

Restoration of an

When restoration and heritage create and support the past and present

TIME WEATHERS ALL

Dating back to the 1930s sign writers were traveling the country sign writing their hearts out ... great job. Time takes its toll. Yes, there is only one original, but as building use changes so does the acknowledgement between restoration and practical living needs.

When building owner Joshua Hodge was restoring his heritage shop into his family home, he was confronted with a waterproofing issue. The exposed wall was acting like a sponge in bad weather. After prudent negotiation with local authorities and considering the heritage value of the building, Joshua knew what was needed to solve the problem.

The Carrington area in Newcastle is steeped history that goes back to the building of the city. It was a foundation for engineering, ship building and is probably the heart and soul of 'Newy' as it's locally called. To maintain the historical importance of the site Joshua contacted Mick

George of MG Signs, Cardiff who is well known for his passion and traditional sign skills and modern techniques.

Mick is well respected for his love of old signs, gold leaf, handcrafted signs and all things signage. Mick's had considerable experience in restoration of old signs including the local Morpeth Indian Root Pills Barn project, Billy Tea in Holbrook and The Lan Choo Tea wall in Chiswick and The Tall Ship James Craig over the last decade.

As the photos show Mick completed the projected restoring the original sign to its former glory.

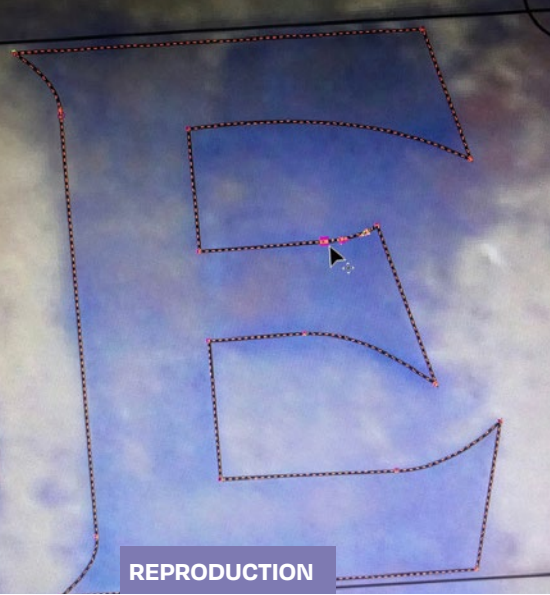
Iconic Sign

Article and Images by Mick George and John Hadfield – www.mgsigns.com.au



RESEARCH

The building owner Joshua, the Authorities and Mick from MG signs all desired the result to replicate the original visual appearance, methodology and traditional techniques whilst integrating compliant WHS and modern surface coatings. Developed from precise photography, converted to electronic file the layout was created. A fun note, to keep the project accurate all three 'Es' has variations from the originators and that was honoured.



REPRODUCTION

The traditional scale drawing converted to a pounce being the logical option to replicate. This respects the original sign writers and their likely use of hand mark-outs. The aim was to capture their work not replace with them with modern fonts.



COATINGS KNOWLEDGE

As many will recognise the luxury of off the shelf paint in the 30's was not commonplace. Mick worked with 3rd generation Michael Vipond from Australian paint and coatings specialist for guidance and input – www.viponds.com.au. Viponds supplied all the paint including the White, Yellow, Ultramarine and Silver paste to make the specialised applications accurate and long life.



FINAL TOUCHES

The wall sign added to the building in approaching its final glory as Mick George and Warwick Gamble enjoyed warm spring days and wonderful memories of the old timers who sign-wrote the original wall looking down from Heaven with pride.

FULL SCALE FOR ACCURACY



The use of a full-scale drawing then pounce gave authenticity and homage to the originators of the sign work.

TRADITIONAL SKILLS



The buzz word of authenticity is common place nowadays, however for the practitioners who grew up with a brush in hand they are more likely to call it "bloody good fun".



LOCATION

With the assistance of a local old building, its height and location offered a birds eye view. No modern drones here, I have to give it to Mick to maintain the restoration theme all the way!

RENEWED LIFE

Life imitates art. Who would have known such signs have earned the status of such a link to our past. Finishing on a fun note local folk law suggest that the text, "for the liver" was included in this location as Carrington was known for its many local pubs! Not unlike modern day social media which drives business by its algorithms?

REVERSE SIGNWRITING



The onsite work followed the time honoured method offering a uniform waterproof barrier while reinstating the original technique of 'cutting in reverse' which sharpens corners and serifs providing a crisp and legible sign.

