



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Kalgoorlie Miner Building, is the only three-storey structure in Hannan Street and, with its facade treatment of painted and cement relief work on the upper levels, the building has prominence in this important streetscape. The verandah roof over the pavement and parapet contribute to the visual character of Hannan Street. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Kalgoorlie Miner Building has historic value as a commercial building designed to facilitate the publishing of goldfields newspapers providing immediate and local news to the resident population. (Criterion 2.1)

The construction of *Kalgoorlie Miner Building* is closely associated with the rapid population growth in the eastern goldfields at the turn-of-the-century. (Criterion 2.2)

Kalgoorlie Miner Building has a long association with the publication of goldfields newspapers (*Kalgoorlie Miner* and *Western Argus*), and a close association with the Hocking family (in particular Sidney Edwin Hocking), who as editors/owners of the *Kalgoorlie Miner* (and *Western Argus*) were prominent citizens of the Kalgoorlie community. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Kalgoorlie Miner Building is the only three-storey structure in Kalgoorlie's main street, Hannan Street.

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Kalgoorlie Miner Building is representative of the ebullient architecture that was common in Kalgoorlie during the gold boom. As such it is a demonstration of the increasing prosperity and sophistication of Kalgoorlie, and Western Australia, at the turn-of-the-century. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Kalgoorlie Miner Building is in good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Although the building has undergone extensive internal alterations and additions, the original spatial layout of *Kalgoorlie Miner Building* is evident and the place continues to fulfil its original function. Overall, the place retains a moderate degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The external fabric of *Kalgoorlie Miner Building* remains largely intact and has been enhanced by the restoration of the shop. Although the internal fabric has been altered, the place retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Julia Ball, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Kelly Aris, Conservation Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Kalgoorlie Miner Building is a three-storey brick building constructed in 1900 to provide more spacious office/factory accommodation for the expanding goldfields newspaper, the *Kalgoorlie Miner*.

Sidney Edwin Hocking, born in Adelaide, had a long association with newspapers. Arriving in Coolgardie in 1893, he sent articles to the Adelaide *Advertiser* and *Register* and the Melbourne *Age* and *Argus*. With James MacCallum Smith, and later joined by his brother Percy, he floated a company to publish the weekly *Goldfields Courier* and the daily *Golden Age*. When the new Kalgoorlie goldfield began to drain the life from Coolgardie, Hocking inspected the 'Golden Mile' and decided that its future was assured. He and his partners sold the Coolgardie company and, in August 1895, bought the weekly *Kalgoorlie Western Argus* founded by the Mott Bros. On 14 September 1895, they published the first issue of the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, a daily publication of four pages costing two pence.¹

Early in 1896, Hocking launched Hocking & Co. Ltd. with himself, Percy, another brother Ernest, Kirwin (editor) and their printer W.W. Willcock as shareholders.² For many years Hocking was chairman of the Kalgoorlie Racing Club and President of the Kalgoorlie Chamber of Commerce. He served on the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council and was mayor in 1909-10.

Quickly outgrowing the premises, plans for a new building (on the same site as the existing building) were drawn up by architect Harvey G. Draper. In 1900, tenders were called for the erection of a permanent brick structure. The successful tenderers were Messrs Garrick and Ford, who began work at the end of July 1900.³ The newspaper announced its intention to construct a new building a few days before work began:

Owing to the steady increase of trade in all Departments, our premises, which were erected when Kalgoorlie was in its infancy, have been, for some months past, quite unsuitable for the volume of business. To overcome this difficulty the proprietors have recently accepted a tender ... for the erection of a magnificent three storey building which will be started without delay.

When the Hockings began planning their new business premises they discovered they had a problem. Their adjoining shop, originally rented by Kapp and Co., was then leased to a barber who refused to relinquish his lease. As the lease was a long-term one, Hocking and Co. had no alternative but to leave the barber's shop as it was.⁴

¹ Webb, M. & A., *Golden Destiny: The Centenary History of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia* (City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Kalgoorlie, 1993), p. 423.

² Nairn, B. & Serle, G. (eds), *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 9, (Melbourne University Press, 1983), p. 318. When Percy died in 1900, Hocking took over the commercial side.

³ King, N., *The Voice of the Goldfields: 100 years of the Kalgoorlie Miner* (Hocking & Co., Kalgoorlie, 1995), p. 64.

⁴ *ibid.*

This caused difficulties for the architect and added to the cost of the building, which in that first stage extended half-way down the length of the block. In order to take the weight of the new building it was necessary to use big steel posts and girders to reinforce the inside wall of the passageway dividing the two buildings.

Kalgoorlie Miner Building was completed before the end of 1900, and by March of the following year the first copies of the *Kalgoorlie Miner* were produced on the new printing equipment.

In 1906, there were further additions to the premises. This time the work was carried out by contractor Mr C. J. Anstey under the supervision of architect Harvey Draper. An article in the newspaper provided details of the additions:

The ground floor, laid down with granolithic paving, contains a storeroom 40 feet in length, 16ft 6in in width and 14ft in height, and a publisher's room 29ft in length, 16ft 6ins in width and of similar height. Both places are flanked to the westward by a long passageway 6ft wide which communicates with the lift in the three-storey building. The publisher's room is side by side with the machine room in the old structure.

When this work was completed, *Kalgoorlie Miner Building* ran the entire length of the lot, from Hannan Street to the laneway dividing Hannan and Egan Streets.

Following the death of Mr Sidney Hocking in 1935 the running of the *Kalgoorlie Miner* was taken over by his four sons, Sidney, Ernest, Percy and Joe. In April 1970, the ownership passed from the hands of the Hocking family to West Australian Newspapers Pty. Ltd. The rotary press and some of the linotypes remained in use until 1976, when the *Kalgoorlie Miner* was printed in Perth.

In 1996, the *Kalgoorlie Miner Building* is used as the headquarters for the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, the only daily newspaper on the goldfields.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Kalgoorlie Miner Building is a three-storey commercial building constructed in the Federation Free Classical style⁵ which replaced a timber framed structure built in 1895.

The style was common throughout Western Australia during the gold boom. The style expressed the confidence that accompanied the dynamic growth of settlements in Western Australia following gold discoveries in the goldfields.

The building is constructed to the street alignment of Hannan Street and towers above the adjacent single-storey shops and the corner hotel. The building has prominence in the streetscape for its facade treatment of painted and cement relief work on the upper levels and is the only three storey building remaining in Kalgoorlie. The building originally comprised a single-storey, the upper storeys are additions.

The walls of the building are in orange brickwork laid in English bond. The facade walls are strengthened by four rendered piers treated as pilasters. The

⁵ Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P., *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1994) pp. 104-15.

piers divide the facade into three bays with windows between each bay. The piers are capped with a rendered entablature and a parapet above. The parapet and entablature bear the former name of the building. The building is symmetrical about a central triangular pediment that forms part of the parapet.

Each window on the first floor level has double, plain double-hung sashes with semi-circular arched fanlights which are supported at their springing points by square brick pilasters. The windows on the second storey are plain, rectangular versions of the windows below with awning fanlights divided into four smaller panes by slim glazing bars.

The ground floor level has a central recessed entry with a timber framed shopfront either side. The shopfronts have circular galvanised iron columns at each corner, a timber panelled dado and large panes with fanlights divided into smaller panes. A bull-nosed verandah roof with sheet metal spandrels extends across the facade over the pavement. The verandah roof was originally a lean-to supported by timber posts with decorative brackets.⁶ The end piers on the ground floor level are tuck-pointed and rendered above the dado line.

The interior comprises a shop, with a timber stair in the south-west corner that leads to the first and second floors. The Kalgoorlie Miner Offices are behind the shop through an archway with double-doors and a curved fanlight with glazing bars in a scallop pattern. A brick enclosed hoist well is in the corner on the rear wall. Storage, newspaper files and an accounts department are at the rear of the building, and the editorial and advertising departments are on the upper level. The top floor level, comprising two rooms, is vacant.

The interior of the shop has circular engaged piers that support the perimeter beams. The walls are painted with tall timber skirting boards and the ceilings are lined with pressed metal. The timber stair is simply detailed with ripple-iron soffits. A glazed partition encloses a phone room at the rear of the ground floor offices. The partition mimics the detailing of the archway which separates the offices from the shop. The Kalgoorlie Miner Offices retain its original wide timber counter and writing desk and pressed metal ceilings.

The building was extended at the rear in stonework.⁷ In the 1940s, a second storey was added to the stone addition, and the building was further extended eastward behind the adjacent building.⁸ The additions are in brickwork laid in Colonial bond. The eastern addition is two-storey with a gable roof. The additions were unlikely to have been constructed at the same time, as their style and the brickwork colour are different. An old printing press and store room is on the ground floor level, and a caretaker's room, linotype room, now general printing section, is on the upper level. The additions have concrete floors, and a timber trussed roof covered with corrugated iron. Windows on the first floor of the east elevation comprise openings of 16 small panes with pivoting sashes to the centre panes. A new hoist has been added to the rear wall.

6 The date the new verandah roof was installed is unknown.

7 Date of the addition is unknown, but existed prior to the Second World War.

8 Conversation with Mr J. Laws, 1 March, 1996; and conversation with Mr J. Gibbs, Director of Kalgoorlie Miner, 30 April, 1996.

Executive

A laneway between *Kalgoorlie Miner Building* and the adjacent shop on the east side has been enclosed at the street with a doorway to form a passage which extends the length of the building. An enclosed staircase is at the end of the passage which leads to the upper floor level. The stair landing features an arched window with replacement etched and coloured glass. Halfway down the passage is evidence of an archway, now enclosed with a doorway. From the doorway to the far end of the passage, the floor has been covered in concrete. The laneway has been covered with a concrete slab which forms a passageway on the upper level. The slab comprises glass blocks to light the laneway below.

In 1977, sections of the stone and brick walls of the passage were strengthened to prevent collapse.

In 1993/94, the second floor offices were remodelled. New suspended ceilings, light-weight partitions and lighting were installed, and the floors were covered in carpet. A new access to the passage has been created and the previous access bricked-up. In 1995, the office at the street elevation on the second floor was remodelled in matching style to the others.

New suspended fluorescent lights and spotlights have been installed in the shop, window display boxes have been created with panelling behind the shopfronts, the floor at the entrance has been covered in linoleum, the entrance doors have been replaced, and the verandah has been paved. Air-conditioning units have been installed throughout the building.

On the third floor, a large archway dividing the two rooms has been bricked-up and a doorway installed, fireplaces have been partially brick-up, and suspended ceilings and exposed air conditioning ducts have been installed. The suspended ceilings partially conceal rollers that remain from an original press.

The building is in good condition; however, the timber stair's top flight is unsafe.

13.3 REFERENCES

National Trust Assessment Exposition, June 1973.