

Local Heritage Register: Comino's Store



Comino's Store, ca1940, Copyright Mackay Regional Council Library image qmc01959

Building Name :	Comino's Store
Street Address:	14-20 Sydney Street
Property Description :	Lot 1 and 2 on RP706803
Land Area:	2 x 431m ²

Description

Comino's Store is an integral part of Mackay's history. The building has survived and the Comino family have traded on that side of Sydney Street for over 100 years.

Once the offices of the Queensland National Bank, the north shop has been occupied since the 1930s by Comino Drapers. The window display and interior faithfully reflects this long occupation.

Peter Comino arrived in Mackay during 1904 and at first worked cutting cane. He opened the Sydney Oyster Saloon further south in Sydney Street the following year. He and his family of eight children were prominent in the town and eventually he

opened a working mans store and drapers at this address.

Tenants

The northern tenancy has had few occupants over time:

- Queensland National Bank from 1890 until ca 1910
- Husband Motors from late 1910s to late 1920s
- Greddens frock shop until 1933; and
- Cominos drapers since then

The southern tenancy is more uncertain, and in recent times has been vacant. Tenants include:

- T.C. Bernie & Co. early 1900s
- Peoples Cash Store early 1920s
- George Grant Invicta Cycles Mackay Bike Depot in 1927

- Mackay Fish Market in 1935

After this time the store was split into two and the tenant records are unclear but include Rockmans and a jeweller. The site was owned by the King family for many years until Mrs. King's death and sale to the Comino family in 2002.

The Building

The building contains two symmetric shop fronts. The builder is probably D. Shepherd to the design of John Dow. The shops were subdivided in 1927. Interestingly, the coach house to rear remains across the boundary!

The northern shop is tiled in glossy black tiles. The window has a raised floor and is formed with chromed brass sections. A ramp leads into the shop, ending in a white marble step.

Clerestory glazing running above the window head is original. One outer masonry pier still contains a rectangular terra-cotta floral panel in high relief.

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The awning is original in corrugated iron, supported with four octagonal timber posts and lined on the rake with fibro. Above the awning is a deep, false front, generally plain apart from two wide moulded ledges. A pilaster is engaged at each end and another is placed in the centre.

Central over each shop front is a raised parapet, each bearing a high relief garland motif and the date '1890'. The top line consists of pilasters bearing urns, joined by a balustrade. The parapeted elements are topped by masonry balls. It is one of the last timber structures with timber awning and footpath posts.



The rear of the properties. The old coach-house building straddles the boundary. 2016, Mackay Regional Council

Statement of Historical Significance

Criteria	Significance
A: Historical significance	Constructed in the late 19th century it forms one of the few surviving links with the Streetscape of the 1890s and is important in demonstrating the development of the Mackay region from the 19th century to the present day.
B: All aspects of heritage significance	Does not meet this criterion.
C: Scientific significance	Remains of an early coach house/stables has potential to yield information which will contribute to the history and development of Mackay.
D: Architectural significance	Does not meet this criterion.
E: Aesthetic / architectural significance	The original façade of the building above the awning is largely intact and is important in contributing to the streetscape values of Sydney Street.
F: Aesthetic or other significance	Does not meet this criterion.
G: Social significance	Does not meet this criterion.
H: Historical significance	The place has a special association with the Comino family who have conducted business in the Street for over a century.

References:

- Daily Mercury, 31 July 1909 p.8 ; and 9 November 1912, p.3;
- Woods, R., 1995, '*Heritage Places Criteria*', Mackay City Council
- Land Title and Survey plan documents.
- Comino, V., 2016, pers. communication
- Osborne, P., 2010, '*Historical Chronology, P. Comino & Sons*', Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (provided by V. Comino)

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