

BAND ROTUNDA



Beaufort Band Rotunda



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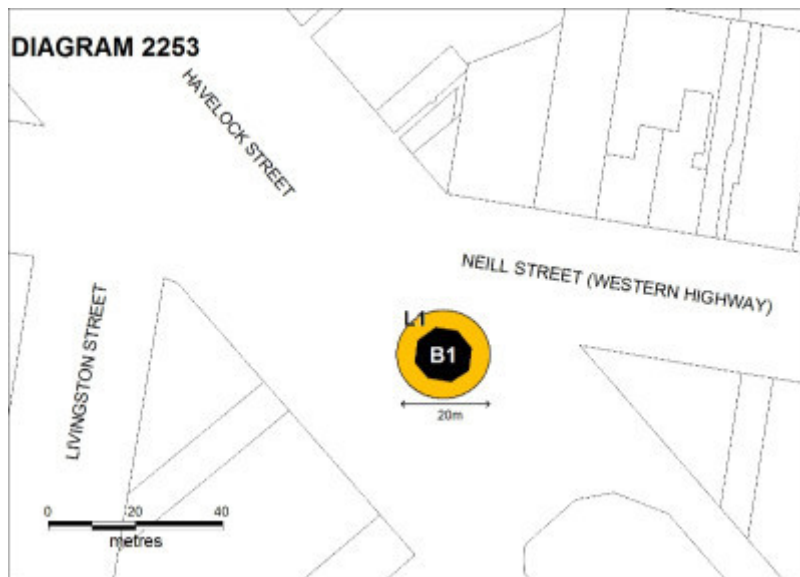
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beaufort bandstand diagram.jpg

Location

NEILL STREET (WESTERN HIGHWAY) AND HAVELOCK STREET BEAUFORT, PYRENEES SHIRE

Municipality

PYRENEES SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2253

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO20

VHR Registration

August 12, 2010

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Beaufort Band Rotunda was designed by the Ballarat architectural firm Clegg & Miller and built by Stevenson Brothers in 1903 for a cost of about £300. The Beaufort Brass Band had until then played in the local hotel, but the band decided that a rotunda could serve for rehearsals and performances as well as being an adornment to the town. The site chosen was occupied by the local weighbridge, which had operated in the main street since 1874. A competition with a prize of five guineas was held for the design of the bandstand. A new weighbridge office was to be located in the brick base, adjacent to the weighbridge platform, and Rear Admiral Bridges, the owner of Trawalla, a local pastoral property, agreed to donate a clock to be placed on the top. Queen Victoria had died in 1901, and it was decided that in addition to its practical function the bandstand should also act as a monument to her memory. The rotunda was opened in December 1903 by the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir Malcolm McEarchen, and Lady McEarchen started the clock. Sir Malcolm noted in his speech that the rotunda was the first memorial erected in Victoria to the memory of the late queen.

The Beaufort band rotunda is an octagonal structure with a brick base decorated with rendered bands, which once housed the weighbridge office and the stairs leading to the upper level, and above this a band platform of timber and cast iron with a corrugated iron roof. The base is simply designed but the upper level where the band played is very ornate, with decorative cast iron pillars, balustrade and brackets. Above is an octagonal cupola with decorative cast iron vents surmounted by a dome-roofed square clock tower with clock faces on each side and decorated with iron finials at each corner, and surmounted by a flagpole. The foundation stone is inscribed: 'A.D. 1903. Erected by the residents of Beaufort and district in commemoration of the glorious reign of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria'. Another inscription reads: 'The clock that surmounts this memorial was presented by Rear Admiral Bridges of Trawalla'. The building has been restored and repainted with its original colours.

How is it significant?

The Beaufort Band Rotunda is of architectural and historical significance to the state of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Beaufort Band Rotunda is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of an early twentieth century band rotunda. It is one of Victoria's most elaborate rotundas, unusual for the incorporation of elements of various styles: Federation in the base, Art Nouveau in the cast iron decoration, and Edwardian Baroque in the clock tower. It is the only known example in Victoria of a band rotunda with a clock tower, and is notable for its original secondary function, as the local weighbridge office.

The Beaufort Band Rotunda is historically significant as one of the first memorials built in Victoria following the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, and was said at the opening ceremony to be the first such memorial in Victoria. The elaborate structure reflects the importance of such structures in the social life of Victorian towns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and has served as the focal point of musical and other cultural activities in the town since 1903.

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](#).

Specific Exemptions:

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. **Minor Works :** Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive

Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates	1903,
Architect/Designer	Clegg & Miller,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	Bandstand, Queen Victoria Memorial,
Hermes Number	4157
Property Number	

History

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Band rotundas

Bands rotundas first appeared in Britain in the eighteenth century to accommodate outdoor band performances. The models developed in Britain in the nineteenth century were copied in Victoria, probably the first in Melbourne being built at the Cremorne Gardens, near Richmond in c1853, and many were soon also built in provincial centres. Band rotundas became a common building type during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when most communities had their own bands, which gave regular public performances. The bands usually performed in purpose-built rotundas, which were a common feature in public parks. As well as having the obvious musical function, they also had a social function as a meeting place and place of entertainment, and a decorative function, as a decorative architectural element in public gardens.

Band rotundas gained popularity in first quarter of the twentieth century, when many built, but after this their popularity decreased. In the 1930s construction virtually ceased in Victoria, with bandstands only being built in remote country areas. None appear to have been built between 1937 and the 1980s, but there was a revival in the 1980s. Many are no longer used, and many have been demolished

Band rotundas were usually circular, octagonal, hexagonal or square, and were roofed to provide shelter. A circular plan had the advantage that the band could face in any direction, depending on the wind direction. Screens were sometimes added for protection, eg from wind, or to allow for private rehearsal. Many had a ceiling sloping in towards the centre to deflect the sound outward, rather than enclosing it, as a ceiling that deflects the sound straight back down at the player can be uncomfortable to play under - especially for wind instruments which point upwards. Timber is the most acoustically favourable material. An elevated bandstand helps the sound, but is not good in windy places, eg at the seaside, but if it was too high the audience couldn't see the band.

There was a great local variation in the basic design. This partly reflected the fact that many served different secondary purposes, depending on the needs of the local community.

They might be used also for band rehearsals, as a memorial (eg to war, a local identity, royalty), as a platform for speech makers and political rallies, as a shelter, eg in a playground, or for dancing. In elevated rotundas the space below also had various uses, perhaps for storage, as a rehearsal space (as at Nhill), as a dressing room (as at Malvern Cricket Ground), as tearooms, as an infant welfare centre (Surrey Hills), as a weighing office (Beaufort), or even as a scout hall/opportunity shop (Portarlington).

Queen Victoria memorials

Queen Victoria (1819-1901) reigned from 1837 for over sixty years. Port Phillip was only settled in 1835, and when the colony of Victoria was founded in 1851 it was named after her. When the queen died in 1901 many

memorials were erected to her throughout the Empire, including Victoria, taking the form of hospitals, homes, gardens, statues and fountains. In some cases existing buildings were renamed in her memory: the Queen Victoria Hospital for Women and Children in Melbourne, established in 1896, was renamed the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital in 1901. In 1905 the *Queen Victoria Memorial Act* was passed, which required that £25,000 be paid from Australia's Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purposes of erecting a monument to the Queen.

HISTORY OF PLACE

A weighbridge was constructed in 1874 in the main street of Beaufort, on the site of the present rotunda. It had a small timber weighbridge house, about 2 metres square with a four gabled roof, and two finials were added to hold lamps in 1885. (In the early twentieth century it was relocated many times, and has now been restored and placed next to the Mechanics Institute.)

Until 1903 the Beaufort Brass Band practised at the Golden Age Hotel, which was thought by the Band Secretary to be inappropriate, especially for the younger members of the band. He suggested that Beaufort might build a band rotunda, similar to those at Ballarat, Stawell, Camperdown and Portland. It would be a more suitable location for practice, for performances and would also be an adornment to the town. It was decided that the best location would be on the site of the existing weighbridge house, which was by then considered to be too inconvenient for users, which is on part of the road reserve, now used as a park. The rotunda could function as the weighbridge office, and Beaufort would not only have a rotunda but a better weighbridge setup. It was also suggested that some wealthy gentleman would donate a clock tower to be incorporated into the building.

A competition was held for the design of the rotunda, with a prize of five guineas, with entries closing in June 1903, and the winners were the Ballarat architects Clegg & Miller. Rear-Admiral Bridges of Trawalla agreed to donate the clock. £180 was raised in the town by donations and fund-raising events. It was decided that in addition to its practical functions the building should also be a monument to the memory of the late Queen Victoria, and a Queen's Memorial Fund was set up. The foundation stone was laid on 23 September 1903, with the band playing and a crowd of five or six hundred. The inscription on the stone reads:

A.D. 1903.

Erected by the residents of

Beaufort and district in commemoration of the glorious reign

of Her Late Majesty

Queen Victoria

It was built by the Stevenson Brothers for a cost for the building and the clock of about £300. It was officially opened on 2 December 1903, with six hundred local residents in attendance. The Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir Malcolm McEarchen, performed the opening ceremony and his wife set the clock working by pulling a ribbon suspended from the tower. McEarchen was a wealthy businessman and politician, who founded the shipping firm McIlraith, McEarchen & Co and launched the Australian trade in refrigerated meat.

The opening of the rotunda was reported in the *Riponshire Advocate* (5 December 1903):

The Suggestion of the band rotunda committee to build a bandstand with weighbridge beneath same was further elaborated on by Messrs Clegg and Miller, the successful competing architects, by the addition of a clock tower, and the edifice as now completed presents a combination of art worthy of imitation in any city. The design is in the form of an octagon, 22 ft in diameter. The lower storey, used as a weighbridge, is 9 ft high and is substantially erected of brick. The superstructure, generally speaking, is constructed of wood and iron. The whole of the ornamental friezes, balustrading and panels are executed to special designs of the architects, the clock faces are constructed entirely of cast iron. The total height of the structure to the top of the domed roof of the clock is 50 ft. Beneath, the window of the weighbridge room in an ornamental corbel table is placed the foundation stone, inscribed 'A.D. 1903. Erected by the residents of Beaufort and district in commemoration of the glorious reign of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria'.

This stone was laid by the president of the Shire on 23rd day of September. Immediately above the window is placed a marble tablet with the following inscription. 'The clock that surmounts this memorial was presented by Rear-Admiral Bridges of Trawalla.'

To Messrs Stephenson Bros of Beaufort, not a little credit is due for the faithful interpretation of the design and the sound and skilful manner in which the work has been carried out. Messrs Clegg and Miller, architects of Ballarat, are to be congratulated on the successful termination of the work.

Beaufort was en fête on Wednesday afternoon when fully 600 residents of the town and district assembled in the main street to witness the opening ceremony. .

Also present was Lord Mayor of Melbourne McEarchen. Lord McEarchen said 'the people of Beaufort had been the first in the state to put up a memorial to their late queen, and that showed the spirit, determination and progressive nature of the townsmen'.

The opening was also reported in *The Argus* of 4 December 1903. It noted that 'as it is the first memorial erected in the state [McEarchen] promised to have a photograph of it sent to His Majesty King Edward'.

Assessment Against Criteria

a. Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history

The Beaufort Band Rotunda was one of the first memorials built in Victoria following the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, and was said at the opening ceremony to be the first such memorial in Victoria. The elaborate structure reflects the importance of such structures in the social life of Victorian towns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and has served as the focal point of musical and other cultural activities in the town since 1903.

b. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

c. Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

d. Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.

The Beaufort Band Rotunda is an outstanding example of an early twentieth century band rotunda. It is one of Victoria's more elaborate rotundas, unusual for the incorporation of elements of various styles: Federation in the base, Art Nouveau in the cast iron decoration, and with an Edwardian Baroque style cupola. It is the only known example in the state of a band rotunda with a clock tower, and is also unusual for its original secondary function as the local weighbridge office. It is also an unusual memorial, erected in memory of the late Queen Victoria shortly after her death.

e. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

f. Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

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.

h. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Plaque Citation

Designed by the Ballarat architects Clegg & Miller and built in 1903 this rotunda, which had a weighbridge office in the base, was one of the first memorials erected in Victoria to the memory of the late Queen Victoria.

Extent of Registration

1. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 2253 held by the Executive Director.
2. All the building marked B1 on Diagram 2253 held by the Executive Director.

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/>