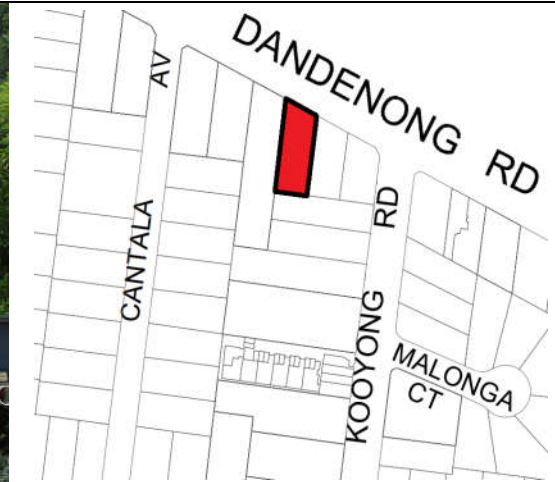


<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	N/A
<b>Other name/s</b>	Lind House (former)	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 K9
<b>Address</b>	450 Dandenong Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1954-55
<b>Designer/s</b>	Anatol Kagan & Associates	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd



Location map and proposed extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent (very few changes)
<b>Significance</b>	Local (potentially state, as a notably intact example of Kagan's domestic work)		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as individual heritage place		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Paint Controls	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration Controls	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Controls

## History

The house at 450 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North was erected in 1954-55 for émigré textile manufacturer Leo Lind and his wife Dorothy, to a design by Russian-born architect Anatol Kagan.

The son of a flour mill owner, Leo Lind (*ne* Jehuda Lajb Lindwaser) was born in Poland on 12 October in either 1908 or 1912 (sources differ). The youngest of thirteen children, he was the only one to survive the Holocaust. He was still living in Warsaw when, on 17 March 1938, he married Dwojra (Devorah) Eizenberg (1919-1983). Nearly a decade passed before the couple migrated to Australia. They flew in to Sydney on 8 March 1947 and moved thence to Melbourne, where they had already secured accommodation at *El Sonia*, a block of flats in Palm Court, St Kilda East. They would reside there for the next seven years.

Upon arrival in Australia in early 1947, Lindwaser gave his occupation as 'merchant'. By the end of that year, he and his wife had started their own business in Melbourne, the L Z Trading Company, working from their private address in St Kilda East. Within a few years, the couple had entered into partnership with two fellow émigrés to establish Lind's Trading Company, manufacturers and importers, with city premises at 6a Elizabeth Street. In 1952, having resided in Australia for the requisite five years, the Lindwasers applied for naturalisation and duly anglicised their names to become Leo and Dorothy Lind. During the 1950s, their business interests broadened with the establishment of a textile manufacturing firm, Lind's Textile Ltd, latterly operating from Flinders Lane, the heartland of Melbourne's Rag Trade.

By this time, the Linds had two young daughters, Margaret and Naomi. Still residing in the *El Sonia* flats, the growing family clearly felt the need of a larger residence. To that effect, the couple acquired a block of vacant land on the south side of Dandenong Road in Caulfield North. According to the Certificate of Title, ownership of this site was transferred to Leo and Dorothy Lind on 27 April 1954 (COT V8079/F463).

It has not known how Leo and Dorothy Lind came to engage Anatol Kagan as their architect, although it is likely that they were aware of his reputation as one of the most sought-after architects to Melbourne's post-war Jewish community. Born in St Petersburg, Kagan (1913-2009) was the only son of Russian intelligentsia who were exiled by Lenin's regime in 1922. The family moved to Berlin, where Kagan completed his architectural studies before fleeing to England in 1938 to escape persecution by the Nazis. After a brief stint working for a Swiss-born modernist architect in London, Kagan and his wife migrated to Australia, settling in Melbourne in early 1939. He spent the next few years gaining experience in the office of several leading architectural firms and the Department of Works & Housing, while also undertaking a few private commissions. However, it was not until 1949 that he was able to fully establish himself in sole practice as Anatol Kagan & Associates. For the next decade, his business boomed. Although he designed factories, kindergartens and even a war memorial, it was high-end residential work that formed the mainstay of his Melbourne practice. Many of these houses were commissioned by wealthy clients who, like Leo Lind, were self-made émigré businessmen and who, like Lind and even Kagan himself, had fled Europe in the late 1930s to seek a new life in Australia. Kagan's Melbourne practice effectively ended in 1961, when the architect moved to Sydney to take up an architectural position in the Department of Public Works.

While the book *Gentle Modernist* nominally dated the Lind House as 'circa 1956', further research confirms that it was actually finished slightly earlier and its date can now be more accurately cited as 1954-55. The City of Caulfield Rate Book for 1955-56 (dated 29 November 1955) records that the house was already completed by that time. Then addressed as 62 Dandenong Road, the property was rated as an eight-roomed brick house with a Net Annual Value of £230, owned and occupied by Leo and Dorothy Lind. A pencilled note, stating "brick dwelling, £11,000, 20/12/54", presumably refers to the project cost and date of building permit. The MMBW property service plan for the house, which would have been prepared following the final inspection, is dated March 1957.

Although not published at the time, the completed house attracted public attention due to its large scale, unusual form and its prominent siting on one of Melbourne's major thoroughfares. Not long after it was finished, Leo Lind was approached by one passerby who was thinking about building a house for himself. A plumber from Wangaratta, Spencely Ross happened to drive past Lind's house during a visit to Melbourne and, impressed by its design, knocked on the door to enquire as to the name of the designer. After being told that it was Kagan, Ross immediately drove to the architect's office, then located in nearby St Kilda Road, and engaged Kagan to design his new house at Wangaratta, which was completed in 1960.

The Lind House remained in the family's ownership for nearly four decades. Dorothy and Leo were still there at the time of their deaths in the early 1980s (respectively on 23 August 1983 and 13 May 1984). As Leon's wife predeceased him, ownership of the Caulfield North house was temporarily vested in the executor of his estate until 1991, when it passed to their eldest daughter Margaret (by then Mrs Ulli Katz). After leaving the ownership of the Lind family in 1992, the house was occupied by another couple until 2006. When it came up for sale that year, the house was praised by veteran mid-century architect Neil Clerehan in his *Melbourne Weekly* property column, including an allusion to its status as a roadside landmark:

A gem from the 1950s... it has been viewed by millions of motorists speeding to Cairns or Melbourne because of its position... It presents a momentary, perfectly framed view to even the most conscientious driver. On completion, it would have been admired for its bold asymmetry, dramatic fenestration, black and white boarding and stone feature wall. It would have been accepted as a splendid example of the ruling Contemporary style.

Clerehan also commented on the property's notable level of physical intactness. This would be carefully maintained by its next owner, reported to be a "fashion designer who kept it in its original condition during her time living there." (*Weekly Times*, 05/07/2017). The property changed hands again in 2016.

## Description

The house at 450 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, is a double-storey butterfly-roofed modernist house of cream brick construction. Typifying what has been described as Kagan's 'upside down house' approach, the principal living areas are at the upper level while the lower level forms an undercroft, garage and entry foyer. When the house is seen from the street, the taller and more embellished upper level thus dominates over the lower and simpler ground floor level. This façade is double-fronted and asymmetrical, with a projecting bay to the left (east) side that incorporates a narrow garage at street level with a projecting balcony above. To the right, the recessed portion of the façade (approximately two-third of the total width) a full-height window wall at the upper level and an undercroft at the lower level, supported in white metal poles.

The street façade exhibits a range of details and finishes typical of Kagan's best work. The cream brick is enlivened by random stone cladding to the undercroft and a feature wall along the inner side of the projecting bay. The window wall has a geometric pattern of fixed and operable white-painted timber sashes, with lower spandrels of blue-tinted glass. The main entry, inside the undercroft, has a blue-painted door beside a pair of full-height windows revealing the floating staircase within. The wide eaves of the butterfly roof have exposed rafters, gently tapering and painted in a dark tone to contrast with the pale-coloured eaves lining. The spandrel between eaves and window heads has an unusual finish of vertical timber boards in a black and white colour scheme with a row of circular vents. The solid balustrade to the balcony is similarly treated.

Much of this detailing is echoed on the east elevation of the house, which can be glimpsed from the street. Windows are similarly expressed with white-painted timber sashes, blue glass spandrels and the vertical panelled bay under the eaves. The distinctive profile of the butterfly roof, with central box gutter to the rear, is also strongly evident when the house is seen from this angle. The rear elevation, which is not visible from the street, is known to incorporate a large sun terrace at the upper level, shielded by a timber egg-crate pergola on metal pipe columns, with vertical louvred screen wall to one side.

The modernist character of the house is enhanced by its front garden, which includes palm trees, succulents, cacti, strelitzia and other plantings that, even if not actually original, are all highly evocative of the 1950s. The concrete paving to the front porch, the low front wall (of random coursed stonework) and the letterbox (in the form of a skillion-roofed box mounted on hairpin-like metal rods) are all original; Kagan is known to have used letterboxes of similar form in several of his other houses.

While an internal inspection has not been made, photographs accompanying real estate listings from the most recent sale reveal the interiors of main rooms to be notably intact. Kagan's best houses were characterised by high-quality bespoke joinery such as panelling, screens, stair balustrades and built-in furniture. The Lind House has parquetry floors (inlaid to delineate a panelled basketweave pattern), feature walls of vertical timber strips, recessed shelving, and, notably, a built-in unit with mirror-backed cocktail cabinet, downlights and fold-out radiogram. Also of note are the upholstered doors and the floating staircase, with wedge-shaped timber treads and continuous metal rod balustrade.

### Comparative Analysis

Kagan was a prolific architect at the peak of his practice in the 1950s, but the later loss of his office records means that a definitive list of his buildings may never exist. By Kagan's own admission, he designed 'more than 300 projects' over eleven years of his Melbourne practice, yet research for the book *Gentle Modernist* identified only eighty. Some new projects have since come to light; more will inevitably follow. As such, it cannot be categorically stated how many Kagan-designed buildings may have been built in what is now the City of Glen Eira. While it is well known that the architect received many commissions from Melbourne's émigré community, research to date has identified only three Kagan houses in Caulfield, a suburb that (with St Kilda East, Elwood and Elsternwick) formed the community's heartland. Dating from 1954-55, the Lind House is the earliest of the three. It was followed by the Arnott House at 380 Glen Eira Road (c1958) and the Rose House at 21 Waiora Road (1959-60). The former is still standing but has a second storey addition; it is otherwise relatively intact externally and also internally. However, it is a much less striking design, indicative of the more pared-back style that Kagan adopted in his later years. The Rose House, apparently designed in association with fellow émigré Dr Ernest Fooks (or perhaps even built to an entirely new Fooks design after Kagan moved to Sydney in 1960) has long since been demolished.

More broadly, Kagan's output in the Caulfield area can be compared to that of other European-trained émigré architects who were professionally active therein. During the 1950s and '60s, the two such individuals most prolific in Caulfield and environs were Czech-born Dr Ernest Fooks (1906-1985) and Austrian-born Kurt Popper (1910-2008), each of whom undertook at least two dozen projects in Caulfield alone. Both, notably, were local residents, and lived in houses of their own design: Popper at 63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick (built 1956) and Fooks at 32 Howitt Street, Caulfield North (built 1966; recently added to the *Victorian Heritage Register*). Other émigré architects known to have designed at least one building in Caulfield in the 1950s and '60s include Mordechai Benshemesh, Michael Feldhagen, Oscar Gimesy, Harry Hershberg, Erwin Kaldor, Robert Rosh and Bernard Slawik (another local resident; designer of at least four houses). From the mid-1960s until the early 1990s, the émigré architects most active in the Caulfield area were probably the Polish-born husband-and-wife team of John & Helen Holgar, who designed at least a dozen houses therein.

It can thus be concluded that the Lind House is the finest, most prominently sited and most intact (both internally and externally) of the few buildings that leading architect Anatol Kagan is currently known to have designed within what is now the City of Glen Eira. The house is potentially of state significance as one of the most intact remaining examples of Kagan's high-end domestic work in Melbourne or even Victoria.

### Statement of Significance

#### *What is significant?*

Built in 1954-55 to a design by Anatol Kagan, the former Lind House at 450 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, is a large double-storey cream brick house in the Modernist style, with broad-eaved butterfly roof and an asymmetrical double-fronted façade that incorporates feature stone cladding, a recessed undercroft, a balcony (and eaves spandrels) with vertical timber boarding, and an expansive window wall with white-painted sash windows and blue glass spandrels.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire house, the stone wall along the street boundary and the letterbox. The front garden landscaping, which includes cacti, succulents, palm trees and strelitzia, provides an appropriate and evocative setting and (even if not entirely original) should be retained.

The interior is deemed to be significant to the extent original fittings and finishes in the living room, study, stair lobby, powder room (off stair landing), master bedroom and walk-in robe. The significant fabric in these spaces is deemed to include parquetry flooring, wall panelling, floating staircase (including balustrade and rock garden), built-in furniture (including recessed shelving, mirror cocktail cabinet with radiogram, bedside tables, dressing tables and wardrobe storage), upholstered sliding door (between living room and study), glass sliding doors (between hall and living room, and living room and meals area), and timber-framed glazed partition (between upstairs landing and powder room). The interiors of the kitchen, meal area, bathrooms, laundry and secondary bedrooms are not deemed to be of significance.

#### *How is it significant?*

The former Lind House satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics
- Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person of importance in our history

#### *Why is it significant?*

The former Lind House is significant for the following reasons:

This house is significant as a notable (and notably intact) example of modern residential architecture of the 1950s, and specifically the distinctive sub-style associated with émigré architects who were born, qualified as architects and often practiced in Europe before settling here. This house displays many of the key motifs associated with European Modernism, such as its broad-eaved butterfly roof, window walls and feature stone cladding, as well as its articulation as an 'upside down house' (ie, principal rooms to an emphasised upper level and service areas/undercroft to an understated lower level), creating the effect of an elevated volume. The house also exhibits more unusual detailing and finishes such as the blue glass windows spandrels, the black-and-white vertical timber boarding along the eaves line and front balcony, and interiors with floating staircase and extensive bespoke panelling, joinery and built-in furniture. Prominently sited on a major Melbourne thoroughfare, this large and distinctly eye-catching dwelling has a billboard-like quality, forming a landmark in the suburban landscape, enhanced by its high level of physical intactness. (*Criterion E*).

The house is significant as an exceptional example of the residential work of Russian-born and German-trained Anatol Kagan, one of Melbourne's leading émigré architects of the 1950s. Keenly sought-after by members of Melbourne's post-war migrant community, Kagan made his name as a designer of large and well-appointed houses for wealthy businessmen. The house, which typifies Kagan's approach to such high-end projects, is not only the best remaining example of his work in Caulfield (and the City of Glen Eira), but also one of his finest, most intact and most prominently-sited surviving houses in Melbourne. While Kagan seems to have designed few houses in Caulfield, evidence of his presence there forms part of a broader and highly significant local theme of émigré architects (eg Ernest Fooks, Kurt Popper and Bernard Slawik) who made an important contribution to the re-shaping of Caulfield in the post-war era. (*Criterion H*).

## References

MMBW Property Service Plan No 276526, dated 5 March 1957. Held by South West Water.

Neil Clerehan, 'Elevated living', *Melbourne Weekly*, 19 April 2006.

Simon Reeves, *Gentle Modernist: The Nine Lives of Anatol Kagan* (Fremantle: Vivid Publishing, 2014)

## Originally identified by

City of Glen Eira (research and assessment by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, 7 Jul 2017; revised Dec 2017)

## Additional images

Vintage photographs from the Anatol Kagan Collection, now held by the RMIT Design Archives



Additional photographs taken by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, dated 2011



Photographs accompany online real estate listing, 2016  
(Archived at <http://modernistaustralia.com/2016/04/450-dandenong-rd-caulfield-north-vic>)

