

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: MASONIC LODGE (FORMER)

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: 37 Winter Street COLERAINE

STUDY NUMBER: 104

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: Coleraine

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 1 **SECTION:** 19 **PARISH:** PARISH OF COLERAINE

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 430J , VicRoads 228 , located on the south west corner of Winter and McConochie Streets, approximately 3 blocks south of the intersection of Whyte & Winter Streets, Coleraine.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Masonic Lodge (former), Winter Street, Coleraine. Looking north west from Winter Street.

Image Date: 31/01/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the building including the interiors and all of the land.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The former Masonic Lodge is located on a narrow block of land at 37 Winter Street Coleraine. It is a brick building with a corrugated iron roof, consisting of a vestibule, main hall, supper room, kitchen and toilet/service area. Six iron roof vents capped in an unusual design run along the ridge of the main hall.

The facade, entrance area and south wall of the main hall are cement rendered, while the rest of the exterior walls are panelled red-brick. The 1960s toilet block is made of cement blocks. The Masonic symbol is moulded in render on the facade, facing Winter Street, although other signs have clearly been removed in recent years since the building was decommissioned. The traditionally severe neo-Classicism of the exterior reflects the values of the Masons.

As usual, the interiors of the building also reflect the values and formal ceremonies of the Masons, as well as the less formal social function of the building. Inside, the main hall measures approximately 9 metres by 15 metres. It has pressed metal ceilings of a very fine quality, with ornate pressed metal ceiling vents. An Art Nouveau era ceiling fan is positioned in the middle of the roof above the ceremonial area. Two pendant ceiling lights with milk glass shades are the main source of lighting. There is a blue fleur-de-lis patterned carpet on the floor, except in the ceremonial area, which is a rectangular section of the floor covered with an oil cloth painted with black and white geometrical designs. There are high, small timber-framed windows glazed in opaque glass on the south side only. A timber door in the south wall gives onto the side walkway.

The main entrance to the Lodge is at the end of a walkway on the south side. Inside the main door is a timber panelled cloak room space, still with original coat hooks. The red fleur-de-lis carpet on the floor is worn and looks to be at least 50 years old. An extensive set of storage cupboards in the vestibule have been removed in recent years. A timber notice board remains on the north wall. The entrance to the main hall from the vestibule is marked by an exceptionally wide nine panelled timber door. Two electric lights, with intact red and blue globes, are positioned high on the wall beside the door to indicate if access is permissible.

The supper room is a later extension, built c. 1936. It extends the full width of the block, approximately 12 metres by 10 metres. It contains one double hung sash window, a corner fireplace, and moulded plaster cornices and ceiling in Art Deco designs. At the end of the supper room is a kitchen and a later cement block toilet and service area, which includes a hatch door to deliver firewood to the supper room.

HISTORY:

The land on which the former Wannon Masonic Lodge (Allotment 1, Section 19) now stands was first purchased from the Crown on 29th January, 1864 by Henry Nickoll (Department of Lands and Survey, 1955). Henry Nickoll was an early occupant of Coleraine, who owned land elsewhere in Coleraine, but may have built a residence on the land, where he and his wife Lillias (nee Sutherland) may have lived with their three children, Mary (born in Casterton), Clare and John (born in Coleraine) (VPI Reg No's. 230, 3097, 4633, 1414).

Thomas Templeton, an important local grazier (of the Model Farm, 'Muntham Mains') purchased the land from Henry Nickoll in 1875 (Tippet, 16/10/01). Templeton had arrived in Australia from Scotland in 1844 (Smith, 548) and purchased an initial pastoral holding of 100 acres in the Coleraine area in 1857 (ibid.). In 1867, he married Rosina, daughter of the Shire of Wannon valuer, Mr. Edward Lander (ibid.), and between 1867 and 1885, they had 11 children. Thomas Templeton was well known as a successful farmer interested in scientific principals of farming. In 1903, The Cyclopaedia of Victoria described his freehold of 500 acres as " 'Muntham Mains', well known as the 'Model Farm', is situated three miles from Coleraine. It comprises 500 acres of freehold land.....The property has been managed according to scientific methods

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from the commencement, and the efforts of the owner have been well rewarded" (ibid.,549).

Templeton was heavily involved in the local community in Coleraine and the surrounding district. He held office as a Wannon Shire Councillor from 1888-1899, and as Shire President in 1898-99 (McGaffin, 15), as well as being President for the Pastoral and Agricultural Society (Smith, 549). It is likely that Thomas Templeton donated the land on which the former Lodge stands, and may have been a founding member of the Coleraine Lodge No. 1699.

Leon May Lesser (merchant), Joseph Frederick Friend (watchmaker) and Eugene Silvester (solicitor) took possession of the site in the early 1880s. Lesser was heavily involved in Freemasonry, and initiated into the Wannon Lodge in 1882 (Stubbings in Forth (ed.), 84). It is likely that Friend and Silvester along with Lesser took the property in their name on behalf of the Freemason Society.

Freemasonry has existed as a charitable and social organisation in Victoria since 1839 when the Australia Felix Lodge was established in Melbourne. The Coleraine Lodge No. 1699 first met on 18th August 1875 (CHS Files), which is perhaps the earliest in what is now the Southern Grampians Shire. In 1889 the United Grand Lodge of Victoria brought together Lodges that formerly worked under the separate constitutions of the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland. As a result of this, the lodge changed its number and name to Wannon Lodge No. 68 on 13 March 1889 (CHS files). Freemasonry is still the largest community service organisation of its kind in the State.

The current hall was constructed in 1906, built by James Brothers builders for 602 pounds. It was extended in 1925 to add a supper room, and again in 1937 to enlarge the supper room and build a kitchen (Thornton, 2003). The building was highly regarded by the Coleraine community for the quality of its interior appointments, particularly the very fine pressed metal ceilings.

The building ceased to be used as a Lodge in 1975 and went through several changes of use and ownership until it was purchased in 1996 for use as a private residence (Tippett, 2001).

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 4: Building settlements, towns and cities

Theme 8: Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.5 Forming associations

8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories

8.5.2 Helping other people

8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid

CONDITION:

The condition of the former Masonic Centre is only fair. It has suffered from a lack of routine maintenance, which has caused some water damage. The cement render on the front facade has been damaged by the removal of signage, and by graffiti vandalism. There is substantial cracking of the main wall at the north east corner, with several brick courses affected by moisture. The interior wall of the main hall shows deteriorating plaster and paintwork at this corner.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

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What is significant?

The former Coleraine Masonic Lodge is located on the south west corner of Winter and McConochie Streets, approximately 3 blocks south of the intersection of Whyte & Winter Streets, Coleraine. The land on which the lodge stands was purchased and probably donated to the Freemasons by an important local grazier, Thomas Templeton. The former Masonic Lodge was constructed in 1906 by James Brothers but the name of the architect, if there was one, is not known. It is in the 'stripped' Neo-Classical style, standard for Masonic buildings. It is constructed of brick, with a cement render façade and a corrugated iron roof with six vents of an unusual design. The building comprises a vestibule, main hall, supper room, kitchen and toilet/service area. These reflect not only the formal ceremonial function of the building but also the informal social function of fellowship. The interiors include very fine pressed metal ceilings and several relics from the use of the building as a Masonic Lodge. It had replaced an earlier lodge which may have dated from 1875 when the Coleraine Lodge No. 1699 was formed. The Coleraine Lodge was one of the earliest in what is now the Shire of Southern Grampians, but as part of a greater reform within the Freemasons, the lodge changed its name and number to Wannon Lodge No. 68 on 13 March 1889. The Wannon Lodge ceased to function from Winter Street in 1975, since which time it has had a variety of uses, including its current use as a private residence. The building is in fair condition.

How is it significant?

The former Masonic Lodge is of historical, social and architectural significance to the township of Coleraine and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The former Masonic Lodge, 37 Winter Street, Coleraine is of historical significance as a long-term demonstration of the values and status of Freemasonry in the local community, and for its associations with important local people. The land on which the former Lodge stands was donated to the Freemasons by an important local grazier, Thomas Templeton, and many of the founding members of the Coleraine Lodge No. 1699 were highly influential pastoralists, merchants and tradesmen. It is of social significance as a venue for the members coming together to share common interests. It is of architectural significance because its style, form and details, both externally and internally, express the conservative values and the ceremonies of Freemasonry.

COMPARISON:

385 Masonic Hall (Former), Parker Street, Dunkeld
269 Temperance & Masonic Hall (Former), 77 Watton Street, Penshurst

ASSESSED BY: TFH & MGT

ASSESSMENT DATE:

20/06/2003

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Coleraine Historical Society	File Note - Masonic Lodge	n.d	
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1873	
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1955	

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James Smith, ed	The Cyclopaedia of Victoria	1905 548-9
Macbeth Genealogical Services	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888	1998
P. T. Thornton	Personal Communication, January 2003	2003
P. T. Thornton	A century of union : The United Grand Lodge of Victoria	1989
Syd Tippett	Personal Communication 16/10/2001	2001
W J Ingram	The first hundred years of the lodge of Australia Felix No. 1 United Grand Lodge of Victoria	1940