

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** WMFS DISPENSARY BUILDING

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** 167 Graham Street WONTHAGGI

**STUDY NUMBER:** 523

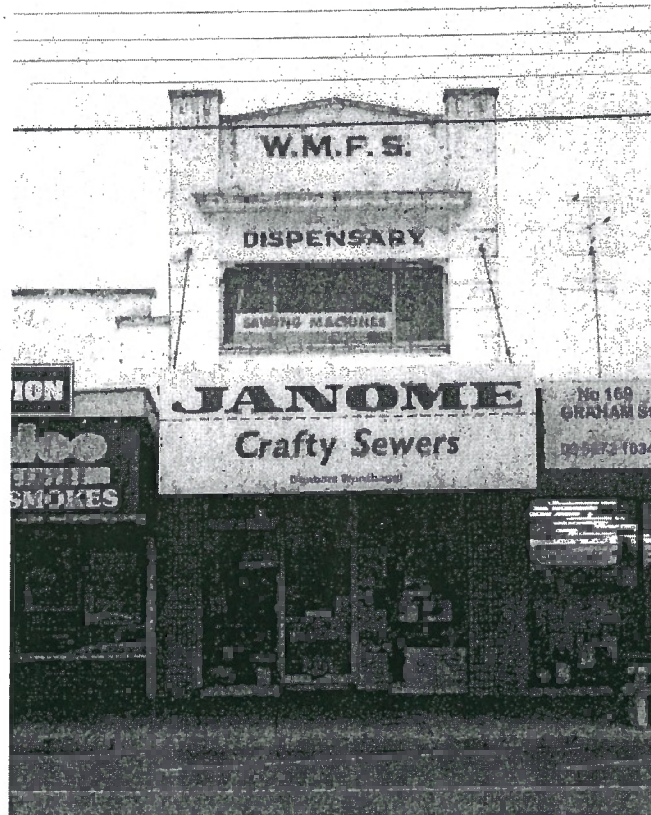
**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:** HO160

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**OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE:** JANOME SEWING CENTRE

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Bass Coast Shire

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



WMFS Dispensary Building, 167 Graham Street, Wonthaggi

**Image Date:** July 2004

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

Whole allotment.

# WMFS DISPENSARY BUILDING

Heritage Overlay No **HO160**  
PropertyNo  
File Number  
Heritage Study No **523**  
Heritage Grading

HPD Number 216 HI Number

VHR Number

Other Names/s JANOME SEWING CENTRE

Precinct

Group Number

Extra Files

Location 167 Graham Street WONTHAGGI

COUNTY OF MORNINGTON

WONTHAGGI (T)

Planning Authority

Ward Hovell

Access Description

Map Number 0

Map Scale 1:100000

Latitude

Longitude

UMG Zone

Easting

Northing

Location Validity

Spatial Accuracy

Percent of Listing

Whole allotment.

Published Extent of Listing

Significance Local

Statement of Significance

The former WMFS Dispensary Building is of local historic and aesthetic significance. It is of local historic significance as a dispensary built by the Miners Union to provide important medical and health services during the lifetime of the mine. It is of aesthetic significance as one of the few 1920s shops remaining in Wonthaggi and demonstrative of the formative phase of the town.

Gazettal Details

Permit Exemptions

Exemptions Policy

Assessment Against Criteria

A.4 Importance for association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, State, region or community.

Date Assessed 13/08/2004 Assessed By F Woodhouse

Comparisons

Rare Assessment

Intact Assessment

Include in VHR  Include in RNE  Include in Local Planning Scheme  No Recommendations for Inclusions

Recommended Management

Heritage Act Categories

Heritage Item Groups

Heritage Item Categories

Heritage place

Commercial

Commercial Office/Building

Title Details

Physical Description

The WMFS Dispensary is a narrow, two-storey red brick shop. The Graham Street elevation has modern shop front glazing at ground floor level. The facade at first floor level is rendered, with an inset balcony (which has been enclosed) and raised rusticated piers on either side of a gabled parapet. The original suspended awning remains, although modern signage has been attached. The roof is gambrel in form and clad with galvanised, corrugated steel sheeting.

Physical Condition and/or Archaeological Potential

Usage Shop.

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Associated People

Historical Notes

Wonthaggi was established as a mining town in 1909 to supply the Victorian Railways with black coal, and thus make Victoria independent of the privately owned New South Wales coalfields, the previous source of coal for the railways. The decision to proceed with mining coal from the Powlett Coalfield was prompted by the coal miners in New South Wales strike in 1909. When established, the coal was worked by the State Coal Mine from the Dudley and Kirrak Basins. The township of Wonthaggi is located on a ridge between the two basins. Initially the miners lived in a tent city; by 1910 the Government had laid out a model township. By 1921 Wonthaggi had a population of 5,000, making it one of the largest towns in Gippsland at the time. Wonthaggi's population peaked at around 12,000 in the mid-1920s when the mine was at its operational peak. The township was divided into commercial and residential areas. Its infrastructure provided for housing, water, churches, schools, and other social facilities.

The Wonthaggi Miners Friendly Society (WMFS) Dispensary, a pharmacy, was opened in December 1922, first appearing in commercial directories in 1924. Its establishment, including the purchase of the site and construction of this building, was funded by mine workers. The first manager was pharmacist A W Griffiths, who operated the dispensary with assistant James Allen. The WMFS Dispensary continued to be listed in directories until as late as 1965. Although the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi closed in 1968, it is unclear how long the Dispensary remained part of the mine workers' infrastructure. This building is now occupied by a sewing machine retailer.

Historic Themes

Thematic Environmental History

13.1 Larger Towns: Wonthaggi, the site of the former State Coal Mine, was established to supply coal to the Victorian Railways and eventually other industries. Today it is a flourishing town and the largest shopping centre in South Gippsland. Wonthaggi's commercial area includes an extensive range of shops. As a tourist destination, the area supports hotels, motels, caravan parks and accommodation for holiday rentals. Nearby attractions include Cape Paterson and its fine surf beaches and the adjoining Bunurong Marine Park. The State Coal Mine and Mining Museum, now a tourist attraction, is managed by Parks Victoria.

Listings

References

Author	Title	Year	Shelf	Location
Department of Land and Survey	Parish Plan of Township of Wonthaggi, Parish of Wonthaggi, County of Mornington			
John M Coghlan	The State Coal Mine and Wonthaggi 1909-1968	1979		
Sands & McDougalls	Sands & McDougalls Commercial Directories	1920		
		-30		
F.J. Gannon (ed.)	Wonthaggi and District: Past and Present	1934		

Conservation Plans

Owner Type

Section 32 Recommendation

Owners/Occupants/Managers

Other Notes

Application Detail

Adviser Comments

Planning Scheme Amendments

Overlay Controls

Planning Scheme Schedule

External Paint Controls?	No	Included in Vic Heritage Register?	No
Internal Alteration Controls?	No	Prohibited uses may be permitted?	Yes
Tree Controls?	No	Name of incorporated plan	No

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**Extra Files**

**Outbuildings/fences not exempt?** No

**Aboriginal Heritage Place?** No