

# STOREY HALL



STOREY HALL SOHE 2008



1 storey hall swanston street  
melbourne front elevation



storey hall swanston street  
melbourne rear elevation

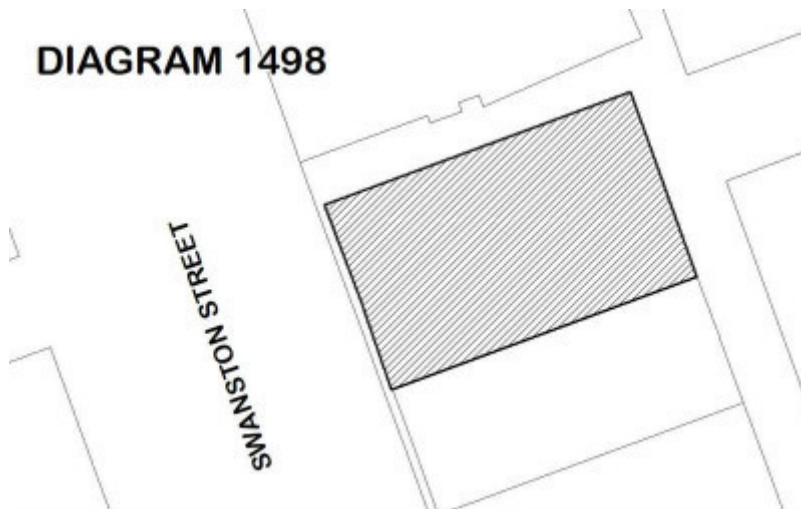


DIAGRAM 1498

## Location

344-346 SWANSTON STREET MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE CITY

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1498

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO482

## VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

January 7, 2021

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 28, 2000

What is significant?

Storey Hall was erected by the Hibernian-Australasian Catholic Benefit Society and was one of several such halls erected by Friendly Benefit Societies in Melbourne during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The architects were Tappin, Gilbert and Dennehy and the contractors were O'Dea and Kennedy. Storey Hall is a three storey building with basement, constructed of stuccoed brick and stone. The principal facade is designed in the manner of the High Renaissance, consisting of a massive podium base of Malmsbury bluestone articulated with quoin work, a large main storey divided into three bays by paired Ionic columns with aedicule window openings, and finally, above an elaborate cornice, an attic storey. At the parapet level was a statue of Erin with a harp and Irish wolfhound. This was removed in 1930. The fireproof construction in the basement is an example of the Traegerwellblech system of corrugated iron and concrete. The building was opened in 1887 and occupied by the Hibernian Society until 1903. Following financial difficulties the Hibernians were forced to sell the hall to the Central Zion Tabernacle who occupied it until 1907, at which stage it passed into the hands of Messrs Gibbs and Bright and was known as the Guild Hall. The hall was used for art exhibitions, as a cinema and as a wrestling venue. During the First World War it was briefly occupied by the Women's Political Association, a feminist pacifist organisation. It was a venue for large anti-conscription rallies. During 1917 it was temporarily a commune to support wharf workers during the General Strike. In 1958 it was purchased by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and was renamed Storey Hall in 1959 in honour of industrialist, Sir John Storey, for his contribution to technical education in Victoria.

How is it significant?

Storey Hall is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Storey Hall is historically significant as a response by Irish Catholics to their perceived marginalisation by the Melbourne Protestant establishment, and the denial of their access to the city's largest public halls for meetings. It is significant for its association with the Hibernian-Australasian Catholic Benefit Society, a large society which was one of the main focus points for Irish Catholics in Melbourne. In the twentieth century the hall continued to be a significant place for protest meetings, and it is particularly important for its associations with pacifist and anti-conscription rallies during the First World War and for its use as a commune during the General Strike of 1917.

Storey Hall is architecturally significant as one of the most architecturally pretentious and largest Friendly Society Halls erected in Melbourne during the nineteenth century. The scale and styling is more akin to a municipal hall. The facade is an unusual example of a full blown interpretation of the High Renaissance style, typified by the

overall concentration of ornament and the debasing of the role of the wall.

## 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	1885,
Architect/Designer	Tappin, Gilbert & Dennehy,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	HIBERNIAN HALL, GUILD HALL, DUREAU MEMORIAL HALL,
Hermes Number	821
Property Number	

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## History

### History of Place:

The Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society was formed in the late 1860s as an amalgamation of two earlier societies. During the 1870s it became the key Irish friendly society in Victoria with many branches throughout the State. The St Patrick's Society had constructed a meeting hall in Bourke Street some years before but it was considered too small for the whole community to use. In 1883 a visiting Irish Member of the British House of Commons was prevented from speaking to Irish Catholics in local public halls, including the Melbourne Town Hall, about the situation in Ireland. Outcry over the situation prompted the Hibernians to plan a new building with a large hall.

## Plaque Citation

Known as Hibernian Hall, this building was designed by Tappin, Gilbert and Dennehy in 1887 to provide the Irish Catholic community with a large meeting space. It was renamed in honour of industrialist, John Storey, in 1959.

## **Extent of Registration**

Heritage Act 2017 NOTICE OF REGISTRATION As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act 2017, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying a place in the Heritage Register: Number: H1498 Category: Registered Place Place: Storey Hall Location: 344 Swanston Street, Melbourne Municipality: City of Melbourne All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 1498 encompassing all of Crown Allotments 27, 28 and 29 Section 44 City of Melbourne Parish of Melbourne North 7 January 2021 STEVEN AVERY 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/>*