

# SINGLETON MEDICAL CENTRE



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1 free medical mission dispensary wellington street collingwood front view feb1986



free medical mission dispensary wellington street collingwood side view feb1986



free medical mission dispensary wellington street collingwood rear view aug1979



free medical mission dispensary wellington street collingwood front entrance aug1979

## Location

162 WELLINGTON STREET COLLINGWOOD, YARRA CITY

## Municipality

YARRA CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0497

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO143

## VHR Registration

April 16, 1982

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 13, 1999

What is significant?

The Singleton Medical Centre is a two storey brick building with a rendered facade, established in 1889 by Dr John Singleton as a dispensary to administer free medical attention and provide spiritual guidance to the poor. The dispensary originally included a large central mission hall at the rear with meeting rooms. The main building contained a large dispensary, two waiting rooms, two consulting rooms, a reading room, a registry office for the unemployed, a coffee room and book store. The facade is symmetrically composed about a pedimented doorway on the ground floor with paired round-headed arched windows delineated into bays by panelled pilasters.

How is significant?

The Singleton Medical Centre is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Singleton Medical Centre is of historical significance as a substantial reminder of the work of Dr John Singleton, one of Melbourne's most active and generous philanthropists. Dr Singleton was born in Dublin in 1808 and arrived in Victoria in 1851. He was initially involved with temperance societies and gaol visiting, and was a vocal opponent of capital punishment. Whilst practising medicine in Warrnambool, Mt. Gambier and Maryborough, he developed an interest in Aboriginal affairs and helped establish the Framlingham Aboriginal Reserve near Warrnambool. After returning to Melbourne in 1867 Singleton continued his philanthropic works, establishing the free medical dispensary in 1869 as well as a number of other facilities such as night shelters and a retreat for friendless and fallen women and widow's cottages in Collingwood. The original 1869 dispensary eventually became inadequate for the purpose and the present building was constructed using funds from a public appeal. It remains the crowning achievement of Singleton's work in providing free medical care in the working-class suburbs of Melbourne and appears to be the last surviving building with which Dr. Singleton was associated.

The Singleton Medical Centre is of historical significance as a reminder of the early provision of social welfare and medical care in Victoria. The Dispensary was one of the first ventures to distribute free medical attention to the poor. It, and the other welfare facilities established by Singleton, demonstrate the extent of poor people's reliance on philanthropy at a time when governments provided few welfare services. The site was also the first home of the Salvation Army in Melbourne, the Army using the dispensary's hall. Of particular significance in the history of medical care in Victoria is the fact that Singleton was a great supporter of women in medical practice and the Collingwood dispensary became the first practice to employ a female doctor, Laura Morgan.

The Singleton Medical Centre is of architectural significance as an example of late 19th century institutional architecture. Although parts of the facade have been removed, sufficient remains to provide a good example of the conservative classicism that was prevalent in institutional architecture during the 1880s boom years.

### Permit Exemptions

#### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage

Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Construction dates	1887,
Architect/Designer	Gibbins, JF,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	FREE MEDICAL MISSION DISPENSARY, WET ON WELLINGTON, SALVATION ARMY,
Hermes Number	318
Property Number	

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## Extent of Registration

Historic Building No. 497 Singleton's Medical Welfare Centre, 162 Wellington Street, Collingwood (to the extent of the total external fabric of the building only).

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No.35 16 April 1982 p.1054]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*