

Recommendation of the Executive Director and assessment of cultural heritage significance under Part 3 of the *Heritage Act 2017*

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Name	William Dargie Murals
Location	Caulfield Junior College, 186 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North, City of Glen Eira
Hermes Number	197958
Heritage Overlay	No Heritage Overlay on the site where the murals are currently located



The Expedition of Burke and Wills – Commencement of the Journey (2017)



Lieut John Murray claiming Port Phillip Bay for His Majesty King George III March 8th 1802 (2017)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE HERITAGE COUNCIL:

- That the objects NOT be included in the Victorian Heritage Register under Section 37(1)(b) of the *Heritage Act 2017*.
- The Heritage Council may wish to consider exercising its powers under s.49(1)(c) of the *Heritage Act 2017* to refer the recommendation to the City of Glen Eira for inclusion of the Infants School Building of the Caulfield Junior College with internal controls in the local Heritage Overlay.

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

Recommendation provided to the Heritage Council of Victoria: 12 July 2018

Recommendation publicly advertised and available online: From 20 July 2018 for 60 days

This recommendation report has been issued by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria under s.37 of the *Heritage Act 2017*. It has not been considered or endorsed by the Heritage Council of Victoria.

EXTENT OF NOMINATION

Date that the nomination was accepted by the Executive Director

14 October 2015.

Written extent of nomination

2 x murals/paintings with wood frames approx. 1m x 3m (photos attached) which are located high up on the walls of the Infants School Building (photo attached) at the rear of the Caulfield Junior College, Balaclava Rd, Caulfield.

- 1) Mural 1 title "The Expedition of Burke and Wills – Commencement of the Journey"
- 2) Mural 2 title "Lieut John Murray claiming Pt Philip for his Majesty King George III March 8th 1802"

On a plaque beneath each mural and following the title are the words "Mural Painting by W.A. Dargie", "Donated to the school by Colonel the Hon Harold Cohen CMG CBE DSO VD MLA."

The plaque and murals are undated.

Nomination extent diagram

No nomination diagram is required for objects.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESPONSE SUMMARY

It is the view of the Executive Director that these objects should not be included in the Victorian Heritage Register for the reasons outlined in this report.

The information presented in this report and the attached documents demonstrates that the Infants School Building of Caulfield Junior College and William Dargie Murals affixed to this building may be of potential local significance. The Heritage Council may wish to refer this recommendation and submissions to the City of Glen Eira to consider the inclusion of the Infants School Building of Caulfield Junior College in the Heritage Overlay of the planning scheme and include interior controls for the William Dargie Murals affixed to this building; or determine under s.49(1)(c)(ii) that it is more appropriate for steps to be taken under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* or by any other means to protect or conserve the place.

PRELIMINARY NOTE

Class of object 'artistic mural'

Background definition

Murals are usually defined as artworks directly painted onto walls, however large-scale movable paintings in oil (such as the William Dargie murals) installed in permanent or semi-permanent locations are also known as murals. Murals are typically commissioned by organisations or individuals to:

- celebrate, commemorate or evoke an event
- educate, inform or inspire viewers.

Murals are often found in public buildings although they can also be privately commissioned. They can be found in various locations including libraries, commercial buildings, schools, railway stations, homes, restaurants and schools.

RECOMMENDATION REASONS

REASONS FOR NOT RECOMMENDING INCLUSION IN THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER [s.40]

Following is the Executive Director's assessment of the place against the tests set out in *The Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines (2014)*.

CRITERION A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION A

The place/object has a *CLEAR ASSOCIATION* with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's cultural history.

Plus

The association of the place/object to the event, phase, etc *IS EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources or oral history.

Plus

The *EVENT, PHASE, etc* is of *HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE*, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.

Executive Director's Response

The William Dargie Murals (1938) have a clear association with the artistic tradition of mural painting in Victoria. This is evident in the fabric of the murals. The artistic tradition of mural painting has made an influential contribution to Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion A is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION A

The place/object allows the clear association with the event, phase etc. of historical importance to be *UNDERSTOOD BETTER THAN MOST OTHER PLACES OR OBJECTS IN VICTORIA WITH SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME ASSOCIATION*.

The William Dargie Murals do not allow the artistic tradition of mural painting to be understood better than most other places or objects in Victoria with substantially the same association. These murals are competently executed oil paintings depicting historical scenes in a visually pleasing manner. But they are not as accomplished as other artistic murals painted in Victoria. Other murals allow this artistic tradition to be better understood include Napier Waller's 1928 Café Florentino Murals (VHR H0493) and his Myer Mural

Hall Murals (part of VHR H2100) as well as Harold Freedman's 1973 History of Transport Mural (VHR H1936) (see comparisons section for a more comprehensive listing of artistic murals).

Criterion A is not likely to be satisfied at the State level.

CRITERION B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION B

The place/object has a *clear ASSOCIATION* with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of importance in Victoria's cultural history.

Plus

The association of the place/object to the event, phase, etc *IS EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources or oral history.

Plus

The place/object is *RARE OR UNCOMMON*, being one of a small number of places/objects remaining that demonstrates the important event, phase etc.

OR

The place/object is *RARE OR UNCOMMON*, containing unusual features of note that were not widely replicated

OR

The existence of the *class* of place/object that demonstrates the important event, phase etc is *ENDANGERED* to the point of rarity due to threats and pressures on such places/objects.

The William Dargie Murals (1938) have a clear association with the artistic tradition of mural painting in Victoria which is important in the State's cultural history. This is evident in the fabric of the murals. Murals are not rare or uncommon in Victoria. There are many murals from the twentieth century in public and private locations throughout Victoria (see comparisons section for a comprehensive listing of artistic murals).

The William Dargie Murals may be the only extant murals installed in a Victorian school in the 1930s. With these qualifiers the William Dargie Murals are uncommon.

Criterion B is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION B

The place/object is *RARE, UNCOMMON OR ENDANGERED* within Victoria.

Executive Director's Response

The William Dargie Murals may be the only extant murals installed in a Victorian school in the 1930s. The Executive Director is of the view that exclusion XB2 applies 'Dependence on too many qualifiers': 'The claimed rarity is dependent upon numerous qualifiers being strung together'. The use of qualifiers potentially makes every mural significant at the state level (the only extant mural installed in a Victorian hospital in the 1940s, the only extant mural installed in a Victorian park in the 1970s etc).

Criterion B is likely not to be satisfied at the State level.

CRITERION C

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION C

The:

- visible physical fabric; &/or
- documentary evidence; &/or
 - oral history,

relating to the place/object indicates a likelihood that the place/object contains *PHYSICAL EVIDENCE* of *historical interest* that is *NOT CURRENTLY VISIBLE OR UNDERSTOOD*.

Plus

From what we know of the place/object, the physical evidence is likely to be of an *INTEGRITY* and/or *CONDITION* that it *COULD YIELD INFORMATION* through detailed investigation.

Executive Director's Response

- The murals are typical examples of oil paintings on stretched canvas. This has been a standard way of creating paintings for hundreds of years. While the back of the paintings could not be examined, it is not likely the objects contain physical evidence of historical interest that is not currently visible or understood.
- William Dargie was a very prolific artist. Detailed investigation of these murals is not likely to yield information that could not be gained from his other works.
- The technical and art historical aspects of early twentieth century oil paintings have been extensively studied by conservators and curators. Further investigations of the Dargie murals are not likely to yield information of historical interest to Victoria that is not currently visible or understood.

Criterion C is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION D

The place/object is one of a *CLASS* of places/objects that has a *clear ASSOCIATION* with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, important person(s), custom or way of life in Victoria's history.

Plus

The *EVENT, PHASE, etc* is of *HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE*, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.

Plus

The principal characteristics of the class are *EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object.

Executive Director's Response

The William Dargie Murals are artworks that have a clear association with the tradition of artistic mural painting in Victoria's history. This tradition is of historical importance having made an influential contribution to Victoria's cultural history. The principal characteristics of this class (artistic murals) is evident in the fabric of the murals.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION D

The place/object is a NOTABLE EXAMPLE of the class in Victoria (refer to Reference Tool D).

Executive Director's Response

- The William Dargie murals are not notable examples of the class 'artistic murals'.
- They are not fine, pivotal or influential in terms of their artistic accomplishment.
- While the landscapes depicted are pleasing, the figures (except for the cameleer) are generally stiff and not well painted. This is unusual as William Dargie was a very accomplished artist with the ability to capture a beautiful and accurate likeness of a subject or scene, even at this early stage of his career.

Criterion D is likely not to be satisfied.

CRITERION E

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION E

The *PHYSICAL FABRIC* of the place/object clearly exhibits particular aesthetic characteristics.

Executive Director's Response

- The physical fabric of the Dargie murals does exhibit particular aesthetic characteristics.
- The landscapes in the murals are pleasing and evocative of Australian landscape scenes in history.

Criterion E is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION E

The aesthetic characteristics are APPRECIATED OR VALUED by the wider community or an appropriately-related discipline as evidenced, for example, by:

- CRITICAL RECOGNITION of the aesthetic characteristics of the place/object within a relevant art, design, architectural or related discipline as an outstanding example within Victoria; or
- wide public ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL MERIT in Victoria in medium such as songs, poetry, literature, painting, sculpture, publications, print media etc.

Executive Director's Response

- There are many publications on William Dargie's work but none of those accessed discuss or even mention the murals at Caulfield Junior College.
- The murals received no known critical recognition as outstanding examples of artworks or murals in general or Dargie's work in particular.
- There has been no wide acknowledgement of exceptional merit in the public domain.

Criterion E is likely not to be satisfied at the State level.

CRITERION F

Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION F

The place/object contains *PHYSICAL EVIDENCE* that clearly demonstrates creative or technical *ACHIEVEMENT* for the time in which it was created.

Plus

The physical evidence demonstrates a *HIGH DEGREE OF INTEGRITY*.

Executive Director's Response

- The murals demonstrate a high degree of integrity.
- The William Dargie murals do not demonstrate any creative or technical achievement for the time in which they were created. They are competently executed oil paintings but are not out of the ordinary.

Criterion F is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION G

Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to indigenous people as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION G

Evidence exists of a *DIRECT ASSOCIATION* between the place/object and a *PARTICULAR COMMUNITY OR CULTURAL GROUP*.

(For the purpose of these guidelines, 'COMMUNITY or CULTURAL GROUP' is defined as a sizable group of persons who share a common and long-standing interest or identity).

Plus

The *ASSOCIATION* between the place/object and the community or cultural group is *STRONG OR SPECIAL*, as evidenced by the regular or long-term use of/engagement with the place/object or the enduring ceremonial, ritual, commemorative, spiritual or celebratory use of the place/object.

Executive Director's Response

- The Dargie murals have a direct association with the Caulfield Junior College community.
- The Dargie murals are not well known outside this community.
- While the Dargie murals have been at the place since 1938-9 they have not used been used for ceremonial, ritual, commemorative, spiritual or celebratory purposes.
- There is no evidence that the association between the Dargie murals and the school community is 'strong or special' beyond that which would exist between a school community and murals at a school.

Criterion G is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION H

Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION H

The place/object has a *DIRECT ASSOCIATION* with a person or group of persons who have made a strong or influential *CONTRIBUTION* to the course of Victoria's history.

Plus

The *ASSOCIATION* of the place/object to the person(s) *IS EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources and/or oral history.

Plus

The *ASSOCIATION*:

- directly relates to *ACHIEVEMENTS* of the person(s) at, or relating to, the place/object; or
- relates to an *enduring* and/or *close INTERACTION* between the person(s) and the place/object.

Executive Director's Response

There is a direct association between the William Dargie Murals, William Dargie the artist and Colonel Harold Cohen the philanthropist who commissioned them.

William Dargie

- William Dargie was one of Australia's best portraitists and made an influential contribution to art in Victoria.
- The Murals because they are part of Dargie's oeuvre even though they are not particularly accomplished.

Harold Cohen

- Cohen was a highly regarded Melbourne soldier, business man and politician with a strong sense of public duty.
- Cohen made an influential contribution to Victoria but is less well known than another philanthropist who was active at the same time, Sir Macpherson Robertson, (1859–1945).
- Cohen's philanthropy tended to be expressed through acts of public service, donations/bequests and work through organisations (such as the Scouts) rather than the construction of buildings or monuments.

Criterion H is likely to be satisfied.

STEP 2: A BASIC TEST FOR DETERMINING STATE LEVEL SIGNIFICANCE FOR CRITERION H

The place/object allows the clear association with the person or group of persons to be *READILY APPRECIATED BETTER THAN MOST OTHER PLACES OR OBJECTS IN VICTORIA*.

Executive Director's Response

- The association of the murals with Dargie and Cohen is documented in the plaques at the bases of each mural with the words 'donated by'.
- There is no evidence that there was any enduring interaction between Dargie and Cohen, the school and the murals.

William Dargie

- The William Dargie Murals do not allow the clear association with Dargie to be readily appreciated better than most other places or objects in Victoria.

- The murals are not particularly good examples of Dargie's work. While the landscapes in the Dargie murals are pleasing, the figures (except for the cameleer) are generally stiff and not well painted.
- This is unusual as William Dargie was a very accomplished artist with the ability to capture a beautiful and accurate likeness of a subject or scene, even at this early stage of his career.
- William Dargie's work can be better appreciated by his other more accomplished paintings.

Harold Cohen

- The association between Cohen and the William Dargie Murals is less strong. While the phrase 'donated by' is on the plaque under the murals, Cohen was not involved in their creation and his hand is not evident.
- It should be noted that the murals were donated to a newly built school within Cohen's electorate when he was a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for the Electoral District of Caulfield.
- Cohen's philanthropy is currently acknowledged by the Harold and Freda Cohen prizes in education at the University of Melbourne.

Criterion H is not likely to be satisfied at the State level.

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE [s.40]

The Executive Director is of the view that the William Dargie Murals do not meet any of the Heritage Council of Victoria criteria at the threshold for State significance. The Infants School Building and the William Dargie Murals may be significant at a local level.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Local Government Authority	City of Glen Eira
Heritage Overlay	No
Heritage Overlay Controls	None
Other Overlays	None
Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register	No
Other Names	None

Comments

Heritage Victoria staff were not able to view the backs of the murals (paintings on canvas) because they are affixed to the wall within frames.

HISTORY

Sir William Dargie OBE CBE

William Alexander Dargie (1912-2003) was born in Footscray and grew up in Gippsland and Melbourne and resided in the Caulfield / Glen Huntly area before moving to the Dandenongs then Canterbury. He first trained as a teacher and in 1931 he took leave from teaching to study art with Archibald Colquhoun and Napier Waller, and at Melbourne Technical College. He began to practice as an artist in 1933. Dargie worked as an art teacher at Caulfield Technical College from 1933 to at least 1938 and then at Swinburne Technical College. Dargie lived and worked in the Caulfield / Glen Eira area during the 1920s and 1930s.

Dargie was a prolific and high-profile portraitist and was an official war artist. He also painted still-lives, landscapes, interiors, and works of the ballet and theatre all in the same tonal realist style. Dargie won the Archibald Prize on eight occasions between 1941 and 1956, the most of any artist. The later awards were controversial with many artists condemning the conservatism of his work. Despite Dargie being of considerable significance to Australian art, there is comparatively little published on him when compared to other artists working at the same time (eg. William Dobell). Perhaps this is because of the Archibald controversies and because his realist style has been unfashionable with art academics (but not the establishment or the public) since the 1950s.

Colonel the Hon Harold Cohen DSO CMG CBE

Harold Cohen (1881-1946), was born in St Kilda. He attended Xavier College, the first Jewish boy to do so and was its captain in 1898. He completed the two-year articled clerks course at the University of Melbourne in 1900 and was later admitted to legal practice in the family firm of Pavey, Wilson & Cohen.

Cohen's distinguished military service began in 1901 when he was commissioned in the Field Artillery Brigade, Australian Military Forces, and he joined the army in 1915. During WWI he commanded a brigade and was awarded the DSO in 1917 and created CMG in 1918. He continued his military involvement between the wars and during WWII he went to the Middle East as honorary Red Cross commissioner. He was appointed adjutant-general in February 1943 with the rank of Brigadier.

After his return to Australia in 1919, Cohen resumed practice in commercial and constitutional law, and became director of eight big companies in the brewing, paper and non-ferrous metals industries. In 1929, he entered Parliament and from 1935 to 1943 he was a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for the Electoral District of Caulfield. He was the Minister of Public Instruction and Solicitor-General during 1935. Cohen was chief commissioner of the Boy Scouts Association from 1922-25 and was its president for twenty years.

Cohen's rigorous Jesuit education and the tutelage of his father combined to produce a hard-working, thorough man, dedicated to duty as he saw it. He never took payment for his military or political duties. The Harold and Freda Cohen prizes in education at the University of Melbourne were donated by him. Cohen is less well-known than other Victorian philanthropists (for example Sir Macpherson Robertson, (1859–1945), who was active at the same time) probably because Cohen's philanthropy tended to be expressed through acts of public service, donations/bequests and work through organisations rather than the construction of buildings or monuments.

Cohen was extensively involved with the scouting movement which was very nationalist in the interwar period. As President of the Victorian Jewish Returned Soldiers' Circle from 1937–46, Cohen frequently argued the Jewish case in returned soldiers' circles. He was Chairman of the Victorian Jewish Returned and ex-Servicemen's Association at the time of his death.

Art in the 1930s

There were two main streams of art in Australia the 1930s. The Modernist movement was gaining popularity as were its artists such as John Perceval, Albert Tucker and Sidney Nolan. However traditional realist art does appear to have been more popular than modernism in the 1930s.

These parallel art movements were demonstrated by the foundation of the Australian Academy of Art (AAA) by Robert Menzies in 1937 which was intended to mirror the Royal Academy in Britain (Menzies hoped to receive a Royal Warrant for the AAA). The Contemporary Art Society (CAS) was established in 1938, by George Bell in protest at the perceived conservatism of the AAA. The young William Dargie was included in the AAA's first exhibition but never exhibited at the CAS.

In the 1920s Diego Rivera and other artists in Mexico gained international recognition for their monumental murals. Their work inspired other artists all over the world to start to revive the mural tradition. In 1936 the Art Gallery of NSW established the Sir John Sulman prize for mural decoration. This led to the production of many more murals in Australia for shops, restaurants and public buildings. Many of these murals were decorative but others were more educational or historic in nature. Dargie's large scale history murals at Caulfield Junior College are typical of the conservative, realist stream of Australian art and of mural making of the interwar period.

Historical events in the 1930s

The Centenary of Melbourne had been celebrated in 1934. The 150th anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet in 1938 was widely celebrated. The celebration of these anniversaries demonstrates the patriotism and the increasing interest in Victoria's history which was notable in the 1930s.

Caulfield Junior College

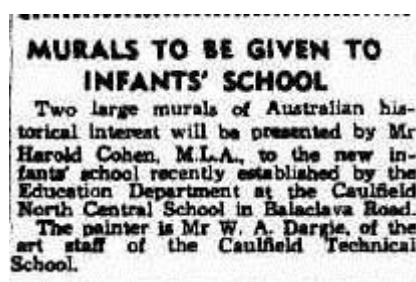
Balaclava Road Primary School Number 3820 at 186 Balaclava Road, Caulfield was constructed in 1914. After many complaints of overcrowding, a new Infants School Building was constructed in 1938. The murals are installed in this building. The new building faced Stanley Parade and was placed in the centre of the school grounds to minimise the street noise from Balaclava Road which was a significant problem in the main building. The new school was designed by the Public Works Department Chief Architect, Percy Everett. It is a

streamlined Moderne style of building with a flat roof and two levels of red and liver coloured brick. It appears to have been designed to be visually compatible with the original red brick school building. Balaclava Road Primary School has been renamed three times: Caulfield North Central School in 1919; Caulfield North Primary School in 1989 and Caulfield Junior College in 1999.

There is no record of any murals being installed in any Percy Everett designed schools except for in the early 1950s when there were proposals to paint murals depicting nursery rhymes and fables onto room dividers in Victorian infants schools. When asked about this, Percy Everett said that he had no objections to murals "...as long as they are good!" It appears that these 1950s murals were only ever installed in two schools and these no longer exist.

History of the Dargie murals

There is little information available on the history of the two Dargie murals at Caulfield Junior College. They were donated to the school in 1938-39 by Colonel Harold Cohen while he was the MLA for the local seat of Caulfield.



Herald, Tuesday 3 January 1939, page 15

It seems likely that Cohen's sense of public duty and nationalist sentiment invigorated by the historical anniversaries of the 1930s – as well as a desire to remain in favour with his electorate – led to him donating these murals. Newspaper coverage of the newly installed murals said that they were intended to be "A new way of learning history". Rosemary Triolo who researches the teaching of history in Australian Schools, has said that the use of the murals to teach history did indeed represent a radical new way of teaching history to children. History teaching at that time was exclusively text based and the use of large scale images of historical events would have been an innovative way of teaching for the time. However it has not been possible to find any evidence how murals were used to teach history to the students.

There is no information about the murals in any of the available references on Dargie and Dargie's son Roger was unaware of them. This seems to indicate that they were of low importance to Dargie (unlike his 1951 New Holland mural). Barbara Falk, Harold Cohen's daughter wrote a book on the Cohen family which includes a chapter on Harold. It records Cohen's efforts to construct the new Caulfield Infants School but does not mention the murals. No connections have been found between Dargie, Cohen and/or Percy Everett.

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Artist name: William Dargie

Architectural style name: Tonal realism

Construction started date: 1938

Construction ended date: 1939

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The murals are large oil paintings on canvas each approximately 1 metre high and 3 metres long. Brush strokes and texture of the paint is visible. Joins in the canvas are not immediately visible. It appears that the paintings are on stretchers. Each painting is enclosed in a timber frame with a simple rounded profile, painted dark brown. The frames are attached to the wall and the bottom edge of each frame rests on a plaster moulding. The frame of the Burke and Wills mural has been cut to allow space for the mechanism of the sliding door into the classroom.

The paintings are heroic in style, but the figures are generally stiff and somewhat amateur in style. This is unusual as William Dargie was very technically proficient even at the age of 26 when these murals were made. It is possible that some of Dargie's students from Caulfield Technical School painted parts of the murals. The only vibrant and technically competent figure in the two murals is that of the cameleer which may have been painted by Dargie. The landscape is not detailed but this appears to be typical of Dargie's other landscapes and may have been painted by him.

The inscriptions are painted in bronze paint on varnished timber panels. The inscriptions read:

THE EXPEDITION OF BURKE AND WILLS – COMMENCEMENT OF THE JOURNEY

Mural Painting by W A Dargie

DONATED TO THE SCHOOL BY

COLONEL THE HON HAROLD COHEN MLA CBE DSO VD MLA

and

LIEUT JOHN MURRAY CLAIMING PORT PHILLIP BAY FOR HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE III MARCH 8TH 1802

Mural Painting by W A Dargie

DONATED TO THE SCHOOL BY

COLONEL THE HON HAROLD COHEN CMG CBE DSO VD MLA

INTEGRITY/INTACTNESS

Intactness

The intactness of both the murals is excellent. All components are present. They have never been moved from their original locations. (October 2017)

Integrity

The cultural heritage values of the murals can be easily read in the extant fabric. But they are difficult to understand and appreciate because walls have been installed close to the murals to create hanging spaces for the children's school bags. These walls make it difficult to view the murals. (October 2017)

CONDITION

The Expedition of Burke And Wills mural is in good condition. Limited visual inspection shows that the paint is well attached to the canvas and the colours do not appear to be faded. There is a light layer of surface dirt as would be expected from a painting of this age. The canvas seems strong and not sagging, although it was not possible to view the stretcher to confirm this. The base of the canvas and frame of *The Expedition of Burke And Wills* Mural has been cut away to accommodate the mechanism of the sliding door into the classroom. It is likely that this occurred at the time of installation because the stretcher of the painting appears to have been carefully modified to accommodate the door. (October 2017)

Lieut John Murray Claiming Port Phillip Bay for His Majesty is in fair condition. Visual inspection shows that the paint is mostly well attached to the canvas and the colours do not appear to be faded. There is a light layer of surface dirt as would be expected from a painting of this age. There is water damage on the western side of the painting apparently from a roof leak above. This has led to cracking of the paint film at the base

and along the water drips. The paint still remains attached to the canvas in these areas. This damage can be easily reversed by professional conservation. The canvas seems strong and not sagging, although it was not possible to view the stretcher to confirm this. (October 2017)

The varnished timber plaques below the paintings are in good condition although the varnish is slightly dulled and dirty. The bronze paint of the letters would have been golden in colour but has tarnished to a greenish brown colour and is difficult to read. The paint is well attached. The frames are in good condition with some minor paint losses. (October 2017)

COMPARISONS

Comparison – Type/Theme 1 – Murals in Educational organisations

While there have been many murals installed in schools since 1970, few date from the period between 1930 and 1970. All those found demonstrate greater aesthetic and historical significance than the Dargie murals. Examples of surviving school murals are:

- Mac.Robertson Girls' High School. VHR H1641 (building), one mural (paint on board) painted in 1957 by Murray Griffin (1903 - 1992).
- Melbourne High School. VHR H1636 (building), set of two murals (frescos) painted in 1956 by Leonard Annois (1906 - 1966).
- MLC Kew, set of two murals (paint on timber) in the assembly hall painted in 1957 by George Browning (1918 - 2000). The building was recommended for addition to the Victorian Heritage Register in the City of Kew Urban Conservation Study 1988.
- Sale Technical School now Macalister Campus, Sale College. 'Learning Through the Ages' (mosaic) made in 1963 by an unknown artist and installed in the Assembly Hall. This mural was recently taken down and remounted on the outside of a new building on the site.



Learning through the Ages, mosaic, Sale Technical College, 1968. Formerly in the assembly hall of Sale Technical School, now on the outside of a new building on the site



Mural, Melbourne High School by Leonard Annois

Significant later murals associated with educational organisations include

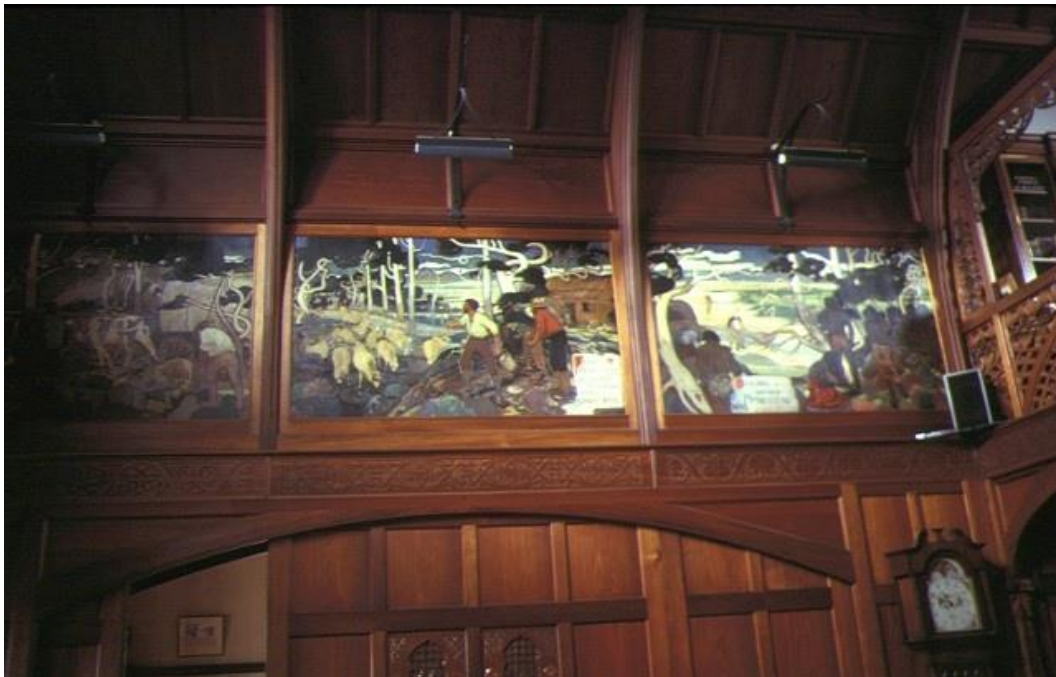
- The Keith Haring Mural, 1984, (Former Collingwood Technical School, VHR H2055).
- *The Sissons Mural* at Monash University Parkville Campus painted by Leonard Annois in 1961
- Mural by Douglas Annand at Wilson Hall, University of Melbourne, 1956
- *Symmetry of sport*, Beaurepaire Centre (VHR H1045), University of Melbourne, 1956 Leonard French



The Sissons Mural 1961. Source: Monash University

Comparison – Type/Theme 3 – Other significant murals

Walter Withers, 1901, Purrumbeete (VHR H0301) - six panels included in the registration of Purrumbeete. These illustrate the settlement and development of Purrumbeete.



Murals by Walter Whithers, Purumbeete, VHR H0301

Napier Waller Murals, 1928, Café Florentino (VHR H0493) - sixteen intact dining room murals included in the registration of Café Florentino. These depict scenes from Renaissance Italy and were painted under the supervision of Napier Waller by his students.



Mural by Napier Waller and students at Café Florentino VHR H0493

Myer Mural Hall murals, 1933, Myer Melbourne (former Myer Emporium) (VHR H2100) - ten murals by Napier Waller included in the registration of Myer Melbourne. These depict women in history.

History of Transport Mural, 1973 (VHR H1936) by Harold Freeman – five panels depicting the first century of transport in Victoria (1835-1935). Registered as an object.



The History of Transport Mural VHR H1936 in its original location at Spencer St Station.

Source: State Library of Victoria

Summary

The Walter Withers murals at Purrumbete are magnificent artworks in their own right, unlike the Dargie murals. Both the Withers and the Waller murals are also an important part of the registered place. The Dargie murals are most similar to the Waller murals in Café Florentino because they made from the same type of materials (oil on canvas) and because they are of lesser artistic quality than other works by the same artist. There are some similarities between the Dargie murals and the History of Transport mural because both have an educational intent (unlike the Waller murals). The History of Transport mural is registered as an object despite its association with Spencer St Station. The Dargie murals are clearly part of the same tradition as these murals but of less significance.

Comparison – Type/Theme 4 – Works by William Dargie in Victoria (including murals)

The National Gallery of Victoria holds only one work by William Dargie. Museum Victoria does not hold any. Parliament House, Victoria holds two Dargie portraits of premiers Henry Bolte (1980) and Rupert Hamer (1982). The University of Melbourne holds at least 18 Dargie portraits one of Robert Menzies. The State Library of Victoria holds 34 artworks by Dargie including a portrait of his brother, *The Young Recruit*, painted when Dargie was only 21. The online Australian Dictionary of Biography includes over 100 people whose portraits were painted by Dargie, ca. 40 of which are held by organisations and private individuals in Victoria (unusually there is no Australian Dictionary of Biography entry on Dargie himself).



The Young Recruit, 1933, William Dargie
Source: State Library of Victoria



Premier Henry Bolte, 1980, William Dargie
Source: Parliament of Victoria

The figures in the Dargie murals at Caulfield Junior college are of lower artistic quality than portraits by Dargie held in Victorian collections and those in the New Holland mural. The scenery in the Caulfield murals is of similar quality to his other landscapes. The New Holland Mural, 1951 was painted with oil paint onto 18 Masonite panels. It was painted by Dargie and some students for the New Holland company's headquarters in Dandenong. The mural was removed from the building when New Holland relocated, and the mural is now owned by the Mildura Art Gallery.



New Holland Mural, 1954 by William Dargie. Source: National Library of Australia

Comparison – Type/Theme 5 – Memorials commemorating the history of Victoria in the 1930s and specific historic events – The Burke and Wills expedition and the British claim to Victoria

There is a very large amount of material in Victoria that memorialises the Burke and Wills expedition. This includes the *Burke and Wills Monument* formerly in City Square, Melbourne, the *Burke and Wills Memorial* at Melbourne General Cemetery and approx. 18 other memorials throughout the state. There are also many photographs, artefacts, sketches, lithographs and historical documents held in public institutions in Victoria. Examples of other artworks are *The Arrival of Burke, Wills and King at the deserted camp at Cooper's Creek, Sunday evening, 21st April 1861* (1907) by John Longstaff, and *Burke and Wills at the Gulf* (1961) by Sidney Nolan, both held by the National Gallery of Victoria and the 1881 lithograph *The Departure of the Burke and Wills Expedition* held at the State Library of Victoria.



The Burke and Wills expedition: the first day's order of march (1862) by William Strutt
Source: State Library of Victoria

There are very few memorials to the *Lieut John Murray Claiming Port Phillip Bay* except for cairns, walls and other structures with informative plaques mounted on them.



Lieutenant John Murray Cairn, 1929, Arthur's Seat. Source: Monument Australia

There are many memorials to commemorate important moments in Victoria's history. These include the Mac.Robertson Girls High School (VHR H1641) which was built to commemorate the 1934 centenary, and the Macpherson Robertson Fountain and the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden in the Domain Parklands

(VHR H2304). The set of murals at Caulfield Junior College are not a rare example of the memorialisation, patriotism and nationalism of the 1930s in Victoria following the 1934 Centenary of the founding of Victoria.



Phoenix Biscuit Co. Tin, Centenary of Melbourne, 1935. Source: Museum Victoria

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Dr Rosalie Triolo, Senior Lecturer, Education, Monash University

KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT

Archivists and office staff at many Victorian public and private schools
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ADDITIONAL IMAGES

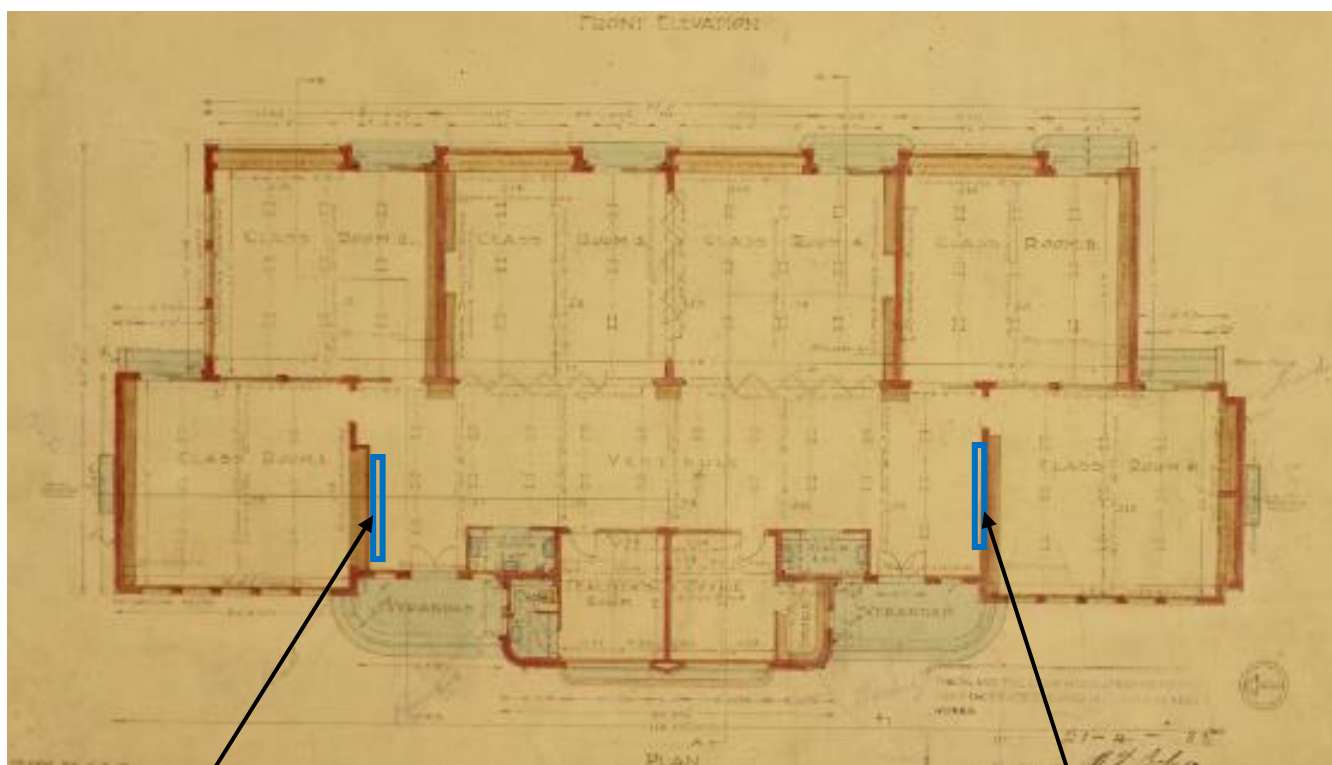
Infants
School
Building



The murals are located inside the 1938 Infants School Building (designed by Percy Everett) on the site of Caulfield Junior College



Infants Building, Caulfield Junior College, from the West



Location of the murals

"The Expedition of Burke and Wills – Commencement of the Journey"
 "Lieut John Murray claiming Port Phillip Bay for his Majesty King George III March 8th 1802"



The Expedition of Burke and Wills – Commencement of the Journey



Lieut John Murray claiming Port Phillip Bay for his Majesty King George III March 8th 1802



The plaque below the Burke and Wills mural



The partition in front of the Burke and Wills Mural
(sliding door just visible)



Section of Burke and Wills mural cut away to
accommodate the door



Base of Lieutenant Murray mural showing water
damage



William Dargie, 1934. Source: State Library of Victoria



Colonel Harold Cohen, 1940. Source: Cassirer and Cohen - draft family genealogy compiled by Jim Falk (Cohen's grandson)



Press Coverage of the construction of the new Infants School building.
The man in the centre of this image is Government Architect Percy Everett. *The Age*, June 9, 1938



Press Coverage about the murals, *The Argus* 21 Feb 1939 (note erroneous title of the mural)