



**National Trust of Victoria (Geelong & Region Branch)
&
City of Greater Geelong
Heritage Awards 2024**

1. Dwelling, 7 Lawton Avenue, Geelong West
2. Armytage House, 263 Pakington Street, Newtown.
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1. 7 Lawton Avenue, Geelong West.**Category:**

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**
- **New Work in a Heritage Overlay**

Works: Partial demolition, restoration, reconstruction, alterations & additions & fencing

Significance: Contributory, Lawton Avenue Heritage Area HO1633

Planning Application: 348/2020

Planner: Leigh Page

Owner: Lauren Di Mauro

Architect: Antonietta Di Mauro Architecture & Interiors

The Federation styled timber house at 7 Lawton Avenue was built in 1913-14 for Mrs Mary McLennan. She was the widow of David McLennan. They had married in Ballarat in 1867 and after trying their luck on the Ballarat goldfields before relocating to Steiglitz. It was there in 1870 when John Alexander McLennan was born. The McLennan family later took up farming at Charlton. John McLennan was the first occupant of the house at 7 Lawton Avenue in 1914. He changed careers, becoming a fireman, before returning to the family farm.

When built, the house reflected a number of common and interesting Federation era design details, including a rectangular bay window with bracketed hipped roof hood, decorative rendered gable end and decorative timber verandah fretwork.



7 Lawton Avenue (n.d.) [early 20th century]. Source: Lauren Di Mauro.

By the late 20th century, the house had experienced a number of alterations, undermining its Federation character. These changes included the removal of the original verandah decoration, to be replaced with steel trussed posts and steel balustrading, removal of the front bay window,

and the introduction of unsympathetic windows. A brick fence had also been constructed at the front.

The works that have been carried out have been the partial demolition of the rear portion of the dwelling, reconstruction of missing verandah posts, verandah floor, timber framed windows, window hood and painting. At the rear, gabled and hipped roofed additions have been constructed in materials consistent with the original dwelling. The additions have not replicated the old house but are a respectful contemporary interpretation and given the rear location, they do not visually overwhelm the heritage asset. A new brick garage is highly recessive from the front. A timber picket fence has replaced the unsympathetic brick fence and helps to enhance the presentation of the dwelling.

Notes from Lauren Di Mauro:

Most of the restoration of the original house has been completed by Ross Di Mauro (owner and roof plumber at Greater City Roofing) and Angelo Di Mauro (carpenter).

The landscape was designed and garden planted by Lauren Di Mauro (owner).

The new works were designed by Di Mauro Architecture and Interiors. It has been a bit of a 'family' affair.....

Ross spent many months sanding back and repairing the original weatherboards, installed the galvanised roof, re-created and installed the curved pressed metal detail on the front gable, completely restored the original front door and entrance to bring it back to its former glory, painted the front fence and is currently completing the fretwork for the front verandah to match the original.

Angelo assisted with many aspects including restumping, installation of original weatherboards, verandah posts, verandah decking and front fence. Both Ross and Angelo have such a high standard of workmanship

Overall, the reconstruction, alterations and additions and brought back to life some of the original Federation design qualities and the dwelling is now a fine contributor to this highly intact and significant streetscape.



Dwelling, 7 Lawton Avenue, 2010, when purchased by the Di Mauro family. Source: Lauren Di Mauro.



Dwelling, 7 Lawston Avenue, with restoration in progress, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Dwelling, 7 Lawton Avenue, with restoration in progress, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



7 Lawton Avenue, almost complete, 2024. Source: Lauren Di Mauro



7 Lawton Avenue, almost complete, 2024. Source: Lauren Di Mauro.

2. **Armytage House, 263 Pakington Street, Newtown.**

Category:

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**
- **New Work in a Heritage Overlay**

Works: Partial demolition, restoration, reconstruction, alterations & additions & fencing

Significance: State significance, Victorian Heritage Register

Planning Application: Heritage Permit

Planner: Ann Gove, Heritage Victoria

Architect: WMK Architecture

Heritage Consultant: RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants

Landscape Architect:

Builder: Built by Wilson

Armytage House is one of Greater Geelong's most substantial heritage dwellings, and one of the finest Colonial regency styled mansions in Victoria. It was built in 1858 to a design by local architect, Edward Prowse, for George Armytage, prominent pastoralist from England. Armytage had arrived with sheep in Victoria in May 1836. The mansion house was named The Hermitage. From 1905, the property was the location of the Geelong Church of England Girls Grammar School, an association that continued until 1973.

In 1974, The Hermitage property was sold to the Newtown and Chilwell Council and it was officially opened as the Council's headquarters in December that year. Numerous repairs and alterations had been carried out under the supervision of the Geelong architects, Buchan Laird and Buchan. It was at this time when the name of the property was changed to Armytage House as a condition of the sale of the property was that the original name – The Hermitage – was not to be used.

The symmetrical, two storey, Barrabool stone mansion is characterised by a central Ionic entrance portico and return iron balconies and verandahs. The recent works have involved the reconstruction of the missing balustraded parapet; stone repairs and other restoration and painting following sound conservation practice; contemporary single storey parapeted and shallow pitch rear additions (associated terrace) lightly connected to the original fabric; rear garaging; and detached and pool pavilion and pool, the pavilion having gabled roof forms. The forms and materials, tones and textures respect the strength and character of Armytage House while clearly being distinctive as innovative designs in their own right. The landscaping continues to celebrate the formal early layout and surface finish of the circular driveway. The new front fence and gates are in keeping with the substantial scale of the property, and the solid nature of early boundary fencing for this property, and provide a more formalised streetscape interface. The works are a remarkable outcome, allowing the significance of this property to be honoured, ensuring its long-term future.



The Hermitage (Armytage House), n.d. [c.1900], showing the mansion house in its setting. Note the original balustraded parapet. Source: GRS 137/0, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Aerial view of Armytage House when The Hermitage Church of England Girls' Grammar School, c.1936-37. Source: C. Pratt, accession H91.2160/907 State Library of Victoria.



Armytage House when the offices of the Newtown and Chilwell Council, 1976.
Source: J.T. Collins, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Victorian Heritage Database.



Works in progress, 28 March 2022. Source: David Rowe.



Armytage House restored and partially reconstructed, 2024. Source: Novka Long, Indre Design.



Armytage Huse, detail of entrance portico, 2024. Source: Novka Long, Indre Design.



Additions and new terrace, north elevation, 2024. Source: Novka Long, Indre Design.



Pool House, 2024. Source: Novka Long, Indre Design.



New fence and gate entrance, 2024. Source: David Rowe.

3. 240 Gully Road, Ceres.

Category:

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**

Works: Restoration and reconstruction of a ruinous dwelling

Significance: State significance, Victorian Heritage Register

Planning Application: 1114/20

Planner: Claire McVilly

Owner:

Architect:

Builder: WRB Construction Group Pty Ltd: William Barraclough

Stonemason: J.M. Stonemasonry, ph 0422 630 940

Planning Consultants: Context Planning, Marshall Sullivan

‘Barwonside’ was built in 1850-53 for Robert McDonald, a farmer from Northern Ireland. It was the location of his successful crop farm and one acre vineyard. He sold it to David Lamb in 1876. Members of the Lamb family farmed ‘Barwonside’ for over 100 years until 1978. Since that time, this gabled Victorian vernacular Barrabool stone cottage had fallen into disrepair and by 2020 it was ruinous. The introduced rendered finish to the stone walls was spalling on the south elevation; there were numerous cracks in the walls; slates were missing from the roof allowing rainwater ingress which in turn rotted the roof structure and caused significant damage internally; and the windows doors and verandah had all but disintegrated.

‘Barwonside’ is a physical legacy of the early Colonial development of the Barrabool Hills for farming, agriculture and viticulture from the 19th century. It is one of a distinctive number of similarly constructed dwellings that are peculiar to the area for their vernacular designs and siting within the Barrabool Hills landscape. It is for these reasons that the substantial restoration and reconstruction of ‘Barwonside’ has been so important and as part of this significant Barrabool Hills cultural landscape.

The restoration and reconstruction of ‘Barwonside’ was a valid conservation option as outlined in the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*. The demolition management plan that formed the basis of the works was particularly instructive and gave a sound methodology with detailed photographic analysis and individual documentation for each Barrabool stone block for accurate reinstatement. The works have been transformative and the outcome highlights the dedication of the owners and the high quality skills of the stonemason and building contractor. The contribution of ‘Barwonside’ as part of the Barrabool Hills cultural landscape will now continue into the future.



'Barwonside', 1980-85. Source: J.T. Collins, accession H91.200/649 State Library of Victoria.



'Barwonside', 1980-85. Source: J.T. Collins, accession H91.200/649 State Library of Victoria.



'Barwonside', 1980-85. Source: J.T. Collins, accession H91.200/649 State Library of Victoria.



'Barwonside', 20 March 2020. Source: David Rowe.



'Barwonside', 20 March 2020. Source: David Rowe.



'Barwonside', 20 March 2020. Source: David Rowe.



'Barwonside', 20 March 2020. Source: David Rowe.



'Barwonside', July 2023. Source: Jennifer Bantow.



'Barwonside', July 2023. Source: Jennifer Bantow.



'Barwonside', 2024. Source: David Rowe.



'Barwonside', 2024. Source: David Rowe.

4. Former Protestant Orphan Asylum and School, 204-210 McCurdy Road, Fyansford.

Category:

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**

Works: Stone repairs

Significance: State significance, Victorian Heritage Register

Planning Application: Heritage Permit

Planner: Ann Gove, Heritage Victoria

Stonemason: Matt Cartlidge, Victorian Stonemasons Cooperative

A public meeting was held in Geelong in May 1854 for the purpose of establishing an orphan asylum and taking up donations and subscriptions for the construction of buildings. An architectural competition was held soon after, the commission being awarded to Andrew McWilliams. On 14 March, 1855, the foundation stone was laid. It was a ceremonious occasion, whereby Councillor George Wright led a procession of riflemen, firemen, councilors, Oddfellows, the Committee of the Orphan Asylum and bandsmen around the streets of Geelong to the Herne Hill site. It was later in 1855 when the Asylum opened under the name Geelong Orphan Asylum. William Packer Carden Kent (c.1813-1884), an Irish farmer, was appointed Master and his wife, Esther Kent (nee Sharpley), became the inaugural Matron. At the orphanage in 1855 there were nine children, but 20 children had been selected by the committee from a longer list compiled by subscribers.

Three years later in 1865, the architect Joseph Shaw provided a design for a Common School. It was constructed immediately north of the Asylum and in 1873 it was extended with two playrooms being added. The education of the children extended beyond the textbook and involved the learning of practical skills. Boys learnt gardening, stone breaking and making roads (the carriage drive established in 1873 and several pathways, as well as the fine ornamental and produce gardens were the work of the boys) while the girls learnt cooking, laundry, waiting at table and sewing.

In 1933, the Orphanage and School at Fyansford closed and the institution relocated to the newly-built Glastonbury home in Belmont.

Today, the buildings and remnant front setting are architecturally, historically and socially significant to the State of Victoria for their association with the history of child welfare; as one of the first four orphanages established in Victoria in the 1850s; for its associations with the early history of education in Victoria; and as an extraordinary example of the work of the local architect, Andrew McWilliams.

While the former Orphanage and School buildings are highly significant for their designs and construction, deterioration in the Barrabool stone dressings was undermining their future viability. Careful repairs have been painstakingly carried out following traditional methods. The outcomes have brought back to life these important architectural details of the buildings.



Protestant Orphan Asylum and Common School, c.1873. Source: Thomas J. Washbourne, accession H27573, State Library of Victoria.



Geelong Protestant Orphan Asylum and Common School, n.d. [late 19th century', showing the children in the front garden. Source: Geelong Cement Museum.



Former Protestant Orphan Asylum, 15 November 2019. Source: David Rowe.



Former Common School, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Former Orphan Asylum, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



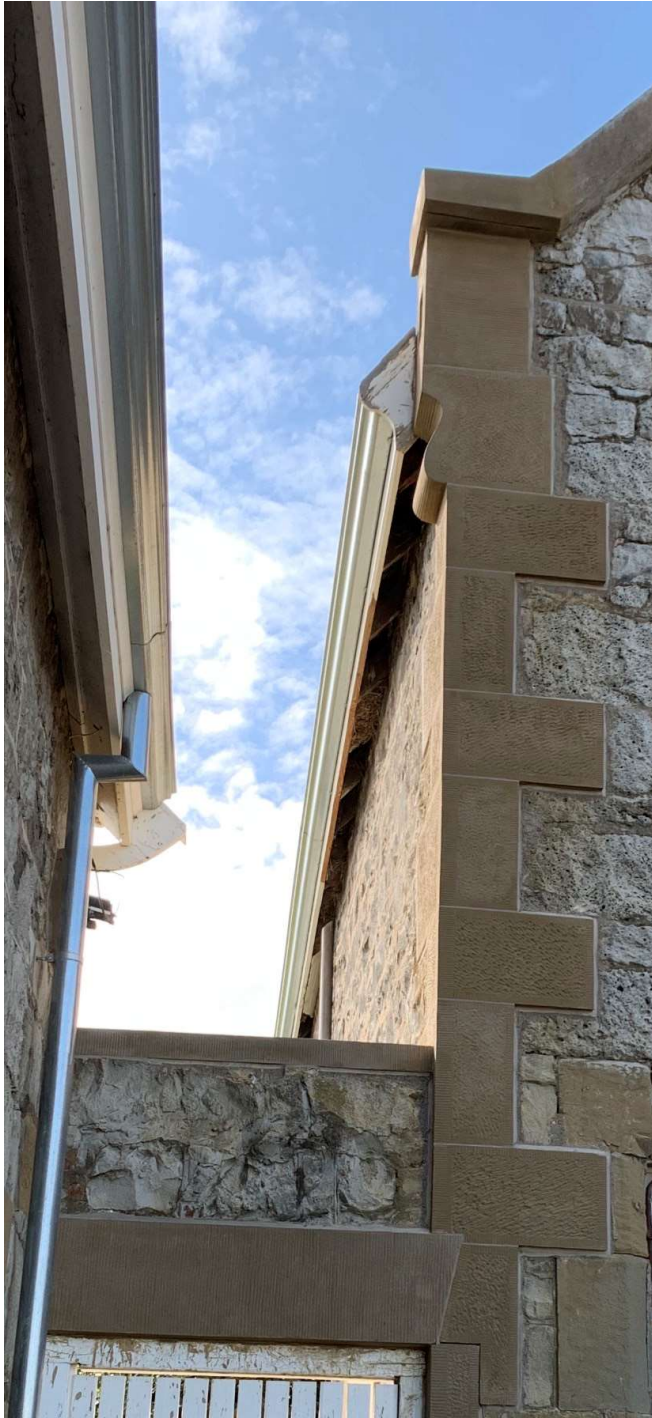
Gateway between the Orphanage and the School prior to restoration. Source: Matt Cartlidge.



Gateway following restoration, 2023. Source: Matt Cartlidge.



Stone quoinwork, former orphanage, prior to repair. Source: Matt Cartlidge.



Stone quoinwork, former orphanage, after repair. Source: Matt Cartlidge, 2023.

5. Lara Villa, 78 Swanston Street, Geelong.**Category:**

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**
- **New Work in a Heritage Overlay**

Works: Restoration, reinstatement of architectural details more consistent with the design and era of the dwelling, rear additions.

Significance: Contributory, HO1641

Planning Application: 401/2022

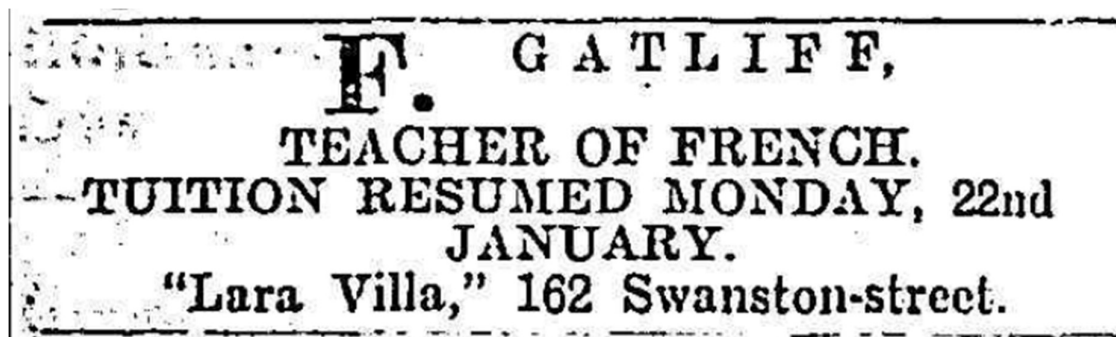
Planner: Alex Lawrence

Owner: Tracey Grisenti

Architect: MTV Design

Builder: Joe Marinovic (Eminent Homes (Vic) Pty Ltd)

The dwelling at 78 Swanston Street was built in 1896-97 for William Wheatland, a retired civil servant. It was investment property as Wheatland lived next door at 80 Swanston Street in a house also built in 1896-97 to a similar design. At 78 Swanston Street, the dwelling was first named “Lara Villa” by the original occupant, Frank Gatliff. Born in France in 1847, he was the son of John Gatliff of Leeds, Yorkshire, United Kingdom, and Marie Antoinette Tapioner of Paris, France. It appears that John Gatliff had relocated to France to work for a French manufacturer, where he met Marie. They had relocated to England by 1851 before returning again to Paris. Frank Gatliff appears to have been well educated during his upbringing in France. In 1870, he emigrated to Victoria. He was in Geelong by 1872 when he offered to teach the French language to members of the Geelong Catholic Young Men’s Literary Association. At 78 Swanston Street from 1897 (then addressed as 162 Swanston Street), he gave lessons in French, matriculation and conversation.



Geelong Advertiser advertisement, 27 January 1906, p.4.

Throughout the 20th century, the integrity and outward appearance of “Lara Villa” was comprised by the removal of the original front verandah, windows, chimneys and other details. A shallow-pitched verandah and large windows, as well as a brick front fence, were constructed. None of these details enhanced the intended Late Victorian appearance of the dwelling although its contribution to the significance of the City South Heritage Precinct was apparent in the surviving roof forms, eaves detailing, and external construction.

The works that have been recently carried out include the removal of the introduced verandah, windows and front fence, and the construction of front timber framed double hung tripartite windows in the same openings, a post-supported convex front verandah and a new timber verandah floor. These works, based on comparable dwellings, have greatly enhanced the presentation of the dwelling and align with the Late Victorian design of the dwelling. A new timber picket fence with corner piers – currently under construction – will further enhance the

appearance of the dwelling and add to the character of this part of the Swanston Street streetscape.

At the rear are single storey additions. They have been designed to ensure the retention in the three dimensional integrity of the original dwelling, and the hipped roof forms and materials are in keeping with the heritage asset without replicating it.

Overall, the transformation has greatly improved the dwelling, ensuring it will survive as an inner-city residence well into the future and in a manner that honours the original Late Victorian design.



Lara Villa, showing the alterations that had diminished its original intended Late Victorian appearance, 2021. Source: Buxton Real Estate, <https://www.realestate.com.au/property/78-swanston-st-geelong-vic-3220/>



Lara Villa showing work in progress, including the new windows and front verandah under construction, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Lara Villa showing work in progress, including the new windows and front verandah under construction, as well as the rear additions, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Lara Villa, almost completed (the new front fence yet to be constructed), 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Rear additions and garage as viewed from the lane, 2024. Source: Jennifer Bantow.



Rear additions, 2024. Source: Jennifer Bantow.

6. Chimney, Little Creatures Brewery (former Valley Worsted Mill), 221 Swanston Street, South Geelong.

Category:

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**

Works: Restoration and repair to chimney stack

Significance: Regional significance, HO1168

Planning Application: 723/2023

Planner: Silvie Tynan

Architect: Conservation Studio

The Valley Worsted Mill at 221 Swanston Street, South Geelong, was built between 1922 and 1927 to a design by E.H. Bucknole, following a British concept. When it was completed in 1927, it was proclaimed as the “largest and most important mill of its kind in Australia.” It employed 550 men, women and children. The large complex of red brick buildings with saw-toothed roofs and original details, and the brick chimney stack have largely been retained as part of the revitalisation of this important industrial heritage landmark in South Geelong as Little Creatures Brewery. The adaptation into the brewery received a heritage award in 2014.

Tonight we celebrate the restoration of the chimney stack. It is integral to the significance of this former woollen mill complex, and as part of the cultural landscape along the Barwon River from Fyansford to Breakwater where the chimney stacks are a physical legacy of Geelong’s importance as a manufacturing city in the 19th and 20th centuries. The works have included concrete repairs to the plinth and cornice, removal of corrosion of the steel reinforcement, mortar repairs, poultice salts removal, some brick replacement and mortar repairs – including the chimney top and upper six bays. The high quality documentation outlining the conservation process, the technical skills involved given the nature and location of the works, have greatly benefitted the stabilisation of the chimney so that it continues as a key heritage feature in this part of South Geelong for years to come.



Aerial view of the Valley Worsted Mill including the chimney stack, 1934. Source: Charles Pratt, State Library of Victoria.



Works in progress. Source: Stephen Rieven, Brewery Director, Boags/Little Creatures.



Little Creatures, view from Swanston Street, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Little Creatures Chimney, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Plinth detail, Little Creatures Chimney, 2024. Source: David Rowe.

7. Former Macrow's Furniture Arcade, 85-87 Ryrie Street, Geelong

Category:

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**

Works: Restoration to exterior and repainting

Significance: Regional significance, HO1116

Planning Application: No permit required

In January 1911, the architects Tombs and Durran called tenders 'for Re-building (in brick)' a two storey shop for Messrs. Henry, Lear and Co., agents. Completed in October 1911, a notable tenant in one of the two shops at 85-87 Ryrie Street (corner Gheringhap Street) was William Macrow and Son, furniture dealers. The Federation Free style building (Figure 5.115) featured a crown-like corner bay surmounted by onion-like cappings, and a domed roof. The *Geelong Advertiser* reported on the 'handsome new building' as part of the opening of Macrow's. The building was taken over by the Kearney Brothers, bootmakers, in 1916. It has served for other commercial uses since, include as a café and offices.

The distinctive domed roof of the former Macrow's Furniture Arcade formed part of a recognisable design feature of the local architects, Tombs and Durran. Other designs which feature their domes include the Ladies Kiosk in Eastern Park, and the end towers to the Solomon's Building (now Market Square Shopping Centre complex). The building also boasts the earliest cantilevered verandah in Geelong,.

Like most commercial buildings, the former Macrow's Furniture Arcade experienced some alterations throughout the 20th century: to the ground floor shopfronts and most notable the painting over the first floor brick facades. Yet, the building continues on as one of Geelong's Federation era commercial landmarks. In recent years, it has been suffering from some disrepair in the rendered finish, flaking paintwork and other dilapidation. These defects have been now been rectified and the building again makes a highly significant contribution to central Geelong's architecture, particularly at this important intersection of Ryrie and Gheringhap Streets. It is a credit to all involved in ensuring this has important part of central Geelong's heritage is conserved into the future.



Former Macrow's Furniture Arcade (when Kearney Bros. Bootery), 85-87 Ryrie Street, Geelong, c.1920. Source: GRS 2009/00802 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Underside of the cantilevered verandah, Ryrie Street, looking east, c.1912. Source: Kevin Krastins.



Former Macrow's Furniture Arcade, 2007. Source: David Rowe.



Former Macrow's Furniture Arcade, 15 February 2024. Source: David Rowe.

8. Former store and dwellings, 245-247 Malop Street, Geelong

Category:

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**
- **Alterations and additions**
- **Adaptation**

Works: Substantial repairs and restoration to roofs, walls and windows to this once dilapidated local heritage landmark. The building has been adapted into dwellings.

Planning Application: 559/2011

Planner: Steve Roussac

Owner: Bill Votsaris, Batman Investments

Architect: Cactus Designs

Builder: Deltex Constructions

The two storey building at the corner of Malop and Swanston Streets was built in 1858 for Thomas Barber as an investment property. The architect for the building has not been determined, although it was possibly John Young, as he had designed a number of hotels in Geelong in the 1850s and in 1864 he called tenders for the rendering of the exterior walls. The building was meant to open as a hotel but due to a lack of success in achieving a hotel license, it became two dwellings.

One of the first occupants was Henry Plumstead, Professor of Music, from England. He was the son of William Plumstead, a London musician, composer and arranger. In 1846, Henry Plumstead married his cousin, Maria Plumstead, and they sailed for South Australia in 1848. In Adelaide, Plumstead soon began offering lessons on the pianoforte, seraphine and organ, as well as singing. He also gave organ recitals in Adelaide's churches. Plumstead arrived in Geelong in 1852 where he continued his musical lessons to the public, piano tuning and also as organist for St. Paul's and Christ Church Anglican Churches. A complex character, after a time in New Zealand, Plumstead returned to South Australia.

In 1919, a major change in the use of the building occurred when it was purchased by Frank Arcaro and remodelled into a shop and dwelling to a design by the local architect, I.G. Anderson. While Arcaro established as fruit and confectionary business in the building, ironically, he too was an accomplished professional musician. He had arrived in Melbourne from Potenza, Italy, in 1907. One of his early major roles was musical director of an orchestra that performed at the opening of the Joy Ark floating Picture on the Eastern Beach foreshore in 1912. He was also elected the inaugural treasurer of the Geelong Italian Club when it formed in 1917.

The rich history of the building at 245 Malop Street is equalled in its architectural status in this part of Geelong. Although the building had experienced some minor alterations to the public facades over the years, it has always retained its original landmark presentation. A planning permit was issued in 2011 for repairs and alterations and additions. These works were much-needed as the building had progressively been falling into disrepair for many years. An ownership change saved the day for this building. Its condition had become very dire, but as they say, "all good things come to those who wait". Extensive repairs to the facades to ensure their structural stability, re-rendering, re-slating and other roof repairs and alterations for conversion into two superior dwellings has ensured that this building lives on into the future. The interior changes have been substantial but the exterior again celebrates much of the

original Victorian character this important building. The result is truly remarkable and expressed the high quality of the skills of the tradespeople involved in its conservation.



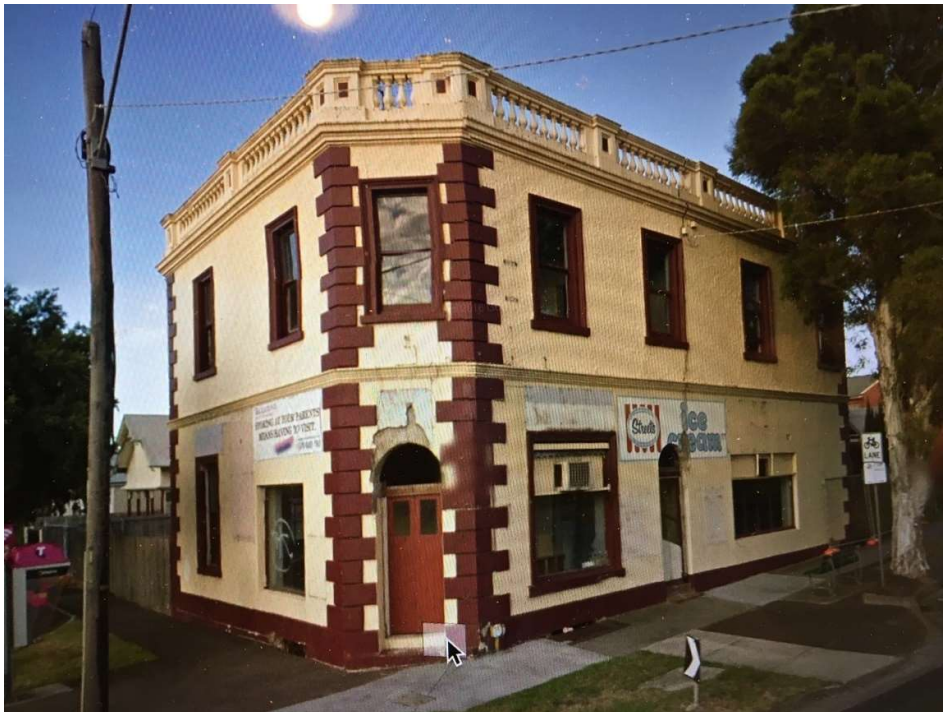
245 Malop Street, c.1972. Source: Ian Wynd collection.



245 Malop Street, 1993. Source: City of Greater Geelong.



245 Malop Street, 2010. Source: David Rowe.



245 Malop Street, August 2021. Source: Google streetview, ©Google.



245 Malop Street, rear (north) elevation, August 2021. Source: Jennifer Bantow.



245 Malop Street, showing early rendered removed, and wall repairs being carried out prior to re-rendering and painting, October 2021. Source: Jennifer Bantow.



245 Malop Street, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



245-247 Malop Street, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



245-247 Malop Street, 2024. Source: David Rowe.

9. Dwelling, 121 McKillop Street, Geelong**Category:**

- **Restoration of a Heritage Place**
- **Alterations and additions**

Works: Restoration, reconstruction of front verandah, rear modest additions, new front fence and gate in keeping with the character and appearance of the Victorian dwelling.

Planning Application: 1549/21

Planner: Amanda Frienze

Owner: Amy Donovan, 0455 507 156

Architect: Brendan Henry Design

Builder: Redhouse Developments

The house at 121 Swanston Street was built in 1885-86 to a design by Joseph Watts, one of Geelong's most prolific 19th century architects. It was one of several of Watts' investment properties in Geelong. While a typical Late Victorian timber design, it featured Watts' trademark: the Rinceau cast iron valance (this being an ornamental motif consisting of a branching scroll with leaves and roses). The cast iron valance was set in a timber frame.

The dwelling forms one of several in this part of City that express economic progress in the late 19th century as Geelong came out of its 'sleepy hollow' slumber. Its corner location gives it more architectural status. Over the past 10-15 years, the dwelling had slowly but surely fallen into disrepair. The trademark verandah valance fell out about 5-10 years ago (I'd noticed this while waiting at the traffic lights and thought this might have been the beginning of the end).

However, in recent years, the current owners saw the potential of reviving one of Joseph Watts' designs back to how it was meant to be, along with adapting and extending it into a medical facility. As many of you have also done, the owners and their designer worked collaboratively with the Planning Department to achieve the remarkable outcome we recognise today. The works have included the restoration and reconstruction of the front verandah, external repairs, and contemporary, modest skillion-roofed additions at the rear. These additions have retained the principal three dimensional portion of the dwelling. These conservation and building works, along with the new use, have revived the future of this dwelling. The reinstatement of the trademark verandah detailing has also helped to celebrate part of Geelong's architectural identity.



Dwelling, 121 McKillop Street, 2019. Source: <https://www.realestate.com.au/property/121-mckillop-st-geelong-vic-3220/>



Dwelling, 121 McKillop Street. Source: <https://www.realestate.com.au/property/121-mckillop-st-geelong-vic-3220/> .



Dwelling, 121 McKillop Street, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Dwelling, 121 McKillop Street, 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Dwelling, 121 McKillop Street, rear additions, 2024. Source: David Rowe.

10. Jennifer Bantow Local Heritage Award: Nat De-Palma

Category:

- Longstanding services to heritage conservation in Geelong

Works: Tuckpointing.

The inaugural recipient of the Jennifer Bantow Local Heritage Award for longstanding service to heritage conservation in Geelong is Nat De-Palma of Kobrix Masonry. He began his career as a bricklayer in between tours of Australia as a drummer in rock and roll bands, a passion that continues today.

A History of Nat De-Palma, Tuck-pointer, as written by Nat De-Palma (KOBRIX Masonry)

Being of Italian descent, I was destined to be involved in the building industry, as most Italian boys are born with a trowel in one hand and a cash contract in the other. 😊

I left Bell Park Tech School in 1973, at 16 years old, and immediately started working in the family business as a concreter/bricklaying apprentice working side by side with my father and other family members. I remained in the family business until 1987.

Throughout the course of this time, I got to meet City Building Inspectors and various contractors. I believe that my fascination with tuck-pointing came as a result of standing outside of the Geelong West Post Office, waiting for my mum to buy stamps, wondering how the men did the sort of work I saw on the building.

One day while a City Building Inspector was on site checking out our form work and reo sheets prior to pouring a concrete slab, I began to voice my disgust at the City for allowing the destruction of several Heritage Buildings in and around Geelong. Colin, the current Inspector at the time, looked at me and said, "They are rotting away Nat, and nobody knows how to fix them properly."

Little did Colin know that hearing his words – "our buildings are rotting away and nobody knows how to fix them" would send me on a quest that was to change my life forever.

So from mid 1985 to sometime in 1987, I spent most of my time in libraries, used book stores and phoning men whose names were given to me as possible leads. I drove around Victoria to places such as Warrnambool, Bendigo and Albury trying to track down retired tuck-pointers who may have still been alive and possibly able to help me. Sadly, for the most part, my time spent in search was to no avail.

But then I had a massive breakthrough! Geelong had a retired Tuck-Pointer who was still alive and living in East Geelong. His name was Frank C. I had no phone number but had Frank's address.

The morning I went over to meet Frank to ask for help, I found him sitting on his front porch enjoying the sun and reading the Geelong Advertiser. This first meeting went well. Frank loaned me a set of his tools so I could get a set made by a tool maker. He also offered to show me his "tricks of the trade" and said he would show me how it was done. Hallelujah, I now had a teacher!

Frank requested that I first find someone's house to point and then he would come on site and teach me. After our first meeting, I drove around Geelong knocking on front doors explaining that I had a teacher and offered to point their house for free if I could be allowed to tuck-point their premises. To my surprise and astonishment, nobody was interested, even though I had offered my services for free. I cannot remember how many streets I canvassed or how many doors I knocked on but finally, a couple who lived in East Geelong, said they would love to have their pointing done.

As soon as I was told it would be okay to do the job, I let Frank know that I had a house. He gave me a hammer and a chisel and told me to chisel out all of the existing tuck-pointing and that when I was finished, to call him then he would come out on site and start teaching me.

The next week I organised a time that was good for Frank to meet me on site. Finally, the day came and I was on site early and all "eager beaver" to get started!

Frank arrived on time, got out of his car, walked up to the front of the house and just stood there staring at the house I had hand chiselled, preparing the home to start the restoration. Without saying one word, Frank turned, went back to his car and drove off.

My first thought was that Frank had forgotten to bring something or maybe he needed some different tools? So, I patiently waited for him to return, still over the moon with the excitement that in a few hours, I would be well on my way, having my first lesson.

One half hour went by – no Frank – then one hour, then two hours.....until I finally left the work site to go to Frank's house to ask what was wrong, now believing that I must have made a mistake with the hammering and chiselling!

Once arriving at Frank's home, I was greeted by his aging wife who told me to go away, leave Frank alone and never come back, as [her] husband had retired years ago and didn't need some wog pestering him to go back and work"! ☹

So, I left and as I was getting in my truck and about to leave, Frank came outside and over to my truck, then apologised for not being able to help me. He went on to let me know that my chiselling was perfect, and that that particular house was the last house that he and his father had pointed just before his father passed away.

Being a Christian, upon hearing the problem, I quietly asked God under my breath "to please let me die because I had now destroyed the front façade of my client's home and couldn't come through with the goods".

As luck would have it, the home owners were very understanding and they ended up finding a Melbourne family who were 2nd generation tuck-pointers, who did the job on the condition that I stayed away and would not come near the house while the tuck-pointing was being done. I agreed, thanking God that I wasn't going to get sued after all.

My next course of action was to go back to Trade School and beg the Bricklaying teacher to let me view a VHS video about Tuck-pointing, even though I was no longer an apprentice. Allan (the

teacher) finally allowed me to take the video home for the weekend but he needed it to be returned on Monday.

I spent the whole weekend watching the video over and over, making many notes as I watched. Now having some knowledge of the process and more importantly, the recipes for my mixes, I built a brick model in my dad's garage. I worked on it every night after work for several months, teaching myself from the notes I had made until I reached a standard that I thought was good enough for me to take on a project.

As a result of a close friend of mine paving the backyard of a heritage home, I was contracted to Tuck-Point my first job – a double storey single fronted terrace house on Eastern Beach Road that needed one storey re-tucked. Upon completion of the project, the owners called the National Trust to come and see my work.

Shortly thereafter, I was approached by the National Trust and asked if I would be interested in doing some of their period buildings, to which I happily said “yes”!

My first project for the National Trust was to re-point the entire platform of the Geelong Railway Station (platform only), which was about to undergo a major restoration.

Soon after signing the contract, the Geelong Advertiser came on site to do a story about the restoration of the station. At this stage, I had started on the station and because my trade was so unique, they wrote a special article about my job and what I was doing was the main feature of the article.

A couple of days later, while continuing to work on the station, two older gentlemen who appeared to be waiting for the next train, came over to my work area and started asking me all sorts of questions. They had read the news article and said that they were interested to see how I pointed the white ribbons.

Sadly, I could only answer a few of their questions, letting them know that I was a novice, teaching myself from a video that came from the U.K.

I later learned that they were impressed with my honesty and humility, which is why they would take me under their wing. They turned out to be retired 2nd and 3rd generation tuck-pointers who were now living in St. Leonards, training race horses. Their names were Albie and Phil Klaneck. Albie had been taught by his father, who then went on to teach his son, Phil.

The first thing I learned from these pros, was that the video was basically a load of rubbish! Over the next few months, I was given the Klaneck's 150-year-old recipes, that unlike the video recipes, contained no cement. Using cement is an absolute “no no” in the heritage world, instead using sand and lime-based mortars *only* in order for the brick work to continue to breathe.

They modified my tools and taught me to make my mixes by using my feet on a hessian bag, which is an absolute must to get the putty to the right consistency and control the water factor in the lime.

Eventually the day came when the lessons were over. Albie's last words and advice to me, were: "we have nothing left to give, show or offer you. From here on, the walls you work on will teach you the rest", which turned out to be very true.

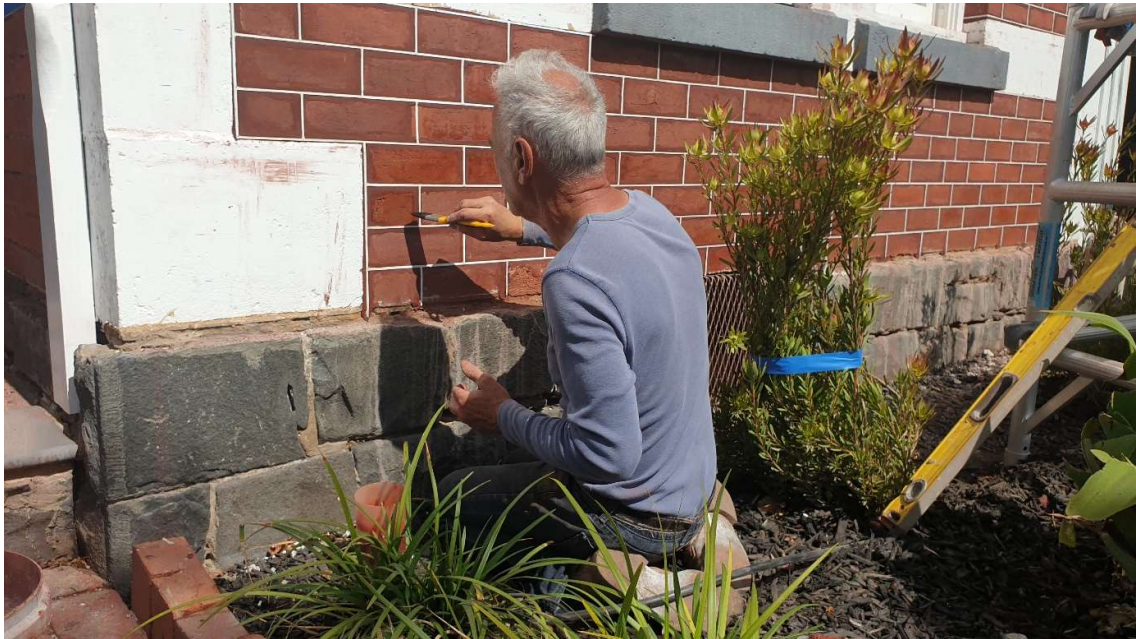
Over the 37 years since, I have taught 6 other tradesmen how to do this work in an endeavour to ensure that there were enough of us to protect any more buildings from being destroyed.

Out of the 6 who I have taught, only 2 are still working in the trade – my first apprentice, Antoni Pijaca and my last apprentice, Grant Sheather, who is now my business partner in Kobrix Masonry.

In closing, I would like to state that I am very grateful to have found Grant, who is every bit as skilled, filled with passion and who has absorbed all of the knowledge I have acquired over the years, passed on to him.

My days are coming to an end now, being close to 70 years old, but the trade is not lost, and the buildings will continue to be protected due to Grant being the future restorer of many such buildings."

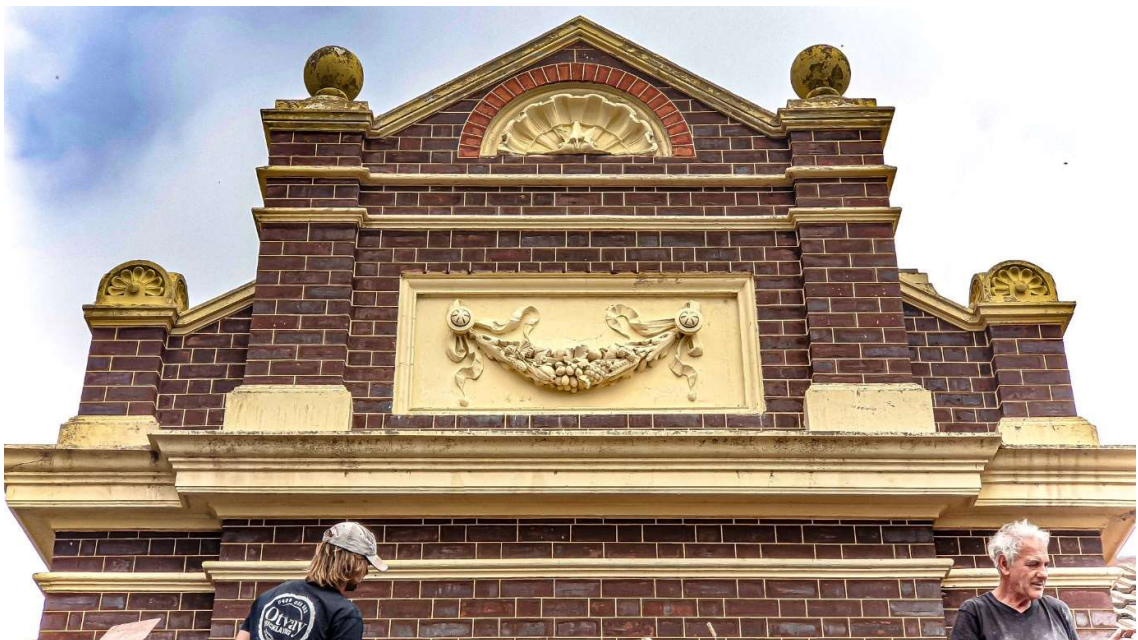
Ultimately, Nat's work has helped to conserve and enhance Greater Geelong's heritage for generations to come. His work is testimony to his patience, steady hand, keen eye, rare skill, and most of all, a love of the work.



Nat De-Palma.



The drummer, Nat De-Palma with The Blue Jays acoustic blues band, July 2023. Source: Nat De-Palma.



Portarlington Post Office. Source: Nat De-Palma.



32-34 Eastern Beach Road, Geelong, May 2024. Source: David Rowe.



Chipchase, 2 Ryrie St. Source: Nat De-Palma.



Fireplace, Geelong West, prior to restoration & tuckpointing. Source: Nat De-Palma.



Fireplace, Geelong West, after restoration & tuckpointing. Source: Nat De-Palma.



Verandah balustrade, Geelong, prior to restoration & tuckpointing. Source: Nat De-Palma.



Verandah balustrade, Geelong, after restoration & tuckpointing. Source: Nat De-Palma.



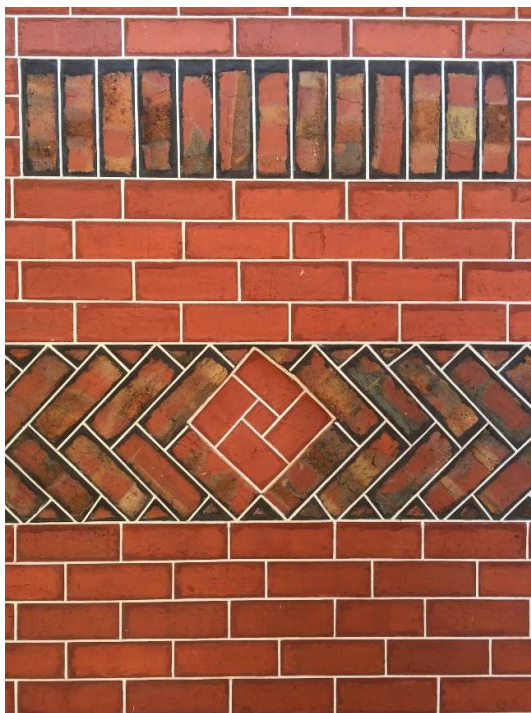
Geelong Railway Station. Source: Nat De-Palma.



Scott Hamilton Building, 126-128 Ryrie Street, before works. Source: Richard Facer.



Scott Hamilton Building, 126-128 Ryrie Street, 2021. Source: Richard Facer.





Other examples of Nat's work. Source: Nat De-Palma.