MOIRA SHIRE STAGE TWO HERITAGE STUDY 2007
VOLUME FIVE of Five: HERITAGE PRECINCTS: NUMURKAH, ST JAMES, TUNGAMAH, YARRAWONGA

YARRAWONGA TOWN CENTRE PRECINCT

Contents

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
Yarrawonga Town Centre PRECINCT

Appendix 1 Photo List of culturally significant places in the precinct

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LOCATION

Precinct Boundaries And Map

The Yarrawonga Town Centre Heritage Precinct is centered along Belmore Street which forms a major north-south spine including intersections with Orr, Piper and Witt Streets in the precinct and as such encompasses the historic commercial heart of the town. The heritage sites included within the precinct are thus predominantly of a commercial or civic nature. The precinct has been affected by all major periods of development in Yarrawonga and significant extant sites reflect its interconnectedness with the commercial and civic history of the town.
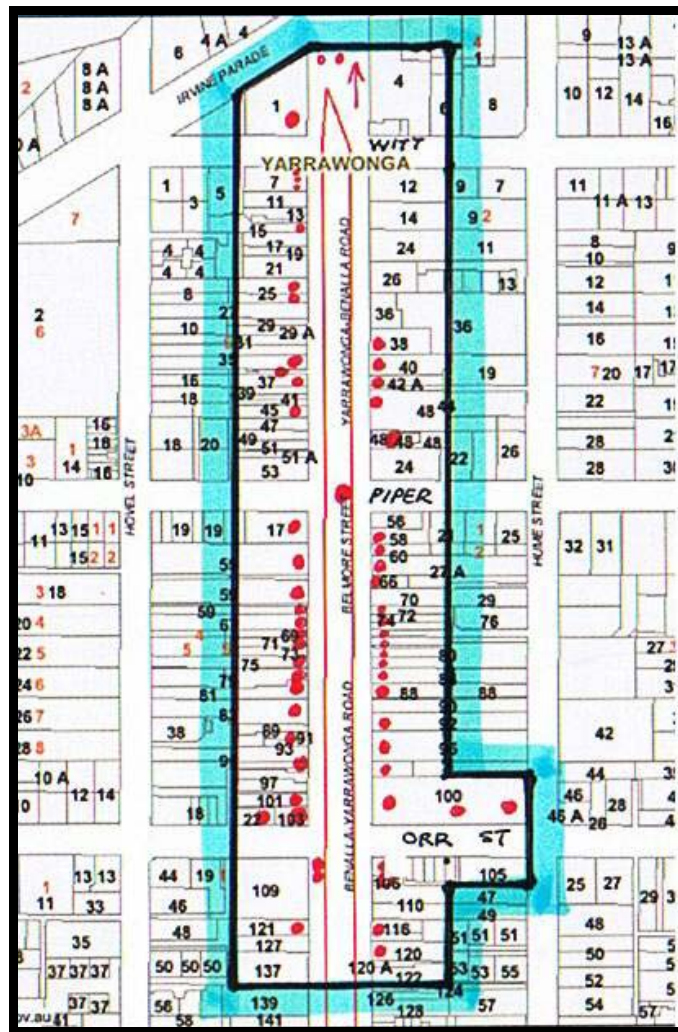
Refer to the map in Fig 1 for the boundary details.

Fig. 1 Map of Yarrawonga Town Centre Precinct with location of 59 sighificant places marked with red dots. Refer to the photo list of thes places in the appendix.

Note: Not all significant sites are marked with a red dot as the map provided by Moira shire council is not accurate and some places do not have street numbers on the premises. Refer to the photo list of places.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Table One: List of Culturally Significant Places, their location , database number and historical context. Source Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2006.

Historic Era	Historic Themes and Events	Dates	Extant places within precinct	DB No.	Location
Victorian 1860s to 1890s	Yarrawonga's Survey in 1868. 1873 first few allotments were purchased. Transport: 1877 Cobb and Co. coach service. From steamboat to railway town. Commercial subdivision. Development of urban services. 1886 Railway Opens 1886 First Breweries 1891 First Bridge 1895 Water Reticulation	1882 1886 1892 1896 1880s 1890s	Plaque re Punt Criterion Hotel Victoria Hotel Customs House & Paddle wheels Old Shire Offices Victorian shops Late Victorian shops	351 350 346 352 724 354 920, 345, 347, 349 318, 364, 342, 358, 340, 341	Belmore St Belmore St. Belmore St. Belmore St Belmore St. Belmore St. Belmore St.
Federation 1901 to 1914	Political: Federation, free intercolonial trade. Development of urban services.	1904 1912 c.1900s	Former Post Office Former State Savings Bank Federation shops	353 2 369, 368	Belmore St. Belmore St. Belmore St.
Interwar 1915 to 1930s	Transport: Increase in cross-river traffic Social: return of Great War veterans. Infrastructure: construction of Yarrawonga weir.	1919 1921 1924 1927 1920s-1930s 1930 1935 1937	Memorial Tree War Memorial Concrete Bridge Terminus Hotel Interwar shops Shire Hall Grove Open Air Pictures Burke's Royal Mail Hotel	357 333 348, 343, 344, 334, 363, 1097 367 361 366	Belmore St. Belmore St. Murray River Belmore St. Belmore St. Belmore St. Belmore St. Belmore St.
Post War 1940s to 1960s	Infrastructure: flooding of Lake Mulwala Economic: Post war boom	1968	Back To Yarrawonga Centenary Plaque Heritage Walk Plaques		Belmore St Belmore St

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HISTORICAL CONTEXT[1]

The township of Yarrawonga was first surveyed in 1868 by government surveyor Henry Grimes. The area of this first survey was that bounded by Witt Street, Hume Street, Orr Street and Hovell Street.[2] It comprised Sections 1-4 of the subsequent town planning scheme and thus includes the main part of the Town Centre Heritage Precinct, south of Witt Street and north of Orr Street. While the town site is thus a particularly early one in the history of the Moira Shire area, it was not until 1873 that the first few allotments were purchased by the township's first private landowners, John McNally, John Salmon, Albert L. Ely, Mary Theresa Louch, Robert Sharp and John Thomas Swannell. These allotments were all in section 1 or 2, and further land sold at a gradual pace thereafter through 1873-4.[3]

Agricultural land around the vicinity of the town included that purchased by John M. Gorman, who was also a significant landowner in the town, taking up three allotments in the 1874 land sale. The early history of Yarrawonga was interconnected with the agricultural selectors and with the river crossing. Halberd's punt was a prominent feature and 'local legend' up to the building of the first timber bridge in 1891. Other transport infrastructure included the Cobb and Co. coach service which ran from 1877.[4]

It was not until the 1880s that brick structures began to replace the timber buildings that dominated Belmore Street up to that time. Important industries that developed at this time in and around Yarrawonga were saw milling, brick making, brewing and flour milling. Wheat remained the major primary industry. The town's breweries were the Yarrawonga Brewery (1886-1912) and Anglo-Australian Brewery (1886-1912). The town was serviced by a number of hotels, the extant buildings being the **Criterion Hotel (1882) DB350 , Victoria Hotel (1886) DB346, Terminus Hotel (1927) DB333 and Burke's Royal Mail Hotel (c.1935) DB366.**[5] Most of these buildings replaced earlier buildings on the same sites in Belmore Street.

Particular urban development took place ahead of the opening of the railway in 1886, which was a much anticipated event for which the town's Progress Association had lobbied for many years. Most of the town's land allotments, both commercial and residential, were purchased by the early 1880s.[6] The town's commercial development in the early 1880s included two banks, four hotels and a number of shops all to be found along Belmore Street. In 1882 the town's post office was operated out of Davis's General Store.[7]
In August of 1885, the Yarrawonga *Mercury* (est.1879) reported on the numerous town improvements ahead of the opening of the railway station:

> A glance around Yarrawonga at the present time is quite sufficient to convince one of the faith entertained in its future prosperity. On all sides buildings of various design and dimensions are in the course of erection, and daily is the want of dwelling accommodation being more felt.[8]

The opening of the 'long delayed' railway line itself was 'a red letter day', and was marked by celebrations of 'Yarrawonga's destined prominence.'[9] The line was particularly significant on a historic level as the first line to be completed under the significant 1884 Railway Act. The *Australasian* reported on the town's state in 1886:

> There are in Yarrawonga three brick churches, namely the Church of England, Presbyterian and Congregational, and three weatherboard churches [...] There is a Masonic Hall and **Mechanics Institute**, **DB335** consisting of one room, giving accommodation for a free and lending library and reading rooms. [...] [10]

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Fig 2 Belmore Street scene in 1882 looking northwards. Source: Loughnan 1968.

The 1880s were 'boom years' in Yarrawonga.[11] Between 1881 and 1891 the town's population grew from 366 to 1,278.[12] The 1890s, a depression-decade throughout much of Australia, were a more stable period in the town, but by the early twentieth century the town had nonetheless grown gradually into a well established and significant township, described by the *Australian Handbook* in 1903 as:

> A post town, with **telegraph, money-order office**, **saving bank**, receipt and pay office and electrical registrar's office [...] Within the border of the town are eight hotels, the Yarrawonga, Commercial, **Royal Mail,** Exchange, **Terminus**, **Criterion**, Farmer's Arms, and **Victoria**; branches of the Australasia, Commercial and National Banks,[...] Town has excellent urban water-works (Trust), the water supply being pumped from the Murray and conveyed by pipes through the streets; it is lighted with kerosene. ... it is now one of the most important towns on the Murray. It has besides the places above-mentioned, two saw mills, a farmer's co-operative grain store, butter factory, a number of **general stores**, and **tradesman's shops**, two flour mills, three cordial factories [...] three **public halls** for meetings, Masonic M.U.I.O.O.F, I.O.O.F, and W.C.T.U., A.N.A and Hibernian societies, and many private residences.[13]

At this time the population of the town was 1,500 and the centre of a shire of 3,200 residents.

The *Leader* reported in 1931 that the progress of the township had been constrained to some degree by 'a large landowner disinclined to sell property' until the turn of the century.[14] The early twentieth century was certainly the next main period of growth in Yarrawonga and saw the beautification of **Belmore Street** and the erection and improvement of several shops and public buildings. Among these were the 1912 **State Savings Bank of Victoria** building, which formed a significant block of civic buildings next to the 1896 **Shire Offices**, and the 1904 **post office** both augmenting the importance of the old Shire Offices block. The shop adjacent to the bank in the photo below also appears to be extant DB1097.

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Fig3 A postcard view of the red brick Post Office and stone Shire Offices with fence, in 1905.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

Fig 4 1916 photos of Belmore Street showing Post Office, Shire Offices Savings Bank, and shop.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

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Fig 5 Cattle in Belmore street, Yarrawonga - Yarrawonga, VIC showing part of 1919 Yarrawonga's Avenue of Honour 230 Kurrajongs which were planted, each with a name plaque of a man who served in the Great War.
Source: At Work and Play – 00883 State Library of NSW

During the Great War of 1914-18, 475 men enlisted from the Yarrawonga area, of whom 57 were killed during the conflict. Of the Yarrawonga State School alone, 81 former students enlisted and 16 did not return.[15] The contribution of Yarrawonga to the defence of Australia and the Empire was thus keenly felt and the sacrifice was marked, as across Australia, by the erection of monuments. The first of these, in 1919, were the memorial trees, in the form of an Avenue of Honour consisting of over 230 currajong trees. Each and every tree was marked with a plaque commemorating individual soldiers who fought in the war.[16] The avenue extended down Belmore, McNally, and Lott Streets.[17] Of these trees, within this precinct only one remains. It has the original plaque which reads "This tree was planted in honour of Sgt Allan McColl MM".

From this time onwards **Belmore Street** became a particular focus of civic pride in the commercial and architectural development of Yarrawonga. Postcards and photographs testify both to community attitudes towards the strip and to the various beautification efforts, particularly trees and shade.

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Figs 6 & 7   Belmore Street with grand palms, the Kurrajong Avenue of Honour, and war memorial monument in 1936 (top) in the 1940s (bottom). Source: State Library of Victoria.

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Fig 8 Belmore Street grand palms and part of the Kurrajong Avenue of Honour. Source: Jacye Symes.

Among the most notable civic developments in the interwar period was the foundation of The Grove Pictures Company, a not-for-profit community organisation which showed pictures on several sites in **Belmore Street** such as the **Athenaeum** hall and places on the site of the current 1930 **Shire Hall** and **Grove Memorial Park.**[18]   The Heritage Walk with street plaques is a recent acknowledgement of the social significance of Belmore Street heritage to the citizens of Yarrawonga.
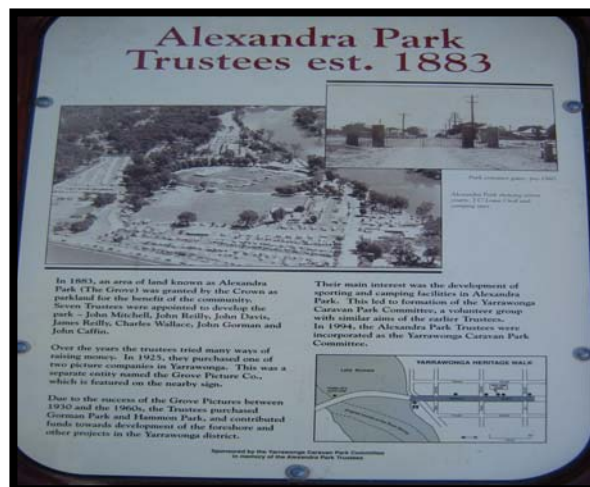

Fig9   Plaque in Belmore Street acknowledging the volunteers who established Alexandra Park.
A new period was ushered in at Yarrawonga with the building of the Yarrawonga weir and the resulting flooding of Lake Mulwala in 1939. As well as boosting demand for workers' housing and services in the town, the project also established Yarrawonga as a waterside tourist resort, with the establishment of the Foreshore Improvement Committee in 1944.[19] The Alexandra Park and other foreshore amenities are testimony both to the committee and to the fundraising efforts of the Grove Picture Company.[20] This period saw the next large population boom since the 1880s, with the population growing from 1,908 in 1933 to 2,953 in 1954, an increase of around 50% in a little over two decades. A number of interwar and post-war shops in Belmore Street are reminders of this growth. The grand **Inter-War Free Classical styled Shire Hall (1930) DB367** is a particular testament to the prosperity and importance of Yarrawonga, completed in 1930.

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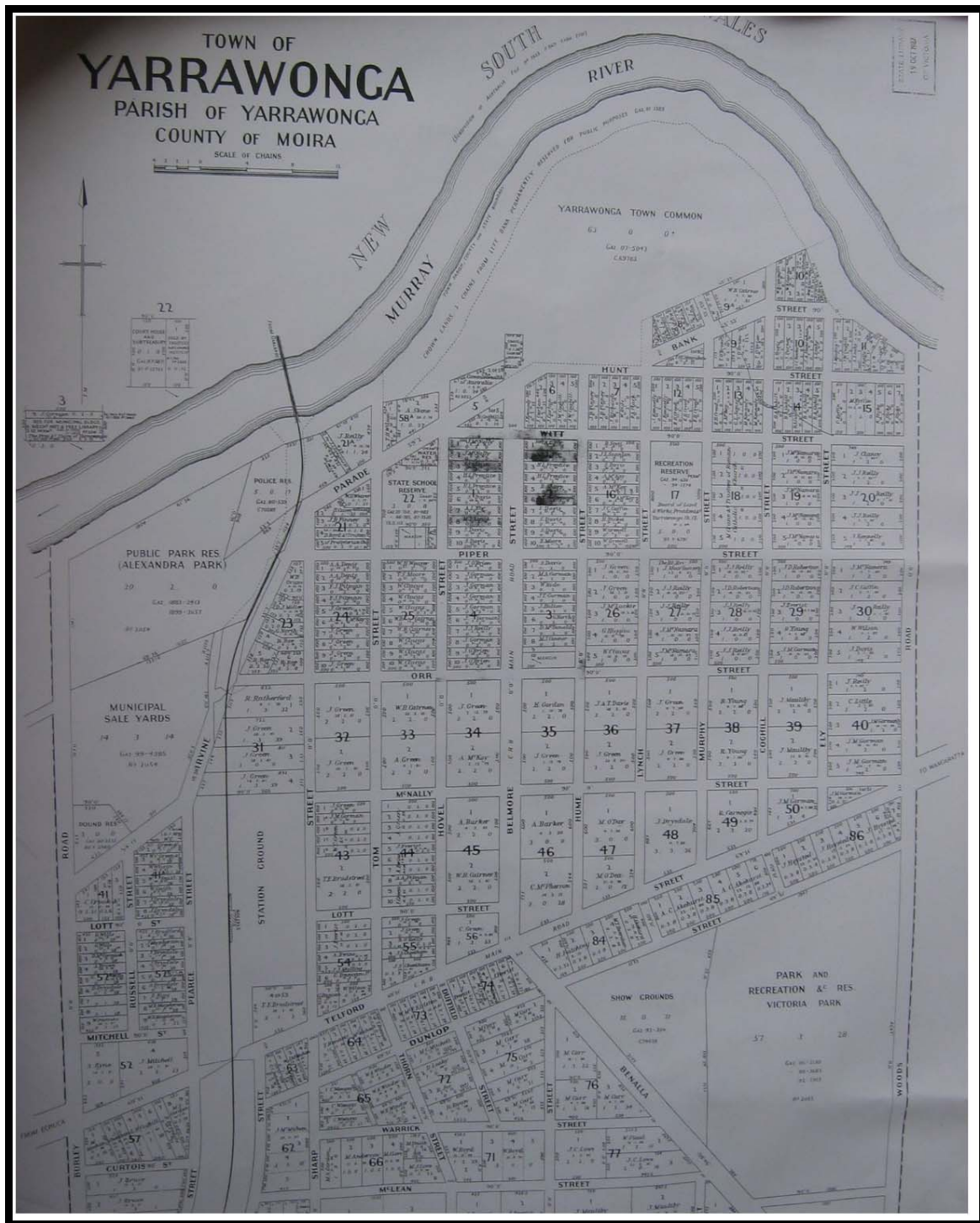**VOLUME FIVE of Five: HERITAGE PRECINCTS: NUMURKAH, ST JAMES, TUNGAMAH, YARRAWONGA**

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Fig 10 TOWN PLANNING SCHEME MAP 1933 --
Source: State Library of Victoria

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

URBAN DESIGN, VIEWS AND FOCI   Belmore Street

Views and foci

The most important views within the precinct are towards the War Memorial in the intersection of Belmore and Piper Streets. Much of the historic streetscape is expressed in the buildings and subdivision layout of streets and allotments and some views of these. There are important views from within the precinct to the palms, bridge, customs house and lake. There are also important views to the imposing Town Hall on the corner of Orr Street.

Fig11 Important view north along Belmore Street from Witt Street intersection, showing the tall palms, street trees and customs house. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

Fig 12 Important view south along Belmore Street from Piper Street intersection, showing the important foci: War monument in the foreground and Town Hall roof and tower in the background.. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

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Unfortunately, the beautification by earlier generations, with magnificent palms down the centre of the road and Kurrajongs along each side of Belmore Street, has been removed.[21] More recently however nibs have been introduced to the intersections to slow down the cars and separate the parked cars from the flowing traffic and some trees have been replanted.

Fig 13 View c 1950s showing the magnificent urban design created with large symbolic palms down the centre of the road, the Kurrajong Avenue of Honour along each side of the road and the dignified War Memorial Monument with the granite and chain fence around it. Source slv Accession No.: H32492/6618 Image No.: b02909

It is notable that cars are angle parked between the Kurrajong trees and between the palms in the center of the road.[22]
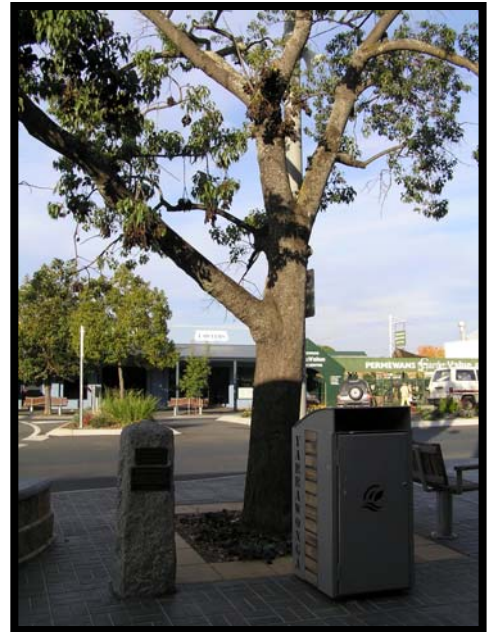

Fig 14 War memorial in 2005. It is unclear why the granite and chain fence has not been maintained on the round-about but the granite pillars appear to have been relocated beside the plaque in Dunlop Street. . Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005.

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Culturally Significant Places\

Memorial Avenue of Honour Trees (1919) and War Memorial Monument (1921) and DB 357

Figs 15, 16, 17 The only original memorial Kurrajong tree remaining in Belmore Street. It stands on the SW corner of Belmore and Orr Streets with a modern wall and plaque with the soldier's name but not explaining its origins as part of the 1919 Avenue of Honour. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2005

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The War Memorial in Belmore Street was designed by S. Talochino & Son, and unveiled in 1921.[23] While the kurrajong trees commemorated all those who enlisted, the monument was inscribed with the names of those 64 who died in the war.[24] The monument was formally unveiled by General Sir John Gellibrand, in the presence of 1500 veterans and residents, after a procession along the full length of the Avenue of Honour from the railway station to the monument in Belmore Street. One Kurrajong remains in Belmore Street and three in Lott Street.

Fig 18 Left War Memorial Monument in Belmore Street. Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.
Fig 19 Right. The unveiling ceremony at the War Memorial, Belmore Street, 1921. Source: Clarke 1995.

Fig20 Detail of War Memorial Monument. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2005.

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Fig 21 Commemorative Plaque to mark the centerary of Yarrawonga's Survey in 1868. "Back to Yarrawonga" celebrations on 11 October 1968. Town Hall Belmore Street. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

Customs House (1892)   **DB 352**

Fig 22 Customs House 1892 - 1910, restored 1995. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005
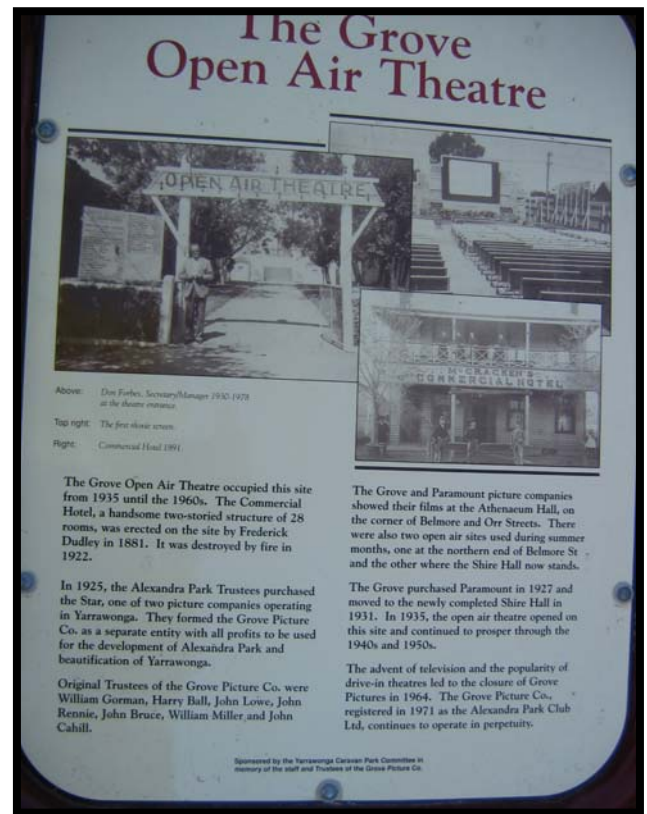

Fig 23 Paddlesteamer paddlewheels built in 1883. 1939/6? Reclaimed 1983, restored 1984. DB 724
Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

The Grove Memorial Park (c.1964) and trees (c.1935), and commemorative plaque, Belmore Street. DB 361

The Alexandra and Grove Memorial Garden is important as the site of the Grove Picture Company's open air theatre from 1935 – 1964. The Grove Picture Company played an important role in both picture entertainment before television, and as a fundraiser for significant beautification, recreational and service oriented projects in Yarrawonga.[25]

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Figs 24 & 25 Landscaped site of former Grove Open Air Theatre 1935 – 1964, with established Bay and Jacaranda Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005.
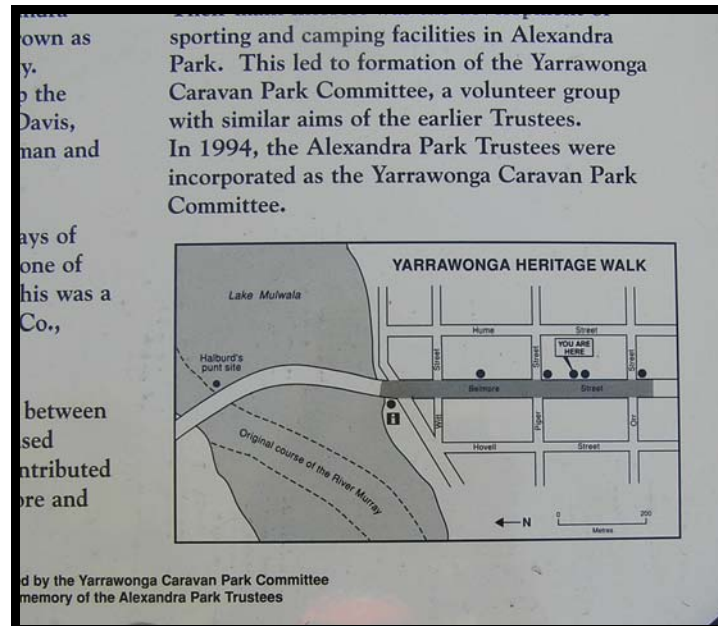
Heritage Walk Plaques, Belmore Street.

Fig 26 Showing part of Plaque which forms part of the Yarrawonga Heritage Walk in Belmore Street.
Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005.

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Old Shire Hall (1896)   DB 354

Fig 27 Former Shire Offices 1896 – 1930 Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The Shire of Yarrawonga was established in 1878 and subdivided into five ridings in 1889. Early meetings of the shire council in Yarrawonga were held at the **Victoria Hotel**. The first shire engineer, H. G. Oliver, was instructed by the council in 1892 to draw up plans and construct the first shire hall and offices 'one room to be built at an estimated cost of £200 and the balance when funds are available'.[26] The building was subsequently constructed and served as shire offices from 1896 until the completion of the new shire hall and offices in 1930. When compared with the early photograph below, the building form is intact but the façade has been greatly altered. The 'stone' ashlar has been re-rendered and painted and a new skillion verandah added. The verandah is practical, but aesthetically the building has been stripped of the appearance of its historical Shire Offices origins.

Fig 28 A postcard view of the Post Office and Council Chambers in 1905. Note the unpainted 'stone' façade, projecting Tudor entry porch, Tudor windows and timber fence. Source: State Library of Victoria.

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Post Office (1904)   DB 353

Fig 29 Former Post Office (1904) in Belmore Street.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The postal service was established in Yarrawonga in 1874, when it operated out of Davies General Store in Belmore Street. In 1882 tenders were called for a post office, a wooden post office that was built the following year on the corner of the school block in Piper Street.[27] The red brick Federation post office in Belmore Street was constructed to replace the old wooden office in 1904 and instantly became an architectural and civic focus for the town. The building has excellent integrity. The white painted cement render trims, which overpower the originally dignified unpainted cement render decorative detailing, can be removed chemically.[28]

Fig30 The Post Office in Belmore Street in 1917.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

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Athenaeum Hall, Belmore Street.

Fig 31 Classical architectural details on the Athenaeum Hall, Belmore Street.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2005.

The Athenaeum is strongly associated with the Mechanics Institute of Yarrawonga, established in 1885, which occupied various sites around the town. 'In 1910, the Athenaeum Hall was purchased for £2,000. The books were then removed from the old building and a temporary library was opened in one of the offices of the Athenaeum Hall.'[29] Note the red tuck pointed brickwork of the walls and pilasters have been painted.

Figs. 32, 33, 34
Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005.
The building is prominently located on the NW corner of Orr and Belmore Streets, directly opposite the Town Hall. The interior and exterior of the shop and hall beyond are important as they retain many early architectural details. Note the copper window frames by E L Yencken and Co, glazed tile ingo and stall boards, and superb pressed metal verandah ceiling with coved cornices.

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Shire Hall (1930) Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.   DB 367

Fig. 35 Inter-War Free Classical styled Shire Hall (1930), entry portico, Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The new shire hall was begun in 1929 and completed in 1930. With the rapid growth of Yarrawonga's population in the interwar period, with both expanding agricultural production and the construction works associated with the weir, the hall answered a longstanding demand for expanded municipal offices for the Shire of Yarrawonga. The architects commissioned for the work were Harrison & Glaskin of Albury.[30] The builder was J. Keith, whose tendered cost was £14,875. The hall was part of a large program of municipal works, including the sealing of roads and drain construction that occurred around this time.[31]

The Inter-War Free Classical style has a courageous weaving of Art Deco decorative themes into the detailing. Essentially composed of individual symmetrical elevations, it has a strong asymmetrical form, emphasised by the unusual roof outline. The subtle cement rendered classical modeling on the Belmore Street façade has giant order Corinthian columns in-antis either side of the recessed entrance and a tall corner tower addressing the intersection of Belmore and Orr Streets.

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Fig 36 Dramatic view of corner clock tower illustrating the subtle cement rendered Free Classical detailing with Art Deco capitals on the classical pilasters. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd. 2005

The building is also a very important architectural landmark in Belmore Street. It is the largest building in the street. The bold corner tower, unusual roof form and superb architectural details create variety and delight in the streetscape.

Figs 37 & 38 Belmore Street rendered façade and red brick walls with rendered Art Deco decoration along the side elevation. Note the stepped roof form clad in terra cotta tiles with ventilators and large lantern light at the rear. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005.

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Criterion Hotel (1882)   **DB 350**

Fig 39 Criterion Hotel (1881) in Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The Criterion is Yarrawonga's oldest surviving hotel. The first storey was built in 1882 and the second was added in 1888, with a timber and iron verandah and balcony.[32] The decorative cast iron balcony was recently removed in 1980, removing valuable floor area and amenity for shade and protection from the rain.
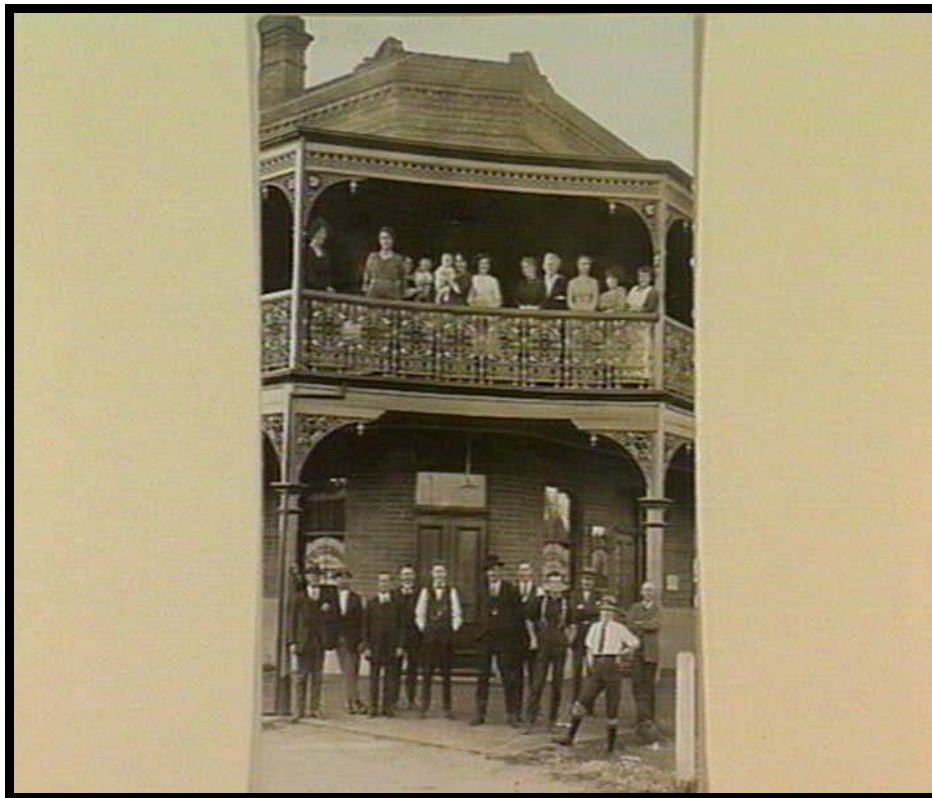

Fig 40 The corner of the unpainted red brick Criterion Hotel in 1921. Patrons enjoying the decorative cast iron
Note the intricate manner in which the cast iron has been painted to highlight the pattern.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

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Victoria Hotel (1886), Belmore Street   DB 346

Fig 41 Victoria Hotel (1886) Belmore Street.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The Victoria Hotel, with its intact balcony, is Yarrawonga's best preserved colonial hotel facade. It was constructed in 1886 for Alfred Day, by Melbourne architect J. M. Brady.[33] The *Mercury* described the Victoria as a 'grand hotel' that would be 'an ornament not only to the town, but in the district at large'. Made of brick, the Victoria Hotel included

> a frontage 43x107 ft deep, room 13ft 7in high [...] a ground floor with a bar, a common room, a spacious sample room, a billiard room 24x19ft, fitted with one of Alcock's best tables, three parlours, three dining rooms, twelve bedrooms, a kitchen and pantry.

The chimneys and body of the building is face red brickwork, whereas the facade meanwhile drew ample comment, with 'rooms all plastered and finished with elegant cornice and elegant centre pieces...':

> The front parapet is eight ft above the wall, the whole front building cemented, and rock cornices and rich balustrading on top [finishing] an elegant and convenient design.[34]

At the rear of the hotel was a fifteen stall timber stable. The Victoria was an important social as well as commercial institution, with early shire council meetings held there before 1892.[35]

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Terminus Hotel (1927)   **DB 333**

Fig 42 Terminus Hotel, Belmore Street
Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

The Terminus hotel is located on the site of the original Terminus Hotel of 1882 which burnt down in 1909.[36]
The present building opened in November of 1927, making it the earlier of the town's two interwar hotel
buildings. The ground floor windows are notable. A particularly notable feature of its design was the
platform on its balcony from which crowds might be addressed in the street during open air meetings or
rallies.[37] The old stables were still extant in 2002.

Burke's Royal Mail Hotel (1937), Belmore Street.DB 366

Fig 43 Burke's Royal Mail Hotel.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

Burke's Royal Mail Hotel is located on the site of the earlier Royal Mail Hotel buildings of 1878 and 1911.
The present building replaced the latter in 1937.[38] Built in the Moderne and Art Deco style fashionable at the
time, it represents the growth and prosperity of Yarrawonga in the interwar period associated with the
construction of the weir, with the associated influx of workers and demand for urban services and social
amenities.[39]

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YARRAWONGA TOWN CENTRE PRECINCT

Late Victorian Shops (c.1890s) Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.   **DB 340, 341, 342, 364**

The brick shop with tall lantern light, and timber residence at the rear, on the SE corner of Piper and Belmore Street cost £1265.13.3 when constructed in 1897, for Messrs. A. and Coy Hill but soon sold t Berryman.[40] The corner section has been demolished but the Credit Union is in the remaining section.

Fig. 44   1897 shop. Source: Lorraine Huddle Pty Ltd 2005

Fig. 45   1897 shop. Source: Mr Gordon Oakley, 1996. Yarrawonga Historical Society.

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Figs 46, 47, 48 Examples of late Victorian shops at 88-90, 77, 73 and 58 Belmore Street. Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

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Federation Shops (c.1901-1914), Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.   **DB 368, 369 & 338**

A significant number of shops in Belmore Street can be dated to the turn of the twentieth century and the Federation era. By this time Yarrawonga was 'one of the most important towns on the Murray',[41] with a population of some 1,500 residents. Federation also brought significant progress to the town with subsequent free trade between the former colonies of Victoria and New South Wales. The example below is an exemplary Federation style building with a very picturesque form created by the tall decorative parapet, steeply pitched hip and gablet roofs, with ventilators and cladding in galvanised iron.[42]

Figs 49, 50, 51 Federation era shops at 116-120, Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

Note the superbly crafted copper and beveled edged lead light windows and pressed metal verandah ceiling.

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State Savings Bank (1912)   **DB 2**

Fig 52 Former State Savings Bank (1912), Belmore Street. *Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.*

The former State Savings Bank building is notable as the only intact prewar bank in Yarrawonga. Earlier banks, of which there were at least three main players at most times during the nineteenth century history of the town, have all been demolished. The State Savings Bank opened in 1912.[1] It was designed in the typical elaborate genre used by the State Savings Bank across the state at the time. The banded pattern was designed to be more subtle in its original form with unpainted cement render.[43]

Fig 53   1916 detail of photo of Belmore Street showing the Savings Bank and shop.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

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1   Loughnan, p.82.

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Interwar Shops (c.1918 – 1939) Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.   **DB 348, 343, 356, 334**

Figs 54, 55, 56 Examples of Interwar shops at 15, 59-63 Belmore Street, Yarrawonga.
Source: Lorraine Huddle 2004.

The Interwar period was one of marked commercial expansion in Yarrawonga, and saw both the construction of new shops, and remodelling of older facades. The division, development and remodelling of the 'Big Store' was among the significant changes in Belmore Street, with the site long associated with one of Yarrawonga's major general stores. These projects coincided with the infrastructural developments of the time such as the building of the weir and the influx of new workers and their families.

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STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE[44]

Yarrawonga Town Centre Precinct

The history and description, which precedes this Statement of Cultural Significance, is the source of evidence for the statement below.

The **Yarrawonga Town Centre Precinct** is **aesthetically significant** at the **LOCAL** level (AHC criteria D.2, E.1). It demonstrates many original and early design qualities associated with the civic and commercial development of Belmore Street, between the 1880s and 1950s. It is a stylistic mix of predominantly Victorian, some Federation and several inter war architectural styles that have been built and maintained throughout most of the precinct. These qualities include predominantly brick wall construction, hipped or gabled galvanised corrugated iron roof forms, one storey and two storey heights, decorative parapets, some posted verandahs, cantilever verandahs from the interwar and post war period, picturesque skylines created by the pitched rooflines with chimneys and parapets, and accented by a backdrop of sky forming a consistent streetscape.

The most striking and aesthetically significant places for their urban design are the War Memorial Monument and palms.

The area is aesthetically enhanced by several architecturally fine buildings such as the magnificent Inter-War Free Classical Town Hall, the two storey Post Office, State Savings Bank, Victoria Hotel, Terminus Hotel and Burke's Royal Mail Hotel and outstanding architectural examples of single storey places such as the Athenaeum building, The Big Store, the former Shire Offices, Federation shops at 116-120 Belmore Street and various other shops and views along Belmore Street to these buildings.

The Belmore Street streetscape views:, towards the war memorial monument, towards the customs house and various views of the Town Hall are **aesthetically significant on a local level** (**AHC E.1**) (**AHC A.4, G.1**) for their association with the civic spirit of Yarrawonga as locally recognised and appreciated features of the town.

Civic Places
The **historically and socially significant** civic places in Belmore Street are the shire halls, the former post office, customs house and the former Mechanic Institute's Athenaeum hall, the war memorial and memorial trees.

The former **Customs House (1892)** is **historically significant on a local leve**l as a reminder of the period when Yarrawonga was a border town between the two colonies, before federation (AHC A.4). The old **Shire Offices (1896)** is historically and socially significant on a local level as the former municipal offices and first shire building in Yarrawonga, associated with the development of civic institutions in the colonial period. (AHC A.4) The **Shire Hall (1930)** is historically significant on a local level for its association with the development of civic institutions in the interwar period, a time of particular growth for Yarrawonga with the construction of the weir during that time. It is also socially significant on a local level for its continuing association with local government and recreation. (AHC A.4, G.1) The **former Post Office (1904)** is historically and socially significant as an example of Federation era civic building in the town and is associated with the development of postal services and communications in the early twentieth century. (AHC A.4, G 1) The **Athenaeum** is historically and socially significant on a local level as the site of the Mechanics Institute's hall, associated with both the educational, entertainment and recreational development of Yarrawonga from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. (AHC A.4, G 1) The **War Memorial**

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(1921) and **Avenue of Honour Memorial (1919)** is historically and socially significant on a local level as sites commemorating the Great War of 1914-18 and ongoing associations with the defence of Australia and as sites of public memory and national identity. (AHC A.4, G.1)

Commercial Buildings – Hotels
There are four extant hotels in Belmore Street, dating from the colonial and interwar periods in the history of the town. The **Criterion Hotel (1882)** is historically significant on a local level as Yarrawonga's oldest hotel, associated with the early colonial history of the town before the opening of the railway. (AHC A.4) The **Victoria Hotel (1886)** is historically significant on a local level as Yarrawonga's best preserved colonial hotel and as the town's hotel associated with the opening of the railway in the same year. (AHC A.4) The **Terminus Hotel (1927)** and **Burke's Royal Mail Hotel (1937)** are historically significant on a local level as the two interwar hotels in the town associated with the rapid progress and expanding demand for social and recreational facilities during the long construction of the weir and the development of Yarrawonga therafter. (AHC A.4)

Commercial Places – Bank & Shops
Belmore Street is particularly dominated by commercial sites, as the commercial and service provision centre of Yarrawonga throughout its history. The former **State Savings Bank (1912)** is historically significant on a local level as the only surviving intact bank in Yarrawonga, associated with the expansion of commercial services in the early twentieth century. (AHC A.4) The various **Victorian shops** are historically significant on a local level for their association with the commercial development of the town in the colonial period; the **Federation shops** are historically significant through their association with the commercial consolidation of the town at the opening of free trade between the former colonies after Federation; and the **Interwar shops** are historically significant for their association with the next period of significant commercial expansion in Yarrawonga during the construction of the weir. (AHC A.4)

Recreation And Community
An important recreational and community site in Belmore Street is the **Grove Memorial Park (1964) and trees (1935)**, associated with the important community and charitable group, the Grove Picture Company, which played an important role in both picture entertainment before television, and as a fundraiser for significant beautification, recreational and service oriented projects in Yarrawonga. (AHC H.1, A.4)

The **Yarrawonga Town Centre Precinct is scientifically significant on a LOCAL level (Criteria C2, F1).** Building materials such wrought iron, cast iron, terra cotta roof decoration, marble and granite, and stained glass are a testament to the high level of technical skill that artisans in Yarrawonga possessed. The use of these materials is becoming rare and their presence forms an integral part of the precinct's fabric.

Overall, the Yarrawonga Town Centre Precinct is culturally significant at the LOCAL level.

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1   Incorporating material from *Moira Shire Thematic Environmental History.* Sources: *VMD*, 1994, p. 649; Watson, *Forgotten Towns*, p. 347; *Vision and Realisation*, Vol. 3. pp. 799, 866-7; *VMD*, various years - see Appendix A; Gazetteer of Australian Cities; Wise's Victoria Post Office Directory 1884-1885, 1888-1889; Bossence; State Library of Victoria, Maps collection; Baragwanath, Pam, *If The Walls Could Speak : A Social History of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria,* Mechanics Institute Inc., Windsor, 2000, p. 221; Challinger, *Historic Court Houses of Victoria*, p. 147; Clark, Ian & Heydon, Toby, *Aboriginal Placenames of Victoria*, Database on CD-Rom, Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, Melbourne, 2002.
2   Loughnan, *Ballanda to 1968,* p.56.
3   H. C. Staveley, *Town of Yarrawonga: First surveys and sales,* 1939; Yarrawonga Town Planning Scheme Map 1933.
4   Loughnan, p.57.
5   Gary Bell, *Historic Pubs along the Murray River,* 2002, p.37
6   Yarrawonga Town Planning Scheme Map 1933.
7   *Little Red School*, p.13.
8   *Mercury*, 6 August 1885.
9   *Mercury*, 22 April 1886.
10   *Australasian,* 1 May 1886. This building was in Piper Street between the Court House and first Post Office.
11   Loughnan, p.59.
12   Census of the Colony of Victoria, 1881, 1891.
13   *Australian Handbook* 1903.
14   *Leader*, 31 October 1931.
15   See Stan Clarke, *Murray Country Heroes* (1995), passim. A memorial tree for each of these men was planted in the grounds of the State School where they can still be seen with a plaque.
16   Clark (1995), p.105; *Tungamah Express*, 11 September 1919.
17   Clark (1995), p.105; *Tungamah Express*, 11 September 1919.
18   Loughnan, p.71.
19   Loughnan, p.23-27; See also 1952 Town Planning Scheme Map.
20   Loughnan, p.71.
21   The Avenue of Honour has disappeared over time, through neglect, ignorance or damage and highlights the importance of an ongoing management program for Avenues of Honour, historic trees, plaques, honour boards and monuments. Removal of posted verandahs and street trees from the 1950s led to streetscapes dominated by hard surfaces and metal and the unnecessary loss of shade (now a safety issue in itself). Many streets and supermarket car parks are still devoid of shade. Over the past decade the need to 'calm' the traffic is seen as 'safer' and the number of lanes has been reduced and the traffic slowed with round-a-bouts, median strips, and corner nibs. Some small shade trees have been replanted, but the trees planted down the centre of the road are out of character with the scale of the space. It is believed that the remnants of the Avenue of Honour were destroyed amidst public concern in the 1960-70s including those in Telford Street which were removed for road widening and the 'replacement' one, consisting of Lemon Scented Gums planted in Gilmore Street in 1979, has never been completed along the road to the cemetery, as proposed. The original plaques from the 1919 trees were stored in the town hall. It is known that 21 of the 230 are in the Pioneer Museum in Mulwala but the remainder is unaccounted for. It is recommended that the 1919 Kurrajong Avenue of Honour be reconstructed and replica name plaques installed. Other Avenues of Honour in Victoria have suffered in this way, Seymour also lost their magnificent World War One Avenue of Honour of oaks due to a decision by Vic Roads ? to widen the road using a 'clearfell' design. This is contrasted with Ballarat's Avenue of Honour in which many dying trees have recently been replaced with new ones,(planted further from the edge of the road), at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars, much of it raised by public donation as was the case for the original Avenue of Honour.
22   Echuca had a similarly magnificent urban design in High Street, with tall palms and war memorial monument at an intersection. A median strip was recently reconstructed in High Street to slow the traffic and to provide a safety island for pedestrians. Unfortunately, Manchurian Pear Trees were planted and the small scale of these trees will not create the magnificence of the palms (nor have the symbolic connection with those who fought in the war, and the monument has been relocated, at considerable expense to a public lawn.
23   Clark (1995), p.111.

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24   Clark (1995), p.111; *Mercury*, 29 November 1921.
25   Loughnan, p.71.
26   Loughnan, p.51.
27   Loughnan, p.57; *Little Red School*, p.13.
28   Never sandblast bricks or cement render as this will permanently destroy the hard, smooth finish and create damp problems.
29   Baragwanath, *If These Walls Could Talk* (2000), p.299.
30   Loughnan, p.51-3.
31   Loughnan, p.51-3..
32   Bell (2002), p.37.
33   Bell (2002), p.37.
34   *Mercury*, 11 March 1886.
35   Loughnan (1979), p.51.
36   Bell, *Historic Pubs.* p.39.
37   Bell, *Historic Pubs.* p.39.
38   Bell (2002), p.37.
39   See *Environmental History.*
40   Reference: Laird and Barlow Contractors' Book, 1894 -1899, p. 71. Mr Gordon Oakley, on 19 Feb 1996 by phone, now 86 years and a retired builder, historian and Councillor. It was built for Hill but was soon sold to Berryman ad Bryant. He can remember alterations to the premises and this involved jacking up the house and moving it further back on the block.
41   *Australian Handbook* 1903.
42   The red brickwork, a major feature of Federation architecture, has been painted and can be removed chemically. Never sandblast paint off bricks or render.
43   The red brickwork, a major feature of Federation architecture, has been painted and can be removed chemically. Never sandblast paint off bricks or render.
44   Definitions used are from the Burra Charter 1999; historical themes relate to the Principal Australian Themes – Australian Heritage Commission; criteria for Locally Significant places are from the Australian Heritage Commission and in the case of State Significant places, from Heritage Victoria; levels of significance used are State and Local, which directly relate to the two legislative authorities who administer the protection of heritage places, the State Government and Local Government respectively