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# SYNAGOGUE



1 synagogue ballarat front view



SYNAGOGUE SOHE 2008



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## Location

2 BARKLY STREET BALLARAT EAST, BALLARAT CITY

## Municipality

BALLARAT CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0106

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO8

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

## What is significant?

The Jewish Synagogue in Barkly Street, Ballarat was built in 1861 and designed by the local architect, T. B. Cameron for the Ballarat Hebrew congregation. The first Jewish service was held in the Clarendon Hotel, Lydiard Street, in 1853 as the Jewish community began to establish itself in Ballarat, two years after gold was discovered in the area. The growth of this community in the township of Ballarat resulted in the need for a permanent synagogue.

Constructed in Barkly Street and consecrated in 1855, the first synagogue in Ballarat was a large, timber building, designed to accommodate a congregation of about two hundred. Two years later, about three hundred Jews were recorded as residing in Ballarat and the surrounding areas, with similar numbers in Bendigo and fewer in such towns as Geelong, Avoca and Castlemaine. In 1859 the Ballarat East Town Council requisitioned the land in Barkly Street and granted the congregation a replacement site at the corner of Barkly and Princess Streets. Private homes were used for religious services until the new synagogue, designed to accommodate about three hundred and fifty people, was built, and consecrated in 1861.

The Synagogue is a single storey rectangular building designed in a simple Renaissance Revival style with pedimented portico fronting a parapeted main hall. Paired Tuscan squared columns and pilasters support the portico, the tympanum of which contains the name of the congregation, 'Remnant of Israel' in Hebrew characters. Tuscan pilasters support the deep cornice of the main parapet and divide the side facades into bays. Simple, tall round-headed window openings flank the front portico and are positioned along the sides of the main hall.

Remodelling was undertaken in 1878, including the extension of the women's gallery along the sides of the hall, and the addition of a second staircase to the gallery and ante-rooms towards the front of the building. Externally the latter are in a style consistent with that of the building. The Synagogue was originally constructed in face brickwork, with contrast provided by rendered pilasters, columns, pediment, window reveals and cornice. The entire building has since been rendered. The building was renovated in the 1960s and 1970s and is still in use as a synagogue.

## How is it significant?

The Jewish Synagogue in Ballarat is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

## Why is it significant?

The Synagogue in Ballarat is of architectural significance as an example of conservative classical design as applied to an early religious building in Victoria. The interior of the building is also significant with intact furniture and fittings, including a cedar Bimah and cedar-fronted Ark, and cast iron gallery balustrading.

The Synagogue in Ballarat is of historical significance as an early example of a synagogue constructed for a Jewish congregation in Australia. Regarded as a highly orthodox synagogue in its early years, it is one of the few surviving nineteenth century synagogues in Victoria. Jewish congregations were formed in the country centres of Ballarat, Bendigo (synagogue demolished in 1920), Geelong (synagogue sold) and Shepparton and the synagogue in Ballarat is the only one still used for religious purposes. It is illustrative of the development of an early and strong Jewish community in Ballarat, and reflects the number of Jews, particularly from Europe, who settled permanently in the area from the 1850s. By the 1870s, Jews were relatively more numerous in Ballarat than in other Victorian towns and as a community they strongly influenced business life in the town. The Synagogue also has significance as one of the early surviving buildings in Ballarat and is illustrative of its early development.

The Synagogue in Ballarat is of scientific (horticultural) significance for the specimen of *Pinus Canariensis* (Canary Island Pine) which is located in front of the synagogue. It was one of two planted on 22 July 1867 by Jacob Bernstein, an active member of the Hebrew congregation in Ballarat and committee member for over thirty years. One tree was later removed however the remaining tree is a fine example of this species.

*[Online Data Upgrade Project 2004]*

## 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. **Note:** All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

**General Conditions: 3.** If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. **Note:** A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan 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 must 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	1861, 1878,
Architect/Designer	Cameron, TB,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,

Other Names BALLARAT SYNAGOGUE,  
Hermes Number 58  
Property Number

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## History

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### **The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Data Upgrade Project 2004. Sources were as follows:**

Jacobs, Lewis, Vines and Aitken. *Ballarat: a guide to buildings and areas 1851-1940*. Melbourne 1981

Jacobs Lewis Vines *Ballarat Conservation Study* 1978

M. Gould. *Conservation Analysis of the Former Mickveh Yisrael Synagogue, Exhibition Street, Melbourne*. (VHR 766) Melbourne 1990

N. Rosenthal. *Formula for Survival. The Saga of the Ballarat Hebrew Congregation*. Melbourne 1979

M. Lewis (ed). *Victorian Churches*. Melbourne 1991

## Extent of Registration

*City of Ballarat*. No. 106. Jewish Synagogue, Cnr. Barkly and Princess Streets, Ballarat.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3648]

*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/>*