

Mechanical and Automotive Engineering Trades Building – Sydney Technical College

Address Cnr Wattle and Thomas Streets, Ultimo, NSW, 2007

Practice NSW Government Architects Branch

Designed 1937-1938 Completed 1940

History & Description The master plan included a broad straight interior street giving access to classrooms & laboratories on both sides. Originally to include five staircase towers fronting Wattle Street with a clock tower marking the main entrance to Thomas Street only three-fifths of the scheme was constructed, but remains a most impressive work. Designed by the NSW Government Architects Branch (the Government Architect during this period was Cobden Parkes) with Edward Henry (Harry) Rembert project architect; the building is believed to be the first major work in this style by Rembert.

The brick-clad & concrete-framed two & three-storey building has a central entry off Thomas Street marked with a largely window less four storey square tower. The entrance features chrome columns & marble wall linings & is noted for its simplicity. The flanking rectangular wings have steel framed windows set in continuous strips along the façade which return around the corners. The basic cubic building forms consists of a series of classrooms & training workshops, with light-wells between blocks. Interior materials & finishes are of a high quality. The building's emphasis is on simplicity, austerity & functionalism.

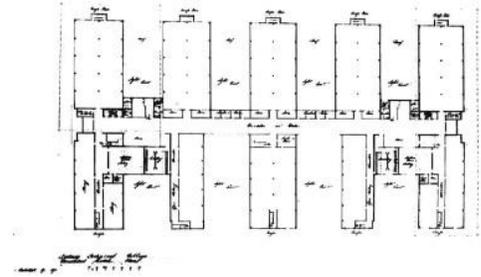
Harry Rembert designed a variety of public buildings including the notable Newcastle Technical College which includes the H. G. Darling Engineering Building, 1940, in the same Inter-War Functionalist style.

Statement of Significance The Mechanical and Automotive Engineering Trades Building is an excellent example of the Inter-War Functionalist style of architecture designed by Harry Rembert of the NSW Government Architects Branch. The building is a well detailed & strong study of the modern movement European design trends with its simple geometric shapes, long horizontal windows & steel framed windows, including corner windows.

Criteria Applicable **N1.** Significant heritage value in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design



Wattle Street elevation.
Source: Scott Robertson, 2007.



Plan.
Source: G P Webber, *E. H. Rembert: The Life and Work of the Sydney Architect 1902-1966*, University of Sydney, 1982, p. 41.



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Corner elevation to Thomas Street
Source: Scott Robertson, 2007.