

BUILDING TITLE: Williams Building **BUILDING ADDRESS:** 91-95 Gray St
LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: A || B || C |X| D || E || **BUILDING TYPE:** shops & offices
DESIGNATION: HBR Reg No File # AHC File # NT File # Class || Rec ||
CONSERVATION AREA: Gray St Commercial **LEVEL OF STREETSCAPE SIGNIFICANCE:** 1 || 2 || 3 ||
STYLE: Moderne

CONSTRUCTION DATE & ALTERATIONS:

1. before 1940?
2. 1990 (new aluminium shop fronts)
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Sources:

HSA DP No 23,24,25

MATERIALS:

Roof:
Walls: face brick
Dressings: cement render
Plinth: tiles
Windows: steel first floor windows
Paving: terrazzo steps?
Other: nickel plated shop windows
 Vitrolite facings
 black glazed tiles

SURVEY DATE: 7/3/91 **NEG FILE:** 2/14 **REPORTER:** SK

INTEGRITY: E || G |X| F || P || **NOTABLE FEATURES:** Sculptured brick figure and use of innovative materials.

CONDITION: E |X| G || F || P ||

SIGNIFICANCE: Designed by Seabrook and Fildes and built by Reg Williams, this is a keystone building in the streetscapes of both Gray and Thompson Streets. Originally built for Williams The Shoeman.

ALTERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Appropriate:	Rec	Inappropriate:	Rec
		aluminium shopfront	S
		air conditioner	R

O=reinstate original design S=reinstate sympathetic alternative R=remove RAM=remove by approved method

SIGNIFICANT OWNERS/TENANTS:	ARCHITECTS/BUILDERS:	TITLE:
land to I.G.Robertson, 20.5.52		Sec C A
		4 18
		Williams the Shoeman, owner 1940

COUNCIL COMPUTER #

MORE INFO OVER |X|

HAMDS054

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Williams Building
91-95 Gray Street

This shop and office building has local significance for its architectural interest as the original Williams The Shoeman store and offices constructed in the late 1930s by the Hamilton builder, Reginald Williams, from the designs of the notable architects, Seabrooke and Fildes. (i) This architectural firm was associated with the designs for the former Uren's Pharmacy diagonally opposite in 1940, Scullions, 196 Gray Street in 1938, the remodelling, in 1937, of the former Miller's Department Store at 121 Gray Street and the remodelling of the Argyle Arms and George Hotels. (ii) The building is another of the firm's successful exercises in massing, taking full advantage of the corner site. Unlike the stylish Pharmacy it does not use a curved corner. It uses innovative materials such as steel windows, textured bricks, terrazzo, nickel plated shop windows and Vitrolite glass facings from America. It lacks but does not need the glass block tower found in their other work relying instead on the carved brick sculpture and the panel of brickwork above the office entrance. Fildes gave Williams the design and specification of a house, 355 Gray Street, for a wedding present.

The building is significantly intact and in excellent condition. It is a keystone building in the streetscape of both Gray and Thompson Street commanding, as it does, over their intersection.

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC THEMES

Evolution of the Town: 1930s
Tertiary Industry: Shoe retailing

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC BUILDINGS

MacRobertson Girls High School, South Melbourne
former Miller's Department Store, 121 Gray Street.
Scullions, 196 Gray Street
The George Hotel, 213 Gray Street
Argyle Arms Hotel, 235 Gray Street
House, 355 Gray Street

REFERENCES

HSA DP No 23,24,25

FOOTNOTES

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- ⁱ Conversation with Mrs Christie, Reg Williams' daughter, 16 May 1991; HSA DP No. 283 (*Drainage Plan, Uren's Pharmacy*, dated 24 February, 1939).
- ⁱⁱ RVIAJ, May 1937, p 72; *Argus*, 25 November 1937.