brick piers which rise through the parapet.

How is it significant?

The former Hawthorn Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club is of historical and aesthetic (architectural) significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

The former Hawthorn Returned Sailors and Soldiers Club is of historical significance for its association with the Club and for its ability to demonstrate the proliferation of returned servicemen's organisations in the period immediately after WWI. While RSL clubrooms and halls from the interwar period varied widely in their forms, the facilities accommodated within them and their architectural expression, this example is still considered of significance as a representative and externally intact example of the broad typology. The incorporation of a shop front is of interest in reflecting the location of the building on a major shopping strip and opportunity to generate revenue. While not assessed, it is also possible that members of the Hawthorn RSL retain a level of attachment to this building, which ceased operation as clubrooms in the 1970s and that the building could be found to be of social value for this reason.

Recommendation

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as an individually Significant place. The Overlay should extend to the original property boundaries and should not include the land associated with 609 Glenferrie Road.

External paint colours	Yes
Internal Alterations Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and fences not exempt	No
Victorian Heritage Register	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No

Incorporated plan	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No

Identified By

Graeme Butler, *Upper Hawthorn Conservation Study* 1983.

References

General: Graeme Butler, *Upper Hawthorn Conservation Study* 1983; Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992; Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study Review*, 1994; Context P/L, *Hawthorn Heritage Precincts Study*, 2010.

Specific:

- 1 'Hawthorn Soldiers' Club', *Argus*, 17 May 1920 p. 6.
- 2 'Hawthorn Returned Soldiers' Club', *Argus*, 17 February 1921, p. 7.
- 3 'Pattern of occupation drawn from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Melbourne Directory* between 1920 and 1974, various years.
- 4 Graeme Butler's 1983 citation for the subject property treated the subject building and the adjoining unrelated shop premises as a single unit.
- 5 Noted by Ken Inglis in *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Miegunyah, Melbourne, 1998, p. 134.
- 6 Hugh O'Neill has documented the English Renaissance influence on buildings such as Osaka Railway Station through Japanese architects trained in Britain from the 1890s on through the Great War (lectures, Monash University, 1990s). Americans greatly admired new English Baroque Revival buildings such as Belcher and Pite's Institute of Chartered Accounts in the City of London (1891), widely commented on in *American Architect* during the early 1890s. This was reflected in American designs through to the San Francisco Customs House (c. 1906) and the Farmers' Exchange Bank in Philadelphia (c. 1915). Australia took up the revival around 1891. See Apperly, Irving and Reynolds, *Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus and Robertson, 1989, 1990, pp. 100-103, which they describe as 'Federation Academic Classical', and 104-107, which they describe as 'Federation Free Classical'. See Also Conrad Hamann, *A History of Australian Architecture*, Part 3, 1900-1945, Educational Media, Melbourne, 1985 (series editor: Leon Paroissien).
- 7 Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture and its Origins*, Architectural Press, London, 1975, pp. 303-350 (Joass); 411 (Central School).
- 8 Philip Goad and others, *Melbourne Architecture*, Watermark, Sydney, 1999, 2008, p. 87 item 138.
- 9 See esp. Ken Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Miegunyah, Melbourne, 1998, Chs. 4, 6 and 7.
- 10 Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture*, pp. 320-321 esp.
- 11 James S Curl, *Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, Oxford, 1999, 2006, pp. 469-70. Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture and Its Origins*, Architectural press, London, 1975, pp. 320-321 esp., and Philip Goad and others, *Bates Smart: 150 Years of Australian Architecture*, Thames and Hudson, Melbourne, 2004, pp. 98-100; 104-11. *Melbourne Cityscope*, Sydney, 2011, Map 30 p. 11 item 34 (Leviathan); Map 33 p. 1 item 54 (Chanonry); Map 15 p. 1 Item 1 (State Library), Map 22, p. 11 item 34A (Buckley's, now David Jones).
- 12 Goad and others, *Bates Smart*, pp. 120-122.