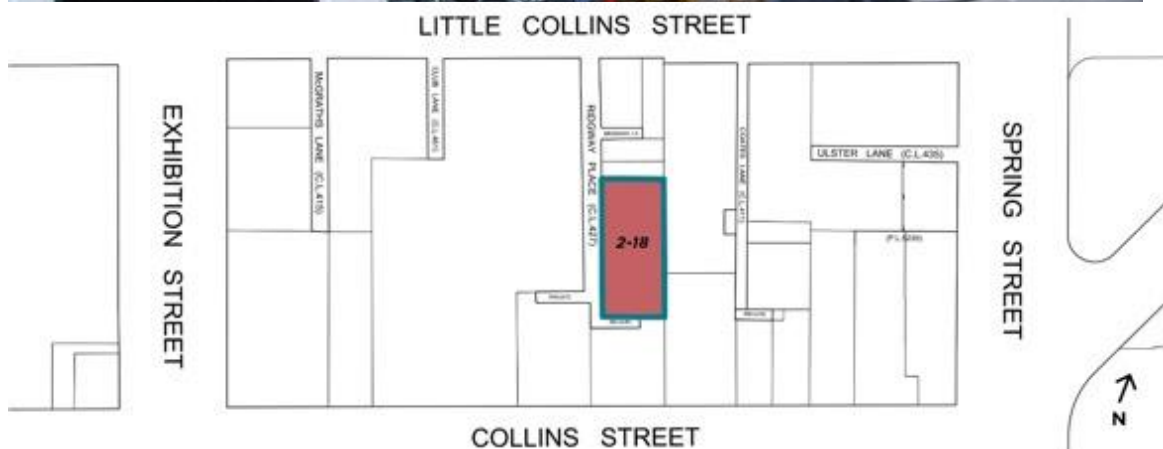


SITE NAME	Lyceum Club
STREET ADDRESS	2-18 Ridgway Place, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108274



SURVEY DATE:	June 2017	SURVEY BY:	Context
HERITAGE INVENTORY	H7822-1777	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY	No
PLACE TYPE	Individual Place Type	PROPOSED CATEGORY	Significant
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Ellison Harvie	FORMER GRADE	D
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Postwar Period (1945-1965)	BUILDER:	Pollard Brothers
		DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1959

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, Stage 2 Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here
POSTWAR THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
1 Shaping the urban landscape	1.8 Expressing an architectural style
8 Enjoying the city	8.3 Entertainment and socialising

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Not able to be determined
1920s	Not able to be determined
1960s	Clubs and Unions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map

SUMMARY

2-18 Ridgway Place was designed in 1959 by architect Ellison Harvie for the Lyceum Club, the largest and most important club for professional women in Victoria. This modernist building is characterised by its floating first floor form and aesthetic expression of structural and building elements. It sits comfortably in its compact laneway location.

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

The period from 1945 to 1975 was one of radical transformation for Melbourne; from the low-rise city that still reflected its colonial origins to a bustling international centre of commerce and culture. The surviving buildings from this period are evidence of the evolving economic and social conditions in Melbourne at the time and demonstrate the city's transition from its nineteenth century manufacturing origins to its current banking, office and service industry focus. These buildings reflect the increasing commercial and cultural role of Melbourne in the international context of globalisation and postwar optimism as well as a radically altered economic environment which saw an influx of foreign capital and ideas. Collectively, these buildings represent a transformative period in the life of the city; a period that is categorised by significant change, growth and evolution across all aspects of life – social, political, economic and cultural.

Expressing an architectural style in the postwar period

Multi-storey commercial buildings made a significant contribution to postwar Melbourne, particularly from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s. With the resumption of building construction in the 1950s after the hiatus of World War II, the advent of curtain wall construction – enabling the application of a non-load bearing skin to the face of a building – radically altered the appearance of the modern city commercial building.

Constructed predominantly for the financial and business sectors, there was an eagerness amongst clients to establish a dominant city presence and to project a modern, progressive and prestigious approach to commercial building design. The resulting Post-War Modernist style of multi-storey buildings, influenced particularly by steel and glass office tower design in the United States, were in stark contrast to the pre-war city buildings in central Melbourne and presented architects of the day with a completely new design challenge.

Thirty major city buildings were completed in Melbourne in four years alone from 1955 to 1958 and 22 were office buildings within, or on the fringes of, the CBD (Saunders 1959:91). Largely influenced by the American skyscraper, the earliest office buildings of the 1950s utilised innovative curtain walling, formed from continuous metal-framing filled principally with glass. The curtain wall is described by Miles Lewis as 'essentially a continuous, non-bearing skin on the face of a building' and is one of the 'leitmotifs of modernism, both in Australia and overseas' (Lewis 2012:185). The curtain walled 'glass box' aesthetic was embraced by the local architects, and many buildings followed to the extent that high-rise office buildings with curtain walling became a defining characteristic of the new buildings in the latter half of the 1950s (NTAV 2014:5-6).

Amongst the first curtain walled buildings to be constructed in Melbourne was the 13-storey glass-fronted Gilbert Court at 100 Collins Street (J A La Gerche 1954-56), which was built to the height limit of 132 feet (40m), and – perhaps the most influential – the free-standing ICI House, 1 Nicholson Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon 1955-58). Located on the outskirts of the Hoddle Grid, ICI House was clad on all four facades with glass curtain walling and exceeded the well-established maximum building height within the Hoddle Grid. Large numbers of similarly designed city commercial buildings followed, often displaying bold horizontal contrast between alternating rows of glazing and coloured spandrels.

Entertainment and socialising in the postwar period

The retail and entertainment precincts in Melbourne, which emerged in the early 1960s, were largely protected from consolidation and redevelopment due to lower plot ratio controls and difficulty in consolidating a sufficient number of properties to achieve a legitimate tower form. The level of redevelopment in these precincts is more modest, with fine grained, smaller sized allotments along with

valued heritage fabric. During this phase, conservation of heritage buildings was not yet an intentional pursuit, but rather a residual effect of the prevailing logic of the planning system (CoM 2016:5-7).

Higher disposable income, more leisure time, and larger metropolitan populations created an increase in entertainment and tourism industries in every Australian capital city. According to Marsden, only the office and finance sector has had more impact on the physical expansion and alteration of existing places, especially in central Sydney and Melbourne. Even though increased suburbanisation from the 1950s led to the closure of entertainment venues and theatres in Melbourne's city centre, other venues opened. In 1970, for example, Hoyts Cinema Centre in Bourke Street opened the first multi-cinema complex in Australia.

Clubs have also historically been an important part of city life. The Lyceum Club for women built new premises at 2-18 Ridgway Place in 1959 while new clubrooms for the RACV Club were built at 123 Queen Street in 1961. Such places provided patrons with a space in the city to meet, network and promote cultural activities.

SITE HISTORY

The site of 2-18 Ridgway Place was originally purchased as part of the fifth Crown Land sale in 1839, with lanes and subdivisions developed by the same year. By 1850, a building had been constructed and in 1888, the site comprised seven houses. By 1905-06 there were six two-storey houses fronting a lane. (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993).

In 1959, the Lyceum Club opened its clubrooms at 2-18 Ridgway Place.

The Lyceum Club

The following history on the Lyceum Club has been taken from the National Trust file (B6902), which in turn has been extracted from the history in Allom Lovell and Associate's 1998 management plan for the Lyceum Club.

The Lyceum Club held its first meeting in 1912 at rented premises, the Brunton Chambers, at the corner of Elizabeth and Collins streets. After six years of operation, the club's 150 members had outgrown the space, and the Lyceum moved to the fifth floor of the Auditorium Building at 167 Collins Street. With the end of World War One, and the subsequent increased involvement of women in professional and public work, membership continued to rise. The new premises soon reached capacity, resulting in the Lyceum Club needing to limit membership numbers to 450 and create a temporary waiting list.

Membership increased from 500 in 1921 to 625 in 1922. In 1925 the Lyceum Club accepted an offer from the ES&A Bank to lease an empty floor within the Stock Exchange building. The club had the opportunity to adapt the space to meet its needs, with the architects devising a system of folding doors so that the main rooms could be opened to make one large room for special occasions. Later in 1925, the Lyceum Club's constitution was changed to allow for its incorporation under the

Companies Act of 1916. In 1928, the club's rules were altered to allow membership to increase from 800 to 1000, which it reached in the 1940s.

The Lyceum Club remained in the Stock Exchange building until 1934, when it moved to Bank House, at the corner of Collins and Queens streets. The planning of new premises at Bank House offered an opportunity to provide accommodation, with three bedrooms for guests made available on the third floor.

Membership after World War Two continued to rise and by 1947, in order to absorb the number of people on the waiting list, the Articles of Association were altered to allow membership to increase from 1000 to 1200. In 1956, the club was advised that Bank House would no longer be made available for its use. Architect member and associate in the partnership of architectural firm, Stephenson & Turner, Ellison Harvie, surveyed members regarding their wishes for future club premises. It was decided that the Lyceum Club should investigate the possibility of buying a property in the city and that members would be encouraged to take up £25 debentures.

After investigations, a block in Ridgway Place was chosen in 1957 as a potential site for the club's new premises. It was described at a special club meeting as being approximately 7000 square feet, on which six small two-storey houses stood, one of which remains today at 20 Ridgway Place. The cottages were once owned by the adjacent Melbourne Club, who used them as accommodation for its coachmen, but by the 1950s the houses were privately owned and tenanted. The Lyceum Club took up the option of the Ridgway Place site and purchased the land for £26,000 in 1957. A decision to demolish the cottages and construct a new building on the Ridgway Place site was made in May 1958.

The construction of the Lyceum Club's new building was coordinated by Ellison Harvie, with assistance from fellow architects Hilary Lewis and Jessie Madsen. The club was relocated to temporary accommodation provided by the ES&A Bank at 140 Flinders Lane.

Harvey's design for the new building included car parking, an entrance on the ground floor, dining room, kitchen and clubrooms on the first floor, with a small lounge and six bedrooms opening to a roof terrace on the second floor. The terrace and the full-length windows on the first floor overlooked the garden of the adjacent Melbourne Club. The tender for the construction of the building was awarded to Pollard Brothers for the sum of £75,857. The new building was officially opened by Lady Mayoress F W Thomas on 26 May 1959.

Over the next 10 years, various work on the building was undertaken by architects Stephenson & Turner. After Ellison Harvie retired from the practice in 1967, Stephenson & Turner continued to act as the club's regular architects. In 1972, extensive repairs were undertaken following flooding, which occurred after torrential rain in late 1971.

At the same time, the club appointed an honorary architect from its own members, Berenice Harris, who had been a director with the firm Romberg & Boyd since 1961. Harris's work over the next few years included minor works but culminated in the early 1980s when a large renovation program was implemented, including extensions, the construction of ensuite bathrooms and the installation of a lift. After Harris's retirement in the 1980s, the Lyceum Club's building and maintenance work became the responsibility of the local firm of Cunningham & Keddie. In addition to minor works over the years, the most substantial work undertaken by the firm was the fit-out of the library on the second floor, which involved the consolidation of three original bedrooms facing the sun terrace.

Other architect members of the Lyceum Club likely to have made contributions to the building over the years include Cynthea Teague, Ailsa Trundle, Lorna Phillips, Muriel Stott, Mary Turner Shaw, and Babs Delaney. Other notable local women professionals who have contributed to the building include artists Anne Montgomery (mural painting) and Bee Taplin (textiles), interior decorator Joyce Godfrey (club rooms and lounge), and landscape designer Millie Gibson.

In sum, the building was built and adapted regularly to meet the changing needs of the club and its membership. The organisation dates to 1912, and the building to 1959. The building was purpose built for the club and is its first permanent home (previous spaces were leased). Construction of the building enabled an expansion of the membership of the club and development of facilities for members. The Club's first president was Pattie Deakin, wife of the prime minister Alfred Deakin, and many of its early members were among the first female professionals in their particular fields: Dr Constance Ellis (medicine), Christian Jollie Smith (law), and Marion Mahoney Griffin (architecture). As a result of bequests and member donations, the Lyceum Club houses an important collection of furniture, artwork and reference books (National Trust 2005).

Ellison Harvie, architect

The Australian Dictionary of Biography contains this entry for Ellison Harvey:

Edythe Ellison Harvie (1902-1984), architect joined Sir Arthur Stephenson in his recently established firm in 1921 and remained there throughout her professional life.

In 1925-28 Harvie attended the Melbourne University Architectural Atelier (1925-28), where she excelled, her work being later recognised in the award of a diploma of architectural design (1938) - the first received by a woman. Registered as an architect and elected an associate (1928) of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, Harvie specialised in hospital architecture, a field in which Stephenson & Meldrum gained an international reputation. She led work on the Jessie Macpherson wing of the Queen Victoria Hospital (1928), and on designs for the St Vincent's (1933), Mercy (1934, 1937-39) and Freemasons (1935) hospitals...

Harvie was made an associate of the new partnership Stephenson & Turner in 1938 and soon placed in charge of work on the Royal Melbourne Hospital...In 1946 she was made a partner of the firm and elected a fellow of the RVIA—the first woman to gain this status. She was also a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects and, later, a life fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

A committed modernist, Harvie drew much of her inspiration from the innovative institutional work she observed during travels through the United States of America and Europe. Deploping the lack of architectural appreciation in Australia, she served on the RVIA's Board of Architectural Education (1946-56) and on the board of the University of Melbourne's faculty of architecture (1945-73).

Harvie also became an advocate for the professional development of women, urging their full participation in public life and an end to discrimination against them in employment. She continued to work on hospitals until her retirement from full-time practice in 1968, but also designed two buildings specifically serving women: The Lyceum Club (1959) and St Hilda's

College (1963), University of Melbourne. The former has an elegance typical of late 1950s modernism; the latter, in spare, pale brick, is tempered with modest references to the traditions of collegial gothic...

Ellison Harvie was president (1963-65) of the Lyceum Club and a foundation member (1948) and honorary treasurer of the Melbourne Soroptomist Club...She died at East Melbourne on 27 September 1984 and was buried in Boroondara cemetery, Kew (Edquist 2007).

The Lyceum Club was one of only two commissions Harvie accepted outside the Stephenson & Turner office (National Trust 2005).

Stephenson & Turner, architects

The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture contains the following information about Stephenson & Turner:

At its peak, Stephenson & Turner was Australia's largest architecture firm, with offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle, New Zealand and Hong Kong. It was formed in 1921 by A. G. Stephenson and Percy Meldrum as Stephenson & Meldrum, after both had returned to Australia after WWI, having met at London's Architectural Association. The firm had relatively modest beginnings, with a range of projects and clients, including the State Savings Bank of Victoria (Its chairman, Sir William McBeath, had encouraged Stephenson to return to Melbourne to set up a practice.) The firm's first hospital client, the Melbourne Children's Hospital in 1925, and a proposed reform to the hospital system, prompted Stephenson to imagine a new direction for his fledgling firm and he audaciously borrowed money to take an extensive overseas trip in 1926-27 to the United States and Canada to gather intelligence and experience with a view to becoming a firm specialising in hospitals...

The firm established a Sydney office in 1934 led by Donald Keith Turner, and were known in NSW from 1935 as Stephenson, Meldrum & Turner, taking on several large hospital projects including Gloucester House at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney (1936) ... Meldrum was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with Stephenson's interest in taking on more hospital work...The result was a very rapid and acrimonious split in the partnership...

Turner and Stephenson continued as Stephenson & Turner, continuing their hospital work during WWII, and afterwards promoted a number of their associates, such as Ellison Harvie, Geoffrey Moline and John D. Fisher, to partners. Beyond their hospital work, the firm also undertook key industrial complexes, commercial office buildings, banks, town plans (including Shepparton (1946) and the Australian pavilions at the Paris Exposition (1937) and the New York World's Fair (1939-40).

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Establishing its own club premises at 2-18 Ridgway Place in 1958, the Lyceum Club, as an organisation has been highly influential in the lives of generations of Victorian women. There is a direct association between the organisation, membership and the building that has endured for nearly 60 years.

With its large influx of immigrants, Melbourne was a city that inspired and promoted literature and art, movements that were accompanied by the establishment of art and literary clubs and societies. One such club was the Lyceum Club, established in 1912:

had its origins in the Woman Writers' Club, founded ten years earlier by the three female members of the Institute of Journalists who, excluded from the institute's premises, wanted a place to meet and write. In 1912 they joined with the group of women active in philanthropic and community work, education, science and the arts who had met through the 1907 Women's Work Exhibition, and members of the Catalysts, a women's discussion group, founded in 1910. The first overseas group to affiliate with the London Lyceum, the Club was open to university graduates and women who had achieved distinction in their own right. Its purpose was evident in a series of 'circles' that allowed members to learn new skills or discuss social problems (Swain 2008).

The Lyceum Club is considered to be of social significance for its association with a community of professional women. The relevant significance indicators include:

- The community or cultural group has a deep sense of ownership/stewardship and/or connectedness to the place or object
- The place is important to this community's sense identity
- Important as a place of community service (including health, education, worship, pastoral care, communications, emergency services, museums, etc.)

It may also be important to this community as an 'Important as a place of collective socialisation'.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Lyceum Club is located at the end of the narrow laneway Ridgway Lane, which runs off Little Collins Street, towards the eastern end of the CBD. The long narrow building runs over several addresses (numbers 2-18). It faces the high masonry wall of the Melbourne Club across the laneway. Although comprised of three levels, the building fits appropriately in the laneway setting, without appearing to dominate the confined space.

The middle storey is cantilevered over the ground floor and the flat roofed profile of this level results in a low section that presents as a horizontal band running the full length of the building. In keeping with the modern aesthetic, the building has an unadorned façade, with primary aesthetic interest derived from the arrangement of structural elements, and most notably, windows. Identical bays of timber framed windows run the full length of the building, giving a distinctive pattern and rhythm to the façade. Main meeting rooms and functions areas are located on this level.

Entry to the building is from street level. The compact entry foyer has extensive glazing and a textured cream brick wall. The internal stair is visible from the entry point. A row of equally spaced concrete columns runs along the build line. The open spaces on this level are used for car parking. Metal screens between the columns are a later addition.

The contemporary garage roller doors obscuring the ground floor space and entry of the building are still used by the Lyceum Club. An upper floor and alterations to the building were completed in 2018, designed by KTA Architects. This has respected and added to the original design.



Figure 1. Aerial Photo by Wolfgang Sievers, 1976 (Source: Sievers 1976).

INTEGRITY

Extensive alterations and extensions have occurred at the upper level in 2017-18, undertaken by KTA Architects. This has succeeded in adapting the building to the changing needs of the Lyceum Club and its members. Extensive works were also undertaken in 1981 when a seminar room was added to the upper level. Currently the built form extends to the building edge in two locations on the upper floor. This alteration impacts somewhat on the reading of the middle level as a single horizontal band. However, the façade of the important middle level remains intact and the design intent of the original arrangement is still clear.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Lyceum Club as an organisation has been highly influential in the lives of generations of Victorian women. There is a direct association between the organisation, its membership and the building that has endured for nearly 60 years. The only other known women's club, the Alexandra Club is primarily a private hotel for rural and regional women and has a different mission.

The Alexandra Club, 81 Collins Street, 1934 (HO568, HO504 Collins Street East precinct)

The Alexandra Club was designed by Anketell & K Henderson in 1937. It features a neo-Georgian brick façade of five storeys. The interior retains its' 1930s design in decorative columns and coffered ceiling, concierge's cabin and lift lobby.



Figure 2. 81 Collins Street, Alexandra Club constructed 1934. (Source: CoMMaps)

As a place, the Lyceum Club compares with several other modern buildings and/or former clubs. In conceiving more modest city buildings, some architects embraced the modernist theme of apparent weightlessness, where, like the Lyceum Club at 2-18 Ridgway Place, the upper floor(s) projected above a recessed ground floor (National Trust 2014:73). This was also achieved in other buildings such as:

Sapphire House, 11-25 Crossley Street, 1957 (HO500 Bourke Hill Precinct)

Built 1957, Sapphire House is a two-storey brick masonry building with recessed glazing within protruding white window frames (National Trust 2014:73).



Figure 3. 11-25 Crossley Street constructed 1957. (Source: CoMMaps)

Latrobe Photographic Studios, 152 Little Lonsdale Street, 1964

Designed by architect Harry Ernest in 1964, two levels of office space (expressed externally with alternating bays of windows and wide brick piers) project over a fully-glazed ground floor level (National Trust 2014:73).



Figure 4. 152-156 Little Lonsdale Street constructed 1964. (Source: CoMMaps)

RACV Club, 111-129 Queen Street, 1959-61 (Interim HO1068)

Designed by Bates Smart & McCutcheon, the elevated masonry clad block rests on stilts above the podium as discrete and well formulated massing, the stilts or columns being visible as they pass through the podium on the south side. The tower block appears to float above the façade and when combined with the glazed podium, gives the lightness and clarity of purpose sought by modernist designers.



Figure 5. 111-129 Queen Street constructed 1959-61. (Source: CoMMaps)

Analysis

The Lyceum Club as an organisation historically and socially has few peers in Melbourne, with the Alexandra Club being the only other known private women's club in the city. Today the Lyceum Club and the Alexandra Club at 81 Collins Street both provide private clubs for women with the Lyceum catering specifically for professional women.

It is one of only two private commissions by pioneering architect Ellison Harvie, outside her role at Stephenson & Turner.

As a place, the Lyceum Club, including its recent extensions and alterations, is a representative example of hybrid modern and contemporary architecture, comprising the 1959 building and the 2018 extension.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

✓	<p>CRITERION A Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).</p>
	<p>CRITERION B Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).</p>
	<p>CRITERION C Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).</p>
	<p>CRITERION D Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).</p>
	<p>CRITERION E Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).</p>
	<p>CRITERION F Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)</p>
✓	<p>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 peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).</p>
✓	<p>CRITERION H Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

OTHER

N/A

REFERENCES

Contextual History references contained within *City of Melbourne Hoddle Grid Heritage Review: Postwar Thematic Environmental History 1945-1975*

Allom Lovell 1998, Lyceum Club Management Plan,

Context Pty Ltd 2012, *Thematic History: A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment*, prepared for the City of Melbourne.

Edquist, Harriet, 'Harvie, Edythe Ellison (1902–1984)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/harvie-edythe-ellison-12605/text22705>, published first in hardcopy 2007, accessed 4 June 2017.

Fels, M, Lavelle S, and Mider, D 1993, 'Archaeological Management Plan', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

National Trust 2005, 'Lyceum Club' citation in Victorian Heritage Database, <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/65499#sthash.JI3MUMxZ.dpuf>, accessed 21 June 2017.

National Trust 2014, *Melbourne's Marvellous Modernism: A Comparative Analysis of Post-War Modern Architecture in Melbourne's CBD 1955-1975*, East Melbourne, National Trust.

National Trust file B6902 for the Lyceum Club, 2-18 Ridgway Place, Melbourne.

Swain, Shurlee 2008, 'Lyceum Club' in *eMelbourne*, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00870b.htm>, accessed 15 June 2017.

Willis, Julie 'Stephenson & Turner', in Goad, Philip & Willis, Julie (eds.) 2012, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985** D

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993** D

**Review of Heritage
overlay listings in the
CBD 2002** Ungraded

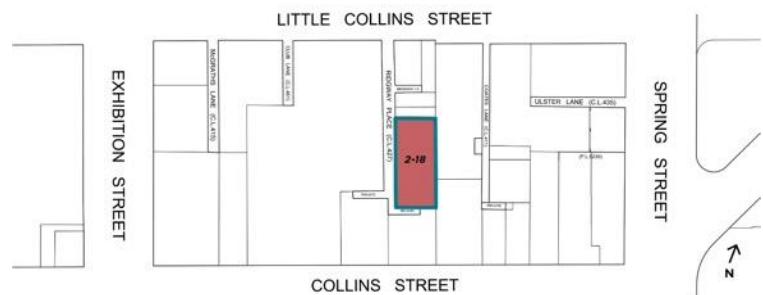
**Central City Heritage
Review 2011** Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Lyceum Club



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The Lyceum Club at 2-18 Ridgeway Place, Melbourne, designed by architect Ellison Harvie and completed in 1959.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing; and
- The building's continuous use as a women's club.

How it is significant?

The Lyceum Club at 2-18 Ridgeway Place is of local historic, social and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Historically, the Lyceum Club is significant as a purpose-built club house, designed by and for women. Importantly, the 1957 building commission and all subsequent alterations and additions, have involved local women architects from the original design and construction by Ellison Harvie, to subsequent work by Hilary Lewis, Jessie Madsen, Berenice Harris, Cunningham & Keddie and KTA (Kerstin Thompson Architects). Other notable local women professionals who have contributed to the design of the building include artists Anne Montgomery (mural painting) and Bee Taplin (textiles), interior decorator Joyce Godfrey (club rooms and lounge), and landscape designer Millie Gibson. This tradition of continuous and almost exclusively female design input on the one project, over a sustained period has few precedents (National Trust 2005). (Criterion A)

Historically, the Lyceum Club is significant as the largest and most important club for professional women in Victoria. Having been formally established in Melbourne in 1912 to provide a place of retreat, meeting and discussion for professional and retired women, it is significant for its pioneering role in furthering the status of women within the professional sphere dominated by men at the time. As a result of bequests and member donations, the Lyceum Club houses an important collection of furniture, artwork and reference books (National Trust 2005). (Criterion A)

The Lyceum Club is of social significance for its strong and enduring association with the organisation and its membership. The building reflects the aspirations and needs of the organisation in providing and

sustaining a place of social congregation and intellectual exchange amongst professional women.

(Criterion G)

The Lyceum Club is significant for its association with its designer, architect Ellison Harvie. Harvie, as a member of the Club and a partner in the firm of Stephenson & Turner, was the first woman to gain a Diploma of Architectural Design from the Architectural Atelier in 1938, and the first Australian woman to be nominated as a Fellow of the RIBA in 1949. Her work at Stephenson & Turner contributed to the design of numerous major hospitals in Sydney and Melbourne, including the Royal Melbourne Hospital in 1942. (Criterion H)

The Lyceum Club is associated with many highly regarded women including the first president, Pattie Deakin and many of its early members were among the first female professionals in their particular fields including Dr Constance Ellis (medicine), Christian Jollie Smith (law), and Marion Mahoney Griffin (architecture) (National Trust 2005). (Criterion H)

Primary source

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)