

## THE GRAND DAME OF MELBOURNE'S SKYLINE TURNS 80



Photograph, John Gollings

www.manchesterunitybuilding.com.au

### RENEWAL AND REJUVENATION ENSURES LONGEVITY

The Manchester Unity Building is a magnificent structure and a monument to human endeavour. It has a special place in the history of Melbourne and the hearts of its citizens, as well as the city's economy, which is why it should be celebrated.

A building of this vintage also requires a great deal of investment for maintenance, preservation and pressing matters other than just simple cosmetic refurbishment. This is where support by local and state governments and even the broader community is crucial. Aspects of the building needing urgent

repair include the faience cladding and the prominent awning that offers protection to the countless Melburnians and tourists frequenting Collins and Swanston streets daily.

When all major works are completed, the building and Melburnians will be ready to celebrate its next milestone.

**Dr Kia Pajouhesh, Managing Director  
Smile Solutions and Chairman,  
Committee of Management MUB**

As a heritage-listed capital city building, Manchester Unity continues to stand out for its architectural excellence, unique design, artistic influences, and quality workmanship.

During its milestone anniversary year, the building welcomes and introduces its own Patron – Mr Barry Humphries AO, CBE.

Posthumous congratulations are extended to a group of men who dared to dream that grandness was possible during the Depression of 1932.

#### MUIOOF Building Committee Members

|                          |                                |                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| A.S. Harris              | C.W. Lettroy                   | C.J. Kirkby    |
| T. Millar                | W.J.K. Pomroy                  | W. H. Best     |
| W. West                  | F.D. Winslow                   | J. J. Robinson |
| S.W.H. Pearson           | F.W. Pettingill                |                |
| Architect: Marcus Barlow | Builder: W.E. Cooper Pty. Ltd. |                |

### A CALL OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

If you were related to or acquainted with any of the gents listed above, or hold any memorabilia, the Friends of Manchester Unity Building (FOMUB) would like to hear from you.

A commemorative publication *Memories of Manchester Unity, Melbourne's Building* is proposed. Much more is needed to be known about the people who were directly involved in its construction, including the tireless tradesmen.

If you would like to become a 'friend' of the building, your membership will support the rejuvenation project. In his capacity as Patron, Mr Barry Humphries will acknowledge all gifts with a special Certificate of Appreciation.

For information and/or enquiries please contact –  
Sandra Makris  
Friends of Manchester Unity Building  
Phone: 0427 888 258 or Email: info@buildingbusiness.com.au

## DECORATIVE PANELS ADORN THE INTERIOR OF MANCHESTER UNITY BUILDING



Courtesy, Graeme Rudd

A wonderful feature of the Manchester Unity building is the series of friezes and panels. Collectively they depict scenes associated with the history of Victoria, the values of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows (MUIOOF) and the construction of the building.

In the foyer, plaster friezes depict scenes of pastoral Victoria. Miners, squatters, tree-fellers and Aboriginal tribesmen are all going about their business, whilst the corners feature some wonderful sunbursts. Adorning the walls are black marble panels dedicated to the activities, services and values of the Order. The illustrations, which include neo-Greco male bodies with strategically placed fig-leaves, depict scenes that emphasize family life. Above the escalator, more marble panels highlight sports played in Victoria as well as industrial, construction and transport scenes.

Plaster friezes can also be found in the corridors of all the floors above. Some repeat the pastoral scenes from the foyer; others feature draped female

figures against backgrounds dedicated to transport. The boardroom on the 11th floor includes another range of friezes at the top of the wall, whilst the ceiling is adorned with a large panel emphasising family life and Masonic symbolism.

Little has been written about these wonderful decorative panels. We don't know who the artist was or their manufacturer. ADMS has now launched a project to photograph each panel and to discover their history.

**Robin Grow, President Art Deco & Modernism Society (ADMS)**  
www.artdeco.org.au



Courtesy, David Thompson