

Building:	Former Railway Hotel	Significance:	A
Address:	950-956 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill (Also known as 615 Station St).		
Building Type:	Hotel	Construction Date:	1882, remodelled 1911
Architect:	Unknown	Builder:	Unknown



Intactness:
 G[x] F[] P[]

Condition:
 G[x] F[] P[]

Existing Heritage Listings:

Victorian Heritage Register	[]
Register of the National Estate	[]
National Trust	[]

Recommended Heritage Listings:

Victorian Heritage Register	[x]
Register of the National Estate	[x]
Heritage Overlay Controls	[x]

History

The Railway Hotel was built in 1882 by Silas Padgham, who had emigrated to Melbourne from England in 1852. He was an early landholder in Box Hill, and established Box Hill's first general store. Padgham also suggested the name 'Box Hill' for the area. In 1882, when the railway through Box Hill was being planned, Padgham and the owners of other property donated parts of their land on which the railway was to be sited. He then built the Railway Hotel, which was completed to coincide with the railway's opening. The hotel, and the land between it and the railway line, was then leased to Alfred Rawlings, a butcher and local landowner who was responsible for the development of the Box Hill Homestead Estate. Rawlings sub-let the hotel to Annie Meader, whose father William Meader was also a publican. Rawlings later built a butcher's shop and residence next door to the hotel.

In 1920, a fervent anti-liquor campaign was begun by local politician E W Greenwood, and he gained many supporters. At that time, hotel licensing legislation had a Local Option clause, which meant that voters in a district could support prohibition without forcing it onto other districts who were not in favour. Greenwood took advantage of this, and when a poll was held, the districts of Nunawading and Boroondara reached the required 60% majority. Box Hill's three hotels, along with seven in Camberwell, were closed down on New Year's Day, 1921.

Whilst some of the hotels were demolished either immediately or in the following decades, the Railway Hotel in Station Street was remodelled. The building became known as Tait's Corner, and its first occupants as such were Trebilcock's Drapery, in the corner shop, and Mrs Christie's Coffee Palace. No new hotels have been built in the Box Hill 'dry area' since the Liquor Ban, although those elsewhere in the City of Whitehorse, including the Mitcham Hotel and the Blackburn Hotel, have continued to thrive.

The original 1882 hotel forms the southern component of the present building. The northern section with tower was completed in January 1911.

Description

This property also incorporates the shops at 617 Station Street.

The former Railway Hotel is a large double-storey Arts and Crafts-style building on the south-west corner of Whitehorse Road and Station Street, Box Hill. The first floor walls retain the roughcast and render finishes from the 1911 remodelling. A string course separates the roughcast dado from the smooth rendered upper section. Windows are timber-framed double-hung sashes. The corner is marked by an octagonal tower with a bell-shaped pressed metal roof topped with an iron finial. The tower is embellished with Art Nouveau decoration surrounding oval windows. Rendered panels on the north and east elevation formerly contained the name of the hotel.

The ground floor shopfronts have been completely altered, and a cantilevered verandah has been added.

Comparative Examples

Former Surrey Family Hotel, Canterbury Road (corner Union Road), Surrey Hills

Significance

The former Railway Hotel is of historical and aesthetic significance. It is the only surviving hotel building within the former electoral district of Box Hill, Box Hill's other two hotels having been demolished in the years following the Liquor Ban in 1921. It is also the oldest surviving hotel building within the City of Whitehorse. Historically, the building is also associated with Silas Padgham, an important early landowner and founder of the first general store in Box Hill and who is credited with the naming of the suburb. Aesthetically, the building as remodelled in 1911 exhibits interesting Arts and Crafts / Art Nouveau detailing, and, with its prominent tower, has become a local landmark in the Box Hill commercial centre.

Source

Andrew C Ward & Associates. *City of Box Hill Heritage and Conservation Study*. 1990.

Additional Historical Information

Andrew Lemon. *Box Hill*. Melbourne, 1978. pp 24, 76, 78, 101, 130-131, 148, 154.

