



### Heritage Toolkit

## The Mildura Art Deco Walking Tour

### Mildura

This walking tour is an introduction to the Art Deco heritage still found in and around Mildura. Many significant buildings in Mildura and the outlying area's exhibit features that were either built during the Art Deco period or were influenced by the style.

Following the establishment of the irrigation colony in 1887, the first buildings in Mildura were in the Victorian and later Federation style; employing local red brick, corrugated iron roof and wide verandahs.

Between the First and Second World

Wars, three architectural styles emerged in Australia: the Californian Bungalow, Spanish Mission and Art Deco. Art Deco influences in both housing and commercial buildings can be found in Mildura up until the 1950's.

### Art Deco

First introduced to the world from the 1925 Exposition International des Arts Decoratifs et Industries Moderne held in Paris, the term wasn't popularised until the 1960's.

Characterised by linear decorative designs, reminiscent of modernising technology, it emphasised long thin forms, curved surfaces and geometric

patterns symbolic of the expansion of the machine age.

A modernisation of many different artistic styles and themes from the past, it borrowed from Far and Middle Eastern designs, Greek and Roman themes. Egyptian and even Mayan influence. It emphasised abstraction, distortion and the simplification of geometric shapes and intense colours.

To assist you to recognise Art Deco buildings, typical architectural features may include:

- Dominant vertical lines and horizontal lines
- Simplicity: relatively stripped-down in terms of the façade and its features
- Upper levels of buildings set back in stages from the vertical
- Different use of materials: combinations of stone, brick and metal
- Geometric ornamentation: use of circles, diamonds, chevrons, zig-zags, triangles, pyramids, spirals, octagons and stylised floral motifs
- Frequently used symbols/motifs: sunbursts, plant and animal life, gears, lightning bolts, relief sculpture embodying justice, truth, knowledge, industry, labour, man's strength, work ethic, achievement, commerce and bounty
- Decorative methods: relief sculptures (in limestone, terracotta, metal (iron and bronze), painted murals, tile mosaics, decorative metal work (grills, various covers, railings, door frames) and flat against the wall fluted columns.

Take to the streets, explore our hidden gems and discover the region's Art Deco

past. We hope you enjoy the walk.

## THE WALK

### 1. Fabulous Interior—The Mildura Brewery

(20-22 Langtree Ave)

The Mildura Brewery and bar has been incorporated into the former Astor Theatre. The key interior Art Deco style indicators of line, form and colour have been retained from the theatre and enhanced with Art Deco styled light fittings, bar and floor patterning.

### 2. Former Capitol Theatre

(39 Langtree Ave)

Built around 1935-1938 as a theatre on the site of Mueller's Department Store (c. 1890); it incorporates into the upper wall area the typical Art Deco chevron pattern derived from Mayan civilisation.

### 3. Former Commercial Bank of Australia

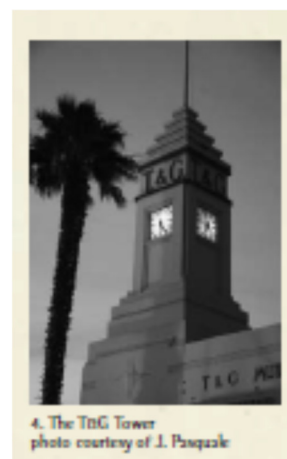
(45 Langtree Ave)

Now the Sandbar this building was completed around 1932, on the site of a small bakery. It features decorative brickwork and streaming with fluted columns at the entry.

### 4. Mildura Icon—the T & G Clock Tower

(138 Eighth Street)

The T & G Building was built in the 1920's. It is one of a small number of similar styled buildings constructed in regional centres. The symmetrical stepped detailing to the walls and top section of the clock tower are a classic Art Deco feature.



## 5. Mills Court

(39-41 Deakin Ave)

This commercial building completed in the early 1940's was influenced by Art Deco styled patterning and features a symmetrical, stepped upper wall façade with geometric parapet detailing and integrated façade lettering.

## 6. Win Television

18 (Deakin Ave)

Formerly the Mildura Urban Water Trust this modest building from the 1920's features a typical Art Deco stepped parapet and entry detail and geometric parapet detailing.

## 7. Power Supply Substation

(Deakin Ave median– 7th & 8th St)

The electrical substation was built in 1936 and features the typical symmetrical lines of Art Deco, including handsome relief lettering of the period.

## 8. Original 1930's Shop

(65 Deakin Ave)

Etheringtons the Jewellers was established in 1932 on the site of the former Williams Store (c. 1890). The Art Deco shop front and interior is still intact including signage and internal fittings. The front door is in the streamline style.

## 9. Unique Windows—The Mildura RSL

(Corner of Tenth Street & Madden Ave)

The Mildura RSL has wonderful stained-glass windows completed in 1954 by Mervyn Napier-Waller. At the time the artist was working on his greatest achievement, the wall mosaics for the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. The repeated, coffin shaped motif of the RSL windows in shapes reminiscent of Egyptian mummies symbolises the spirit or souls of the fallen ascending to heaven.

## 10. Royal Victorian Regiment

(Corner San Mateo & Twelfth Street)

The Drill Hall was built in the mid 1920's and is a

handsome symmetrical Art Deco building with decorative brickwork.

## 11. Private Residence

(7 Princes Street)

Built in the 1930's this flat roofed residence has streamlined parapet detailing and curved corners typical of the period.

## 12. Former Mildura Base Hospital

(137 Thirteenth Street)

Built in 1933-1934 and considered 'modern' in design with the main building a streamlined horizontal linear block incorporating curved glassed in solarium at either end and an interior central Art Deco styled staircase.

## Further Afield in Nearby Towns

**Merbein** (cnr Commercial St & Main Ave)

Formerly built for the Bowring's Department Store in 1936-1937. The building incorporates a distinctive symmetrical composition with its stepped parapet and vertical fins to the façade.



**Red Cliffs** (24-28 Jameson Street)

The Courthouse is 'modern' in design and was built in the 1940's; symmetrical in its block massing it features Art Deco geometric parapet detailing and vertical fins to the façade.

**Ouyen** (17 Oke Street)

The Roxy Theatre was opened as a movie house as the Victory Theatre in 1936. It is thought to be the only tropical-style cinema in southern Australia.

**Dareton** (near Tapio & Neilpo Street)

The former State Bank of NSW, built in 1935, incorporates distinctive Art Deco patterning, with a rounded entrance highlighted by cement pillars

forming a porch and supporting a large curved pediment displaying horizontal and vertical reliefs.

**Wentworth (26 Adelaide Street)**

The 1870's Victorian Style Town Hall was the Mechanics Institute until the late 1880's when the Wentworth Municipal Council utilised the facility as the Town Hall. The building was modernised in 1930's with a double parapet and horizontal relief elements.

**More Information**

This fact sheet is also available as a trifold brochure suitable for school field trips.

For further information please contact Council's Strategic Planning Team on (03) 5018 8419 or email [planning.services@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning.services@mildura.vic.gov.au)

