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T & G building

Corner McLachlan and Firebrace Streets, Horsham

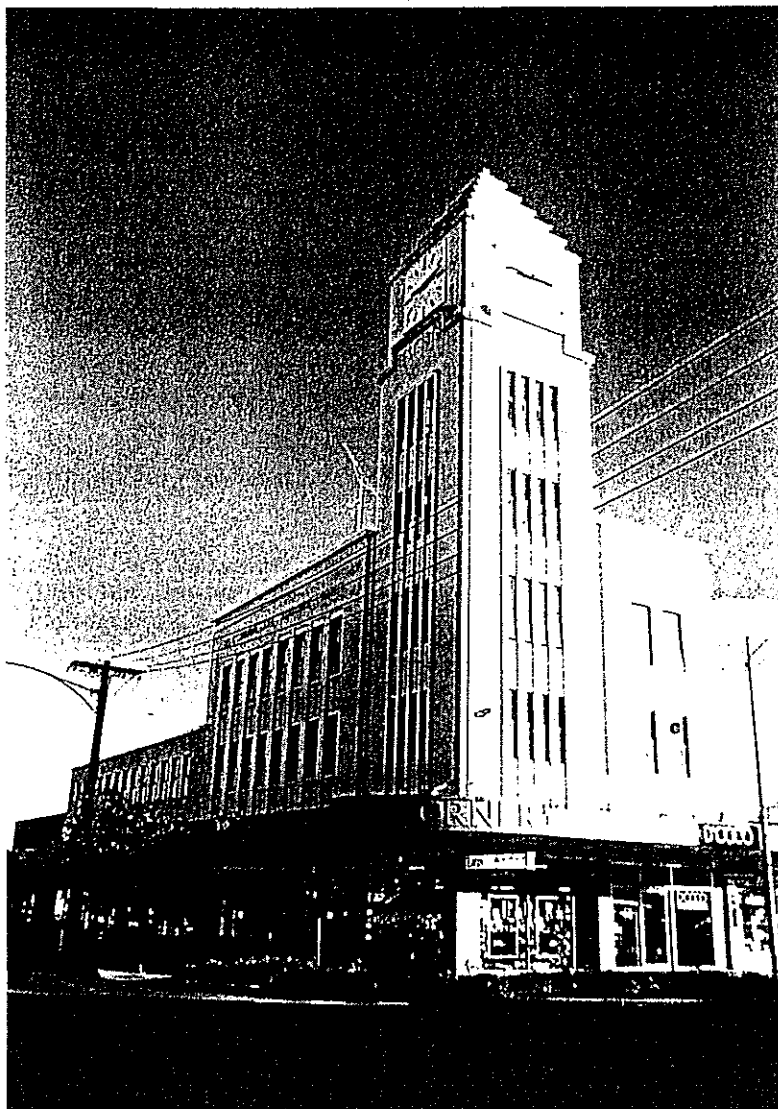


Photo: 1997

Existing Registrations:

Victorian Heritage Register: nil

National Estate Register: nil

National Trust Register: nil

History: The Parish plan for the Town of Horsham shows the north west corner of Firebrace and McLachlan Streets was part of lot 5 of Section 5A purchased by J.C.L.Bowden and S.B.Bolton on the 11 October 1864. The lot covered an area of just over one acre. Most of Section 5A was subdivided into substantial lots for housing; however, lot 5 fronting Firebrace Street was gradually used for commercial development. By 1927, shops lined the street between McLachlan and Baillie Streets. In 1940, the land

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on the northwest corner of Firebrace and McLachlan Streets was owned by the Temperance and General Mutual Life Society. By April of that year, the Society, known as the T&G, was in the process of erecting a modern reinforced concrete building of three storeys with corner tower; a style which typified all of its buildings. The ground floor provided room for five shops and the Society's offices. The first floor was intended for leasing as office and professional suites and the third floor, also for leasing, was divided into three flats.

The T&G building stood diagonally opposite the old Georgian style post office in 1940. In 1970, the post office was demolished. Although the government owned the building, there was a perception that the clock, installed in 1885, belonged to the city. Cr. Tom Windsor made the statement that "A clock is essential...adds status...(is) a service to ratepayers." The clock was handed over to the City and subsequently installed in the tower of the T&G building, presumably with an altered face. Its mechanism was thereafter operated by electric power.

Description: The T & G building is representative of other Society buildings and, being erected during the Second World War, adopts the then popular style of the European Modernists. The prominent corner tower with stepped pyramidal roof has its vertical dimension emphasized by the fenestration and corner treatments, standing apart from the body of the building which is lower, capped by a parapet course common to the period, has simplified fenestration and is articulated separately. The cantilevered verandah retains its curved corner with the phrase "T & G Corner" in low relief, reinforcing the Modernist character of the building.

Integrity: High **Condition:** Sound

Comparative examples: These include the Society's Melbourne headquarters in Collins Street, now reduced to a façade surrounding a recent building and similar branches in the provincial cities including Bendigo (1925), Mildura and Warrnambool. The Warrnambool example is highly comparable.

Significance: The Temperance and General Mutual Life Society Ltd. building of 1940 is representative of the Society's buildings of the period (criterion D) and a sophisticated example of European Modernism in Horsham, comparing with the Town hall complex of 1938 and the former Pattersons Building. It demonstrates the importance of Horsham as a commercial centre during the War years (criterion A).

References: Town of Horsham, Parish Plan, Department of Lands and Survey, 28.2.1928.
Horsham Sewerage Plan no.132, c.1927, amended June 1948.
File, Horsham Historical Society.
Brian Brooke and Alan Finch, A Story of Horsham, A Municipal Century, City of Horsham, 1982, p.176, 184.

Data sheet prepared by Andrew Ward 2/98
