

## HERITAGE COUNCIL DETERMINATION

Determination Date	5 April 2018
Place/Object Name	Stawell Amalgamated Miners' Association Banner
Location	Stawell Town Hall, 63-65 Main Street, Stawell
VHR Number	H2383
Category	Heritage Object

At a meeting of the Heritage Council of Victoria on 5 April 2018 it was determined that, in accordance with Section 49(1)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the above object is of State-level cultural heritage significance and warrants inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register, subject to the tracked changes in the below report. This decision was reached having considered the assessment against the Heritage Council's criteria, other information contained in the attached report and all submissions received in response to the Executive Director's recommendation.

The Heritage Council endorses and adopts the attached report for the purposes of making its decision.



**Professor Stuart Macintyre AO**  
**Chair, Heritage Council of Victoria**

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

<b>Name</b>	Stawell Amalgamated Miners' Association Banner
<b>Location</b>	Stawell Town Hall, 63-65 Main Street, Stawell
<b>Provisional VHR Number</b>	PROV H2383
<b>Provisional VHR Categor(ies)</b>	Heritage Object
<b>Hermes Number</b>	14365
<b>Heritage Overlay</b>	N/A



Stawell Amalgamated Miners' Association Banner (September 2017)

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE HERITAGE COUNCIL:

- That the Stawell Amalgamated Miners' Association Banner be included as a Heritage Object in the Victorian Heritage Register under the *Heritage Act 2017* [Section 37(1)(a)].

**STEVEN AVERY**  
Executive Director

**Recommendation Date:** 11 January 2018

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

## EXTENT OF NOMINATION

### **Date that the nomination was accepted by the Executive Director**

25 September 2006

### **Written extent of nomination**

Stawell Amalgamated Miners' Association (AMA) Banner.

### **Nomination extent diagram**

The Stawell AMA Banner is located in the Stawell Town Hall and is in the Category of Object. No extent diagram was required.

### **Is the extent of nomination the same as the recommended extent?**

Yes

## RECOMMENDED REGISTRATION

The registration includes all of the object known as the Stawell AMA Banner.

## RATIONALE FOR EXTENT

The extent of registration of the Stawell AMA Banner in the Victorian Heritage Register is limited to the banner itself. This banner could be considered as part of the collection of Eight Hour Day Trade Union Banners (VHR H2086) owned by Trades Hall and held by Museums Victoria. It is recommended as a separate registration rather than an amendment to VHR H2086 as unlike the banners which make up VHR H2086 the Stawell AMA Banner is owned by Northern Grampians Shire Council and located in Stawell.

## BACKGROUND

### WHAT IS THE OBJECT?

The Stawell AMA Banner is located in the Town Hall, Stawell. The double sided banner is made of painted cloth with fringing to the lower edge and imagery and mottos on both sides. One side has a large central panel depicting two male figures shaking hands, surrounded by painted wording. The reverse side has a central female figure carrying a sword surrounded by mottos referencing the Eight Hour Day Movement. The banner is displayed in a Perspex casing hanging in the stairwell of the Stawell Town Hall where both sides of the banner can be viewed.

### WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE OBJECT?

The Stawell AMA Banner was created in 1904 by W Rodgers as a replica of an earlier banner which was created in 1874. The 1904 banner was displayed by the Stawell Branch of the AMA during union parades until 1909 when parades ceased due to a lack of support. The tradition of parades where the banners of unions and friendly societies were displayed originated in Britain. The first parades and banners in Victoria focused on the Eight Hour Day Movement, but unions also created banners which were displayed in parades as a form of identity. In the 1860s, unions were formed on the Victorian goldfields to protect the rights of miners as large company mines were established. In 1874, these individual unions united to form the AMA and at a meeting in Maldon in 1884, the AMA became the AMAA the first intercolonial union in Australia, with branches in Tasmania, Far North Queensland and New Zealand.

## STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT?

The Stawell [Amalgamated Miners' Association \(AMA\)](#) Banner.

### HOW IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

The Stawell AMA Banner is of historical significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

#### Criterion A

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

#### Criterion B

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

#### Criterion D

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

### WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

The Stawell AMA Banner is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Stawell AMA Banner is historically significant for its association with one of the earliest unions in Victoria, the AMA. The AMA became part of the AMAA, Australia's first intercolonial union in 1884. The Stawell AMA was established in February 1872 and was the second miners union in Victoria, the first being Bendigo which was formed only one day earlier. The Stawell AMA Banner is important in demonstrating the union's political and social aspirations as well as the non-oppositional labour and capital ethos that was the defining feature of the first Australian gold mining unions. It is also important for its association with the Eight Hour Day Movement, one of the most significant nineteenth century industrial reforms. [Criterion A]

The Stawell AMA Banner is significant as a rare surviving example of an early twentieth century trade union banner which was a replica of an earlier banner. More than 200 union banners were produced in Victoria

and the Stawell Banner is one of only twelve union banners known to have survived in Victoria. It is a rare surviving historical document associated with an early intercolonial trade union for which little documentary evidence survives. [Criterion B]

The Stawell AMA Banner is a notable example of the class of union banners. It is fine and highly intact example of a nineteenth century [style](#) union banner and displays a large number of characteristics which are typical of the class, including the materials, use of symbolic and political images and mottos, and large scale and design. The design and sewing of the banner and the painting of the imagery and mottos are executed in a highly proficient manner. [Criterion D]

# RECOMMENDATION REASONS

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING INCLUSION IN THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER [s.40]

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

### CRITERION A

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

#### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION A

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

**Plus**

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

**Plus**

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

#### **Executive Director's Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner was created in 1904 by W Rodgers. It replaced an earlier banner which was created in 1874 and was paraded at union processions and sports days until 1909. It has a clear association with the development of the union movement in Victoria and with mining unions in particular. It was the banner for the second miners' union formed in Victoria, with Bendigo established only one day earlier. The union movement is of historical importance having made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria and the association with the union movement is evident in the physical fabric of the banner and in documentary resources.

Criterion A is likely to be satisfied.

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

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

#### **Executive Director's Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner is one of only twelve known surviving union banners in Victoria. It has a clear association with the AMA and with the AMAA which became the model for the organisational structure of future unions. It is associated with the second gold miners' union established in Victoria and was used during processional and celebratory parades as a means of visual identification for the union. The Stawell AMA Banner allows the clear association with the foundation of gold mining unions, and with the Eight Hour Day movement in Victoria to be understood better than most other objects in Victoria with substantially the same association.

Criterion A is likely to be satisfied at the State level.

## CRITERION B

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

### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION B

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

#### Plus

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

#### Plus

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

OR

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

OR

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

#### ***Executive Director's Response***

The Stawell AMA Banner has a clear association with the early development of the union movement in Victoria and is a rare surviving example of a union banner which was displayed during union parades. It has been estimated that more than 200 trade union banners were created and there are now only twelve known surviving examples in Victoria. Of these, this banner is associated with the AMA, one of the earliest mining unions in Victoria, and with the AMAA, Australia's first intercolonial union.

Criterion B is likely to be satisfied.

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

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

#### ***Executive Director's Response***

The Stawell AMA Banner is a rare surviving example of an early twentieth century trade union banner. It is one of only twelve known examples in Victoria, and is associated with the Victoria's first gold mining union and with Australia's first intercolonial union. Little remains of the archival record of the AMA or the AMAA and the Stawell banner is significant as rare surviving evidence of the social and political aspirations of the union.

Criterion B is likely to be satisfied at the State level.

## CRITERION C

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

### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION C

The:

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

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

**Plus**

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

#### **Executive Director’s Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner does not contain physical evidence of historical interest that is not currently visible or understood. The banner has undergone conservation and its materials and methods of construction are well understood.

Criterion C is not likely to be satisfied.

## CRITERION D

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

### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION D

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

**Plus**

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

**Plus**

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

#### **Executive Director’s Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner is one of a class of union banners which has a clear association with the development of the union movement in Victoria. The union movement made a strong contribution to Victoria by lobbying for safe and fair work environments and through its association with the Eight Hour Day Movement which established the eight hour working day.

The principal characteristics of the class of union banners, including materials, the use of symbolic and political images and mottos, and the large scale and method of construction which allowed them to be prominently displayed on the rear of horse and carts during processions, are evident in the Stawell AMA Banner.

Criterion D is likely to be satisfied.

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

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

### **Executive Director's Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner is a notable example of the class of union banners. It is a fine and highly intact example of a nineteenth century union banner and displays a large number of characteristics which are typical of the class. The design and sewing of the banner and the painting of the imagery and mottos are executed in a highly proficient manner.

Criterion D is likely to be satisfied at the State level.

## CRITERION E

**Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.**

### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION E

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

### **Executive Director's Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner clearly exhibits aesthetic characteristics as a fine example of an early twentieth century banner which demonstrates fine craftsmanship and artistic skills. It is an artistic record of the AMAA, an association for which few documentary archives survive.

Criterion E is likely to be satisfied.

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

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

- *critical recognition* of the aesthetic characteristics of the place/object within a relevant art, design, architectural or related discipline as an outstanding example within Victoria; or
- wide public *acknowledgement of exceptional merit* in Victoria in medium such as songs, poetry, literature, painting, sculpture, publications, print media etc.

### **Executive Director's Response**

The aesthetic characteristics are appreciated and valued by the Stawell community, and by appropriately related disciplines but there has been no critical recognition of the aesthetic characteristics of the banner within a relevant or related discipline as an outstanding example within Victoria, or wide public acknowledgement of its exceptional merit in another medium.

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

## CRITERION F

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

### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION F

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

**Plus**

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

### **Executive Director's Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner contains physical evidence that clearly demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement for the time in which it was created.

Criterion F is likely to be satisfied.

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

The nature &/or scale of the achievement is *OF A HIGH DEGREE* or 'beyond the ordinary' for the period in which it was undertaken as evidenced by:

- *critical acclaim* of the place/object within the relevant creative or technological discipline as an outstanding example in Victoria; or
- wide *acknowledgement of exceptional merit* in Victoria in medium such as publications and print media; or
- recognition of the place/object as a *breakthrough* in terms of design, fabrication or construction techniques; or
- recognition of the place/object as a successful solution to a technical problem that *extended the limits* of existing technology; or
- recognition of the place/object as an outstanding example of the *creative adaptation* of available materials and technology of the period.

### **Executive Director's Response**

The nature of the creative achievement is not 'beyond the ordinary' for the period in which it was undertaken. The materials and techniques used to create the Stawell AMA Banner were typical of those used to create the many banners made in Victoria during this time.

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

## **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 Aboriginal people as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.**

### **STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION G**

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

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

**Plus**

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

### **Executive Director's Response**

The Stawell AMA Banner had a strong association with the people of Stawell and with the mining community in particular. The banner is displayed in the Town Hall in Stawell, but its use in parades ceased in 1909, more than one hundred years ago and since that time there has been no evidence of regular or long term engagement with the banner for ceremonial, ritual, commemorative, spiritual or celebratory use.

Criterion G is not likely to be satisfied.

## CRITERION H

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

### STEP 1: A BASIC TEST FOR SATISFYING CRITERION H

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

**Plus**

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

**Plus**

The *ASSOCIATION*:

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

### ***Executive Director's Response***

The Stawell AMA Banner has a direct association with the Stawell gold miners who were members of the AMA and later the AMAA. These organisations as a whole made a strong and influential contribution to the course of Victoria's history and the association is evident in the physical fabric of the object. The association directly relates to achievements of the AMA but the banner ceased being used in parades in 1909 and there has been no enduring or close interaction between the object, the AMA or the AMAA since that time.

Criterion H is not likely to be satisfied.

# PROPOSED PERMIT POLICY

## Preamble

The purpose of the Permit Policy is to assist when considering or making decisions regarding works to a registered place or object. It is recommended that any proposed works be discussed with an officer of Heritage Victoria prior to making a permit application. Discussing proposed works will assist in answering questions the owner may have and aid any decisions regarding works to the object or to the place in which it is located.

**The extent of registration of the Stawell AMA Banner in the Victorian Heritage Register consists of the banner itself.** Under the *Heritage Act 2017* a person must not remove or demolish, damage or despoil, develop or alter or excavate, relocate or disturb the position of any part of a registered place or object without approval. It is acknowledged, however, that conservation may be required to keep places and objects in good repair and adapt them for use into the future.

If a person wishes to undertake works or activities in relation to a registered place or registered object, they must apply to the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria for a permit. The purpose of a permit is to enable appropriate change to a place and to effectively manage adverse impacts on the cultural heritage significance of a place as a consequence of change. If an owner is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that Heritage Victoria be contacted.

Permits are required for anything which alters the place or object, unless a **permit exemption** is granted. Permit exemptions usually cover routine maintenance and upkeep issues faced by owners as well as minor works or works to the elements of the place or object that are not significant. They may include appropriate works that are specified in a conservation management plan. Permit exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.49(3) of the *Heritage Act 2017*) or after registration (under s.92 of the *Heritage Act 2017*).

## Collection Management

It is recommended that the Stawell AMA Banner is included in any Collection Policy (CP) developed to manage the collection held by the Northern Grampians Shire Council in a manner which preserves its cultural heritage significance. If a CP does not exist, it is recommended that a policy be developed for management of the banner. The CP documentation and all aspects of the management of the banner should be in accordance with the *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries*.

It is also recommended that a formal arrangement is made to ensure the survival of the Stawell AMA Banner in the event that it can no longer be exhibited in the Stawell Town Hall. This arrangement should provide for the preservation of the banner and ensure that it remains publicly accessible.

## Security

Fire detection and suppression systems suitable for museum use should be installed if this has not already occurred. A Disaster Plan should be prepared and implemented in accordance with Museums Australia's standards. A security system suitable for museum use should be installed.

## Movement or Relocation

Temporary external movement, permanent relocation, or loan of objects requires permit approval by the Executive Director pursuant to the *Heritage Act 2017*.

The temporary relocation or movement of a registered heritage object resulting from works to the building in which the object is housed requires permit approval by the Executive Director pursuant to the *Heritage Act 2017*. Works to the building where the Stawell AMA Banner is held have the potential to damage the

Banner. These works include but are not limited to the works listed below. The Banner must be removed if the works are likely to impact the area in which the Banner is located before the works commence and not be returned until after the works have been completed. If works occur in another area of the building, the Banner should be protected from potentially damage causing elements, including dust.

- Renovation of the building.
- Demolition, removal or installation of walls, ceilings, wall linings, doors, windows, bathroom, kitchen or office fitouts, lights, built-in furniture, and the like.
- Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring, computer and audio visual systems.
- Repairs and maintenance.
- Painting of walls and ceilings.
- Vermin control.
- Security and fire detection and suppression.

### **Cultural heritage significance**

#### ***Overview of significance***

The cultural heritage significance of the Stawell AMA Banner lies in the fabric of the banner itself.

### **PROPOSED PERMIT EXEMPTIONS (UNDER SECTION 49(3) OF THE HERITAGE ACT)**

It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.49(3) of the *Heritage Act 2017*). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.92 of the *Heritage Act 2017*).

#### **General Condition 1**

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

#### **General Condition 2**

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

#### **General Condition 3**

All works should ideally be informed by the Collection Policy prepared for the object. The Executive Director is not bound by any Collection Policy, and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Collection Policy.

#### **General Condition 4**

Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

#### **Conservation**

Written notification is required for any proposed conservation activities. The applicant will then be notified by the Executive Director whether the conservation activity requires permit approval pursuant to the *Heritage Act 2017*, or whether it is permit exempt.

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

<b>Local Government Authority</b>	Northern Grampians Shire Council
<b>Heritage Overlay</b>	N/A
<b>Heritage Overlay Controls</b>	N/A
<b>Other Overlays</b>	N/A
<b>Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register</b>	No
<b>Other Listings</b>	No
<b>Other Names</b>	No

## HISTORY

The Stawell AMA Banner is a trade union banner which was displayed by the Stawell Branch of the AMA during sports day parades until 1909.

### History of union banners

The tradition of parades where the banners of unions and friendly societies were displayed originated in Britain. The first parades and banners in Victoria focused on the Eight Hour Day Movement, but as unions were formed, banners were created as a means of identity for the various organisations. They were elaborately painted with imagery and wording, usually had tassels and fringing and were of a large scale to allow their prominent display on horse drawn carts. The imagery included tools and emblems associated with the various trades, and mottos espousing the beliefs and vision of the particular union or organisation. Figures depicted were usually men and if women were included, they were usually depicted as representations of ideals such as truth and wisdom.

### Mining unions

The first mining unions in Victoria were established in the 1860s to protect the conditions and wages of miners on the goldfields when mining evolved from the use of labour intensive, simple surface-focused techniques undertaken by individual miners, to the establishment of large mining companies. Initially established in each mining area, the individual unions united in 1874 to form the AMA. Most branches had large banners which were displayed during parades as symbols of pride and solidarity and as a means of visual identification.

In March 1872, the Bendigo Miners' Association held the first annual Miners' Picnic and Sports Day, an event which was to define the miners' unions. It was held at Ravenswood and an estimated 3,000 people attended. In addition to sports such as quoits, foot racing, and hop, skip and jump, there was an open-air meeting where Robert Clark, President of the Bendigo Miners Association, stated that the picnic was also being held to celebrate the increasing success of the agitation for an eight hour day system. Three months after the Ravenswood Picnic and Sports Day, gold miners at Bendigo were awarded an eight hour working day, reputedly the first miners in the world to win the Eight Hour Day campaign. This was one of the most important industrial reforms won by unionists in the nineteenth century. Sports and picnic days became annual events, commencing with a procession in which the union banners were displayed. They were fund raising events, often declared public holidays by the mining companies and attended by huge crowds. For example, the Miners' Association Sports Day at Creswick in 1882 attracted 7,000 people with approximately 1,700 participants in the parade which was  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile (1.2 kilometres) in length.

In June 1874, a conference of the individual miners' associations was held at Bendigo. The principal discussion focused on the formation of a union which would combine the multiple district unions and this resulted in the establishment of the AMA. As the *Bendigo Advertiser* reported, the philosophy of mutual satisfaction was to continue to guide the new association – *'there can be no question in the world that it will be better for both masters and men that a union of the sort to be formed, should exist. So long as one side is not unreasonable we are quite satisfied that the other will not be ... the design of men, being selfish and*

*corrupt, must be resisted and defeated*'. These sentiments are expressed in the mottos on the Stawell AMA Banner.

While upholding reconciliation and industrial harmony, the AMA reserved the right to industrial action if its legitimate claims were denied. Through the AMA, miners had the strength to dispute wage reductions, defective equipment and poor working conditions. Miners went on strike to protect their rights and any miner who filled the place of a union member was disqualified from joining the AMA.

In October 1884, 39 delegates from the 20 branches of the AMA, including Stawell, held a conference in the Masonic Hall at Maldon. This meeting resulted in further amalgamation with other unions including the New South Wales Coalminers' Union to form Australia's first intercolonial union, the AMAA. Union rules were based on those of the National Miners' Association of Great Britain with a decentralised organisational structure with strong branches which were kept in close contact with the union's central committee through stewards appointed at each mine. In 1888, union membership in all Bendigo mines was made compulsory. These were progressive achievements which were later adopted by the emerging rural workers' unions. The AMAA presence spread from central Victorian goldmines, to all Victorian mining fields, and within a decade to Tasmania, Far North Queensland and New Zealand.

#### History of the Stawell banner

Stawell AMA held its first Sports Day in 1873 and a makeshift banner was displayed in the street parade which started in Patrick Street and ended at the Botanical Reserve (now the Old Lake Reserve) where the sporting activities occurred. This banner was replaced in the following year with a banner made by E P Bishop at a cost of £45. It was used in parades until 1903 when it fell into disrepair and was replaced by a replica banner made by W Rodgers at a cost of £22. This banner was used in the annual parade and sports day from 1904 until 1909 when the Stawell branch of the AMA decided not to hold their sports day owing to lack of support. The banner was held in storage until 1982 when it became the property of the Stawell Town Council. The banner underwent conservation and was subsequently unveiled at the Stawell Town Hall in 1990 where it is currently displayed.

The gold industry began to decline around World War I when gold production began to decrease in Bendigo, Victoria's most important mining centre. Stawell's largest goldfield, the Magdala-cum-Moonlight closed in 1917 and its mining plant was sold.

In 1918, the AMAA became part of the Australian Workers' Union. Unlike other unions, no substantial archival records of the AMA or the AMAA survive. The banner therefore provides the most tangible record of the union's aspirations and an insight into the character of nineteenth century miners.

## MANUFACTURE DETAILS

**Maker's name:** Mr W Rodgers  
**Date made:** 1904

## VICTORIAN HISTORICAL THEMES

- 04 Transforming and managing land and natural resources**
  - 4.5 Gold mining
- 07 Governing Victorians**
  - 7.2 Struggling for political rights

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Stawell AMA Banner is located in the Town Hall, Stawell where it is displayed within a suspended perspex box with both sides visible. The double-sided banner is made of cloth with hand painted decoration. It was constructed to be supported on a horizontal rod at the top of the banner and has fringing and braiding along its lower edge.

One side commemorates the Eight Hour Day Movement with a hand painted central female figure carrying a sword surrounding by hand painted horizontal ribbons containing the words 'Eight Hours Labour' across the upper edge, 'Eight/Hours/Recreation' on the left side, 'Eight/Hours/Rest' on the right side and 'Unity is Strength' across the lower edge. The reverse side represents the Stawell AMA with two male figures representing labour and capital depicted in a mining scene shaking hands. The painted panel is surrounded by painted ribbons with the words 'Stawell' on the left side, 'Amalgamated Miners' across the upper edge and 'Association' on the right side. A panel beneath the two men contains the words 'Let us greet him as the best/And help him all we can/The brightest gem in Nature's crest/Is an honest working man'. A fourth ribbon at the lower edge contains the words 'Estab.d October 19th 1872'.

## INTEGRITY/INTACTNESS

Intactness – The intactness of the object is very good. The banner has been conserved and the painted images and mottos are intact, as well as the braiding and fringing to the lower edge. (September 2017)

Integrity – The integrity of the object is very good. The cultural heritage values of the object can be easily read in the extant fabric. The conservation works stabilised much of the original fabric and it is now displayed in a suspended Perspex box with both sides of the banner visible. (September 2017)

## CONDITION

The object is in very good condition after conservation treatment. The banner is currently displayed in a suspended perspex box. (September 2017)

## COMPARISONS

### Union banners in the VHR

#### **Eight Hour Day Trade Union Banners (VHR H2086) Museums Victoria, Carlton**

The Eight Hour Day Trade Union Banners collection is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria. It comprises eight banners created between 1890 and 1916. The first Eight Hour Day procession was held in Melbourne in 1856 to celebrate the winning of the eight hour working day by building workers, one of the most important industrial reforms won by unionists in the nineteenth century. The march became Melbourne's biggest annual procession and processions were also held in regional towns. The day was declared a public holiday in 1879, and renamed Labour Day in 1934. The major features of the processions were the large trade union banners, mounted and carried behind horse-drawn carriages or on floats. One side of the banner was usually a realistic depiction of the particular trade, including associated materials, tools and skills, while the other displayed allegorical figures and symbols. The Eight Hour Day Trade Union Banners are of historical and social significance for their important associations with the history

of trade unionism in Victoria and with the Eight Hour Day movement. They are important historical documents which demonstrate the concerns of workers, the nature of their work and the identity of unions, as well as being powerful symbols of the role of unions in advancing conditions and wages for working people. The banners are rare surviving examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century trade union banners and represent the only substantial collection in Victoria and one of only two major Eight Hour Day banner collections in Australia.



Australian Boot Trade, Ballarat Division (1905)



Australian Railways Union (1912)



Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, Victorian Branch, 1914



Operative Painters and Decorators Union (1915)



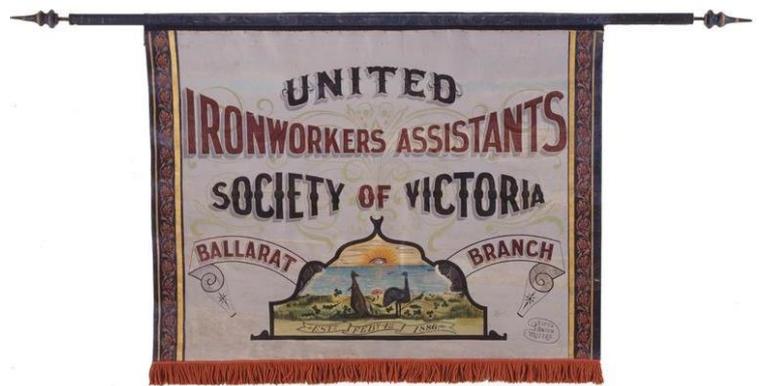
Australian Tramways Employees Association, Victorian Branch (1916)



Manufacturing Grocers Employees Industrial Union of Victoria (n.d.)



Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Blacksmiths, Fitters, Patternmakers, Turners and Machinists, Ballarat (n.d.)



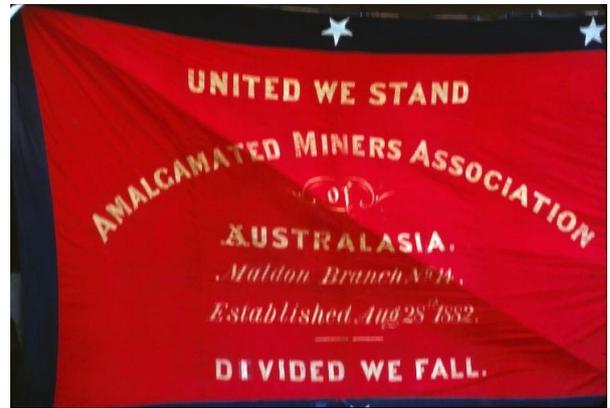
United Ironworkers' Assistants Society of Victoria, Ballarat Branch (n.d.)

Union banners not in the VHR but recommended for inclusion in the VHR by the Executive Director, 19 January 2018

**Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch, Maldon Museum**

The Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch is located in the Maldon Museum, Maldon. It was created in 1888 and is a double-sided banner with a central panel surrounded by a border on each side. One side has an image of two male figures representing labour and capital surrounded by mottos and wording and the reverse side has wording only. The Banner was displayed during union parades up until World War I, and in Easter parades until the 1970s.

It is of historical and social significance for its association with the union movement in Victoria and with the AMA and AMAA in particular. It is a rare surviving union banner, of which there were more than 200 made in Victoria between 1856 and the 1950s. It is an uncommon example of a banner which continued to be displayed in community parades after the AMAA ceased to exist.

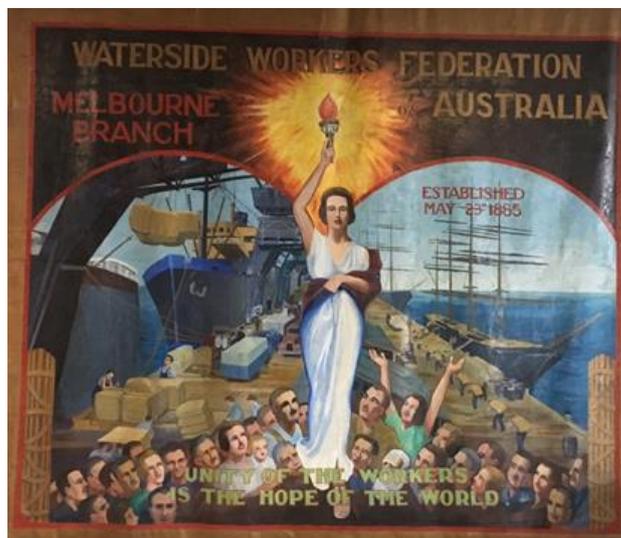


Banner of the AMAA, Maldon No. 14 Branch (front and rear)

**Waterside Workers' Federation Banner**

The Waterside Workers' Federation Banner was created in 1949 by artist Richard Ovenden. It is a large double sided canvas banner with imagery and mottos painted in oil paint on both sides, although only one side is currently visible. The banner hangs on a wall, suspended by its top cross bar and the visible side has a central female figure in white robes holding a torch with a dock, ships and a massed crowd in the background. Mottos and wording surround the image. The Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) was a

national organisation formed in 1902 with strong links to the Australian Labor Party. The WWF emerged from the Melbourne Wharf Labourers' Union (MWLU) which was formed in 1885 and played a significant part in the national strike of the late 1880s known as the Maritime Strike and involving many trades. The Waterside Workers' Federation Banner is an unusual example of a banner created at a time when few were being commissioned or created.



Waterside Workers Federation Banner (front face)

### SUMMARY OF COMPARISONS

The Eight Hour Day Banners in the VHR are union banners which were used primarily during Eight Hour Day Movement parades. The Stawell Banner also references the Eight Hour Day Movement which was one of the most significant industrial movements in the nineteenth century. The banners were emblematic symbols of each union's trade and aspirations and were mainly used in processions celebrating the Eight Hour Day and later May Day celebrations. There were more than 200 union banners created between 1856 and 1950 and the Stawell AMA Banner is now one of only twelve known to survive in Victoria. Unlike other unions, there is no substantial archival record of the AMA or the AMAA. The Stawell and Maldon banners are therefore the most tangible record of the union's aspirations and provide insight into nineteenth century miners who were willing to work with mine owners, but equally determined to defend their rights.

### KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT

Bannear, D. (2004) 'A symbol of cooperation goes on display' Inherit Heritage Council Victoria, Issue 20, October 2004

Reeves, A. (2007) 'Trade Unionism and the Australian Mining Industry: the influence of Central Victorian goldminers, 1870 – 1920' in K. Reeves & D. Nichols (eds.) Deeper Leads: new approaches to Victorian goldfields history, BHS Publishing, Ballarat, Victoria, 2007

Smith, B. Australian Trades Union Archives Retrieved from URL: <http://www.atua.org.au> 17/01/2012.

Conservation works completed by Victorian Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Material (c.1990)

**ADDITIONAL IMAGES**



2017, the Stawell AMA Banner, front view, suspended in a Perspex case in the Stawell Town Hall.



2017, the Stawell AMA Banner, rear view, suspended in a Perspex case in the Stawell Town Hall.