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# SCOTTISH HOUSE



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2008



1 scottish house william street  
melbourne front view feb1986



scottish house william street  
melbourne balcony view  
jul1985



scottish house william street  
melbourne front entrance  
oct1990



scottish house william street  
melbourne roof design  
jul1985

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## Location

90-96 WILLIAM STREET MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE CITY

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0606

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO755

## VHR Registration

September 25, 1985

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 10, 2000

What is significant?

Scottish House was designed as an office block for the prominent shipping agents McIlwraith McEacharn Ltd in 1907 by architect Charles D'Ebro. The six storey building has a light well in the centre and the construction is a steel frame with masonry walls and composite reinforced concrete and timber floors. The floors are six inches (150mm) thick, possibly with coke-breeze aggregate and expanded steel as reinforcement. The front facade, in a restrained English Renaissance style is faced with sandstone and has a rusticated base with plain arched openings. The slightly projecting central bay is crowned with a pediment. The architraves are minimal. The interior was considerably altered in the 1950s, entailing major alterations to walls, toilets and lifts, and original finishes and details were lost. The columned main chamber and the stair forming a ring around the central light court form notable spaces.

How is it significant?

Scottish House is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Scottish House is architecturally significant as an office building that expresses both in style and structure the commercial values and status of a leading Australian company. The building is significant for its fine stonework. The subdued elegance of the design ideally displays the cut sandstone of the main facade. The ground floor is equally elegant for its bluestone arcade with carved keystones and red granite columns. The use of reinforced concrete floors is an early example of this structural system in a city building. The building is unusual for the dual entries which lead separately to the main ground floor chamber or to the lift and staircase which serves the upper floors.

Scottish House is historically significant as the head office for more than seventy years of the mercantile agents and shipowners, McIlwraith McEacharn & Co. The construction of Scottish House confirmed their position as a leading Australian coastal shipping firm. During the latter decades of the nineteenth century the firm helped pioneer the export of frozen meat, making them one of the most innovative and important shipping company's of the period.

## 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:**

- > Internal Office Fit-outs
- > Alterations to interior fit-outs which do not affect any of the following;
  - structural elements of the building,
  - the exterior of the building,
  - the interior of the ground floor of the building,
  - the form and location of the lift shaft and stairwell.
- > Installation, removal and replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted artworks.
- > Installation, removal and replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings.

### Decorative Schemes

Alterations to internal decorative schemes (except for the ground floor), including painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of original paint or other decorative scheme.

Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves and skirtings.

### Electrical Works

Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed.

Installation, removal or replacement of smoke detectors.

Lift Car Alterations to, or replacement of, lift cars

### Bathrooms and Kitchens

Refurbishment of existing bathrooms, toilets including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings.

Installation, removal or replacement of existing kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers etc. and associated plumbing and wiring

### CONDITIONS:

**1.** Exempt classes of works or activities are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the registered place / object. However, if other previously hidden original or inaccessible details of the object or place are uncovered, any works that may affect such items shall immediately cease. The Executive Director shall be notified of the details immediately to enable Heritage Victoria representatives to inspect and record the items, and for discussion to take place on the possible retention of the items, or the issue of a modified approval.

**2.** If there is a Conservation Policy and Plan approved by the Heritage Council or Executive Director, all works and activities shall be carried out in accordance with that Policy and Plan.

3. Nothing in this Declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exempt alterations provided work has not commenced on the alteration.

THE ATTENTION OF THE OWNER AND/OR APPLICANT IS DRAWN TO THE NEED TO OBTAIN ALL OTHER RELEVANT PERMITS PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.

Construction dates            1907,  
Architect/Designer            D'Ebro, Charles,  
Heritage Act Categories      Registered place,  
Hermes Number                827  
Property Number

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## History

Contextual History:

Mcllwraith and McEacharn & Co was one of the most innovative and important Australian shipping firms of the late nineteenth century. The parent company had its origins in the immigrant trade between Britain and Australia and helped to pioneer the export of frozen meat. The name of the building, Scottish House, reflects the origins of the firm's British founders, Andrew Mcllwraith and Sir Malcom McEachern. McEachern settled in Australia in 1881 and became a prominent figure in business and social circles in Melbourne. He served periods as Mayor of Melbourne and as a member of the Federal Parliament. He returned to Britain in 1905 and died in 1910. McEacharn settled in Melbourne in the mid-1880s.

The building of Scottish house coincided with the launch of the company's first passenger liner, Karoola, in 1909. The company launched another liner in 1913, the Katoomba, and in 1935 the Kanimbla. In the post-war period the company concentrated on container shipping.

The choice of C A D'Ebro as architect probably reflected the architect's associations with the meat trade and his interest in cool stores and freezing works. D'Ebro was particularly interested in the use of reinforced concrete.

Associated People: Sir Malcolm McEacharn  
Andrew Mcllwraith

## Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 606, Scottish House, 90-98 William Street, Melbourne (to the extent of the whole building and the whole of the Title Volume 3141 Folio 076).

[Victoria Government Gazette No. 101 25 September 1985 p. 3790]

*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/>*