

# **Methodist Ladies' College Heritage Citation**

(Context Pty. Ltd, revised 3 June 2020)

## **Table of Contents**

Extent of Overlay .....	1
Historical Context .....	2
History.....	2
Description & Integrity .....	18
Comparative Analysis .....	33
Assessment Against Criteria .....	38
Statement of Significance .....	41
Grading and Recommendations .....	45
References.....	46

# METHODIST LADIES' COLLEGE (MLC)

Prepared by: Context Pty Ltd

**Address:** 207 Barkers Road, Kew

<b>Name:</b> Methodist Ladies' College	<b>Survey Date:</b> March 2016 & May 2018
<b>Place Type:</b> Education	<b>Architects:</b> Crouch & Wilson, A Eggleston, H Norris, FC Armstrong, Daryl Jackson & Evan Walker
<b>Grading:</b> Significant	<b>Builder:</b>
<b>Extent of Overlay:</b> See map below (shown as yellow)	<b>Construction Date:</b> 1881 to 1974



**Extent of Heritage Overlay**

## **Historical Context**

### ***Denominational colleges in Boroondara***

The following contextual history, about private education, is cited from the *City of Boroondara Thematic Environmental History* (Built Heritage, 2012):

*[The City of Boroondara] (and notably its eastern half) has become strongly associated with larger church-based colleges that were intended to serve larger catchments across the eastern suburbs, or even the entire metropolitan area. The earliest of these was Xavier College at Kew, which was founded in 1872 by a group of Jesuit priests whose original school, St Patrick's in East Melbourne, was not suitable for boarders. ... A decade later, another Roman Catholic order based in the inner city, the Faithful Companions of Jesus, followed the Jesuit lead and proposed to open a private girls' school at Kew. Known as Genazzano College, this developed on a 20-acre site at the corner of Cotham Road and Mont Victor Road, where the foundation stone for a combined convent and school building was laid on 9 March 1890.*

*The first protestant counterpart was the Methodist Ladies College, also in Kew, which was established on its present site in Barkers Road in 1882. As Vaughan records, this subsequently expanded (through a series of generous bequests by people such as Alfred Nicholas) to the point that it was, at one time, believed to be the largest denominational girls' school in the world. A close rival for that title – later to be described as “one of the large girls' schools in the metropolis” – [was] Fintona Presbyterian Girls' Grammar School. Founded in 1896 by Miss Annie Hughston and her brother, William, this school was originally based in a mansion in Mayston Street, Hawthorn, before moving in 1898 to larger premises at the corner of Burke and Victoria roads, and thence, in 1936, to a larger site at Balwyn, where it remains today.*

*More modest in scale (at least initially) was the school founded by the local Anglican congregation, Holy Trinity, which commenced in 1903 in the church's own Parish Hall. Three years later, Trinity Grammar School (as it was known) transferred to a large Victorian mansion, Roxeth in Charles Street, Kew, which expanded in 1907 with additional classrooms and a hall. A notable addition to the growing number of denominational colleges in the study area – and one of the first established outside the apparent epicentre of the City of Kew – was Scotch College, a Presbyterian school that opened at Hawthorn in 1916. ...*

*The inter-war period saw the ongoing expansion of existing denominational colleges, as well as the appearance of new ones. ... All of these denominational colleges have expanded over the decades to include buildings by noted architects. This trend has continued into the post-war period, with such examples Buick Hall at Fintona (John & Phyllis Murphy, 1951), the Assembly Hall (H A & F L Norris, 1957) and [RAW Woodgate] Resource Centre (Daryl Jackson, 1973) at MLC, and a string of award-winning buildings at Trinity Grammar School (Crone Ross, 1988-91, 1992 and 1993).*

## **History**

### ***Methodist schools in Australia***

The Methodist Church has had an educational context since it was established at England's Oxford University by students and brothers John and Charles Wesley, as an eighteenth-century revival of the Church of England. By 1872, the Methodist Church in Australia had already founded Horton College in Tasmania, Newington College in Sydney and Wesley College in Melbourne, the latter being a namesake of the religion's founders (MLC 1957:11). Though the Methodist Church had discussed the need for a girls' school in Melbourne as early as 1872, at this time public education in the Australian colonies was in its infancy and schools for girls were regarded as a costly luxury.

After much deliberation, in 1879 at the annual Methodist Church Conference, a Committee was established specifically to 'consider the expediency and practicability of founding a College for young ladies' (MLC 1957:12). Following three years discussing various plans for the College, the site in Barkers Road, Kew, was purchased on 4 August 1881 for the amount of £2600, comprising three acres of the area then known as "Kelly's Paddock" (MLC 1957:12). With extremely limited funds, the Committee then set about constructing and equipping the College that was to become a world-class school for girls.

### ***Foundation of Methodist Ladies' College***

The Methodist Ladies' College (MLC) campus was formally opened at its current location in April 1882 (*The Argus* 25 April 1882:10). Described at this time as 'undoubtedly the finest educational establishment of its kind in Australia', support for MLC was 'so large and eager' that additional land to expand the college was sought soon after its opening (*The Argus* 25 April 1882:10; *The Australasian* 22 July 1882:19).

The school has gradually expanded to its present boundary by acquiring neighbouring residential properties that abutted its eastern edge; indeed, it was estimated that between 1882 and 1921 the College Committee had spent upwards of £80,000 on building, rebuilding and equipping the campus (MLC 1957:13). MLC now comprises a collection of some twenty buildings constructed over its 136-year history, many of which were erected in the name of benefactors who were great supporters of the college. A number of its earlier buildings were demolished in the middle decades of the twentieth century to make way for modern development, leaving its current built character defined largely by contemporary structures. A core group of heritage buildings remain at the campus, notably the impressive Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence overlooking Barkers Road. During the 1950s and 60s several new buildings and wings were constructed at the campus – the Science Block, Fitchett Chapel, the Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall, the Neville Wing and the Harold Wood Wing (see Modern development section below) – during another busy period of expansion (Certificate of Title V.2799 F.703).

The campus also includes two residential buildings that were built independently of MLC, but have since been enveloped within its expanding boundaries and now have school uses. They are HO916 'Wentworth' (now known as Art House) at the former 876 Glenferrie Road (at the corner of Fitzwilliam Street) and a 1901 Federation Queen Anne villa at the former 231 Barkers Road (HO915; now known as the Red House). As their heritage significance is not linked with the school, they have their own site-specific Heritage Overlays.

### **'Crom' fence and gates, formerly 874 Glenferrie Road**

Another early survivor on the campus is the Gothic Revival cast-iron and masonry fence with two ornate cast-iron pedestrian gates, just south of 'Wentworth'. This house, built in 1890-91 for owner Henry Holmes, was called 'Crom'. It was classified by the National Trust and described before its 1981 demolition as follows: 'The house is designed in a Gothic Revival style with projecting gabled bay and arcaded verandah. Construction is in face brickwork with stucco details. Roof is clad in slate. The fence is also of note' (as cited in Heritage Victoria record for 874 Glenferrie Road in the VHD).



The fence was lengthened in a simplified fashion, likely in relation to the construction of the Centenary Building in the early 1980s.

***Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence 1881-85***

The College Committee purportedly spent over £32,000 on buildings, equipment and acquiring more land for the MLC campus within the first four years of its establishment, including the imposing Gothic Revival Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence designed by architects Crouch & Wilson (MLC 1957:13). It was the first building to be constructed at the College and was completed in stages between 1881 and 1885 (Donnelly 2016).



**Figure 3. Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence in 1885. The fountain is visible in the foreground. (MLC Kew Facebook page, accessed 5 August 2016)**

Crouch and Wilson called for tenders in October of 1881 ‘for erection of Wesleyan Ladies’ College at Hawthorn’ and the foundation stone was laid that same year (*The Age* 1 October 1881:11). A history of MLC prepared in 1957 notes that: ‘In recent years the main building has been reserved for the boarders, the administrative offices and the Principal’s quarters’ (MLC 1957:73). By 2004 the Principal had moved out of the east wing (still known as The Residence). That area houses the Advancement offices, Archives, Museum Room and two historically furnished rooms used for educational purposes and tours (Donnelly 2017).

In 1890 a two-storey brick building was added to the grounds, containing a swimming pool in the ground floor and upstairs studios and science laboratory. This building was also designed by Crouch and Wilson and erected at a cost of ‘over £3000’ (*The Argus* 19 September 1890:5). The swimming pool proved difficult to maintain and was boarded over; the building was used for examinations until its demolition circa 1939 (Donnelly 2017).

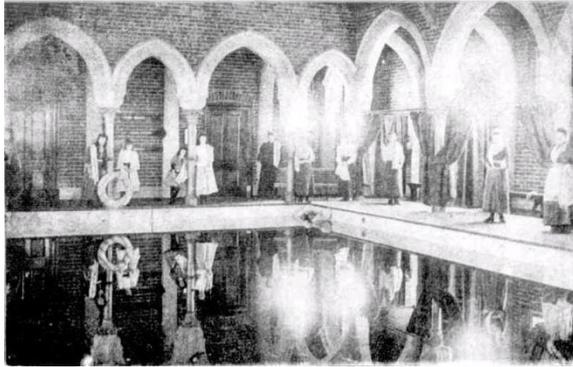


Figure 4. The swimming pool depicted in 1896 (Source: *Chronicle* 4 January 1896:4).

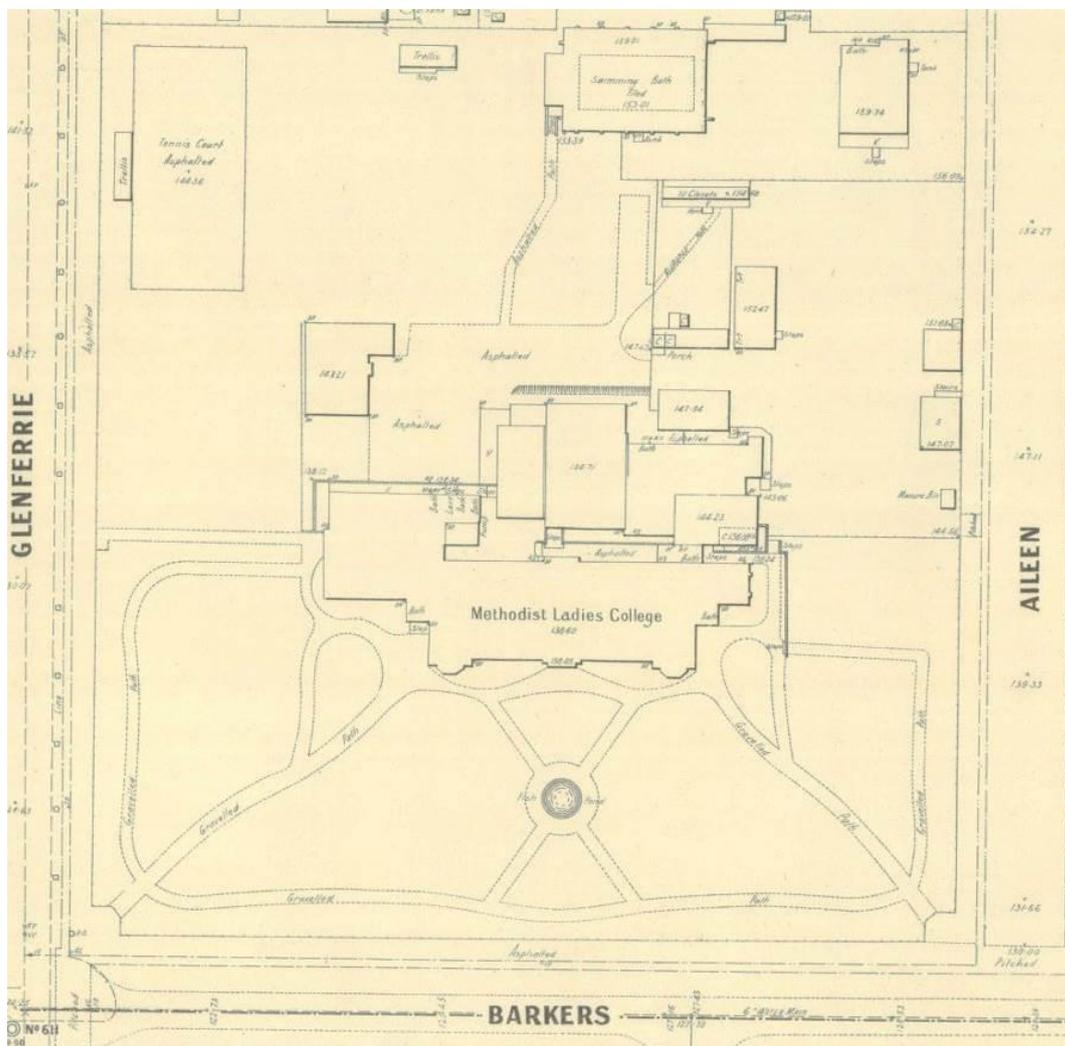


Figure 5. The collection of buildings on the southern portion of the Methodist Ladies College campus in 1903. Only Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence and the fountain in front of it remain. (Source: MMBW Detail Plan 1573, 1903)

#### *Crouch & Wilson*

Thomas James Crouch was born in Tasmania in 1832, where he became one of the first architects to be articulated to a professional in Australia (Tibbits 2012:183). After starting his own architectural firm in Tasmania, Crouch relocated to Melbourne in 1852, and in 1858 established the practice of Crouch & Wilson with fellow architect Ralph Wilson. The

partnership lasted until 1881, but was carried on under the same style by their sons Ernest WM Crouch and Sydney H Wilson, and Crouch's wife Emma, who were the firm's principal architects by 1889. Crouch had a Wesleyan-Quaker background and was active within the Wesleyan branch of the Methodist Church, which gave rise to the large body of work he completed for this church, both solely and in partnership with Wilson (Tibbits 2012:183). It is estimated that the pair were involved in the design of approximately 40 Wesleyan and/or Methodist churches throughout Victoria, Tasmania and New Zealand (Tibbits 2012:183). Thomas and Emma Crouch's daughters and granddaughters attended MLC (Donnelly 2017).

### ***Fitchett Hall 1917***

The next major building constructed for MLC was Fitchett Hall, located to the west of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence. It was designed by architect Alec Eggleston and completed in 1917, comprising an assembly hall on the upper level and classrooms for a new Business Department on the lower floor (*Spectator & Methodist Chronicle* 30 May 1917:585; MLC 1957:73). The namesake of the building is Rev. Dr William Henry Fitchett, who was the founding president of MLC and Principal of the school for forty-seven years. He was appointed in 1881 and still Principal when he died in 1928 (Donnelly 2016). In 1886 Fitchett was elected president of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Victoria and Tasmania, and in 1902 first president of the United Methodist Victorian and Tasmanian Conference. In 1904, in recognition of his contribution to the reunification of Methodism's five branches, he was elected first president of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia, holding the position until 1907. He also became a popular figure in world Methodism, addressing the Methodist Conference in London in 1899 and attending various British Conference meetings in 1905, when he gave the 35th Fernley Lecture on 'The Unrealised Logic of Religion'. Furthermore, Rev. Dr Fitchett had a notable career as a writer and journalist, including a published account of his years at MLC in 1921 (Zainu'ddin 1981).

In November 1916 Rev. Dr Fitchett presided over a special meeting of the MLC Council to discuss plans for the new hall, which were presented by Eggleston along with tender submissions for its construction (*Spectator & Methodist Chronicle* 15 November 1916:1478). During this meeting Rev. Dr Fitchett praised the alignment of the new Business Department with the College's core values, stating:

*The war has created new conditions. New fields of service in the banks and great business offices are opening for women on every side. It is a psychological moment! After the war it is possible we may have a period of adversity; but this makes it only the more necessary that girls should be trained so that at the end of their school course they may have a commercial value. Our present plan is designed to meet that need* (*Spectator & Methodist Chronicle* 15 November 1916:1478).

The formal opening of the Hall, held in May of 1917, was crowned by the presentation of a 'handsome' desk designed by Eggleston and manufactured by woodworker Mr Woodhead, which was to stand on the central platform in the Assembly Hall (*Spectator & Methodist Chronicle* 30 May 1917:585). The desk bore an inscription upon a silver plate, recording that it had been gifted from the Old Collegians' Club (O.C.C.), and was accepted by Rev. Dr Fitchett personally. Fitchett Hall was reportedly constructed with the assistance of an unnamed financial benefactor (*Spectator & Methodist Chronicle* 15 November 1916:1478).

### ***Alec Stanley Eggleston***

Born in St Kilda, Victoria, Alec Stanley Eggleston (1883-1955) initially served articles with Melbourne architects Usher & Kemp between 1900 and 1903 and stayed on with the firm as a draftsman until 1906 (Murphy & Raworth 2012:227). Eggleston worked as a sole practitioner in Melbourne and Warrnambool from around 1906 to 1916, completing a wide range of residential and commercial work. For the period between 1916 and 1923

Eggleston was in partnership with Percy A Oakley, operating as Eggleston & Oakley (Murphy & Raworth 2012:227). The design of Fitchett Hall was completed sometime in 1916 and most contemporary references name only Eggleston as the architect, however the MLC School Magazine (*The Bluebell*, 1917) lists the architects of the hall as 'Messrs. Eggleston & Oakley' (Donnelly 2016; *Spectator & Methodist Chronicle* 30 May 1917:585). It is likely that Eggleston was the Hall's sole designer though he had formed a practice with Oakley by the time the Hall was complete.

Eggleston's connection with MLC was also personal in nature, he himself being the son of one of the members of the first College Council (*The Argus* 1 November 1923:18), and the grandson of a clergyman. Alec Eggleston's daughters also attended MLC, and he is the first person to be regularly referred to in College Council minutes as "the school architect" (Donnelly 2017). He is known for his extensive work for a range of protestant denominations and was for a time the architect to Wesley College, Queens College and MLC. His first church was built at Menzies' Creek in 1907, with his best-known examples the Middle Park Presbyterian Church (1922-23), the Box Hill Wesleyan Methodist Church (1925-26), the Bentleigh Wesleyan Methodist Church (1928), and the Yarraville Wesleyan Methodist Church (1930-31). He ran a busy and successful architectural firm, for nearly fifty years. In the post-war era it was known as Eggleston, Macdonald and Seacomb and was responsible for designs such as the Beaurepaire Centre swimming pool at the University of Melbourne (Heritage Alliance, 'Elwood Heritage Review', 2005).

In addition to designing for MLC Fitchett Hall, the Krome Memorial Gates (see below) and the Glenferrie/Barkers Road wall, Eggleston, at the request of the MLC Council, prepared a survey of the campus and its buildings in 1928 "with the suggested position of any future enlargements" and the next year was asked to estimate the costs of expanding the Boarding House/Residence.

### ***Krome Memorial Gates & Fence to Glenferrie Road/Barkers Road 1923***

The Krome Memorial Gates and Fence span part of the Glenferrie and Barkers roads frontages of the MLC campus at its southern and western boundaries. They were constructed in 1923 to the design of architect Alec Eggleston (Raworth 2016). The gates were erected in memory of Mr Otto Krome who was headmaster of MLC from 1906 to 1917, and were formally unveiled on 31 October 1923 by his wife (*The Argus* 1 November 1923:18). At the time of their installation the gates and fence were described as:

*... fine double gates at the entrance to the main drive. The gates are painted green, and have the college crest in gold in the centre. In addition a new wall has been built on the Barker's road and Glenferrie road frontages of the college (The Argus 1 November 1923:18).*

The wrought-iron gates were fabricated by craft metalworker CR Caslake of South Yarra. Caslake was known for his frequent collaboration with architects including Louis Williams. He created gates for Firbank Grammar and internal fittings for churches, to Williams' design, as well as for many mansions in Melbourne's suburbs and interstate. (Moore, 2001).

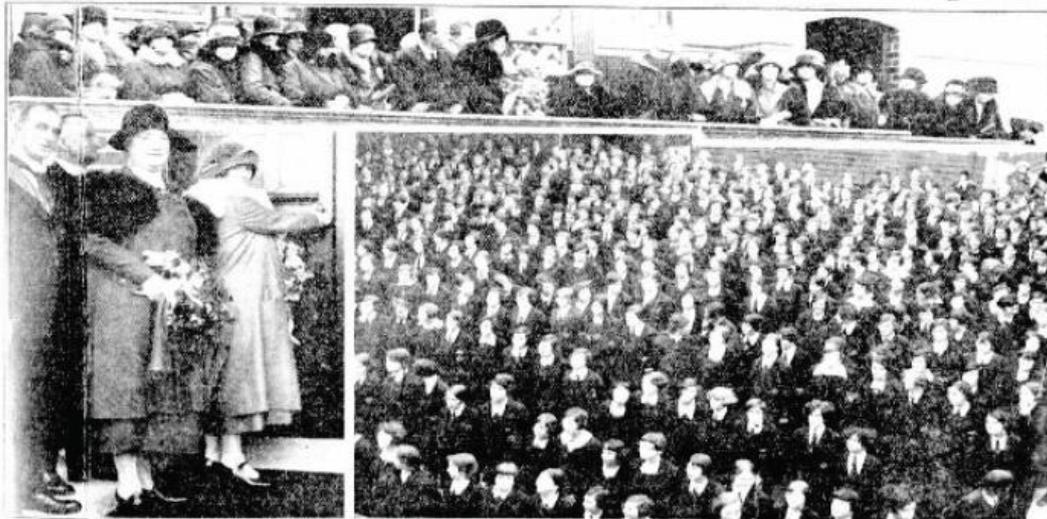
The Krome Memorial Gates were professionally restored in early 2016 (Donnelly 2017). The Gates and the tower of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence are two of MLC's most iconic and highly visible structures.

### ***Nicholas House (now Language Centre) 1926***

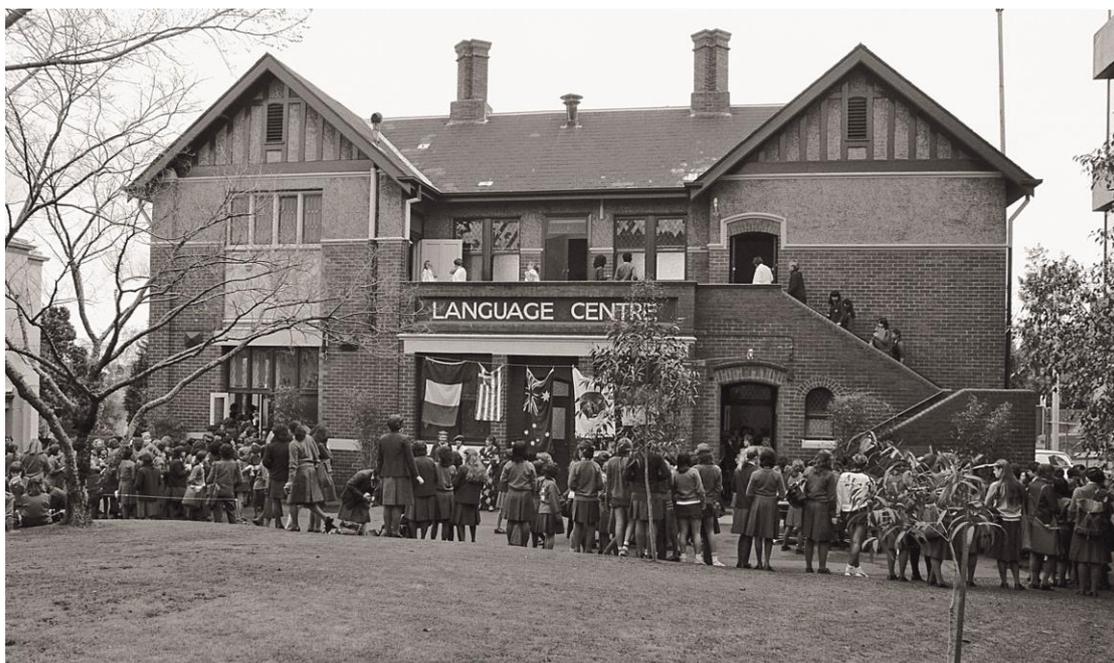
The first of many endowments by the Nicholas family to MLC came in 1926 with the completion of Nicholas House, a two-storey brick and concrete building containing state-of-the-art home science facilities (*The Age* 30 July 1926:11). Mr and Mrs George Nicholas formally opened the building on July 30, 1926 in front of a crowd of 300 senior students of

the college (see Figure 6). Two years on, the college installed a tablet honouring George and his brother Alfred Nicholas for their donation (*The Age* 31 March 1928:17). After MLC's Home Economics Department was re-housed in the Centenary Building in 1982, Nicholas House was repurposed the following year as the Language Centre, still its current use. It was refurbished in early 2015 (Donnelly 2017).

Nicholas House was designed by architect Alec Stanley Eggleston, who at the time was practicing in partnership with his son Robert A Eggleston and J Douglas Overend (*The Argus* 31 July 1926:34; Murphy & Raworth 2012:227). A notable design by the firm is the Provident Life Building at 37-41 Queen Street, Melbourne, constructed in 1937, which was one of the few buildings in the central city to exhibit the design principles of European Modernism (Murphy & Raworth 2012:227).



**Figure 6.** The opening of Nicholas House at Methodist Ladies College on 30 July 1926 by Mrs G R Nicholas (left), attended by 300 of the college's senior students (Source: *Table Talk* 5 August 1926).



**Figure 7.** Nicholas House shown from the east side after its reincarnation as MLC's Language Centre, 1983 (Source: MLC Archives: RS629).

### *The Nicholas Brothers*

The Nicholas Brothers were major benefactors of MLC and funded a number of its interwar buildings. The Nicholases' involvement with Methodist Ladies' College as well as with the boys' Wesley College stemmed from their children's attendance at these schools during the 1920s and '30s (*The Age* 31 March 1928:17; *The Daily News* 28 September 1933:1). Between them, the brothers donated a number of buildings to MLC, the first being Nicholas House in 1926, and in the late 1930s the Boarders' Dining Room-Boarding House wings and the George R Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building).

The Nicholas family, made up of three brothers and three sisters, were raised on the goldfields of South Australia and Victoria by Cornish miner Michael Nicholas and his Geelong-born wife Ellen, née Anstee (*Border Watch* 27 February 1937:5; Wall 1988). From these humble beginnings, George Richard Nicholas, born in 1884, studied as a pharmacist and went on to establish his own pharmacy in Punt Road, Windsor, in 1912 (Wall 1988). George became the first person to manufacture and patent the painkiller aspirin (named 'Aspro') in Australia, while the German Bayer pharmaceuticals' patent on the product was suspended during WWI (Wall 1988).

Born in 1881, Alfred Michael Nicholas was a merchant and though he did not receive the same formal education as did his younger brother George, the pair established an infant drug company together with an associate, Henry Woolf Shmith, in 1915. Shmith pulled out of the business in 1917, leaving the brothers to rename the company Nicholas Pty Ltd in 1921. Nicholas Pty Ltd went on to become a multi-million-dollar empire distributing Aspro in New Zealand, Europe and Asia (Wall 1988). The brothers lived with their families in South Melbourne and were known widely for their philanthropy, making large donations mainly to Wesley College and Methodist Ladies' College, as well as to hospitals and universities in Melbourne and throughout Australia (Wall 1988).

### ***Boarding House Wings & Boarders' Dining Room 1938-39***

In 1938 the new Boarding House wings were appended to the north side of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, extending from the main building to form an east wing and a west wing. The relatively austere additions were designed by architect Harry Norris in a stripped Gothic Revival style. They were completed in 1939 and provided improved, additional accommodation for boarders as well as a Boarders' Dining Room (MLC 1957:73).

The new Boarding House wings were part of a larger rebuilding scheme made possible by a sizeable monetary donation by George R Nicholas and in memory of the late Alfred Nicholas, announced in May of 1937 (*The Age* 8 May 1937:20). With the brothers' combined donation of £80,000, MLC commissioned the Nicholas Building and constructed a new swimming pool, hospital, expanded Boarding House and also a new kitchen, laundry, boiler-room; the Boarding House wings also housed a library, music school and art and craft studio. That section now accommodates the Speech & Drama Department and Health Centre (*The Age* 8 May 1937:20; MLC 1957:77; Donnelly 2017).

At this time the school also underwent boundary expansion. The Nicholas brothers' generosity allowed the acquisition of residential properties on the east side of Aileen Street in the lead up to 1939 (MLC 1957:74). When the rebuilding scheme was underway that same year, Kew City Council agreed to the closure of Aileen Street, which was absorbed into the MLC campus on the condition that MLC would purchase residential properties on the west side of Lofts Avenue at the first opportunity (*The Age* 8 May 1937:20; 1957:77). The Nicholas brothers' donation facilitated the development of state-of-the-art facilities at MLC, the future plans for which were described as 'probably the finest block of buildings of any girls' college in Australia' in 1937 (*The Age* 8 May 1937:20).



**Figure 8. Aerial photograph of MLC campus at Barkers Road, taken some time between 1926 and 1938 before the expansion scheme was initiated. Aileen Street is still visible to the east of the MLC buildings. MLC property boundaries are outlined in white. (Source: MLC 1957:76)**

### ***Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building) 1939***

The Nicholas Wing (now known as the Nicholas Building), to the northwest of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, was constructed in 1939 as part of the expansion scheme funded by George and Alfred Nicholas (*The Argus* 10 May 1937:4). Harry Norris, the same architect who designed the Boarding House additions, was engaged to design this building which merges Georgian Revival forms with up-to-date Moderne details (*Table Talk* 19 August 1937:5). A bronze plaque on an external wall notes that the building is: *Commemorating the Rev. Dr. W.H. Fitchett, Founder of M.L.C., Principal, 1882-1928.*



**Figure 9. Construction crew at MLC during the 1938-39 rebuilding. View is looking west and shows the Nicholas Wing with scaffolding on the south-east corner of the wing, with a near-completed portion top right behind the wooden fence. In the centre rear of the photo, one of the new boarding house wings is visible (two-storey brick building with double windows). (Source: MLC Archives RS 629 ACC 831/1)**

### ***Harry Norris***

The Nicholas brothers' consistent use of architect Harry Norris in both their private and philanthropic buildings saw Norris' designs erected across Melbourne. George Nicholas was reportedly Norris' first ever client, brought in by a mutual friend the day he commenced operating out of offices in Collins Street in 1919 (*Table Talk* 19 August 1937:5). After designing the Nicholas Building on Swanston Street, Melbourne, for the brothers in 1924, Norris relocated his offices to their Aspro premises in City Road, South Melbourne, where he remained until 1955 and reportedly did 'all the Nicholas Brothers' work [from then on]'

(*Table Talk* 19 August 1937:5). Harry Norris' success – and that of his practice – ran parallel with the 'Modern' era for Melbourne, of which Norris was an advocate (Context Pty Ltd & Nigel Lewis Pty Ltd 2009:3). As Context & Nigel Lewis (2009:3) note:

*Like many architects during [the Modern] era, Norris drew heavily on international styles and technologies. Norris undertook professional overseas sojourns annually between 1928 and 1941 also working for a time in America. For Norris, America was at the forefront of applying innovative commercial building techniques with concrete and steel construction that enabled heights to be pushed to new limits. Many American commercial buildings were also featuring a Renaissance Commercial Palazzo form and along with Art Deco, Spanish Colonial Revival and Streamlined Moderne styles, that were also influencing Australian architecture. Norris would contemporise his designs with these new forms and technologies.*

Aside from his work on the MLC, Norris designed a number of educational buildings at Wesley College, for which the Nicholases donated a total of £200,000. This provided for the remodelling of its main building, completed in 1934, as well as the construction of four new buildings at the St Kilda Road campus, which were formally opened in 1937 (*The Argus* 27 February 1937:17; *The Daily News* 28 September 1933:1). The buildings comprised a preparatory school, sports pavilion, chapel and tuck shop, all designed by Harry Norris, the plans for which were prepared in 1934 (*The Age* 6 September 1934:13; *The Argus* 15 March 1934:13).

Norris was also responsible for designing other buildings funded by the Nicholas brothers' philanthropy, including new premises at Port Melbourne for the Victoria Missions to Seamen, completed in 1937, as well as Nicholas Hall at the Wesleyan Church on Lonsdale Street, constructed in 1938 (*The Argus* 24 December 1936:12).

Norris also designed two homes for Alfred Nicholas. The first was the extensive remodelling of the 1870s mansion Carn Brea at 5 Harcourt Street, Hawthorn, in 1920 and 1927 (HO235). This was followed by the Moderne mansion Burnham Beeches at Sherbrooke in the Dandenong Ranges, constructed 1932-34. Norris' firm was also known for its ongoing work with retail giant G J Coles, designing many Moderne suburban stores (Context Pty Ltd & Nigel Lewis Pty Ltd 2009:5). Alfred and Norris were involved in several joint business ventures together, importing car parts from the 1920s, which made them key players in the Victorian motoring industry (Gurr & Willis 2012:502-503).

The long association between the Nicholas family and Harry Norris finally came to an end in 1955. According to Heritage Alliance (2006:5-6):

*When renovations were undertaken at Burnham Beeches [in 1955], Nicholas Pty Ltd engaged the rival firm of Yuncken, Freeman Brothers, Griffiths & Simpson and, when a new factory and office complex was proposed at Chadstone around the same time, the commission went to a young industrial architect, Donald Graeme Lumsden. Norris had been excluded from the latter because it was felt that his firm – although then still one of the largest commercial firms in Melbourne – lacked the necessary experience in large-scale industrial projects and chemical engineering. Norris, ironically, went on to design the new Kodak factory at Coburg – a vast complex of production, research and administration buildings geared towards a very specific manufacturing process.*

More than twenty years after his older brother's passing, George Richard Nicholas died in September of 1960 at St Vincent's Hospital in Fitzroy, leaving an estate valued at over £2 million to his wife and children (Wall 1988). Notably, Norris had been appointed as guardian of Alfred's children following his death in 1937 (*Mercury* 5 May 1937:10). Harry Norris continued practicing as an architect with his brother Frank Leonard Norris up until his retirement in 1967 at the age of 75 and died later that same year (Gurr & Willis 2012:502).



**Figure 10. The MLC campus in 1945, showing its progression northward, with Barkers Road along the bottom of the photo and Glenferrie Road to the left. The buildings with the bright new roofs just north of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence are the Boarding House Wings (including The Cloisters) and Dining Hall, while the Nicholas Wing is the dark, L-shaped building further north. The new pool and gymnasium are to the right, in the long light-coloured building. (Source: University of Melbourne)**

***Science Block/Student & Learning Support building 1946-51***

A new science building, called the Science Block, was completed to the north of the Nicholas Wing in 1951. Mr H McKnight was appointed Science Master at MLC in 1946 and brought with him experience of modern laboratories in England and New South Wales; plans and equipment for the new science building were developed to his specifications soon after his arrival (MLC 1957:77).

That year, the office of Harry A Norris was commissioned to prepare designs for the new building, at an estimated cost of £12,000. The decision was made that the 'the science block would follow general architectural lines of existing buildings, with which it would harmonise' (*The Age* 30 August 1946:5). This explains its close similarity to the Georgian-Moderne Nicholas Wing of 1939.

Construction did not begin until 1948, and the building was completed in March 1951 at a cost of over £43,000 (*The Age* 31 March 1951:5). This money came from the school's own funds (*The Age* 30 August 1946:5; MLC 1957:77). The building, comprising state-of-the-art lecture rooms and laboratories, was formally opened by Sir Charles Lowe, then Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, on 30 March 1951 (MLC 1957:77). During his address at the opening ceremony, Chairman of the College's finance and advisory Committee Mr RW Nevile announced that MLC's expansion plans were still far from complete, stating that 'the next thing will be an Assembly Hall' (*The Age* 31 March 1951:5).



**Figure 11. Ground floor lecture room in Science Block, 1951, now Special Services offices. (Source: MLC Archives, RS629)**

### **Cato Wing 1956**

The Cato Wing was completed in 1956 and formally opened in June that same year (*The Age* 4 June 1956:7). The site of the Cato Wing had previously been occupied by former residences known on campus as Cato House and Evans House, used originally for boarders but primarily for junior classes. The houses were demolished to make way for the Cato Wing and Assembly Hall (MLC 1957:74). As recorded in the MLC Archives, the designer was again Harry A Norris (Donnelly 2017).

The Cato Wing was named after Mr Frederick (Fred) John Cato, a devout Methodist and generous benefactor who had donated in excess of £250,000 to charities, hospitals and religious and educational institutions up to the time of his death in 1935 (*Weekly Times* 14 September 1935:32). Formerly a school teacher, Cato made his fortune as co-founder of the retail grocery chain Moran & Cato, which became one of the largest retail organisations in Australia (*Daily Advertiser* 5 June 1935:4). Cato was also a major name at Wesley College, as Fred J Cato's sons attended that school and he served on the College Council. Cato's three daughters attended MLC. The family were known as major benefactors to the school for many decades (Wesley College website).

### ***Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall 1957***

In 1957 the Assembly Hall was formally opened, dubbed the Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall, located near the campus' northern perimeter (Sanderson 1988). The Hall was designed by Harry Norris's practice – by then known as Harry A & Frank L Norris & Associates.

Given the known links between Norris and the Nicholas brothers, the Assembly Hall – which cost £105,000 to construct – was most likely funded in part by the Nicholas family. Fundraising events undertaken by MLC for its construction did include an open day at the gardens of the late Alfred Nicholas' estate Burnham Beeches in October 1954 (*The Age* 9 October 1954:8). This was more likely a reflection of the personal relationship between Norris and Alfred Nicholas rather than formal support from Nicholas Pty Ltd. Old Collegians, students, family and staff also contributed towards the fundraising efforts and handed over a cheque for over £8000 in 1952 (Donnelly 2016).

### ***Fitchett Chapel 1959***

The modern Romanesque/Tuscan-inspired brick church located to the west of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence was completed in 1959 to the design of architect Frederick Clarence Armstrong (Sanderson 1988). The Chapel had been planned for as early as 1947 and was initially to be a grander Gothic Revival building designed by the distinguished architectural practice Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, at a cost of £10,000 (*The Age* 11 April 1947:2; see Figure 13). The Chapel was named in memory of long-time Principal Rev. Dr William Henry Fitchett, who died in 1928, as well as 'In thanksgiving for peace after the war of 1939-45' (Chapel Memorial Stone, 21 Feb. 1959).

### ***Frederick Clarence Armstrong***

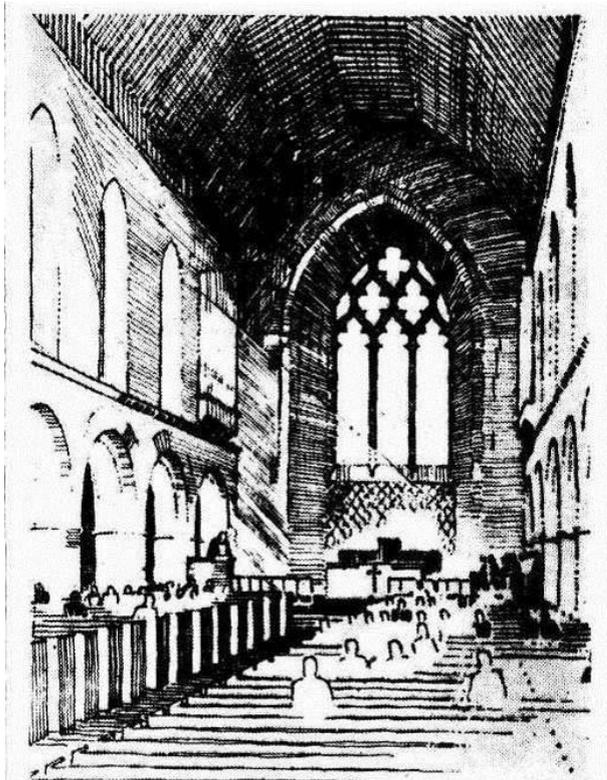
Born in Windsor, Victoria, Frederick 'Clarrie' Clarence Armstrong became a registered architect in 1946 and is best known for his work on the Hospitals and Charities Commission, to which he was appointed Planning Officer in 1950 (*Sydney Morning Herald* 13 January 2009). The purpose of the Commission was to facilitate functional planning of hospitals following a push for new and extended hospital services in the immediate post-war years. Armstrong's role in the Commission was to prepare planning briefs and guidelines for architects that would assist in designing hospitals in a manner to meet their purpose. As the first architect appointed to the Commission, Armstrong was in many ways a pioneer of the field (*Sydney Morning Herald* 13 January 2009).

Armstrong is known to have designed churches and chapels including that at MLC, as well as at Epworth Hospital. Himself a Methodist, it is likely that Armstrong was known to the MLC through religious circles and through his charitable work in the public health system, hence his commission to design the Chapel in 1959. Armstrong was referred to in MLC Council minutes as "the school architect" during the 1950s and 1960s. In addition to Fitchett Chapel, he designed the Nevile Wing (1961), Wood Wing (1963), Junior School (1954), Science Block alterations (1960), Junior School extensions (1965) and the Senior Science building (1969). MLC named a laboratory after Armstrong in acknowledgment of his contributions to the school (Donnelly 2017).



**Figure 12.** MLC Principal Rev Dr Harold Wood (left) with FC Armstrong at opening of Neville Wing, 1961. (Source: MLC Archives: *Silver and Green* magazine, July 1961, p 13).

In 1994 Armstrong was recognised for this work, at which time he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (*Sydney Morning Herald* 13 January 2009).



**NEW CHAPEL FOR M.L.C.**—The conception of the architects, Messrs. Bates, Smart and McCutcheon, of the chapel to be built at the Methodist Ladies' College, Hawthorn. The cost of the Chapel is approximately

**Figure 13.** Concept sketch of the Gothic Revival style chapel initially to be erected at MLC, drawn by architects Bates, Smart & McCutcheon and later superseded by the design of FC Armstrong (Source: *The Age* 11 April 1947:2)



Figure 14. Interior of Fitchett Chapel, 2017. (Source: MLC Archives)

#### **R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre 1973-74**

The R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre located at the west of the site was completed in 1974 and designed by architectural firm Daryl Jackson & Evan Walker Pty Ltd (Sanderson 1988). The design received a Bronze Medal in the General Buildings category at the Victorian Architecture Awards (1974) and is included on the RAI A Twentieth Century Buildings Register (Sanderson 1988). The building incorporates the main library, staff centre and café.

The brutalist-style building was constructed by Van Driel Pty Ltd utilising an off-form concrete method that was also used as the primary finishing material. Shortly after its completion the Resource Centre was described in *Architecture Australia*:

*The building breaks new ground in educational architecture in Australia in its form, massing, material and detail. It bears a strong relationship to recent work in the USA, UK and parts of Europe (as cited in Sanderson 1988).*

#### **Modern development**

A number of MLC's earlier buildings, including several 'temporary' fibro buildings, were demolished in the latter part of the twentieth century to make way for modern development, with a total of twelve large modern buildings/wings constructed at the campus between 1961 and 2010. In order of completion, these are the R W Neville Wing (1961), the Wood Wing (1963), the Senior Science building (1969) (all three designed by FC Armstrong); the R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre (1974), designed by Daryl Jackson and Evan Walker; the Centenary Building (1982) design by Daryl Jackson; the Physical Education Centre (1987); Music School/Tatoulis Auditorium (1995) designed by Daryl Jackson; MLC Kindle (early learning centre) (2000) designed by DesignInc.; and the Prep-2 Building (2002) designed by Daryl Jackson. The most recent projects are the expansion and redevelopment of the 1954 Junior School into the Yeas 3-6 Building (2007), the David Loader Centre (2010); and the major refurbishing of existing science buildings now known as the Science Precinct (2010 including Elizabeth Tatoulis East Wing, all by DesignInc. (Raworth 2016; Donnelly 2016, 2017, 2018).

### *Daryl Jackson OA*

Daryl Jackson established his architectural firm in 1964 and has studios in Melbourne, Canberra and Brisbane. He was awarded honorary doctorates from University of Melbourne and University of Ballarat and a Centenary Medal for Services to Architecture in 2001. His relationship with MLC began over 50 years ago when, with Evan Walker, he designed the Nevile Wing Science Labs in 1963. Most significantly he was responsible (along with Evan Walker) for the design of the Brutalist-style R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre (1974) and the Music School in 1994. Jackson was also the architect for the Wood Wing extension (1994), Cato Wing renovations (1999) and the Prep-2 Building (2002). He also compiled several College Master Plans between the early 1990s and early 2000s. He has played a significant role in the development of MLC's modern architectural structures and the redevelopment of existing buildings (Donnelly 2017; <http://jacksonarchitecture.com.au/>).

### **Description & Integrity**

Methodist Ladies' College stands at the north-east corner of Glenferrie and Barkers roads, with the historical entrance at this corner. As noted in the history, its original extent fronted on Barkers Road, between Glenferrie Road and Aileen Street (since absorbed into the campus), and stretched about halfway up to Fitzwilliam Street. It now occupies the entire area between Barkers and Glenferrie roads, Fitzwilliam Street and Lofts Avenue, with the Kindle/Prep-2 Junior School on the east side of Lofts Avenue.

This description focuses on the western half of the current campus, where almost all school-related development of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> century took place. One exception is the 1959 Fitchett Chapel, located just to the east of the Aileen Street alignment.

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century heart of the school is Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence and its grounds at the south end. This Gothic Revival building stands before a large garden with lawn and mature exotic trees. The curved drive before it is as shown on the 1903 MMBW plan. At the centre of the garden is the 1885 fountain. The historical entrance is at the corner, via the Krome Memorial Gates. The gate posts are a part of a larger masonry fence of 1923, designed by architect Alec Eggleston.

To the rear of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence is the H-shaped Boarders' Dining Room and the L-shaped Boarding House extensions, both of which were built in a stripped Gothic style in 1938, to a design by Harry Norris. To the west of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence is the Arts & Crafts Gothic Fitchett Hall of 1917, designed by Alec Eggleston, which stands on Glenferrie Road.

Further north, along Glenferrie Road, is the west façade of the 1938 Boarding House Wings, the 1926 Old English Nicholas House, the 1974 brutalist Woodgate Resource Centre, the 1982 Centenary Building, and the 1889 'Wentworth' (in HO916) at the corner of Fitzwilliam Street. In front of the Centenary Building along Glenferrie Road is a remnant cast-iron fence constructed for the house 'Crom' c1890-91, and extended southward during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Moving east is the 1957 Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall, designed by Harry Norris, which is set back from Fitzwilliam Street behind the Cato Wing of 1956. A bit to the south-east is the L-shaped Nicholas Building of 1939, designed by Harry Norris. The north wing would have been located along Aileen Street when constructed.

As noted, the 1959 Fitchett Chapel is located along Barkers Road, to the east of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence. The remaining buildings on the site date to the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century and are not considered to contribute to the heritage significance of MLC.



Figure 15. MLC building and elements and the proposed Heritage Overlay boundary

In the following section, each of the buildings and landscape elements that contribute to the significance of MLC are described. They are listed in chronological order, apart from one earlier residential element that developed independently of the school.

**'Crom' fence and gates at Centenary Building, Glenferrie Road, c1890-91** – This cast-iron fence sits on a brick plinth between closely spaced rendered Gothic piers. It incorporates two cast-iron pedestrian gates. The northern half of the fence and gateways corresponds with what is shown on the 1903 MMBW plan in front of the large Victorian house 'Crom' (since demolished) on the south side of 'Wentworth'. The fence has been extended in length to stretch along the entire frontage of the very large Centenary Building (built 1982). The original section has cast-iron fence panels featuring trefoils (also seen in the two gates), and a bluestone plinth and coping to the brick wall below, and bluestone plinths to the piers. The reproduction section uses typical metal palisade fencing and has no bluestone elements.



**Figure 16. Part of the fence and gates in front of Centenary Building. (Context 2016)**

**Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, 1881-1885** – This two-storey Gothic Revival building is iconic to MLC and has a suitably commanding design. It is built symmetrically around a turreted four-storey tower, and has a pavilioned form with projecting gables at each end. The walls are faced with cement render (unpainted), with cast-cement ornament including stringcourses with quatrefoils, while colonnettes and hood mouldings decorate the coupled windows.



**Figure 17. Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, looking north-east, 2016.**

***Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence landscape and trees*** - The landscaped area to the front of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence is in the form of a large ornamental garden, with mature specimen trees set in sweeping lawns, and a combination of mature trees and shrubs planted along the Barkers Road and Glenferrie Road fence lines. The form of the landscaped garden has changed in its layout and composition over time, but retains some traces of the elements of its early design, contemporary with Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, including the lawns between the residence and Barkers Road, the corner entrance and pathway from Barkers & Glenferrie roads, the 1885 fountain (described below) and a boundary planting along both street frontages. The 1885 photo demonstrates the typical late nineteenth-century planting style of the original residential garden, complete with gravelled paths lined with shrubs, small shrubberies, the use of specimen palms for visual interest, particularly at the building's facade and a clear focus point for the garden, being the fountain located at its centre. The garden layout is more typical of a residential style than that of a purpose-built educational facility for this period.

The early path network and layout has been altered in form and materials several times since it was originally laid out as part of the Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence garden. The current layout is simplified to form a vehicular drive in the form of a simple sweeping semi-circle addressing the façade, which commences at the original Barkers and Glenferrie Road corner entry, and terminates at Barkers Road, some distance east of the original termination point. The drive is surfaced in asphalt. A modern water feature has recently been placed at the centre of the driveway adjacent to the original corner entry to prohibit vehicular access from this point. This drive is substantially altered from the original gravel paths shown in the 1885 MMBW plans which bisected the garden, with a particular focus on the fountain, placed at the centre of the front garden, and a series of simple paths which encouraged appreciation of the border plantings along Barkers and Glenferrie roads. The gravelled carriageway at that time was arranged to allow access through the site from south to east, with a broad alignment area at the front of the building, as well as having an individual turning circle at each of the south and eastern wings (possibly for delivery or tradesmen).

A pair of Elms (*Ulmus sp.*) at the corner entrance, a single specimen of Algerian Oak (*Quercus canariensis sp.?*) planted on the Barkers Road boundary and a single specimen of English Oak (*Quercus robur*) planted on the Glenferrie Road boundary appear to date from the late nineteenth century, and are likely to be the remnants of what appears to be an earlier boundary planting of Elms and Oaks shown in the aerial photograph of 1945. The Atlantic Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*) directly in front of the central entrance to Tiddeman House/The Residence, is also thought to date from the 1890s; a Cedar tree in that position appears consistently in school photographs beginning in 1893 (Munn & Shurey).



**Figure 18. Front gardens looking east, circa 1928, showing cedar tree in front of Tiddeman House/The Residence. (Source: MLC Archives: RS629 ACC 817/10)**



**Figure 19. Cedar tree in same position, 2017. (MLC Archives: Archivist's Files).**

These Elms and Oaks along the boundary fences have been interplanted with a mix of native and exotic trees and shrubs, first in c.1930s, and later layers of planting of both trees and shrubs have continued to be added over time. There is a broad mix of tree and shrub species planted through the boundary, including specimens of Brush Box, Lilly Pilly, Sweet Pittosporum, Viburnum, Loquat, Chinese Elm, Red Flowering Gum, Irish Strawberry Tree and others. Of these, it is likely that the Chinese Elm, Irish Strawberry Tree, and at least one of the largest Lilly Pilly trees date from the c.1930s. The shrubs all appear to postdate the c.1960s. At the same time that the first boundary interplantings was undertaken (c.1930s), significant specimen tree planting occurred throughout the vast expanse of lawn at the front of the building, changing the layout and aesthetic of the garden, as well as the relationship of the main building with the surrounding streetscapes. Mature specimens of Plane Tree, Ash, Cedar and other exotics from this period survive throughout the lawn areas. Later plantings of exotic specimen trees have continued this theme, and there is now a range of specimen trees from the 1930s through to the late 1990s represented within the garden of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence.



Figure 20. Entrance to the school at the corner of Glenferrie and Barkers roads, showing the Elms. (Context, 2016)

**Fountain, 1885** - The fountain stands in the middle of the front lawn before Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence. The basin is round, with rendered masonry walls, moulded sides and four raised escutcheons atop its lip. The fountain tier appears to be of cast iron, supported on four colonnettes. Water is sprayed from the mouths of classical dolphins which sit below a large floral crown. The fountain has been restored numerous times but maintains its original form (Donnelly 2017).

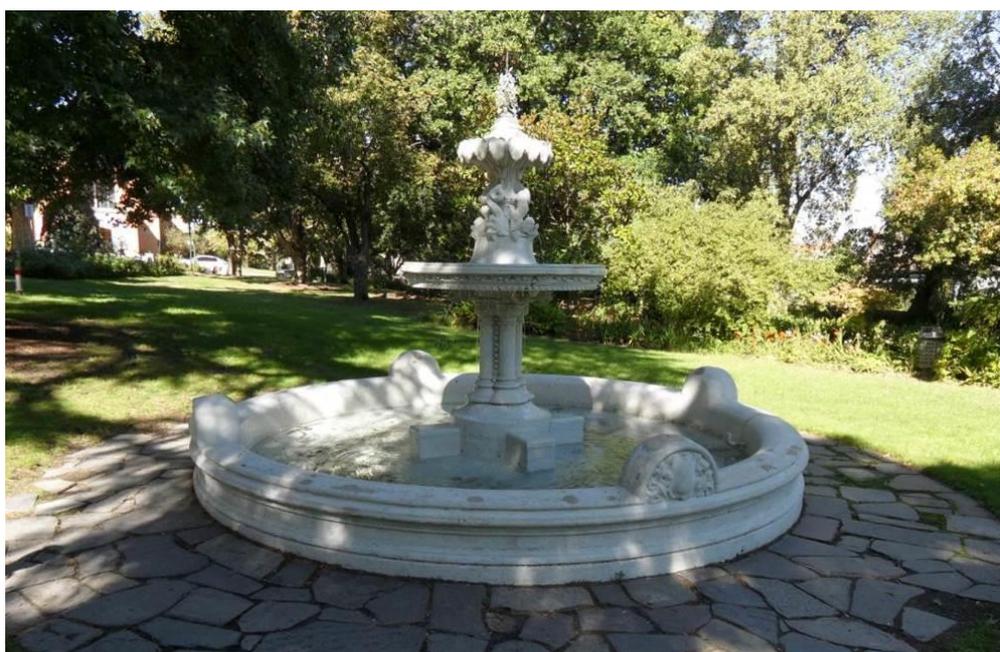


Figure 21. The fountain, 2016. (Context, 2016)

***Fitchett Hall, 1917*** - This two-storey red brick building has a dramatic arts hall upstairs and offices below. The main elevation faces east - inward into the campus. Stylistically, it can be described as Arts & Crafts Gothic in style, with the use of many contrasting materials and textures typical of the Arts & Crafts. The steeply pitched gable roof is clad in slate. Apart from the red brick with render dressings, this includes fish-scale shingles to the west gable and half-timbering below, and panels of bas-relief Gothic tracery below windows on the three other sides. The main (east) elevation has two gabled entrance porches, with lancet openings. There is a very large tripartite lancet window above the porches, which contains stained and painted glass – a memorial window commissioned by founding Principal Rev. Dr Fitchett to commemorate his youngest daughter who died in 1897 (Donnelly 2017). A small porch superstructure has been added to the south elevation, and a fire escape to the north elevation.



**Figure 22. Fitchett Hall, east and north elevations, 2016.**

***Krome Memorial Gates and fence, 1923*** - These wrought-iron gates stand between rendered brick piers with a recessed trefoil motif. Above the gateway is a metal banner with raised lettering reading 'Methodist Ladies' College'. Mounted on the gates is the MLC monogram in a silvery metal. The gates integrate complex foliage and typical decorative detail with scrolls, pointed arches and twisted bars. The Gothic Revival gate posts are part of a large rendered masonry fence on a brick plinth.



**Figure 23.** The Krome Memorial Gates and part of the masonry fence, 2016.

**Nicholas House/Language Centre, 1926** - This is a large, two-storey building facing Glenferrie Road. The front and rear facades have a gable-fronted wing on either side, with a transverse gable between. It is English Domestic Revival in style, incorporating half-timbering and tracery panels below the windows. Walls are of red brick, with render dressings and unpainted roughcast render to the gables and just below them. The roof is clad in slate, with modelled brick chimneys. Most windows are small diamond leadlight casements in banks of four. On the east elevation there is a large external brick staircase (original).

The three lancet-arched porch openings on the west elevation have been infilled with glazing and a low brick wall. The associated terrazzo steps have been left intact, as has the original external wall inside, but the original entrance door has been replaced. The balcony above it has also been infilled with windows.



Figure 24. Nicholas House, looking north-east, 2016.

**Boarders' Dining Room & Boarding House Extensions, 1938** - This building comprises two distinct wings. The large, L-shaped Boarding House Wing extends from the west wing of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence and then turns to front Glenferrie Road. It is in a stripped Gothic style, referencing Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence. The roof is a low gable, hidden behind the parapet, and walls are rendered. Windows have Tudor-style hood moulds, and there is an impressed quatrefoil beneath each window. The windows are double-hung timber sashes with horizontal glazing bars, indicating a Moderne influence. The external doorways are deeply recessed with engaged colonnettes and a cast roundel superimposed on three horizontal lines.



**Figure 25. West end of the Boarding House Extension, looking south, 2016.**

This entirely un-medieval motif is repeated multiple times on the Boarders' Dining Room, which is a free-standing building running north-south behind the centre of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence. It also has a roof hidden behind a parapet - here with a moulded cornice - and rendered walls. This building is more stripped classical in style, with long tripartite windows. Above the windows is the same impressed motif of a roundel on three horizontal lines.



**Figure 26. Boarders' Dining Room (with Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence behind it), looking south-west, 2016.**

**George R Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building), 1939** – This two-storey building is L-shaped in plan, with the long wing running north-south. Its massing and details such as quoining and tiled hipped roofs with sheet-copper cupolas indicate a strong allegiance to the Georgian Revival. This is combined with stripped back horizontal Moderne detailing, such as the form of the quoins (recessed bands in the brick), concrete hoods above the banks of windows, and steel-framed windows (but with multiple panes in keeping with the Georgian Revival). Walls are of apricot-tone cream brick with brown manganese bricks to the building plinth and between windows.

The building was massed into three sections, one running east-west and two running north-south. Each of the north-south sections had a taller central pavilion with slightly lower bays on each side. The two north-south sections were demolished in December 2017. They were originally joined by a large brick gateway (an additional gateway was added c.1960s to join it to the 1951 Science Block). Above the southern gateway, on its western face, was a bas-relief depicting MLC girls with various attributes (such as a hockey stick and a globe). The surviving east-west section retains most of its multipane steel windows. The Science Block to the north has recent replacement windows in a simpler configuration. The east-west section houses the College's senior administrative offices and a large exhibition corridor. This wing is today referred to as "Principal's Admin" and "Common Ground" (Donnelly 2017).

Other alterations to the building include a 1980s single-storey glazed extension to the north elevation of the east-west wing, and a new two-storey building (Wood Wing) on its south side that concealed half of the building from this side.



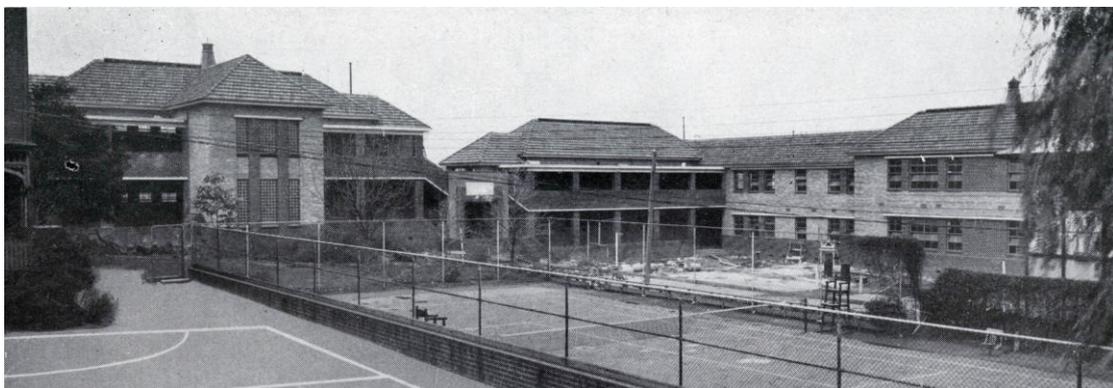
**Figure 27.** The east-west section of the George R Nicholas Wing (Principal's Admin area), as shown in what appears to be original metal lettering on its north elevation. Note the small cupola on the ridge. The ground floor is obscured by a later addition, but it is reportedly intact behind. (Context, 2016)



**Figure 28. The north-south sections of the George R Nicholas Wing (demolished in 2018). (Context, 2016)**



**Figure 29. Bas-relief of MLC girls, once located above the western face of the gateway between the two north-south sections of the building. (Context, 2016)**



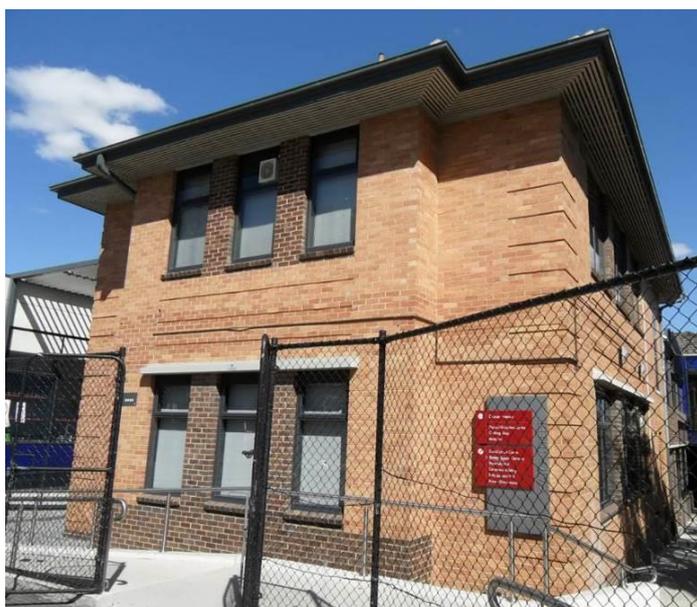
**Figure 30. Nicholas Wing near completion viewed from the north-west, 1939. Bas-relief is visible as white rectangle above gateway in centre of photograph. (Source: MLC Archives, *Silver and Green* Dec 1939)**

**Science Block, 1948-51** - The Science Block sat at the north end of the Nicholas Wing, and extends all the way north to Fitzwilliam Street. As noted in the history, Harry Norris continued the same design as the Nicholas Wing. This includes the massing (two-storeys, hipped roof with breakfronts at the northern end), the materials (cream brick with manganese bricks between windows and as the plinth), and style (Georgian Revival massing and abstracted quoining; Moderne concrete window hoods and recessed speedlines). The more decorative touch of the copper cupolas was not used for this later building.

The north-south sections of the Nicholas Wing were demolished in January 2018, destroying the connection with the Science Block. The building is intact apart from the replacement of all multipane steel windows with simpler aluminium units, and a small two-storey addition to its south end.



**Figure 31. East elevation of the Science Block, 1955. (Source: MLC Archives).**



**Figure 32. North elevation of the Science Block. (Context, 2016)**

**Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall, 1956-57** - The hall is built in exposed dark cream brickwork. It has a bold interplay of masses, with the stage set in a rectangular box, from which springs the free curve of the roof of the hall. The entrance was given monumentality through the use of giant order columns set in front of a two-storey glazed screen, and balances the box-like form of the stage. Texture was added to the façade through the device of recessing and projecting bricks to create patterning, and the windows were set along the hall wall in a staggered pattern. The Hall is linked to the Cato Building, to its north, by a recent extension (not significant).



Figure 33. Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall, east elevation. (Context, 2016)

**Fitchett Chapel, 1959** - The Chapel is a fine example of ecclesiastical design and a modern interpretation of the traditional Tuscan church type. Walls are of dark cream brick, with a dominant gable roof of terracotta tiles and a campanile. The Chapel has elements such as leadlight and timber joinery that contribute to its Tuscan revival aesthetic. The west wall of the entrance porch was originally faced with stacked stone, as shown in the 1991 photo of the Kew Urban Conservation Study. Since then that finish has been removed and replaced with cement render, and an arched opening created. The Chapel appears to be otherwise intact.



Figure 34. Fitchett Chapel, looking north-east. (Context, 2016)

**RAW Woodgate Resource Centre, 1974** – This sculptural building is in off-form concrete and this has been applied not only to the structural system but was also used as the primary finishing material, as was characteristic of Brutalism. The building has a strong horizontality in the placement of its bands of windows and the cantilevered form of the top floor, while the circulation routes are expressed externally with stairs and ramps extending out from the building in a sculptural manner.



Figure 35. Woodgate Resource Centre, northeast elevation. (Context, 2016)

## Comparative Analysis

### *The school as a whole*

Within the City of Boroondara, Methodist Ladies' College should be compared with other private schools, particularly those housed in purpose-built buildings. These include:

- Genazzano FCJ College, 285-315 Cotham Road, Kew (VHR H1902) - This large, multi-wing building was built as a combined convent, school and dormitories in 1890-91 by outstanding architect William Wardell in a French Gothic style. It is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.
- Xavier College, 135 Barkers Road, Kew (VHR H893) - Four large and imposing structures at the college are considered to be of State significance. They date from the 1870s to the 1930s, and were all purpose built for the school. The first was the Victorian South Wing (1872, architects Kelly, Dennehy and Tappin), then the Classical West Wing (1889) and the Great Hall (1890). A very grand Baroque chapel was constructed 1927-34 to the design of architects Schrieber and Jorgensen. Xavier College is of historic and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.
- Scotch College, 491 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn (HO608) - Twelve buildings are recommended for the Heritage Overlay (pending Council adoption in August 2016, then Ministerial approval). Apart from the remains of the 1875 house that predated the move of Scotch College here in 1917, the buildings primarily date from the interwar period. The earliest group (1917-25) were designed in the Queen Anne style by distinguished architect Henry Kemp, who was one of the pioneers of this style. The second group (1934-56) are buildings designed by John Scarborough.

His famous Littlejohn Memorial Chapel was design in a stripped Gothic style, while the other buildings are in a Moderne interpretation of the Scottish Baronial style.

- Siena Convent and College, 815 Riversdale Road, Camberwell (HO724) - The main building (recommended for a Heritage Overlay by the Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991), is a Byzantine chapel and classroom wing of 1939-40, designed by architects Agabiti and Millane. They form two sides surrounding a quadrangle, with a cloister arcade. Modern classroom buildings enclose the other two sides; the remaining buildings of the college are also recent in date. The building is believed to have architectural and historical significance (Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991).

Like the other colleges set out above, MLC boasts a collection of fine, purpose-built buildings designed by several architects. Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, by Crouch & Wilson, compares well in its imposing grandeur, cement-render detail and intactness with Wardell's brick French Gothic Genazzano College building, and the nineteenth-century buildings at Xavier College. The collection of early and late interwar buildings, by two successive architects and first exhibiting a medieval influence and then the Moderne, is quite comparable to the buildings of Scotch College.

Most of the architect-designed buildings from the nineteenth and early twentieth century that are largely intact are considered Significant elements of MLC. These include Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, Fitchett Hall and Nicholas House/Language Centre. Harry Norris' Boarding House Wings/Boarders' Dining Room and the surviving pavilion of the Nicholas Wing are elements that contribute to the significance of MLC.

The Krome Memorial Gates and Fence are also considered Significant as they are architect-designed and an iconic element of the school and its public presentation. The 1885 Fountain is also a very early and characteristic element of the school, so is also Significant.

The later Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall and R.A.W. Woodgate Centre are also Significant, as was assessed in the 'Kew Conservation Study' of 1988, primarily for their fine designs. Fitchett Chapel is an element that contributes to the significance of MLC.

### ***The Nicholas brothers***

Both the early and late interwar buildings at MLC are further linked by the patronage of the Nicholas brothers. They engaged Alec Eggleston for the early interwar Nicholas House, and Harry Norris for the later buildings. The Boarders' Dining Room-Boarding House wings, and the George R Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building) were part of the grand development scheme launched the late 1930s, funded by a £80,000 donation from the brothers. This building campaign is directly comparable to the reshaping of the campus of MLC's brother school, Wesley College, in the early 1930s which was also funded by a massive donation from the Nicholas brothers. Their funds allowed the total remodelling by architect Harry Norris of the main school building of Wesley College over the summer holidays (1933/34) with the addition of two long wings, as well as the construction of new buildings including a chapel, preparatory school building, gymnasium and swimming pool in 1935-36. Norris' main school building, chapel and prep school are all A-graded in the City of Melbourne planning scheme (by definition, of national or state importance), within HO6 South Yarra Precinct.



**Figure 36. Wesley College main building, Harry Norris, 1933-34. (Melbourne i-Heritage)**

Like Norris' designs for MLC later that decade, his work at Wesley College combines traditional classical forms with a contemporary aesthetic. The remodelled main building on St Kilda Road has rendered walls in a stripped Neoclassical design with a giant-order colonnade to the central section. The preparatory (or junior) school, facing Punt Road is also rendered and is distinguished by its delicate Adamesque bas-relief ornament. The chapel, which faces High Street, is considered a rare Neoclassical design incorporating Art Deco detailing. In this it is related to Norris' Boarders' Dining Room at MLC.

### ***Nicholas Wing***

In the Nicholas Wing, and the later Science Block, Harry Norris used Georgian Revival forms updated with Moderne streamlining and materials. In the early 20th century, Australian architecture was influenced by the parallel Georgian Revival movements in England and America. William Hardy Wilson is considered the main inspirer of the Georgian Revival movement in Australia, both by his designs and his book of drawings titled *Old Colonial Architecture in New South Wales and Tasmania* of 1924.

Australian Georgian Revival became synonymous with upper-middle-class concepts of good taste, with its order and restraint, and was favoured by academically trained architects. For this reason, interwar Georgian Revival houses are seen mostly in well-to-do suburbs of Melbourne. Its typical features include a box-like form often broken up with symmetrical breakfronts or wings, face brick or rendered walls with quoins to corners, a simple hipped or transverse gabled roof, symmetrically arranged doors and windows (usually multipane sashes), and the use of Classical detail and Orders as well as delicate Adamesque decoration. By the mid-1930s, the eclecticism typical of the interwar period led to the frequent combination of Georgian Revival forms with Moderne streamlining and details.

The style was also used for institutional buildings, particularly schools. A large number of state secondary schools were established in Victoria in the 1920s and early 1930s, and Georgian Revival was a favoured style. Examples include the assembly hall at Essendon High School (VHR H1294) of 1926; Preston Girls' High School (Darebin HO24) and Ivanhoe Primary School (Banyule HO161), both of 1927-28; and University High School (VHR H2183) and Box Hill High School (Whitehorse HO219), both of 1929-30. The Essendon hall and Box Hill High School are very formal and Neoclassical, while the Ivanhoe, Preston and University High buildings are more stripped back.

The Vice Chancellor's House of 1937-38 at the University of Melbourne is also an apt comparison for the Nicholas Wing. It was privately sponsored by George Nicholas and Herbert Brooke, also designed by Harry Norris in a Moderne version of the Georgian Revival. It is significant at the State level for reasons including its demonstration of the links between George Nicholas and Harry Norris, and also as a representative example of 'the large Georgian Revival residences designed and built during the interwar period and the resurgence in the association of the classical style with notions of Australian colonial history, scholarliness and propriety' (VHR H1003 citation).

In Boroondara, an example of the more conservative approach, typical of the 1920s Georgian Revival, is seen at the Canterbury Girls' Secondary College of 1928, at 16 Mangarra Road (HO685). It is a two-storey, L-shaped building with frontages to Irilbarra and Mangarra roads. Walls are of red faced brick with clinker brick stringcourses and rendered panels above and below the arched first-floor windows. The roof is tiled and hipped with wide eaves and a traditional cupola ventilator. Each of the two main entrances is marked by a Classical portico supported on heavy Tuscan-order columns with a balustrade above. No examples of Georgian Revival institutional buildings were identified in the Boroondara Heritage Overlay.

The Nicholas Wing is most closely comparable to Norris' Vice Chancellor's residence, as they both illustrate the 'Moderne' variation of the Georgian Revival seen in the late 1930s and use contemporary brick colours. On the other hand, its massing and the use of the traditional cupola are more traditional than the Vice Chancellor's residence, and more in keeping with the school buildings in Canterbury, Ivanhoe and University High.

#### ***Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence***

The Gothic style was regarded as the only truly Christian style in the nineteenth century, and though originally revived for largely religious and nationalistic reasons, in the 1850s it was increasingly used for secular purposes. The first major public building of the Gothic Revival was the new Houses of Parliament at Westminster (Charles Barry 1836-68). The Gothic style was commonly used for schools, where teaching of religious principles was then a primary focus.

Public and institutional buildings in the Gothic Revival style were often symmetrical with a taller central element and lower flanking wings, often with gabled elements at the ends, early examples being the University Museum, Oxford (Deane & Woodward, 1855-59), and Glasgow University (George Gilbert Scott, designed 1865). The central tower element made for a more impressive building, marked the main entrance and provided visual interest to what was usually a very long front facade. In Australia this form was first used by Edmund Blackett for the University of Sydney (1854-62), regarded then as the finest building in Australia.<sup>1</sup>

In Victoria, the finest examples of this institutional Gothic Revival type include the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution (1866; VHR H2122), the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (1867-8, VHR H1002), both by Crouch & Wilson and located on St Kilda Road; Melbourne Grammar School (Webb & Taylor, 1856 & 1861-91, VHR H19), and Ormond College, Parkville (Reed & Barnes, 1879-89, VHR H728). All four buildings were constructed of stone: the first three of bluestone and Ormond College of sandstone. Melbourne Grammar has a stronger Tudor influence, while the others have a French Gothic influence with their pinnacle towers (though the Institute for the Blind has lost its tower roofs and pinnacles). Ormond College is the grandest in scale, reflecting the wealth of its patron Francis Ormond, and the higher status of such University buildings. The Deaf and Dumb Institution has the

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<sup>1</sup> These first two paragraphs have been quoted in full from the VHR place citation for the Former Deaf and Dumb Institution, Melbourne (H2122).

most exuberant decoration, particularly in its use of bichrome brick decoration over door and window openings.

The MLC building compares very well to these four State-significant buildings in its intactness and execution. While the only one of the group not to be built of stone, the highly decorated cement render lends a similar visual exuberance as that seen at the Deaf and Dumb Institute. In scale, it is similar to Melbourne Grammar and the Institute for the Blind.

#### **'Crom'/Centenary Building fence and gates**

The cast-iron fence and gates of the demolished 'Crom', which now stands in front of the northern half of the Centenary Building, is quite different to the standard Victorian iron palisade fence seen at 'Wentworth' next door (HO916) and most other Victorian houses that have retained their fence, as illustrated in publications such as the *National Trust Technical Bulletin Fences & Gates c. 1840-1925* and Graeme Robertson's *Decorative Cast Iron in Australia*.

Close comparisons to the Centenary Building fence are found in Adelaide, where a high masonry plinth with decorative cast-iron panels atop and a matching gate were popular, many manufactured by the local AC Harley & Co foundry (G Robertson, *Decorative Cast Iron in Australia*, 1984, p. 186). Another Adelaide foundry, Metters Ltd, manufactured a similar Gothic Revival fence and gate to the one at MLC, though with a quatrefoil motif in this instance instead of trefoil (*National Trust Technical Bulletin Fences & Gates c. 1840-1925*, 1988, p.46).

In the City of Boroondara, one of the closest comparisons is found at HO19, 997 Burke Road, Camberwell. This is a two-storey villa of 1980 attributed to architect John Beswicke. The front fence before it has a relatively high bluestone plinth atop of which are fence panels incorporating curvilinear wrought elements with cast elements. The front gate is of cast iron and is very elaborate in its ornamentation, including an arched gateway. In the 'Hawthorn Heritage Study', 1992, the place was assessed as having heritage significance both for the house as well as: 'Architecturally significant, as one of the best examples of wrought iron fencing in Melbourne.' The fence and gate were nominated to the state heritage register (independent of the house), but have not been assessed.

There are strong precedents for the heritage protection of fences, even when they have lost their associated house. This is seen with the 'Maratimo' fence in Williamstown (Hobsons Bay HO283), which is individually significant for aesthetic reasons. Even less grand palisade fences that survive in front of heavily altered (non-contributory) houses within City of Yarra HO precincts are consistently given a contributory grade (see, for example, 650 Lygon Street, Carlton North, in HO326 and 217 Gold Street, Clifton Hill, in HO317), as well as in Greater Bendigo (180 Barnard Street, Bendigo, in HO1). Note that all four of the above fences are larger or smaller examples of the iron palisade fence so typical of the nineteenth century.

As an intact and unusual fence of high quality, the fence of the now-demolished 'Crom' clearly deserves protection to its original extent (i.e., the northern half, easily identifiable from the simplified imitation to the south).

## Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria referred to in *Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay*, Department of Planning and Community Development, September 2012, modified for the local context.

**CRITERION A:** *Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

Methodist Ladies' College (MLC) is one of a number of prestigious denominational colleges in the City of Boroondara. The municipality has become strongly associated with larger church-based colleges that were intended to serve larger catchments across the eastern suburbs, or even the entire metropolitan area. It was the first Protestant college to be established in the municipality, and one of the three earliest church-based colleges along with the Catholic Xavier College and Genazzano College. Thanks to generous bequests by patrons such as Fred Cato and the Nicholas brothers, MLC expanded to the point that it was believed to be the largest denominational girls' school in the world. More widely, MLC has a significant place in the history of Methodism, as one of the largest and oldest extant Methodist girls' schools in the world.

The MLC Boarders' Dining Room/Boarding House Wings of 1938, and the George R Nicholas Wing of 1939 contribute to the historical significance of MLC by illustrating the important client-architect relationship between George and Alfred Nicholas and Norris, which resulted in a large collection of architecturally and historically significant domestic, institutional and commercial commissions in the Melbourne area between 1919 and 1955. These commissions include the massive rebuilding and expansion of MLC's brother school, Wesley College, in 1933-36. They also demonstrate the major phase of development of MLC which began in the late 1930s. In 1937, George R Nicholas announced a major redevelopment programme in memory of the recently deceased Alfred Nicholas, to be funded by their jointly donated £80,000. The Boarders' Dining Room/Boarding House also illustrates the ongoing and growing importance of the boarding school element of MLC, which had been present since its founding.

The Atlantic Cedar in front of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, the Elms located at the entrance of the school, and the Algerian Oak (boundary of Barkers Road) and English Oak (boundary of Glenferrie Road) are believed to be the only plantings or original features of the original garden which survive, and are considered to contribute to the historical significance of MLC as part of the early garden design, demonstrating the early boundary planting.

Subsequent interwar boundary plantings and specimen tree plantings, particularly those from the 1930s are of contextual historical interest, in that they represent the major expansion of the school at this time, and an investment not only in buildings, but the fence and landscape as well, with an emphasis on defining the boundaries and increasing privacy. They are not considered to contribute to the significance of the place.

The use of a corner entrance point from the corner of Barkers and Glenferrie Road is considered to contribute to the historical significance of MLC.

The path layout between the original entrance point and front of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence (to the termination of the eastern wing) is relatively intact, with minor changes to its form and materials and is considered to contribute to the historical significance of MLC as an original early feature of the landscape which still demonstrates the access point and transport route to the school.

**CRITERION B:** *Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (rarity).*

NA

**CRITERION C:** *Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (research potential).*

NA

**CRITERION D:** *Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).*

The George R Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building) contributes to the architectural significance of MLC as an example of the Georgian Revival style, which was popular during the interwar period for educational buildings as well as large residences in Melbourne's wealthier suburbs thanks to its associations with Australian colonial history, scholarship and propriety. Harry Norris' design approach incorporated traditional massing and features such as the copper cupolas on roofs, paired with a stripped-back Moderne sensibility seen in details such as the stylised quoins and concrete window hoods.

Fitchett Chapel contributes to the architectural significance of MLC as a fine example of ecclesiastic design and a modern interpretation of the traditional Tuscan church type. It is built of cream brick with a dominant gable roof of pan tiles and a campanile.

Fitchett Hall and Nicholas House are of architectural significance as representative examples of the continued medieval architectural influence seen at MLC during the twentieth century. Fitchett Hall, by Alec Eggleston, is in the Arts & Crafts Gothic style, and Nicholas House by Eggleston is in the English Domestic Revival style. The Boarders' Dining Room/ Boarding House Wings is a stripped Gothic/Tudor building that contributes to this continued architectural influence.

**CRITERION E:** *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).*

The front fence built for 'Crom' in c1890-91 contributes to the aesthetic significance of the MLC campus with its high-quality Gothic Revival cast-iron fence panels and gates, of a type used frequently in Adelaide but rare in Victoria.

Elements of Fitchett Chapel including the leadlight windows and timber joinery contribute to the aesthetic significance of MLC.

The Krome Memorial Gates are of aesthetic significance for the high quality wrought iron work, designed by Alex Eggleston and fabricated by craft metalworker CR Caslake. They commemorate former MLC headmaster Otto Krome.

The landscaped gardens associated with Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, fronting Barkers and Glenferrie Roads provide an attractive garden setting to the former residential building, but are substantially altered in the layout, form and plantings of the nineteenth century residential garden, so are only of amenity value not heritage value.

**CRITERION F:** *Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).*

Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence is one of the most commanding, intact and successfully designed education buildings built in the Melbourne metropolitan area during

the nineteenth century. It is distinguished by its fine Gothic decoration, executed in cement render, and the landmark central tower. Externally the building is highly intact, even retaining its now rare unpainted render finish. It is potentially of State significance.

The Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall is of creative significance as one of the most confidently and successfully designed buildings in Melbourne during the post war period, and as an outstandingly intact example of the post-war designs of Harry Norris' office.

The R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre is of technical significance for having been an early, successful and influential example of the use of off-form concrete as a finishing material.

**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).*

The MLC alumnae have a strong association with their alma mater.

**CRITERION H:** *Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Boroondara's history (associative significance).*

MLC has strong associations with a number of people, particularly:

*Rev. Dr William Henry Fitchett*, the founding president of MLC and Principal of the school for over forty years (1882-1928). He was a prominent member of the Methodist Church, elected president of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Victoria and Tasmania in 1886, and in 1902 first president of the United Methodist Victorian and Tasmanian Conference. Rev. Dr Fitchett was also a notable journalist and writer whose historical works (particularly *Deeds That Won the Empire*) sold tens of thousands of copies and made him a household name in the British Empire. His contribution to the foundation and early years of the school is recognised by the naming of two buildings after him, Fitchett Hall and Fitchett Chapel, and a School House. He lived in The Residence for the entire term of his principalship at MLC.

*Alec Stanley Eggleston*, the architect of MLC's early interwar buildings and works including Fitchett Hall and Nicholas House as well as the iconic Krome Memorial Gates. Eggleston is known for his extensive work for a range of protestant denominations and was for a time the architect to Wesley College, Queens College and MLC, as well as the designer of many interwar Methodist churches.

*Fred J. Cato*. Philanthropist and successful co-owner of Moran & Cato grocers, Fred Cato was an early, significant supporter of MLC where his two daughters attended. His major gifts to the College included funding half the purchase of J. Powers' mansion on Aileen Street (1924) (which became known as Cato House) and the purchase of Richard Allan's former home – 'Kooyong' – on Gladstone Parade, Elsternwick, for MLC's use as a branch school (1931). (Initially known as the Fred J. Cato branch of MLC, it became Cato College and is now part of Wesley College). Mr Cato additionally funded many improvements to both MLC campuses and set up a scholarship program which benefitted hundreds of students and is still awarded today. In addition to naming the Elsternwick branch after him, at the Kew campus the original Cato House building, the newer Cato Wing and a School House were named in his honour.

*Harry Norris*, the architect of MLC's late interwar and a number of early post-war buildings, most of them part of the 1937 development plan funded by the Nicholas brothers. Norris was a prominent interwar-era architect who worked closely with the Nicholas brothers on

projects ranging from their homes, the Nicholas Building on Swanston Street, and a suite of educational buildings at Wesley College.

*George R Nicholas* was the first person to manufacture and patent the painkiller aspirin (named 'Aspro') in Australia, while the German Bayer pharmaceuticals' patent on the product was suspended during WWI. His younger brother, *Alfred Nicholas*, joined his business in 1915, and Nicholas Pty Ltd went on to become a multi-million-dollar empire distributing Aspro in New Zealand, Europe and Asia. The brothers lived with their families in South Melbourne and were known widely for their philanthropy, making large donations mainly to Wesley College and Methodist Ladies' College, as well as to hospitals and universities in Melbourne and throughout Australia.

## **Statement of Significance**

### ***What is Significant?***

The Methodist Ladies' College campus at 207 Barkers Road, Kew, is significant. In 1879 the annual Methodist Church Conference decided to consider the possibility of establishing a school for girls, as Wesley College for boys had opened in 1866. The Barkers Road site was purchased in 1881, and the campus formally opened in April 1882. Its first principal was Rev. Dr William Henry Fitchett, who remained head of the school until 1928. The first building was the Gothic Revival Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence fronting Barkers Road, constructed to the design of prominent Melbourne architects Crouch & Wilson, 1881-85.

The next major phase of construction that marks the campus today was in the early interwar period. Fitchett Hall, named after the founding principal, was built in 1917, followed by the Krome Memorial Gates and associated masonry fence of 1923, and Nicholas House of 1926, all designed by architect Alec Eggleston.

The next suite of buildings was designed by architect Harry Norris as part of a large-scale expansion plan initiated in 1937. This resulted in the construction of the Boarding House Wings and Boarders' Dining Room, and the Nicholas Wing.

Norris' practice was engaged again for the design of the Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall of 1957. Other post-war buildings of note include another building commemorating Rev. Dr Fitchett's legacy, Fitchett Chapel, and the innovative brutalist R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre of 1974.

Methodist Ladies' College continues to be one of the pre-eminent private girls' schools in metropolitan Melbourne.

The following buildings and elements including views to their principal elevations are Significant:

- Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence of 1881-85
- Fountain of 1885
- Fitchett Hall of 1917
- Krome Memorial Gates & Fence of 1923
- Nicholas House (Language Centre) of 1926
- Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall of 1957
- R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre of 1974

The following building and elements including views to their principal elevations contribute to the significance of MLC:

- Boarding House Wings & Boarders' Dining Room of 1938-39

- Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building) of 1939
- Fitchett Chapel of 1959
- Path layout from the corner entrance to the east wing of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence
- Two mature Elms at entrance of the school, Algerian Oak (boundary of Barkers Road) and English Oak (boundary of Glenferrie Road) and Atlantic Cedar in front gardens, all of the nineteenth century
- Fence and gates of 'Crom' at Centenary Building, northern section (of c1890-91) only

The remaining buildings and elements within the extent of the Heritage Overlay do not contribute to the heritage significance of MLC.

***How is it significant?***

Methodist Ladies' College is of local historical, architectural, aesthetic, technical and associational significance to the City of Boroondara. Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence is potentially of State significance.

***Why is it significant?***

Methodist Ladies' College (MLC) is one of a number of prestigious denominational colleges in the City of Boroondara. The municipality has become strongly associated with larger church-based colleges that were intended to serve larger catchments across the eastern suburbs, or even the entire metropolitan area. It was the first Protestant college to be established in the municipality, and one of the three earliest church-based colleges along with the Catholic Xavier College and Genazzano College. Thanks to generous bequests by patrons such as Fred Cato and the Nicholas brothers, MLC expanded to the point that it was believed to be the largest denominational girls' school in the world. More widely, MLC has a significant place in the history of Methodism, as one of the largest and oldest extant Methodist girls' schools in the world. Founded as a combined boarding school and day school, this continuing aspect of the school is illustrated by the Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence as well as the Boarders' Dining Room/Boarding House, constructed nearly 60 years later. (Criterion A)

The Atlantic Cedar in front of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence, the Elms located at the entrance of the school, and the Algerian Oak (boundary of Barkers Road) and English Oak (boundary of Glenferrie Road) are believed to be the only plantings or original features of the original garden that survive. The path layout between the original entrance point and front of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence (to the termination of the eastern wing) is relatively intact and still demonstrates the access point and transport route to the school. All of these landscape elements are considered to contribute to the historical significance of MLC. (Criterion A)

The MLC alumnae have a strong association with their alma mater. (Criterion G)

Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence is one of the most commanding, intact and successfully designed education buildings built in the Melbourne metropolitan area during the nineteenth century. It is distinguished by its fine Gothic decoration, executed in cement render, and the landmark central tower. Externally the building is highly intact, even retaining its now rare unpainted render finish. It is potentially of State significance. (Criterion F)

Fitchett Hall, and Nicholas House are of architectural significance as representative examples of the continued medieval architectural influence seen at MLC during the twentieth century. Fitchett Hall, by Alec Eggleston, is in the Arts & Crafts Gothic style, and Nicholas House by Eggleston is in the English Domestic Revival style. The Boarders'

Dining Room/ Boarding House Wings is a stripped Gothic/Tudor building that contributes to this continued architectural influence. (Criterion D)

The Krome Memorial Gates are of aesthetic significance for the high quality wrought iron work, designed by Alex Eggleston and fabricated by craft metalworker CR Caslake. They commemorate former MLC headmaster Otto Krome. (Criterion E)

The MLC Boarders' Dining Room/Boarding House Wings of 1938, and the George R Nicholas Wing of 1939 contribute to the historical significance of MLC by illustrating the important client-architect relationship between George and Alfred Nicholas and Harry Norris, which resulted in a large collection of architecturally and historically significant domestic, institutional and commercial commissions in the Melbourne area between 1919 and 1955. These commissions include the massive rebuilding and expansion of MLC's brother school, Wesley College, in 1933-36. They also demonstrate the major phase of development of MLC which began in the late 1930s. In 1937, George R Nicholas announced a major redevelopment programme in memory of the recently deceased Alfred Nicholas, to be funded by their jointly donated £80,000. (Criterion A)

All MLC buildings funded by the Nicholas brothers – Nicholas House of 1926, the Boarders' Dining Centre/Boarding House Wings of 1938, and the George R Nicholas Wing of 1939 – contribute to the historical significance of MLC for their association with the Nicholas brothers, who were prominent in Melbourne's commercial world and noted philanthropists. The brothers were the major supporters of Methodist education in the 1930s, supporting both MLC and Wesley College. (Criterion H)

The George R Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building) contributes to the architectural significance of MLC as an example of the Georgian Revival style, which was popular during the interwar period for educational buildings as well as large residences in Melbourne's wealthier suburbs thanks to its associations with Australian colonial history, scholarship and propriety. Harry Norris' design approach incorporated traditional massing and features such as the copper cupolas on roofs, paired with a stripped-back Moderne sensibility seen in details such as the stylised quoins and concrete window hoods. (Criterion D)

Fitchett Chapel contributes to the architectural significance of MLC as a fine example of ecclesiastic design and a modern interpretation of the traditional Tuscan church type. It is built of cream brick with a dominant gable roof of pan tiles and a campanile. Elements of Fitchett Chapel contribute to the aesthetic significance of MLC including the leadlight windows and timber joinery. (Criteria D & E)

The Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall is of creative significance as one of the most confidently and successfully designed buildings in Melbourne during the post war period, and as an outstandingly intact example of the post-war designs of Harry Norris' office. (Criterion F)

The R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre is of technical significance for having been an early, successful and influential example of the use of off-form concrete as a finishing material. (Criterion F)

The front fence built for 'Crom' in c1890-91 contributes to the aesthetic significance of the MLC campus with its high-quality Gothic Revival cast-iron fence panels and gates, of a type used frequently in Adelaide but rare in Victoria. (Criterion E)

Apart from the Nicholas brothers, MLC has strong associations with a number of people, particularly:

*Rev. Dr William Henry Fitchett*, the founding president of MLC and Principal of the school for forty years (1882-1928). He was a prominent member of the Methodist Church, elected president of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Victoria and Tasmania in 1886, and in 1902 first president of the United Methodist Victorian and Tasmanian Conference. Rev. Dr Fitchett was also a notable journalist and writer whose historical works (particularly *Deeds That Won the Empire*) sold tens of thousands of copies and made him a household name in the British Empire. His contribution to the foundation and early years of the school is recognised by the naming of two buildings after him, Fitchett Hall and Fitchett Chapel, and a School House. (Criterion H)

*Alec Stanley Eggleston*, the architect of MLC's early interwar buildings and works including Fitchett Hall and Nicholas House as well as the iconic Krome Memorial Gates. Eggleston is known for his extensive work for a range of protestant denominations and was for a time the architect to Wesley College, Queens College and MLC, as well as the designer of many interwar Methodist churches. (Criterion H)

*Harry Norris*, the architect of MLC's late interwar and a number of early post-war buildings, most of them part of the 1937 development plan funded by the Nicholas brothers. Norris was a prominent interwar-era architect who worked closely with the Nicholas brothers on projects ranging from their homes, the Nicholas Building on Swanston Street, and a suite of educational buildings at Wesley College. (Criterion H)

*Fred J. Cato*. Philanthropist and successful co-owner of Moran & Cato grocers, Fred Cato was an early, significant supporter of MLC where his two daughters attended. His major gifts to the College included funding half the purchase of J. Powers' mansion on Aileen Street (1924) (which became known as Cato House) and the purchase of Richard Allan's former home – 'Kooyong' – on Gladstone Parade, Elsternwick, for MLC's use as a branch school. (Initially known as the Fred J. Cato branch of MLC, it became Cato College and is now part of Wesley College). Mr Cato additionally funded many improvements to both MLC campuses and set up a scholarship program which benefitted hundreds of students and is still awarded today. In addition to naming the Elsternwick branch after him, at the Kew campus the original Cato House building, the newer Cato Wing and a School House were named in his honour. (Criterion H)

## Grading and Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as an individually Significant place. A list of buildings and elements of heritage value are provided below.

### ***Significant buildings and elements***

<b>Building/element name</b>	<b>Architect</b>	<b>Built date</b>
Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence	Crouch & Wilson	1881-85
Fountain	Unknown	1885
Fitchett Hall	Alec Eggleston	1917
Krome Memorial Gates & Fence	Alec Eggleston	1923
Nicholas House (Language Centre)	Alec Eggleston	1926
Nurses' Memorial Assembly Hall	Harry A & Frank L Norris & Associates	1956-57
R.A.W. Woodgate Resource Centre	Daryl Jackson & Evan Walker	1974

### ***Buildings and elements that contribute to MLC's heritage significance***

<b>Building/element name</b>	<b>Architect</b>	<b>Built date</b>
Path layout from the corner entrance to the east wing of Tiddeman Boarding House/The Residence		19th century
Two mature Elms at entrance of the school, Algerian Oak (boundary of Barkers Road) and English Oak (boundary of Glenferrie Road) and Atlantic Cedar (front gardens) of the nineteenth century		19th century
'Crom'/Centenary Building Fence & Gates	Unknown	c1890-91
Boarding House Wings & Boarders' Dining Room	Harry Norris	1938-39
Nicholas Wing (Nicholas Building)	Harry Norris	1939
Fitchett Chapel	Frederick Armstrong	1959

*All other buildings and elements within the extent of the Heritage Overlay do not contribute to the heritage significance of MLC.*

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

<b>External Paint Colours</b> <i>Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?</i>	No
<b>Internal Alteration Controls</b> <i>Is a permit required for internal alterations?</i>	No
<b>Tree Controls</b> <i>Is a permit required to remove a tree?</i>	Yes - Two mature Elms at entrance of the school, Algerian Oak (boundary of Barkers Road), English Oak (boundary of Glenferrie Road) and Atlantic Cedar (front gardens)
<b>Victorian Heritage Register</b> <i>Is the place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?</i>	No
<b>Incorporated Plan</b> <i>Does an Incorporated Plan apply to the site?</i>	No
<b>Outbuildings and fences exemptions</b> <i>Are there outbuildings and fences which are not exempt from notice and review?</i>	Yes - Krome Memorial Gates & Fence; and 'Crom'/Centenary Building fence & gates
<b>Prohibited uses may be permitted</b> <i>Can a permit be granted to use the place for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?</i>	No
<b>Aboriginal Heritage Place</b> <i>Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?</i>	No

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