

# **CITY OF GLEN EIRA POST-WAR & HIDDEN GEMS HERITAGE REVIEW 2020 STAGE TWO: CITATIONS**



**Prepared for**

**The City of Glen Eira**

**Adopted by Council on 11 August 2020**

(Post-Panel changes adopted 23 November 2021 highlighted in red)



**HERITAGE PTY LTD**  
ACN 124 908 115

architectural historians  
heritage consultants

**TWENTIETH CENTURY SPECIALISTS**

PO Box 222 Emerald 3782  
phone 9018 9311

[www.builtheritage.com.au](http://www.builtheritage.com.au)



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# A: INTRODUCTION

## A1 BACKGROUND & BRIEF

In early 2019, the City of Glen Eira commissioned a major heritage review, to be made up of three stand-alone components. The second of these, designated as Project Two but informally known as the *Post-War and Hidden Gems Review*. This review sought to identify and protect some of Glen Eira's most outstanding heritage sites within the municipality, including underrepresented architectural building styles and periods. This project was divided into two tasks:

- To compile a list of post-WW2 places of potential heritage significance, relying principally on desktop research, as well as places nominated by others (including Council staff, the Glen Eira Historical Society, and member of the public)
- To review an existing list of pre-WW2 places of potential heritage significance, nicknamed the "Hidden Gems", which had been nominated by Council staff, the Glen Eira Historical Society and members of the public

The places on these respective lists were to be subject to basic fieldwork, coupled with preliminary historical research and comparative analysis, to establish which represented the most worthy candidates for further and more rigorous assessment, with a view to applying a heritage overlay.

The budget for Stage One of the project allowed for a brief preliminary datasheet (referred to as an Outline Citation) to be prepared for the top fifty post-WW2 places, and top fifty "Hidden Gems". From this combined total of one hundred places, the budget allowed for fifty individual sites to be selected for more rigorous assessment in the form of full-length heritage citations. These full-length citations, with a complete history, description, comparative analysis and Statement of Significance, would be completed as Stage Two of the project.

## A2 AUTHORSHIP

This review was undertaken by Simon Reeves, director and principal of Built Heritage Pty Ltd.

## A3 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The consultants would like to thank the following for their assistance with this project:

Ms Felicity Watson	<i>Advocacy Manager, National Trust of Australia (Victoria)</i>
Mr Tony Lee	<i>Founding Executive Director, Robin Boyd Foundation</i>
Ms Barbara Hoad	<i>President, Glen Eira Historical Society, Inc</i>
Ms Anne Kirkpatrick	<i>Vice President, Glen Eira Historical Society, Inc</i>
Mr Robin Grow	<i>President, Art Deco &amp; Modernism Society, Inc</i>
Professor Alan Pert	<i>Director, Melbourne School of Design, University of Melbourne</i>

We would also like to thank architects Leon Fink and Tony Styant-Browne for generously sharing their recollections of architectural projects that they undertook so many years ago.



## B: METHODOLOGY

### B1 STAGE ONE

#### PRE-WW2 PLACES (“HIDDEN GEMS”)

“Hidden Gems” was the term adopted by the City of Glen Eira to refer to a working list of places of potential heritage significance erected prior to 1945, which had variously been nominated by Council staff, the Glen Eira Historical Society, property owners, and members of the public. Some of the Hidden Gems had been previously been identified in Andrew Ward’s *City of Glen Eira Heritage Management Plan* (1996), either with an existing citation that did not result in a heritage overlay being applied, or as a C-graded place for which a citation had not yet been prepared.

The original Hidden Gems document consisted of 53 places (or groups of places) as follows. They are listed here in the original order (ie, alphabetical by suburb rather than street name), with the dates that were provided.

- House, 14 Atkinson Street, Bentleigh (1890)
- House, 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh (1885)
- Houses, 195-197 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield (1939)
- House (*Oak Tree House*) and oak tree, 258 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield (no date)
- Shops, 969-985 Glenhuntly Road, (no date)
- House, 438 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield (1928)
- House, 488 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield (1914)
- House, 1 Lockhart Street, Caulfield (1930)
- House, 176 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North (1933)
- House, 83 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (1933)
- Flats, 561-575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North (no date)
- House, 576 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North (1880)
- House, 91 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North (1923)
- House, 19 Waiora Road, Caulfield North (1915)
- House, 4 Findon Avenue, Caulfield North (1941)
- House, 284 Orrong Road, Caulfield North (1917)
- Houses (group), Grimwade Court, Caulfield North (1930s)
- House and tree, 80 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North (1914)
- House, 58 Norwood Road, Caulfield North (1900)
- Flats, 273 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (1934)
- Flats, 213 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (1926)
- House, 259 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North (1918)
- House, 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1914)
- Flats, 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1940)
- Shops, 158-160 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North (1936)
- Shops, 162-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North (1930)
- House, 69 Howitt Road, Caulfield North (1919)
- House, 11 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North (1917)
- House, 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North (1917)
- Duplexes, 5-7 Linlithgow Avenue, Caulfield North (1938)
- House, 44 Narong Road, Caulfield North (1908)

- Houses (group), Calista Court, Elsternwick (1930s)
- House, 48 Hartigan Street, Elsternwick (1895)
- House, 54 Hartigan Street, Elsternwick (1895)
- House, 24 Parkside Street, Elsternwick (1915)
- House, 2 Malacca Street, McKinnon (1928)
- House, 475 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1880)
- Houses (group), 1-18 Wahroonga Crescent, Murrumbeena (1920s/30s)
- House, 23 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena (1918)
- House, 29 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena (1918)
- House, 526 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1915)
- House, 532 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1910)
- Shop, 430-432 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (no date)
- House, 23 Weeroona Road, Murrumbeena (1927)
- House, 533 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1935)
- House, 30 Carlyon Street, Ormond (1890)
- House, 51 Carlyon Street, Ormond (1890)
- House, 261 Grange Road, Ormond (1900)
- Caulfield Grammar School (St Kilda East Campus), 217 Glen Eira Road, St Kilda East (no date)
- Flats, 78 Hotham Street, St Kilda East (1910)
- Flats, 1-7 Lockerbie Court, St Kilda East (1936-37)
- House, 219 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (1922)
- House, 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East (1923)

The original list of 53 properties subsequently increased with three further nominations:

- Duplex, 325/325A Bambra Road, Caulfield South – *assumed post WW2 but since dated as 1940*
- Shops, 476-486 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (no date)
- Shop (*Wardrop's Building*), 77-79 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1921)

As the first stage in the filtering process, this list of 56 places was reviewed to eliminate those places for which, at face value, there appeared to be no compelling basis for local significance. These were mostly places that were demonstrably generic (ie, merely representative examples of their type and era, rather than especially notable ones), plus one other place that had been considerably altered since it was initially identified. In addition, a group of houses in Wahroonga Crescent was excluded because it was considered that the historic associations of one house (since demolished) was not sufficient justification for a heritage overlay across the contemporaneous dwellings that survived in the same street. Ultimately, the following **nine** places were eliminated from further consideration:

- Shops, 969-985 Glenhuntly Road, (no date) – *representative example only*
- House, 284 Orrong Road, Caulfield North (1917) – *representative example only*
- House, 48 Hartigan Street, Elsternwick (1895) – *representative example only*
- House, 54 Hartigan Street, Elsternwick (1895) – *representative example only*
- House, 2 Malacca Street, McKinnon (1928) – *representative example only*
- Houses (group), 1-18 Wahroonga Crescent, Murrumbeena (1920s/30s) – *HO not appropriate*
- House, 23 Weeroona Road, Murrumbeena (1927) – *representative example only*
- House, 533 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1935) – *representative example only*
- House, 219 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (1922) – *much altered since it was first nominated*

With this filtering process reducing the Hidden Gems list from 56 to 47 entries, it was necessary to identify a few additional places to bring the total back to fifty, which was the total number of Hidden Gems properties for which outline citations were to be prepared. The consultants duly nominated three additional places as follows:

- House, 474 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield South (1939)
- House, 10 Findon Avenue, Caulfield North (1939)
- House, 12 Findon Avenue, Caulfield North (1939-40)

Outline citations for these fifty properties were duly prepared and formed part of a draft report that was submitted to Council on 2 August 2019.

## POST-WW2 PLACES

The task of identifying post-WW2 places of potential significance was intended to be primarily a desktop exercise. The following consolidates the chief sources that were reviewed:

- The consultant's own in-house database of post-WW2 Australian architecture (approximately 300+ references to places in what is now the City of Glen Eira)
- A list of places identified by the Glen Eira Historical Society (approximately 10 places), as well as an unprioritised list of local buildings by architect Ernest Fooks (approximately 70 places)
- A list of places in Elsternwick and Bentleigh, identified during windscreen survey undertaken by RBA Architects as part of Project One of the same heritage review (approximately 40 places)
- A list of houses included (or shortlisted for inclusion) in the 2001 exhibition *Notable & Modern: Post-War Domestic Architecture in the City of Glen Eira*. (approximately 25 places)
- A list of places in the City of Glen Eira identified as being of potential state significance, in Heritage Alliance's *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria: Stage One* (2008) (nine places)
- A list of houses in the City of Glen Eira designed by European émigré architects (focusing on Ernest Fooks, Kurt Popper and Holgar & Holgar), compiled by Professor Alan Pert of the Melbourne School of Design, University of Melbourne (approximately 300 places, with higher priorities designated as a Top 10 and a Top 25)
- Miscellaneous nominations by Council staff, members of the public, etc (approx ten places)

The consultants sought further nominations by making contact with the following representatives of other stakeholder groups. Only a very small number of nominations was forthcoming.

- Mr Tony Lee (founder of the Robin Boyd Foundation)
- Ms Felicity Watson (National Trust of Australia, Victoria)
- Mr Robin Grow (President, Art Deco & Modernism Society, Inc)

When the places identified in these sources were consulted, a certain amount of overlap became evident (ie, a single place may have been identified in two, three or even more of the sources). However, it was necessarily for the Masterlist of places to be further filtered in an attempt to identify what might be considered the highest priorities for further assessment. The following broad criteria were also used to assist in the filtering process:

- Places that represented notable works by notable architects (including architect's own houses)
- Places that had generated press coverage (eg articles in magazines and/or newspapers)
- Places that had won architectural awards or other plaudits
- Places that, even at face value, appeared to be above average in a local context
- Places that were deemed to be more vulnerable to demolition or redevelopment (with single detached dwellings, for example, considered more vulnerable than blocks of flats, and privately-owned property more vulnerable than council-owned properties).

Generally speaking, precedence was given to those properties for which architectural attributions had already been confirmed, and for which contemporary write-ups (such as newspaper and magazine articles) had already been located. A number of post-WW2 places that had been nominated by others were eliminated from further consideration because they were deemed, at face value, to be only representative examples rather than particularly exceptional ones. The Carnegie Swimming Pool (1962), while technically rare in a typological sense, was deemed to be of limited architectural significance, and thus eliminated from further consideration.

In shortlisting the top fifty post-WW2 places for which Outline Citations would be prepared, efforts were made to ensure that there was a varied representation of building types (eg residential vs non-residential), historical eras (spanning the late 1940s to the mid-1990s) and especially geographic locations within the City of Glen Eira.

Outline citations for these fifty properties were duly prepared and formed part of a draft report that was submitted to Council on 2 August 2019.

## CREATING A PRIORITY LISTING FOR CITATIONS

The consultants determined a priority list for inclusion in the Top 50 list based on:

- Potential for local heritage significance (low, medium or high); and
- Perceived threat of demolition (low, medium or high).

Of the fifty pre-WW2 places (or small precincts), fourteen were designated as being high priority, thirty-one as medium priority, and the remaining four as low priority. In cumulative terms, this meant that the overwhelming majority of the Hidden Gems (specifically, 95% of them) appeared, at face value, likely to meet the threshold for heritage significance at the local level.

Of the fifty post-WW2 places (or small precincts), twenty places were designated as being high priority, twenty-two as medium priority, and the remaining eight as low priorities. This corresponded to 84% of the places being very likely to reach the threshold for local significance.

In specific relation to the post-WW2 places that were identified through desktop research and partially assessed in the form of Outline Citations, the following statistics could be tabulated regarding the representation of places in terms of geographic location, typology and date:

Suburbs		Typologies		Eras (1945-1990)	
Bentleigh	3 places	Houses	28 places	1945-1949	2 places
Bentleigh East	4 places	Flats	11 places	1950-1959	10 places
Caulfield	2 places	Churches	3 places	1960-1969	26 places
Caulfield North	23 places	Synagogues	2 places	1970-1979	10 places
Caulfield South	4 places	Community facilities	2 places	1980-1989	2 places
Elsternwick	3 places	Commercial/retail	2 places		
Glenhuntly	1 place	Medical	1 place		
McKinnon	2 places				
Murrumbeena	1 place				
Ormond	1 place				
St Kilda East	6 places				

The data in these tables indicates that, while every effort was made to identify places across the entire municipality, covering a range of building typologies as well as historical eras, the fact remains that Caulfield North was the epicentre for important architect-designed buildings during the second half of the twentieth century. Amongst places of potential significance, the single detached house was the typology that was by far the most represented, while examples from the 1960s considerably outweighed those from the previous and subsequent decades.



## B2 STAGE TWO

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FULL CITATIONS

Though, at face value, a high percentage of the 100 properties provided with Outline Citations were considered likely to meet the threshold for local heritage significance, the budget for this next stage of the project only allowed for 50 full citations to be prepared. Places that did not make the final list for full citations are therefore not necessarily considered unworthy of a heritage overlay. Council can continue to monitor these sites and prepare full citations at a later date.

The consultant recommended that full citations be prepared for the fourteen pre-WW2 places and twenty post-WW2 places respectively designated as high priorities (ie, a combined total of 34 places). In order to complete the remaining sixteen full citations allocated under the current budget, places in both lists that were flagged as a medium priority have been further reviewed to determine which may represent a higher priority ("medium/high").

### Top 50 Places for Full Citations (as at 2 August 2019)

HIGH PRIORITY	
Pre-WW2 (Hidden Gems)	Post-WW2 places
House, 91 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North	House, 30 Aroona Road, Caulfield North
House, 30 Carlyon Street, Ormond	House, 47 Aroona Road, Caulfield North
House, 51 Carlyon Street, Ormond	House, 49 Aroona Road, Caulfield North
House, 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North	House, 64 Balaclava Road, St Kilda East
House, 10 Findon Avenue, Caulfield North	Offices, 219-229 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North
Caulfield Grammar School, 219 GlenEira Road, St Kilda East	House, 4 Bickhams Court, St Kilda East
Houses, 195-197 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North	House, 166a Booran Road, Glenhuntly
House, 474 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield South	House, 16 Cantala Avenue, Caulfield North
House, 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North	St John's Anglican Church, 624 Centre Road, Bentleigh
Shop, 430-434 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena	House, 780 Centre Road, Bentleigh East
House, 475 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena	Medical clinic, 868 Centre Road, Bentleigh East
House, 58 Norwood Road, Caulfield North	House, 2 Edinburgh Road, Caulfield
House, 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East	House and flats, 61-63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick
House, 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh	St Margaret's Presbyterian Church, 106 Hotham Street, St Kilda East
	Caulfield Synagogue, 572 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North
	House, 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield
	Murrumbeena Baptist Church, 44 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena
	House, 3 Oakleigh Crescent, Ormond
	House, 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield North
	Kadimah Jewish Cultural Centre, 3-7 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick

MEDIUM PRIORITY (REVIEWED AND REDESIGNATED AS MEDIUM/HIGH PRIORITY)	
Pre-WW2 (Hidden Gems)	Post-WW2 places
House, 12 Findon Avenue, Caulfield North (1939-40)	Flats, 53 Balaclava Road, St Kilda East (1949-51)
Houses, Grimwade Court, Caulfield North (1935-39)	House, 14-16 Clee Street, McKinnon (1963)
Flats, 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North (1937)	House, 30 Griffiths Street, Caulfield South (1979)
House, 83 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (1933)	House, 406 Inkerman Road, St Kilda East (1957)
Flats, 213 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (1926)	House, 16 Khartoum Street, Caulfield North (1969)
1 Lockerbie Court, St Kilda East (1936-37)	House, 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North (1964)
	Caulfield Recreation Centre, 6 Maple Street, Caulfield South (1957-58)
	Flats, 1 Muntz Street, Caulfield North (1968)
	Car showroom, 771 Nepean Highway, Bentleigh
	Flats, 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North

## THE REVIEW PROCESS

The aforementioned Top 50 list underwent several subsequent rounds of review by Council, including a meeting on 20 August 2019 of the Post War & Hidden Gems Review Team (hereafter referred to as the Review Team) which consisted of the consultant, two members of the Glen Eira Historical Society, Council's Heritage Advisor and officers of Council's City Futures and Urban Planning Departments, to discuss the merits of each site. Council officers and Council's Heritage Advisor had previously inspected each site before this meeting. The Review Team discussed the idea of grouping places together to form small precincts where a number of sites in proximity were found to be worthy of a citation.

During this meeting, the Review Team also discussed the consultant's "perceived threat of demolition" which was noted on each Outline Citation. It was considered by Council officers that some of the threat levels proposed by the consultant did not align with Council officer views when taking into account zoning, land use, land ownership or surrounding development. While threat levels were not amended within the Stage One report based on this discussion, there was consensus that some of the priority rankings for citations should be fluid if threat was considered to be higher or lower by Council officers. The perceived level of threat used by the consultant to help inform his overall priority rating for a citation was discussed and, during further review by Council officers, some places were either raised or lowered on the priority list, based on these discussions. An example was building in the grounds of Caulfield Grammar School. The Review Team disagreed with the perceived "high" level of threat, given that the building was located within the grounds of a school.

Additionally, during the review period, a number of shortlisted places were eliminated from further consideration for various reasons, including in-house consensus. The former doctor's surgery/residence at 166a Booran Road, Glenhuntly (Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, 1949) was eliminated because it was being assessed as part of a separate heritage survey being undertaken concurrently by RBA Architects. A modernist house at 406 Inkerman Street, St Kilda East (Ernest Fooks, 1957), which had been nominated by Professor Alan Pert, was eliminated when it was confirmed that it was actually located just outside the boundaries of the City of Glen Eira (in the adjacent City of Port Phillip). A bungalow-style pre-WW2 house at 91 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North, was removed as a planning permit had already been issued for a development at this site and the building was subsequently demolished.



During this review phase, a small number of entirely new places (ie, for which Outline Citations had not been prepared) were nominated for further assessment as full citations. These new places, which had not hitherto been flagged by the usual sources (ie, Built Heritage Pty Ltd, the City of Glen Eira, local history groups, member of the public or other stakeholders), were identified via *Modernist Australia*, a popular website that showcases architect-designed modernist houses across the country that have appeared on online real estate listings. Four post-WW2 houses were identified in this way, two of which were designed by as-yet unconfirmed architects:

- House, 335 Alma Road, Caulfield North (Robert Rosh, 1968)
- House, 27 Aroona Road, Caulfield North (unknown, 1968)
- House, 58 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (Kurt Elsner, 1968)
- House, 30 Loch Avenue, St Kilda East (unknown, 1975)

In subsequent discussions with Built Heritage Pty Ltd, it was agreed that all four of these houses had a very strong *prima facie* case for heritage significance at the local level and, consequently, were deemed to be appropriate candidates for full citations.

## POTENTIAL PRECINCTS

The Outline Citations for Hidden Gems included two that specifically identified small precincts. These, at Grimwade Court, Caulfield North, and Calista Court, Elsternwick, were both cul-de-sac clusters of 1930s houses. In undertaking preliminary assessment of both the Hidden Gems and the Post-War places, it became apparent that some buildings that had been identified individually were in close proximity, and of similar date and/or demonstrative of similar themes. This hinted that they might be more appropriately protected collectively, rather than individually, in the form of small heritage precinct or group listing. These potential precincts were flagged as follows:

- *Findon Avenue, Caulfield North*. Grand architect-designed houses of the late 1930s/early 1940s. Outline citations were prepared for an example at No 4 (architect unknown, 1940) that had been nominated by the City of Glen Eira, and two others at No 10 (Yuncken, Freeman Brothers, Griffiths & Simpson, 1939) and No 12 (Mewton & Grounds, 1939-40) identified by Built Heritage Pty Ltd. During fieldwork, it became apparent that the other houses along this side of the street (Nos 2, 6, 8, 14 and 16) were of similar vintage, scale and degree of architectural sophistication. This cohesive streetscape was thus considered as a potential precinct.
- *Aroona Road, Caulfield North*. Architect designed houses of the 1960s and early 1970s. Outline Citations were prepared for two standout individual examples, at No 47 (Ernest Fooks, 1962) and No 49 (Holgar & Holgar, 1973). Desktop research had also identified a nearby house at No 43 (Ernest Fooks, 1961) that, while perhaps not individually significant, was above-average and substantially intact. When fieldwork revealed the intervening house at No 45 to be yet another excellent and intact dwelling of the period (subsequently confirmed to have also been designed by Holgar & Holgar), it became apparent that this small but cohesive fragment of post-WW2 residential streetscape effectively constituted a mini-precinct.
- *Bickhams Court, St Kilda East*: Architect-designed houses of the 1960s and early 1970s. Outline citations were prepared for two standout individual examples at No 4 (Harold Shafer, 1973) and No 9 (Harry Ernest, 1962). Fieldwork established that there were some contemporaneous houses in Bickhams Court and adjoining Wimbledon Court, and another fronting Alexandra Avenue (corner Bickhams Court). Most of these houses were notably intact and evocative of their period. Some were already known to have been the work of leading architects, such as Holgar & Holgar; others were clearly architect-designed, by as yet unconfirmed individuals. It was thus considered that this intact enclave could comprise a small precinct.

- *Murrumbeena Shopping Centre, Neerim Road, Murrumbeena.* Local commercial strip near railway station, dominated by inter-war shops with some earlier (Edwardian/Victorian) and later (post-WW2) fabric. A site at 430-432 Neerim Road, including an 1880s residential shop, had been nominated by a member of the public. Two later groups of inter-war shops, comprising *Wardrop's Building* at 77-79 Murrumbeena Road (1921) and a row of six at 476-486 Neerim Road (1924) were nominated by the City of Glen Eira. The 1880s shop (representing rare surviving evidence of the strip's historical origins) and *Wardrop's Building* were noted to be potentially of individual significance. While the row of six shops was deemed only representative of its type and era, it would be considered as a contributory element in a wider commercial precinct. Fieldwork confirmed that there were many other pre-war shops along the north side of Neerim Road (bookended by 1920s motor garages), as well as others on the south side, and both sides of Murrumbeena Road. This was strongly suggestive of a potential heritage overlay precinct.

## THE FINAL LIST OF PLACES AND PRECINCTS PROPOSED FOR FULL CITATIONS

Council officers made the final decision in relation to places and precincts that would be included for a full citation to potentially form part of a planning scheme amendment process for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay.

On 18 September 2019, the final list was confirmed as follows:

### Hidden Gems (x14)

- Duplex, 325/325a Bambra Road, Caulfield South
- House, 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North
- Flats, 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North
- Shops, 158-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North - *one citation for two adjacent groups of shops*
- Houses (pair), 195-197 Hawthorn road, Caulfield North
- Flats, 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North
- House, 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North
- Flats, 1 Lockerbie Court, St Kilda East
- House, 475 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena
- House, 58 Norwood Road, Caulfield North
- Flats, 213 Orrong Road, St Kilda East
- Flats, 273 Orrong Road, St Kilda East
- House, 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East
- House, 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh

### Post-War Places (x29)

- House, 335 Alma Road, Caulfield North
- House, 386 Alma Road, Caulfield North
- House, 27 Aroona Road, Caulfield North
- House, 30 Aroona Road, Caulfield North
- Flats, 53 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North
- House, 64 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North
- Flats, 124 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North
- Office building, 219-221 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North
- House, 16 Cantala Avenue, Caulfield North
- St John's Church, 624 Centre Road, Bentleigh East
- House, 780 Centre Road, Bentleigh East
- House, 14-16 Cleve Street, McKinnon

- House, 2 Edinburgh Road, Caulfield
- House, 23 Edinburgh Road, Caulfield
- House and flats, 61-63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick
- House, 30 Griffiths Street, Caulfield South
- St Margaret's Church, 106 Hotham Street, St Kilda East
- Caulfield Synagogue, 572 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North
- House, 6 Keeron Street, Caulfield South
- House and flats, 218 Kooyong Road, Caulfield
- House, 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North
- House, 30 Loch Avenue, St Kilda East
- House, 40 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North
- House, 58 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North
- House, 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North
- Murrumbeena Baptist Church, 44 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena
- Flats, 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North
- House, 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield North
- Kadimah Cultural Centre, 7 Selwyn Avenue, Elsternwick

#### **Precincts (x5)**

- Murrumbeena Village, Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads, Murrumbeena
- Bickhams Court and Wimbledon Court, St Kilda East
- Findon Avenue, Caulfield North (Nos 2-16)
- Aroona Road, Caulfield North (Nos 43-49)
- Grimwade Court, Caulfield North

Thus, Stage Two was to proceed with the preparation of 43 citations for individual places, and five citations for precincts. The total number of citations came to less than fifty, because those for the larger precincts were costed at a different rate for an individual citation.

### **COMPLETION OF FULL CITATIONS**

The process of expanding the shortlisted single-page Outline Citations into full-fledged citations (between four and six pages in length, depending on the complexity of the building), required each property to be subjected to a follow-up site visit, as well as additional historical research and comparative analysis to underpin the case for local significance. A full Statement of Significance, in standard tripartite form, was also included, citing the relevant HERCON Criteria (see overleaf).

Each citation also included a recent photograph of the place, a location map (also indicating the proposed extent of HO), a brief appraisal of physical condition and intactness, the thematic context (referencing Council's own thematic environmental history; see overleaf), and how the place corresponds to Heritage Victoria's standard designations for Heritage Group (ie, broad typology) and Heritage Category (ie, more specific sub-typology).

#### **Fieldwork**

During October 2019, each of the shortlisted properties was revisited, in order to take additional digital photographs (from the street or other public vantage point) and make brief field notes of any salient features and finishes, as well as the condition and intactness of the building.

Wherever practicable, the consultant's most recent photograph of the building was used to illustrate the final citation. In a few cases, the earlier photograph (ie, taken during the initial surveying in June 2019) was used, if it provided a clearer view of the building.

## Historical research

In researching the history of the places, a range of primary and secondary sources were consulted.

As the bulk of the properties included in the final list were residential in nature (approximately 25 single dwellings and 10 multi-unit dwellings), there was much reliance on standard primary sources such as land title records, subdivision plans, municipal rate books, post office directories and electoral rolls. Wherever possible (and especially for post-WW2 properties), the consultants sought to obtain copies of original building permit documentation (including architectural drawings) from the City of Glen Eira's Building Department. Aside from specific newspaper and journal articles that had been identified through the consultant's own in-house database of post-WW2 Australian architecture, further information was drawn from archival newspapers and other such sources that have been digitized and made available online. In this way, information could be quickly found pertaining to tender notices, building permits, and biographical information on property owners. Biographical details were also drawn from other sources in the public domain, such as civil registration indices, probate files and immigration records. Of some interest was the fact that two original property owners were also the subject of published memoirs, which were found to contain much useful information.

In researching non-residential buildings, such as shops and places of worship, there was much reliance on reports in contemporary newspaper and journals. For the four churches and one synagogue, reference was made to the Department of Health's Public Building records (which include both files and drawings) held by the Public Record Office.

In researching the architects of buildings, much use was made to the consultant's aforementioned database, paper-based files and online *Dictionary of Unsung Architects*. Details were also drawn from the membership files of the ARBV (held by the Public Record Office) and the RAIA (held by the State Library of Victoria), and from published monographs on architects such as Kurt Popper, Ernest Fooks, Edmond & Corrigan and Wood Marsh. Original drawings for a number of projects by Ernest Fooks were inspected at the RMIT Design Archives and the State Library of Victoria. The State Library also holds the family archive of artist Sybil Craig, which was found to contain information about her father Matthew's architectural career, including copies of the original specification and drawings for the family home at 380 Dandenong Road. In researching the numerous properties designed by Holgar & Holgar, reference was made to the firm's own archive, which is now held in a private collection.

In two cases (both relating to citations for buildings dating from the 1970s), the consultants were able to track down the original architects for a brief interview about their involvement in the project. In another case, a 2014 interview between the original architects and the original client for a particular house was located on YouTube. This was found to contain enough useful background information that the consultants did not deem it necessary to contact the parties directly.

A small amount of research assistance was also provided by the Glen Eira Historical Society, which kindly supplied digital copies of items held in its collection, including publications relating to the history of two local church congregations.

## Thematic Context

Each citation references the *City of Glen Eira Thematic Environmental History (Refresh) 2020*.

Council's existing thematic history, contained in Volume One of the *Glen Eira Heritage Management Plan 1996*, is considered outdated. The document provides a history of Glen Eira in chronological order and focuses on municipal history generally up to the end of WW2. The *City of Glen Eira Thematic Environmental History (Refresh) 2020*, which was undertaken in tandem with the *City of Glen Eira Postwar and Hidden Gems Review 2020*, provides a new thematic environmental history for the municipality.

The revised document reformats much information from the original Heritage Management Plan, using the headings of *Victoria's Framework of Historic Themes*. The revised document also provides additional information relating particularly to post-WW2 development and relevant information relating to themes not discussed within the original document.

Given that the *City of Glen Eira Thematic Environmental History (Refresh) 2020* will form part of the same amendment as the subject review for inclusion within the Glen Eira Planning Scheme, it was deemed important to relate each citation to the proposed themes rather than the existing environmental history.

### Comparative Analysis

In order to apply a threshold for local heritage significance, some comparative analysis is required to substantiate the significance of each place or precinct. Given that this study was not intended as a comprehensive, (street-by-street) review of the entire municipality, a "closed set" of comparators could not be provided. Additionally, the analysis of Post-WW2 places for heritage significance is a relatively new consideration for Glen Eira Council. Currently only two such places are listed in Glen Eira's Schedule to the Heritage Overlay and both are also included on the *Victorian Heritage Register*. Comparative analysis was therefore informed by a range of sources, including existing heritage studies, published local history books, and some specific comparators brought to the consultant's attention by the City of Glen Eira. In tracking down other examples of a particular architect's work for use as comparators, reference was made to the consultant's own architectural database and *Dictionary of Unsung Architects*, the online *Australian Architectural Index* (edited by Professor Miles Lewis) and tender notices or other references in contemporary newspapers.

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While the budget for the project did not allow the consultant to conduct fieldwork specifically to identify comparative examples, a number of such places were serendipitously encountered during both phases of fieldwork, and noted for future reference in the citations. The consultant also undertook a degree of what might be referred to as virtual fieldwork, trawling Google Maps, Google Streetview and online real estate listings, for buildings that might assist in establishing a comparative framework.

### Statements of Significance

The Statements of Significance were prepared in the standard tripartite form, defining the significance of each place under the headings of *what* is significant (ie a description, brief history and extent of the significant fabric), *how* is it significant and *why* is it significant. The text references the relevant HERCON Criteria, taken from the following set of eight recognised criteria that are used in the assessment of the cultural heritage value of heritage places:

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to understanding our cultural or natural history (research potential).

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).



Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

## Precinct gradings

Within proposed precincts, places were graded as either *contributory* or *non-contributory*. The definitions of these gradings are included in the Glen Eira Heritage Policy at Clause 22.01 of the Glen Eira Planning Scheme, as follows:

- Contributory: The place is a contributory element within a larger heritage precinct. A contributory element could include a building, or building parts such as rooflines, chimneys, verandahs or other structure or works such as landscaping, front fences or paving;
- Non-contributory: The place is not individually significant and does not contribute to the heritage precinct

For the purposes of assessing the contribution of an individual building to the significance of a precinct, an approach has been adopted in keeping with good heritage practice (as outlined in the *Burra Charter* which is the guiding document for professionals dealing with post-contact cultural heritage in Australia).

In this study, a place has been given a *contributory* grading if the following apply:

- It contributes to the character of the streetscape/precinct;
- It was constructed during the period of significance (as identified within the Statement of Significance);
- It is an intact example or a place which though altered, remains largely identifiable as an example of its type/period;
- It typically retains its form, most original materials, and at least some original detailing (which might include openings, chimneys, verandah or porch, decorative elements, etc);
- Generally any changes that have occurred as reversible, allowing for accurate reconstruction in accordance with the *Burra Charter*;
- If there are visible additions, they are sufficiently set back such that the original section is not overwhelmed and the original roof form remains legible.

## Interior Alteration Controls and External Paint Controls

Additional heritage controls can be applied to specific places/precincts through the schedule to the Heritage Overlay. The additional controls relate to the protection of trees on properties, the allowance to apply for a prohibited use at the property or the application of external paint controls or internal alteration controls.

The following properties are proposed for external paint controls:

- 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North  
(to protect stained timber finishes to the exterior of the building);
- 158-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North  
(to protect stained timber finishes to the exterior of the building);
- Kadimah Cultural Centre, 7 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick  
(to protect the façade sculpture).

The following sites are proposed for internal alteration controls:

- 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North
- 40 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North
- 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North
- St John's Church 624 Centre Road, Bentleigh East

Internal inspections of these places were not carried out by consultant as part of this project. Except for one case, where the consultant had coincidentally inspected a certain house when it was open for public inspection when offered for sale 2015 (ie, several years before the commencement of this heritage project), reliance was made on interior photographs freely available online, including church websites and real estate listings. In June 2020, a site inspection of St John's Church in Bentleigh was also carried out by Council's Heritage Planner, where photographs of the interior were taken to be included in the citation.

Internal controls for each of the above sites were recommended because, in each case, there was strong evidence that the interiors currently still contained original finishes, fixtures and fittings of interest that were deemed to contribute to the significance of the place.

### **Completion**

The citations for the five precincts were the first to be completed, and were submitted to council in draft form in August 2019. The citations for the individual places, which were prepared in roughly chronological order between October 2019 and the end of January 2020, were issued to council in draft form in the last week of January 2020.

In March 2020, a small number of minor corrections were made to the draft report, to update incorrect mapping and street addresses.

In July 2020, many of the citations were amended to delete identifying details of property owners and their families at the direction of Council, unless the inclusion of such information was deemed necessary for historical reasons. Relevant information relating to architects and builders was retained. The deletions, made to protect the privacy of previous and current property owners, were not endorsed by the Consultant. The following citations have not been amended:

- 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (Amendment C207glen)
- 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East (Amendment C207glen)
- Murrumbeena Village Precinct (Amendment C201glen)
- 58 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (Council resolved not to proceed with an amendment for this property).

A number of citations were also amended to note further information suggested by submitters during the pre-amendment consultation process.





## **C: CITATIONS FOR PRE-WW2 PLACES ("HIDDEN GEMS")**



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	DUPLEX	<b>Citation No</b>	HG01
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 B7
<b>Address</b>	325/325A Bambra Road CAULFIELD SOUTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1939
<b>Designer/s</b>	Charles Ring?	<b>Builder/s</b>	Charles Ring



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flat	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The building at 325/325a Bambra Road, Caulfield South, is a two-storey cream brick duplex in the Streamlined Moderne style. Occupying a corner site, it has parapeted hipped roof and a stepped quadruple-fronted façade with curving corners and rendered panels with horizontal and vertical fluting and a row of porthole windows. It was erected in 1939 by local builder Charles Ring, as a speculative project, and he may have designed it himself.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the original 1939 building and the matching dwarf wall that extends along each of the two street boundaries. The single-storey studio apartment at the north end of the building, added in the 1960s, is not considered to be significant.

### How is it significant?

The duplex 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

### *Why is it significant?*

The duplex at 325/325a Bambra Road, Caulfield South, is aesthetically significant as an excellent example of the Streamlined Moderne style. The work of an as yet unconfirmed designer (and perhaps even designed by the builder himself, Charles Ring), the building has a simple utilitarian expression to its west (rear) and south (side) elevations that contrast markedly with the far more confident articulation of its two street elevations, to the east and north. These are deftly expressed as a stepping quadruple-fronted façade with parapeted roofline, alternating curved and right-angled corners, corner windows and rendered panels with plain mouldings, vertical and horizontal fluting and a row of porthole windows, with the entrances to each flat marked by a flat-roofed porch. With a matching brick wall along both street boundaries the house remains a highly distinctive element in the residential streetscape. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The building at 325/325a Bambra Road, Caulfield South, was erected in 1939 by Charles Ring, a local developer/builder who was responsible for several other residential buildings in the area. Little is known of the background of Charles Alfred Ring (1892-1979), who settled in Caulfield South after his marriage in the early 1920s. Electoral rolls show that he and his wife lived in Moore Street during the 1920s and in Sycamore Street for most of the 1930s. During this time, Ring's profession was variously listed as bricklayer and plasterer. One of the first sources to identify him as a builder was the City of Caulfield Rate Book for 1938-39, dated 8 December 1938, in which he is recorded as owner of several properties in Caulfield South that included a five-roomed brick house at 4 Remuera Road, two adjacent vacant blocks at 266-268 Bambra Road, and another site further up the street at No 325, on the south corner of Winston Drive.

The land that Charles Ring owned at 325 Bambra Road formed part of a subdivision created from eight acres bounded by Bambra Road, Sussex Road and Steele Street. In September 1935, this land was acquired by another building contractor, who subdivided it in several stages over the next few years. The Bambra Road frontage, which was carved up into five allotments, represented the first stage. According to the 1938-39 Rate Book, the vacant block on the south corner of Bambra Road and newly-formed Winston Drive (designated as Lot 41) was then owned by a businessman from Yarraville. However, a handwritten amendment to the rate entry, dated 4 May 1939, shows that the site had since been acquired by Charles Ring (of Remuera Road, Caulfield South) and was now occupied by a seven-roomed brick house and garage, worth £700.

As it turned out, Ring retained the new duplex for only a short time. In August 1941, the land title was transferred to a married couple from Sydney, who took up residence in one of the two flats and, the following year, sought a tenant for the neighbouring one, which was advertised as a six-roomed "ultra-modern maisonette", with electric hot water service and "every convenience" (*Argus* 18/07/1942:8). In 1942, the duplex appeared for the first time in the *Sands & McDougall Directory*, recording the building's owner at No 325 and a tenant at No 325a. While various other tenants followed, the owners remained living there until they returned to New South Wales towards the end of the decade.

In 1946, ownership of the duplex was transferred to a Polish-born lingerie manufacturer and his wife, who lived in Elwood and subsequently rented out the Bambra Road property. For a time, one of the flats was occupied by their son, a barrister. The next owners of the duplex, who acquired it in 1963, engaged a building firm, Wedgewood Homes Pty Ltd, to prepare plans to enlarge Flat 2 with a small single-storey skillion-roofed brick addition at the north end, containing a rumpus room and vestibule. By the time that the duplex was offered for sale again in 1971, the playroom had been converted into a stand-alone bedsit, advertised as a "studio flatette" (*Age* 21/08/1971:38).

Charles Ring, who built the duplex, went on to develop the two blocks of vacant land that he owned on the opposite side of Bambra Road. During 1940-41, he erected a large house for himself at what is now No 266, and a two-storey block of three flats next door, at No 268. He and his wife remained living at No 266 until the late 1950s, when they moved to a smaller house on Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield, and thence to Carnegie in the late 1960s.

## Description

The building at 325/325a Bambra Road, Caulfield South, is a two-storeyed brick duplex (ie, attached pair of self-contained dwellings) in the Streamlined Moderne style, with a hipped roof concealed by a parapet. Occupying a corner site, the building is double-storey, with a single storey wing along the Winston Drive side. It otherwise presents an asymmetrical quadruple-fronted façade to both streets, with alternating curved and right-angled corners. The plain cream brickwork is relieved by a contrasting manganese brick plinth, a recessed header-brick stringcourse along the stepped parapet line, and feature rendered panels. On the two rectilinear bays, these rendered panels forms are horizontally fluted and form spandrels between large rectangular windows at each level. The rendered portions of the two curved bays incorporate moulded banding, vertical fluting and a row of three porthole windows. The two curved bays also incorporate the front entrances to each dwelling; these have timber doors with vertical lights (enlivened by circular motifs), a brick paved porch and a projecting concrete slab roof.

The side (south) elevation is simpler in detailing, with a plain cream brick wall giving way to an even more utilitarian expression of face red brickwork, exposed skillion roof and small rectangular windows. The single-storey rear wing to Winston Drive (originally playroom; later a studio apartment) is double fronted, with a separate entry set into the recessed wall, a small canopy roof, and a wide window to the projecting bay.

A low wall, in matching cream brick with a manganese brick plinth course, extends along both street boundaries, with pairs of posts making pedestrian gateways for each entrance, and driveways at the far end of each frontage (leading to simple skillion-roofed carports).

## Comparisons

As already mentioned, little is known of the extent of Charles Ring's work as a builder in the Caulfield South area. To date, the only other confirmed examples of his work that can be cited as direct comparators are his own house at 266 Bambra Road (c1940) and the adjacent block of flats at Nos 268-70 (c1940-41). Conceived to exploit their elevated sites with views over Princes Park, the two buildings have much in common. They are both double-storeyed buildings with exposed hipped roofs clad in terracotta tiles, and clinker brickwork relieved by contrasting cream brick stringcourses. Both have asymmetrical frontages: Ring's own house incorporates a projecting curved bay to one side, while the adjacent flats have a triple-fronted façade with a rendered bay towards the rear, marking the entrance. When compared to the duplex at 325/325a Bambra Road, these other two examples of Ring's must be considered as rather less confident manifestations of the Streamlined Moderne style, lacking the boldness and rigour that is evident in the façade of the earlier building, with its parapeted roofline, porthole windows and more assured use of rendered panels, with contrasting vertical and horizontal fluting.

Considered more broadly among residential buildings of similar date and style, the duplex has a number of comparators in what is now the City of Glen Eira. In its expression of a stepped façade with curving rendered bays and horizontal ornament, it can be compared with large two-storey houses such as 3 Grimwade Court, Caulfield North (c1935) and 4 Linlithgow Road, Caulfield (1938) [HO41], as well as a block of flats at 237 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield North (c1939). All three of these buildings, however, have fully exposed hipped roofs and more conventional fenestration with traditional double-hung sashes.

There are many other examples that are even more stylistically hybrid, such as the *Elster Court* flats at 83 Orrong Road, Elsternwick (c1937) and *Toolangi Court* flats at 500-506 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick (1936), where the trademark Moderne motif of the curving rendered bay, relieved by horizontal banding, has been applied almost tokenistically. As a more assured manifestation, the duplex at Bambra Road is most pertinently comparable to the *Olgita* flats at 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1940), where a confident articulation of Streamlined Moderne characteristics dominates one entire frontage of the building, visually discrete from a more conservative expression to the side and rear elevations.

## References

Lodged Plan No 15,759, declared 12 May 1941.

Certificate of Title, Volume 6494, Folio 749, created 13 August 1941.

Wedgewood Homes Pty Ltd, "Proposed additions to existing flats, 325 Bambra Road, Caulfield, for Mr & Mrs [redacted]", working drawings undated [c1963]. City of Caulfield Permit No 33,196.

## Identified by

City of Glen Eira



**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 22 September 2020 (C207)**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	HG02
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Hurlock</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J9
<b>Address</b>	380 Dandenong Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1913-14
<b>Designer/s</b>	Matthew Craig	<b>Builder/s</b>	E H M Ratcliff



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians 9.3 Achieving design and artistic distinction
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

*What is significant?*

*Hurlock*, the former Craig House at 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, is a large attic-storeyed Arts & Crafts red brick bungalow with broad gabled terracotta-tiled roof incorporating a shingled dormer gable with multi-paned windows and carved pelmet. Erected in 1913-14, the house was designed by architect Matthew Craig for his own use, and would remain occupied by the family for over seventy years (eventually, solely by his unmarried daughter, artist Sybil Craig).

The significant fabric is defined as the interior and exterior of the entire building. External paint controls are recommended to protect stained timber finishes, and interior alteration controls to protect spaces containing original elements that include brick fireplaces and timber joinery such as wall and ceiling paneling, picture rails, architraves, mantelpieces and panelled doors.

*How is it significant?*

The 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 F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is significant as an outstanding, notably early and remarkably intact example of the Arts & Crafts bungalow style. Dating from 1913, it represents a surprisingly assured manifestation of the idiom at a time when other local examples were more hybrid, combined with the prevailing Federation style. With its prominent longitudinal gabled roof, intersecting dormer and shingled infill, it anticipates the flood of attic-storeyed bungalows in the later 1910s and early 1920s, while certain distinctive features, such as the carved pelmet, decorative brickwork and lozenge glazing, remained rare even in later examples. Demonstrating a high degree of creative achievement, the sophistication and confidence of the design testifies to the fact that it was an architect's own home (and, moreover, who had spent time in Great Britain). Occupied by Matthew Craig's family for seventy years, the house remains in a notably unaltered state, with retention of original stained finish to the external shingles, and interiors with original fireplaces and extensive timber joinery, each representing a particularly rare survival. (*Criterion E; Criterion F*)

### **History**

The house at 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, was built in 1914 for architect Matthew Craig, who designed it himself. Born in Melbourne, Matthew Francis Craig (1872-1958) was the son of Matthew senior, a noted pastoralist (a partner in the firm of Simmie, Fraser & Craig) who, in a mysterious and much-reported incident, was found dead on Elwood Beach in 1878, the victim of a fatal shotgun wound. Three years later, his widow Letitia remarried (to Dr J W Foster Rogers, headmaster of a private school in St Kilda) and the family took up residence in Mathoura Road, Toorak. Matthew junior was still living there at the time of his marriage, to Frances Winifred Major (1879-1970), in February 1901. The couple travelled overseas to visit relatives in Great Britain, where their first and only child, daughter Sybil (1901-1989), was born in November.

While Matthew Craig was working as an architect at the time of his marriage, little is known of his training or qualifications. In an interview recorded near the end of her life, Sybil Craig discussed her father only briefly, but noted that he "was attached to the firm of Reed, Smart & Tappin". This was one of many incarnations of the venerable Melbourne architectural practice founded in 1854 by Joseph Reed, which ultimately became Bates, Smart & McCutcheon and continues today as Bates Smart. Prior to, and just after, Reed's death in 1890, the firm changed its name thrice in rapid succession, becoming Reed, Smart & Tappin in April 1890 and retaining that name until 1907. While Philip Goad's weighty monograph on Bates, Smart & McCutcheon does not list Matthew Craig amongst known staff members during the Reed, Smart & Tappin era, it does name others, including Alfred Carleton (1866-1936), J VT Ward (1872-1927), Denis Healey (1873-1931) and Harold Dumsday (1876-1942), who were all around Craig's age. Alfred Carleton and J V T Ward, who left the firm in 1897 to enter into partnership as Ward & Carleton, may even have taken Craig with them, as the latter is recorded as the owner of a pair of dwellings in Murray Street, Preston, which was designed by Ward & Carleton in 1900 as a speculative venture.

Returning from overseas, the Craigs took up residence in Oak Grove, Brighton, where they lived for a decade. The family then briefly resided in New South Wales, due to the ill health of Frances' sister (also named Sybil), but were back in Melbourne by 1913, residing in Barkly Street, St Kilda. In April of that year, Craig acquired the title to the present site on Dandenong Road, which formed Lot 25 of a newly-created estate. Plans were prepared for an attic-storeyed brick bungalow with expansive living areas (sitting room, dining room, breakfast room), maid's room, two downstairs bedrooms and two more upstairs, flanking a central open area that presumably served as Craig's home office. A copy of the drawing found in Sybil Craig's papers bears a stamp of approval from the Building Surveyor, signed and dated 17 September 1913. It also bears the stamp of E Ratcliff, "builder and house decorator" of High Street, Armadale. This was Ernest Henry Montague Ratcliff (1867-1938), a much-respected British-born builder and longtime Caulfield resident whose diligence took him to the USA in 1904 to study the latest advances in residential construction and decoration (*Prahran Chronicle* 09/01/1904:3).



When the building contract was signed, the Craig family was residing at *St Leonard's Mansions*, on Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. On 16 September 1913, a member of Ernest Ratcliff's staff wrote to Craig at that address, stating that "I herewith beg to confirm my verbal agreement to the effect that your building is to be completed by the 1 January 1914". A proviso was added that extra time would be allowed if the brickwork ("to be done by the same men that carried out Mr Newton's job") took longer than expected. This, or another delay, evidently came to pass. Sybil Craig later recalled that her family moved into the new house, which they named *Hurlock*, just before the start of WW1 (ie, late July 1914). This is confirmed by a surviving receipt, dated 15 July 1914, for professional services rendered by landscape gardener (and Norwood Road resident) Frank Bugg, in laying out the Craigs' garden with driveway, fully-stocked vegetable beds and an array of flowering plants including geraniums, carnations, chrysanthemums, sunflowers, climbing roses, etc.

At the time of that *Hurlock* was built, Craig does not seem to have been formally practising as an architect. The vast family archive, preserved by Sybil Craig and now held by the State Library, contains scant evidence of private architectural practice but much to suggest that Craig was largely engaged in property investment. By the late teens, he had gone into partnership with fellow St Kilda resident Samuel McGuinness to form a property company, McGuinness & Craig. A typical project from 1920 was the conversion of an old mansion in Alma Road into flats; drawings in the Craig Papers bear the title block of designer/builder Howard Lawson, a former employee of Ernest Ratcliff, rather than Craig himself. A surviving estate agent's receipt from 1922 shows that, by then, Craig was receiving rent from no fewer than twelve investment properties, including the two houses in Murray Street, Preston, designed by Ward & Carleton back in 1900.

Following in her father's creative footsteps, Sybil Craig became an artist of some repute. In 1920, she began private art tuition and later studied at the National Gallery School, holding her first solo exhibition in 1932. For two decades, she exhibited regularly with the Victorian Artists' Society, Melbourne Society of Women Painters & Sculptors, and Twenty Melbourne Painters, maintaining a studio in Collins Street. During WW2, she was one of the few women to serve as an official War Artist. Closing her city studio in 1951, her professional artistic pursuits tailed off in the post-WW2 era, although she was subject to a retrospective exhibition in 1978, and received an OAM in 1981. Predeceased by her father and mother (in 1958 and 1970 respectively), the unmarried Sybil resided alone at *Hurlock* on Dandenong Road until her own death on 9 September 1989.

## Description

*Hurlock*, at 380 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, is a large attic-storeyed red brick bungalow in the Arts & Crafts style. It has a broad longitudinal gabled roof clad in terracotta Marseille pattern tiles and penetrated by tall red brick chimneys with corbelled capping and terracotta pots. On the street side, the roof plane incorporates a prominent central dormer bay, clad with stained timber shingles and containing a four-bay window with multi-paned sashes and a carved timber pelmet. At ground level, there is a smaller gabled bay with shingled infill, off-centre recessed entry porch with double timber doors, and bays of rectangular windows with corbelled brick sills and timber-framed double-hung sashes with leaded glazing in a lozenge pattern.

While an internal inspection has not been undertaken for this assessment, photographs taken at the time of the last sale in August 2019 (still available online via [www.realestate.com.au](http://www.realestate.com.au)) indicate that the interior of the house is notably intact, retaining a considerable amount of original timber joinery (panelled walls and ceilings, skirtings, architraves, picture rails, mantelpieces and panelled doors) as well as face brick fireplaces to the living room and kitchen.

## Comparisons

Broadly speaking, *Hurlock* is a manifestation of the bungalow style that emerged in Australian architecture in the early twentieth century before reaching its peak of popularity during the inter-war era. As Graham Butler noted, local examples can be loosely codified according to a broad and

often overlapping range of overseas influences that informed them: the Anglo-Indian bungalows of India and Ceylon, Swiss and Italian Chalets, the Arts & Crafts movement from Great Britain, and the California bungalows and New England hunting lodges of the USA. With its prominent steep roofline, tall chimneys, carved pelmet, multi-paned windows and lozenge glazing, *Hurlock* is most demonstrative of the Arts & Crafts style.

As was the case elsewhere in inner suburban Melbourne, the bungalow style developed slowly and gradually in what is now the City of Glen Eira. A few houses from the early 1910s, notably 88 Shoobra Road, Elsternwick (1910) and 88 Orrong Road, Caulfield (1912), have been acknowledged as demonstrative of the emerging bungalow style, combining key elements (eg shingled cladding) with those of the prevailing Federation idiom. Examples in a more overt Arts & Crafts mode, with steeper gabled roofs, attic storeys, dormers, tall chimneys and bay or bow windows with leaded glazing, would become increasingly common from the mid-1910s, typified by 17 Wyuna Road, Caulfield North (1915), 526 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena (1915), and 11 Labassa Grove, Caulfield (1917). None of these, however is truly comparable to *Hurlock*, with the characteristic expression of a prominent longitudinal gabled roofline, intersecting dormer bay and shingled infill that would not become more ubiquitous until the later 1910s and early 1920s, as seen in such local examples as 12 Stanley Street, Elsternwick (1918), 69 Howitt Road, Caulfield North (1919) and 23 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena (1921). One fine and intact example at 18 Stanley Street, Elsternwick (1918), is included on the City of Glen Eira heritage overlay schedule as H0140.

As an example of an architect's own home in an early bungalow style, *Hurlock* can be compared to *Anselm*, Robert Haddon's residence at 4 Glenferrie Street, Caulfield North (1906). This important and early manifestation of the Arts & Crafts tendency (included on the *Victorian Heritage Register* as H1795, and on the City of Glen Eira heritage overlay schedule as H027) is broadly similar to *Hurlock* in its steep roofline with intersecting dormer gable, red brickwork (with projecting details), tall chimneys, and boxed windows with leaded glazing, although *Anselm's* polygonal corner tower, with saucer dome and overt Art Nouveau flourishes are peculiarly Haddon-esque touches. Alex K Finlay, a lesser known architect who was a partner in the firm of Gibbs & Finlay, designed himself a bungalow-style house at 5 Kooyong Road, Caulfield (c1913). Precisely contemporaneous with Craig's *Hurlock*, it was published in the *Real Property Annual* in 1914 but has long since been demolished. Slightly later in date but still standing is architect William Meldrum's own house at 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North (1917), a highly idiosyncratic example of the bungalow style, wholly atypical for its stone construction and incorporation of classical references.

## References

- "Proposed new residence, Dandenong Road, East St Kilda, for M F Craig, esquire", working drawings, undated (stamped 19 September 1913). Sybil Craig Papers, *loc cit*.
- Sybil Craig Papers, 1853 to c1980. MS 13111, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria.
- Sybil Craig, interviewed by Barbara Blackman, 5 October 1987. Oral history recording, ORAL TRC 2325. National Library of Australia, Canberra.
- Graeme Butler, *The Californian Bungalow in Australia*, South Melbourne: Lothian Books, 1992.
- Philip Goad (ed), *Bates Smart: 150 Years of Australian Architecture*. Fishermen's Bend: Thames & Hudson, 2004.
- Dianne Reilly, "Craig, Sybil Mary Frances (1901–1989)", in Diane Langmore (ed), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 17 (2007)

## Identified by

Andrew Ward (C grade list)

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	HG03
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Olgita</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 K9
<b>Address</b>	440 Dandenong Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1940
<b>Designer/s</b>	Leslie J W Reed (attrib)	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

*Olgita* at 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, is a double-storey rendered brick block of flats in the Streamlined Moderne style, with a stepped façade incorporating a series of curved parapeted bays with horizontal banding, a taller stairwell bay with contrasting vertical fluting, and a more conventional hip-roofed expression to the side and rear. The flats were built in 1940 as an investment property for a Russian-born hosiery manufacturer, and were probably designed by Armadale architect Leslie J W Reed, who had undertaken prior work for the same client.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building.

### How is it significant?

The flats satisfy 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.

### *Why is it significant?*

*Olgita* is aesthetically significant as an excellent example of a block of flats in the Streamlined Moderne style, incorporating some particular bold and striking details. Occupying a long narrow site, the large two-storey building (containing six flats of above-average size) has a stepped frontage to the north-east, with recessing curved bays incorporating rendered banding and faceted windows. Characteristically of the style, this innate horizontality is relieved by a contrasting vertical element in the form of a stair lobby that projects above the parapet, with vertical fluting, curvilinear wrought iron ornament and a projecting bulbous balcony. The bold articulation of this principal frontage contrasts with more conventionally domestic utilitarian expression of the west (rear) side, with exposed hipped roof, rectilinear massing and standard windows. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The block of flats at 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, was erected in 1940 for a sock manufacturer, initially as an investment property. The owner and his wife were both born in Russia but left, with their large family, in the early 1920s. Migrating to Australia via Palestine, they arrived in Melbourne in the mid-1920s and settled in Carlton North, where the family's sock manufacturing business was established. By 1930, the venture had expanded and would continue to do so, spreading along Lygon Street with an "ambitious building project" initiated in 1934 (*Herald* 22/08/1934:16). At the same time, the family relocated from Carlton North to St Kilda East, taking up residence in a new Moderne house in Vadrure Avenue.

The family's hosiery empire continued to thrive on the strength of its flagship product, and it was during this prosperous period that they decided to build a block of flats on Dandenong Road as an investment property. The proposed site, near the west corner of Cantala Avenue, formed part of the vast *Cantala Estate*, an ambitious pre-war subdivision created from the fourteen-acre grounds of Septimus Miller's eponymous *Cantala* mansion. The first two stages of the subdivision, auctioned in May 1933 and April 1938, attracted much interest; this remained the case when the third and final stage, encapsulating allotments in newly-formed Cantala Avenue and the adjacent frontage to Dandenong Road, was released in November 1939.

While the architect of the new block of flats has not been conclusively identified, it is likely to have been the work of Leslie J W Reed, who had already designed the family's house in Vadrure Street, St Kilda East (*Age* 13/12/1933:4) as well as the major additions to the their factory in Lygon Street (*Herald* 22/08/1934:16). Born in Malvern, Leslie Joseph Whitaker Reed (1893-1964), began private practice in 1914 but would reach the peak of his professional life during the 1920s and '30s, when he flourished mostly as a designer of residential work (both houses and flats) as well as a few commercial and industrial projects. A longtime resident of Malvern East who maintained his professional offices in Armadale, Reed was notably active in that area, including South Yarra, Prahran and Caulfield. An eclectic designer, Reed worked in many of the fashionable styles of the day, embracing the progressive Moderne style and more conservative modes, such as Tudor Revival, Spanish Mission and Colonial Revival, with equal aplomb. After WW2, he gradually moved away from historicist styles toward a more conventional modernist approach. Relocating to Ringwood in the later 1950s, Reed remained in practice until his death.

The block of flats on Dandenong Road, almost certainly designed by Reed, was a large two-storey building on an elongated stepped plan, originally providing four apartments of uncommonly large size (with either two or three bedrooms) and degree of luxury. Conceived in the fashionable Streamlined Moderne style, each apartment had a front room with a vast curved window, as well as modish fireplaces, french doors, moulded cornices, and ceiling panels in lively geometric patterns. On completion, the building (originally numbered as 54 Dandenong Road) was named the *Olgita* flats, combining the forenames of two female members of the family.



Six years after the flats were completed, the owners erected a new house on the adjacent site (then No 56; now 442), which, in a broadly similar Moderne mode, was designed by architect Archibald Ikin (who appears to have supplanted Leslie Reed as the family's preferred architect, as Ikin went on to design the their hosiery mills at Williamstown, in 1949). The second house on Dandenong Road was not without controversy: the size of the dwelling prompted questions to be asked in Parliament as to whether it contravened wartime restrictions on the scale of private residential construction (*Herald* 28/05/1947:8). As it transpired, the house in fact comprised two separate flats, one of which was occupied by the owners and the other by their son and daughter-in-law. By the mid-1950s, the younger couple had relocated next door, to one of the *Olgita* flats, and would remain living there for the next two decades.

## Description

*Olgita*, at 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey hip-roofed brick building in a Streamlined Moderne style. Laid out on an elongated and stepped rectilinear plan, it contains six flats. While the building is expressed with a consistent palette of painted brickwork, rendered banding and large rectangular windows with multi-paned sashes, it has a somewhat hybrid elevational treatment. The Streamlined Moderne idiom is most boldly expressed to the north-east (left) side of the building, where the hipped roof is concealed by parapet with incised stringcourse, and there are curved corners with faceted windows and another curved bay containing the stairwell, with recessed entry porch, projecting half-round balcony, tall window with fishtail glazing bars, and a vertically fluted spandrel above. The north-west (right) side of the building, while incorporating similar rendered banding and steel-framed windows, is otherwise more traditionally domestic in scale, with right-angled corners and the hipped roof exposed.

## Comparisons

While not conclusively proven to have been designed by architect Leslie J W Reed, the fact that he was responsible for two other projects for the same family is compelling. Stylistically, the *Olgita* flats also have much in common with other Moderne-style apartment blocks known to have been designed by Reed around the same time, such as the *Urana* flats at 202 Punt Road, Windsor (1936) and the *Taurea* flats at 90 Toorak Road West, South Yarra (1937), both of which have rendered curved bays with incised horizontal grooves and vertical fluting. Within what is now the City of Glen Eira, Reed is represented by a number of residential buildings, although few seem to survive. Among the casualties are a pair of timber houses at the corner of Bambra Road and Filbert Street, Caulfield South (1929) and a house at 326 Orrong Road, Caulfield (1935) that, with its peculiarly patterned clinker brickwork, had appeared in the *Australian Home Beautiful*.

The house that Reed had previously designed for same family, still standing at 7 Vadhure Avenue, St Kilda East (1933) [part of H07], is an interesting proto-Moderne design: a large but fairly conventional hip-roofed single-storey rendered house, punctuated by an entry porch with unusual stepped parapet. As a resident of Malvern East who maintained his office in Armadale, Reed was notably active in the area and his output includes several surviving buildings located just outside the current study area, including a house on the opposite (north) side of Dandenong Road, on the corner of Redcourt Avenue (1937).

Considered more broadly as an example of apartment blocks in the Streamlined Moderne style, the *Olgita* flats have a number of local comparators. The use of curving rendered walls with incised stringcourses and faceted windows at the corner, coupled with an entry stairwell expressed as a contrasting vertical element with stepped parapet and moulded ornamentation, is similar to the *Linden* flats at 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North (1937). The use of curved corners on a stepped triple-fronted façade, with incised ornament, also anticipates the slightly later duplex at 325/325a Bambra Road, Caulfield South (1940).

The merging of such defining Streamlined Moderne characteristics with more conventionally domestic features, such as an exposed hipped roof, was not altogether unusual at the time. There are many examples where this has been attempted in an arguably less sophisticated manner, typified by the *Kingston Court* flats at 1088 Glenhuntly Road, Glen Huntly (c1937), the *Winston* flats at 2 Dorgan Street, Caulfield North (1940) and an unnamed block at 268-270 Bambra Road, Caulfield South (c1940). Counterparts where this hybrid approach has been adopted in a more assured fashion, as with the *Olgita* flats, are rarer. Examples include a semi-detached pair of dwellings at 4-6 Gladstone Parade, Elsternwick (1939) [H022] and a two-storey single residences at 13 Kambea Grove, Caulfield North (c1938) and 705 North Road, Carnegie (1943) [H0143].

## References

Archibald Ikin, "Proposed residence, Caulfield, for Mrs [redacted]", working drawings, undated [c1947]. City of Caulfield Permit No 8,522.

"Spin, dye own yarn for socks", *Argus*, 14 May 1953, p 25.

Built Heritage Pty Ltd, "Leslie J W Reed (1893-1964)", *Dictionary of Unsung Architects*, <<[www.builtheritage.com.au/dua\\_reed.html](http://www.builtheritage.com.au/dua_reed.html)>>

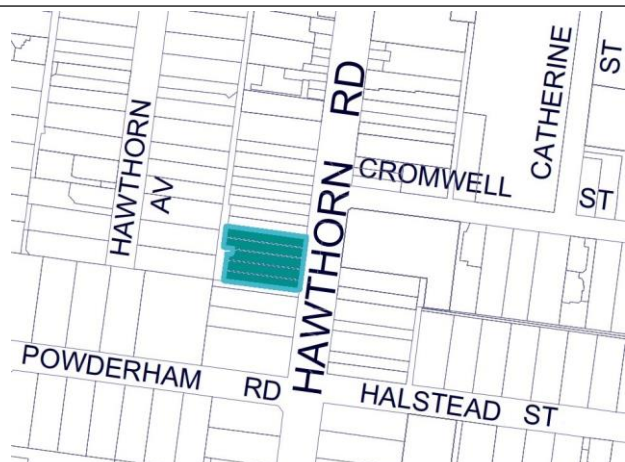
## Identified by

Andrew Ward (C grade list).

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	SHOPS (TWO GROUPS)	<b>Citation No</b>	HG04
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 A1
<b>Address</b>	158-166 Hawthorn Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1936-37
<b>Designer/s</b>	John L Richards (attrib)	<b>Builder/s</b>	John L Richards



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Retail and Wholesale	<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Shop	<b>Intactness</b>	Good (shopfronts altered)
<b>Thematic context</b>	5.3 Marketing and retailing		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The row of five shops at 158-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North, comprises two separate blocks of two-storey residential shops (a pair at No 158-160 and a group of three at Nos 162-166) in the Tudor Revival style. Erected as investment properties within six months of each other in 1936-37, the two blocks were erected by the same builder, John Richards, who evidently designed them himself. The two separate buildings combine broad characteristics of the Tudor Revival style (eg steep tiled roofs, half-timbering and dormer bays) with more individualistic detailing such as herringbone brickwork, roughcast render, bracketed eaves and window shutters.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building, including two original shopfronts (Nos 158 and 162), and pressed metal linings to the footpath canopies (Nos 158-160). External paint controls have been triggered to protect the original stained finish to timberwork.

### How is it significant?

The row of shops at 158-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North, 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

### *Why is it significant?*

The two groups of shops are aesthetically significant as excellent examples of the Tudor Revival style popular in Melbourne in the 1930s. While the style is well represented in the City of Glen Eira by many houses and numerous blocks of flats, its specific application to commercial buildings is rarer at the local level, with only a handful of examples identified. These two adjacent groups of shops, erected (and evidently also designed) by the same builder, display the broad characteristics of the Tudor Revival style (eg steep tile-clad roofs, dormer bays, dark-coloured Roman brick and half-timbering) while simultaneously exhibiting more unusual features (eg cusped tracery, lancet arches, herringbone brick, roughcast render, casement windows, timber shutters, turned finials, stepped parapets with moulded caps) that make them quite distinct from each other, and, as a cohesive group, from other examples in the study area. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The five residential shops at 158-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North, comprise two discrete buildings (a pair at No 158-160 and a row of three at Nos 162-66), built within a few months of each other in 1936-37, and by the same builder, John Richards of Glen Iris. Before WW1, this part of Hawthorn Road had remained staunchly residential in nature. The *Sands & McDougall Directory* for 1910 listed nine properties on the west side of the street, between Balaclava Road and Glen Eira Road. These were dominated by *Crotonhurst*, a vast mansion estate built in the late 1850s by Justice Webb (and occupied by his daughter after his death in 1891), with a group of more modest timber dwellings to the north. Commercial development emerged in 1915, with a fruiterer's shop at the Balaclava Road corner. Many more followed and, by 1930, the directory listed over a dozen shops, two banks and a post office. The last, cited as No 146, marked the termination of the retail strip, beyond which were two remaining residential properties separated by a vacant block.

After one of these longtime residents died in 1936, her former home in Hawthorn Road (identified as No 156) was offered for sale as a "weatherboard cottage and land, suitable for subdivision, shop or villa sites" (*Argus* 15/08/1936:4). The site, measuring 42 feet (7 metres) by 483 feet (147 metres), clearly had great potential; a lengthier advertisement noted that "situated in a splendid shopping centre, this property should interest the investor with a view to subdividing the frontage into shop sites and the rear, which abuts Hawthorn Avenue, into villa sites" (*Herald* 22/08/1936:37). It sold promptly and, one day after the auction, a tender notice appeared for demolition of the dwelling, with the contact address of Williams & Company, estate agents, of 161 Toorak Road, South Yarra (*Age* 27/08/1936:3). In early September, the City of Caulfield issued a building permit for "two shops and dwellings, Hawthorn Street [*sic*] (near Balaclava Road)", with the owner's name cited "c/- 161 Toorak Road, South Yarra". The inclusion of the estate agent's address would suggest that the client (confirmed to be a wealthy Toorak resident) had purchased the property to build residential shops as an investment, rather than for her own use.

While the building permit notice did not identify an architect for the shops, the builder was named as J Richards of Glen Iris. The supposition that Richards may have designed as well as built them is bolstered by the fact that the (undated) working drawings include a title block bearing only Richards' name. While little is known of John Loftus Richards (1894-1958), it seems more than a coincidence that, around the same time that he built these Caulfield shops, he was involved in a similar project at 307-315 Toorak Road, South Yarra. Credited to architect Arthur W Plaisted, the latter was a row of five residential shops, "in the Old English tradition", with steep tiled roofs, half-timbered walls, canted bay windows, multi-paned sashes and clinker brick quoining (*Herald* 26/05/1937:14). While no evidence has been found to indicate that Plaisted designed the Hawthorn Road shops, the fact that the same builder worked on both projects is compelling enough to suggest that Richards drew inspiration from a concurrent association with Plaisted.



While construction of the two shops at 158-160 Hawthorn Road was still evidently underway, the adjacent block of land to the south, with a street frontage of 70 feet (21 metres) and a depth of 150 feet (45 metres), evidently caught the eye of the same estate agents, Williams & Company. In February 1937, a building permit was issued for “three brick shops and dwellings”, for a different client (a car dealer from St Kilda) but with the same contact details, “c/- 161 Toorak Road, South Yarra”. The permit confirms that the same builder (and probable designer) was involved: J L Richards of Glen Iris, with Richards’ title block also appearing on the working drawings.

The two groups of shops are first recorded in the *Sands & McDougall Directory* for 1938. The earlier pair, at Nos 158-160, was occupied by a ladies’ draper and a poulterer, and the three adjacent ones at Nos 162-166 by a draper, a milliner and a sports store. None of these five original tenants remained there beyond the early 1940s. In the post-WW2 era, the shops were occupied by a range of retailers that included a boot repairer, confectioner, delicatessen, engineer, financier, furrier, ladies’ hairdresser, photographer, printer and soft furnishings. The most enduring business was the furrier at No 164, which operated from the early 1940s until at least the early 1970s.

## Description

The properties at 158-166 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield, comprise two similar but discrete groups of two-storey residential shops: a pair at Nos 158-160 and a row of three at No 160-166. Designed around the same time, in a comparable Tudor Revival style, the two groups of shops have much in common. Both have longitudinal gabled roofs clad in terracotta tiles, which extend between brick party-walls with parapets that are either raked (Nos 158-60) or stepped (No 162-166), with corbels to the street. The larger group of shops also has two short brick chimneys that straddle the ridge line. In both case, rooflines are enlivened by intersecting gablets with timber bargeboards and turned finials: the row of three shops has a central dormer-like gablet with paired window, flanked by two smaller gablets, while the paired shops have a single gablet above a slightly projecting central bay window.

At first floor level, the two groups have contrasting wall finishes: the row of three has clinker brickwork laid in conventional stretcher bond (but with some panels in an ornamental herringbone bond), while the adjacent pair has a heavily textured Spanish-style rendered finish, with narrow piers of manganese Roman brick at each end. Both facades have decorative timber boards to evoke the traditional half-timbered effect, with simple studs, rails and braces as well as more ornate elements such as saltires (ie St Andrew’s Cross) with cusps to form trefoils and quatrefoils. Rows of small curved timber brackets extend along the eaves line of the paired shops, and along the sill line of the boxed window at the attic story of the group of three. Fenestration is otherwise varied. The paired shops have a central projecting bay window with corbelled brick sill and casement sashes, flanked by individual double-hung sashes with timber shutters. The row of three shops has tall sash windows in groups of three or four, containing leaded glass in a rectilinear grid pattern, and there are also two narrow lancet arch windows. All windows contain leaded glazing, either in a lozenge pattern (No 158-160) or rectilinear grid (Nos 162-166).

At ground level, the five shopfronts are separated by clinker brick piers (in the case of the paired shops, in narrow Roman brick, with matching brick lintels). Only two original shopfronts (Nos 158 and 162) remain notably intact, with matching brick spandrels and thresholds, splayed in-going, metal-framed shopfront windows (angled to follow the shape of the in-going) and a continuous highlight window with leaded glazing. The shopfronts at No 160, 164 and 166 have all been replaced, although the last has a splayed in-going that recalls the original. All five shops have cantilevered canopies, but only those to the paired shops retain original pressed metal ceilings.

## Comparisons

The mediaevalised architectural style referred to as Tudor Revival, also known as Elizabethan, Old English and English Domestic Revival, encapsulates an eclectic approach informed by a wide range of predominantly British influences from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, and revivals of same in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some of the more recurring elements associated with the style include steep tile-clad roofs, half-timbering, and windows of picturesque form (such as dormers, canted bays and oriels) with multi-paned and/or leaded sashes. Popular in Melbourne during the inter-war period, it was one of a number of historicist styles (along with Spanish Mission, Georgian Revival *et al*) that, in contrast to the modern style, appealed to those of more conservative tastes.

In what is now the City of Glen Eira, the Tudor Revival style is well represented in innumerable houses from the 1930s, as well as some apartment blocks (notably *Craigellachie* at 273 Orrong Road, St Kilda East), but is considerably less common in commercial applications. The most outstanding surviving example is the former *Tudor Service Station* at 254-258 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield North (1935), already included on the heritage overlay schedule [HO24]. Typologically hybrid, this unique development comprises a group of residential shops with an attached motor garage of matching form, but set back from the street to provide vehicular access to petrol pumps. While it demonstrates many of the principal characteristics of the style, such as the steep tile-clad roof, half-timbering, Roman brickwork and multi-paned windows, it also uses some more distinctive and unusual motifs such as a castellated parapet, Tudor arches, false-arched lancet windows, and the deliberate omission of small areas of stucco to expose brickwork beneath.

To date, only a few other groups of Tudor Revival shops have been identified in the study area. While similarly articulated as double-storey residential shops (ie, retail premises at street level with flats above), in small groups (either pairs, or groups of three), these other examples vary in complexity. One group of three, on a corner site at 246-248 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield North (c1937), is of relatively simple form, with tile-clad roof, rendered walls and pairs or groups of double-hung multi-paned sash windows. Overt mediavalising is sparse, chiefly limited to a single half-timbered gabled bay on the Glen Eira Road elevation and a narrow lancet arched window on the Orrong Road side. Another row of three shops, at 582-586 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick (c1937), is also fairly simple, with the two outermost shops enlivened at the upper level by canted bay windows on timber brackets. It has been much altered by overpainting, replacement of some original sashes and partial removal (or concealment) of the half-timbered effect.

In both scale and architectural sophistication, the row of shops at 158-166 Hawthorn Road is most comparable to a counterpart at 712-722 Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield South [part of HO66], which similarly comprises two separate buildings: one group of three shops at Nos 712-716 (c1937) and a slightly later one (c1939) at Nos 718-722. The earlier block is conventional in its fenestration, but a little more complex in detailing, with extensive half-timbering, and a longitudinal gabled roof with stepped parapets. The later block is even more assured in design, with more ornate half timbering (with the less common trefoil and quatrefoil motifs, as seen at Hawthorn Road), casement sashes with leaded glazing, and stepped parapets with a rendered finish and moulded tops. All three of its shopfronts remain largely intact, with clinker brick, splayed in-goings, metal-framed windows, leaded highlights and, most unusually, multi-paned timber entry doors with Tudor arches.

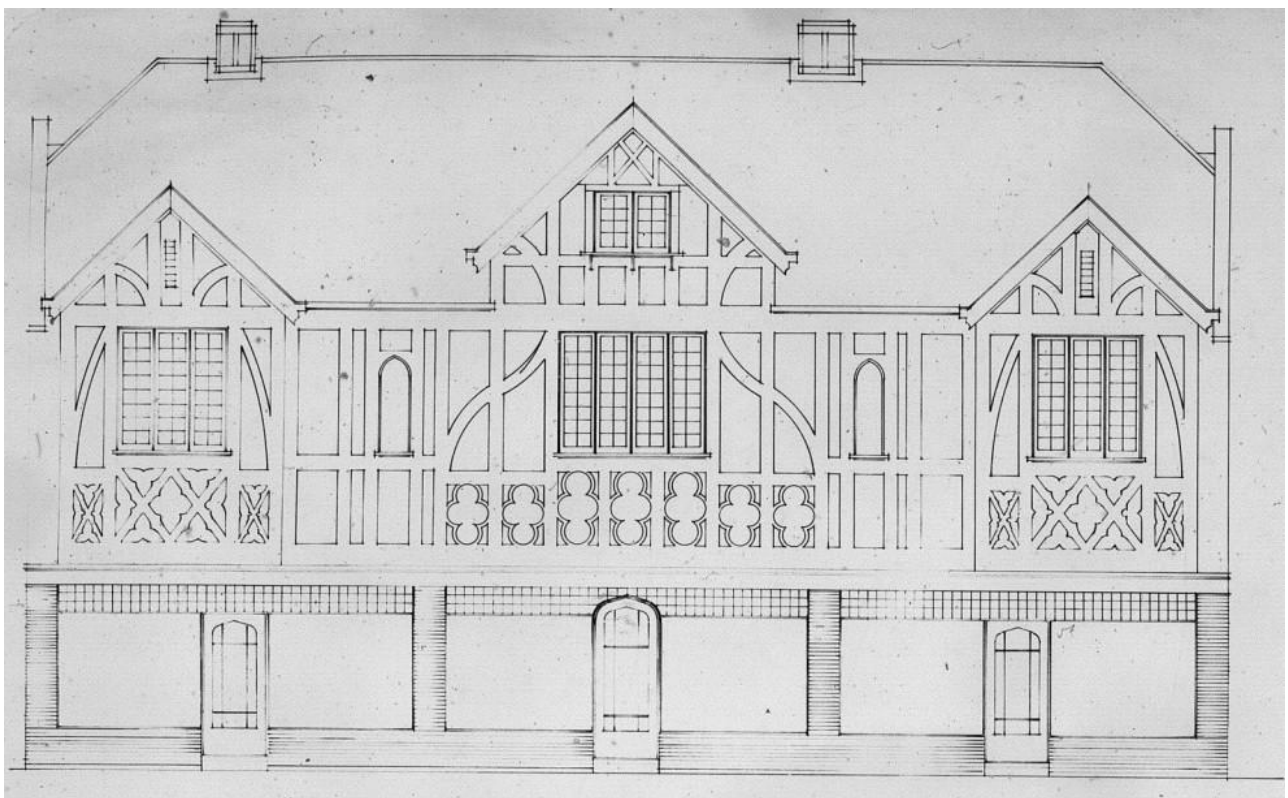
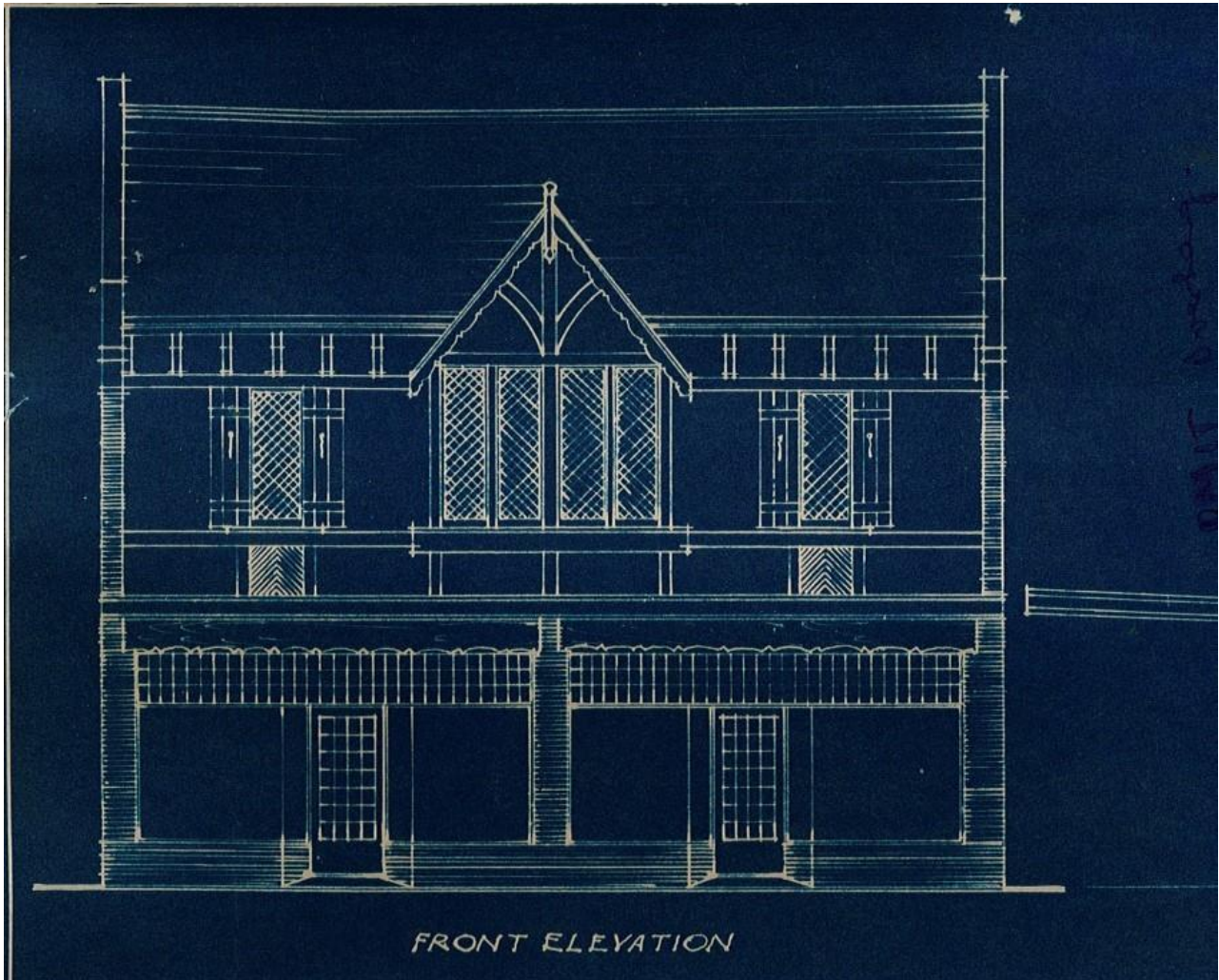
## Reference

J Richards, builder. "Proposed brick shops and dwellings, Hawthorn Road, Caulfield", working drawing, undated [c1936-37]. City of Caulfield Permit No 1,949.

## Identified by

City of Glen Eira





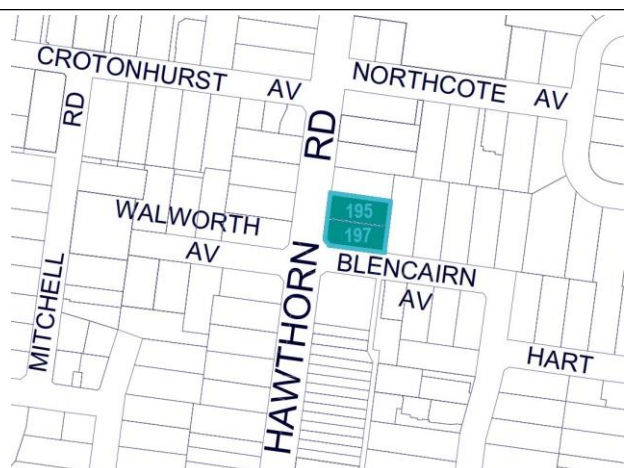


**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSES (PAIR)	<b>Citation No</b>	HG05
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 A1
<b>Address</b>	195-197 Hawthorn Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1939
<b>Designer/s</b>	J W Fairbanks & Son	<b>Builder/s</b>	J W Fairbanks & Son



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House(s)	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		

<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The two houses at 195-197 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North, comprised a detached pair of single-storey hip-roofed rendered brick dwellings in a hybrid style combining the horizontal emphasis, round corners and curved windows of the Streamlined Moderne with the fluted columns and applied ornament of the classical tradition. Similar without being identical, the two houses were erected in 1939 by local designer/builder J W Fairbanks & Son, as separate but attached residences for two sisters.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of both houses, the detached garage to No 195 (but excluding its front wall, which is a later infill), and the matching dwarf walls (and any original metal gates) along both street boundaries. The non-original garage at the rear of No 197, facing Blencairn Avenue, is not considered significant.

### How is it significant?

The pair of houses at 195-197 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North, 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



### *Why is it significant?*

The two houses are aesthetically significant as a distinctive example of domestic architecture from the late 1930s, deftly combining key characteristics of the prevailing Streamlined Moderne style (eg rounded corners and unusually extensive use of curved glazing) with classical touches (ie fluted porch columns) and an uncommon degree of applied ornament (included brick stringcourses and moulded elements). The exuberance and unselfconsciousness of this hybrid design is testament to the fact that it was the work of a talented and enthusiastic designer/builder rather than a qualified architect, reflecting the more populist approach to residential architecture at the time. Designed to be similar without being identical, the two houses form a unique pair and an eye-catching element in the streetscape, enhanced by retention of their original front fences. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

Erected in 1939 for two members of the same family, the detached pair of houses at 195-197 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North, was the work of local designer/builder J W Fairbanks & Son. The sites formed part of a subdivision created fifteen years early from *Blencairn*, a venerable mansion estate dating back to the 1880s. Gazetted in 1924, the subdivision created a new street, Blencairn Avenue, with five residential blocks along the north side and the original mansion initially retained on a larger block on the south side (but later demolished for further subdivision). The Hawthorn Road frontage was carved into sixteen elongated allotments that, with widths from 18 to 22 feet (5.5 to 6.7 metres), were clearly intended to attract retail development. This, however, met with mixed success: the blocks along Hawthorn Road would not be developed until the later 1930s, with those to the south of Blencairn Avenue attracting limited commercial development while those to the north were consolidated and acquired for residential use.

In July 1939, a site at the north corner of Hawthorn Road and Blencairn Avenue (comprising Lots 9, 10 and half of 11) was acquired by an unmarried woman, and the adjacent site (Lots 12, 13 and halves of 11 and 14) by her married sister. Title records indicate that both women were then residing at the same address in Elsternwick. Born in the late 1890s, the sisters were both milliners by profession. It has not been confirmed what prompted the sisters to relocate to Caulfield North and build adjacent houses on Hawthorn Road. On 26 May 1939, the City of Caulfield issued separate building permits: one for “brick villa, Hawthorn Road” for the married sister, and the other for “brick villa and garage” for the unmarried one. The builder for both dwellings was identified as J W Fairbanks & Son of 123 Orrong Crescent.

Joseph William Fairbanks (1871-1942) evidently hailed from Western Australia, as electoral rolls record him as a carpenter in Subiaco in the early 1900s. By the end of the decade, he and his wife Agnes had relocated to Victoria and settled in the Bendigo area, where he worked as a builder. In 1918, the family (by then including their young son Harold) moved to Melbourne and took up residence in the St Kilda/Balaclava area. The fact that Fairbanks changed address frequently over the next few years, relocating from Bowen Street to Hawsleigh Street to Westbury Street, suggests that he was building houses on a speculative basis, briefly occupying them himself, then selling them and moving on. This pattern evidently continued in the 1930s, when the family relocated to Caulfield and resided in Inkerman Road and later Orrong Crescent. Little is known of Fairbanks’ professional activities, although he appears to have styled himself as a designer/builder. The name J W Fairbanks & Son is first recorded in the late 1930s, indicating that son Harold Walter Fairbanks (1915-1962), identified in electoral rolls as a carpenter, had joined the family business by that time. It is unclear if he carried on the firm after his father’s death in 1942.



The two houses that J W Fairbanks & Sons erected on Hawthorn Road were completed by the end of 1939, when they were subject to a feature article in the Sydney-based trade journal, *Decoration & Glass*. Drawing attention to the fact that they represented the work of a designer/builder, without an architect's input, the article conceded that "while architect designed homes are intended to suit in every detail the requirements of one particular client, the builder-designer caters for a wider field". The quirky hybrid design, combining both traditional and progressive elements, was also acknowledged: "while it is difficult to reconcile classic columns with bent glass windows, they are well worthy of study as authentic examples of the current public demand. They afford, also, an interesting comparison with the builder-design homes of a few years ago". Befitting the journal's remit, the article otherwise focused on the construction materials and finishes, with emphasis on the extensive use of curved glazing. This was supplied by the Australian Window Glass Pty Ltd, which ran its own advertisement in the same issue, featuring an illustration of the house at No 195.

On completion of the two houses, the unmarried sister and her widowed mother took up residence at No 195, while the married sister and her husband lived at No 197. The two branches of the family would remain neighbours for a relatively brief period. The unmarried sister wed in the mid-1940s and moved elsewhere, while her sister and brother-in-law remained at No 195 until the late 1950s. Both houses have had a succession of subsequent owners.

### Description

The houses at 195-197 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield, are a detached pair of single-storey hip-roofed rendered brick dwellings in a Streamlined Moderne style. The work of the same designer/builder, the dwellings are very similar in expression, finishes and detailing, but not exactly identical. Street frontages are asymmetrical and double-fronted, with the dominant expression of overlapping curves sometimes referred to as the 'Waterfall' style. The convex curves of the walls and parapets are echoed in the curved glass of the windows and curved porches with matching curved flights of steps. The stark rendered walls are relieved by clinker brick plinths that incorporate soldier courses; the house at No 197 has matching clinker brick to the window lintels and a stepped motif above the entry porch. The horizontality of each of the two street facades is variously emphasised by incised stringcourses (No 197), fluted banding (No 195), a projecting porch canopy (No 197) and a recessing parapet (No 197). Both houses are further enlivened by panels of cabled fluting, placed either vertically (No 195) or horizontally (No 197). Both also have fluted columns to their front porches: No 195 has paired columns with Corinthian capitals, while No 197 has single columns with Ionic capitals. The front entrances have pairs of glazed doors with flanking sidelights, all with curvilinear leadlighting. The corner house, at No 197 has a porthole window to the side (Blencairn Avenue) elevation and a rendered dwarf wall along both frontages, with matching clinker brick plinth and capping and a corner gateway with stepped gateposts and mild steel gate.

### Comparisons

While Joseph Fairbanks lived and worked in St Kilda, Balaclava and Caulfield for two decades, little seems to be recorded of his professional activities in the study area. Research to date has identified only two other houses that can be conclusively attributed to J W Fairbanks. The earlier of these is a two-storey brick dwelling at 38 Fitzgibbon Crescent, Caulfield North (1934), in a Tudor Revival mode with hipped tile-clad roof and rendered walls with tapestry brick lintels and quoining (*Argus* 07/09/1934:2). Somewhat later, and more comparable to the subject buildings, is a two-storey rendered brick house at 14 Findon Avenue, Caulfield North (c1941), this time in a stark functionalist mode with curved corner (incorporating curved glass window) and projecting balcony above a classically-inspired entry porch. While it is likely that Fairbanks designed and built the houses that his own family occupied, none of these remains extant in what is now the City of Glen Eira: his first Caulfield house, at 521 Inkerman Road (c1932) has been demolished, as has the premises that he later occupied at 87-89 (formerly 123-123a) Orrong Crescent.

Several houses have been identified in the study area that, while not confirmed as the work of J W Fairbanks, are notably similar in their hybrid design approach. Of these, the most pertinent comparator is a single-storey rendered brick house at 2 Pullman Court, St Kilda East (c1938) that, with its curved corners, shaped parapets and curved entry porch with fluted columns, displays a confident amalgam of progressive and traditional styles that is eerily reminiscent of Fairbanks' two houses on Hawthorn Road. A similar approach is also evident in a nearby single-storey house at 166 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (c1939), which also combines Moderne curves with classical columns, albeit in a simpler fashion. Otherwise, the Hawthorn Road houses are more broadly comparable to manifestations of the Streamlined Moderne style that are more ornamented than most, such as the late example at 705 North Road, Carnegie (1943) [H041], with a similar stepped and curving façade at the lower level, and 442 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1947), with curving rendered walls punctuated by garland-like parapet frieze and row of plain circular panels.

## References

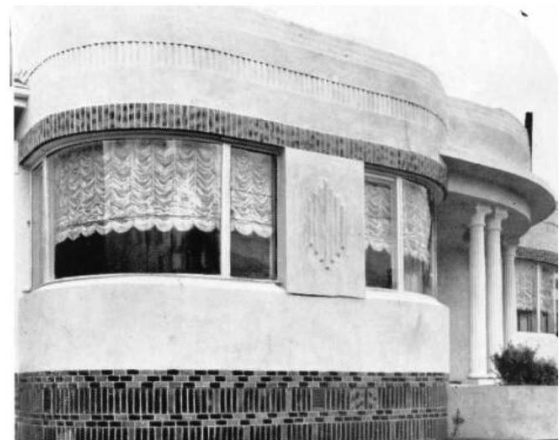
Lodged plan No 10,125, dated 2 July 1924.

Certificates of Title, Volume 6332, Folios 234 and 235, dated 19 July 1939.

"Twin homes: Spectacular design features bent glass", *Decoration & Glass*, Dec 1939, pp 3, 20-22.

## Identified by

City of Glen Eira

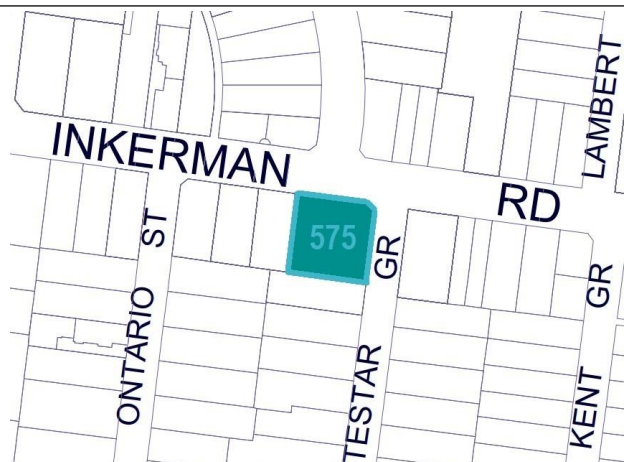


*Two contemporary photographs: a general view of both houses (left) and detail of No 195 (right)  
(source: Decoration & Glass, December 1939)*

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	HG06
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Linden Flats</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J11
<b>Address</b>	575 Inkerman Road CAULFIELD	<b>Date/s</b>	1937
<b>Designer/s</b>	T W Morris?	<b>Builder/s</b>	T W Morris



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

*Linden* at 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North, is a double-storey rendered brick block of flats in a Streamlined Moderne style with parapeted roof, curved corners and a horizontal emphasis that is relieved by the contrasting vertical elements of entry bays to each street façade. Built in 1937 for a prominent radio manufacturer, the flats were erected by prolific local builder (and later Mayor of Caulfield), T W Morris, who may have also designed them.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building, and the matching brick dwarf wall and gateposts and letterboxes that extend along both street boundaries.

### How is it significant?

The flats satisfy 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.

### *Why is it significant?*

The *Linden* flats are aesthetically significant as an excellent and unusually large-scale example of a block of flats in the Streamlined Moderne style. An ambitious scheme to provide a complex of ten flats on a double-width corner block (forming part of a recent subdivision of some of the last remaining vacant land along Inkerman Road), it provided its as-yet unidentified designer with the rare opportunity to create a landmark building with unparalleled streetscape presence.

Characteristic of the Streamline Moderne style, its two stark and atypically elongated street facades are expressed as a continuous horizontal sweep with parapeted roofline, curving corners and incised shadowlines, with a contrasting vertical focus introduced by the three vertical entrance bays, distinguished by their stepped parapets, recessive vertical banding and curvilinear metal balustrades. Retaining its original dwarf wall along both street boundaries, this confidently conceived and atypically grand block of inter-war flats remains as a striking feature along this major thoroughfare. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The *Linden* flats at 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North, were erected in 1937 as an investment property for a leading radio manufacturer who lived in nearby Armadale. The owner was the son of major city retailer whose chain of variety stores expanded considerably during the 1920s. The future owner of the *Linden* flats initially worked as an indentor but became involved in the radio business in the mid-1920s. By the late 1930s, he was involved in a number of radio manufacturing firms, including one that was well-known for its stylish range of console and table-top radio units in Bakelite or veneered timber, echoing the fashionable Art Deco and Moderne styles of the day.

It was around that time that the radio manufacturer acquired land at the corner of Inkerman Road and Testar Grove that formed part of a new estate created from the grounds of *Rosnay*, a Victorian-era mansion at the corner of Inkerman Road and Testar Grove, which was owned for many years by a prominent solicitor. In 1936, the vast property was carved up to create the *Eaves Estate*, with fourteen residential allotments that fronted Inkerman Road, Testar Grove and Ontario Grove. Newspaper advertisements for the forthcoming auction emphasised that “this locality is the pick of this charming district, close to Grimwade House, Christian Brothers’ College and schools of all denominations, and surrounded by beautiful homes in all directions” (*Argus* 23/05/1936:2).

On 22 July 1937, the radio manufacturer acquired the title to Lots 8 and 9 of the *Eaves Estate*, which combined to form a generous square-shaped corner site with 100-foot (30 metres) frontages to both streets. A month earlier, on 23 June, a building permit was issued for a “ten flat building and garages, Inkerman Road”, citing also the name and home address of the new purchaser. No architect was named, but the builder was listed as T W Morris of 25 Neerim Road, Caulfield. This was Thomas Wilson Morris (1889-1980), a Sydneysider who had moved to Melbourne by the early 1930s, initially residing in Bentleigh before relocating to Neerim Road circa 1936. Evidence suggests that, during this early period, Morris worked as a designer/builder; this is hinted at by such projects as a group of “ultra-modern brick villas by T W Morris” in Brighton East, which were advertised for sale in 1938 (*Herald*, 03/09/1938:14). Active in his locality in both a professional and personal capacity, Morris served as a ward councillor from 1938 and as Mayor of the City of Caulfield in 1939-41, including a stint as ARP Warden. His construction business, latterly styled as T W Morris & Sons Pty Ltd and based in Murrumbeena, thrived well into the post-WW2 era.

A sheet of working drawings held by the City of Glen Eira, undated and bearing the title block of “T W Morris, master builder”, depicts the *Linden* flats with their current L-shaped footprint, massing and internal planning, but with the street elevations in a Tudor Revival mode. At some point, this was revised to a more progressive Moderne idiom.



Construction was completed by November 1937, when a newspaper advertisement noted the availability of “magnificent new flats, four and five spacious rooms, latest kitchens and bathrooms, gas stove, hot water service, double connect doors, charming outlook” (*Argus* 27/11/1937:22). The building first appeared in the *Sands & McDougall Directory* in 1938, belatedly listed as “flats being built” on the south side of Inkerman Road, between Ontario and Testar Groves. The following year, they were first definitively designated as No 575, and identified as the *Linden* flats.

Around the same time, the flats attracted attention from the national press, when a photograph appeared in the Sydney-based journal, *Building*. Although its address was erroneously cited as Balaclava Road, Caulfield, and neither the designer nor the builder was credited, the caption otherwise praised this “new and striking block of modern flats” for its progressive style, observing that “a horizontal motif is the predominating note of the design, which, however, is punctuated by the verticality of the entrance to the various flats. Graceful ironwork tends to provide contrast with the heaviness of the unadorned brick walls and parapets” (*Building* 25/07/1938:40).

## Description

*Linden*, at 575 Inkerman Street, Caulfield North, is a large two-storey block of brick flats with a low hipped roof concealed by parapets. Occupying a large corner site, the building presents elongated elevations to both street frontages. Conceived in a Streamlined Moderne style, these elevations are rendered with clinker brick plinths and curved corners. The innate horizontality is heightened by slightly recessed bays at each level, forming continuous shadowlines that follow the window sills and lintels. The windows themselves, wide and rectangular, contain metal-framed sashes (which, at the corner, are faceted to follow the curve). The horizontal emphasis of the street facades is relieved by the vertical elements in the form of tall chimney breasts and three prominent off-centre entry bays (two facing Inkerman Road and one on Testar Grove). These bays, which rise well above the parapet line, are delineated by tall piers with stepping edges that curved around at the top. At ground level, a recessed doorway marks the common entrance to the open stairwell, which has a taller vertical window at the upper level opening onto a curved balconette with a mild steel balustrade incorporating volute motifs. On the Inkerman Road side, the entry bay to the right (west) end is slightly wider, incorporating an additional pair of openings with matching metal balustrades.

Along both street frontages, there is a rendered brick dwarf wall that incorporates gateways marked by squat clinker brick piers with stepped caps and curving spur walls.

## Comparisons

As a residential building in the Streamlined Moderne mode, the *Linden* flats are quite distinct compared to the few counterparts currently on the heritage overlay schedule, which include similarly-scaled two-storey houses or duplexes at 4 Linlithgow Avenue, Caulfield (1938) [H041], 4-6 Gladstone Parade, Elsternwick (1939) [H022], and 705 North Road, Carnegie (1943) [H0143]. Of these, the Gladstone Parade building is perhaps most comparable, with its stronger horizontal emphasis punctuated by contrasting stepped vertical elements. In this regard, the *Linden* flats are also comparable to the slightly later *Olgita* flats at 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (Leslie J W Reed, 1940), which makes similar use of curving corners (albeit of a more pronounced bulbous form) with horizontal mouldings, and the communal entry marked by a vertical bay that rises up above the parapet line to form a prominent tower-like feature with a stepped profile. Both buildings also use faceted steel-framed sashes (rather than continuous bent glass) where window bays curve around the corner, and are enlivened by ornamental wrought ironwork in typical symmetrical curvilinear patterns. The eye-catching entry bays of the *Linden* flats, with their irregular profiles and vertical stepped banding represents a more intricate version of a motif that recurs in contemporaneous Moderne buildings, demonstrated locally by a startling early example at 83 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (architect unknown, 1933).

Aside from its style, *Linden* is notable for its scale. Providing a total of ten flats, it was one of the more ambitious apartment developments to be undertaken in the City of Caulfield in the 1930s, when blocks of flats generally comprised only four or six units. Although *Linden* is dwarfed by the even more enormous 25-unit *Craigellachie* flats at 273 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (W H Merritt, 1934-37), it was still uncommonly large for its time. Amongst its local comparators in this regard are the seven-unit *Meadows* flats at 10-12 Melby Avenue, St Kilda East (1940), an eight-unit block at 14 King Street, Elsternwick (1940) and the ten-unit *Toolangi Court* at 500-506 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick (1936), of identical size but laid out on a U-shaped courtyard plan rather than the L-shaped plan seen at *Linden*.

## References

Certificate of Title, Volume 6129, Folio 700, created 22 July 1937.

T W Morris, "Proposed block of flats to be erected corner Inkerman Road and Testar Grove, Caulfield", working drawings, undated [c1937]. City of Caulfield Permit No 2,238.

"Modern Victorians Flats, Balaclava Road, Caulfield", *Building*, 25 July 1938, p 40.

## Identified by

City of Glen Eira



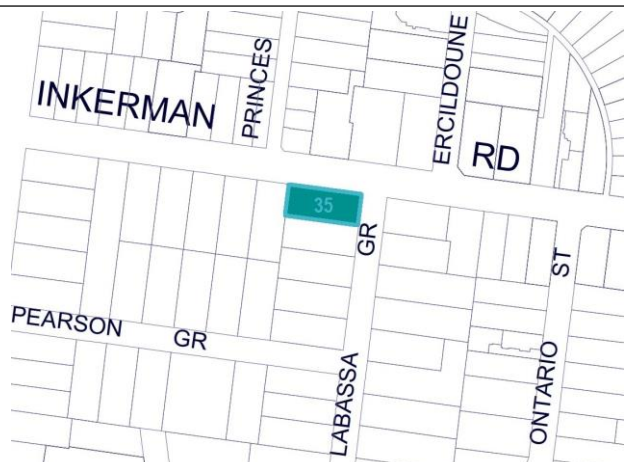
Early published photograph of the Linden Flats, 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North  
Source: *Building*, 25 July 1938, p 40.



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	HG07
<b>Other name/s</b>	Meldrum House (former)	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J11
<b>Address</b>	35 Labassa Grove CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1917-18
<b>Designer/s</b>	William Meldrum	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The former Meldrum House at 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North, is an attic-storey Arts & Crafts bungalow of ashlar stone construction with fish-scale slate roof. It has a prominent gabled façade to Labassa Grove, incorporating bracketed eaves and projecting porch with Tuscan columns and dentillated cornice, and glass-walled sunroom, dormer windows and corner balcony to Inkerman Road. Erected in 1917-18, the house was designed by architect William Meldrum (longtime associate of Charles D'Ebro and brother of artist Max Meldrum) for his own use.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire house.

### How is it significant?

The 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 F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

### *Why is it significant?*

The former Meldrum House is significant as an idiosyncratic example of an early Arts & Crafts bungalow. While its attic-storeyed form, prominent gabled frontage, dormer windows, bracketed eaves and shingled infill are wholly typical of that emerging aesthetic, the use of fish-scale roof slates, ashlar stone construction and overt classical references in the projecting front porch (*in antis* Tuscan columns and dentillated cornice) are particularly rare and unusual. While use of feature stonework became more common in later bungalows, examples entirely of stone construction would remain exceptional well into the 1920s and beyond. Demonstrating a high degree of creative achievement, the sophistication of the design testifies to the fact that it was an architect's own home. Sited on a prominent corner block, the house remains an eye-catching and unusual element in the predominantly inter-war streetscape. (*Criterion E; Criterion F*)

### **History**

The house at 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield was erected in 1917-18 for architect William Meldrum, who designed it himself. Born in Edinburgh, William Julian Templeton Meldrum (1874-1945) migrated to Australia in 1889 with his parents and three siblings, one of whom was Max Meldrum (1875-1955), later an eminent Australian painter. In 1890, Meldrum became articled to Melbourne architect Charles D'Ebro (1850-1920), late of Grainger & D'Ebro, and would remain with that office for the rest of his career. In 1894, around the time that he completed his articles, he won first prize in a student competition with a scheme for a Turkish bathhouse (*Australian Builders & Contractors News*, 24/11/1894:222). After Meldrum married in 1907, he and his wife took up residence in Marlborough Street, Caulfield North. In 1916, Meldrum and colleague H J Wagstaff were both elevated to partnership in the firm known thereafter as D'Ebro, Meldrum & Wagstaff (*Age* 12/07/1916:16). Early the next year, it was reported that he had become an associate of the RVIA (*RVIA Journal* 01/1917:443). These changes to Meldrum's professional status were almost certainly the impetus for him to decide that it was time to design a new family residence.

As a resident of Marlborough Street, Meldrum was doubtless aware of the nearby *Labassa Estate*, a subdivision created from the grounds of the eponymous mansion. Auctioned in November 1913, it comprised 46 lots with frontage to Balaclava Road and two new north-south roads, Ontario Street and Labassa Grove. Originally, these were cul-de-sacs that stopped just short of Inkerman Road before being extended through in 1916. The City of Caulfield Rate Book for 1916-1917, dated 5 December 1916, records that Lot 16, a prime block on the west corner of Labassa Grove and Inkerman Road was owned by the East St Kilda Sand Company, with a handwritten amendment noting that it had been acquired by William Meldrum on 7 September 1917. In the next year's rate book, dated 27 November 1917, the site is again rated as vacant land, owned by Meldrum, with another handwritten note, dated 15 December, recording a brick [*sic*] house on the site worth £1,000. In the volume for 1918-19, dated 10 December 1918, the new house is definitely recorded for the first time as a seven-roomed brick and stone house, with a Net Annual Value of £70.

At the time that Meldrum designed and built his new house, the office of D'Ebro, Meldrum & Wagstaff was predominantly engaged in non-residential work. Its specific area of expertise was the design of facilities for commercial freezing and refrigeration, illustrated by a number of such projects not only in Victoria but also New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. The practice would soon change direction (and name) after Wagstaff left to open his own office in 1919, and founder Charles D'Ebro committed suicide the following year. With the admission of former Melbourne Harbour Trust engineer-in-chief A C Mackenzie, the firm was rebadged as D'Ebro, Mackenzie & Meldrum and, when Mackenzie resigned in 1926, as D'Ebro, Meldrum & Pearse. In the 1920s, his practice moved away from refrigeration projects to embrace a broader remit including other industrial buildings, banks, shops and offices. Such was Meldrum's reputation during that decade that he appeared in two editions of *Who's Who in Australia*.

The firm of D'Ebro, Meldrum & Pearse appears have petered out during the Depression. In 1931, Meldrum terminated his registration as an architect "on account of adverse economic conditions". Although the practice re-emerged a few years later under the new name of Meldrum & Pearse, now located at 84 William Street, it ceased operation permanently before the end of the decade. By then, Meldrum and his family were still living at 35 Labassa Grove. After Meldrum's death on 19 September 1945, his son (by then, a commercial artist) and daughter-in-law remained at living Labassa Grove for another decade.

## Description

The former Meldrum House at 35 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North, is a gable-roofed attic-storey stone bungalow in the Arts & Crafts style. The stonework consists of a granite plinth with random coursed axe-finished freestone, while the roof has fish-scale slate cladding, terracotta ridges and timber-lined eaves with plain bargeboards and angled brackets. Occupying a corner site, the house presents a mostly symmetrical frontage to Labassa Grove, save for a slightly recessed bay that forms a sunroom across the Inkerman Road side. The principal façade is dominated by a projecting central portico with *in antis* Tuscan columns and dentillated cornice. This is flanked by a pair of tall rectangular windows at each level, with flat arched stone lintels and timber-framed double-hung sashes. At the upper level, there are also two tiny rectangular windows at the outer edge of the facade, abutting the eave bracket. The recessed bay, to the north, contains glazed timber doors with a shingled spandrel above.

The asymmetrical Inkerman Road elevation consists of a continuous row of timber-framed windows along the eaves line, with a larger stone bay at the far (west) end, containing a single window with double-hung sashes. At the upper level, this far end of the roof plane is penetrated by an asymmetrical pair of gabled dormer bays, clad with horizontal timber boarding. The smaller dormer, to the left, forms a bay window with multi-paned windows to three sides. The larger one, slightly set back to the right, has matching multi-paned french doors that open onto a small terrace with a stone balustrade wall.

## Comparisons

It is difficult to place William Meldrum's house in the context of his other architectural work, as the various incarnations of his practice, from 1916 to the late 1930s, have attracted scant scholarly attention. While his firm was prolific, in its early phase, as specialists in commercial refrigeration, little is known of its other work, especially in later years. To date, the only other example located in what is now the City of Glen Eira was a branch of the National Australia Bank at 146 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield (D'Ebro, Meldrum & Pearse, 1928), long since demolished (*Prahran Telegraph* 04/01/1929:2). Meldrum's work in the sphere of residential architecture remains tantalizingly ill-documented. A review of newspaper tender notices has failed to identify any other houses, in the City of Glen Eira or anywhere else, credited to any permutation of Meldrum's practice. While his famous brother, artist Max Meldrum, resided at 377 Kooyong Road, Elsternwick, from 1923, no evidence has been found to suggest that the house (sold when the artist moved to Europe in 1925, and since demolished) was designed by William Meldrum.

Broadly speaking, Meldrum's own house is a manifestation of the bungalow style that emerged in Australian architecture in the early twentieth century before reaching its peak of popularity during the inter-war era. As Graham Butler noted, local examples can be loosely codified according to a broad and often overlapping range of overseas influences that informed them: the Anglo-Indian bungalows of India and Ceylon, Swiss and Italian Chalets, the Arts & Crafts movement from Great Britain, and the California bungalows and New England hunting lodges of the USA.

With its attic storeyed form and prominent gabled frontage with bracketed eaves, Meldrum's house is most demonstrative of the Arts & Crafts style. In this broad sense, it can be compared to a number of contemporaneous bungalows of similar form, such as the rendered example at 284 Orrong Road, Caulfield North (Harold Desbrowe-Annear, 1916), a red brick one at 11 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North (1917), and timber and roughcast one at 29 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena (1918). Such dwellings proliferated into the early 1920s, as demonstrated by the quintessential example at 40 Snowdon Avenue, Caulfield South (1921) [H0139].

What sets Meldrum's own house apart from such comparators, however, is its use of materials and details, notably the ashlar stone construction, fish-scale roof slates and the classically-detailed front porch, which represent an idiosyncratic departure from the bungalow norm. In themselves, classical columns are not uncommon in 1920s bungalow-style dwellings, and can often be seen in trabeated or arcaded front porches (eg 10, 11 and 15 Field Street, Bentleigh). However, the porch to Meldrum's house, with *in antis* columns set into a projecting rectilinear bay with dentillated cornice, represents an entirely more rigorous application of classical influences. This is rarer at a local level; one comparator was the slightly later (and recently demolished) bungalow at 91 Balaclava Road (Sydney Smith & Ogg, 1923), which had a recessed front entry porch with similar *in antis* columns, albeit of the Ionic order rather than Tuscan, and mounted on a plinth rather than freestanding.

Similarly, brick bungalows might occasionally incorporate feature stonework, typified by the aforementioned example by Sydney Smith & Ogg (with tapering pillars of river stone) or another at 448 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield North (with porch piers in rough-hewn stone blocks). However, the use of ashlar masonry as the principal construction material, as with Meldrum's own home, is exceptional. Only a few local comparators have yet been identified, all dating from the mid-1920s. Graeme Butler reports that, during that decade, the Mount Gambier Limestone Quarrying & Building Company erected a display house of limestone construction on North Road, Ormond. Newspaper references confirm that this house, promoted as "a beautiful home of white stone, artistically designed and lavishly fitted throughout" dates from 1925 and stood near the corner of Booran Road (*Argus* 21/02/1925:27). It appears to survive at 409 North Road, albeit in an altered state, now used as a medical centre. Among the few more intact and evocative example of Mount Gambier limestone construction are the attic-storey bungalow at 53 Neerim Road, Caulfield, and a more modest single-storey bungalow at 1 Frogmore Road, Carnegie (1926), with ashlar masonry in contrasting smooth and rough-hewn blocks.

## References

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(Individual Architects Registration Files), PROV.

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## Identified by

Andrew Ward (C+ graded, with basic citation, October 2000)

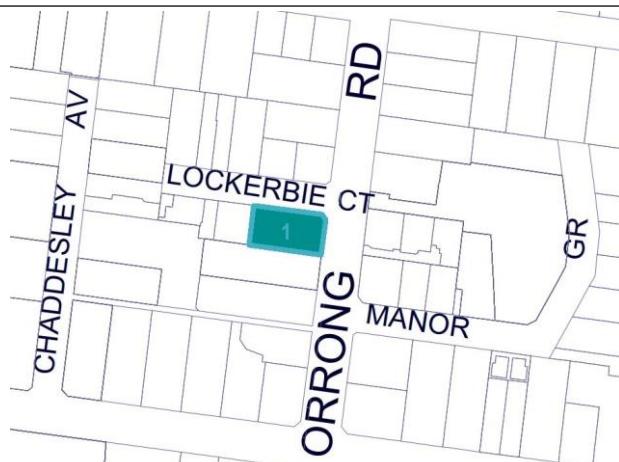
Additional research and assessment by Built Heritage Pty Ltd



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	HG08
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H11
<b>Address</b>	1 Lockerbie Court ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1936-37
<b>Designer/s</b>	W H Merritt	<b>Builder/s</b>	Frank Butt



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The building at 1 Lockerbie Court, St Kilda East, is a double-storey rendered brick block of flats in a bold Functionalist style, starkly expressed with parapeted roof and unadorned street elevations incorporating stepped planes, curved balconies, clinker brick entry bays and a sweeping curve at the corner. Built in 1936-37 for a Polish-born businessman, who briefly lived there himself before moving to Sydney, the flats were designed by architect W H Merritt.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building.

### How is it significant?

The flats satisfy the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

### *Why is it Significant?*

The flats are aesthetically significant as a fine example of modernist residential architecture of the later 1930s in the stark European-influenced mode described at the time as “Continental” but now generally referred to as the Functionalist style. With a parapeted roofline defining elongated street façades in plain rendered brick, with stepping planes, rounded balconies, contrasting manganese brick entry bays with vertical strip windows, and a bold sweeping curve at the corner, the building potently evokes the spartan Functionalist tradition. While contemporaneous buildings in the more embellished Jazz Moderne and Streamlined Moderne styles are common in what is now the City of Glen Eira (and especially the former City of Caulfield), this block of flats is rare as one of very few local manifestations of the unadorned Functionalist style. (*Criterion B, Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The flats at 1 Lockerbie Court, St Kilda East, were erected in 1937 to a design by architect W H Merritt. The client was a Polish-born businessman who had migrated to Australia by the late 1920s, when he took a position as director of a leading Melbourne firm of fur and skin merchants. After marrying in Sydney in the early 1930s, he and his wife returned to Melbourne and lived in cul-de-sac estates in Elwood and then St Kilda East. During 1934, he undertook a five-month business trip, travelling to Great Britain and back via the USA, passing through New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco (*Herald* 31/07/1934:21). On his return, he and his wife moved into a flat at Hampden Road, Armadale. Seeking to provide themselves with a purpose-built home of their own, they acquired land in the newly-formed cul-de-sac of Lockerbie Court. This comprised part of the *Chaddesley Estate*, a new subdivision created from the grounds of the eponymous mansion on the north-west corner of Orrong and Balaclava Roads. Conceived in early 1936, the new estate was laid out according to “the most modern methods of town planning”, with old timber paling fences replaced by new clinker brick walls and a “handsome newly constructed steel gateway” at the estate’s entry on Lockerbie Court (*Herald* 20/02/1936:20). Before the end of the year, the Polish businessman had purchased the prime corner block fronting Orrong Road and engaged architect W H Merritt to design a block of flats.

London-born, William Henry Merritt (1898-1955) studied carpentry at the Working Men’s College (later MTC, now RMIT) and joined the building firm of Clements Langford as an apprentice joiner. By the early 1920s, he had begun private practice in partnership as Merritt & Slevin, architects and designers, with offices in Melbourne and Geelong. Married in 1924, Merritt and his wife Mary settled in Elsternwick; by the end of the decade, he was in sole practice and had already fostered a reputation for several well-received blocks of flats in St Kilda. During the peak of his practice in the 1930s, he continued to specialise in apartment blocks but also designed numerous (generally large-scale) single dwellings, several hotels and hotel renovations, and other projects including a factory, guest house and church hall. His office appears to have closed around 1941, presumably due to WW2. Having briefly been attached to the Australian Flying Corps during WW1, he served as a Flying Officer with the RAAF during WW2. Afterwards, Merritt and his wife moved to Toorak. Subsequently maintaining a lower professional profile, he retired in 1954 due to ill health and died the following year, aged only 57 years.

While it is unconfirmed how the Polish businessman came to engage Merritt to design the building, it seems more than coincidental that, shortly beforehand, the architect had completed a particularly eye-catching Moderne-style house at 35 Hampden Road, Armadale, just up the street from where Merritt’s future client was living at No 29. Towards the end of 1936, Merritt called tenders for “erection of block of flats at Orrong Road, East St Kilda” (*Age* 07/11/1936:20) and, early the next year, the contract for “four brick flats, Orrong Road and Lockerbie Crescent [*sic*]”, was awarded to builder Frank Butt of Punt Road, Richmond.



The project was reportedly nearing completion in late May, when it was subject to a detailed write-up in a daily newspaper. Entitled “Continental design in East St Kilda Flats”, the article focused on the progressive planning and fitout of the block, which included a central cooling system (described as “an overseas system of air-conditioning”), built-in cocktail bars and radio units, sound-proof floors and stairwells, bathrooms with heated towel rails, and “completely equipped kitchens with electric exhaust fans in place of the old fashioned chimney” (*Herald*, 19/05/1937:25). Such innovations, not to mention the purportedly “Continental” design, clearly reflected the forward-thinking inclinations of a client who was both a European émigré and a much-travelled businessman who had spent time interstate and overseas.

While electoral rolls confirm that the Polish businessman and his wife had taken up residence in one of the new flats in 1937, they were to remain there for a relatively short period. During 1939, he resigned from his directorship to become the Australian manager for a rival firm. In December, he embarked upon a three-month overseas tour, visiting fur sales in the USA, Canada, China and Japan (*Adelaide Advertiser* 04/11/1939:19). By 1940, the family had settled in Sydney.

## Description

The building at 1 Lockerbie Court is a double-storey rendered brick block of flats in a bold Functionalist style, with a tile-clad hipped roof concealed by a parapet. Occupying a corner site, the building is laid out on an L-shaped footprint; its two street elevations, starkly articulated with plain rendered walls and a narrow clinker brick plinth, are expressed continuously, with a sweeping curve at the junction. On the Orrong Road side, the façade is divided into a series of stepping bays, dominated by an entrance bay in clinker Roman brick, which projects high above the parapet line. This bay has a recessed porch, with curved reveals and a soldier-course lintel, and a multi-paned vertical strip window to the stairwell within. Between the stairwell window and the porch is a decorative motif of three projecting rendered chevrons, as well as metal numerals stating the property’s original Orrong Road street number, 263.

The longer north elevation, to Lockerbie Court, is expressed as a series of slightly recessed and projecting bays, incorporating an off-centre clinker brick entrance bay that is virtually identical to that on Orrong Road, but with a conventional rectangular window at the upper level rather than a vertical strip window. Instead of metal numerals, the street address of this frontage (1 Lockerbie Court) is indicated by a narrow metal-framed light box set into the right side of the curved door reveal. Along the Lockerbie Court facade, the recessed bays incorporate curved balconies at each level, with low black-painted metal balustrades. All of the windows, and the glazed doors to the north-facing balconies, contained multi-paned metal-framed sashes.

## Comparisons

Broadly speaking, the flats at 1 Lockerbie Court provide evidence of the local boom of pre-war apartment building that emerged slowly and gradually from the mid-1920s, burgeoned from the early 1930s, and then reached its peak towards the end of that decade before tailing off as wartime restrictions took hold from the early 1940s. As an example of a block of flats from the peak era, spanning the years from 1937 to 1941, the building has countless local comparators, many of which are indicative, to a greater or lesser degree, of the prevailing Moderne style. The curving corner, a defining characteristic of the idiom, is evident in such examples as *Toolangi Court* at 500-506 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick (1936), *Elster Court* at 83 Orrong Road, Elsternwick (c1937), *Otira* at 440 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1940) and an unnamed block at 237 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield (c1939). In all of these cases, and generally speaking, curved corners are used to accentuate part of the façade (eg a projecting bay), and tend to be enlivened by incised grooves, or stringcourses of contrasting brick or moulded render, to heighten the sense of horizontality.

By contrast, the building at Lockerbie Court stands out for its starker articulation, with no applied ornament, and the fact that its curved corner creates a continuous sweep between the two street facades, with the roof entirely hidden by a parapet. In this sense, the building is perhaps most comparable to the similarly slick, if somewhat more ornamented, *Linden* flats at 575 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North (1937). The bold Functionalist expression of the Lockerbie Court flats is (as noted in the contemporary write-up) more evocative of Continental European antecedents. Even outside the specific realm of apartment blocks, this Functionalist style is an uncommon presence in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Very few truly comparable examples have yet been identified, such as the two similarly spartan semi-detached pairs of maisonettes at 317-317a and 319-319a Bambra Road, Caulfield South (c1941), and a house at 162 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (c1939), with a sweeping cream brick façade, and rounded corner with curving window.

W H Merritt designed a number of buildings in what is now the City of Glen Eira and, with the notable exception of *Craigellachie* flats at 273 Orrong Road (1934-37), in the Tudor Revival mode, his work is largely represented by single residences in the Moderne idiom. While a one-storey house in Kambea Grove, Caulfield North (1938) has evidently been demolished, larger two-storey houses still survive at 1 Grimwade Court, Caulfield North (1936), 7 Lempriere Avenue, St Kilda East (1937) and 430-432 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1940). All three are similar in date, scale, form and expression of typical Moderne features such as curved corners, first-floor sun terraces and large windows with steel-framed sashes. With their exposed hipped roofs, these houses are more conventionally domestic in character than Merritt's Lockerbie Court flats, with their sweeping curved and stepped façade, concealed roofline and clinker brick entry bays. As an example of his work in a bolder Functionalist mode, they are comparable to two other apartment blocks that he designed in the former City of St Kilda. Still standing at 1a Dickens Street, Elwood, and 17 Victoria Street, St Kilda, these are distinguished by a minimalist expression with stark rendered facades and curved corner balconies, with the Elwood example having a contrasting clinker brick entry bay, as seen at Lockerbie Court. Both dating from 1936 (ie, slightly predating Lockerbie Court), these two St Kilda projects were similarly described at the time of construction as being "Continental" in derivation (*Herald* 13/05/1936:20; 23/09/1936:24).

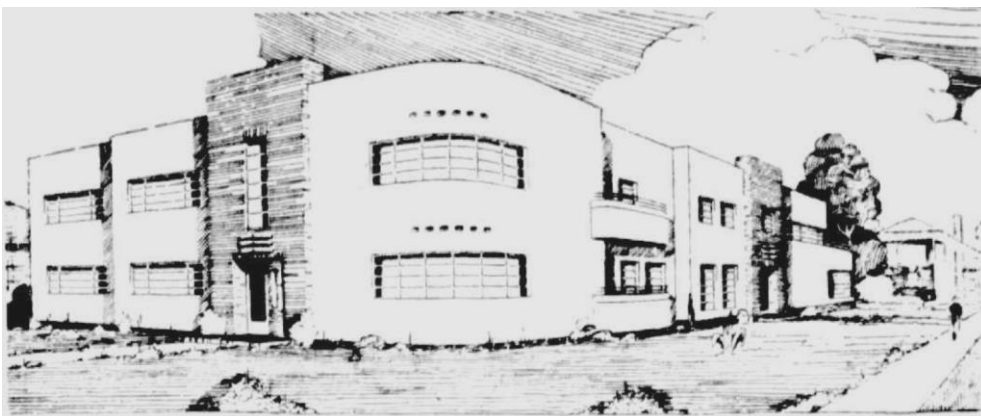
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"Continental design in East St Kilda Flats", *Herald*, 19 May 1937, p 25.

ARBV file for William Henry Merritt. Unit 10, VPRS 8838/P1  
(Individual Architects Registration Files), PROV.

## Identified by

Andrew Ward (C graded list)

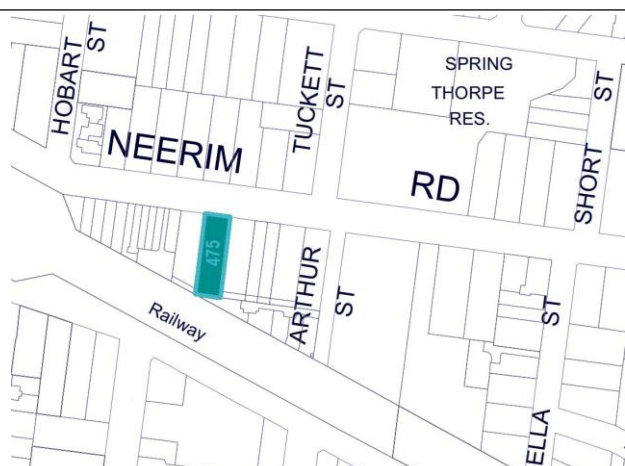


Original perspective drawing (*Herald*, 19 May 1937, p 25)

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	HG09
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Bundara</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	69 B5
<b>Address</b>	475 Neerim Road MURRUMBEENA	<b>Date/s</b>	1890
<b>Designer/s</b>	T & H Payne?	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

*Bundara*, at 475 Neerim Road, Murrumbene, is a single-storey double-fronted Late Victorian bichromatic brick villa with a hipped roof, prominent brick chimneys, a skillion-roofed timber-framed return verandah, and a gable-roofed weatherboard rear wing. It was erected in 1890 for shipping agent Edward Swindells, whose large family occupied the property for seven decades.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the brick villa and weatherboard rear wing.

### How is it significant?

*Bundara* satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

### *Why is it significant?*

At the local level, *Bundara* is significant for its associations with an early and important phase of residential settlement in the suburb of Murrumbeena. Although the railway line was extended through the area as early as 1879, with a station at the junction of Neerim and Murrumbeena roads, further settlement in the vicinity was not encouraged until several large subdivisions were released in 1887-88. While a minor boom of residential (and commercial) settlement ensued, the area was to remain only sparsely developed until late 1910s, when the Boom-era estates finally began to fill out (*Criterion A*). With many of the earlier Victorian houses subsequently demolished for post-WW2 subdivision and higher density development, *Bundara* remains to provide rare evidence of the initial phase of settlement, both along the major thoroughfare of Neerim Road and more broadly across the entire suburb of Murrumbeena (*Criterion B*).

At the local level, *Bundara* is significant as an unusual and substantially intact example of a Late Victorian villa. Of bichromatic red and cream brick construction, it stands out from most other late nineteenth century houses in the area, which are more commonly of timber (often block-fronted) or sometimes rendered brick. While fairly conventional in its expression, with M-shaped hipped roof and double-fronted façade, *Bundara* is distinguished by its ornate chimneys (with rendered strips and heavily moulded cornices) and unusual return verandah with shaped brackets and simple slat frieze instead of the more ubiquitous wrought iron lacework. The early rear addition, in weatherboard with gabled slate roof, is a rare survivor in a house of this age. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Bundara*, at 476 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena was erected in 1890 for shipping agent Edward Arthur Swindells (1859-1949). Melbourne-born Swindells was employed as the Melbourne manager for the Belfast & Koroit Steam Navigation Company by 1884, and would hold that position for over half a century before his retirement in October 1938 (*Argus* 26/10/1938:12). In October 1889, Swindells married Frances Ada Williams (1871-1949) and the couple purchased vacant land on Neerim Road, Murrumbeena, on which to erect a family home. The site, designated as Lot 6, formed part of a recent subdivision along the south side of the street, just east of the railway station. Rate books confirm that the building was completed by January 1891, when it was first recorded as a four-roomed brick house on Lot 6, Neerim Road, with a Net Annual Value of £35. Although unconfirmed, the house may have been designed by architects T & H Payne of Brunswick, who had called tenders in April 1890 for a “brick cottage, Neerim Road, Murrumbeena Station” (*Age* 26/04/1890:3). The new house was named *Bundara*, which had been the name of the house in Albert Park that Swindells occupied prior to his marriage.

The Swindells family grew to become a large one, even by Victorian standards. By the turn of the century, Edward and Frances had had five daughters and a son (although four died in infancy), followed by a further six daughters born between 1903 and 1912. By then, the family comprised eight surviving offspring ranging in age from newborn Ada to young adults Gertrude and Dorothy, the two eldest surviving sisters, who never married. It is thus hardly surprising that the original four-roomed brick house soon became inadequate. The MMBW plan, dated 1918, shows that a large timber-framed wing had been added to the rear by that time. During this period, Swindells became notably active in local affairs, and was one of the principal agitators for the establishment the Murrumbeena State School, which opened in 1903. He was also a member of the Oakleigh & District Chrysanthemum Society, serving as its Honorary Secretary in 1897-98.

During the inter-war years, the occupation of *Bundara* decreased as the four middle daughters (Marjorie, Mary, Kathleen and Beryl) married and moved elsewhere, while the two eldest (Gertrude and Dorothy) and two youngest (Sylvia and Ada) remained living with their elderly parents. After the respective deaths of Edward and his wife Frances, who died just one month apart in 1949, spinster sisters Gertrude and Dorothy continued to live there until the early 1960s.



## Description

The former Swindells House at 475 Neerim Road, Murrumbeena, is a single-storey bichromatic brick Victorian villa with a hipped roof (in the traditional M-shaped section) clad in corrugated galvanized steel, with turned finials to the ridge and three large chimneys with rendered banding, moulded cornices and terracotta pots. Of red brick construction with contrasting cream brick stringcourses and a tuck-pointed finish, the house has an asymmetrical double fronted façade incorporating a return verandah, with a skillion roof supported on turned timber posts with curved and fretted brackets and a simple timber frieze. The front door is set into the side wall at the far end of the verandah return, and there is a plain rectangular window with projecting stone sill and timber-framed double-hung sashes. The street façade had two larger tripartite windows, each with a set of double-hung sashes flanked by solomonic mullions and narrow sidelights.

The rear wing, which projects slightly west of the alignment of the main house, is a weatherboard structure with a steep gabled roof clad in slate.

## Comparisons

Although Murrumbeena Railway Station opened in 1879, a decade passed before settlement began in earnest. This was expedited by the release of four large subdivisions radiating from the junction of Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads: the *Murrumbeena Reserve* to the north-east, the *Murrumbeena Railway Station Estate* to the north-west, the *Murrumbeena Estate* to the south-east, and the *Crosbie Park Estate* to the south-west. Offered for sale by auction during 1887-88, these estates saw limited development over the next decade or so. In 1900, the *Sands & McDougall Directory* included fewer than a hundred residential listings in Murrumbeena, with the main hotspots being the east side of Murrumbeena Road (14 listings), west side of Emily Street (7 listings), east side of Dunoon Street (5 listings), north side of Sydney Street (5 listings), north side of Adelaide Street (5 listings), and others in Railway Parade, Melbourne Street, Hobart Road and Kangaroo Road. While the early twentieth century saw further development, MMBW plans from the late 1910s still show only a smattering of dwellings. It was not until the inter-war years that these estates began to fill out. However, many of the earlier houses from the late Victorian (and Edwardian) eras would fall prey to the subsequent phase of post-WW2 development, as their often larger-than-average frontages made them desirable for higher density development such as blocks of flats and villa units.

Today, little physical evidence remains of Murrumbeena's initial phase of late Victorian residential settlement. Amongst the aforementioned hotspots listed in the 1900 directory, only one early house appears to remain along Murrumbeena Road: a neglected but intact rendered brick villa at No 130, with slate-clad roof and asymmetrical façade with return verandah. Only one early house survives on the west side of Emily Street (an unprepossessing and much altered double-fronted weatherboard villa at No 11) and none at all on the east side of Dunoon Street. In Railway Parade, an atypically grander two-storey rendered house (formerly known as *Brimlea*) survives as part of a retirement home at No 22, although it has been greatly altered and engulfed by later additions. A far more intact and distinguished survivor is *Alnick* at No 11, an unusual triple-fronted red brick house in the Queen Anne style, erected 1892-93 for Sir James Patterson, and currently included on the City of Glen Eira's heritage overlay schedule [H057].

Otherwise, most remaining Victorian dwellings in the area can be found within the former extent of the *Murrumbeena Reserve* estate, bounded by Neerim, Murrumbeena, Dandenong and Hobart Roads. Relatively intact hip-roofed timber villas still stand at 4 Sydney Street, 8 Sydney Street and 21 Brisbane Street (all c1891), with asymmetrical facades, canted bay windows and verandahs. A counterpart with symmetrical façade survives at 14 Melbourne Street (c1890), but has been altered by the addition of an attached garage in a matching faux-Victorian style. Rather more directly comparable to *Bundara* is the double-fronted bichromatic brick villa at 18 Adelaide Street (c1892), with slate-clad hipped roof, arched windows and L-shaped return verandah with lacework frieze.

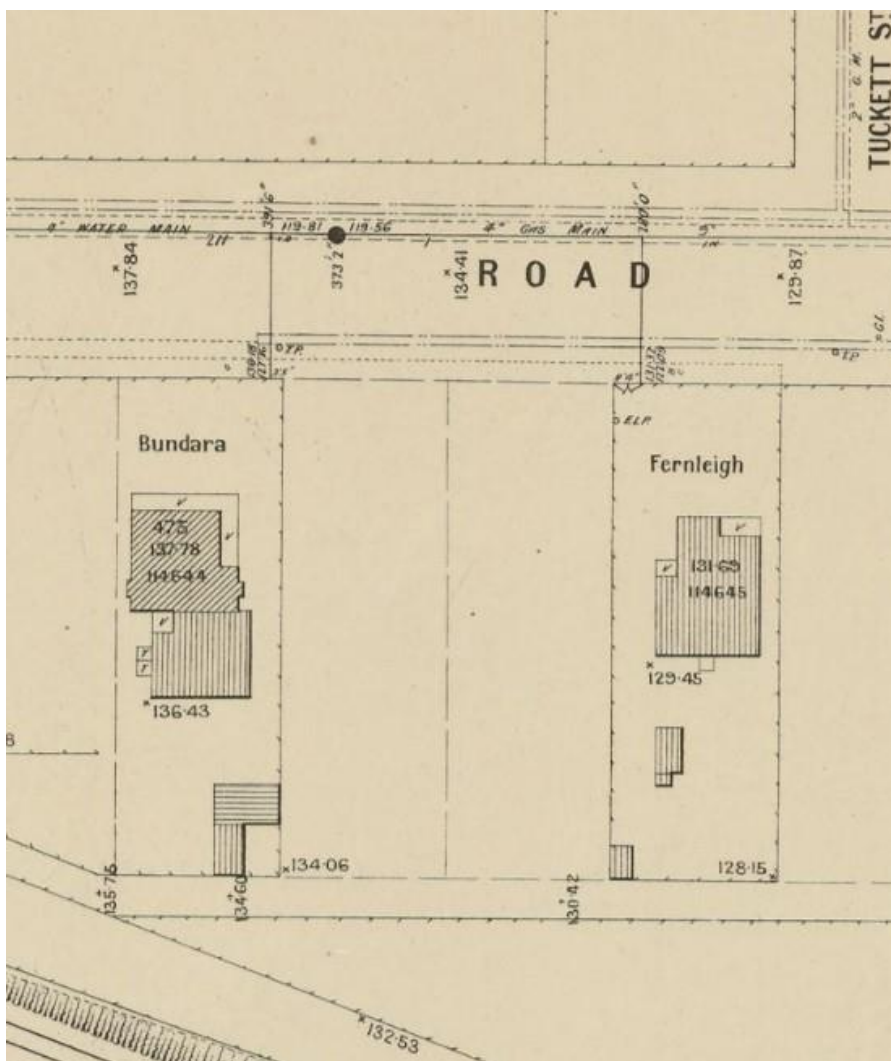
*Bundara*, at 475 Neerim Road, stands out not only as of Murrumbeena's oldest surviving houses, but also the last of its kind along this particular part of Neerim Road. By 1900, a number of large houses had been erected along this major thoroughfare, typically occupying large sites, although virtually all would be demolished in the post-WW2 era. The casualties included all of the other grand residences on the south side of Neerim Road: those properties known as *The Braes* (No 495), *Yamba* (No 497), *Hazelwood* (No 501), *Onhah* (No 503) and *Fairholm* (No 507). On the north side of Neerim Road, only the gateposts of Dr John Springthorpe's former residence [HO133] remain to demonstrate this phase of late Victorian residential settlement. Otherwise, its nearest counterpart as evidence of early settlement along Neerim Road is a bichromatic brick villa, with asymmetrical double-fronted façade, bullnosed verandah and wrought iron detailing, which still stands, amongst considerably later houses from the twentieth century, at 234 Neerim Road, Carnegie.

## References

*City of Caulfield Rate Books*, various.

## Identified by

Nominated by a member of the public.



*Bundara* (left), as shown on MMBW Detail Plan No 2872, dated 17 October 1919  
Source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	HG10
<b>Other name/s</b>	Clarence Lodge; Heristal	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J9
<b>Address</b>	58 Norwood Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1890
<b>Designer/s</b>	A B Rieusset	<b>Builder/s</b>	James Taylor



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Good (some changes)
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

Clarence Lodge, at 58 Norwood Road, Caulfield North, is a large single-storey double-fronted hip-roofed Late Victorian villa in a hybrid Queen Anne style, with tall chimneys, prominent gable end, shaped bargeboards, canted bay window, leadlight windows and expansive return verandah with turned posts, lattice freeze and tessellated floor. Designed by architect R B Rieusset, the house was built in 1890 for successful Boom-era businessman and his wife, who lived there only very briefly before his business collapsed in 1891.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the house **except for alterations including removal of the attic window, rendering of face brick walls and chimneys, removal of some woodwork from the front battened gable wall, extension to the verandah, alterations to the west facing roofline and replacement of original slate roof and terra cotta ridge capping.**

### How is it significant?

Clarence Lodge satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

- Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.



### *Why is it significant?*

*Clarence Lodge* is aesthetically significant as a distinctive and idiosyncratic example of Boom-era residential architecture. Its design freely adapted the typical forms and motifs of the prevailing Late Victorian villa style (eg double-fronted asymmetrical façade composition, return verandah and canted bay window), merged with those that are more indicative of the emerging Queen Anne style (eg overscaled gable end with shaped bargeboards, turned posts and tall chimneys). Within this unusual composition, several elements are particularly quirky, such as the verandah extended across the projecting bay, the canted highlight window above the verandah roof, and the turned timber finials supporting the gablet eaves. The house demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement as an early manifestation of the gradual shift towards the Federation style, which would dominate domestic architecture in Australia in the first decade of the twentieth century. It is rare as one of only a small number of houses in Melbourne from the late 1880s and early 1890s that can be considered as prototypes for this important aesthetic shift. (*Criteria B, E and F*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 58 Norwood Road, Caulfield North, was erected in 1890 for a Boom-era businessman. Born in London in the late 1840s, he later worked as a bank clerk in Berkshire and had married by the early 1870s. The family migrated to Australia during the prosperous Boom period of the late 1880s, when the future house owner became a director of a glass bottle works in Port Melbourne. He duly bought out his partners to take full control of the company but later changed direction, establishing a different business as an importer. This venture thrived, in 1890, it was reported that the total value of goods imported over the previous eighteen months amounted to more than £31,000 (*Argus* 06/05/1891:9).

Emboldened by professional success, the family planned to build a grand new residence for themselves, and acquired land in Norwood Road, Caulfield North. An L-shaped thoroughfare linking Dandenong Road with Orrong Road, Norwood Road was to become an enclave for noted Melburnians; its future residents would include a knighted judge and a prominent manufacturer. The site of the importer's house, purchased in his wife's name for the sum of £800, was a large block on the south side of the street, in a prime position at the far eastern end that offered an unobstructed view up to Dandenong Road. The project proceeded swiftly and, on 22 March 1890, the *Argus* announced that "tenders are invited for villa residence, stabling, &c, Norwood Road, Caulfield. Plans and specifications may be seen between 10 and 1 o'clock at the office of A B Rieusset, architect, 22 Moleworth Chambers, Chancery Lane".

Augustine Benedict Rieusset (1854-1935) was born in Ramsgate, Kent, but trained as an architect in Liverpool, where he married in 1878. He and his wife migrated to Australia five years later, settling in Melbourne where he commenced private practice from Molesworth Chambers in the block of Little Collins Street known as Chancery Lane. Little is recorded of Rieusset's early career; in the late 1880s, he entered a competition for Melbourne's new Stock Exchange and called tenders for shops in Spencer Street. During 1890, after calling tenders for the house in Norwood Road, Rieusset relocated his office to the Empire Buildings in Collins Street, and went on to receive further residential commissions. In 1890, he was elected an associate of the RVIA, and, the following year, served as president of the Victorian Architectural & Engineering Association. With the architectural profession in Melbourne badly affected by the Depression of the early 1890s, Rieusset was one of a number of local practitioners who opted to move to Western Australia, which was then booming from a belated Gold Rush. Re-establishing a successful architectural practice in Perth, Rieusset was to remain there for the rest of his life.

Erected by Hawthorn builder James Taylor at a cost of £1,700, the house in Norwood Road that Rieusset designed for the importer and his wife was completed by October 1890, when it appeared in the *Building Engineering & Mining Journal*. A full-page perspective drawing was accompanied by text noting that “it is built of red brick pointed with black ash mortar; roofs are covered with green slates and red terracotta ridging. The verandahs are tiled with tiles supplied by the Australian Tessellated Tile Company (of Mitcham). The kitchens, &c, are ventilated by means of torpedo vents and Wareham’s Ventilators”. Palatial in scale, the nine-roomed house comprised “drawing room, dining room, sitting room, four bedrooms, servant’s bedroom, stores, pantries, bathrooms, kitchen, scullery, washhouse”, while the ground included a tennis court and “two stall stable, harness room, man’s room, coach house and loft with all the necessary appurtenances”.

Sadly, the new house did not provide the long-term family residence they had planned. During 1890, the owner’s import business collapsed spectacularly; early the following year, builder James Taylor, who was still owed £104, initiated a Supreme Court case against the importer’s wife, the legal owner of the new house. In February 1891, the property was offered for sale by auction, advertised as “that very valuable and charming property known as *Clarence Lodge*... a really well built modern brick villa, artistically finished, containing twelve rooms and every convenience; also coach house, stables, etc” (*Argus* 31/01/1891). In March, an absolute order was granted for the owner’s estate to be compulsory sequestered, followed by a ruling that his wife’s estate could also be levied (*Prahran Telegraph* 28/03/1891:3).

After the family’s premature departure, ownership of the Norwood Road house was vested in the Australian Deposit & Mortgage Bank (and later the Colonial Bank) for the next two decades. Still referred to as *Clarence Lodge* during that period, it was successively occupied by a retired Major-General and then a manufacturer. In 1913, the house was acquired from the Colonial Bank by a couple who renamed it *Heristal*, evidently as an arcane historical allusion to their surname.

## Description

The house at 58 Norwood Road, Caulfield North, is a large single-storey Late Victorian brick villa in a Queen Anne style, with hipped slate-clad roof clad, penetrated by chimneys with moulded cornices and capping. The external walls, originally of tuck-pointed red brick, have since been rendered. The house has an asymmetrical triple-fronted facade with a return verandah that extends along the front (north) and side (west) sides, comprising a bullnosed roof of corrugated steel, supported on turned timber posts with curved brackets and a lattice frieze. The verandah floor has an ornate tessellated floor, and bluestone edging.

The asymmetrical triple-fronted street façade comprises a recessed central bay, a slightly projecting bay to the right (west) side, and a more prominently projecting bay to the left (east). The largest bay is further emphasised by a prominent gable end with plain infill and carved timber bargeboards that, at the lower end, are supported on turned timber posts that align with those of the front verandah. This bay also has a full-width canted bay window with moulded sill and timber-framed windows, with a matching canted highlight window (containing leadlight glazing) that is sandwiched between the apex of the verandah roof and the underside of the projecting gable. The corresponding bay to the east side of the street façade has a tall pair of rectangular windows, while the recessed central bay has an off-centre arched opening forming a recess for the front door. There is a small window alongside, with moulded sill, and another leadlight highlight window above, between the roof eaves and the verandah.

The changes made to the exterior, namely the replacement of original slate roof (with new slates), **removal of the attic window, removal of some woodwork from the front battened gable wall, extension to the verandah, alterations to the west facing roofline** and the rendering of the original face brickwork, are not considered to have compromised the distinctive form and detailing of the original house to the degree that a heritage overlay would no longer be considered appropriate.



Recent aerial photographs of the property show that a gable-roofed outbuilding still stands in the south-west corner of the property, where stables were indicated on the 1902 MMBW Detail Plan. However, it has not been confirmed if this outbuilding is in fact the original stable. Comparing the aerial photograph with the MMBW plan, it is also apparent that the current location of the tennis court, to the west of the main house, does not correspond precisely to its position in 1902.

## Comparisons

The unusual style of *Clarence Lodge* was acknowledged as early as 1979, when Conrad Hamann mentioned the house in an article tracing the emergence and development of the Federation style from the 1880s to the 1920s. Discussing early local manifestations of the Queen Anne idiom, influenced by the work of British architect Richard Norman Shaw and others, Hamann identified A B Rieusset as an early champion of Shaw's approach, noting that "in 1890, after several tirades against Melbourne's 'gimcrack' and 'overornamented' buildings, he designed a house in the Melbourne suburb of Caulfield. Here, he pushed 'Norman Shaw' forms back into iconographic motifs behind a verandah which circled a standard Melbourne villa homestead fashion. To avoid dark interiors that bedeviled verandahed house, he added a complex series of skylights which distorted the Shavian gables completely." However, Hamann went on to state that, while the house adopted some forms and details of the maturing Queen Anne style, it could not be considered a prototype for the more overt manifestation of the Federation Villa, which Hamann attributed to certain other Melbourne architects working in the late 1880s and early '90s, such as E G Killburn, Arthur Fisher, Christopher Cowper, Alfred Dunn and Beverley Ussher.

As an idiosyncratic and experimental foray into new aesthetic influences, *Clarence Lodge* has few direct comparators in the City of Glen Eira. The contemporaneous *Alnick* at 11 Railway Avenue, Murrumbidgee (architect unknown, 1892-93), erected for Sir James Patterson and already included on the heritage overlay schedule (H057), is comparably hybrid in its mix of typical Late Victorian finishes and details (eg bichromatic brickwork, slate roof and canted bay windows) with those associated with the developing Queen Anne style (eg unusual triple-fronted symmetrical façade, shingled bays and proto-Federation timber detailing to verandah and gable ends). This approach, however, would not become more widespread in the study area until the turn of the century, typified by a red brick villa at 83 St Georges Road, Elsternwick (c1902) [part H072], with roughcast half-timbered gable ends, tiled roof and lacework frieze to a recessed skillion-roofed verandah.

Ultimately, *Clarence Lodge* can only really be compared with other examples of the work of its own architect. Little seems to be recorded of Rieusset's output in Melbourne in the 1880s and early '90s, and *Clarence Lodge* is his only known building in what is now the City of Glen Eira. The few other examples of his residential work identified elsewhere, including single-storey detached villas at 15 Russell Street, Surrey Hills (1890) and 49 Emo Road, Malvern (1891), and a two-storey terrace house at 761 Park Street, Brunswick West (1891), are all individually distinctive but echo *Clarence Lodge* in their use of slate roofs, tall chimneys, half-timbered gable ends and integrated verandahs.

A red brick house still standing at 15 Alma Road, Camberwell (Evander McIvor, 1890-91), with slate roof and tall chimneys, is even more eerily reminiscent to *Clarence Lodge* in its asymmetrical double-fronted composition with a verandah that extends across the entire façade, including the projecting gabled bay enlivened with shaped bargeboards, brackets and unusual trussed infill. This unusual house was described in Graeme Butler's *Camberwell Conservation Study* (1991) as "perhaps a prototype for the later Queen Anne villa style", while a more recent heritage review by Lovell Chen added that it "ranks with only six or seven prototypes for the Federation villa that appeared in Melbourne in the period 1889-92... The most direct formal parallel is A B Rieusset's villa in Caulfield, which was published around the same time. Evander McIvor, as with A B Rieusset, Alfred Dunn, Christopher Cowper and others active in the Camberwell-Surrey Hills area, was prominent in moving in this direction and the house sets out much of the Federation form that would spread around Australia in the next ten years".

## References

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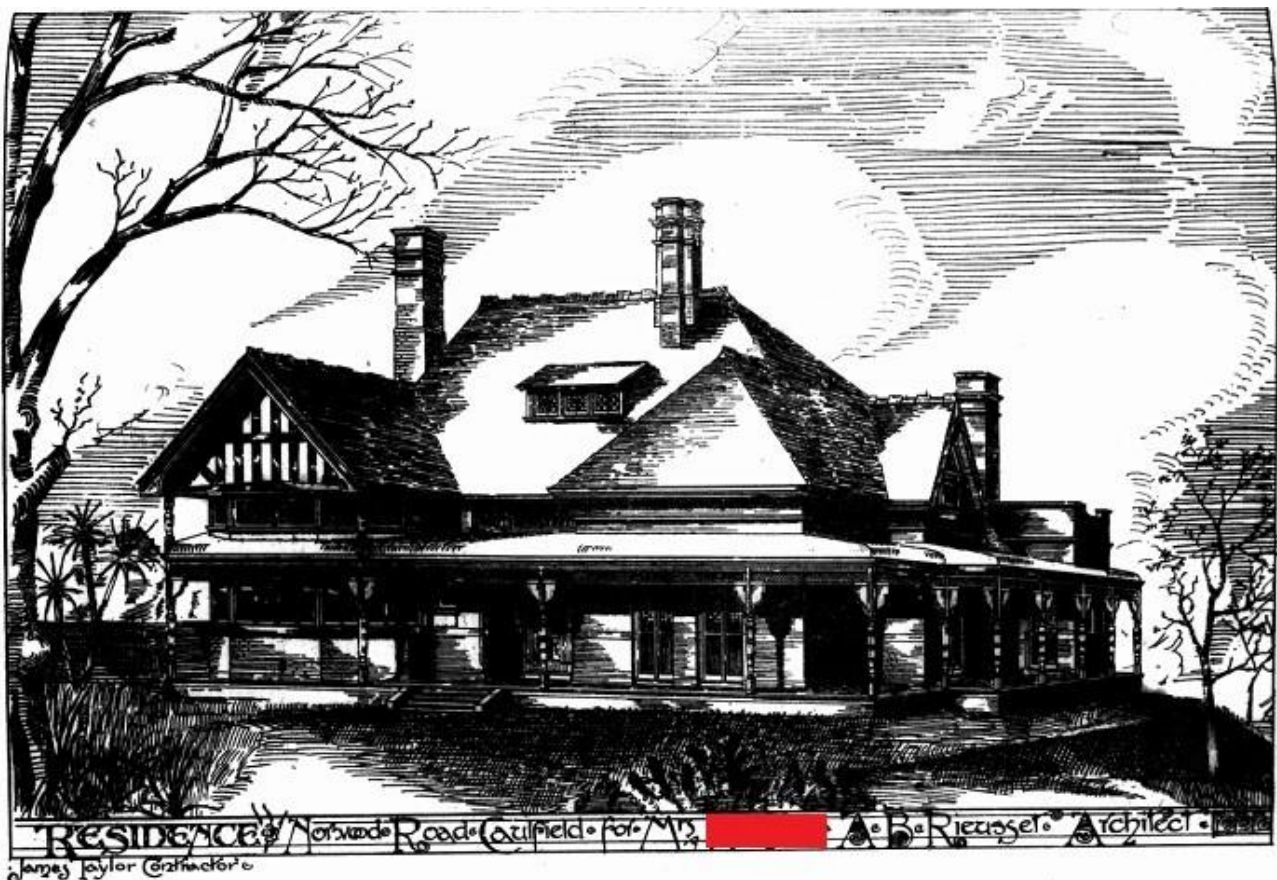
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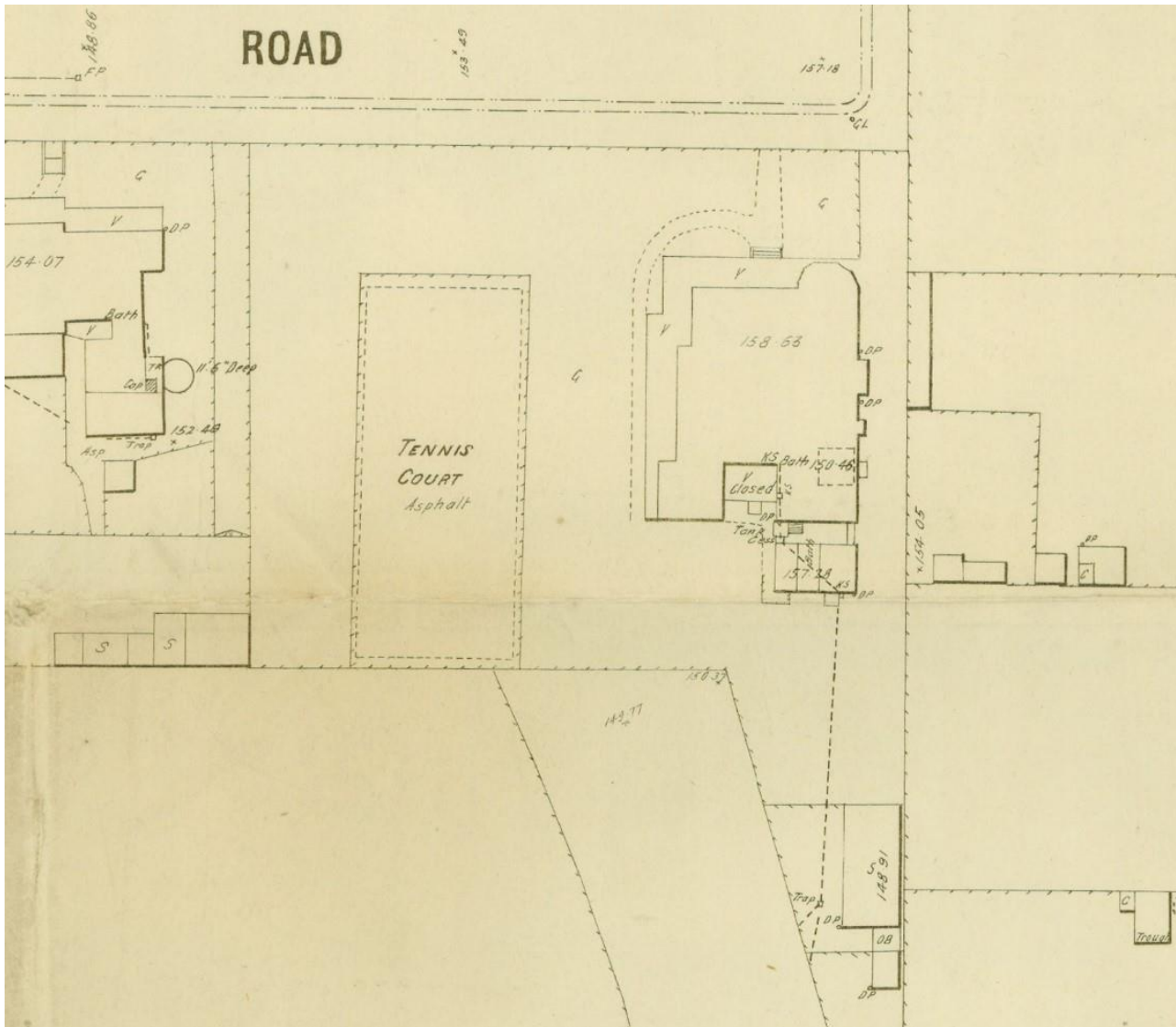
## Identified by

Andrew Ward (C graded list)



A B Rieusset's original perspective drawing of the house

Source: *Building Engineering & Mining Journal*, 11 October 1890, p 360.



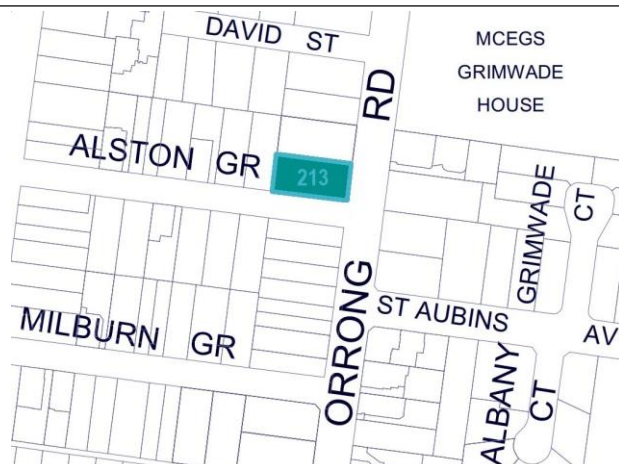
Excerpt of MMBW Detail Plan No1413, dated February 1902; note stable in south-west corner of block  
Source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	HG11
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Orrong Court</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H12
<b>Address</b>	213 Orrong Road ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1926
<b>Designer/s</b>	R O Goldsmith	<b>Builder/s</b>	T E Matthews



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

*Orrong Court*, at 213 Orrong Road, St Kilda East, is a two-storey block of rendered brick flats in the inter-war bungalow style, with an elongated stepped plan, hipped and gabled tile-clad roof and external staircases providing private access to upper flats. Erected in 1926 as an investment property for a Russian-born businessman and his wife, the flats were designed by architect, local resident and former City of Caulfield Builder Surveyor, R O Goldsmith.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the main building and adjacent garage, the matching fence along both street boundaries, and the gateway/letterbox piers at the corner.

### How is it significant?

*Orrong Court* satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion D: Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.

### *Why is it significant?*

The *Orrong Court* flats are significant as an early local manifestation of the modern purpose-built apartment block. Introduced into Melbourne in the early twentieth century, the typology began to proliferate in certain inner suburbs (eg St Kilda, Elwood) from the late teens, but took some time to become popular in the City of Caulfield. Although a few mansions were converted into flats in the early 1920s, this practice was discouraged and the first purpose-built examples emerged gradually during that decade. Dating from 1926, *Orrong Court* is not the oldest surviving block of flats in the City of Glen Eira, but was one of the first to be explicitly articulated as a multi-dwelling complex, in contrast to earlier examples designed to resemble a single large residence. With units expressed individually, provided with separate external entrances and open staircases for private access, *Orrong Court* is a textbook example of a distinctive form of apartment block that, while common in the former City of St Kilda, is rare in the former City of Caulfield. (*Criterion B; Criterion D*). As one of the earliest examples of modern apartment architecture in the study area, the building provides valuable evidence of a theme that was to dominate residential development of the City of Glen Eira (and particularly the former City of Caulfield) from the 1930s to the 1970s. (*Criterion A*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The *Orrong Court* flats at 213 Orrong Road, St Kilda East, were designed by architect R O Gilbert in 1926 as an investment property for a Russian-born businessman who was born in the late 1880s and migrated to Australia in the early 1900s. He found work in the new retail outlet founded by compatriot Sydney Myer and, by 1920, held the position as manager of the ladies' underclothing department. He remained with the Myer Emporium for the rest of his career, undertaking several overseas study tours (*Herald* 04/05/1944:7). He and his wife lived in St Kilda before relocating to Orrong Road, St Kilda East, by the early 1920s. In the City of Caulfield Rate Book for 1922-23 (dated 11 December 1923), the businessman's wife is recorded as owner of a seven-roomed brick house at 215 Orrong Road, with her husband listed as occupant. A scribbled note, made during the following year, records that he had acquired the adjacent block of vacant land at the corner of Alston Grove. By 1925, ownership of the latter site had been transferred to his wife. Intending to develop this land with a small block of flats, the couple turned to architect R O Gilbert.

Born in Eaglehawk, near Bendigo, Richard Oliver Goldsmith (1891-1977) worked as a carpenter for local builders until 1912, when he became articled to Bendigo architects Keogh & Austen. After distinguished service in WW1, Goldsmith married and moved to Melbourne, where he completed his articles under his former Bendigo boss Ernest J Keogh, who had similarly moved to Melbourne, establishing sole practice in Queens Street. In 1921, Goldsmith left Keogh's office to take up the position of Building Surveyor to the City of Caulfield. He and his wife Jane, who initially lived in Middle Park, moved to St Kilda East. During his time as Building Surveyor, Goldsmith supervised construction of several council buildings, including baby health centres at Caulfield and Carnegie, and oversaw the alterations to the Town Hall. After he resigned in November 1924 to open his own architectural practice, it was reported that "he had been a conscientious officer and had saved Council a considerable amount of money by this expert advice and personal attention" (*Prahran Telegraph* 03/04/1925:6). Goldsmith, who lived in Sidwell Avenue in the later 1920s and later relocated to Elwood, remained professionally active in the local area for some time.

As an architect living in St Kilda East in the early 1920s, Goldsmith would have been keenly aware of the boom of apartment blocks in the suburb (and the broader St Kilda, Elwood and Elsternwick area) at that time. But, while such development proliferated in what was then the City of St Kilda, it was rather less apparent in the contiguous City of Caulfield. Towards the end of 1923, the latter council generated a degree of press attention after it refused several applications to convert local buildings into residential flats (*Argus* 20/09/1923:4).



Early the following year, Goldsmith chimed into the debate in his capacity as Building Surveyor, stating that these refusals did not mean that the City of Caulfield was opposed to apartment development of any kind. He was thus quoted: “we have no power to refuse to pass plans for erection of flats, provided they conform to our building regulations. But we certainly oppose makeshift alterations to houses for conversion into flats that do not reach the standard of our building and health regulations. These, I admit, have been drafted to discourage the poorer class of flats” (*Herald*, 07/01/1924:5).

In 1926, more than a year after resigning as Building Surveyor to pursue private architectural practice, Goldsmith was given the opportunity to move beyond the “poorer class of flats”. On 27 July, he called tenders for “erection of six flat building at St Kilda” and, a month later, the contract was awarded to builder T E Matthews, of Ash Grove, Caulfield, who tendered £5,790. On 25 August, a building permit was issued (by T A Constable, who took over as acting Building Surveyor after Goldsmith resigned). Construction was evidently well underway by October, when the businessman and his wife moved out of the adjacent house at No 215, taking up temporary residence in the nearby *Ardoch* flats on Dandenong Road (*Prahran Telegraph* 01/10/1926:8). The completed building is first recorded in the City of Caulfield Rate Book for 1927-28 (dated 7 December 1927) as the Orrong Court Flats, a 26-roomed brick house [*sic*] owned by the businessman’s wife, with a Net Annual Value of £325 and a population of nineteen. Following the death of the businessman and his wife in the mid-1940s, ownership of the *Orrong Court* flats remained vested in her estate well into the 1950s.

## Description

*Orrong Court*, at 213 Orrong Road, East St Kilda, is a double-storey block of rendered brick flats in the inter-war bungalow style, with a hipped and gabled roof. Occupying a corner site, the building is laid out on an elongated and stepped plan, with each pair of flats articulated as a separate duplex (ie, one flat at each level, with individual external access). It thus presents an asymmetrical double-fronted elevation to Orrong Road, with a single gabled bay to the right (north) side and recessed porches to the left (south), while the elongated elevation to Alston Grove is more symmetrical, comprising two recessed bays alternating with three projecting gabled bays.

The building is otherwise expressed with a consistent palette of materials, finishes and details. It has a clinker brick plinth and roughcast rendered walls with contrasting smooth render to piers, lintels, sills and panel borders. The roof, clad in cement tiles, has boarded eaves with timber brackets. Along the Alston Grove side, gable ends are enlivened by vertical grooved motifs, while the Orrong Road side has a dormer gable with half-timbered infill and a shingled spandrel above the half-round bow window. Windows are varied in form: there are tripartite boxed windows with bracketed sills and double-hung sashes (to both elevations), larger multi-paned picture windows (to the central bay on Alston Grove, and the partially concealed west elevation) and french doors with flanking sidelights (to the porches on the Orrong Road side). Most windows are multi-paned and contain leadlight glazing.

The Alston Grove elevation includes three prominent open staircases, with rendered balustrade walls, to provide private access to the upstairs flats. The ground floor flats are accessed via a recessed porch (on Orrong Road side) or doorways with short flights of steps (on Alston Grove side). Each elevation also incorporates a projecting box-like balcony bearing the name *Orrong Court* in raised rendered lettering. At the west end of the Alston Grove frontage is a detached double garage in a matching style with gabled roof between two party-walls and rendered walls with incised groove. The original front fence, extending along both street frontages, comprises a row of squat piers (in matching clinker brick and roughcast render) connected by chains. At the corner, a wide gateway is defined by two large canted walls, containing letterbox slots.

## Comparisons

It is hard to place *Orrong Court* in the context of Goldsmith's broader oeuvre. Despite his association (personally and professionally) with what is now the City of Glen Eira, little is known of his local output. While he is credited with supervising construction of infant welfare centres at Caulfield and Carnegie (1924), it is unclear if he designed them himself. In any case, both centres (located at 254 Hawthorn Road and 17 Truganini Road) have since been demolished. A review of tender notices reveals that, in his early private practice, Goldsmith completed several projects for the municipalities that merged to form the City of Glen Eira. For the City of Caulfield, he designed a timber pavilion at East Caulfield Reserve (1928), alterations to the municipal market in Caulfield South (1928) and more renovations to the Town Hall (1929), while the City of Moorabbin engaged him to design its new Shire Offices on Point Nepean Road (1928), and convert the old Shire Offices into a baby health centre (1929). But little seems to remain of this work in Caulfield, and, while Moorabbin's former Shire Offices still stand at 977 Nepean Highway, they are outside the borders of the City of Glen Eira. Even less is recorded of Goldsmith's residential work. It can be assumed that he designed his own house at 26 Sidwell Avenue, St Kilda East (1925), and he was presumably also responsible for a house erected on land that he owned at what is now 1100 (formerly 582) Dandenong Road, Carnegie (1926). Typical of the era, both are bungalow-style dwellings with rendered walls and broad tile-clad gabled roofs. The Carnegie house, which had unusual bulbous piers with soldier brick capping and diaperwork, has only recently been demolished.

Ultimately, *Orrong Court* must be viewed in the context of early apartment development in what is now the City of Glen Eira. It has been noted that, while blocks of flats boomed in the City of St Kilda from the late teens, it took some time before they became popular in the City of Caulfield. As early as 1920, architects E J & C L Ruck called tenders for "two-storey residential flats, Caulfield", but its exact address remains unconfirmed (*Herald* 14/04/1920:2). To date, few examples of purpose-built 1920s flats have been identified in the study area. Amongst the earliest are the *Albynes* flats at 17 Tennyson Avenue, Caulfield (1923) and *Ontario* flats at 9 Manor Grove, Caulfield (1925), each designed (no doubt in deference to neighbouring residents) to resemble a large two-storey single residence, with bungalow-style detailing such as half timbering, shingles, eaves brackets and boxed windows. While *Orrong Court* exhibit stylistic influences, the building was laid out in a characteristic and unmistakable apartment topology: an elongated stepped plan with individual flats articulated more overtly, and textbook external stairs to provide private access to first floor flats. This distinctive form, while ubiquitous in the former City of St Kilda, remained rare in the City of Caulfield. Only a few later examples have yet been identified, including the *Dacre Court* flats at 372 Orrong Road (1927), the *Glenura* flats at 374 Orrong Road (c1930), the *Englefield* flats at 94 Hotham Street (1932) and the *Berwick Hall* flats at 554 Dandenong Road (c1935). The *Rothesay Court* flats at 6 Sidwell Avenue (1928-31) (HO64) represent a hybrid form, where an existing mansion (formerly *St Sidwells*) was converted into flats, supplemented by a flanking pair of purpose-built blocks with external staircases.

## References

ARBV file for Richard Oliver Goldsmith. Unit 6, VPRS 8838/P1  
(Individual Architects Registration Files), PROV.

Terry Sawyer, "Residential flats in Melbourne: the development of a building type to 1950",  
Undergraduate thesis, BArch, University of Melbourne, 1982.

## Identified by

City of Glen Eira

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	HG12
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Craigellachie</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H11
<b>Address</b>	273 Orrong Road ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1934-37
<b>Designer/s</b>	W H Merritt	<b>Builder/s</b>	Guardian Building Co Pty Ltd



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The *Craigellachie* flats, at 273 Orrong Road, East St Kilda, are a large complex of 25 residential flats in a series of two-storey blocks around a central landscaped court. Designed in the Tudor Revival style, they are of clinker brick construction with steep tile-clad roofs, tall chimneys, eaves corbels, gabled porches, bay windows and multi-paned sashes. Developed on part of the former grounds of the eponymous mansion *Craigellachie*, the flats were built in four stages from 1934 to 1937, to a design by architect W H Merritt.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the building and the matching boundary fence and gateways on both street frontages.

### How is it significant?

The *Craigellachie* flats satisfy the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

### *Why is it significant?*

*Craigellachie* is significant as the largest and most ambitious block of flats built in the City of Glen Eira area before WW2. Proposed at a time when apartment living was becoming increasingly popular in the former City of Caulfield, the complex provided no fewer than 25 units, three times the size of most local counterparts (typically with only six to eight units). More akin to the grand apartment blocks that emerged in the adjacent City of St Kilda in the later 1930s, *Craigellachie* anticipates the significant post-WW2 boom of higher-density living that would fundamentally reshape the study area. (*Criterion A*)

*Craigellachie* is significant as a large and sophisticated expression of the Tudor Revival mode that was popular in domestic architecture in the 1930s. While its clinker brick, steep roofline, tall chimneys, gabled porches, arches and multi-paned windows are all broad characteristics of that style, the rendered eaves corbels and window boxes, bay windows, decorative bricks (including corbelling and basket-weave panels) elevate it to a higher level. The distinctive layout of the complex, with blocks arranged around a central landscaped courtyard, is rare at the local level and, coupled with its uncommonly elongated street frontage and matching boundary fence, forms a prominent and eye-catching element along this major residential streetscape. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

The *Craigellachie* flats at 273 Orrong Road, St Kilda East were erected in several stages between 1934 and 1937, to a design by architect W H Merritt. The flats were erected on part of the grounds of the eponymous *Craigellachie*, a venerable mansion built in the early 1870s for warehouseman William Young, who occupied it briefly before it was acquired and enlarged by pastoralist and politician William Pearson. Following Pearson's death in 1894, the property was occupied by his son, Robert Crawford Pearson, for the next quarter century, and thence by others. In the early 1930s, it was purchased by solicitor Newton Francis (1895-1966), who opted to retain the mansion while developing the property's capacious Orrong Street frontage with a large new block of flats. To design them, Francis engaged architect W H Merritt

London-born, William Henry Merritt (1898-1955) studied carpentry at the Working Men's College (later MTC, now RMIT) and joined the building firm of Clements Langford as an apprentice joiner. By the early 1920s, he had begun private practice in partnership as Merritt & Slevin, architects and designers, with offices in Melbourne and Geelong. Married in 1924, Merritt and his wife settled in Elsternwick; by the end of the decade, he was in sole practice and had already fostered a reputation for several well-received blocks of flats in St Kilda. During the peak of his practice in the 1930s, he continued to specialise in apartment blocks but also designed numerous (generally large-scale) single dwellings, several hotels and hotel renovations, and other projects including a factory, guest house and church hall. His office appears to have closed around 1941, presumably due to WW2. Having briefly been attached to the Australian Flying Corps during WW1, he served as a Flying Officer with the RAAF during WW2. Afterwards, Merritt and his wife moved to Toorak. Subsequently maintaining a lower professional profile, he retired in 1954 due to ill health and died the following year, aged only 57 years.

The apartment complex that Merritt designed for Newton Francis on Orrong Road was conceived as an ambitious development of 25 units, contained in a series of double-storey blocks that were carefully sited to define a central forecourt. The scheme was intended to be realised in several stages, and Merritt called tenders for erection of the first two blocks, providing a total of sixteen flats, in early 1934 (*Age* 10/02/1934:10). Construction was carried out by the Guardian Building Company Pty Ltd, a leading Collins Street firm that specialised in residential work and, the following year, would publish an illustrated booklet entitled *Guardian Personality Homes: How to Plan, Finance & Build your Home*.



The first stage of the scheme was completed within twelve months, with an advertisement in early 1935 noting that sixteen new flats at *Craigellachie*, 273 Orrong Road, were now open for public inspection (*Argus* 05/01/1935:14). That week, the development was profiled in the same newspaper's property column by noted architect Best Overend, himself one of Melbourne's leading exponents of flat design. While Overend's own tastes were allied towards Modernism, he was not dismissive of Merritt's conservative style (described as "an Elizabethan manner adapted to Australian conditions"), and otherwise lauded the flats for their progressive fitout, which included automatic hot water services, acid-proof bathtubs and generous built-in cupboards, and a subtle interior design scheme with "textured walls of different soft colours and grain blending into ceilings of a decorative base of soft old ivory" (*Argus* 10/01/1935:13).

The new flats appear to have been snapped up quickly. A month after Overend's review, it noted that only a few of the sixteen flats, with "carpeted stairways, hot water, ornamental gardens and tiled bathrooms", were still available (*Argus* 07/02/1935:16). Four months later, Newton Francis and wife Mona formed their own building company, *Craigellachie Pty Ltd*, which (with capital of £6,000) would underwrite the remaining stages of the project (*Herald* 24/06/1935:23). A third block of four flats was under construction in early 1937, when an article noted the "attractive simplicity of the design in the Old English manner", drawing attention to such advanced features as sound-proof concrete floors, specially-designed light fittings and kitchens with "all the latest equipment and ample cupboard space" (*Herald* 07/04/1937:21). These final stages of the scheme were completed by the end of the year, when an advertisement promoted an "ultra-modern" flat at 273 Orrong Road, "in new set of four flats standing in large grounds" (*Argus* 09/10/1937:24). The following year, *Craigellachie* garnered further press attention when the complex appeared in the Sydney-based national journal, *Building*. Under the heading "Flats can be beautiful", it was lauded as "a forcible argument in favour of proper planning and architectural treatment of the flat building", with praise for its "ample gardens" and its use of clinker brickwork, "a favorite Victorian characteristic, which imparts rustic charm to the wall surface" (*Building* 25/07/1938:14).

Newton and Mona Francis, the owners of the complex, took up residence in one of their flats as early as 1934, and would remain living there for several decades with their son John (born 1926) and, for a few years in the 1940s, with Newton's widowed mother, Ellen Francis. The family was still residing there at the time of Newton's death in 1966.

## Description

*Craigellachie*, at 273 Orrong Road, East St Kilda, is a large complex of 25 residential flats in the inter-war Tudor Revival style. Occupying a corner site with a wide frontage to Orrong Road, the complex consists of a detached pair of two-storey J-shaped brick buildings facing each other across a central landscaped court. While comparable in general plan form, the two blocks are not of identical mirror-reversed design, but exhibit subtle differences in massing, fenestration and placement of gables and entrances. They are otherwise united by a consistent palette of materials and details: textured clinker brick walls, terracotta tiled hipped roofs clad penetrated by tall chimneys with plain brick capping, gabled bays with contrasting basket-weave brickwork and stepped rendered corbels, and windows with multi-paned

Fenestration is irregular, with windows variously expressed as standard tall rectangular openings, narrower pairs, and larger examples with tripartite bays. The Lyndoch Avenue façade of the south block has a large bay with a row of five windows at each level, separated by continuous brick piers and a vertically panelled rendered spandrel; a similar spandrel recurs to one of the inner facades of the north block. A few windows are accentuated by corbelled lintels and rendered window-boxes, and there is also an eye-catching right-angled bay window on the south elevation of the north block, with corbelled base. A typical entrance, located off-centre on the Lyndoch Avenue frontage, has a projecting gabled porch containing a round-arched opening with rendered quoining.



A front fence, extending along both street boundaries, comprises a rendered dwarf wall with clinker brick capping, rendered piers with stepped caps, and a black-painted mild steel railing. The boundary wall is splayed at the street corner, and incorporates a small pedestrian gateway on the Lyndoch Avenue side and three vehicle gateways along Orrong Road, along with grander central pedestrian gateway with splayed walls, double gates and letterboxes integrated into the piers. This gateway opens onto a hedge-lined concrete pathway, flanked by paved parking areas, that leads toward a formal garden area with a circular bed and radiating pathways (all lined with neatly clipped hedges) that extend across lawn areas to individual flat entrances.

## Comparisons

From the late 1920s, as apartment living rose in popularity in the former City of Caulfield, blocks of flats emerged in various sizes, forms and styles that followed prevailing tastes in domestic architecture. Early examples in the bungalow mode, such as *Orrong Court* at 213 Orrong Road, St Kilda East (1926), gave way to counterparts in a Free Classical and Spanish Mission style, typified by *Glenura* at 374 Orrong Road, Caulfield North (c1930) and *Hotham Hall* at 78 Hotham Street, St Kilda East (1933). In the mid-1930s, many blocks of flats were expressed in the simpler form of two-storeyed hip-roofed face brick buildings, nominally enlivened by contrasting render or clinker brick, typified by *Hollandia* at 380 Orrong Road, Caulfield (1935), the adjacent *Kaituna* at No 378 (c1936), and *Kingston Court* at 1088 Glenhuntly Road, Glen Huntly (c1936). Blocks of flats in a more explicitly mediaevalised mode, such as the Tudor Revival or Elizabethan, were less common in the study area. The eclectic *Brixton Court Flats* at 96 Hotham Street, St Kilda East (1935) evoke some of these qualities with its steep gabled roof, corbel-table and pointed arch window. More overtly Tudor Revival, *Park Manor* at 82 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield North (Archibald Ikin, 1935), is a modestly-scaled two-storey block with roughcast render, half-timbered gable ends and corbelled eaves (*Herald* 28/02/1935:20). A slightly later block of flats at 9 Chaddesley Avenue, Caulfield (Walter Mason, 1937), in face brick with steep gable, corbelled eaves and multi-paned shuttered windows, was described in one contemporary source as “Flemish” (*Argus* 23/12/1937:7). None of these, however, displays the degree of stylistic rigour that is evident at *Craigellachie*.

Aside from its style, *Craigellachie* is notable for its scale and unusual layout. Built in four stages with 25 units, it is one of the largest apartment blocks (if not the largest) erected in the study area prior to WW2. Even at the peak of the inter-war apartment boom in the later 1930s, blocks of flats in the former City of Caulfield typically comprised only four or six units. Larger examples include the seven-unit *Meadows* flats at 10-12 Melby Avenue, St Kilda East (1940), an eight-unit block at 14 King Street, Elsternwick (1940), and two ten-unit blocks: *Toolangi Court* at 500-506 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick (1936) and *Linden* at 575 Inkerman Road (1937). With two large blocks of eight units and two smaller blocks of four or five, *Craigellachie* is over twice the size of its nearest local counterparts, and three times larger than most. Its layout, with flats in L-shaped blocks around a central garden, is unusual at a local level. Its closest comparators in this regard are the aforementioned *Toolangi Court* at 500-506 Glenhuntly Road, and a residential development at 6 Carnavon Road, Caulfield North (c1939) [part of H014], comprising semi-detached pairs of two-storey houses in a U-shaped cluster around a central lawn. Ultimately, in scale and layout, *Craigellachie* is more akin to the grand apartment blocks in the former City of St Kilda, such as the 25-unit U-shaped block at 303 Carlisle Street, Balaclava (1934), just across the municipal boundary.

As an example of W H Merritt’s work in the City of Glen Eira, *Craigellachie* is comparable to the nearby two-storey block of flats at 1 Lockerbie Court (1937), and grand two-storey residences at 1 Grimwade Court, Caulfield North (1937), 7 Lempriere Avenue, St Kilda East (1937) [part of H07] and 430-432 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North (1940). Postdating *Craigellachie*, all of these are in a Streamlined Moderne style, demonstrating a shift in Merritt’s aesthetic tastes as the decade drew to a close. Research to date has not identified any other local buildings that Merritt designed in the more conservative mediaevalised mode that was so deftly expressed at *Craigellachie*.

## References

Best Overend, "New flats: park view", *Argus*, 10 January 1935, p 13.

"St Kilda flats built in sections", *Herald*, 7 April 1937, p 21.

"Flats can be beautiful", *Building*, 25 July 1938, p 14.

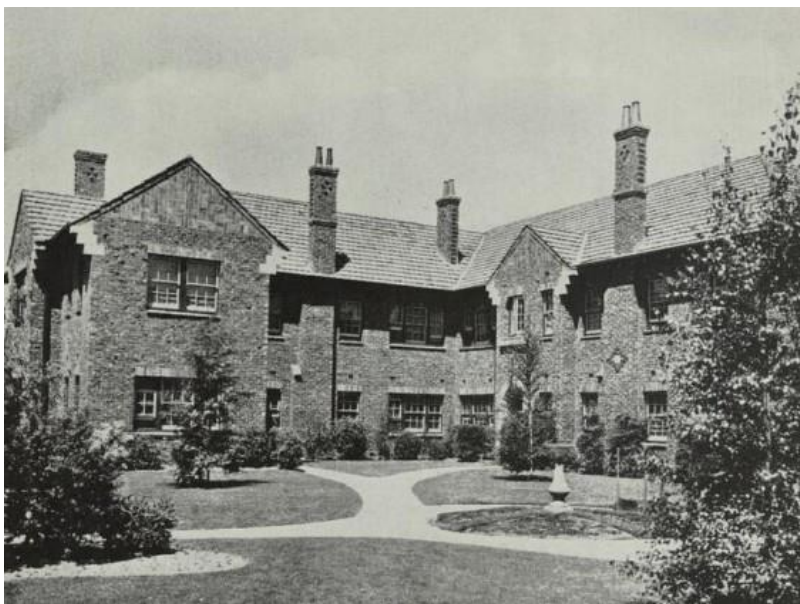
ARBV file for William Henry Merritt. Unit 10, VPRS 8838/P1  
(Individual Architects Registration Files), PROV.

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City of Glen Eira



*Perspective drawing of the entire development, as seen from Orrong Road (source: Argus, 5 January 1935)*



*View of the south block, looking south-west across central garden court (source: Building 27 July 1938)*

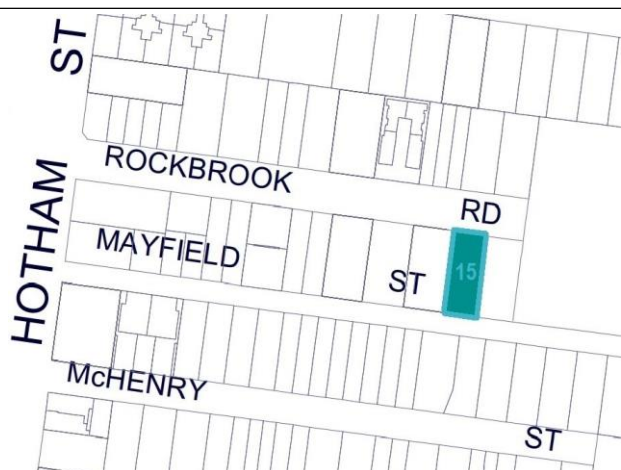


**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 22 September 2020 (C207)**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	HG13
<b>Other name/s</b>	Lloyd House (former)	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 F12
<b>Address</b>	15 Rockbrook Road ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1924
<b>Designer/s</b>	Lippincott & Billson	<b>Builder/s</b>	Lydster Brothers



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

*What is significant?*

The former Lloyd House, at 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East, is a single-storey red brick house with low gabled roof and asymmetrical facade incorporating forms and motifs associated with the Prairie School of Walter Burley Griffin and his circle, including vertical piers, chunky rendered ornament, and windows and doors with geometric mullions and leadlight glazing. Designed for the Lloyd family in 1924, the house was designed by Lippincott & Billson, a partnership between two former members of Griffin's office.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the building.

*How is it significant?*

The former Lloyd 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



### *How is it significant?*

The former Lloyd House is aesthetically significant as an excellent example of the Prairie School style associated with Frank Lloyd Wright, largely introduced into Australia by Walter Burley Griffin, and popularised, for over two decades, by not only by Griffin but also his staff, associates and others. The work of someone who had been the Griffins' first Australian employee, employed by them for six years, and was still sharing office space with them when this house was designed, it can be considered an especially confident articulation of this distinctive style, which is extremely rare in the City of Glen Eira. The house evokes the Midwestern American precedents of Wright and Griffin through its low horizontal expression, broad gabled roof, vertical piers and geometric rendered ornament including chevrons, angular capitals and cornices, chunky faceted embellishment, as well as doors and windows with matching geometric mullions and leadlight glazing. Its bold use of face brickwork, with expanses of red brick contrasting with clinker brick piers, is especially unusual in the context of Billson's residential work in this style, which was more typically characterised by a rendered finish. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

The house at 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East was erected in 1924 for the five adult children of the Lloyd family, to a design by Lippincott & Billson. Although the Lloyd siblings were all born in Victoria, their parents were British. William Leonard Lloyd (1839-1901) and wife Jane, *nee* Mary Jane Embrey (1863-1937) married in London in 1884 and migrated here within two years, when the birth of their first child, Mary (1886-1952), was registered in Broadford. Three more daughters and two sons followed: Frances Amy (1888-1959), Edward Leonard (1891-1941), Margaret Elizabeth (1893-1961) and Charles Thomas (1895-1979). After residing in Broadford for three decades, the family moved to Melbourne in the mid-1910s, with the widowed Jane and her five adult children sharing a house in Williamstown. After WW1 (during which son Edward served with the 25/4th Light Horse Regiment), the family moved to Grosvenor Street, Balaclava. By then, Jane Lloyd and her daughters Margaret and Frances were working as school teachers, Edward as a leather dresser and Charles as a bank clerk. Intending to build a new house for their joint occupation, the family acquired land at the end of Rockbrook Road, a dead-end street that aligned with Grosvenor Street. To design the house, the Lloyds engaged the architectural firm of Lippincott & Billson. This was formed in 1921 by architect Edward Fielder Billson (1892-1986) and his American colleague, Roy Alston Lippincott (1885-1969), who had met while both were employed in the Melbourne office of Walter Burley Griffin. A graduate of New York's Cornell University, Lippincott became involved with the Prairie School after joining the Chicago office of Herman von Holst, an early associate of Frank Lloyd Wright. He went on to become Walter and Marion Griffin's head draftsman and, after the couple won the competition for the design of Canberra in 1911, he travelled with them to Australia (along with Griffin's sister, Genevieve, whom Lippincott married in 1913). Commencing practice in Melbourne, the Griffins engaged Billson, Melbourne University's first architecture graduate, as their first local employee. Seven years apart in age, Billson and Lippincott established a rapport and later collaborated on the design of a window stay (patented in Australia in 1918, and in the USA the following year). By then, Billson had already begun designing buildings under his own name, including a house for his parents in Clendon Road, Toorak (1918) and another for a family friend in Balaclava Road, Caulfield (1919). Far from objecting to their staff undertaking private commissions, the Griffins encouraged it by initiating an unusual reciprocal co-operative contract, whereby profits from such outside projects would be shared.

Lippincott and Billson formerly entered into partnership after winning first prize in a competition for the Arts Building at the University of Auckland. Required to open an office there, both men initially moved to New Zealand, although Billson would return to Melbourne "for family reasons" (as he later put it). Thus, the partnership of Lippincott & Billson split into two: the Auckland office run by Lippincott, and the Melbourne office under Billson, assisted by draftsman George Ozanne (who, much later, would become MCC City Architect).



As the partnership had been conceived for the sole purpose of overseeing the Auckland project, it was formally dissolved when the building was completed in 1925. Over the ensuing four years, Lippincott & Billson's Melbourne office (which operated from the Griffins' address at 395 Collins Street) undertook over a dozen projects. Most were suburban houses (along with a group of three pisé dwellings at Balranald, NSW), with other work including a flat conversion in St Kilda, a stable in Pascoe Vale and a hotel renovation in Swan Hill. There was further success in architectural competitions: highly commended for an entry in the Ideal Home Competition (1923), fourth place in the National War Memorial competition (1924) and third place for a scheme to complete St Paul's Cathedral (1925). After the partnership ended, Lippincott continued to practice under his own name in Auckland (eventually returning to the USA in 1939). Billson followed suit in Melbourne and, aside from the short-lived partnerships of Billson & Cheetham (1927) and Billson & Newton (1939-41), he would maintain a notable sole practice into the post-WW2 period, carried on for two generations by his like-named son and grandson.

While original drawings for new house in the Rockbrook Road have not been located, evidence suggests that the project was commissioned by the Lloyd children, rather than their elderly and widowed mother. In 1988, Philip Goad sighted some (unspecified) documentation relating to the house, then held in the (now-defunct) offices of Edward Billson & Partners in Jolimont, which identified the clients as "the Misses Lloyd". This clearly refers to the three unmarried daughters, Mary, Frances and Margaret. In June 1924, Lippincott & Billson called tenders for construction of a "brick villa, Rockbrook Road, St Kilda" (*Cazaly's Contract Reporter*, 03/06/1924:1). Six weeks later, it was reported that the City of Caulfield had issued a building permit, identifying the builders as Lydster Brothers, and the contract sum as £1,500 (*Cazaly's Contract Reporter*, 17/07/1924:10). Construction was still in progress two months later, as per the date on the bottom of the MMBW sewerage plan for the property (PS 138891, 08/09/1924).

The house first appeared in the *Sands & McDougall Directory* for 1925, listed as "house being built" between existing dwellings at Nos 13 and 25. The following year, it was definitely designated as No 15, and its principal occupant named as Mrs M J Lloyd. Electoral rolls, however, confirm that all five of her children resided there as well. After Mrs Lloyd's death in 1937, directories listed her second daughter, Frances, as principal occupant. Edward died in 1941, followed by Mary in 1952 and Frances in 1959. The last of the three daughters, Margaret, was then briefly listed as principal occupant until she died in 1961. Thereafter, the house continued to be occupied solely by the last surviving child, the unmarried Charles Lloyd, until his own death on 9 July 1979.

## Description

The former Lloyd House, at 15 Rockbrook Road, St Kilda East, is a single-storey gable-roofed red brick bungalow with asymmetrical double-fronted façade dominated by a wide projecting bay to the left (east) side, with an off-centre recessed porch. Designed by an architect who had a direct link with Walter Burley Griffin, the house expresses the distinctive Prairie School style associated with the work of the Griffins and their circle. This is broadly evident in the low gabled roofline and the rectilinear division of the façade with vertical pier-like elements (in contrasting clinker brick) and horizontal rendered banding at the window head line. Where the piers intersect with the banding, they have elongated wedged-shaped rendered capitals with trademark Griffinesque geometric mouldings. Above these capitals, the piers extend to the top of the gable end, each divided by vertical grooves to form three narrower sub-piers. At the apex of the gable end, the central pier incorporates a Griffinesque rendered chevron motif, while the plain brick chimneys are enlivened with similarly angular rendered mouldings. The Prairie School influence is also evident in window and door treatment. The wide picture window between the two piers contains six narrow metal-framed casement sashes with coloured leadlight glazing in a geometric pattern of rectangles and diamonds, while the front door is set between a pair of sidelights with vertical and diagonal glazing bars and coloured textured glass.

## Comparisons

The work of Walter Burley Griffin, and his circle, tends to be well represented in suburbs where those architects resided. Griffin, for example, was notably active in Heidelberg (where he and brother-in-law Roy Lippincott occupied adjacent houses in Glenard Drive), while Eric Nicholls did much work in Hawthorn and Kew, J F W Ballantyne in Malvern, and Billson in Toorak. None of these architects, however, seem to have had any enduring association with the Caulfield area. Griffin himself only completed one project in what is now the City of Glen Eira: the renovation of an inter-war house at 20 Labassa Grove, Caulfield (1924), owned by recurring client Sydney Keith. While the house still stands (included on the heritage overlay schedule as HO126), Griffin's input is not evident when seen from the street. Griffin's only other known project in the municipality was an unbuilt scheme for a municipal incinerator (1934), which was an unsuccessful tender by RIECo, the incineration company with which he enjoyed a fruitful association in the 1930s.

While Billson had no enduring links with Caulfield *per se*, his work in the broader St Kilda East/Balaclava area includes three houses straddling the municipal boundary. Aside from the Lloyd House, the other example in the City of Glen Eira is the former Armstrong House at 45 Balaclava Road, Caulfield (1919). Predating his partnership with Lippincott, this house (currently on the heritage overlay schedule as HO6) is similar to the Lloyd House in its broad gabled roof, vertical piers, and windows with geometric mullions and leadlight glazing. However, its roughcast rendered finish and attic-storeyed scale contrast with the face brick and spreading horizontality of the single-storey Lloyd House. Billson's other house in area, located in the City of Port Phillip, is *Tintara*, the former Keane House, at 20 Linden Street, Ripponlea (1923). While its attic-storeyed form, broad roof and piers evoke the earlier Armstrong House, the use of face brickwork clearly anticipates the Lloyd House, designed the following year.

In the broader context of Billson's other houses in the Prairie School mode, the Lloyd House shows some recurring themes. Its low horizontality, distinct from the attic-storey houses cited above, is most akin to the Warren House at 12 Rowan Street, Bendigo (1919), which also has red brickwork and a six-bay leadlight picture window between broad piers. This approach was revisited, albeit on a much simpler and smaller scale, in the tiny Gaunson House at 25 Lithgow Street, Abbotsford (1927). These houses of face brick construction are distinct from the rendered ones that tend to characterise Billson's output at the time, typified by his parents' house at 28 Clendon Road, Toorak (1918), the Pierce House at 9 Toorak Avenue, Toorak (1922), the Silcock House at 16 Glenroy Street, Hawthorn (1924) and the Cox House at 236 Cotham Road, Kew (1925). In a much later published memoir, Billson himself acknowledged this early interest in the use of face brickwork, recalling that he was able to cheaply purchase over-burnt clinker bricks because, at that time, no other architects wanted them. While he would design a few buildings in the Prairie School style in the later 1920s, most notably a new timber clubhouse for the Woodlands Golf Club in Mordialloc (1927; based on an earlier scheme from 1925), he had rejected the aesthetic by the end of the decade. During the 1930s he embraced a more conventionally progressive modernist mode, ably demonstrated by his stylish factory at Warburton for Sanitarium Health Foods (1936), which won him the RVIA Street Architecture Medal in 1940.

## References

Edward Billson, "A Life in Architecture", *Architect*, September/October 1968, pp 22-24.

Donald Leslie Johnson, *Australian Architecture 1901-1951: Sources of Modernism* (1980), pp 109-131.

Philip Goad, "Preamble: Tintara, Ripponlea", 4pp typescript, dated 13 October 1988.

Copy held by Built Heritage Pty Ltd

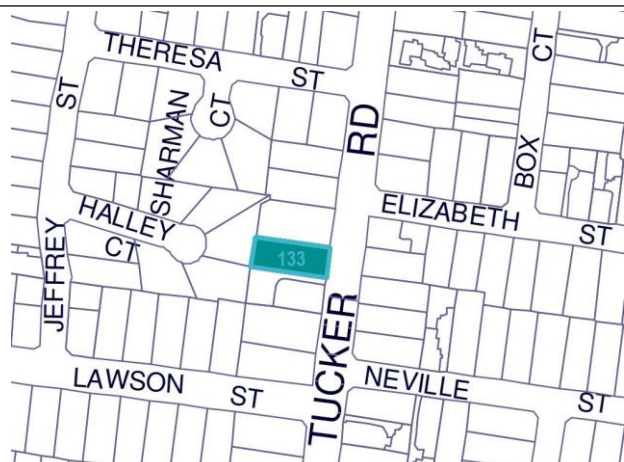
## Identified by

Andrew Ward (C graded list)

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	HG14
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>St Elmo</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	77 G2
<b>Address</b>	133 Tucker Road BENTLEIGH	<b>Date/s</b>	1889
<b>Designer/s</b>	Unknown	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent (notably unaltered)
<b>Thematic context</b>	4.4 Farming 6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

*St Elmo*, at 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh, is a single-storey double-fronted Late Victorian bichromatic brick villa with a hipped slate roof, prominent brick chimneys and a verandah with bullnosed corrugated steel roof on cast iron columns with lacework frieze and brackets. It was erected in 1889 for market gardener Benjamin Collins.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building.

### How is it significant?

*St Elmo* satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

## Why is it significant?

*St Elmo* is historically significant as rare evidence of early settlement in Bentleigh's eastern fringe. Dating back to 1885, it predates the minor flurry of Boom-era residential development that took place in the area in the later 1880s and early 1890s, which resulted in only a few dwellings that now constitute the bulk of surviving Victorian-era housing in the area. *St Elmo* is the oldest surviving house in Bentleigh's eastern fringe, as well as one of the oldest in the entire suburb and in that part of the municipality formerly under the auspices of the City of Moorabbin. The house retains important association with farming activities that once characterised the area: market gardening in the late nineteenth century and, subsequently, a highly-regarded poultry farm that continued to occupy the site in the first half of the twentieth century. (*Criterion A; Criterion B*)

*St Elmo* is aesthetically significant as an excellent, notably intact and uncommonly ornate example of a Late Victorian brick villa. While houses of this vintage are intrinsically rare south of North Road, this particular example, with its lively bichromatic brickwork, represents a marked contrast to the typically less prepossessing villas of rendered brick or block-fronted timber that survive on failed Boom-era estates in the area. With so many of its comparators altered to a greater or lesser degree by recladding of roofs, removal of verandahs or (in one case) roughcast rendering of face brickwork, this example, with a virtually unaltered street frontage that retains slate roof with terracotta ridges, canted bay window and verandah with corrugated iron roof, cast iron columns, lace frieze and tessellated floor, is exceptional at the local level (*Criterion B; Criterion E*)

## History

*St Elmo*, at 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh, was erected in 1889 for market gardener Benjamin Collins. Born in Brighton, Benjamin David Collins (1858-1939) married Catherine Marquis in 1879; their first child, daughter Violet, was born the following year. The family was already residing in the Bentleigh area by March 1881, when the Shire of Moorabbin Rate Book recorded Benjamin Collins, gardener, as owner and occupier of a four-roomed house on a nine acre farm fronting Brewer Road. By 1887, the family had increased with the arrival of daughter Lucy (1881) and son Charles (1884), and had relocated to a five-roomed brick house on a considerably larger 19½ acre farm on South Road, forming part of what was then known as the *Kingsland Estate*.

In July 1889, Benjamin Collins acquired the title to the present site on Tucker Road: a large block with an area of three acres, four perches and 5/10 of a perch (1.62 hectares). A new dwelling had been erected thereon by February 1890, when rate books first recorded Benjamin Collins, market gardener, as owner and occupant of a house and three acres of land on Tucker Road, with a Net Annual Value of £45. Little is currently known of the nature or extent of Collin's market gardening activities on the site, aside from a contemporary newspaper advertisement that noted "seed potatoes for sale, B Collins, Tucker Road, East Brighton" (*Oakleigh Leader*, 04/06/1892). Collins is known to have worked some additional land in the area, with the rate book for 1893 identifying him as the owner and occupant of a further five acres on Tucker Road (rated as "land & stables", NAV £20) and as occupant of a fifteen acres on Centre Road, evidently leased from Messrs Davies & Aitken (NAV £75).

While the Collins family was still residing at Tucker Road when their fourth child, daughter Ivy, was born in 1896, they would sell up and moved to Western Australia the following year. This development was thus noted in a newspaper advertisement: "owing to the departures of Mr and Mrs B D Collins, of Tucker Road, East Brighton, to WA, if any accounts are owing by them they will be settled, if application be made to Mrs Collins before the 14th instant" (*Brighton Southern Cross*, 08/05/1897:3). The family duly settled in Perth, where Benjamin Collins died in 1939 and his widow Catherine in 1951, at the age of 91 years.



After the Collinses moved to Western Australia, their former property in Bentleigh was briefly owned by Patrick Sullivan and then by Robert Molyneux, a sub-inspector of police, although neither appears to have lived there themselves. The next resident owner was Edward Clinch (“of independent means”, according to electoral rolls), who acquired the property in 1905. Five years later, it was taken over by poultry farmer Edgar Kermode Archer, who was evidently the first to use the name *St Elmo*, as per a 1912 newspaper advertisement (*Weekly Times*: 03/08/1912:14). Over the next few years, Archer achieved minor fame on the Victorian poultry scene as a regular prize-winner in egg-laying competitions, and his Tucker Road property was already well-known as the *St Elmo Poultry Farm* by 1916, when it was taken over by Robert Rintoul Christie. Two years later, Christie himself would be praised for the success of the Bentleigh farm (described as “nicely laid out, the runs surrounded with hedges and shade trees”) and the quality of his flock, which comprised 1,000 birds of the Black Orpington and White Leghorn breeds, as well as a bespoke hybrid (“with beetle green sheen running through the plumage”) that was officially known as the “St Elmo” (*Leader*, 27/07/1918:15). Under Christie’s deft management, the St Elmo Poultry Farm continue to maintain its high status during the 1920s and ‘30s.

After Robert Christie died in 1935, the poultry farm was carried on by his widow, Mina, until her own death in 1950, whereupon ownership passed to their son, Charles. Over the next couple of years, the original three-acre property would be gradually reduced by subdivision. In 1951-52, its street frontage was carved up to create two standard residential blocks (with the original Victorian-era farmhouse retained on one of them) and a larger expanse of vacant land to the rear, with a narrow frontage to allow access off Tucker Road. In 1956, this rear block was further subdivided to create more standard residential allotments, some with frontages to an extension of Jeffrey Street and others clustered around a new-cul-de-sac, Halley Court.

## Description

*St Elmo*, at 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh, is a single-storey bichromatic brick Late Victorian villa with hipped slate-clad roof. Predominantly of tuck pointed red brick, the house has contrasting cream brick to the plinth and eaves lines, window surrounds, and quoined corners, as well as some decorative diaperwork. The roof, which is enlivened by a strip of diagonal slates, has narrow eaves supported on curved brackets, and there are two wide bichromatic chimneys with moulded brick caps.

The asymmetrical and double fronted street façade comprises a projecting bay to the right (north) side north (right) side, with round-arched openings, and a verandah to the left (south) with a bullnosed roof of corrugated galvanized steel, supported on fluted cast iron columns with Corinthian capitals and a decorative lacework frieze, and a tessellated floor. There are two large rectangular windows opening onto the verandah; all windows have projecting stone sills and timber-framed double-hung sashes. The front entrance, set into the far right end of the verandah, has a heavily panelled timber door.

## Comparisons

Today, relatively little physical fabric remains in Bentleigh and Bentleigh East to demonstrate early phases of post-contact settlement in the second half of the nineteenth century. A handful of single dwellings remain to provide evidence of a few ambitious Boom-era residential estates that sprung up in area the late 1880s (often in the vicinity of new railway stations) but which attracted limited development at the time and would not fill out until the twentieth century. This phenomenon is typified by the block-fronted timber villas that survive at 7 Lydia Street, Bentleigh East (c1890) and 9 Vickery Street, Bentleigh (c1889) [H0142], and, just a little further north, a pair of rendered brick villas at Nos 30 and 51 Carlyon Road, Ormond (c1890).



Considered more specifically as an example of a Victorian-era “farmhouse”, formerly occupying expansive acreage fronting a major roadway, *St Elmo* has a number of local comparators. The much-altered brick villa at 14 Atkinson Street, Bentleigh, and a more intact timber villa at 19 Talbot Avenue, Bentleigh, have both been ascribed with notably early dates (alleged to have been built, respectively, in the 1860s and “circa 1870”) but probably date from the 1880s. In both cases, their original frontages have long since been subdivided so that the houses are now visible only from a secondary street, presenting what would have been a side elevation as the principal frontage. By contrast, a block-fronted timber villa still standing at 22 Brady Road, Bentleigh East (1889) [H097], erected by market gardener (and later Councillor) William George Leary, is one of few instances where the house (as with *St Elmo*) still presents its principal façade to its original street frontage. Another example of this, erected by market gardener James Lees, is known to have stood at 140 McKinnon Road, McKinnon (1889), but was demolished circa 2003.

Compared to other Victorian houses in the Bentleigh and Bentleigh East area, *St Elmo* not only stands out for the way in which it still addresses its original street frontage, but also for the fact that it is a conspicuously grander dwelling, and one that still exhibits a high degree of physical integrity. Most examples cited above are of relatively modest dwellings of timber construction, albeit with comparable wrought iron lacework friezes (eg 22 Brady Road, 7 Lydia Street and 9 Vickery Street) and one with bichromatic brick chimneys (22 Brady Road). Some retain original slate roofs (9 Vickery Street; 14 Atkinson Street) or corrugated steel sheeting (19 Talbot Avenue) while others have been reclad (7 Lydia Street, 30 Carlyon Street). Of the more substantial houses of masonry construction, all but one are rendered; the exception was originally of face brickwork but was given a roughcast rendered finish during the inter-war years. *St Elmo* on Tucker Road, with lively bichromatic brickwork in excellent condition, remains exceptional.

## References

Certificate of Title, Volume 1964, Folio 774, created 14 January 1888.

Certificate of Title, Volume 3045, Folio 808, created 5 April 1905.

“St Elmo Poultry Farm”, *Australasian*, 16 February 1918, p 13.

“St Elmo Poultry Farm: Mr R R Christie of Bentleigh”, *Leader*, 27 July 1918, p 15.

Lodged Plan Nos 33,581 and 34,008, both declared 14 August 1956.

## Identified by

Andrew Ward (citation, February 2001); Glen Eira Historical Society

Additional research and assessment by Built Heritage Pty Ltd.

## **D: CITATIONS FOR POST-WW2 PLACES ("POST WAR")**

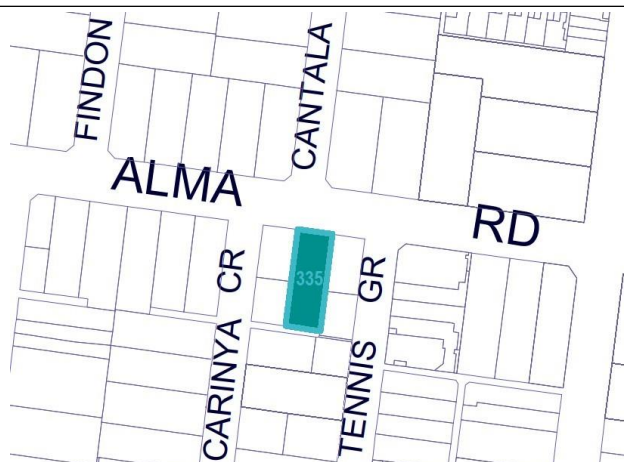


**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW01
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 K10
<b>Address</b>	335 Alma Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1968
<b>Designer/s</b>	Robert Rosh	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7	Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 335 Alma Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed beige brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style, with white marble cladding at the upper level, mosaic tiled columns and stone-clad dwarf walls. Erected in 1968 for a Polish-born clothing manufacturer and his wife, it was designed by Czech-born Robert Rosh.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the house as well as the contemporaneous brick boundary wall, letterbox and stone-clad dwarf walls to the front garden.

### Why is it significant?

The 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

### *How is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as a particularly unusual example of modernist residential architecture of the 1960s. The work of a Czech-born émigré designer who, while professionally qualified, did not become registered as an architect in Victoria, the house exhibits an idiosyncratic strain of modernism where the trademark rectilinear massing, balanced façade and generous fenestration is relieved by decorative embellishments that include mosaic tiled columns, concrete breeze block screen, stone-clad dwarf walls and, most strikingly of all, white marble cladding to the upper level of the street façade. Occupied by the original residents for nearly fifty years, this virtually unaltered house remains an eye-catching element in the streetscape (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 335 Alma Road, Caulfield North, was built in 1968 for a Polish clothing manufacturer and his wife, to a design by Czech-born Robert Rosh. Born in southern Poland in the late 1910s, the future owner of the house moved to Germany in 1940, where he met and married a fellow Pole. Subsequently declared stateless, the couple migrated to Australia in the early 1950s. Initially, they resided briefly in Fitzroy, Brunswick East and Brunswick West, before settling more permanently in Thornbury by the mid-1950s. The man, who cited his occupation as tailor on his immigration form, found related work here and, by the time he and his wife were naturalised in 1956, he was employed by a lingerie manufacturer in Northcote. The couple remained living in Thornbury, albeit relocating to a larger house in another street. Towards the end of the 1960s, they acquired land in Alma Road, Caulfield North, as a site for a new house, and commissioned Robert Rosh to design it.

A Czech émigré and Holocaust survivor, Robert Rosh (*ne* Reichenbaum, 1909-1982) was born in Moravská Ostrava, and took the degree of *Diplom-Architekt* from an as yet unconfirmed university. During 1941, he was confined to an *Arbeitslager* (labour camp) at Vyhne, Czechoslovakia, but was residing in Prague by the next year, when he married Tola Zaks (1914-2016), a Polish merchant's daughter. Two years later, the couple was sent to Sosnowitz, a sub-camp of Auschwitz, but managed to escape. Rosh's older brother Arthur was not so fortunate; he perished at Dachau in December 1944. In 1946, Robert and Tola migrated to Australia with their young daughter and Tola's brother. The family settled in Parkville, where another daughter was born. By the time that Rosh became a naturalized citizen in 1952, he had already commenced private practice. Disinclined to become registered as an architect in Victoria, he was obliged to style himself (for legal reasons) as an 'architectural designer'. Initially, he focused largely on small-scale non-residential work, such as retail fitouts and hotel alterations, but, from the mid-1950s, designed an increasing number of houses, mostly for fellow European emigre clients. This enduring link saw him design a few high-profile projects for the Jewish community, most notably a synagogue on Nepean Highway, Moorabbin (1963).

Rosh's working drawings for the Polish couple's house on Alma Road are simply drafted; in place of a formal title block, they bear the neatly lettered text, "R Rosh & Associates, Toorak". While the original drawing date is not recorded, two amendments are dated May and June 1968. The plans depict a flat-roofed split-level brick house, with a two-storey wing facing the street and single-storey rear wing, partially elevated to allow space for a playroom below. Evidently conceived for entertaining on a lavish scale, the house had an expansive entry foyer with formal staircase and adjacent cloak room and powder room, and two large living areas, one of which opened onto a full-width rear balcony. In the front wing, three bedrooms were provided for the family. They were to occupy the house for almost fifty years, until the respective deaths of the man and his wife in the early twenty-first century.



## Description

The house at 335 Alma Road, Caulfield, is a two-storey flat-roofed beige brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style. It is expressed in a characteristic European Modernist manner, where the upper level (containing principal living areas) is given emphasis over a recessed lower level (containing carport, entry foyer and subsidiary spaces). The street façade is symmetrical at the upper level, with broad eaves and three large bays of tripartite windows (each comprising narrow operable sashes flanking a central fixed sash), enlivened by spandrel cladding of white marble in random coursed slabs. At ground level, there is a matching window bay to the left side, while the remainder of the façade is given over to an integrated double carport with timber slatted ceiling and a screen wall of concrete breeze blocks. The front entry, more or less centrally located at ground level, is marked by circular column clad with glass mosaic tiles. The entry itself, set into the rear wall of the carport area, has a large and heavily panelled timber door.

The front garden incorporates some dwarf walls with stone cladding, which extend along part of the street façade and the driveway. The letterbox unit, in matching beige brick with dark glazed terracotta capping, is also evidently contemporaneous with the house.

## Comparisons

As Robert Rosh never became registered as an architect in Victoria, he has not left the usual paper trail and it has been difficult to conclusively identify other examples of his work, either in the City of Glen Eira or anywhere else. His daughter, author and historian Naomi Rosh White, retains some of his records and confirms that he designed numerous houses for European émigré clients, and was notably active in the post-WW2 migrant heartland of Caulfield and St Kilda. By far his best-known project in the study area is the Kadimah Jewish Cultural Centre and National Library at 7 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick (1972). A purpose-built cultural hub for the Yiddish-speaking community, it is a large multi-purpose brown brick building in an idiosyncratic modernist style, enlivened by a facade sculpture and leadlight windows by eminent artist Karl Duldig.

To date, few of Rosh's residential projects have been identified in what is now the City of Glen Eira. The earliest of these is a house at 3 Bickhams Court, St Kilda East, designed in 1960 for a prominent émigré builder. An expansive split-level brick dwelling on a corner site, it contrasts with the more compact two-house at 335 Alma Road, but still exhibits something of the same mix of academic modernism and a more decorative approach, with slate feature walls, terrazzo paving, tinted glass and vertically striped fence. Other local examples of Rosh's work include three much later houses from the mid-1970s. One, at 1a Sidwell Avenue, St Kilda East (1973) is a compact two-storey dwelling akin to the Alma Road house, but with a full-width balcony with textured glass panels. Another, at 56 Almond Street, Caulfield South (1974) is a two-storey house of wholly different form, in dark red brick with low mansard roof and a front wall with moon gate. Another example at 66 Snowdon Avenue, Caulfield (1974) is a single-storey brick house with flat roof, broad fascias, full-height windows and ceramic tile cladding; owned by the same family until 2010, the house has since been remodelled almost beyond recognition.

The Alma Road house is eerily akin to a block of flats at 650 Inkerman Road, Caulfield North (c1965), with similar use of feature stone cladding (albeit slate rather than marble) and mosaic tiled columns; it may also be Rosh's work. Considered more broadly among 1960s houses designed by European-trained architects for fellow émigré clients, the Alma Road house is most comparable to the work of Michael R E Feldhagen (1932-1986), a German-born architect who, like Rosh, never applied to become registered as an architect in Victoria and practiced as an 'architectural designer'. Feldhagen's distinctive work is typified in Caulfield by houses at 30 Aroona Road (1963) and 19 Morrice Street (c1969), both similarly expressed as double-storeyed flat-roofed dwellings with lower levels recessed and upper levels enlivened by applied ornament. Feldhagen's hand seems evident in a house at 386 Alma Road (1961-62), designed by the office of Ernest Fooks at the time that Feldhagen was employed there.

## **References**

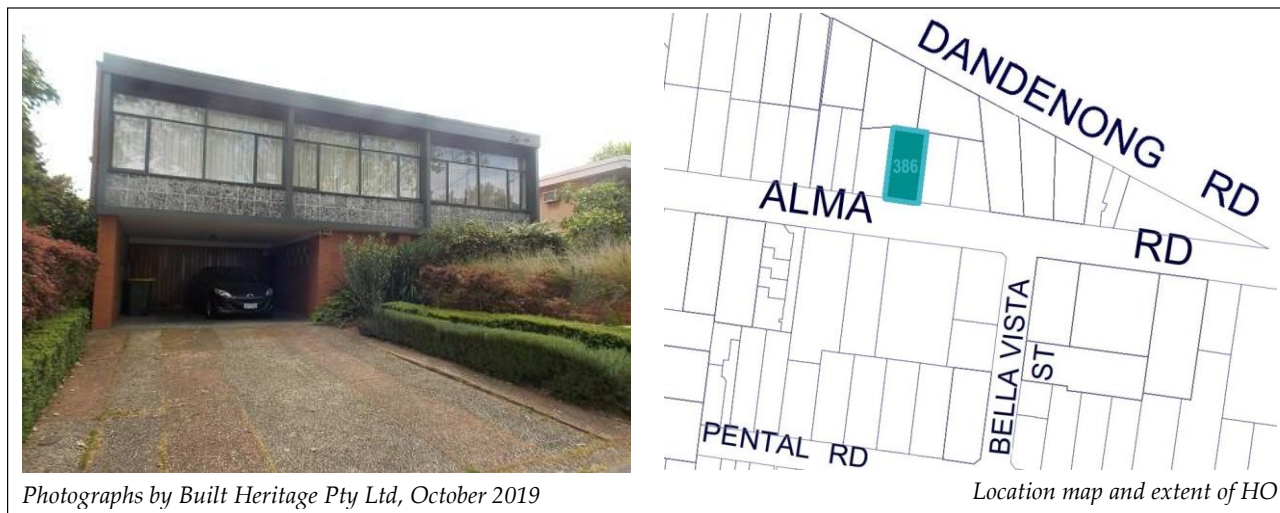
Robert Rosh & Associates, “Proposed two storey split-level brick residence for Mr and Mrs [redacted] at No 335 Alma Road, Caulfield”, working drawings, dated May/June 1968. City of Caulfield Permit No 36,833.

Email from Naomi Rosh White (daughter of Robert Rosh), 12 October 2019.

## **Identified by**

Built Heritage Pty Ltd

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW02
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	59 A10
<b>Address</b>	386 Alma Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1961-62
<b>Designer/s</b>	Dr Ernest Fooks	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 386 Alma Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed orange brick house in the modernist style, expressed as a box-like upper level (containing three large window bays with terrazzo spandrels) elevated above a recessed undercroft that encloses a double carport. Erected in 1961-62 for a clothing manufacturer and his wife, the house was designed by noted Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the house, the matching brick walls to the front garden, and the pebbled paving to the driveway and the front paths.

### How is it significant?

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as a particularly distinctive example of modernist residential architecture of the early 1960s. Commissioned at a time when architect Fooks was moving beyond his usual hard-edged modernism towards a more inclusive and eclectic approach, the house deftly combines the tenets of Fook's more academic style (ie the stark expression of a two-storey house as an elongated glass-fronted box, hovering above an undercroft) with a playfully decorative style fashionable at the time, conveyed by small rows of openings to the carport walls, spandrels with eye-catching rubble terrazzo finish, and a two-toned pebbled driveway. As one of the first Fooks houses to depart from his mainstream modernist style (perhaps influenced by younger employee Michael Feldhagen, whose initials appear on the drawings), the house ushered in a more eclectic approach that would characterise Fooks' work thereafter. (*Criterion E*)

The house is historically significant for associations with Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks, who started private practice in Melbourne in 1948 and soon became sought-after as a designer of residential projects for fellow European émigré clients. Notably prolific in the former City of Caulfield (where he himself resided, in Howitt Street, from 1966 until his death), Fooks maintained a long personal and professional association with what is now the City of Glen Eira, including several art exhibitions held at the Caulfield Town Hall. Dating from 1961, the Alma Road house is one of the most striking and intact examples of Fooks' residential work from that period, marking an auspicious start to what would become the peak decade of his professional practice in Melbourne. (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 386 Alma Road, Caulfield, was erected in 1961 for a clothing manufacturer and his wife, to a design by architect Ernest Fooks. Of second generation Polish migrant stock, the owner's father had migrated to Australia in the mid-1920s and married a fellow émigré of Latvian background. During the 1930s, the couple established a clothing manufacture business that re-emerged in the post-WW2 era as a drapery firm, based in Flinders Lane. Born in the mid-1930s, the future owner of the house in Alma Road joined his father's business in the mid-1950s but, by the end of the decade, had become director of his own clothing firm. Already married by then, he and his wife initially resided with his parents in Elwood. Intending to build a house for themselves, the couple acquired a vacant block on the north side of Alma Road, Caulfield North, which comprised one of "four elevated home sites" in a "superb subdivision" that were auctioned in October 1960 (Age 14/09/1960:2). The following year, they engaged architect Ernest Fooks to design them a new house.

Ernest Fooks (*ne* Fuchs; 1905-1986) was born in Bratislava but his family soon moved to nearby Vienna, where he studied architecture at the *Technische Hochschule* and completed a doctorate in town planning. After further professional experience (included a reputed stint with Le Corbusier), he commenced private practice in Vienna in 1932. Migrating to Australia via Canada (where he married his wife Noemi), Fuchs arrived in Melbourne in 1939 and, on the strength of his town planning credentials, secured a position with the Housing Commission of Victoria. In 1948, he left to open his own office. From the onset, Fooks principally drew his clientele from Melbourne's thriving post-WW2 European émigré community, and this would become an enduring and significant association for the remainder of his career. He not only designed numerous houses for Continental compatriots, but also retail fitouts, factories and a number of major projects for the Jewish community including schools, kindergarten and synagogues.

The working drawings for the Alma Road house bear the title block of “the Office of Dr Ernest Fooks”, and were prepared by a delineator identified by the initials MF. Without doubt, this was Michael Feldhagen (1932-2013), a young German architect who migrated to Australia in 1958 and, following a brief stint with the Housing Commission, had joined Fooks’ office by 1960. While the working drawings are undated (bearing the job number 626), an accompanying sheet of engineers’ drawings is dated November 1961. The consultant engineer on the job was Bulgarian-born Peter Stojanoff (1919-2003), a frequent collaborator of Melbourne’s European émigré architects.

For his Alma Road clients, Fooks proposed a largely split-level house on a carefully zoned C-shaped plan that was divided into two wings linked by a central entrance hall. The front wing, facing Alma Road, contained three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a maid’s room, while the north-facing rear wing containing living area, den and kitchen opening onto a terrace. At the lower level, there was a double garage to Alma Road and a stair lobby providing direct access to the upstairs foyer. Interestingly, the working drawings indicate a number of features that were revised when the house was actually built. A feature wall of random-coursed stone cladding along the side carport walls was omitted, while the front window spandrels, shown on the drawings as eight-inch square Besser blocks, were ultimately replaced by terrazzo panels with a rubble-like finish.

The family remained living in the Alma Road house for decades. During that period, the owner maintained a parallel career as an estate agent, initially working in association with a well-known St Kilda-based property developer, and later with several other leading firms. While the house appears to have remained unpublished during Fooks’ lifetime, it was one of several modernist houses that were selected for inclusion in *Notable & Modern*, an exhibition of post-war domestic architecture in the City of Glen Eira that took place at the Glen Eira Art Gallery in July 2001.

## Description

The house at 386 Alma Road, Caulfield, is a two-storey flat-roofed orange brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style. It is expressed in a characteristic European Modernist manner, where the upper level (containing principal living areas) is given emphasis over a recessed lower level (containing carport, entry foyer and subsidiary spaces). The street façade is symmetrical at the upper level, divided into three bays that are framed by the eaves, projecting floor slab and fin-like piers. Each bay contains a full-width window (made up of fixed and operable sashes with elongated highlights above) and a spandrel of square terrazzo with random stonework. At ground level, a blank and slightly recessed brick wall extends across two-thirds of the façade, with a double carport to the left side that has timber lining boards to the rear wall and rows of small square openings along the side walls. The main entry, concealed from public view, is set into an alcove on the side (west) elevation.

The front garden incorporates matching orange brick retaining walls along the street boundary property line and the east side of the driveway, while the driveway itself is paved with pebbled concrete slabs in alternating pale-toned stripes.

## Comparisons

With a clientele drawn primarily from Melbourne’s post-WW2 European émigré community, it is not surprising that Ernest Fooks undertook a great deal of work in what is now the City of Glen Eira, and specifically the former City of Caulfield (where he himself resided, in Howitt Street, from 1966 until his death). While sources differ, Fooks’s commissions in the Caulfield area numbered at least thirty (according to Edquist) and may have exceeded fifty (according to Pert). With only one confirmed exception, these Caulfield projects were residential, encapsulating new houses, blocks of flats and alteration/additions. Most date from the 1960s (the peak period of Fooks’ practice), with fewer from the ‘50s and fewer still from the ‘70s.



As with most architects in practice for several decades, Fooks' style changed over the years and several distinct phases can be identified. His earliest houses, dating from the late 1940s when wartime restrictions on building materials were still enforced, adopted conventional forms (eg hipped roofs) and materials (eg cream brick, terracotta tiles), with some concessions to modernism. From the early 1950s, he was able to confidently return to his European roots with houses in a stark hard-edged modernist fashion, characterised by a block-like expression, flat roofs with broad eaves, window walls, balconies and sun-decks. Following two stints of overseas travel in 1958 and 1960, Fooks' formerly hard-edged style mellowed to embrace other influences (from Japan, America and elsewhere), resulting in a more urbane version of modernism defined by the use of stark planar walls, floating roofs, screens and colonnades. In the early 1960s, his houses often incorporated playful embellishments, such as feature walls and decorative finishes, reflecting a then-fashionable sub-style of modernism that Robin Boyd denounced as "Featurism". As the decade progressed, Fooks' style became increasingly idiosyncratic, even expressionistic, typified by his own house in Caulfield (1966), with its slate-clad mansard rooflet and wavy timber ceilings. In the later 1960s and into the 1970s, his work drifted even further from the academic modernism of his younger days, sometimes even teetering on the brink of a post-modernist approach, with archways or other implied classical references.

Stylistically, the house at 386 Alma Road falls into Fooks' middle period, when his work was still very much in a slick modernist mode while starting to become tempered with other influences. The general expression of the house, as an elongated box elevated above a recessed undercroft, recurs in a few contemporaneous houses in Caulfield, including those at 3 Kiers Court (1961), 208 Kooyong Road (1964) and 185 Orrong Road (1964). While the last of these has a feature wall of textured concrete brickwork laid in stack bond, with matching hit-and-miss front fence, none of them reaches the degree of liveliness evident in the Alma Road house, with its terrazzo spandrels and pebbled driveway with tinted stripes. In this sense, the house perhaps has more in common with the independent work of Michael Feldhagen (who left Fooks' office in 1963 to establish his own practice), typified by a house at 30 Aroona Road, completed that year.

## References

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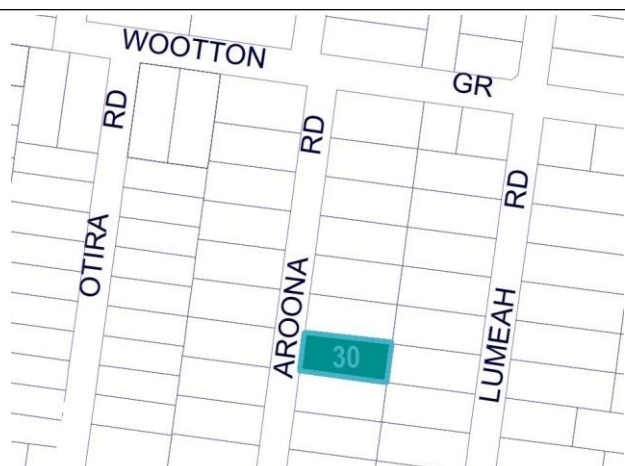
Built Heritage Pty Ltd (also nominated by a member of the public)

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW03
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J12
<b>Address</b>	30 Aroona Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1963 1999 (additions)
<b>Designer/s</b>	Michael R E Feldhagen (1964) Edmond & Corrigan (1999)	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown (1963) KH Contractors Pty Ltd (1999)



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		

<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 30 Aroona Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style, with a projecting upper storey that, supported on paired struts, forms a ground level undercroft. It incorporates expansive windows, two corner balconies with timber-lined eaves and a range of decorative finishes including rock-faced marble chips to the first floor spandrel, projecting brick courses at the lower level, feature stone cladding and concrete breeze block screens to the side elevations. Erected in 1963 for Czechoslovakian-born husband-and-wife clothing manufacturers, the house was designed by German-born architect Michael R E Feldhagen. The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the house, and the crazy paved-stone driveway.

### How is it significant?

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as an exceptional example of modernist residential architecture of the early 1960s. While the expression of a two-storey house with an upper level projecting over a recessed lower level is a recurring motif in modernist architecture (represented by many examples in what is now the City of Glen Eira), this one is outstanding for its more distinctive and idiosyncratic articulation, which includes a subtle concave curve to the street façade, pairs of angled strut-like supports, corner balconies (rather than a full-width balcony) and an uncommonly varied application of decorative surface treatments that include rock-faced marble strips, feature stone cladding, projecting brick courses, concrete breeze block screens and a crazy paved driveway. With the house owned by its original family for many years, its exterior remains remarkably intact to the period, and is a striking element in the streetscape (*Criterion E*)

The house is historically and architecturally significant as one of the most outstanding examples of the work of German-born architect Michael R E Feldhagen, a former employee of Dr Ernest Fooks who, reportedly at the urging of Fooks' clients, left to commence his own practice in 1963 and soon became sought-after as a designer of high-end residences, mostly for fellow European émigrés. While Feldhagen is said to have been notably active in Caulfield in the 1960s and '70s, few of his buildings have been conclusively identified therein. This standout example, with its uncommonly lively and virtually unaltered exterior, remains as his best known residential project. (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 30 Aroona Road, Caulfield North, was erected in 1963 for a Czechoslovakian-born couple who were clothing manufacturers, to a design by German-born architect Michael R E Feldhagen. They were both born in the western part of Czechoslovakia that, after WW2, became part of Ukraine. The couple was living in Bratislava (present-day Slovakia) by the late 1940s, shortly before migrating to Australia and settling in St Kilda. In the early 1950s, the couple established their own clothing company, also based in St Kilda. The family later moved to Elwood and then, in June 1963, acquired the title to the present site at 30 Aroona Road, Caulfield North. At the time, the site was occupied by a modest pre-war dwelling, which the family intended to demolish so that they might build a grand new family residence. To design it, they commissioned German-born architect Michael R E Feldhagen.

Born in Breslau (now Wrocław, in western Poland), Michael Richard Ernest Feldhagen studied architecture at the *Universität der Künste Berlin* and, after graduating, worked for a city architect. Concerned by the political instability that would later bring about the erection of the Berlin Wall, Feldhagen and his wife Helga migrated to Australia, arriving in Melbourne in September 1958. He initially found employment with the Housing Commission of Victoria, but, around 1960, joined the private practice of Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks. Around 1963, reportedly at the urging of some of Fooks' clients, Feldhagen resigned to establish his own practice. Disinclined to become registered as an architect in Victoria, he practised thereafter as an "architectural designer". Initially focusing on individual residential commissions, Feldhagen began to embrace larger-scale apartment blocks from the later 1960s. He remained in practice well into the 1980s (latterly in partnership with his son Oliver) before retiring to Queensland in the 1990s.

Michael Feldhagen's working drawings for the new house in Aroona Road, which are undated, proposed a flat-roofed split-level dwelling on the sloping site, with an H-shaped plan form that comprised a double-storey front wing with a single-storey rear wing connected by a hexagonal lobby/stairwell space. The front wing provided a rumpus room, living room and laundry at the lower level, with three bedrooms and a study upstairs. To the rear was the kitchen, "breakfast nook" and three interconnecting living spaces (sunroom, living room and dining room) that all opened onto an expansive rear terrace. Demolition of the existing house on the site was already underway by May 1963, when a newspaper advertisement drew attention to second-hand roofing tiles for sale at 30 Aroona Road (Age 04/05/1963:48). Construction of the new residence was in progress by August, when a second advertisement sought bricklayers (noting "New Australians welcome") for a building site at the same address (Age 28/08/1963:38).

Ultimately, the family would occupy the house for over three decades. After the widow sold the property in the late 1990s, it was acquired by a lighting designer who engaged his friend Peter Corrigan (with whom he had previously worked on stage design productions) to undertake internal alterations. The office of Edmond & Corrigan remodelled a bathroom and the kitchen, converting the existing breakfast nook into an informal living space identified as the "kitchen family room". In what was clearly a theatrical approach befitting the professional association between architect and client, the renovation was conceived in a lively Post-Modernist mode, later lauded for its "quirky, colourful and humorous elements" with the power to "conjure up multiple interpretations, not least Howard Arkley inspirations, to produce a theatre stage for family living" (Architect, 2000:23). The bold refurbishment went on to receive an Award of Merit in the interiors category at the 2000 RAIA (Victorian chapter) Awards.

Subsequently, this house was one of several modernist houses that were selected for inclusion in *Notable & Modern*, an exhibition of post-war domestic architecture in the City of Glen Eira that took place at the Glen Eira Art Gallery in July 2001.

## Description

The house at 30 Aroona Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style. It is expressed in a characteristic European Modernist manner, where the upper storey (containing the principal living areas) is given emphasis over a recessed lower level (containing carport, entry foyer and subsidiary spaces). The street façade is slightly concave and symmetrical, with the projecting upper level comprising a central glazed bay flanked by two open balconies with window walls and timber-lined ceilings. A continuous brick spandrel, clad in rock-face marble, forms a balustrade wall to each of the balconies. At street level, the projecting upper level is supported on four pairs of angled strut-like steel columns, which rise from low flower boxes enlivened with stone cladding. Beneath this undercroft, a centrally-placed recessed front entry porch is flanked by elongated window bays with face brick spandrels below. The two side elevations of the house also incorporate large areas of feature stone cladding, as well as concrete breeze block screens to the first floor windows.

The front undercroft, which also functions as a double carport and *port cochere*, has a crazy paved stone finish, which extends to the street in both directions to form a circular driveway.

As an interior inspection has not been undertaken, the current status of the award-winning Edmond & Corrigan internal renovation remains unknown.

## Comparisons

Although Michael Feldhagen's son has stated that his father was extremely prolific as a designer in the Caulfield area, relatively few examples of his work have yet been conclusively identified there, or anywhere else in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Research to date has located only two other houses confirmed to have been Feldhagen's work: one at 17 Sycamore Street, Caulfield South (1968) and another at 19 Morrice Street, Caulfield (c1970).

Both have much in common with the house in Aroona Road, in that they were similarly conceived as two-storey flat-roofed brick dwellings with a glass-walled upper storey that is visually emphasised above an understated lower storey. While neither of these two houses has the same bold expression of a projecting upper storey supported on angled struts, each has some specific elements in common with the Aroona Road house. The house in Morrice Street has broad projecting eaves with varnished timber lining boards, and a cantilevered first floor balcony with an eye-catching panelled balustrade wall that gives way to horizontal railings at one end. The house in Sycamore Street, with its wide panelled fascia and large first floor windows, otherwise recalls the Aroona Road house in its use of the same rock-faced white marble cladding to the spandrels at the upper level, and a stone-clad feature wall to the side.

At the time of writing, the only other confirmed examples of Feldhagen's work in the study area is a two-storey block of flats on a corner site at 34 Elizabeth Street, Elsternwick (1969). With its stepped façade, flat roof with wide fascia, tall window bays and varied expression of projecting and recessing balconies with solid balustrade walls, the building is somewhat evocative of the designer's individual residential commissions, albeit lacking the lively decorative embellishments. Another block of flats by Feldhagen, expressed more conventionally in brown brick with corner balconies, still stands on Dandenong Road. However located on the north side of the street (at No 205), it is just outside the boundaries of the City of Glen Eira.

## References

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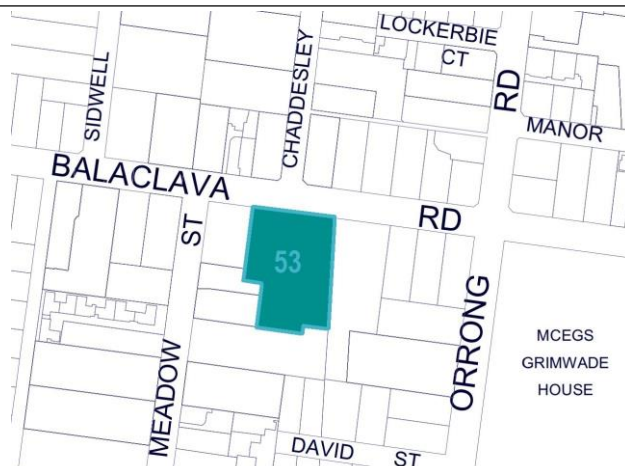
Built Heritage Pty Ltd.



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	PW04
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Greyfriars</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H11
<b>Address</b>	53 Balaclava Road ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1949-51
<b>Designer/s</b>	Bernard Evans	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flat	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The *Greyfriars* flats at 53 Balaclava Road, Caulfield, is a development of forty-three flats in two-and three-storey hip-roofed cream brick blocks around a central garden area. The two blocks facing the street are expressed in a stark Functionalist style (linked by a garden wall), while those to the rear have angled stepped facades, exposed hipped roofs and open staircases/walkways. Erected in 1949-51 as Melbourne's first flats conceived on a co-operative system, they were designed by entrepreneurial architect Bernard Evans, who was also a director of the company that built them.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire original exterior of the flats, including the garden wall that links the two flat-roofed front blocks. The front fence is not considered to be significant.

### How is it significant?

The *Greyfriars* flats satisfy the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

### *Why is it significant?*

The *Greyfriars* flats are historically significant as a milestone in post-WW2 apartment dwelling in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Designed in 1949, this complex of 43 units was the first major block of flats to be erected in the study area in the post-WW2 era, anticipating the significant influx of higher-density living that would transform the study area (and especially the former City of Caulfield) in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. Conceived on a then-innovative co-operative basis, whereby ownership was vested in a co-operative society in which each resident was a member, *Greyfriars* is historically significant as the first development of that type in Melbourne. This ushered in new modern era of own-your-own flats, which subsequently became the norm and ultimately lead to the introduction of strata title legislation in the late 1960s. (*Criterion A*)

The *Greyfriars* flats are aesthetically significant as an unusual example of post-WW2 modernist architecture. While conceived as a single development, with a consistent palette of face brickwork (mostly cream), the individual blocks are expressed in contrasting forms. The two front blocks are articulated in a stark Functionalist mode, with bold rectilinear massing, corner balconies and roofs concealed by parapets, while the rear blocks have a more traditionally domestic character with exposed hipped roofs, stepped angled facades and open stairwells and walkways. With the flats arranged in a U-shaped configuration around a pleasant central garden/carpark area, *Greyfriars* remain as a highly distinctive example of a post-WW2 apartment complex. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

This complex of own-your-own flats was built from 1949-51 to a design by Bernard Evans. The large site, on the south side of Balaclava Road west of Orrong Road, was originally part of the even larger grounds of a Victorian mansion, *Greenmeadows*. In 1902, the property's Balaclava Road frontage was subdivided as *Lempriere's Estate*, creating ten "magnificent new allotments" fronting the main road and newly-formed Meadow Street. Lot 4, future site of the *Greyfriars* flats, spanned just over an acre and was acquired by an engineer who, circa 1908, built a grand residence that he named *Keith House*. Five years after the engineer's death in 1931, *Keith House* was offered for sale as "a commodious triple-fronted brick villa standing well within a garden of charm" (*Age* 10/10/1936:2). Subsequent owners retained the name *Keith House* until 1944, when the building was converted into a private hospital, the Keith House Convalescent Home.

In April 1949, it was reported that Keith House Convalescent Home was to be redeveloped as "a block of 44 [*sic*] ultra-modern flats", conceived on a new system where each of the owners would become members of a co-operative society, contributing £2,000 towards construction costs (*Herald* 40/04/1949:5). Lauded as "the first co-operative housing project of its kind in Victoria", the scheme was sponsored by estate agent F E Carolan, who stated that 150 applications had already been received, and a ballot would be held to select the final members. Plans had been prepared by architect Bernard Evans, who intended to retain the original building on the site (augmented with a rooftop sun deck), with new flats, in elongated double-storey blocks, to either side. It was further reported that "each unit will be self-contained and all will be staggered to allow maximum light. Each will consist of a lounge, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom... A separate laundry unit will have automatic washing machines and a drying room. There will be luxury swimming pool, with bays at each end and will be situated in a U-shaped courtyard".

Born in Manchester, Bernard Evans (1905-1981) migrated to Australia as a teenager with his family, who initially settled in St Kilda. He began his career as a designer/builder for a timber construction company in Box Hill before starting his own business along similar lines in 1928, building speculative dwellings in the southern suburbs and bush nursing hospitals in regional Victoria. During the 1930s, he fostered an ongoing association with West Australian businessman Claude De Bernales, for whom he designed blocks of flats in inner Melbourne, several buildings in Perth and one in London. It was only after returning to Australia in 1940 that Evans, who had

hitherto advertised himself as a designer and master builder, was registered as an architect. After exemplary service in WW2 (finishing with a DSO and the rank of Brigadier), Evans re-established private practice in Melbourne as Bernard Evans & Associates. A commercially-oriented firm, it rose to become one of Melbourne's largest, specialising in large-scale urban projects such as office buildings and apartment blocks. A forward thinker who championed innovative ideas (such as prefabricated plaster construction, own-your-own flats and integration of open space in highrise buildings), Evans also had a keen entrepreneurial streak, and served as director of various private companies involved in speculative projects and subdivisions. Active in local politics, he twice served as Lord Mayor of Melbourne and was knighted in 1962. Evans retired in 1971, by which time his firm was known as Evans, Murphy, Berg & Hocking.

Characteristically, the entrepreneurial Bernard Evans was not only the architect of the Balaclava Road flats, but also one of five directors of its development company, Greyfriars Pty Ltd, formed in July 1949. Towards the end of August, it was reported that the new company had approved the capital issue and that construction (anticipated to take 18 months) had begun (*Age* 23/08/1949:4). Over the next few months, the builder placed newspaper advertisements seeking carpenters, bricklayers and builders' labourers on site, and similar advertisements would continue to appear throughout the first half of 1950. While construction was still in its early stages, Evans, always the publicist, penned a feature article to a daily newspaper titled "So you want a home?", promoting the virtues of co-operative dwelling in general (*Argus* 21/11/1949:2). Further press attention came from architect and *Herald* property editor Harry Perrott, who mentioned the project several times in his weekly column. In May 1950, while reporting another new own-your-own flat development in South Yarra, he noted in passing that *Greyfriars*, "the first scheme of its kind in Melbourne", was now nearing completion (*Herald* 26/05/1950:13). An accompanying photograph showed one of the new blocks beside the existing residence, with a caption reiterating that the project "embraces conversion of an old house and erection of new blocks on each side to make 42 [*sic*] flats in all".

Work continued, with newspaper advertisements for plumbers appearing in the latter half of 1950. Early the next year, Harry Perrott provided a further update, noting that "the own your own flat system was pioneered in Melbourne with the launch of *Greyfriars*, Balaclava Road, East St Kilda, with 43 self-contained units now nearing completion" (*Herald* 20/01/1951:10). While newspaper advertisements for concrete labourers still appeared as late as March 1951, at least one of flats was already occupied by that time (*Age* 20/03/1951:14). In September 1952, there was a minor flurry of press attention when the first of these tightly-held own-your-own flats came up for sale on the open market. The "three-room ultra-modern unit" sold for £3,500 at auction, with a report noting that "the purchaser becomes a shareholder in Greyfriars Pty Ltd, owners of the 43 flats in the block; under agreement, he shares maintenance costs with the other flatholders" (*Argus* 21/10/1952:3). Greyfriars Pty Ltd also maintained ownership of the convalescent home, which operated from the site until the late 1950s, when the building was demolished, allowing for the creating of an open landscape court between the flats (*Age* 22/03/1958:46).

## Description

The *Greyfriars* flats at 53 Balaclava Road, Caulfield, comprise a development of 43 flats (evidently misreported, in some contemporary newspaper accounts, as 44 or 42 flats) in a series of two- and three-storey hip-roofed buildings of face brick construction (mostly cream) arranged around a central garden and carpark area. The street frontage is dominated by a pair of blocks linked by a garden wall. Expressed in a slick Functionalist style, these blocks have stark rectilinear massing and parapets that conceal their hipped roofs. Of identical but mirror reversed design when seen from the street, each block has large bays of windows and recessed corner balconies (with low metal balustrades) at the garden wall end. This wall, which forms a vehicular gateway to the rear of the site, consists of a row of five fin-like brick piers with recessed spandrels between. The third spandrel bears the name of the flats and street number in cursive mild steel lettering.

At the rear, the central open space is flanked by an elongated rectangular block of flats to the east (left) side, and a series of stepped blocks along the west (right) side. Of matching cream brick construction, these rear flats have a more traditionally domestic feel, with exposed hipped roofs (ie not concealed by parapets), broad eaves and prominent chimneys. There is also variation in elevational treatment to the courtyard facades, with some blocks having angled stepped façades with large windows (including corner windows) and others with smaller windows and entrances that open onto shared concrete slab walkways and staircases with simple metal balustrades. Some flats to the west side have integrated garages at the lowest level, accessed via a second driveway off Balaclava Road. The central open space, enclosed on all four sides, incorporates a graveled parking area, lawns, concrete pathways, informal garden beds (some defined by volcanic rock borders) with low plantings, and a few mature trees.

## Comparisons

Dating from 1949, the *Greyfriars* flats were one of the first modern-style apartment blocks erected after WW2 in what is now the City of Glen Eira. At the local level, its nearest counterpart would be the block of flats slightly further east, at 124 Balaclava Road (Mordechai Benshemesh, 1950-51). These are not only comparable in date but also have much in common, stylistically, with the two front blocks of flats at *Greyfriars*: a stark Functionalist expression with plain cream brick walls, parapeted roof and corner windows. The blocks of flats to the rear of *Greyfriars*, with a more traditionally domestic expression of exposed hipped roofs, are more comparable to such local examples as the *Kenleigh Court* flats at 166 Glen Eira Road, Elsternwick (unknown, 1954). The distinctive facade stepping, to maximize sunlight penetration into individual units, is a feature that would only become more widespread in much later blocks of flats, typified by 321a Orrong Road (Kurt Popper, 1958), 66 Downshire Road, Elsternwick (unknown, 1960), and 37 Orrong Road, Elsternwick (unknown, 1965). The *Greyfriars* flats can thus be considered as a groundbreaking example of post-WW2 apartment design, in a municipality where such development would have a significant presence in the 1950s, '60s and '70s.

With several contemporary reports describing *Greyfriars* as Melbourne's first co-operative flat development, it is worth pointing out that the concept became immediately popular and spurred a number of similar ventures in rapid succession. Not coincidentally, most of these were initiated by companies whose directors included F R Lee, who had held that position with Greyfriars Pty Ltd. Amongst the co-operative flat developments to be completed by Lee's companies were *Ravendene* at 205 Domain Road, South Yarra (1950-51), *Merton Court* at 169 Ormond Road, Elwood (1951-52), *Sheridan Close* at St Kilda Road, Melbourne (1951-53) and *Elizabeth Court*, Queens Road, Melbourne (1952-53). The last two, at least, are confirmed to have also been designed by Bernard Evans. These four early blocks of co-operative flats otherwise differed in scale and form. *Ravendene* and *Merton Court* were fairly simple three-storey flat-roofed blocks, providing 16 and 34 bachelor flats respectively, while *Sheridan Close* was a vast five-storey development of 76 units with undercroft carparking, a monumental Georgian-inspired street frontage, and side walls that were angled (as Evans had previously done at *Greyfriars*) to provide balconies.

## References

"Co-operative flats", *Herald*, 30 April 1949, p 5.

"Work begins on another 'owner' plan", *Herald*, 26 May 1950, p 13.

David Dunstan, "Evans, Sir Bernard (1905-1981)" in Diane Langmore (ed), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 17 (2007).

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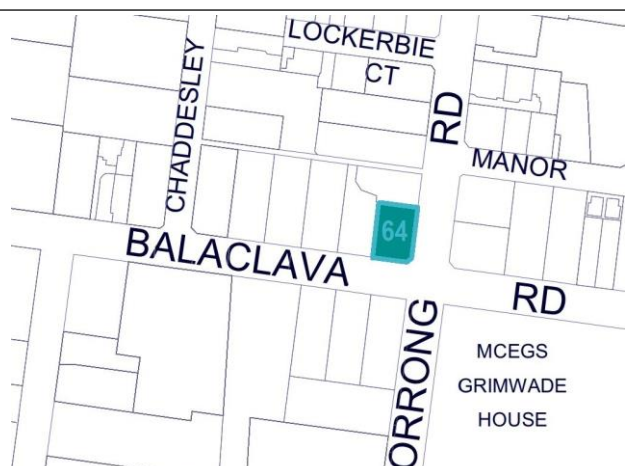
Built Heritage Pty Ltd



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW05
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 G12
<b>Address</b>	64 Balaclava Road ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1951-54
<b>Designer/s</b>	Ernest Fooks	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 64 Balaclava Road, St Kilda East, is a two-storey skillion-roofed cream brick house in a stark post-WW2 modernist style, with asymmetrical street facade incorporating a wide stone-clad chimney, large windows and north-facing sun decks. Designed in 1951 by Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks, the house was commissioned by a compatriot who was a successful canned fruit magnate, and whose family occupied it for three decades.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire house (**except for the altered fascia to the cantilevered overhang and potentially altered skylights**), along with the matching brick garden wall and boundary walls (with metal gates) along both street frontages. The garage to the rear, which occupies the footprint indicated on Fooks' drawings, is not considered significant.

### How is it significant?

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.



The house is aesthetically significant as an early and unusually substantial example of post-WW2 modernist residential architecture. Designed by an architect who trained and even practiced in Austria before migrating to Australia in 1939, the house represents a confident and authentic articulation of the International Style, with its bold rectilinear massing, stark planar walls, broad-eaved skillion roof, expansive windows and sundeck above a columned undercroft. Atypically large for its time, this grand two-storey residence, occupying a prominent corner site at the junction of two major roads, remains a conspicuous element in the streetscape. (*Criterion E*)

The house is historically significant for associations with Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks, who started private practice in Melbourne in 1948 and soon became sought-after as a designer of residential projects for fellow European émigré clients. Notably prolific in the former City of Caulfield (where he himself resided, in Howitt Street, from 1966 until his death), Fooks maintained a long personal and professional association with what is now the City of Glen Eira, including several art exhibitions held at the Caulfield Town Hall. Dating from 1951, the house is one of Fook's two oldest surviving buildings in the study area (along with another at 16 Cantala Avenue, also 1951) that, together, provide rare and significant evidence of the early presence of an architect whose work re-shaped the Caulfield area. (*Criterion H*)

## History

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

This house was built in 1951-53 for an émigré couple, to a design by Dr Ernest Fooks. The future owner was born in Poland in the early 1900s but later settled in Austria, where he married. By the early 1940s, they had already left Europe and were living in Shanghai. Migrating to Australia, the family arrived in Sydney in the late 1940s and promptly moved on to Victoria, where the future owner (who cited his profession as “canning expert” on his migration form) formed a partnership with a fellow émigré to start a fruit canning business in Shepparton (*Age* 03/12/1949:14). Such was its success that the family, which had hitherto resided in a modest house in Essendon, could build a new and grand residence for themselves. In February 1951, the couple acquired the title to a corner block in St Kilda East, and engaged architect Dr Ernest Fooks to design a new house.

Ernest Fooks (*ne* Fuchs; 1905-1986) was born in Bratislava but his family soon moved to nearby Vienna, where he studied architecture at the *Technische Hochschule* and completed a doctorate in town planning. After further professional experience (included a reputed stint with Le Corbusier), he commenced private practice in Vienna in 1932. Migrating to Australia via Canada (where he married his wife Noemi), Fuchs arrived in Melbourne in 1939 and, on the strength of his town planning credentials, secured a position with the Housing Commission of Victoria. In 1948, he left to open his own office. From the onset, Fooks principally drew his clientele from Melbourne's thriving post-WW2 European émigré community, and this would become an enduring and significant association for the remainder of his career. He not only designed numerous houses for Continental compatriots, but also retail fitouts, factories and several major projects for the Jewish community including schools, kindergarten and synagogues.

A blueprint of Fooks' working drawings for the Balaclava Road house, submitted to the City of Caulfield with a building permit application (and retained in the City of Glen Eira's archives), is dated April 1951 and identifies a delineator with initials LAA. This was Lindsay Alfred Anderson, who studied at the Melbourne University Architectural Atelier in the early 1940s but was not registered as an architect until 1961. The plans proposed a two-storey brick house on a stepped rectilinear plan with large windows and north-facing terraces, stone-clad feature walls and a matching solid stone wall along both street boundaries. The site plan indicates a detached “future garage” to the rear. The floorplans of the house show an entry foyer with grand curving staircase, a large living/dining area, kitchen, three downstairs bedrooms and another three upstairs, including a master suite with capacious *en suite* bathroom, dressing room and private balcony.

Construction of the new house evidently took some time. The unfolding project happened to catch the eye of Robin Boyd who wrote a letter in October 1952 to colleague Neil Clerehan (then visiting the USA) that mentioned Fooks' "latest", with a rough but unmistakable sketch of its distinctive curvilinear balustrade. In the City of Caulfield Rate Book for 1953-54, dated 8 December 1953, the site is still described as vacant land owned the fruit canner and his wife, late of Essendon West. A handwritten amendment, added prior to compilation of the next year's rate book, listed the couple as owner/occupants of a nine-roomed brick house with a Net Annual Value of £375. During 1953, while work was still underway on the house, the fruit canner retained Fooks to design a cool store extension to his factory in Shepparton.

Based on its current appearance, it appears that the house was built entirely in accordance with Fooks' scheme, although a plain cream brick boundary wall was erected in place of the more ornate solid stone wall shown on the drawings. A flat-roofed detached garage also exists in the position where Fooks had indicated. The fruit canner and his family were to occupy the house for three decades, until the early 1980s.

## Description

The house at 64 Balaclava Road, Caulfield, is a two-storey skillion-roofed cream brick house on a corner site. Its principal facade, to Balaclava Road, is elongated, asymmetrical and double-fronted, with a slightly projecting bay at the left side balanced by a wide slab-like chimney to the right side. The chimney is clad with Castlemaine slate, which extends along the side of a projecting front terrace. There are large windows at both levels, with steel-framed sashes and brick tile sills. The windows to the projecting bay partially return down the side elevation. The central window bay at the upper level opens onto a narrow balcony with a simple metal balustrade of sinuous form, and there is a matching balustrade to a widow's walk on the roof. The rear elevation of the house, partially visible from Orrong Road, incorporates a recessed porch with round columns and large recessed circular lights. At the second floor, large window bays open onto an expansive north-facing sun terrace with matching metal balustrade, a pergola and a staircase leading up to the widow's walk at roof level.

A low boundary wall, in matching cream brick with edge capping and contrasting orange Roman brick stringcourse, extends along the two street frontages. It incorporates two pedestrian gateways on the Balaclava Road side, with metal gates detailed to match the balustrades of the house. The front and back yards are separated by a taller brick wall incorporating rows of concrete pipes.

The garage to the rear of the property is a flat-roofed structure on a rectangular plan, erected of cream brick that appears to match that of the main house. Although it occupies a position that was indicated for a garage on Fooks' drawings, and may well have been designed by him, it is a utilitarian structure of little architectural interest in its own right.

## Comparisons

With a clientele drawn primarily from Melbourne's post-WW2 European émigré community, it is not surprising that Ernest Fooks undertook a great deal of work in what is now the City of Glen Eira, and specifically the former City of Caulfield (where he himself resided, in Howitt Street, from 1966 until his death). While sources differ, Fooks's commissions in the Caulfield area numbered at least thirty (according to Edquist) and may have exceeded fifty (according to Pert). With only one confirmed exception, these Caulfield projects were residential, encapsulating new houses, blocks of flats and alteration/additions. Most date from the 1960s (the peak period of Fooks' practice), with fewer from the '50s and fewer still from the '70s.

Today, relatively few houses in the Caulfield area remain intact to provide evidence of the initial phase of Fooks' career. While he commenced practice in 1948, his earliest houses in the study area date back to the early 1950s. Several have since been demolished, notably those at 26 Ontario Road (1951) and 39 Howitt Road (1952), while two slightly later survivors at 7 Aroona Road and 1a Kooyong Road (both 1954) have both been heavily modified. While some of Fooks' local houses from the later 1950s have been demolished, including examples at 19 Leaburn Avenue (1956) and 17 Waiora Road (1958), a few more, such as 69 Gordon Street (1955) and 76 Gordon Street (1956), remain standing in relatively intact states. Generally speaking, the survival rate for Fooks houses from the 1960s onwards is much higher.

The house on Balaclava Road, for which working drawings are dated April 1951, must be considered one of Fooks' earliest extant buildings in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Chronologically, its closest comparator would be a house at 16 Cantala Avenue, for which drawings are dated May 1951 – only a month later. These two significantly early Fooks houses, which remain largely intact, are comparable in their grand double-storey scale, stark block-like expression, low rooflines, broad eaves and generous windows and sun decks. They contrast with Fooks' typically smaller-scaled and less prepossessing dwellings of the later 1950s, such as the two aforementioned single-storey survivors in Gordon Street, with their simple block-like form and glazed frontages.

## References

Dr Ernest Fooks, "A brick residence for [redacted], esquire, corner Balaclava and Orrong Roads, Caulfield", working drawing, dated 4 April 1951. City of Caulfield Permit No 12,548.

Letter, Robin Boyd to Neil Clerehan, undated but circa mid-October 1952. Formerly in Clerehan's possession; now in private collection, Melbourne.

Harriet Edquist, *Ernest Fooks, Architect*, Melbourne: School of Architecture & Design: RMIT University, 2001.

Alan Pert, et al, *Ernest Fooks: The House Talks Back*. Parkville: Melbourne School of Design, 2016.

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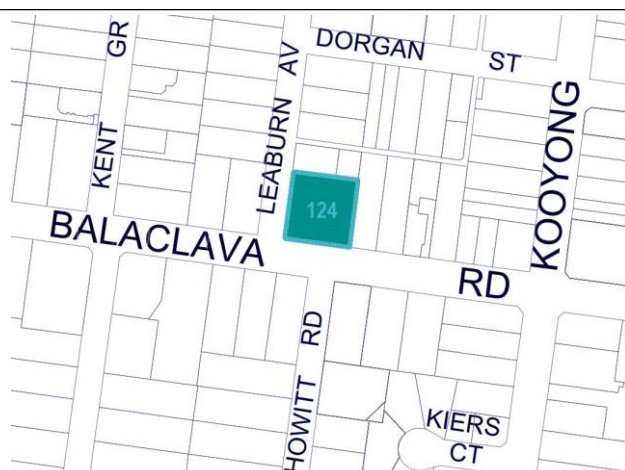
Built Heritage Pty Ltd

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	PW06
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 K12
<b>Address</b>	124 Balaclava Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1950-51
<b>Designer/s</b>	Mordechai Benshemesh	<b>Builder/s</b>	Harry Kinsman



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flat	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The building at 124 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North, is a large flat-roofed two-storey cream brick block of flats in a stark Functionalist style. Occupying a corner site, it has bold rectilinear massing and elongated elevations with rendered banding, wide windows, corner balconies with balustrade walls, and entries with cantilevered slab canopies and tall multi-paned window bays. Built in 1950-51 as an investment property for a Polish émigré couple, the flats were designed by Palestinian émigré architect Mordechai Benshemesh.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the building and the matching dwarf wall along each of the two street boundaries. The garage block, to the rear, is not considered significant.

### How is it significant?

The block of flats satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion D. Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.
- Criterion E. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics



### *Why is it significant?*

The block of flats is architecturally significant as an exceptional example of a modern apartment building in the minimalist tradition of progressive Continental European counterparts. Comprising seven compact and tightly-planned two- or three-bedroom units with private balconies and shared stairwells, the development was conceived for the *existenzminimum* lifestyle that was the norm in larger European cities. This authenticity is underscored by the fact that the building was commissioned by a Polish-born couple, designed by a Palestinian-born architect, and initially tenanted exclusively by Eastern European émigré families who would have been well accustomed to living in such premises. Designed in mid-1950, it can be considered as one of the earliest manifestations of the post-WW2 modernist apartment blocks that would become such a defining characteristic of the Caulfield area in the later 1950s, '60s and '70s. (*Criterion D*)

The block of flats is aesthetically significant as a highly confident expression of the European Functionalist style. This is evident in its stark rectilinear massing and uncommonly elongated street facades, where the innate horizontality is heightened by rendered banding, wide rectangular windows and the conspicuous articulation of concrete slabs to the floors and canopies of corner balconies. Characteristically, the strong horizontal emphasis is relieved by the stepped facades and the contrasting vertical focus on the two street entrances, where tall-multi-paned window bays articulate the stairwells within in the best Functionalist tradition. Occupying an uncommonly large corner site along a major thoroughfare, this prominent building remains an eye-catching and distinctive element along the Balaclava Road streetscape. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

This block of flats on the north-east corner of Balaclava Road and Leaburn Avenue, was built in 1950-51. For many years prior, the large site (and corresponding double-width block on the other corner) was owned by a venerable Flinders Street tailor. The bigger of the two sites, with frontage of 124 feet to Balaclava Road and 180 feet to Leaburn Avenue, it was partly subdivided in the early 1940s for erection of the *Devon Flats* at what is now 27 Leaburn Avenue. At the time of the tailor's death in 1947, the remaining land, measuring 124 feet by 125 feet, was among the last undeveloped holdings on this part of Balaclava Road. Promoted as being "suitable for a large house or block of flats", it was auctioned in October 1948 and realised the enviable sum of £5,580, or £45 per foot (*Argus* 28/10/1948:5). However, the site was not developed immediately and came up for sale again a year later, "offered firstly as one lot and, if not sold, then offered as two separate lots" (*Age* 15/12/1949:8). Nothing came of this and, six months later, the land was offered for sale yet again. Although advertised as "two perfect home sites, each 62 feet by 125 feet", it was also noted that "alternatively, the land complies with building regulations for seven units (one maisonette as a home and six flats as an investment)" (*Argus* 05/04/1950:11).

The new landowners were a Polish-born married couple. Born in the early 1900s, he migrated to Australia in the late 1930s and settled in Carlton North (*Argus* 03/12/1943:12). By the early 1940s, he had his own clothing manufacture business in Flinders Street (*Age* 17/04/1943:10). At the time he and his wife bought the Caulfield North site, they had recently moved to Elwood. This is likely how they came into contact with architect and fellow Elwood resident Mordechai Benshemesh, whom they engaged to design their block of flats. Palestinian-born Benshemesh (1911-1993) studied architecture in Tel Aviv, a city that became a major epicentre for the International Style due to an influx of German Jewish migrants in the 1930s; such was the proliferation of slick new apartment blocks (many designed by Bauhaus-trained expatriate architects) that Tel Aviv acquired the nickname 'White City'. After completing further studies in London, Benshemesh migrated to Australia in 1939 and spent the next decade working for various local architects, notably Arthur Plaisted and Harry Johnson, before opening his own office around 1950.



From the beginning, Benshemesh focused on apartment blocks. While early examples were modest in scale, they soon became larger and more ambitious. After completing several highrise blocks in the inner suburbs in the late 1950s, Benshemesh attracted considerable attention with his thirteen-storey *Edgewater Towers* on the Esplanade at St Kilda (1960), one of the tallest private apartment blocks yet built in Melbourne. Continuing to specialise in such projects, he became one of Melbourne's acknowledged leaders in the field.

The working drawings that Benshemesh prepared for the Polish couple's project on Balaclava Road, dated May 1950, proposed a two-storey building on an L-shaped plan, providing four flats to each level, separately accessed via two common stairwells. A carparking area was provided at the rear and, while the drawings depicted an elongated garage/laundry block along the north site boundary, a scribbled note indicated 'garage omitted'. In October, the City of Caulfield issued a building permit for a "block of seven flats, 124 Balaclava Road", citing also the couple's name and private address in Elwood. The builder was listed as H Kinemer [*sic*], of 1a Ridgway, Moorabbin. Further research confirms this to be Harry Kinsman, listed in electoral rolls at that address and identified as a bricklayer. Construction of the flats was still underway in early 1951, when a newspaper notice advertised for a "bricklayer's labourer, top money, Kinsman's job, 124 Balaclava Road, Caulfield" (*Age* 12/02/1951:21). Work was evidently nearing completion towards the end of the year, when plasterer William Chudleigh similarly advertised for "plasterers, tradesmen, flats, 124 Balaclava Road, North Caulfield" (*Age*, 10/10/1951:21).

The first tenants of the new apartment block were recorded early the following year (*Argus* 02/04/1952:21). Not coincidentally, given that the owners were Polish and their architect was Palestinian (and, moreover, had designed them a building in the Continental tradition of minimalist flat-dwelling), all of the original tenants were European émigrés. Most were Polish: three had been born in Białystok, another hailed from nearby Bielsk Podlaski and one more came from Częstochowa. One other tenant identified as Polish but was born in Ukraine, while three more were Czechoslovakian and one other Austrian. Some of these original or early tenants remained living at 124 Balaclava Road into the 1960s and beyond.

## Descriptions

The building at 124 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North, is a large two-storey flat-roofed cream brick block of flats in a stark Functionalist style. Laid out on an L-shaped footprint across an expansive corner site, the building presents elongated elevations to each of its two street frontages. Similar but not identical, the elevations exhibit the characteristic rectilinear massing, with expansive rectangular window bays and stepping wall planes to allow for the inclusion of corner balconies with solid brick walls, expressed concrete floor slabs, and matching cantilevered slab canopy roofs. This dominant horizontal articulation is heightened by rendered stringcourses at both levels, aligning with the splayed window sills and the capping to balcony walls.

On each of the two street elevations, a shared entrance is marked by a projecting concrete slab canopy with a tall-multi paned window above, indicating the communal stairwell within. Entrances have timber doors with a vertical row of three portholes, flanked by a multi-paned sidelight. On the symmetrical Leaburn Avenue elevation, the entry/stairwell bay is centrally located while on the asymmetrical Balaclava Road elevation, it is off-centre, towards the far right (east) end. The Balaclava Road elevation also incorporates two porthole windows, with rendered surrounds, toward the far left (west) end.

The property has a matching cream brick wall along its two street boundaries. At the outer end of each frontage, a concrete paved driveway provides vehicular access to the rear of the site, where there is paved carparking area and detached flat-roofed carport block of utilitarian form.

## Comparisons

While Mordechai Benshemesh designed many blocks of flats in Melbourne in the 1950s and '60s, research to date has identified no other examples within what is now the City of Glen Eira. A block of flats mentioned (but not illustrated) in a 1960 journal article was reportedly located at 100 Dandenong Road, Caulfield. This address, however, does not exist; it is more likely to refer to a three-storey block of "brand new ultra-modern bachelor flats" that was erected during that year at 110 Wellington Street (at the time, an extension of Dandenong Road) in nearby St Kilda (*Age*, 04/03/1961:36). Benshemesh's work is otherwise well represented in the former City of St Kilda. Of his extant blocks of flats in that area, the most pertinent comparator to 124 Balaclava Road would be the contemporaneous three-storey example at 38 Westbury Street, St Kilda East (1950), which is very similar in its use of plain cream brickwork, stark rectilinear massing and corner balconies with solid balustrade walls.

Within the City of Glen Eira, Benshemesh's building at 124 Balaclava Road can be compared more broadly to other blocks of flats designed by European-trained émigré architects in the 1950s. The earliest of these, however, tend to date from the second half of that decade. A two-storey block at 63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick (Kurt Popper, 1956), which forms part of a development with the architect's own residence at No 61, is somewhat similar in its plain brickwork, stepped façade and vertical stairwell window. However, it is articulated in a more relaxed modernist style typical of the later 1950s, with broad-eaved skillion roof rather than parapeted flat roof seen at 124 Balaclava Road. The same can be said of other blocks of flats dating from the latter part of the decade, such as those at 312a Orrong Road (Kurt Popper, 1958) and 7 Kooyong Road (Ernest Fooks, 1958).

Occupying a corner site with cream brickwork, stepped facades, corner windows and concrete slab porch canopies, the *Kenleigh Court* flats at 166 Glen Eira Road, Elsternwick (designer unknown, 1954) are perhaps more directly comparable to 124 Balaclava Road, although they have a far more conventional hipped roof clad in terracotta tiles. Ultimately, the building that is most similar to the early Benshemesh flats would be the first stage of the *Greyfriars* flats, located nearby at 53 Balaclava Road (Bernard Evans, 1949-51), which is expressed in a similarly stark functionalist style with parapeted flat roof and corner balconies with solid balustrade walls.

## References

Mordechai Benshemesh, "Proposed plans for 7 brick flats at 124 Balaclava Road, for [redacted], esq", working drawings, dated 24 May 1950. City of Caulfield Permit No 11,719.

Built Heritage Pty Ltd, "Mordechai Benshemesh (1911-1993)", *Dictionary of Unsung Architects*, [www.builtheritage.com.au/dua\\_benshemesh.html](http://www.builtheritage.com.au/dua_benshemesh.html)

Harriet Edquist, *Kurt Popper: From Vienna to Melbourne, Architecture 1939-1975* (2002).

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW07
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 K9
<b>Address</b>	16 Cantala Avenue CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1951-53
<b>Designer/s</b>	Ernest Fooks	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location plan and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 16 Cantala Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey skillion-roofed white-painted brick house in a stark post-WW2 modernist style, with asymmetrical street facade incorporating expansive windows and sundecks. Designed in 1951 by Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks, the house was commissioned by a Polish-born businesswoman for her own investment company.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire house and attached garage, along with the stone-paved front terrace, stone retaining walls, steps and original balustrade railings.

### How is it significant?

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant*

The house is aesthetically significant as an early and unusually substantial example of post-WW2 modernist residential architecture. Designed by an architect who trained and even practiced in Austria before migrating to Australia in 1939, the house represents a confident and authentic articulation of the International Style, with its bold rectilinear massing, stark planar walls, broad-eaved skillion roof, expansive windows and sundeck. Built on an elevated site, the split-level dwelling (with attached garage at a lower level) is enhanced by its original setting, which includes a crazy paved patio and terraced front garden defined by stone-clad retaining walls with matching steps and pathways with low black-painted metal balustrades. (*Criterion E*)

The house is historically significant for associations with Austrian-trained architect Dr Ernest Fooks, who started private practice in Melbourne in 1948 and soon became sought-after as a designer of residential projects for fellow European émigré clients. Notably prolific in the former City of Caulfield (where he himself resided, in Howitt Street, from 1966 until his death), Fooks maintained a long personal and professional association with what is now the City of Glen Eira, including several art exhibitions held at the Caulfield Town Hall. Dating from 1951, the Cantala Avenue house is one of Fook's two oldest surviving buildings in the study area (along with another at 64 Balaclava Road, also 1951) that, together, provide rare and significant evidence of the early presence of an architect whose work re-shaped the Caulfield area. (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 16 Cantala Avenue, Caulfield North, was erected in 1951 for a Polish émigré couple, to a design by Dr Ernest Fooks. The family migrated to Australia in the late 1920s. Initially working in an umbrella factory, the husband gravitated to the textile industry and, by the mid-1930s, had become a director of woollen mills at Abbotsford. The family, which had originally settled in Carlton North, relocated to St Kilda East in the early 1940s, where they resided in a large Moderne-style block of flats.

In August 1946, the wife acquired the title to a vacant block in Cantala Avenue, which formed part of an ambitious pre-war subdivision created from the fourteen-acre grounds of Septimus Miller's eponymous *Cantala* mansion. The family's decision to purchase land here may have been swayed by the fact that three of the husband's co-directors at the woollen mills had recently built houses in nearby Findon Avenue. Occupying elevated sites, all three houses were grand in scale and progressive in style. In October 1950, ownership of the land in Cantala Avenue was transferred from the wife's name to that of the family's company, which had been formed in June 1948 as a generic investment company, to engage in activities that included (but were not necessarily restricted to) property development. To design their new house, the couple turned to architect and fellow European émigré Ernest Fooks, who, around the same time, was also designing a house at Charles Street, Kew, for the couple's daughter and son-in-law.

Ernest Fooks (*ne* Fuchs; 1905-1986) was born in Bratislava but his family soon moved to nearby Vienna, where he studied architecture at the *Technische Hochschule* and completed a doctorate in town planning. After further professional experience (included a reputed stint with Le Corbusier), he commenced private practice in Vienna in 1932. Migrating to Australia via Canada (where he married his wife Noemi), Fuchs arrived in Melbourne in 1939 and, on the strength of his town planning credentials, secured a position with the Housing Commission of Victoria. In 1948, he left to open his own office. From the onset, Fooks principally drew his clientele from Melbourne's thriving post-WW2 European émigré community, and this would become an enduring and significant association for the remainder of his career. He not only designed numerous houses for Continental compatriots, but also retail fitouts, factories and a several major projects for the Jewish community including schools, kindergarten and synagogues.



The Ernest Fooks Collection, held by RMIT Design Archives, contains various material pertaining to the house in Cantala Avenue. The earliest appears to be an undated bounded presentation folio (identifying the project as “proposed residence in Cantala Avenue”, citing also the husband’s name) with sketch plans, coloured perspective drawings and explanatory text. This proposed a two-storey house on a compact stepped plan (containing living areas, including a playroom at the upper level) with an attached garage and canted single-storey rear wing (containing bedrooms). In his accompanying text, Fooks referred to the concept as “the Patio Plan”, noting that it was “widely used in parts of America and Europe, where climatic conditions allow outdoor living”. He went on to explain that the key features of the design included separation of living/social areas and sleeping quarters, an appropriate relationship between rooms and outdoor space, placement of sun terraces and large windows to exploit views and sun, and the consolidation of plumbing to ensure that pipework remained exposed only to the rear.

The working drawings, dated May 1951, shows that this original concept had been simplified. While the overall form of the two-storey house remained the same, the rear wing was now of more conventional rectilinear form, and the interior re-planned to provide three bedrooms at ground level and three more upstairs, instead of a playroom. The drawing identifies the project as “brick residence” at the same address, but with the client now identified as the family’s company. The drawings were prepared by a delineator with the initials LAA. This is confirmed as Lindsay Alfred Anderson (1920-2019), who had studied at the Melbourne University Architectural Atelier in the 1940s and spent a year in Fooks’ office after returning from professional experience in London. Anderson’s initials appear on another drawing, dated June 1951 and identifying the client as the husband (rather than the family company), showing the proposed garden setting with flower boxes, stone paving, and matching steps and retaining walls. The latest documentation held by the RMIT Design Archives comprises an engineer’s drawing dated 2 August 1951, and a schematic diagram for the air conditioning system, dated 1 September.

In the *Sands & McDougall Directory*, the new dwelling was belatedly recorded in 1953, and again in 1954, as a “house being built” (on the east side of Cantala Avenue, between No 14 and Dandenong Road. In 1955, when it was first definitively recorded as No 16, its first occupant was not the owners and their family (who would continue to reside in St Kilda East for many years thereafter) but, rather, another individual. The Certificate of Title shows that, in July 1953, ownership of the Cantala Avenue house had indeed passed from the family’s company to another married couple, late of Kew. Like the original owner, the subsequent owner was a Polish émigré who was involved in textile manufacturer in Melbourne, which hints at a prior profession or personal link between the two families. While the new owner died in the mid-1950s, his widow continued to occupy the house in Cantala Avenue for another forty years.

## Description

The house at 16 Cantala Avenue, Caulfield North, is a two-storey skillion-roofed brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style. Elevated above the street frontage, the house is expressed as a group of rectilinear masses with a stark white-painted finish, presenting an asymmetrical façade double-fronted façade with a projecting single-storey bay (forming a large sundeck at the upper level with a low black-painted metal pipe balustrade) with attached garage, set lower down at street level. The house has expansive rectangular windows with steel-framed sashes, and a recessed front entrance with metal security screen in a diagonal grille pattern. The front terrace is finished with crazy paved stonework, and there is matching stone cladding to the entry steps, path, front boundary wall and retaining walls that define the driveway and garden terraces. Some of these walls have low metal pipe balustrades, matching the sundecks.



## Comparisons

With a clientele drawn primarily from Melbourne's post-WW2 European émigré community, it is not surprising that Ernest Fooks undertook a great deal of work in what is now the City of Glen Eira, and specifically the former City of Caulfield (where he himself resided, in Howitt Street, from 1966 until his death). While sources differ, Fooks's commissions in the Caulfield area numbered at least thirty (according to Edquist) and may have exceeded fifty (according to Pert). With only one confirmed exception, these Caulfield projects were residential, encapsulating new houses, blocks of flats and alteration/additions. Most date from the 1960s (the peak period of Fooks' practice), with fewer from the '50s and fewer still from the '70s.

Today, relatively few houses in the Caulfield area remain intact to provide evidence of the initial phase of Fooks' career. While he commenced practice in 1948, his earliest houses in the study area date back to the early 1950s. Several have since been demolished, notably those at 26 Ontario Road (1951) and 39 Howitt Road (1952), while two slightly later survivors at 7 Aroona Road and 1a Kooyong Road (both 1954) have both been heavily modified. While some of Fooks' local houses from the later 1950s have been demolished, including examples at 19 Leaburn Avenue (1956) and 17 Waiora Road (1958), a few more, such as 69 Gordon Street (1955) and 76 Gordon Street (1956), remain standing in relatively intact states. Generally speaking, the survival rate for Fooks houses from the 1960s onwards is much higher.

The house in Cantala Avenue, for which working drawings are dated May 1951, must be considered one of Fooks' earliest extant buildings in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Chronologically, its closest comparator would be the house at 64 Balaclava Road, for which drawings are dated April 1951 – only a month earlier. These two significantly early Fooks houses, which remain largely intact, are comparable in their grand double-storey scale, stark block-like expression, low rooflines, broad eaves and generous windows and sun decks. They contrast with Fooks' typically smaller-scaled and less prepossessing dwellings of the later 1950s, such as the two aforementioned single-storey survivors in Gordon Street, with their simple block-like form and glazed frontages.

## References

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Dr Ernest Fooks, "Analysis [and] sketch plans of proposed residence in Cantala Avenue, Caulfield", undated presentation folio. RMIT Design Archives.  
Excerpt available online at <<<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/program/vienna-abroad>>>

Dr Ernest Fooks, "A brick residence for [redacted], Cantala Avenue Caulfield", working drawing, dated 29 May 1951. City of Caulfield Permit No 12,615.

Dr Ernest Fooks, "A brick residence for [redacted], esquire, Cantala Avenue, Caulfield. Garden, paving and front fence", working drawing, dated 5 June 1951. RMIT Design Archives.

Harriet Edquist, *Ernest Fooks, Architect*, Melbourne: School of Architecture & Design: RMIT University, 2001.

Alan Pert, et al, *Ernest Fooks: The House Talks Back*. Parkville: Melbourne School of Design, 2016.

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	ST JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH	<b>Citation No</b>	PW08
<b>Other name/s</b>	St John's Church of England	<b>Melway ref</b>	77 H1
<b>Address</b>	624 Centre Road BENTLEIGH	<b>Date/s</b>	1960-62 (church)
<b>Designer/s</b>	Gawler, Churcher & Boardman (David Gawler)	<b>Builder/s</b>	Colin D Mason



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Religion	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Church	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	8.1 Maintaining spiritual life
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

St John's Anglican Church at 624 Centre Road, Bentleigh East, is a post-WW2 modernist cream brick church with a truncated A-framed nave, spiky metal steeple, and facade with false arched windows, pebbled wall finish and mosaic tiled spandrels. Erected in 1961-62 to replace an existing church on the site dating back to 1873, the building was designed by architects Gawler, Churcher & Boardman (who had previously designed a new church hall for the same site)

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the 1961-62 church building, and interior fittings as follows: the three stained glass windows from the old church, full immersion baptismal font, decorative iron grille between Pioneers' Chapel and choir stall, decorative iron altar rail, panelled wall behind the altar **with decorative timber strips**, and pendant light fittings in the nave. The other buildings on the site, namely the adjacent hall (by the same architects, but of little architectural interest), vicarage, kindergarten and toilet block, are not considered to be significant.

### How is it significant?

The church 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

### *Why is it significant?*

St John's Anglican Church is aesthetically significant as an exceptional example of ecclesiastical architecture in a lively sub-style of post-WW2 modernism characterised by a playful expression of non-structural elements, applied ornamental and decorative finishes. Famously dismissed by Robin Boyd as "Featurism", this sub-style was mostly associated with commercially-oriented buildings (eg shops, showrooms, motels, etc) and houses, and was rarely adopted for ecclesiastical buildings. St John's Church, with its truncated A-framed nave, false-arched arcade (with pebbled finish and mosaic tiled spandrels) and spiky metal-framed steeple evocative of the American 'Googie' style, is a notable (and notably intact) example of the Featurist approach, as atypically applied to a church. With its deliberately eye-catching design and prominent siting at the corner of two major roads, the building remains a distinctive element in the streetscape. The nave interior is notable for retention of original finishes and fittings including panelled nave wall, decorative ironwork, pendant light fittings and a cruciform full-immersion baptismal font (an element seldom found in Anglican churches). (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

The Anglican Church at 624 Centre Road, Bentleigh was built in 1960-62 for a congregation that, at the time, had occupied the site for ninety years. A local Church of England presence dates back to 1850, when the first outdoor service was held under a tree in Leary's Paddock (between present-day East Boundary Road and Tucker Road). The fledgling congregation subsequently met at St Stephens's Common School on Tucker Road, acquiring the premises in 1854-55. In 1870, it was decided to sell the property and re-establish the church elsewhere. The present site, on the south-east corner of Centre and Tucker Roads, was donated by parishioner named John, in whose honour the new church was named St John's. Erection of a modest brick and bluestone building began in October 1872, and the first service was held on Sunday, 11 May 1873. Such was the sparse settlement of Bentleigh's east at that time that the congregation saw limited growth over the next few decades. However, expansion in the early twentieth century prompted the provision of a vicarage (1912) and Sunday School hall (1923), and then the establishment of a Chapel-of-Ease, St George's in Mavho Street, Bentleigh (1926).

During the inter-war period, the old brick and bluestone church was enhanced with various items gifted by members of the congregation, including new carpet, curtains, communion rail and a set of three stained glass windows (1932) in memory of a parishioner's late husband. However, by the end of the decade, the building itself was in poor structural condition. As recorded in the parish history: "In 1940, the Reverend T H Watts, the then vicar, drew attention to the signs of decay and deterioration of the church and recommended that a Building Fund be opened for the Centenary [in 1954]". Doubtless due to the interruption of WW2, the establishment of the Building Fund was deferred until 1946. When the Centenary was celebrated eight years later, an ambitious rebuilding programme was outlined thus in the souvenir publication: "the design and specification for a new Sunday School Hall are already drawn up and the present plan for St John's Church is to build new sanctuary and vestries on the present edifice and, later, to enlarge the nave. The new hall will be erected where the tennis court is, and two new tennis courts behind where the present Sunday School stands... the only deterrent is the perennial lack of funds".

Such was the post-WW2 boom of residential settlement in the Bentleigh area, as market gardens were sold and subdivided for housing, that demand for community infrastructure, including church facilities, increased at an unprecedented rate. The number of Anglican families in the Parish of Bentleigh reportedly trebled over a single decade, rising from 850 in 1946 to 2,300 in 1957. This period saw the opening of a new church, St Christopher's, which commenced services in 1952 in a prefabricated building on Mackie Road. The mid-1950s brought rapid expansion of local Anglican infrastructure as new brick halls were erected for both St Anne's (Moylan Street) and St Christopher's (Mackie Road), and a new brick church for St George's (Mavho Street).

St John's on Centre Road followed suit, with drawings for a new hall prepared in mid-1957 and the foundation stone laid early the following year. By then, the original plan to retain and enlarge the existing church had been superseded by a bolder scheme to demolish it for a new and larger counterpart. As later reported, the original church was deemed "beyond repair and its seating for 125 is unable to accommodate the usual congregation of five hundred" (*Age* 28/07/1961:7). David Gawler, the architect engaged to design the hall, was retained to design the new church as well.

David Phillip Gawler (1924-2013) was destined to become an architect: his father was John Stevens Gawler, well known in the profession not only as a practitioner but also as an educator (including a pre-war stint as Dean of the Faculty of Architecture), reformer and activist who chaired both the Housing Commission of Victoria and the Town & Country Planning Board. His private practice, founded in 1914 as the partnership of Gawler & Drummond, became Gawler & Churcher in 1941 and then, after Gawler's retirement six years later, Gawler, Churcher & Blackett. Graduating from the University of Melbourne in 1949, David Gawler briefly worked for Stephenson & Turner and then spent several years in Canada before returning to Melbourne and joining his father's firm in 1957. The following year, after the death of W A M Blackett, staff member John Boardman was promoted to partnership in the firm known thence as Gawler, Churcher & Boardman. Eric Churcher died in 1962, but Gawler junior and Boardman remained in partnership until 1974.

Gawler had been engaged to design the new Bentleigh church by mid-1959, when a sub-committee was formed "to prepare plans for St John's new church" (*Church of England Messenger*, 19/06/1959:128). Design development continued in 1960: working drawings, while bearing the job number 5818, are dated January 1961. The site plan shows that the new church would occupy the prime corner site, necessitating removal of the original church. It was deconsecrated on Sunday, 30 July, and demolition began the following week. While one contemporary report noted the sad passing of a venerable local landmark, it was also pointed out that the new church would preserve memories of the old: three stained glass windows (installed in the former church in 1932) would be re-erected in the sanctuary, the pulpit and other original furnishings would be placed in a "Pioneers' Chapel", and a painting of the old church would grace a wall of the narthex (*Age* 28/07/1961:7). The new building would also incorporate the church's pipe organ, which had been installed there only a few years prior (having been relocated from another church, St Savior's Anglican Mission Church in Collingwood, which had ceased operating in the mid-1950s). On 10 August, the foundation stone for the new church was laid by the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, Sir Edmund Herring. As demolition and reconstruction continued, services took place in the old timber hall until the new church was completed in March 1962.

## Description

St John's Anglican Church, at 624 Centre Road, Bentleigh, is an ecclesiastical building in the post-WW2 modernist style. Occupying a corner site, the church is laid out in a stepped rectilinear plan that comprises a large nave with a tall canted roofline (effectively, a truncated A-frame), enveloped on all four sides by a flat-roofed elements. The nave roof is clad in metal tray decking, and its gable ends are respectively infilled with a multi-paned window wall of coloured glass panels (Tucker Road or west end) and a solid wall with a pebbled finish and a series of radiating lines that follow the profile of the roof (east end). There is a small Latin cross mounted above each gable, and a flanking pair of flagstaffs at the west end

Along the Centre Road frontage, the enveloping flat-roofed wing has a pebbled finish and a row of false-arched openings. These have projecting rendered surrounds and contain tripartite window bays with tinted glazing and spandrels clad in pale green mosaic tiling, incorporating various ecclesiastical symbols (including Latin crosses, scales and a figure with a cross halo). The end bay, near the corner, incorporates a doorway that opens onto a metal-framed covered walkway with a low zigzag roofline.



The adjacent elevation to Tucker Road is mostly a blank orange brick wall, enlivened by a narrow horizontal grille of brick tiles, a wall-mounted Celtic cross, and the name of the church. At the far right end, abutting the adjacent church hall, is a second entry point with a pair of glazed doors flanked by sidelights with mosaic tiled spandrels, a wide pebbled spandrel above, and a project flat-roofed canopy. The Tucker Road elevation is otherwise dominated by the spire, which rises from the flat roof in front of the nave, and comprises a long pole supported by a tripod-like structure of **four** tapering metal members with sharply pointed ends.

While an interior inspection was not undertaken by the consultant as part of this study, an inspection made in June 2020 by Council officers noted that the interior of the church remains substantially intact to its early 1960s appearance. Significant fittings are as follows::

- The full immersion baptism font (an element rarely found in Anglican churches);
- Three stained glass windows (1932) from the former church on the site;
- The decorative ironwork grille between the Pioneers' Chapel and the choir stall;
- The decorative ironwork altar rail (matching the above iron grille);
- The panelled wall at the end of the nave (with decorative timber strips);
- Pendant lighting fittings in the nave



*Full immersion baptismal font*



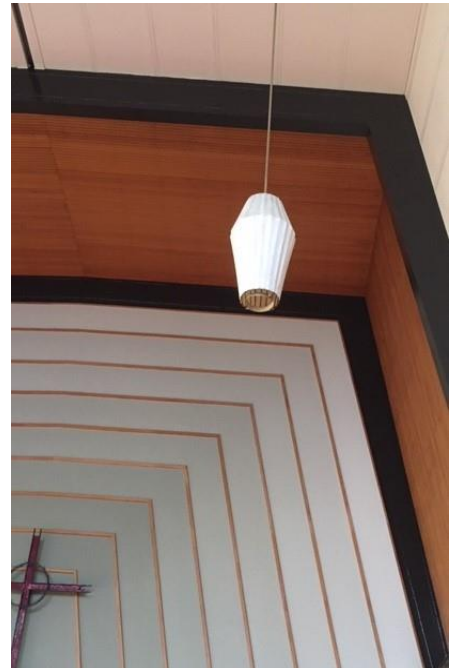
*Stained glass windows (1932)*



*Altar, showing altar rail*



*Decorative grille screen*



*Panelled wall and light fitting*

## Comparisons

Architecturally, early post-WW2 churches in the study area (ie, the early 1950s to the mid-1960s) fall into two categories: progressive and conservative. The latter group represents a continuation of a tradition already well established by the late 1930s, where churches were expressed as plain gable-roofed brick structures with towers and simplified historicist details such as buttresses, arches and mouldings. This is evident in such pre-WW2 examples as Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, 707 Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield South (O H Jorgenson, 1937) [part of HO66], Ormond Uniting Church at 264 Booran Road (Louis Williams, 1937) and St Paul's Church of England, Dandenong Road, Caulfield (Louis Williams, 1938-39) [part of HO14]. It then continued into the early post-WW2 era with such examples as St Kevin's Roman Catholic Church, Glen Orme Avenue, Ormond (Cyril Kelly, 1953) [part of HO75] and Bentleigh Presbyterian (now Uniting) Church, 495-497 Centre Road, Bentleigh (J F D Scarborough, 1958).



The emergence of a more progressive modernist approach, with stark articulation of volumetric forms, flat or low pitched roofs and minimal ornament, can be traced back to St Margaret's Presbyterian Church in Hotham Street, St Kilda East (K Murray Forster, 1952-53). The later 1950s saw very relatively few modern churches (or other places of worship) built in what is now the City of Glen Eira; the new synagogue for the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation at 572 Inkerman Road (Bridge, Hayden & Associates, 1958-61) was a notable exception. In the first half of the 1960s, local churches tended to embrace a starker modernist expression, with bold box-like forms, generous windows, and ornament reduced to stone feature walls or projecting brickwork patterns. This is evident in such examples as the former Brethren Gospel Hall (now Eastleigh Gospel Chapel) at 216 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh East (G James Rattray, 1961-62), the Church of the Temple Society at 152 Tucker Road, Bentleigh (William Blaich, 1963-64) and the recently-demolished East Bentleigh Uniting (former Methodist) Church, 31 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh East (1964).

St John's Anglican Church in Bentleigh stands out amongst local post-WW2 places of worship in that it is neither typical of this prevailing minimalist modernist style, nor does it attempt to make any historicist references. Rather, the building shows the influence of a distinct sub-style of the late 1950s and early 1960s, when mainstream modernism was tempered by the adoption of bold geometric forms, applied ornament and decorative finishes. This playful and deliberately eye-catching approach was famously dismissed by Robin Boyd, who, in his book *The Australian Ugliness* (1960), coined the term "Featurism" to describe it. Despite Boyd's protestations, the Featurist tendency was widely popular for a time, especially for commercially-oriented buildings such as motels, bowling alleys and car showrooms, as well as factories and houses. Perhaps not surprisingly, its application to the more dignified field of ecclesiastical architecture was rare.

As an example of a church in a mature and well-rounded Featurist mode, St John's Anglican Church in Bentleigh has few counterparts in what is now the City of Glen Eira. The former South Oakleigh Methodist Church (now Coatesville Uniting Church) at the corner of North and Mackie Road, Bentleigh East (J Gordon Williams, 1961-62) is dominated by a fairly conventional gabled nave, but exhibiting decidedly Featurist tendencies in its projecting butterfly-roofed narthex, with its random coursed feature wall and matching planter box (still extant) and Besser block screen (since removed). The aforementioned Caulfield Synagogue is also very much in a Featurist mode, with stone feature walls, stacked brickwork and tinted glazing. A proto-Featurist tendency is also evident in a much earlier example, the Bentleigh Church of Christ at 4 Gilbert Grove, Bentleigh (John Wallinga, 1949) [part of HO69]. Designed by a Dutch-born émigré designer, it has an idiosyncratic facade with recessed piers of stack-bond brickwork, half-round pediment, overscaled rendered cornice, and projecting windows hoods of an eye-catching zigzag form. A smaller but no less striking local example of the Featurist style is the 10th Caulfield Scout Hall at 2 Miller Street, Elsternwick (designer unknown, 1959), with a cream brick façade enlivened by a pair of stretched hexagonal windows flanking a central triangular entry porch with colourful chequerboard tiling.

## References

Nancy Taylor, *The First Hundred Years: A Brief History of the Parish of St John's Church of England, Bentleigh, Victoria, 1854-1954* (1954).

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Gawler, Churcher & Blackett, "Proposed church hall for St John's C of E, East Bentleigh", working drawings, dated 5 July 1957. PB File 724, *loc cit*.

"Development in the Bentleigh Parish", *Church of England Messenger*, 21 March 1958, p 50.

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"Picturesque church link with market gardens", *Age*, 28 July 1961, p 7.

“Bentleigh says goodbye to corner church”, *Age*, 1 August 1961, p 18.

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[www.builtheritage.com.au/dua\\_gawler.html](http://www.builtheritage.com.au/dua_gawler.html)

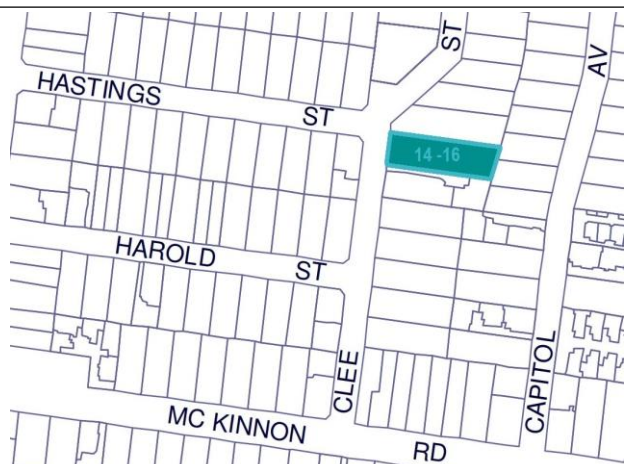
**Identified by**

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<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW09
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 B10
<b>Address</b>	14-16 Clee Street McKINNON	<b>Date/s</b>	1962-63
<b>Designer/s</b>	Holgar & Holgar	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 14-16 Clee Street, McKinnon, is a flat-roofed post-WW2 modernist house starkly expressed as a glass-fronted box-like volume that, occupying a sloping site, incorporates an undercroft carport to one side, where the land falls away. The house was erected in 1962-63 for a Polish businessman and his wife, and was designed by the compatriot husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire house, and the detached cabana that was later designed for the original owners, by architect Theodore Berman.

### How is it significant?

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as an exceptional example of high-end modernist residential architecture of the early 1960s. Built across a sloping site, the house is boldly articulated as a stark rectilinear volume that appears to hover above the ground at one end, incorporating an undercroft carport. With its bold massing, broad eaves and continuous window wall, it represents a particularly confident distillation of European Modernism. It must also be considered as a truly authentic example, being designed by Polish-born architects for a well-heeled compatriot couple who would have been familiar with such progressive architecture in pre-war Europe. (*Criterion E*)

The house is historically and architecturally significant for associations with the Polish-born husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar, which was notably active in Caulfield and environs in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Dating from 1962, this house was one of the partnership's first major private residential commissions in what is now the City of Glen Eira after their prize-winning scheme for the Herald Ideal Home (moved to Bentleigh after being displayed at the 1957 Ideal Home Show) that prompted the couple to commence private practice. A grand and luxurious residence for a successful Polish-born manufacturer, this house was the first of many such palatial houses that Holgar & Holgar would design in the study area (invariably, for similarly well-off émigré clients) over the next quarter-century. With at least twenty examples recorded in the former City of Caulfield, this house stands out as the only in the former City of Moorabbin (excluding the couple's Herald Ideal Home in Bentleigh East, which technically predates the formalised partnership of Holgar & Holgar). (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 14-16 Clee Street, McKinnon, was erected in 1963 for a Polish émigré couple, to a design by the compatriot husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar. The future owner was born in the early 1920s and, by the late 1940s, was working as an electrical/radio technician in Krakow. Following two failed attempts to establish their own business in that field, he and his older brother opted to migrate to Australia. After obtaining a passport in 1947, he and his brother arrived in Melbourne in late 1948. The following year, he married a fellow Polish emigre who had arrived in 1946 (*Herald* 19/09/1951:3).

In 1950, the two brothers started their own business to manufacture plastic and electrical products (*Age* 30/06/1970:14). Initially operating from a site in Carnegie, the business duly expanded and, in the later 1950s, moved to larger premises on Dandenong Road. The venture continued to thrive into the 1960s, securing lucrative government contracts to supply electrical insulators for the Postmaster-General's Department (*Commonwealth Gazette* 12/03/1964:1064). The two brothers ultimately sold the business in 1970, when they accepted a multi-million dollar takeover offer from a rival plastic moulding company.

It is perhaps indicative of the family's growing wealth that, having initially made their home in Elsternwick, the couple had already moved to South Yarra by the mid-1950s, taking up residence in a prestigious Georgian-style block of flats. Around 1960, presumably to be closer to their firm's factory on Dandenong Road, they relocated to a relatively modest dwelling in Murrumbeena. However, as the business thrived, the couple decided that it was time to build a grand new residence for their growing family. In April 1962, the couple acquired the title to a large allotment in Clee Street, McKinnon, and duly engaged architects (and fellow Polish émigrés) Holgar & Holgar to design their new home.

John Holgar (*ne* Władysław Aleksander Janusz Holgar-Ptaszyński) (1922-2006) and his wife Helen (*nee* Helena) (1923-2012) were both born in Poland, fleeing separately during WW2 and meeting for the first time while both were studying architecture in Rome. Moving to London in 1947, they married, completed further studies and gained professional experience before migrating to Australia in 1952, where they worked separately for various Melbourne practices including Godfrey Spowers, Arthur Purnell, Brian Lewis and D F Cowell Ham. In 1957, after the couple won first prize in a high-profile competition for an exhibition house, John began private practice under his own name, with an office in Swanston Street. Eighteen month later, he was joined by Helen, who was latterly employed by Grounds, Romberg & Boyd. Circa 1963, the practice was rebadged as Holgar & Holgar, relocating to Collins Street. It soon fostered a reputation as designers of large-scale houses for fellow European migrants, initially working in a strict modernist style before embracing a more eclectic and idiosyncratic approach characterised by unusual forms and luxurious materials and finishes. High-end residential projects of this nature would continue to sustain their practice well into the 1990s.

For the Clee Street site, the Holgars proposed a large and sprawling flat-roofed house expressed as a hovering horizontal mass, with the slope of the land allowing for a triple carport underneath. While copies of the original working drawings have not been located (either in the City of Glen Eira's building permit files or amongst the Holgars' own archive), photographs taken at the time of the last sale in 2010 indicate that the house (laid out on an unusual J-shaped plan) was designed to provide unusually expansive living areas, a kitchen with integrated meals area, home office, and at least three (possibly four) bedrooms. To the rear, the canted plan enveloped an open terrace area overlooking a swimming pool.

In 1970 (coinciding, no doubt, with the lucrative sale of their business that year), the family chose to upgrade their residence with a detached cabana, to be erected on the far (east) side of the existing swimming pool. For reasons as yet unconfirmed, they turned not to their original architects, Holgar & Holgar, but instead to second-generation émigré Theodore Berman, whose parents had migrated from Poland in the 1920s. Berman's drawings for the cabana, dated July 1970, proposed a substantial skillion-roofed structure on a canted plan, containing a covered deck with integrated barbeque facilities, two change rooms, toilet, store and plant room. The house would remain occupied by the family until the mid-1980s.

## Description

The house at 14-16 Clee Street, McKinnon, is a single-storey flat-roofed brick house in a post-WW2 modernist style. It is starkly articulated as an elongated box-like volume, with the horizontality further emphasised by the respective lines of the roof eaves and floor slab. Occupying a sloping double-width block, house incorporates a double carport underneath, where the slope falls away at the north end, which heightens the perception of a hovering rectilinear volume. The wide street frontage is fully-glazed, with a continuous row of full-height multi-paned window bays. Otherwise asymmetrical, the façade is effectively triple-fronted, with a recessed bay to the right (south) end that incorporates an even further recessed entry porch. The porch, accessed by a wide flight of steps with a simple trabeated railing, is top-lit by a row of square skylights leading to an off-centre front door. The adjacent bay to the right, set between a pair of orange brick piers, similarly incorporates a wide skylight-like opening through the eaves, which are supported at the far end by a metal post.

The property has a concrete paved driveway to the double carport, a low retaining wall of Castlemaine slate, and a wide asphalt pathway leading up to the front entry porch.



## Comparisons

One of the first houses to be designed by Holgar & Holgar (under that name) in what is now the City of Glen Eira, the house in Clee Street can be compared with several other local examples of the firm's work from the early-to-mid 1960s. Although Holgar & Holgar are known to have designed at least five houses in the City of Caulfield during those years, few of these remain intact today. A large and luxurious residence on a double-width block at 41-43 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (1962) has been demolished in recent years, and another at 1 Wimbledon Court, St Kilda East (1963) has either been demolished or altered beyond recognition. Two other early houses in Caulfield, at 9 Helenslea Road and 32 Crotonhurst Avenue (both 1963), have been much altered. A house at 45 Aroona Road, Caulfield North (1963), while still standing and mostly intact, is wholly different in style, with a canted street façade of blank brick walls and large window bays. The Clee Street house, which seems virtually unaltered when seen from the street, is clearly the standout local example of the firm's trademark high-end residential work of the early 1960s. Certainly, some of the hard-edged modernist characteristics of the house are evident in later residential work by Holgar & Holgar, such as a block of flats at 32 Narong Road, Caulfield North (1965) and houses at 24 Langdon Street, Caulfield (1966) and 1 Bickhams Court, St Kilda East (1967).

## References

Certificate of Title, Volume 865, Folio 728, created 31 May 1957.

The Office of Theodore Berman, "Proposed cabana for Mr & Mrs [redacted], 16 Clee Street, McKinnon", working drawings, dated 1 July 1970. City of Glen Eira Permit No 41,700.

Simon Reeves, "Gold-plated doors if you want them: Holgar & Holgar and the Architecture of Opulence," in Ann Marie Brennan & Philip Goad (eds), *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand*. Vol 33 (Melbourne, 2016), pp 568-577.

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd (also flagged by City of Glen Eira)



Undated but contemporary photograph of the house in Clee Street, McKinnon  
 Source: Holgar & Holgar Archive (Private Collection, Melbourne)

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW10
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	67 K2
<b>Address</b>	2 Edinburgh Avenue CAULFIELD	<b>Date/s</b>	1962-63
<b>Designer/s</b>	Bernard Slawik	<b>Builder/s</b>	J P Hammond Pty Ltd



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 2 Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, is a two-storey butterfly-roofed brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style, expressed as a stark rectilinear volume (with continuous window wall and full-width balcony), elevated on columns to form an open undercroft below. Built in 1962-63 for a Polish-born clothing manufacturer and Holocaust survivor, the house was designed by architect Bernard Slawik, also a Polish émigré and Holocaust survivor, and a resident of Caulfield.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building.

### How is it significant?

The 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.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as an exceptional example of high-end modernist residential architecture of the early 1960s. Boldly articulated as a stark rectilinear volume, raised on columns to form an open undercroft, with a low butterfly roof, uncommonly broad timber-lined eaves and a continuous full-height window wall opening onto an expansive front balcony, it represents a particularly bold and confident distillation of European Modernism. It must also be considered as a truly authentic example, being designed by a Polish-born architect (who had worked in Europe, including a stint in Sweden) for a well-heeled compatriot couple who would have been familiar with such progressive architecture in pre-war Europe. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 2 Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, was built in 1962-63 for a Polish clothing manufacturer and his wife, to a design by compatriot architect Bernard Slawik. Born in south-east Poland in the late 1920s, the future owner of the house was the son of a window-fitter who was arrested and sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp, where he died in 1940. Two years later, when Jewish residents of the town were detained, the future owner of the house was separated from his mother and siblings. After two years of forced labour in a steel mill, he was sent to a labour camp and then spent six months at Auschwitz before being transferred to Buchenwald, where he remained until the camp was liberated in April 1945. Subsequently, he was sent to Switzerland as part of a group of orphaned Jewish adolescents. In September 1948, shortly after his 21st birthday, he left Europe for Australia. Settling in Melbourne, he initially resided in a hostel at Camberwell run by the Jewish Welfare & Relief Society, which sponsored his passage.

Soon after arriving, the future house owner found work as a tailor in Flinders Lane, then the centre of Melbourne's Rag Trade. By 1951, he had started his own clothing company, in association with his brother (who had joined him to Australia in 1949) and two other émigrés. Based in Lygon Street, Brunswick East, the company thrived. In 1953, the future house owner met and married a fellow Pole whose family had hidden in the Ukrainian forest during WW2 before settling in Berlin, where her mother died in 1946. She then lived in Bavaria before migrating to Australia in 1952, living with relatives in Elwood. After their marriage, the couple continued to reside in Elwood into the early 1960s, during which time the family increased with the birth of two sons. These changes in personal circumstance, coupled with the rising success of their clothing business, may have hastened the decision to build a grand new family residence in Caulfield. In February 1961, the couple acquired the title to a block of land at 2 Edinburgh Avenue, which formed part of a 34-lot subdivision that was laid out in 1957 on the south-east corner of Glen Eira Road and Kooyong Road. To design their new house, the couple turned to architect Bernard Slawik, a fellow Polish émigré and Holocaust survivor, and himself a Caulfield resident.

Born in Gliniany in southern Poland, Zygmunt Bernard Slawik (1904-1991) completed architectural studies at the Lviv Polytechnic School in 1930. Little seems to be recorded of his career during the next decade, prior to being interred in the Jalowska concentration camp, on the outskirts of Lviv, in late 1941. Managing to escape, Slawik was reunited with his wife and daughter after WW2, and the family settled in Sweden, where he worked as an assistant to the Town Architect of Gävle. Migrating to Australia, the Slawiks arrived in Sydney in October 1948 and travelled thence to Melbourne, settling in Essendon. After gaining further professional experience in the office of architect/town planner Frank Heath, then in the PWD under Percy Everett, Slawik commenced private practice in 1953. Around the same time, he and Alma took up residence in Bambra Road, Caulfield, where they lived for almost forty years. Concentrating mostly on residential projects (many commissioned by fellow European émigrés), Slawik undertook a considerable amount of work in the Caulfield area, as well as in South Yarra, Toorak, Hawthorn, Kew and Ivanhoe.

The house that Bernard Slawik designed in Edinburgh Avenue, for which working drawings are dated August 1962, was a butterfly-roofed double-storey dwelling expressed as a floating rectilinear volume elevated above an open undercroft. The main living areas, located at the upper level, included three large bedrooms, a kitchen with “breakfast nook”, a garden court, and full-width living area (designated as dining/living/sunroom) opening onto a balcony to the street. Downstairs, the undercroft provided carparking space, a playroom, workroom, maid’s quarters and central stair lobby. The design of the house seems to have responded to some quite specific client needs, hinted at in a memoir written by one of their sons. The vast living areas, ideal for entertaining, evidently reflected his father’s “unquenchable instinct for sociability”, while the open planning and expansive glazing addressed his mother’s anxiety towards enclosed spaces (“my mother despises houses without windows”, he wrote). The owner’s own concerns for personal safety, which clearly sprung from his heinous wartime experiences, saw the house incorporate sophisticated security systems such as pressure-triggered floor alarms (which, his son recalls, were tested daily) and a front door with electric lock and intercom system.

The house, erected by builders J P Hammond Pty Ltd, was still under construction in early 1963, when it was profiled in the property column of the *Herald*. It was praised for incorporating “a number of unusual features” such as the reinforced concrete slab floor (designed so that no beams were visible) and supporting structure of “specially designed reinforced concrete columns” (*Herald* 11/04/1963:16). Attention was drawn to the low butterfly roof, with steel deck and insulation of double-sided aluminium-coated building paper, and to the interior fitout that included natural stone feature walls, parquet floors and a french-polished stair handrail.

In residence for nearly thirty years, the original owners sold the house in 1990. A decade later, it was one of several local houses to be included in *Notable & Modern*, an exhibition of post-WW2 domestic architecture in the City of Glen Eira, held at the Glen Eira Art Gallery in July 2001.

## Description

The house at 2 Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, is a double-storey orange brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style, with a low-pitched butterfly roof that extends to form expansive eaves. The house is expressed in a characteristic European Modernist manner, where the upper level (containing principal living areas) is given emphasis over a recessed lower level (containing carport, entry foyer and subsidiary spaces). The symmetrical street façade has fully glazed window walls to each level, with continuous bays of wide full-height windows and glazed doors. At the upper level, the window wall opens on to a full-width cantilever balcony with simple metal balustrade and Castlemaine slate cladding. At the lower level, the wall is set back to form the rear of the double carport, supported on a grid of white-painted columns. The front entrance is located off-centre, to the right side of the carport, and contains a wide glazed door. The ceiling of the carport area, formed by the underside of the concrete floor slab above, incorporates rows of projecting cylindrical metal light fittings.

## Comparisons

A Caulfield resident for more than thirty years, Bernard Slawik is known to have designed several buildings in his local area. His earliest known project in Caulfield (and the only non-residential one identified to date) was the Stanmark Reception Centre at 444 Inkerman Road (1957). The brainchild of a Jewish entrepreneur, it rapidly established itself as Melbourne’s pre-eminent venue for Jewish events such as weddings and *bar mitzvahs*. The building, which incorporated a sculpted mural by émigré artist Karl Duldig, was acquired by the City of Caulfield in 1974 and converted into a community arts centre. This function (and the Duldig mural) was relocated to the Caulfield Town Hall in the 1990s. The former Stanmark Reception Centre was subsequently redeveloped and rebadged as a boutique hotel/conference facility, which still operates today.



Of the half-dozen or so Slawik-designed houses that have been identified in what is now the City of Glen Eira, one example, at 635 Inkerman Road (1964), has long since been demolished; no further information or illustration has yet been located. Of those still standing, the houses at 34 Maxwell Grove (1962) and 6 Labassa Grove (1964) are single-storey brick dwellings with asymmetrical double-fronted facades, quite different to the elevated box-like house in Edinburgh Avenue. While atypically crowned by a tile-clad hipped roof, the Maxwell Grove house has a few elements in common with the one in Edinburgh Avenue, such as the broad covered front porch (extending one side to define a *porte-cochere*), huge glass sliding doors, and a simple metal balustrade. Expansive window walls, and a front porch with similar railing, can also be seen at the Labassa Grove house; however, this house is otherwise more boldly embellished than the Edinburgh Avenue house, with a skylit entry porch, slate feature wall, pebbled cement pathways, and a metal screen door in a lively geometric pattern. Ultimately, the local example of Slawik's work that is most comparable to the Edinburgh Avenue house is a slightly later one at 52 Lumeah Road (1967), which is a pared-down revisitation of the two-storey elevated box, with full-height glazing and balcony at the upper level, and undercroft carport below.

As a modernist house in the tradition of an elevated glass-fronted box, the house at 2 Edinburgh Avenue can also be compared with the house at 1 Bickhams Court, St Kilda East (Holgar & Holgar, 1967), which was commissioned by the brother of the Edinburgh Avenue client.

## References

ARBV file for Zygmunt Bernard Slawik. Unit 13, VPRS 8838/P2  
(Individual Architects Registration Files), PROV.

Certificate of Title, Volume 8160, Folio 755, created 29 May 1957.

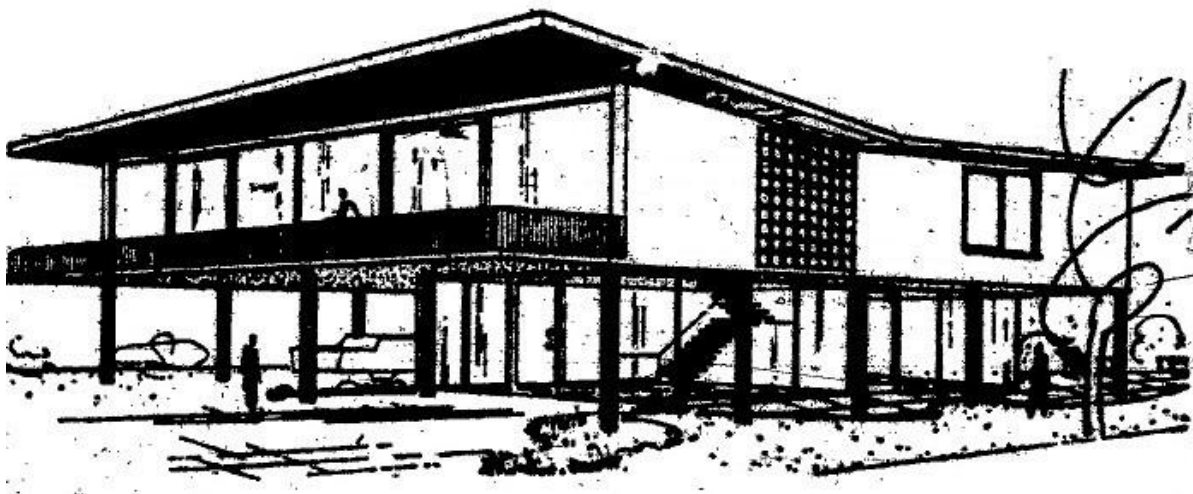
Lodged Plan No 40,844, dated 21 June 1957.

Bernard Slawik, "Proposed residence for Mr & Mrs [redacted], at Lot 17, Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield", working drawings, dated 3 August 1962. City of Caulfield Permit No 28,541.

"Built on floor slab", *Herald*, 11 April 1963, p 16.

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd (also flagged by Melbourne School of Design)



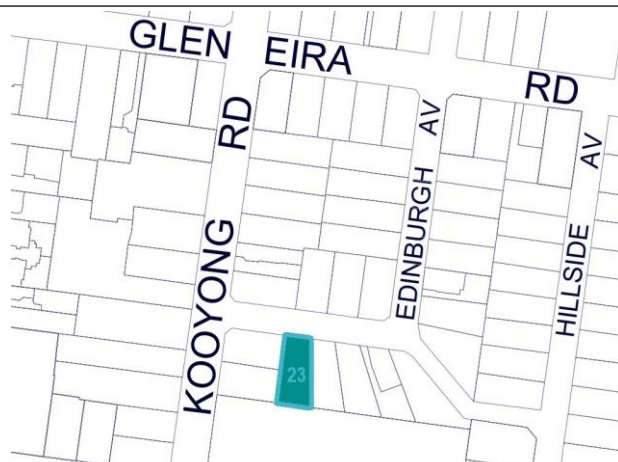
Bernard Slawik's original perspective drawing of the house in Edinburgh Avenue  
source: *Herald*, 11 April 1963



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW11
<b>Other name/s</b>	Shillabeer House (former)	<b>Melway ref</b>	67 K2
<b>Address</b>	23 Edinburgh Avenue CAULFIELD	<b>Date/s</b>	1958
<b>Designer/s</b>	Montgomery, King & Trengove	<b>Builder/s</b>	F E Shillabeer & Sons Pty Ltd?



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential building (private) House	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
		<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The former Shillabeer House at 23 Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, is a single-storey brick house in the Melbourne Regional style, with an elongated L-shaped plan, low gabled roof (enveloping a timber-posted carport to one side), extensive window walls and a recessed courtyard enclosed by a hit-and-miss brick wall. Erected in 1958 for Frank Shillabeer, the third generation of a family of prominent Melbourne builders, the house was designed by Montgomery, King & Trengove and most likely erected by Shillabeer's firm.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building.

### How is it significant?

The 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.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as an excellent and substantially intact example of a house in the so-called Melbourne Regional style associated with the younger generation of locally-trained architects who commenced practice in the later 1940s and early 1950s. With its elongated L-shaped plan form, low gabled roof, broad eaves and full-height window walls, the house demonstrates the principal characteristics of this relaxed sub-style of post-WW2 modernism, coupled with some more distinctive features such as the recessed courtyard enclosed by screen wall of hit-and-miss brickwork, and the large opening in the carport roof. While the City of Glen Eira contains a high proportion of post-WW2 houses in the academic modernist style, many of which were designed by European-trained émigré architects, this is one of relatively few examples of the more relaxed modernist style adopted by younger locally-trained architects in the 1950s and early '60s.

(Criterion E)

### **History**

The house at 23 Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, was built in 1958 for builder Frank Shillabeer and his wife, to a design by the architectural firm of Montgomery, King & Trengove. Born in Caulfield, Frank Alexander Shillabeer (1926-2000) represented the third generation of a family of noted Melbourne builders. The business was founded by his grandfather, Frank Ernest Shillabeer, who was described in an obituary as "a building contractor of wide repute" (*Argus* 24/11/1949:5). In 1925, the thriving firm was reconfigured as F E Shillabeer & Sons Pty Ltd, acknowledging the involvement of Frank's two sons, Frederick and Roy. During the inter-war years, the firm's profile increased with the completion of some major city projects such as Harry Norris's much-published *Nicholas Building* in Swanston Street (1926). Roy's son, Frank Alexander, seems to have joined the family firm in the early post-WW2 era, following a stint with the RAN in which he served aboard the *SS Monterey*, a former ocean liner repurposed as a troop carrier, from 1945 and 1947. After Roy Shillabeer's death in 1952, his brother Frederick retired to Surfers Paradise, evidently leaving the control of F E Shillabeer & Sons in the hand of the next generation. Around 1960, the company vacated its longtime city headquarters at 328 Flinders Lane and relocated to Footscray, apparently ceasing operation within a few years.

After marrying in 1949, Frank Shillabeer and his wife initially resided with his parents in Howitt Road, Caulfield. Intending to build a house for themselves, the younger couple was drawn to Edinburgh Avenue, a new L-shaped thoroughfare created in 1957 as part of the subdivision of a former stately home site on the south-east corner of Glen Eira and Kooyong Roads. In January 1958, the Shillabeers acquired the title to Lot 32, a north-facing block on the south side of the east-west portion of Edinburgh Avenue. To design the new house, the couple turned to architects Montgomery, King & Trengove.

The partnership of Montgomery, King & Trengove was founded in 1953 by Neil Edward Thomas Montgomery (1924-1995), Thomas Lionel King (1924-2001) and Robert Roff Trengove (1925-2010), three returned servicemen who had commenced architectural studies at Melbourne University in 1946 and, after collaborating on a final year design project, decided to enter into partnership upon graduation. This plan, however, was delayed by the need to obtain professional experience: Montgomery travelled overseas, while King and Trengove found work in the office of Yuncken Freeman Brothers, Griffiths & Simpson. After entering into partnership, Montgomery, King & Trengove quickly established a reputation for buildings in a hard-edged academic modernist style that reflected their collective interest in the work of Niemeyer, Mies and Breuer. While Trengove left the partnership in 1955, it retained its original name for another decade. Initially focusing on residential and small-scale retail jobs, the firm later embraced larger institutional and commercial projects. After Montgomery left in 1985, the practice was carried on by King until 1994, when it was taken over by his daughter and son-in-law, Bridget and Geoff Sneath. The firm continued as King & Sneath until the couple retired in the early 2000s.

The house that Montgomery, King & Trengove designed for the Shillabeer family, as depicted in working drawings dated March 1958, was a single-storey hip-roofed dwelling on an L-shaped linear plan that provided a large front living room, kitchen, laundry and three bedrooms along one side, and a projecting rear wing with master bedroom, dressing room and en suite bathroom. The recessed western half of the house also incorporated a carport that doubled as an entry porch, with a semi-enclosed sun terrace.

As it turned out, the Shillabeers resided in Edinburgh Avenue for only a very brief period. In 1960 (presumably coinciding with the relocation of the building business from the city to Footscray), the house was sold and the family moved to Beaumaris. Their former Caulfield residence was purchased by a company director and his German-born wife, who would remain living there for two decades. In 1983, the next owner engaged local architect David Edelman to undertake some minor changes to the house that included the refurbishment of the kitchen and laundry, incorporating a new breakfast nook, and addition of a small enclosed entry foyer at the far end of the carport. This entry foyer has evidently since been removed.

The house was one of ten local houses to be shortlisted for possible inclusion in *Notable & Modern*, an exhibition of post-war domestic architecture in the City of Glen Eira, held at the Glen Eira Art Gallery in 2001. Although ultimately not included in the exhibition, it was noted of these ten houses that “their exclusion from the project in no way meant that they were not interesting”.

## Description

The former Shillabeer House at 23 Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, is a single-storey gable-roofed brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style. Laid out on an elongated L-shaped plan, the house presents an asymmetrical elevation to the street, with a fully glazed window wall to the left half and a recessed carport to the right, enclosed on the west side by a solid brick wall and along the south side by a matching but slightly lower hit-and-miss screen wall. The carport is integrated beneath the broad gabled roof, which incorporates an unusual elongated rectangular opening near the apex, with a row of slender columns along the downward side. The window wall to the front of the house, which comprises wide single-pane windows, highlights and glazed sliding doors, opened onto a sundeck.

## Comparisons

The house at 23 Edinburgh Road falls neatly into a specific sub-group of post-WW2 modernism that is generally referred to as the Melbourne Regional style. Defined by Richard Apperly *et al* as “a palatable, friendly brand of modernism which was not a wishy-washy compromise”, the Melbourne Regional style was typified by single-storey suburban dwellings that, with low gabled roofs and linear plans, evoked an “unassertive horizontality”. Other defining characteristics cited by Apperly include broad eaves, window walls with regular spaced mullions, and timber-posted verandahs. The style tends to be associated with an emerging generation of younger Melbourne architects, often (but not always) returned servicemen who completed architectural studies in the late 1940s and early 1950s, such as Robin Boyd, Neil Clerehan, Peter McIntyre and Don Fulton.

The City of Glen Eira, and especially the Caulfield area, contains a high proportion of post-WW2 modernist houses designed by émigré architects who typically adopted in an academic modernist idiom. However, counterparts in the more relaxed Melbourne Regional style, designed by these younger locally-trained architects, are less common, and tend to be found elsewhere in the study area (such as Bentleigh and Elsternwick). One notably early manifestation is a house at 56 Thomas Street, Bentleigh (Neil Clerehan, 1950-51), with its elongated linear plan, north-facing window wall and jaunty skillion roofline with timber-posted carport on the south side.

A larger and grander example, formerly standing at 3-5 Buckingham Avenue, Bentleigh (Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, 1956), had an elongated F-shaped plan spread horizontally across a double-width block, defining a semi-enclosed front courtyard and a twin carport at one end. With its low skillion roof, window walls and vertical timber board cladding, it was probably the finest remaining example of the Melbourne Regional style in the City of Glen Eira, prior to its demolition as recently as 2013.

A skillion-roofed two-storey painted brick house in the Melbourne Regional style, still standing at 4 Elizabeth Street, Elsternwick (Richard Berryman, 1957), is perhaps less directly comparable to the Shillabeer House, but has some broad similarities in its narrow rectangular plan, timber-posted balcony/verandah, and full-height window bays to each level. Outside of the purely residential sphere, comparisons might also be drawn with a domestically-scaled medical clinic at 74a Orrong Road, Elsternwick (Albert Ross, 1961), which is similarly expressed with a broad gabled roof, wide eaves, full-height window wall, but further enlivened by the eye-catching motif of a triangulated lattice screen across the street frontage.

### References

Lodged Plan No 40,844, dated 21 June 1957.

Certificate of Title, Volume 8160, Folio 750, created 14 January 1958.

Montgomery, King & Trengove, "Brick veneer house in Edinburgh Avenue, Caulfield, for F A Shillabeer", working drawings, dated March 1958. City of Caulfield Permit No 22,000.

Richard Apperly, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture* (1989), pp 218-221.

Simon Reeves, "Montgomery, King & Trengove", in Philip Goad & Julie Willis (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture* (2012), p 468.

### Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd.



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	House and flats	<b>Citation No</b>	PW12
<b>Other name/s</b>	Popper House and <i>Gordonlea</i> Flats	<b>Melway ref</b>	67 F2
<b>Address</b>	61-63 Gordon Street ELSTERNWICK	<b>Date/s</b>	1956
<b>Designer/s</b>	Kurt Popper	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential building (private) House/Flats	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
		<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The residential complex at 61-63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick, comprises a two-storey dwelling (No 63) and an adjacent two-storey L-shaped block of flats (No 61), consistently expressed with stepped façades, plain cream brickwork, low skillion roofs and large window bays. It was designed in 1956 by Austrian émigré architect Kurt Popper to provide a residence for his own family, with the adjacent flats as an investment.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of both buildings and the brick boundary wall.

### How is it significant?

The complex 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.



### *Why is it significant?*

The house and flats are aesthetically significant as a distinctive example of post-WW2 modernism. Considered as a cohesive single development, the two components display a consistent modernist expression of stark volumetric massing, planar walls, wide window bays and low skillion roofs with broad timber-lined eaves. At the same time, undue repetition is avoided, so that the house and the flats remain readily interpreted as two related but separate buildings. While the entire complex is characterised by a minimalism that hints at the architect's European background, the single dwelling to the north, which was his own residence, is granted emphasis with eye-catching feature walls of random stonework and dark-coloured brick. (*Criterion E*)

The house and flats are historically significant for associations with Austrian émigré architect, who conceived them as a residence for his own family with a lettable investment property alongside. Popper, who began private practice in Melbourne in 1946, became sought-after as a designer of residential projects for fellow European émigré clients, and is acknowledged as a leading exponent of higher-density living in Melbourne (ultimately designing some of the first highrise apartment blocks in the CBD and inner suburbs). His own house in Gordon Street, where he lived for more than four decades before his death in 2000, provides evidence of the significant local presence of a resident architect who undertook a notable amount of work in what is now the City of Glen Eira (and especially Caulfield and Elsternwick), while the adjacent *Gordonlea* flats represents one of Popper's earliest (of many) multi-unit projects in the municipality. (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

Dating from 1956, the house and adjacent block of flats at 61-63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick, were designed by Austrian émigré architect Kurt Popper, respectively as his own residence and an investment property.

Born in Vienna, Popper (1910-2008) was the son of the proprietor of a joinery and shopfitting factory. Spurred by an early interest in the theatre, he commenced stage design studies at the University of Applied Arts and secured several commissions for set design before transferring to an architecture course at the Academy of Fine Arts. Establishing private practice, he undertook a few small commercial projects (mostly shop fitouts) before the political situation obliged him to leave Austria. After a brief stint in Paris, he migrated to Australia via London and settled in Adelaide in April 1939. Briefly employed by an architectural firm that closed due to WW2, Popper completed a single private commission before moving to Melbourne. Commencing private practice in Collins Street, he designed a block of flats for former friends in Adelaide before he had to close his office due to the worsening wartime conditions. Popper found work with an engineering company and then joined the Housing Commission of Victoria in 1945. While there, he obtained a residential commission that enabled him to re-launch private practice, with an office in East Melbourne. His practice boomed from the late 1940s, focusing on residential commissions for a clientele mostly comprising fellow European émigrés. His output included numerous blocks of flats, a field in which Popper became a leading exponent well into the 1960s. Popper's long association with the thriving post-WW2 migrant community also saw him design buildings for Jewish groups, including synagogues, schools and aged care homes.

In 1943, during his early years in Melbourne, Popper met and married his German-born wife, who had migrated with her parents four years earlier. The couple initially lived in a flat in St Kilda, but later moved to Malvern East. Plans to build a house for themselves date back to early 1951, when the couple acquired a vacant block in Trevascus Street, Caulfield South. This, however, was evidently sold when they later purchased a block in a new subdivision in Elsternwick. Known as the *Nathan Estate*, this was created from a ten acre site that comprised nearly half of the grounds of the historic *Ripponlea* mansion (then owned by the family after whom the new estate was named). In what was reported at the time to be “the most important inner subdivision of recent time”, the surplus land was carved up to create thirty residential allotments with frontages to Glen Eira Road and an extension to Gordon Street (*Herald* 24/04/1953:10). As a major release of undeveloped land in this well-established suburb, sites in the *Nathan Estate* were keenly sought-after. Amongst those to buy into the estate were Kurt Popper and his wife, who acquired the titles to two adjacent blocks, Lots 17 and 18, on the east side of Gordon Street.

As depicted on working drawings dated September 1956, Kurt Popper proposed to develop his double-width block with a two-storey single dwelling for himself and his family (at what would become No 63), and an adjacent two-storey block of six flats (No 61). The former component, laid out on a compact rectangular plan, provided a double garage, kitchen, study and ample living space downstairs (combined lounge/dining, breakfast room and small playroom) with three bedrooms (for the Poppers and their two sons) and a bathroom upstairs. The flats, although physically connected to the house, were not directly accessible from it, and were articulated as a separate building on an L-shaped plan. A common stair lobby, opening at the junction of the plan, provided communal access to three flats at each level: a pair of two-bedroom flats and one smaller studio flat, with an open-planned living/dining/sleeping area.

The working drawings show that the development was not commissioned by the Poppers *per se* but rather by Gordonlea Pty Ltd, a family investment company that they formed in September 1956 (with its registered office at 128 Jolimont Road, East Melbourne, where Popper maintained his architectural practice); the flats themselves were identified by the name *Gordonlea*. Title records indicate that ownership was vested in Gordonlea Pty Ltd in April 1957. When the company was de-registered in 1978, the title was transferred to Popper and his wife. The property has since remained in the family’s ownership; following Popper’s death in 2000 and that of his widow some years later.

## Description

The Popper property at 61-63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick, comprises two discrete buildings: the architect’s own residence (No 63) and an attached block of flats (No 61), which combine to form an U-shaped footprint. The two components are similar in expression, form, finishes: double-storey cream brick buildings with skillion roofs and broad timber-lined eaves. The simpler of the two buildings, the block of flats has an L-shaped plan and presents an asymmetrical double-fronted elevation to the street, with tall rectangular windows in rows of three or six. The shared entrance to the common stairwell is set into the far corner of the double-fronted façade, marked by a tall multi-paned window bay. The adjacent single residence is similarly expressed at its upper level, with a bay of six tall rectangular windows. At the lower level, however, it is distinguished by a full-width recessed porch with a slightly projecting concrete slab ceiling supported on paired metal pipe columns and, at the far right end, a projecting stone-clad wing wall that also forms the dividing wall to the adjacent flat-roofed double garage. The recessed porch, further enlivened by a feature wall of dark-coloured Roman brickwork, also has a large tripartite window bay and a recessed entrance at the garage end.

A low garden wall, in matching cream brick, extends along the street boundary of the property, retuning along the side of the driveway to No 63.

## Comparisons

Within the City of Glen Eira, Kurt Popper is represented by numerous buildings that include houses, flats and community buildings dating from the early 1950s to the late 1970s. His earliest surviving building in the study area appears to be a house at 317 Glen Eira Road, Caulfield (1952), a hip-roofed cream brick dwelling of relatively conventional form. Another house, at 112a Kooyong Road, Caulfield (1953) is similar but has since been rendered. An example at 4 Morrice Street, Caulfield (1954), which is probably Popper's earliest local project in a wholly modernist mode, is a two-storey skillion-roofed brick house that has much in common with the design of his own house in Gordon Street, designed two years later, although it is simpler in form and lacks the embellishments such as the feature walls of random stonework and dark-coloured Roman bricks. Considered in isolation, the *Gordonlea* flats at No 61 are the earliest known apartment block that Popper designed in the study area, significantly predating subsequent examples at 399 Alma Road, Caulfield North (1960), 178-180 Glen Eira Road, Elsternwick (1962), 4 Edith Street, Caulfield (1965) and 68 Howitt Street, Caulfield North (1968).

At a micro level, the residential development at 61-63 Gordon Street can also be compared to a perhaps surprising number of houses that Popper designed in the same street. In what would have been an unusual circumstance at the time, several other families who purchased land in the new *Nathan Estate* became aware that Popper was designing his own house, and they engaged him to design theirs as well. Consequently, the street is known to contain at least five other examples of his work. Three of these (at Nos 56, 68 and 73, all dating from 1956) are conservative in style, with triple-fronted facades and conventional hipped roofs. A two-storey example at No 72 and a single-storey one at No 77 (both 1956), are both more representative of Popper's taut modernist aesthetic, with flat roofs, expansive windows and planar walls enlivened with decorative embellishments such as slate cladding or projecting brickwork. Popper's own house, at No 63, remains the standout.

## References

Kurt Popper, "Proposed maisonettes and six flats at Gordon Street, Caulfield, for Gordon-Lea Pty Ltd", working drawings, dated September 1956. City of Caulfield Permit No 20,099.

Certificate of Title, Volume 817, Folio 721, created 1957.

Harriet Edquist, *Kurt Popper: From Vienna to Melbourne, Architecture 1939-1975* (2002).

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd (also flagged by Heritage Alliance and RBA Architects)



Undated photograph of Kurt Popper's own house at 63 Gordon Street  
Source: Harriet Edquist, *Kurt Popper: From Vienna to Melbourne*.

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW13
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 C5
<b>Address</b>	30 Griffiths Street CAULFIELD SOUTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1977-78
<b>Designer/s</b>	Leon Fink	<b>Builder/s</b>	K Fink Pty Ltd (Leon Fink, constr. manager)



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential building (private) House	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
		<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 30 Griffiths Street, Caulfield South, is a two-storey orange brick dwelling of unusual sculptural form. Occupying a corner site, it is laid out on an irregular plan (based on a rotated 45-degree modular grid), extruded to form two contrasting and mostly blank street elevations with projecting wing walls, half-round stairwell bay, a Diocletian window and an asymmetrical roofline of separate skillions with flat or raked parapets. The house was erected in 1977-78 as a speculative project for Karl Fink's construction company, and was designed by his architect son, Leon Fink.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire house, including various brick walls that project from the house and extend along the street boundaries.

### How is it significant?

The 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.



### *Why is it Significant*

The house is aesthetically significant as a distinctive example of modernist residential architecture of the late 1970s, showing the pervasive influence of the so-called Chamfer style that was popular for much of that decade. Its highly sculptural appearance is the result of a modular plan that was rotated by 45 degrees to respond to the corner site, then extruded into a series of irregular forms. The two street elevations, starkly and differently expressed, incorporate splayed corners, tapered wing walls, projecting half-round stairwell and an irregular skillion roofline with flat and raked parapets. The starkness is softened by the use of pale orange brick (rather than the concrete block or rendered finish more typically associated with the Chamfer style), and relieved by quirky details such as the projecting downpipes and Diocletian window to Goe Street, which hint at the influence of the emerging Post-Modernist style. Virtually unaltered since completion in 1978, the house remains an eye-catching element in a predominantly pre-war residential streetscape.

(Criterion E)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 30 Griffith Street, Caulfield South, was erected in 1979 as a speculative project for a construction company operated by Polish-born Karl Fink, and was designed by his architect son, Leon Fink. Karl Fink (*ne* Kalman Funckenstejn) (1917-1993) and his wife Feiga (*nee* Rotszylad) (1918-2015) were both born in Włocławek, and were still living there at the time of their marriage in 1938. During WW2, the couple resided in Russia but returned to Włocławek afterwards, where son Leon was born in 1946. Declared stateless, the Funckenstejns were accommodated in a Displaced Persons' Camp in Munich before obtaining passports in Frankfurt in July 1947, enabling them to migrate to Australia. Arriving in Sydney in August 1948, they travelled thence to Melbourne and settled in Parkville. In 1951, Karl applied to have his surname shortened to Fink but was refused. He subsequently took the surname Finksten, which had been suggested as an alternative, but had adopted the name Karl Fink by the end of that decade. Originally a painter and decorator by trade, he established his own construction business in Melbourne, which was formalised in July 1960 as K Fink Pty Ltd.

Karl and Feigla's eldest son, Leon, studied architecture at the University of Melbourne; while still a first year student, he was already involved with his father's firm, supervising the construction of speculative factory projects in the inner suburbs. In 1967-68, Leon and fellow undergraduate Michael Kauffman travelled to London for further professional experience. Both obtained work with George Wimpey & Company, a venerable building firm that had long specialised in housing estates. By time that Fink and Kauffman arrived there, the firm had embraced highrise apartment blocks for local authorities. Fink recalls working on a number of such projects in Scotland, noting that, while they were not particularly notable architecturally, provided him with valuable experience in how a large construction company operated. Outside of work, Fink and Kaufmann furthered their professional knowledge by visiting buildings by well-known British architects such as James Stirling and Denys Lasdun. They also travelled to the Continent to see icons that included Le Corbusier's Chapel at Ronchamp and Joern Utzon's own house near Copenhagen.

Returning to Australia, Kaufman and Fink completed their studies at the University of Melbourne and, after graduating in 1972, entered into partnership together. This proved a relatively short-lived venture, with both men embarking on sole practice (Kaufman was to die, prematurely, in 1974). Fink became increasingly involved in his father's construction business, working in the twofold capacity of in-house designer and construction manager, overseeing speculative projects that mostly consisted of apartment and townhouse developments in suburbs such as Box Hill, Northcote and Thornbury. In parallel, Fink also maintained a modest private practice, mostly undertaking smaller-scaled residential alteration work for friends and family.



In May 1977, one of Karl Fink's companies, K Fink Nominees Pty Ltd, acquired the title to a site at the corner of Griffiths and Goe Streets in Caulfield South, on which to build a large family house as a one-off speculative project. As was later reported, "the house was not designed with a specific client in mind, but was intended to have wide market appeal" (*Age* 01/01/1979:11). Leon recalls that, as it represented a departure from the bread-and-butter medium density housing that he and his father mostly undertook at that time, it offered a rare (and welcome) opportunity for bolder architectural expression. Responding to the corner site in a fresh way, Fink proposed a two-storey house on a plan rotated 45 degrees, with two contrasting street elevations that blurred preconceptions of "front" and "side". The modular plan, generated by a 960mm grid, allowed walls to be placed accurately without the need for fully dimensioned drawings, and created a flexible open-planned interior. Externally, the building's significant bulk was de-emphasised by a stepping down the roofline towards the two street frontages, with the sole non-orthogonal element at the junction: a projecting half-round stairwell that formed a windowless tower-like feature.

Not surprisingly, given the unusual form and detailing of the proposed house, Fink's twofold role as designer and construction manager came to the fore during realisation of the project. He recalls: "some of the things were a bit tricky... working out how to do the roof over the staircase, which was circular... getting the skylights arranged over those lightwells that dropped down. It was something that we had to make sure worked on site because I was actually building it. I had to work it out myself, so it was interesting in that way". He adds that construction required more than the usual amount of site supervision, with sub-contractors mystified by some of the details. The bricklayer, for example, was unfamiliar with laying the specially-cut squint bricks (ie splayed at a 45 degree angle) until Fink advised him to purchase a cheap plastic set-square from a newsagent (although, as the architect wryly recalls, the bricklayer initially came back on site with a 60/30 degree set square). Fink was also responsible for designing the garden setting around the house, which was implemented by landscape contractor Mario Mariani.

In early 1979, the newly-completed house was profiled in the weekly property column of the *Age* newspaper as a "House of the Week". The article lauded its distinctive external expression, with contrasting elevational treatments resulting in "a building that acknowledges both street frontages with a form that offers relief from the rigid streetscape". There was also praise for its modular and carefully-zoned internal planning, creating "a series of flexible interlocking spaces that could be furnished in a variety of ways". Two months later, when the property was offered for sale, it was subject to a second write-up, which referred to it as "the place that looks like a fortress" (wryly noting, "what better way of dealing with traffic noise, sticky beaks and fumes?"). The article went on to state that, despite its forbidding exterior, the inside of the house was spacious and well-lit, with a subtle colour scheme and timberwork "that contributes to a light, airy atmosphere". The house failed to sell at auction, but, by the end of the year, had been acquired by a European émigré couple from Glen Huntly.

## Description

Occupying a corner site, the building at 30 Griffiths Street, Caulfield South, is an orange brick house comprising a single-story hip-roofed portion (facing Griffiths Street) integrated with a flat-roofed double-storey portion (fronting Goe Street). Designed on a 45-degree module, the house is irregular not only in plan but also in elevation and roofline. The low hipped roof to the front is clad with slate and has a broad timber fascia to two sides and raked parapets to the other, while the flat roof to the rear is entirely concealed by horizontal parapets. The double carport, integrated beneath the hipped roof on the Griffiths Street side, is partly enclosed by a tapered wing wall that projects along the driveway. The elevation to Goe Street is stark, with a virtually blank double-height wall relieved only by a Diocletian (half-round) window at the upper level and recessed entry porch on the street, marked by an angled garden wall. On the splayed corner between the two street elevations, the stairwell projects outwards to form a windowless half-round bay.

## Comparisons

By the architect's own admission, the speculative house that he designed at 30 Griffiths Street was a one-off project: a diversion from the townhouse/flat developments that then characterised the bulk of his output. Fink states that he has not designed anything else like it, either in Caulfield, the broader City of Glen Eira, or anywhere else. While Fink's parents resided in Caulfield for many years (in an existing house in Dunbar Avenue), he notes that he has undertaken little architectural work in that part of Melbourne. By his reckoning, his only other significant undertaking in the study area is a block of flats at 15-19 Alexandra Avenue, Elsternwick (1978-79). Still standing, it is a three-storey cream brick building with open carparking at ground level and two storeys of apartments above, with projecting north-facing balconies. Designed soon after the Griffiths Street house, it is larger and more conventionally rectilinear in form, but otherwise comparable for its pale brickwork, varied fenestration (with long rectangular windows placed both horizontally and vertically), and use of a contrasting curved feature (in this case, in the garden walls).

In the absence of other local buildings by Leon Fink, the house can be compared more broadly to other houses in the study area from the later 1970s and early '80s, when residential architecture in Melbourne still showed the pervasive influence of the so-called Chamfer style. Emerging in the early '70s in houses by Edgard Pirotta, Kevin Borland, Peter Crone and others, it was characterised by angular geometry in both plan and elevation. Often generated by rotated modular grids, plans typically had bold angles and splayed corners, while elevations incorporated cranked glazing, tapering walls and jagged rooflines. Several typical examples of the style are recorded in the City of Glen Eira, including houses at 17-19 Burrindi Road, Caulfield (Synman Justin Bialik, 1979), 40 Trevelyan Street, Elsternwick (Kevin Borland, 1981) and an architect's own home at 32 Keeron Street, Caulfield South (Avi Milder, 1983). All of these not only post-date Leon Fink's house in Griffiths Street but, built on standard single-fronted blocks, lack the sculptural form and bold streetscape presence demonstrated by Fink's building, so carefully conceived for its corner site.

## Reference

Certificate of Title, Volume 4823, Folio 551, created 11 October 1923.

John Barker, "Design achieves harmony", *Age*, 1 January 1979, p 11.

Ray Davie, "Fortress like", *Age*, 24 March 1979, p 40.

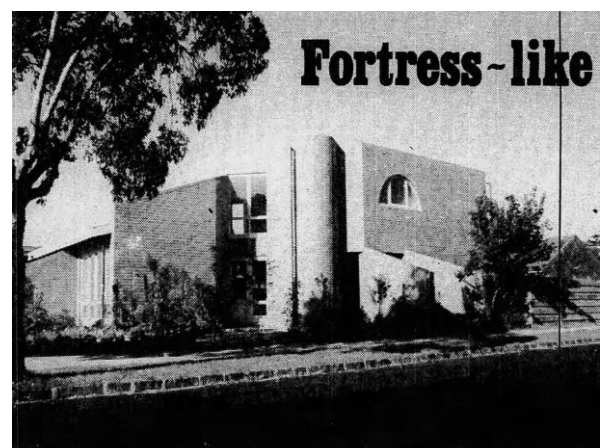
Leon Fink, interviewed by Simon Reeves, 21 December 2019.

## Identified by

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*Contemporary view from the south (Goe Street)*  
Source: courtesy Leon Fink, architect

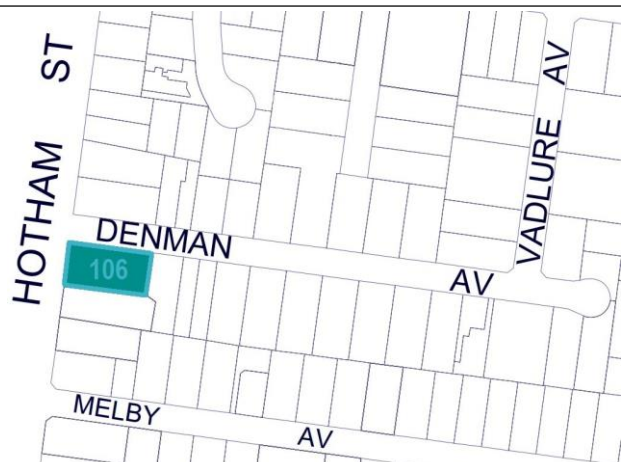


*Contemporary view from the south-west*  
Source: *Age*, 24 March 1979

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	St Margaret's Presbyterian Church	<b>Citation No</b>	PW14
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 F12
<b>Address</b>	106 Hotham Street ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1953-54
<b>Designer/s</b>	K Murray Forster	<b>Builder/s</b>	R E Gyngell



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Religion	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Church	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	8.1 Maintaining spiritual life 9.3 Achieving design and artistic distinction		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

St Margaret's Presbyterian Church, at 106 Hotham Street, St Kilda East, is a cream brick church comprising a gable-roofed hall-like nave with a flat-roofed front foyer wing that incorporates a projecting covered walkway. Erected in 1953-54 to a design by leading Presbyterian architect K Murray Forster, the building represented the culmination of several decades of fundraising for a congregation that had occupied the site, in a series of 'temporary' buildings, from 1916.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building, including the original stained glass windows.

### How is it significant?

St Margaret's Presbyterian Church 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 F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.



### *Why is it significant?*

St Margaret's Presbyterian Church is significant as an excellent and remarkably intact example of an early post-WW2 church in the newly emerging modernist style. With its simple expression of a hall-like nave, low gabled roof, projecting walkway and stark brick walls with varied fenestration and virtually no applied ornament, the church represented a bold departure from the established pre-WW2 convention where designers of churches felt obliged to reference historicist detailing (such as buttresses and arches) associated with the traditional ecclesiastical styles. Forster's building, entirely devoid of such allusions, anticipated a new approach to church design that would become the norm in the later 1950s and 1960s. (*Criterion E*)

St Margaret's Presbyterian Church is significant for its creative achievement in taking inspiration from modernist church architecture that K Murray Forster had seen during a recent European trip, completed just six months before finalising his working drawings. While contemporary accounts of his building broadly acknowledged these Continental sources, noting the influence of recent church architecture of Holland and Switzerland, a specific single precedent has been identified in the eerily similar Swiss Reformed Church at Zurich-Balgrist (Hans & Kurt Pfister, 1950-52). St Margaret's Church, the unusual design of which generated an uncommon degree of comment in the daily and architectural press, is thus notable as an example of a Melbourne architect directly introducing progressive European influences into the local architectural scene. (*Criterion F*)

### **History**

St Margaret's Presbyterian Church was built in 1953-54 for a congregation that dates back to 1911, when existing churches at St Kilda East (St George's, Chapel Street) and Elsternwick (St John's, Glenhuntly Road) were approached to provide for services in Balaclava. As the suburb was well-developed by that time, there was some difficulty in securing a site. In 1913, vacant land at the corner of Hotham Street and Denman Avenue was acquired for £1,208 (mostly donated by a wealthy local resident and the congregation of St George's). With further progress delayed by the onset of WW1, it was not until December 1916 that services began in a temporary building to accommodate 150 parishioners. Five years later, this was replaced by a larger church hall, similarly intended for temporary use until a church proper could be built alongside. As the congregation grew during the 1920s, the matter became more urgent. In 1928, a Church Building Fund was initiated and, two years later, it was reported that "strenuous efforts are being made towards erection of a new church on land at the corner of Hotham Street and Denman Avenue" (*Age* 13/09/1930:21). However, further development was hampered by the Depression. By 1936, the Church Building Fund had exceeded £1,000, and it was hoped that a new building could be completed to coincide with the Presbyterian Centenary Year in 1937. This, however, did not eventuate, and the project would be delayed, yet again, by the onset of WW2.

The scheme was revived in 1947 after the appointment of a new minister, Reverend J Symington. A New Church Building Sub Committee was formed, and architect K Murray Forster engaged to design the building. The son of a Presbyterian minister, Karl Murray Forster (1906-1967) studied at the University of Melbourne Architectural Atelier while articulated to F Bruce Kemp. Registered as an architect in Victoria in 1930, he relocated to Perth for a few years before returning to Melbourne in 1935 and resuming private practice in Collins Street. In the late 1930s, he often worked with his former boss Bruce Kemp on Presbyterian projects including churches, kindergartens and homes, and this continued in the early post-WW2 era. In 1951, Forster entered into partnership with Keith Reid, another leading Presbyterian architect, as a means to maintain his practice during a planned six-month overseas tour. The partnership, styled as Keith Reid & K Murray Forster, was not a success and ended after Forster returned from Europe in November 1952. He thence practiced under his own name, still specialising in work for the Presbyterian Church. In 1963, the practice became Murray Forster & Walsh after the elevation to partnership of longtime employee Allen Walsh, who would continue running the office after Forster's early death four years later.

Forster's working drawings for the St Margaret's Presbyterian Church are dated April 1953, barely six months after he returned from his overseas trip. The drawings (which bear the initials of his assistant, Allen Walsh, as delineator) depict a cream brick building of simple form: a hall-like nave (to accommodate 200 people) with low gabled roof, covered walkways and a blank façade with a Latin Cross flanked by vertical strip windows. In July 1953, it was reported that the construction contract (worth £8,439) had been awarded to builder R E Gyngell (*Construction* 29/7/1953:9). On 22 August, the foundation stone was laid by the Reverend Principal Hugh McLean. Nine months later, on 1 May 1954, the completed church was officially opened by the Right Reverend Alan Watson, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Forster's original scheme had proposed a set of stained glass windows representing the Twelve Apostles, although only one of these (depicting St Andrew) was completed in time for the opening. The new building otherwise included several items (including elders' chairs, communion table and baptismal font) that had been donated over the years, and placed in storage, in anticipation of completion of the building.

The simple architectural form of the church attracted a great deal of attention. One newspaper report of the foundation stone ceremony, illustrated by a perspective drawing, observed that "a style of architecture popular for Presbyterian churches in Switzerland and Holland has been drawn on for the modern church building" (*Argus* 01/08/1953:9). After the official opening the following year, another newspaper was moved to report that "the modern building is unusual" (*Age* 29/04/1954:17), while the Presbyterian state newsletter noted that "the new structure has modern features that are as convenient as they are attractive" (*Messenger*, 30/04/1954:9). Later that year, the weekly property column of the *Herald* newspaper praised the building as "the first Presbyterian church built in Victoria in advanced contemporary style". Its simplified form and internal planning, noted too have been influenced by recent European developments in church architecture, was described as "a complete departure from tradition" (*Herald* 20/08/1954:13). The church subsequently received brief mentions in two architectural journals, lauded for its "restrained interior, effectively using simple materials" (*Cross Section* 11/1954:3) and as "one of Australia's few modern churches" (*Architecture & Arts*, 02/1955:8). In 1956, it was one of only two post-WW2 churches to be included in a slender architectural guidebook published for those visiting Melbourne for the Olympic Games.

## Description

St Margaret's Presbyterian Church at 106 Hotham Street, East St Kilda, is a cream brick building in a post-WW2 modernist style. Starkly expressed, it comprises a large hall-like nave with low gabled roof, a projecting flat-roofed entry wing, and a smaller gabled-roofed rear wing. The nave has a virtually blank façade to Hotham Street, with a single off-centre vertical strip window that is partially screened by an inset white-painted Latin cross motif. Along its side (Denman Avenue) elevation, the nave has a larger double-height vertical window at the chancel end and a row of four smaller rectangular windows. All of these windows have projecting white-painted surrounds. The large window is multi-paned, with inset stained glass, while each of the smaller windows is divided asymmetrically into four panels.

The front wing, facing Hotham Street, has exposed beams and rafters to its very low-pitched roof, which extends northwards to form a covered walkway to the main entrance on that side. A multi-paned horizontal window bay extends along the eaves line on the Hotham Street side, returning to form a highlight window over the entrance facing Denman Avenue. The entry has glazed sidelights and a pair of panelled timber doors, painted pale blue, each emblazoned with a St Andrew's cross (a symbol of Presbyterianism) in contrasting white. The covered walkway, extending across a paved brick terrace with steps at the outer end, had pairs of metal pipe columns, and a simple metal pipe balustrade, finished in the same pale blue colour scheme.



The foundation stone, set into the north wall of the nave alongside the entry porch, is inscribed as follows: TO THE GLORY OF GOD / THIS STONE WAS LAID BY / REV PRINCIPAL H MCLEAN MA MSC, DD / 22 AUGUST 1953 / MINISTER/ ARCHITECT K MURRAY FORSTER ARIBA / BUILDER R E GYNGELL.

## Comparisons

While K Murray Forster is well known as a prolific architect of buildings for the Presbyterian denomination, St Margaret's Church appears to be his only such project in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Forster, who briefly lived in Caulfield in the mid-1930s, is otherwise represented in the study area by some residential projects. His best-known local building (albeit not for reasons he would appreciate) was the *Willas* flats in Labassa Grove, Caulfield (1936), a two-storey apartment block erected in the front garden of the eponymous mansion, *Labassa*. Notoriously obstructing views of the mansion, the flats were purchased by the National Trust in the 1980s and promptly demolished to reinstate the original setting. Forster's post-WW2 output is represented by a timber house at 24 Atkinson Street, Murrumbeena (1953) that, with its C-shaped courtyard plan, skillion roof and wide chimney, was praised as "a good example of the modern trend in design for timber homes" and one that (like his contemporaneous design for St Margaret's Church) incorporated ideas that the architect had seen during his recent visit to Europe (*Argus* 25/06/1953:15). Although still standing, the Murrumbeena house has been much altered.

Considered in Forster's wider body of church architecture, St Margaret's Presbyterian Church was the first in a series of churches that he designed in a stripped-back modernist mode influenced by Continental European precedents. His much-published United Protestant Church in Woomera, South Australia (1954), although of stone construction, is otherwise eerily similar to St Margaret's in its simple hall-like form, low gabled roof, covered walkways and blank façade with Latin Cross motif and vertical strip windows. Echoes of this approach recur in several of Forster's subsequent Presbyterian churches in Victoria, including those at 146 High Street, Heathcote (1955) and 92 Main Street, Pakenham East (1960). In identifying a possible Continental source for Forster's inspiration, contemporary allusions to recent Swiss churches (for the Reformed, Calvinistic and Roman Catholic denominations) provide a crucial clue. Research to date suggests that the most likely precedent was the Reformed Church at Zurich-Balgrist, erected in 1950-52 to a design by architects Hans & Kurt Pfister that had won a limited competition in 1945. This church, simply expressed as a rectangular hall with low gabled roof, stark rendered walls, covered walkways and a blank façade with two vertical slit windows flanking a Latin cross, eerily anticipates Forster's subsequent scheme for St Margaret's.

At the time of completion, St Margaret's Church was described as the first Presbyterian church in Victoria in the modernist style. Within the local context of the City of Glen Eira, it is certainly one of the first modernist churches, of any denomination. In the first half of the 1950s, virtually all new churches in the study area harked back to the inter-war tradition where historicist styles associated with ecclesiastical architecture (typically Gothic or Romanesque) were adapted with varying degrees of rigour. This approach is typified by a number of cream brick churches of contrasting style: St Kevin's Roman Catholic Church in Glen Orme Avenue, Ormond (Cyril Kelly, 1953-54), in an Early Renaissance mode, the Ormond Church of Christ at 587 North Road, Ormond (Louis Williams, 1954-55), nominally Gothic with arched windows and token buttresses, and the Bentleigh Presbyterian (now Uniting) Church at 495-97 Centre Road, Bentleigh (J F D Scarborough, 1958) in a Romanesque mode. It was not until the early 1960s that local churches began to emerge in a more overtly modernist style, as demonstrated by St John's Anglican Church at 624 Centre Rd, Bentleigh (Gawler, Churcher & Boardman, 1961-62), the former Brethren Gospel Hall (now Eastleigh Gospel Chapel) at 216 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh East (G James Rattray, 1961-62), and the Church of the Temple Society at 152 Tucker Road, Bentleigh (William Blauch, 1963-64).

## References

K Murray Forster, "St Margaret's Presbyterian Church, Hotham Street, Balaclava", working drawings, dated June 1953. PB 9,942, Unit 1156, VPRS 7882/P1, PROV.

"Swiss style", *Argus*, 1 August 1953, p 9.

"New church at Balaclava", *Age*, 24 April 1954, p 17.

"New church in modern style", *Herald*, 20 August 1954, p 13.

*Cross Section*, No 25 (November 1954), p 3.

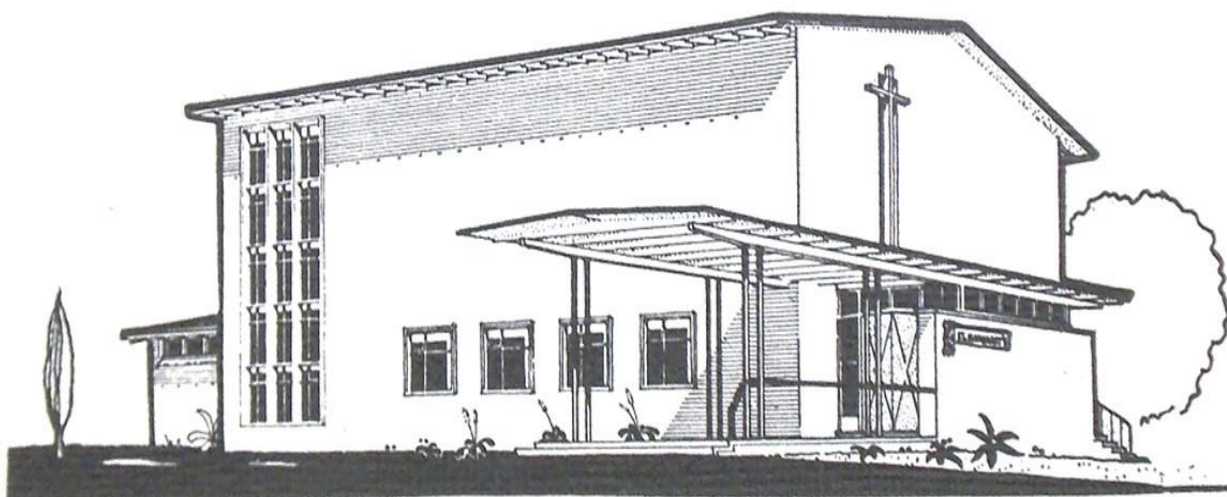
"Modern Presbyterian Church for East St Kilda", *Architecture & Arts*, February 1955, p 8.

Donald C Ward (ed), *Guide to Victorian Architecture* (1956), p 15.

*St Margaret's Presbyterian Church, Hotham Street, Balaclava: Jubilee, 1916-1966.*

## Identified by

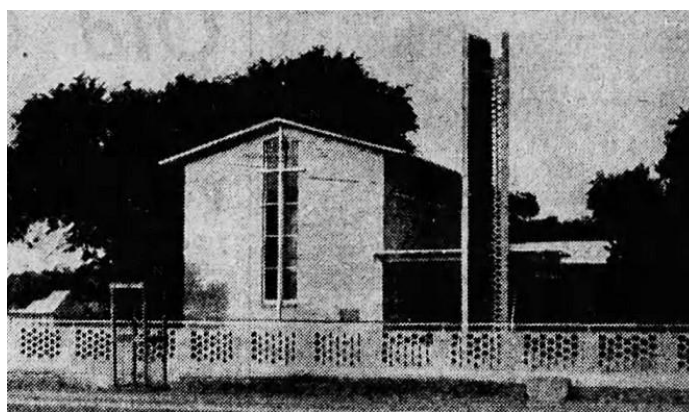
Built Heritage Pty Ltd



*Original perspective drawing by the office of K Murray Forster & Associates  
source: Architecture & Arts, February 1955*



*Reformed Church at Zurich-Balgrist  
(Hans & Kurt Pfister, 1950-52)  
source: www.de.wikipedia.org*



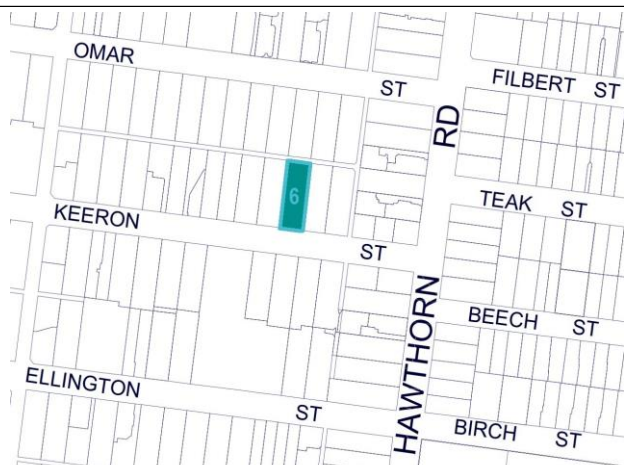
*Presbyterian Church at Heathcote  
(K Murray Forster & Associates, 1955)  
source: Age, 3 March 1956*



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW15
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 A5
<b>Address</b>	6 Keeron Street CAULFIELD SOUTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1971
<b>Designer/s</b>	Andrew Reed & Associates Chris Dance (landscape)	<b>Builder/s</b>	Austranental Building Co P/L (Henry van Reesema)



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		

<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 6 Keeron Street, Caulfield South, is a double-storey brick dwelling on an elongated stepped plan, with an asymmetrical skillion roofline and stark façade incorporating projecting half-round stairwell, tall chimney, strip windows and double garage with matching garden walls and a bluestone driveway. The house was erected in 1971 for an estate agent and his wife, and was designed by architects Andrew Reed & Associates.

The significant fabric is identified as the exterior of the entire house and garage, and the matching recycled brick garden walls and bluestone driveway.

### How is it significant?

The 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.



### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as a distinctive example of residential architecture of the 1970s. A textbook example of the highly individualistic style adopted by architect Andrew Reed, the house deftly combines the bold sculptural expression of the Brutalist idiom (with its jagged roofline, half-round stairwell and slit windows) with an organic approach more commonly associated with the work of Alistair Knox (expressed here through a palette of earthy materials including second-hand bricks, stained timber and bluestone paving). Still occupied by the original owners at the time of writing, the house remains in a remarkably intact state. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 6 Keeron Street, Caulfield South, was erected in 1971 to a design by Andrew Reed & Associates. According to electoral rolls, the original owner was employed as a real estate agent by the early 1960s, and was then residing in St Kilda East. Married by 1967, he and his wife initially resided in half of a pre-war maisonette pair in Brighton East. In May 1969, the couple acquired the present site on Keeron Street, Caulfield South, on which they intended to build a new house for themselves. To design it, they turned to architect Andrew Reed.

Born in England, Andrew Gerald Francis Reed (1943-1999) migrated to Australia with his parents at the age of ten. While studying architecture at the University of Melbourne from 1961-66, he secured a few architectural commissions, and won first prize in a house design contest. Starting private practice after graduation, Reed snared a range of commissions over the next few years that included a Brutalist-style motel, an office building, a townhouse development and a restaurant fitout in Sydney. A keen skier, he designed several buildings at the burgeoning Falls Creek resort, including a block of flats that was published internationally and won a citation at the 1975 RAIA Awards. In the 1970s, he became well-known for houses that combined irregular plans, forms and rooflines with rough materials such as clinker brick, raw timber and bluestone. In the 1980s, Reed re-configured his practice, promoting long-time staff member Tony Mussen to partnership and bringing in a third partner, Tony Styant-Browne (also a former employee, who had recently returned to Australia after more than decade in the USA). The new firm, styled as Reed Mussen Styant-Browne, became well known for larger-scale commercial work, winning an RAIA award in 1987 for a major city office building. The partnership ceased in 1990, due to the Recession.

Reed's working drawings for the house in Keeron Street, dated April 1971, bear a set of initials that identify the delineator as staff member Tony Styant-Browne, who was employed in Reed's office in 1971-72 and returned much later to become a full partner. The drawings depict a house on an elongated and stepped rectilinear plan, carefully zoned with living and sleeping areas at each end, and several integrated courtyards. The street frontage was dominated by a top-lit double garage, a prominent chimney and a projecting rounded stairwell bay that provided access to a partial second storey, where a mezzanine study overlooked the main living room.

Aside from Andrew Reed, still a relative newcomer to practice, the Keeron Street project had input from others who had only recently started out and would go on to become well-known in their fields. The consultant structural engineers were Beauchamp & Huggard, a new partnership between David Beauchamp and Trevor Huggard, who would later collaborate with such leading architects as Kevin Borland, Peter Crone, John Kenny and Daryl Jackson. Meanwhile, the garden layout represented an early project for landscape architect Chris Dance, a nephew of the well-known pre-war gardener designer Hilda Dance. He similarly worked alongside a number of leading architects of the 1970s before joining Tract Consultants, the landscaping/planning firm founded by David Yencken in 1973 as an off-shoot of his highly successful Merchant Builders. Both David Beauchamp and Chris Dance would become regular collaborators with Andrew Reed, spanning multiple projects over the course of many years.

While construction of the house was credited to the Austranental Building Company Pty Ltd (a Cheltenham-based firm founded in 1955 by project housing pioneer A G Croft), the current owners have identified the builder as one Henry van Reesema. In early 1974, the finished house was belatedly profiled in architect John Barker's weekly housing column in the *Age* newspaper. He expressed admiration for the way in which Reed's design responded to its narrow suburban site through its integration of courtyards and glazed gallery. He praised the open planning, noting that "a simple, progression of living, dining and family spaces lead to the kitchen... these interpenetrating spaces require no doors, yet the kitchen remains hidden from the more formal areas, providing an ideal format for entertaining". Barker also drew attention to the effective use of angled skylights, to increase natural lighting, and interior colour scheme "based on a red orange theme to bring out the colours in the bricks and matching quarry handmade tiles".

At the time of writing, the property remained owned and occupied by the same family.

### Description

The house at 6 Keeron Street, Caulfield South, is a partially two-storey house in an idiosyncratic post-WW2 modernist style. Built of variegated recycled bricks (sourced from demolished cottages in Carlton), it has a mostly flat steel tray-deck roof that incorporates some steep skillion elements. Laid out on an elongated and stepped rectilinear plan, the house presents as asymmetrical frontage to the street, dominated by a projecting and half-round stairwell bay that forms a stark tower-like element, with a narrow vertical strip window. To the east (right) side of the stairwell, the house has a steeply raked roofline with a tall plain chimney and another vertical strip window. To the left (west) side, the partial second storey has narrow skillion-roofed bay with vertical timber boarding and a rectangular window. The adjacent double carport had a wide Panelift door, a projecting wing wall and a flat roof with stained timber fascia and a square clerestory skylight (there at two identical skylights, not visible from the street, towards the rear of the house). There are matching recycled brick walls along the front property line and to either side of the driveway, which is paved with salvaged bluestone pitchers, which extend to form a pathway to the front door, which contains a red glass slit window.

### Comparisons

With relatively little research undertaken into Andrew Reed's architectural career, few specific examples of his work have been identified. To date, his only other project recorded in what is now the City of Glen Eira was a townhouse development on Dandenong Road, Caulfield, which was fleetingly mentioned in a list of Reed's recent projects in a 1968 magazine article. With no street number cited, the building has not been conclusively located; it may well have been a scheme that was proposed but never built. Casting the net wider, the Keeron Street house can be compared to other examples of Reed's work outside the municipality. With its bold sculptural form, jagged roofline and distinctive use of rough materials such as recycled brick, raw timber and bluestone, the house in Keeron Street has much in common with others still standing in Mount Eliza (1969), South Yarra (1970) and Black Rock (1972), as well as a now-demolished one in Malvern (1975). Of these, the examples at South Yarra and Black Rock would represent the most pertinent comparators to the house in Caulfield South, not merely for their similar dates and comparable inner-suburban contexts, but also for their compact double-storey form and use of matching garden walls and bluestone driveways.

While Andrew Reed's work is characterised by a highly individualistic style, this particular house can be compared to other architect-designed 1970s houses in the City of Glen Eira that have some elements in common. The stepped rectilinear plan, incorporating galleries and courtyards, was a popular theme in residential architecture of the 1970s. These are typified in the Caulfield area by a house at 13 Pearson Grove Caulfield North (Geoffrey Woodfall, c1970) and two others at 27 Northcote Avenue (Alan Synman, 1970) and 415 Glen Eira Road (Harry Ernest, 1971) that were

designed by the architects as their own homes. None of these, however, demonstrates a bold sculptural form to compare with the house in Keeron Street. The Pearson Grove house was conceived in Woodfall's characteristic Wrightian mode, while the other two other are more conventionally Late Modern, with flat roofs and stark block-like expression.

With its face brickwork, jagged roofline, limited windows and projecting tower-like rounded stairwell, the Keeron Street house has more in common with the speculative house at 30 Griffith Street, Caulfield South (Leon Fink, 1977-78). Reed's distinctive use of second-hand brick, stained timber and bluestone, however, is far removed from the slicker finishes of Fink's much later building. In this regard, the Keeron Street house has more in common with the earthy 1970s dwellings of Alistair Knox, pioneer of the Eltham mud-brick aesthetic. To date, only one example of Knox's work has been identified in the City of Glen Eira: a house at 10 Glencoe Street, Caulfield (1972-73). While this small single-storey house is typically Knox with its broad skillion roof, face brickwork, wide fascias and vertical timber cladding, it is a much more polished example than usual (no doubt, consequent to its atypical inner-suburban context).

## References

Certificate of Title, Volume 8370, Folio 805, created 16 August 1962.

Andrew Reed & Associates, "New house at 6 Keeron Street, Caulfield", working drawings, dated 30 April 1971. City of Caulfield Building Permit No 40,704.

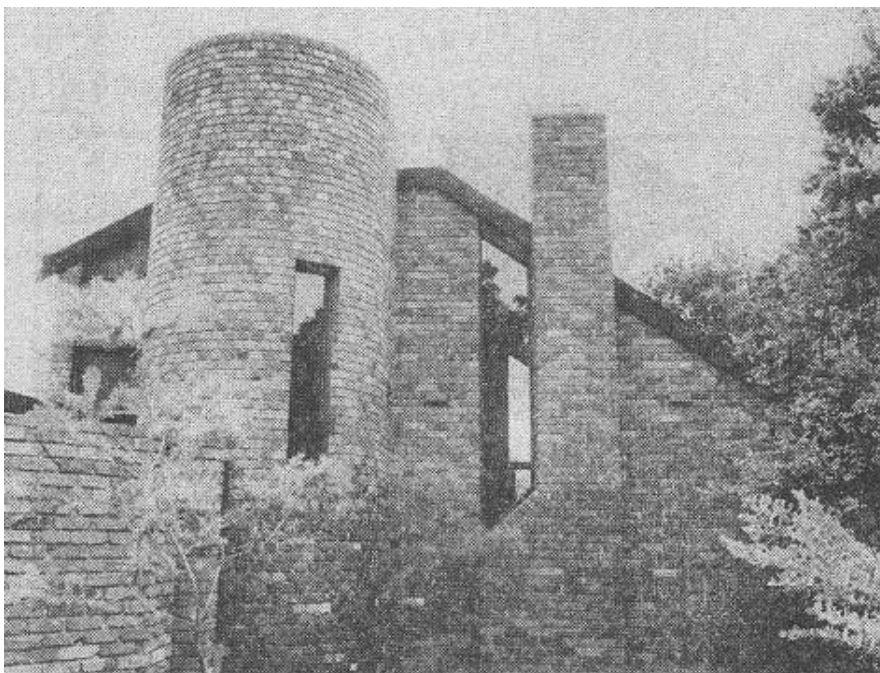
John Barker, "Courtyard overcomes narrow site problem", *Age*, 25 February 1974, p 15.

Built Heritage Pty Ltd, "Andrew Reed (1943-1999)", *Dictionary of Unsung Architects*, <<[www.builtheritage.com.au/dua\\_reed2.html](http://www.builtheritage.com.au/dua_reed2.html)>>

Tony Styant-Browne, interviewed by Simon Reeves, 28 January 2020.

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd



*Contemporary view of the house in Keeron Street*

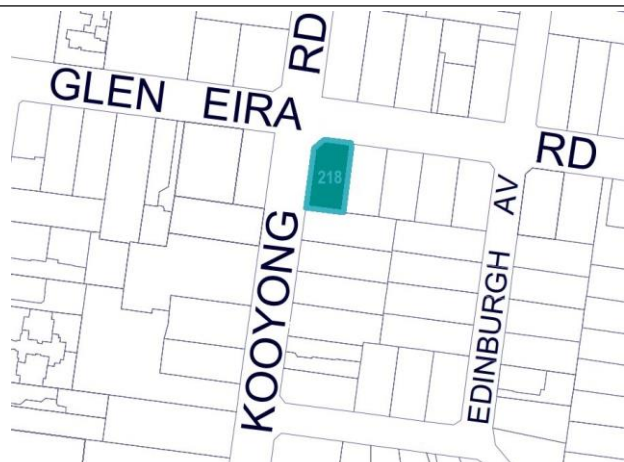
Source: *Age*, 25 February 1974



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	PW16
<b>Other name/s</b>	Robert Lodge	<b>Melway ref</b>	67 K2
<b>Address</b>	218 Kooyong Road CAULFIELD	<b>Date/s</b>	1957-59
<b>Designer/s</b>	Winston Hall Associates	<b>Builder/s</b>	T W E Cash



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House/Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Good (some changes)
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

Robert Lodge at 218 Kooyong Road, Caulfield, is a double-storey brick building with a low butterfly roofline and window walls to the north and south sides. Occupying a corner site, it originally comprised a ground floor dwelling (fronting Glen Eira Road) with two self-contained flats upstairs (accessed off Kooyong Road). Designed by Winston Hall Associates, it was built in 1957-59 for a confectioner whose family occupied the ground floor residence while renting out the upstairs flats as an investment. In 1991, it was converted into four flats that were later strata-titled.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building. The external changes that were made during the 1991 conversion, including the garage infill to Kooyong Road and the tall brick boundary wall, are not considered significant.

### How is it significant?

The building 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 F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.



### *Why is it significant?*

*Robert Lodge* is aesthetically significant as an idiosyncratic example of post-WW2 modernism. Departing from the prevailing flat-roofed modernist aesthetic of the later 1950s, the building adopts a distinctive low-pitched zigzag roofline and an elevational treatment combining expanses of blank brickwork, full-height window bays and (on the Kooyong Road side), large openings to internal lobby and courtyard spaces. Despite removal of some of its livelier features (namely the striped boundary walls and geometric-patterned garage doors), the building remains an unusual element on this prominent corner site at the junction of two major local thoroughfares. (*Criterion E*)

*Robert Lodge* is architecturally significant for its innovative design and planning. Conceived as a single ground floor residence for the owner, with two lettable flats upstairs, it represented a major departure from the semi-detached maisonettes or duplexes that ordinarily fulfilled such a brief. Deftly planned to suit its corner site, with separate private entrances and semi-enclosed circulation space, the building challenged conventional notions of multi-unit living at that time. (*Criterion F*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The building at 218 Kooyong Road, Caulfield North, was designed in 1957 by architects Winston Hall Associates as a multi-unit residential complex for a confectioner, comprising a ground floor residence for the confectioner and his wife, plus two self-contained lettable flats upstairs. Born in Castlemaine around 1900, the confectioner was living in Melbourne by the time of his marriage in 1939. By 1942, the couple was living in Tennyson Street, St Kilda; their only child, a son, was born that same year. Towards the ends of the decade, the family moved into a residential shop in South Yarra, where the confectioner took over the existing milk bar/confectionery business. Directories confirm that the family remained there well into the 1950s.

In January 1957, the confectioner acquired the site of the present building in Caulfield, which formed part of a new subdivision created from the site of a large mansion known as *Sanquhar*, (*Argus* 13/06/1956:3). During 1956, the house was demolished and its six-acre grounds carved up to create 34 residential lots with a new L-shaped thoroughfare, Edinburgh Avenue. The block that the confectioner purchased, designated as Lot 12, occupied the prime corner position at the junction of Glen Eira and Kooyong Road, offering generous frontages to both streets. Here, he intended to erect a new house for himself and his family. To design the building, he engaged architect Stuart Hall, principal of Winston Hall Associates.

Stuart Winston Hall (1922-2014) studied at the Melbourne University Architectural Atelier from 1947-50. His fellow students included Elizabeth Rose Ikin (1928-2017), daughter of noted pre-war architect Archibald Ikin, whom Hall married in early 1951. Registered as an architect in July of that year, he commenced private practice as Winston Hall Associates, dropping his first name to avoid confusion with another Melbourne architect named Stuart Hall. In the early 1950s, Hall successfully applied for an advertised position as architect to the ANZ Bank, and went on to design a string of branch banks that sustained his practice well into the 1960s. In 1955, he travelled to the USA to study the latest developments in bank architecture. Although best known for bank branches, Hall also fostered a reputation for residential work, including a house in Hawthorn (1956) that later appeared in Neil Clerehan's 1961 book, *Best Australian Houses*, and a pair of semi-detached dwellings in Toorak (1963) designed for his own family. Hall was also active in local politics, serving as a City of Malvern councillor from 1964-71, and as Mayor in 1968-69.

The building that Hall designed for the confectioner's family was typologically unusual: a two-storey complex providing a residence for the couple and their son on the ground floor, with a pair of self-contained flats upstairs. The family's residence, entered off Glen Eira Road, was laid out on a zoned H-shaped plan that grouped living room, sitting room and kitchen at the north end and

four bedrooms at the south end, linked by a spine that contained the service areas, flanked to the east by a porch and to the west by two garages, opening onto Kooyong Road. The Kooyong Road frontage incorporated a stair lobby to facilitate separate access to the upstairs flats, which were arranged in a U-shaped configuration around an open court. Mirror reversed, each of the two flats had an L-shaped plan, with two bedrooms along one leg and a large living/dining room and kitchen along the other. A communal laundry, with drying yard, opened off the central court.

In August 1957, Winston Hall Associates called tenders “for construction of brick residence and two flats above, in Caulfield” (*Age* 03/08/1957:41). Construction was undertaken by Brighton-based builder Trafford William Edgar Cash, who appears to have mostly worked in the bayside area. The building was nearing completion by 1959, when it was photographed by leading architectural photographer Wolfgang Sievers. In early 1960, when the project was profiled in the property column of the *Herald* newspaper, it was described as “just completed” (*Herald* 18/03/1960:25). The article lauded the unusual melding of a large dwelling with two smaller flats, acknowledged as a new concept that moved beyond well-established twin-dwelling typologies such as maisonettes or duplexes. There was also praise for the sophistication of the planning and the high-end fitout, which included open fireplaces to all three dwellings (enlivened by white and gold mosaic tiling), kitchens with integrated serveries, coloured glass panels and beaten brass range-hoods, garage doors with a geometric pattern, and boundary wall with alternating courses of white and grey bricks.

In April 1958, while construction was still in progress, the confectioner’s son Robert died at the age of sixteen years. When the couple took up residence in their new home, they named the building *Robert Lodge*, in their son’s memory. They remained living there for only a few years. Offering the property for sale in 1964, it was advertised as “superb contemporary style brick residence and two flats, corner Kooyong Road... ground floor residence, vacant possession, comprised entrance hall, large living room, fabulous kitchen, fully tiled bathroom, shower room and toilet room, four bedrooms, two sun porches, laundry. Upstairs: two excellent self-contained flats, both let... each four spacious rooms with tiled bathroom, toilet, communal laundry” (*Age* 07/10/1964:30). In March 1966, the property title passed from the confectioner and his wife family to new owners.

In 1991, the building was converted into four flats. The four-bedroom residence at ground level was re-configured as a pair of two-bedroom flats, with the two garages infilled to create studies. Upstairs, the two existing flats were enlarged, with studies created by partially infilling the open court. A new boundary wall was also erected along the two street frontages, with off-street carparking provided to the north and south of the building.

## Description

*Robert Lodge*, at 218 Kooyong Road, Caulfield, is a two-storey brick residential building in the post-WW2 modernist style, with a zigzag roofline formed by a pair of low-pitched butterfly roofs. Occupying a corner site, the building originally comprised a stand-alone dwelling at the lower level (accessed from Glen Eira Road) with two separate apartments upstairs (accessed from Kooyong Road). The north (Glen Eira Road) elevation is balanced but not symmetrical, with a small off-centre rectangular window at each level flanked by larger full-height window bays. The west (Kooyong Road) elevation is symmetrical, with a wide central doorway at ground level flanked by window bays that open onto separate walled courtyards. The doorway provides access to a shared semi-open stairwell, which has two large skylights and a pair of wide openings to Kooyong Road, with simple metal balustrades. The elevations to the side (west) and rear (south) elevation are similar to the front (north), with bays of full-height windows.

A tall rendered wall extends along each of the street frontages, defining private open space as well as a parking area on the Glen Eira Road side (with additional parking to the rear).

## Comparisons

This unusual residential building is the only example of the work of architects Winston Hall Associates that has yet been identified in the City of Glen Eira. Within Hall's body of work, it is most directly comparable to the paired dwellings in Selwyn Court, Toorak (1963), which he and his wife Elizabeth subsequently designed for themselves and a colleague from the ANZ Bank. While harking back to the hybrid typology of the earlier *Robert Lodge*, it is markedly different in form, planning and detail. Built on a sloping site, it comprises a semi-detached pair of split-level brick dwellings (one accessed by a long ramp), each with a distinctive bowed roofline.

With no direct comparators in the City of Glen Eira, *Robert Lodge* can only be viewed more broadly in the context of post-WW2 multi-unit complexes that, to a greater or lesser degree, moved beyond the traditional notion of "a block of flats". The semi-detached house and block of flats at 61-63 Gordon Street, Elsternwick (Kurt Popper, 1956) anticipates *Robert Lodge* in combining a single private dwelling (for the architect's own use) with lettable flats, albeit articulated as two separate buildings on a double-width block. A residential development at 1 Clee Street, McKinnon (Walter Mason, 1964) was conceived by its owner to provide stand-alone dwellings for himself and three other family members. Occupying a sloping site with atypically wide street frontage, it consists of a row of four two-storey units that are similar in form and detail without being identical or unduly repetitive. A house at 16 Khartoum Street, Caulfield North (Ernest Fooks, 1969) was conceived as a palatial two-storey single residence, yet incorporating a discrete two-bedroom flat on its own title, which was accessible either from the main house or from a private external entry.

## References

Certificate of Title, Volume 8160, Folio 753, created 22 January 1957.

Lodged Plan No 40,844, dated 21 June 1957.

"It's a home and investment", *Herald*, 18 March 1960, p 25.

## Identified by

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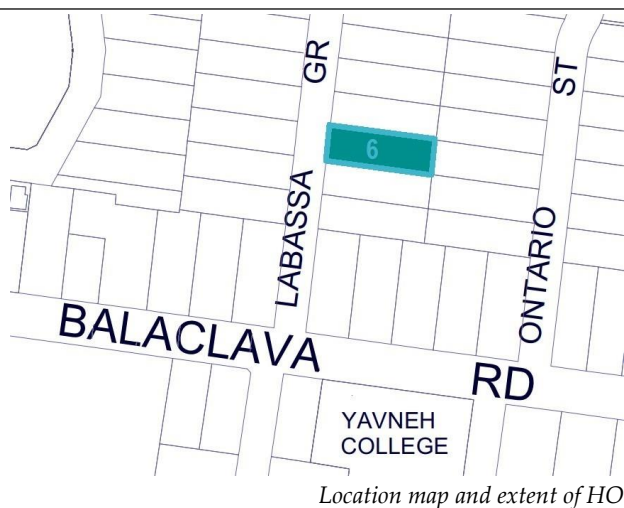


*The virtually completed Robert Lodge, as photographed in 1959 by Wolfgang Sievers*  
Source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW17
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J11
<b>Address</b>	6 Labassa Grove CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1963-64
<b>Designer/s</b>	Bernard Slawik	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North, is a single-storey flat-roofed brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style, with a double-fronted asymmetrical façade that incorporates an expansive window wall, paved terrace and top-lit entry porch with stone feature wall and metal grille screen doors. Designed by Polish-born architect Bernard Slawik, the house was erected in 1963-64 for a Slovakian émigré couple, who would remain living there into the twenty-first century.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the house, as well as the original pebbled concrete front path and driveway, and the original letterbox.

### How is it significant?

The 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.



### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as a highly distinctive example of modernist residential architecture of the early 1960s. Designed by a Polish-born architect who trained in Lviv and worked in Sweden, the house demonstrates many of the defining characteristics of international modernism, such as the flat roof with broad eaves, stark planar walls and expansive full-height windows. The starkness of the composition is relieved by some more idiosyncratic details and decorative finishes such as the skylit porch roof, slate feature wall, metal grille screens, terrazzo terrace and pebbled concrete path and driveway. Owned by the same family for over forty years, the house demonstrates an uncommon degree of physical integrity, including its front garden setting with path, driveway and original letterbox. (*Criterion E*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North, was erected in 1963-64 for husband-and-wife Slovak manufacturers, and was designed by Polish-born architect Bernard Slawik. The son of a retailer, the future owner of the house was born in the early 1900s in eastern Slovakia (later Czechoslovakia) and was still living there when he married in the mid-1930s. With political instability in Czechoslovakia during and after WW2, followed by a Communist coup in 1948, the family sought to emigrate. In January 1950, the husband and wife (and his widowed mother) were all issued with refugee cards by the Vienna branch of the American Jewish Distribution Committee, which noted their intent to re-settle in Australia. Departing from Italy, the three family members reached Fremantle on 4 October, travelling thence to Melbourne.

In Melbourne, the family initially resided in a maisonette in Balaclava. Before the end of the year, they had purchased an existing house at 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield, which dated back to 1917. At the time of the auction, it was advertised as a “charming red brick villa comprising sun porch, spacious lounge, dining room, three bedrooms, fully equipped kitchen... modern bathroom, laundry, two garages” (*Argus* 04/11/1950:21). The Certificate of Title, confirming the couple’s acquisition of the property in 13 December, cites the owner’s occupation as clothing manufacturer, although no further details of his professional activity have yet been unearthed. The couple still occupied their “charming red brick villa” in February 1958, when they became naturalized citizens (*Comm Gazette*, 18/09/1958:3090). Five years later, they decided that it was time to replace the ageing bungalow with a new and modern counterpart on the same site, and they engaged architect Bernard Slawik to design it.

Born in Gliniany in southern Poland, Zygmunt Bernard Slawik (1904-1991) completed architectural studies at the Lviv Polytechnic School in 1930. Little seems to be recorded of his career during the next decade, prior to being interred in the Jalowska concentration camp, on the outskirts of Lviv, in late 1941. Managing to escape, Slawik was reunited with his wife and daughter after WW2, and the family settled in Sweden, where he worked as an assistant to the Town Architect of Gävle. Migrating to Australia, the Slawiks arrived in Sydney in October 1948 and travelled thence to Melbourne, settling in Essendon. After gaining further professional experience in the office of architect/town planner Frank Heath, then in the PWD under Percy Everett, Slawik commenced private practice in 1953. Around the same time, he and his wife took up residence in Bambra Road, Caulfield, where they lived for almost forty years. Concentrating mostly on residential projects (many commissioned by fellow European émigrés), Slawik undertook a considerable amount of work in the Caulfield area, as well as in South Yarra, Toorak, Hawthorn, Kew and Ivanhoe.

Slawik's working drawings for the new house in Labassa Grove, dated October 1963, depict a single-storey flat-roofed dwelling on a stepped plan. Although providing only two bedrooms (ie, one for the couple and one for his mother), the house was otherwise large, dominated by an expansive living room with projecting dining room and study to create a U-shaped space around a semi-enclosed glass-walled court. By the time that the drawings were completed, demolition of the old house on the site was already underway: on 12 October, a newspaper advertisement offered clean second-hand roof tiles for sale, from 6 Labassa Grove, North Caulfield (*Age*, 12/10/1963:16). Construction was evidently completed in 1964.

The family would occupy the house for more than four decades. After the death of the owner's mother in the late 1960s, he and his wife remained in residence until their own deaths, a few years apart, in the early twentieth century. As such, the house appeared virtually unaltered when it was offered for sale for the first time in March 2008.

### Descriptions

The house at 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield North, is a single-storey orange brick house in the post-WW2 modernist style, with a flat roof incorporating broad timber-lined eaves. Its street façade is double-fronted and asymmetrical, dominated by an expansive full-width window wall with the front entrance set into a recessed bay alongside, in alignment with the adjacent double garage. At the corner, the flat roof extends across the porch, incorporating a large square skylight and supported at the edge by a square post. The front door set further back behind a metal security screen with a distinctive pattern of interlocking rectangles. An elevated terrace, with terrazzo finish, extends across the main part of the street frontage, with a short flight of steps leading up to the entry porch, and a simple white-painted mild steel balustrade. At some point (when the original owners reached a certain age), the left end of the steps was partially infilled to form a concrete ramp, and the original metal handrail repositioned accordingly.

The street frontage of the property otherwise retains much of its original setting. This includes the pebbled concrete driveway and parallel pathway, the dwarf wall in grey textured concrete block, the mild steel gate and even the original letterbox, in the form of a narrow and elongated timber box mounted on a metal pipe.

### Comparisons

A Caulfield resident for more than thirty years, Bernard Slawik is known to have designed several buildings in his local area. His earliest known project in Caulfield (and the only non-residential one identified to date) was the Stanmark Reception Centre at 444 Inkerman Road (1957). The brainchild of a Jewish entrepreneur, it rapidly established itself as Melbourne's pre-eminent venue for Jewish events such as weddings and *bar mitzvahs*. The building, which incorporated a sculpted mural by émigré artist Karl Duldig, was acquired by the City of Caulfield in 1974 and converted into a community arts centre. This function (and the Duldig mural) was relocated to the Caulfield Town Hall in the 1990s. The former Stanmark Reception Centre was subsequently redeveloped and rebadged as a boutique hotel/conference facility, which still operates today.

Of the half-dozen or so Slawik-designed houses that have been identified in what is now the City of Glen Eira, one example, at 635 Inkerman Road (1964), has long since been demolished; no further information or illustration has yet been located. Of those still standing, the houses at 2 Edinburgh Avenue (1963) and 52 Lumeah Road (1967) are two-storey dwellings articulated in the characteristic modernist manner of an elevated glass-fronted box above an open undercroft. The former, with its low butterfly roof, oversized sliding glass doors and mosaic-tiled columns, is a standout example. As an example of Slawik's residential work, the Labassa Grove house is more directly comparable to another house at 34 Maxwell Grove (1962). Both are single-storey brick dwellings with asymmetrical façades incorporating balustrade terraces and corner porches with expansive roofs. The Maxwell Grove house, however, is a rather more conservative in its expression, with a conventional tile-clad hipped roof (rather than a flat roof), and lacks some of the more striking details evident at Labassa Grove, such as the stone feature wall and porch skylight.

More broadly, the house in Labassa Grove can be seen as a particularly sophisticated manifestation of a recurring style of single-storey post-WW2 modernist house that is (or rather was) commonly seen in the Caulfield area. Characterised by the use of face brickwork, flat roofs, large windows, feature stone cladding and balustraded front terraces, these dwellings almost always represented the work of European-trained architects or designers, and were invariably commissioned by compatriot clients. Typical examples, by as yet unconfirmed designers, include those at 384/384a Glen Eira Road (c1966) and 14 Edinburgh Avenue (c1964). The latter, with an eerily similar (if somewhat simpler) façade treatment to the Labassa Grove house, may have been designed by the same architect, Bernard Slawik.

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ARBV file for Zygmunt Bernard Slawik. Unit 13, VPRS 8838/P2  
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Bernard Slawik, "Proposed brick residence for Mr & Mrs [redacted] at 6 Labassa Grove, Caulfield", working drawings, dated 14 October 1963. City of Caulfield Permit No 30,369.

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd (also flagged by Melbourne School of Design)

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW18
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	67 J1
<b>Address</b>	40 Lumeah Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1990-94
<b>Designer/s</b>	Wood Marsh	<b>Builder/s</b>	Geoff Hare



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location plan and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians 9.3 Achieving design and artistic distinction
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 40 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed reinforced concrete house on an elongated and irregular plan. Its street frontage is dominated by a blank elliptical volume penetrated by a projecting rectilinear bay with fin-like mullions and mirrored glazing, with a steel front door and a simple trabeated concrete slab carport. Erected in 1990-94, the house was designed by architects Wood Marsh.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior and interior of the house, and other elements of its setting designed by Wood Marsh (including carport, front fence/gates and swimming pool). Controls over internal finishes (eg concrete walls, terrazzo floors, roughcast ceilings) and fittings (including formal staircase and original kitchen and bathroom fitouts) are deemed to be applicable because the architect has stated that the interior is inseparable from the totality of the design.

### How is it significant?

The 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 F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.



### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as an outstanding and idiosyncratic example of modernist residential architecture of the 1990s. Starkly expressed with bold sculptural forms, a curved street facade, a limited palette of materials and minimalist detailing, the house defies convenient stylistic labels. While its massive raw concrete forms evoke the ruggedness of the Brutalist idiom, the projecting mirrored curtain-wall bay recalls the slickness of the International Style. The interior has prompted observers to make comparisons with Egyptian architecture and the work of the Italian Rationalists. A house that literally stopped traffic at the time of its construction, it remains a striking and wholly unexpected element in this suburban residential streetscape. *(Criterion E)*

The house is architecturally significant as a ground-breaking re-invention of the modern house. With a basic brief that effectively gave the architects a wholly free hand, the project represented a noted departure from contemporary trends in planning, materials, forms and finishes. With a cave-like foyer incorporating a grand curving staircase, and a vast entertainment area (for 350 guests) that doubled as a corridor, the interior planning challenged conventional notions of domestic living. Its limited palette of low-maintenance materials, and use of industrial finishes such as brushed metal sheeting, was then uncommon (and has only been embraced more widely since). Also unusually for the time (and still today), the project was conceived as a true totality of design, with its interior inseparable from the exterior, and the architects engaged to design furniture, fences and swimming pool, and even select the artwork. *(Criterion F)*

The house is architecturally significant as an important and influential early undertaking by the internationally-recognised partnership of Wood Marsh. One of the fledgling firm's first major projects, this high-end commission provided a rare opportunity to fully develop and articulate their architectural standpoints. Generating a flood of attention and publicity, and winning two prizes at the 1994 RAIA Awards, it remains one of the firm's best-known and most celebrated projects. It has continued to provoke scholarly and popular attention into the twenty-first century, with a photograph even gracing the front cover of the firm's recent monograph. *(Criterion F)*

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 40 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, was erected in 1990-94 for a mechanical engineer and his wife, a former teacher who would later embrace various business activities. Married by the late 1970s, the couple resided in a modest weatherboard house in Teak Street, Caulfield South. In the early 1980s, the wife became involved in a business venture with her two brothers to manufacture designer sunglasses. The brand became phenomenally successful, prompting a spin-off sun lotion (1982) and perfume range (1986). In 1991, the siblings sold the company to another prominent business family for "an undisclosed sum". As was later reported, the siblings remained with the perfume company for two years under a management contract, whereupon the two brothers went overseas while their sister decided to build a new house (*Australian Financial Review* 24/04/1995).

The intended site for the couple's new house, at 40 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, had previously been owned by the wife's brother and sister-in-law. When they acquired it in 1982, the site was occupied by a modest six-roomed inter-war brick bungalow. In August 1990, ownership was transferred to the couple, who were then living in Webb Street, Caulfield. For the couple, the choice of architect was a foregone conclusion. Some years earlier, the wife had attended a business meeting at the South Melbourne premises of Macrae & Way, a film production company, and was diverted by its peculiar form, which included a façade with jagged parapet, circular bosses and a teardrop-shaped window. As her husband later recalled, "she said, if we ever build a house, it has to be the people who designed this building". Completed in 1985, it was the work of the architectural firm known only as Biltmoderne.

Biltmoderne was founded in 1983 by recent RMIT graduates Roger Wood, Randal Marsh and Dale Jones-Evans. The partnership rose rapidly to fame on Melbourne's architectural scene, becoming well-known for nightclub fitouts, furniture and exhibition design, and a knack for self-promotion. However, by the time that the Caulfield couple came to commission their house, Biltmoderne no longer existed as such. Co-founder Jones-Evans had left in 1987, leaving the two other partners to rebadge themselves as Wood Marsh. When approached by the couple in 1990, the firm had completed few major projects under its new name. Undeterred by the Recession that had badly curtailed the local building industry, they accepted this high-end commission with alacrity. As Marsh recently reflected, "we might not have had a lot of work on, so maybe we could put more time and effort into it than we ordinarily would".

As later reported by the *Age*, the project was unusual "because it was designed for a relatively young couple with small children, by almost equally young architects". The couple had two young sons, and were expecting a third, when they provided their architects with a brief that Marsh recalled as "disarmingly simple". Its chief requirements were that the house had privacy from the street, a sense of arrival, and sufficient living space for entertaining up to 350 guests. The husband recalls that he and his wife otherwise had no strong idea of what sort of house they wanted, observing that "if you go to someone who can design, you ask them to design. It was intended to be their design and, as long as it fitted how we wanted to live, it was up to them to design the structure". It was testament to the uncommon degree of trust between client and architect that, as was later noted, the couple "gave Wood Marsh a completely free hand with the design, even commissioning them to design the furniture, select the art works and design the landscaping, fences and swimming pool" (*Age* 16/07/1994:163)

Of the design, Marsh recently recalled that "the driving concept was to create a living environment that was a work of art, and that the building was both seamless from the transition from the inside to the out and that there is a series or sequence of spaces that you walk through: different emotions, different volumes and different experiences". Hence, the design unfolded into a linear form. An ovoid and cave-like front foyer opened into a vast elongated space, which could not only accommodate large-scale parties but also act as a corridor for daily use. This, in turn, led through an angled service core (with kitchen, bathroom and laundry) into a more informal family zone at the rear. Staircases at each end (including a grand curving formal stair in the foyer) provided access to the upper level, where the master bedroom suite occupied the top of the ovoid volume, with an *en suite* bathroom projecting to the street. The remainder of the upper level was more conventionally articulated, with a row of three bedrooms for the boys, a playroom, and an office for the husband that opened onto a private terrace.

The house was not only unusual in plan and form, but also in materials. Reinforced concrete was chosen as the principal medium, not only because of the architects' own interest in it but also as a reaction against what they perceived as the flimsy expression of much contemporary architecture at that time. Initially the ovoid front wing was to be clad in gold tiling ("it was going to be a gold egg", Marsh recalled). With this idea rejected as too expensive, it was decided to leave the raw concrete untouched. This, in turn, informed the decision to use a limited number of materials and finishes throughout. As Marsh later put it, "the house deals with the monochromatic palette: the rawness, untouched, unfinished, unpainted surface". Exposed concrete was thus combined with roughcast render and layered slate cladding; the most polished finish (literally and figuratively) was the terrazzo floor, inset with onyx chips.

Completed in 1994 at a reported cost of more than one million dollars, the house generated unprecedented attention. In July, a newspaper report article noted that it was "already causing traffic jams in the street where it has been built". The house was profiled in several leading journals. Writing in *Transition*, Helen Stuckey praised its "compositional purity" and "very restrained palette of colour overcome by a richness of texture", while observing that the upstairs areas evoked a "gentle monastic feel". In *Monument*, Ken Kennedy profiled the house (described

as a “pebblecreted arcadia”) in typically inscrutable prose of the period, noting its “defiant originality”, the “seductive chiaroscuro of its spaces”, and “a grandeur reminiscent of the urban villas of [Italian rationalist architects] Terrangi and Lingeri”. The house went on to receive two prizes at the 1994 RAIA (Victorian Chapter) Awards: the coveted Award of Merit for Outstanding Architecture (Residential New Category), and the *Age* Public Award (“for the house that attracts the most support from readers”).

Since completion, the house has continued to attract scholarly and popular attention. In 1999, it was one of the most recent buildings to be included in Philip Goad’s *Guide to Melbourne Architecture*. It has since re-appeared in numerous books on Australian modern architecture, including Joe Rollo’s *Concrete Poetry: Concrete Architecture in Australia* (2004), Philip Goad & Patrick Bingham-Hall’s *New Directions in Australian Architecture* (2005), Leon van Schaik’s, *Design City Melbourne* (2006), Claudia Perren & Kristien Ring’s, *Living the Modern: Australian Architecture* (2007). It was subject to an entire chapter in Karen McCartney’s *70/80/90: Iconic Australian Houses*, (2012), which was recently republished in the same author’s omnibus, *Iconic: Modern Australian Houses 1950-2000* (2019). A photograph of the cave-like entry foyer also graced the front cover of the firm’s own recent monograph, *Wood Marsh Architects: Residential Work* (2012).

## Description

The house at 40 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey reinforced concrete house in a Late Twentieth Century Modernist style. It has an irregular linear plan made up of a series of interlocking forms, dominated at the street frontage by an angled ovoid wing with a projecting rectilinear bay. This forms an asymmetrical elevation with a stark curving wall of precast concrete panels (with expansion joints and fill holes expressed), relieved by the projecting off-centre bay. This bay, with a curtain wall of mirrored glass panels set into a rectilinear grid, forms a canopy above the front entrance, which has a polished steel sheet door. Extending to the south side of the ovoid wing is a double-carport made up of three thick concrete slabs in a simple trabeated configuration, with the outermost vertical slab extending all the way to the street to form a boundary wall. A row of three tall metal gateposts define two entrances to the property: one for vehicles, with a pair of steel-framed gates and fin-like metal slat screen, and another for pedestrians, with a solid steel sheet gate that matches the front door. The gatepost to the left of the pedestrian entry subtly incorporates a letterbox, newspaper tube and intercom.

While an internal inspection was not undertaken for this project, published photographs show the interior of the house to be substantially intact, including concrete walls, terrazzo floors, roughcast ceilings, curving staircase, glazed panels, metalwork, and original kitchen/bathroom fitouts.

## Comparisons

The house is an extremely significant project in Wood Marsh’s body of work. As Marsh himself has stated, “it probably is very important because it was a seminal early work. It set the direction but it also confirmed to us our thinking in architecture”. He has also referred to it as “the first building we did where the fullness of our ideas came together. It was a major commission, a very unusual commission in an Australian context, in that the client was asking us to design the furniture and the whole environmental condition of the interior”. Alluding to the degree of attention generated by the project (not to mention awards), Marsh has stated that “it was the turning point in our career, because the outcome was quite significant”. Outside observers concur. In 1994, Ken Kennedy described house as a “controlled departure” from two earlier houses by the same architects at Eltham (1985) and Eaglemont (1988). Another review of Wood Marsh’s early work noted that the Caulfield house was a significant shift from other houses at Eaglemont (1988), Mount Martha (1988), Essendon (1989) and Mount Waverley (1989). Moreover, the influence of the Caulfield house appears to resonate in some of the firm’s later projects, such as an unbuilt scheme for a house at Port Douglas (1995), and built houses at Toorak (2004) and Flinders (2010).

As there are no other buildings by Wood Marsh (or its predecessor, Biltmoderne) in the City of Glen Eira, the house in Lumeah Road can only be compared more generally to other architect-designed houses of the later 1980s and early '90s. At that time, much new residential architecture in Melbourne was demonstrative of a Late Modern or Rationalist style, characterised by geometric massing and stark rendered walls surfaces. This was typified locally by a house at 9 Trevascus Street, Caulfield (David Edelman, 1987), architect Charles Justin's own residence at 33 Otira Road, Caulfield North (Synman Justin Bialek, 1987), and two examples of architect Nic Bochslers's work at 113 Balaclava Road, Caulfield (1987) and 15 Polo Parade, Caulfield North (1991). The last of these, while characterised by white-painted walls and blocky massing, has a projecting rectilinear bay with a square grid that invites comparison with the similar motif on the Lumeah Road house.

From the early 1990s, a number of new architect-designed houses in the study area reflected the growing interest in non-orthogonal geometry such as curves and sharp angles. This trend is evident in such houses as architect Jack Kaspi's own residence at 30 Newlyn Street, Caulfield South (1992), and others at 76 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North (architect unknown, c1995), 25 Trevascus Street, Caulfield South (Avi Milder, 1998), 8 Ward Avenue, Caulfield (Selwyn Blackstone, 1990s) and 99 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North (architect unknown, 1999). None of these houses, however, introduced such bold forms or planning as that demonstrated by the Lumeah Road house.

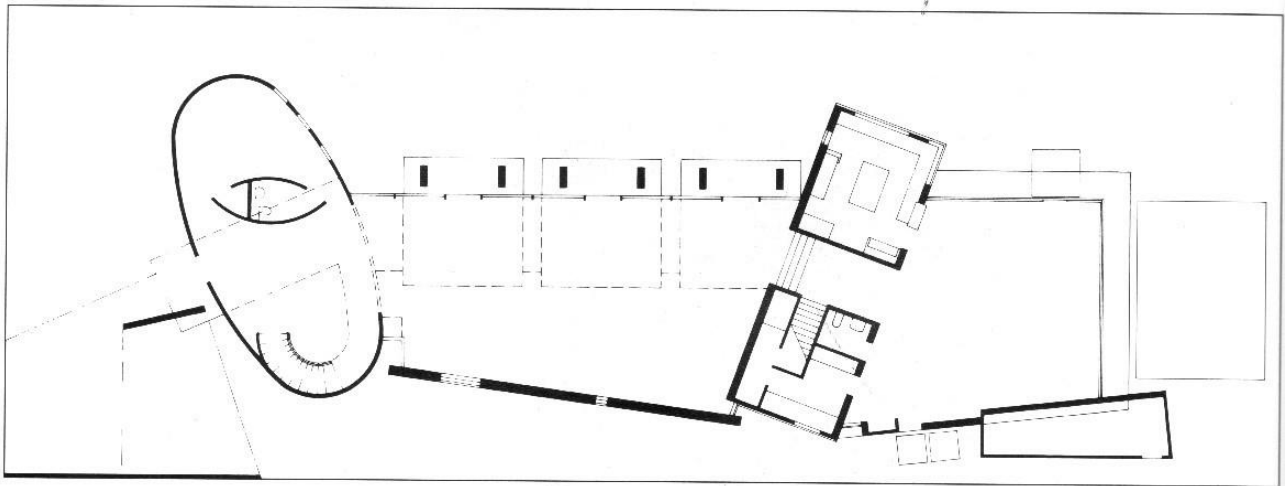
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## Identified by

City of Glen Eira





Ground floor plan of the house  
Source: Monument (1994)



View of the north side of the house  
Source: Monument (1994) (photographer uncredited)



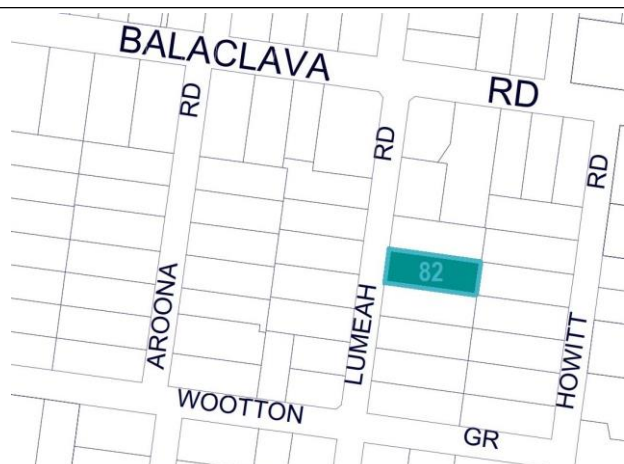
View of the entry foyer  
Source: Karen McCartney, 70/80/90  
(photograph by Michael Wee)

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW19
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J12
<b>Address</b>	82 Lumeah Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1972-74
<b>Designer/s</b>	Holgar & Holgar	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		

<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The house at 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed house in a characteristic post WW2 modernist form, with the upper storey expressed as a rectilinear glass-fronted volume that projects over a recessed lower level. The upper level has a balcony with an unusual Moorish-style vaulted arcade, while the lower level has a blank wall (concealing a carport entered from the side) with a grand staircase leading to the front door at the first floor. It was erected in 1972-73 for a Polish-born businessman and his wife, to a design by compatriot architects Holgar & Holgar.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior, key elements of the original interior fabric (namely the built-in furniture, light fittings, conversation pit, and kitchen/bathroom fitouts), the original external paving (front and rear), driveway lamp-post and in-ground swimming pool.

### How is it significant?

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as a highly idiosyncratic example of post-WW2 modernist residential architecture. While it adopts the trademark European modernist expression, with a glass-walled upper storey projecting above a recessed lower level, it incorporates some unusual detailing that hints at overseas influences rarely seen in Melbourne, except in other houses by Holgar & Holgar. An entirely blank wall at street level, concealing a triple carport entered from the side, is relieved by a full-width balcony at the upper level with a Moorish-style vaulted arcade which extends across a void containing a wide staircase to the front door. With a luxurious interior that remains substantially intact (including built-in furniture, conversation pit, imported light fittings and high-end bathroom and kitchen fitouts), it is an outstanding example of this rare type of glamorous post-WW2 residence, so strongly associated with Holgar & Holgar. (*Criterion E*)

The house is historically and architecturally significant for associations with the Polish-born husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar, which was notably active in Caulfield and environs in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Dating from 1972-73, this house is one of best local examples of the partnership's high-end residential work from the peak period of their career in the 1970s. Occupied by its original owners for almost thirty years, it also exhibits a remarkably high degree of physical intactness, thus representing a rare survivor amongst the couple's extensive body of work in the City of Glen Eira. (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, was built in 1973 to a design by husband-and-wife architects Holgar & Holgar. The future house owner was born in Poland in the early 1930s, and migrated to Australia with his parents later that decade. They settled in Carlton North, where the patriarch later went into partnership with a fellow émigré as manufacturers of ladies' clothing (*Age*, 22/01/1951:7). Near the end of the 1950s, father and son had formed their own investment company, based in St Kilda. During that decade, the future house owner moved from Carlton North to a flat in St Kilda East; his parents duly followed suit, moving to Caulfield North. By the early 1960s, he had married a fellow Polish émigré, and the couple took up residence on Orrong Road. They remained there until the early 1970s, when they acquired a house in Lumeah Road. Offered for sale in April 1971, this was advertised as "solid brick residence, at present in two self-contained flats, easily converted to seven room home or valuable home site, 64 feet by 178 feet approx" (*Age* 28/04/1971:9). Acquiring the title to the property in August, the couple opted for the latter approach. It was proposed to demolish the existing house for a larger and grander counterpart, to be designed by architects (and fellow Polish émigrés) Holgar & Holgar.

John Holgar (*ne* Władysław Aleksander Janusz Holgar-Ptaszyński) (1922-2006) and his wife Helen (*nee* Helena) (1923-2012) were both born in Poland, fleeing separately during WW2 and meeting for the first time while both were studying architecture in Rome. Moving to London in 1947, they married, completed further studies and gained professional experience before migrating to Australia in 1952, where they worked separately for various Melbourne practices including Godfrey Spowers, Arthur Purnell, Brian Lewis and D F Cowell Ham. In 1957, after the couple won first prize in a high-profile competition for an exhibition house, John began private practice under his own name, with an office in Swanston Street. Eighteen months later, he was joined by Helen, who was latterly employed by Grounds, Romberg & Boyd. Circa 1963, the practice was rebadged as Holgar & Holgar, relocating to Collins Street. It soon fostered a reputation as designers of large-scale houses for fellow European migrants, initially working in a strict modernist style before embracing a more eclectic and idiosyncratic approach characterised by unusual forms and luxurious materials and finishes. High-end residential projects of this nature would continue to sustain their practice well into the 1990s.



The working drawings that the Holgars prepared for the Lumeah Road house, dated April 1972, proposed a large flat-roofed dwelling on an elongated and stepping plan. It was effectively single storey but, due to the fall of the site, incorporated a triple carport to the street frontage (which, accessed from the side, presented an entirely blank wall to the street). To the left of the carport wall, a wide staircase provided a grand entrance up to the front door, set into an angled wall at the upper level. Inside, the house was dominated by a sprawling polygonal space that acted as a combined hall, living room and dining room, with a central bar and a projecting circular bay containing a conversation pit. This open-planned living space flowed through a separate dinette and luxuriously-appointed kitchen into an expansive family room at the rear, with another bar. Towards the front of the house, there were three bedrooms facing the street and a master bedroom slightly further back, with a capacious walk-through robe and marble-lined en suite bathroom.

Demolition of the existing dwelling on the site evidently did not commenced until late 1973, when a newspaper advertisement announced the sale of one thousand Selkirk bricks ("Canyon blend") from 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield (*Age*, 8/12/1973:117). With construction completed in 1974, the family was to remain in residence for nearly three decades. When they offered the property for sale in early 1999, it was advertised as "classic 1970s Holgar & Holgar" (*Age* 10/03/1999:88). Subsequent owners have made relatively few changes to the house. When it came up for sale again in 2015, it was noted that the interior had recently been "sensitively renovated" by the award-winning architectural firm of Kennedy Nolan (*Weekly Review* 21/10/2015:21).

## Description

The house, at 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed rendered brick house in an idiosyncratic post-WW2 modernist style. It is expressed in a characteristic European Modernist manner, where the upper level (containing principal living areas) is given emphasis over the recessed lower level (containing a capacious carport). Balanced without being exactly symmetrical, the street façade is divided into a series of regular bays. At the left (north) end, a slightly wider bay forms a grand double-height entry porch with a wide staircase leading to the front door at first floor level, top lit by a trellis-like screen.

At the upper level, the remainder of the facade is full-glazed, with repetitive window bays opening onto a balcony that extends across the entry foyer to form a dead-end elevated walkway, with a full-width metal balustrade. Each of the window bays has a segmental arched fanlight, and the arch motif is echoed in the arcading along the front of the balcony, and in the vaulted ceilings above it. The ground floor level is dominated by a blank white-painted wall, partially screened by the supporting posts of the balcony. This wall encloses the capacious carport, which is accessed from the south (right) end via a short driveway. A doorway at the opposite end of the carport provides access back to the entry stairs. The front entrance, set into a splayed wall at the top of the stairs, has a wide door with a textured gilt finish and bespoke sculpted door handle. The house retains much of its original external setting, including paved driveway, metal lamp-post with amber glass luminaire, and an in-ground swimming pool of unusual form, with paved surround.

While an internal inspection was not undertaken for this assessment, photographs accompanying real estate listings for its most recent sale in 2015 indicate that the sumptuous interior remained substantially intact. Key elements include bespoke timberwork in the form of panelling, room divider screens and built-in furniture (including a leather-upholstered bar with cylindrical timber pendant lights), other imported light fittings (including several Murano glass chandeliers and a Hans Poulsen pendant light over the dining area), a conversation pit, a luxurious master bathroom (with sunken terrazzo tub, travertine lining, glass mosaic tiling and gilt fittings), a smaller family bathroom with a bold red and white colour scheme, and a futuristic kitchen with silver colour scheme, circular island bench and striped floor that extends into an adjacent breakfast nook with built-in daybed and telephone counter. Other rooms, namely the bedrooms and utility rooms, tend to be much more conventional (ie plainer) in their finishes and fitout.



## Comparisons

Polish-born architects John and Helen Holgar were notably active in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Their first collaborative project in Melbourne, and the one that prompted them to open their own architectural office, was a prize-winning scheme for the Herald Ideal Home (1957) that was moved to Centre Road, Bentleigh East, after being displayed at the Ideal Home Show. From 1963, when the burgeoning practice was rebadged as Holgar & Holgar, they undertook a steady stream of residential work that included many houses and blocks of flats in the Caulfield area (and others in Elsternwick and McKinnon). Over the next quarter century, they are known to have completed at least twenty projects in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Their output encapsulates several discrete phases: the academic modernist style of their earliest work (c1958-63), which gave way to a more hybrid and inclusive approach (c1963-68), and then to their mature style, the individualistic and highly idiosyncratic approach for which they are best-known (c1968-79).

Dating from the Holgars' late period, the Lumeah Road house (1972-73) is one of many grand and luxurious residences commissioned by clients who, almost without exception, were wealthy self-made European émigré families. While five other examples are recorded in the Caulfield area, few remain intact. Examples at 45 Rosemont Avenue (c1971), and 18 Howitt Road (1969) have both been remodelled beyond recognition, while another at 8 Hartley Avenue (1975) has also altered, but remains recognizable. Considerably more intact are two outstanding and virtually unaltered examples at 49 Aroona Road (1970) and 49 Rosemont Avenue (1972-73). As at Lumeah Road, these are two-storey flat-roofed houses with a glazed upper storey over a recessed lower level. Instead of the Moorish-style arcade and grand entry staircase, they are enlivened by equally quirky details: the Aroona Road house has a concrete feature resembling a huge faceted crystal, and the Rosemont Avenue house by full-width decorative grilled screen at the upper level. All three houses are exceptional examples of the Holgar's mature work.

## References

Certificate of Title, Volume 3943, Folio 403, created 17 November 1921.

Holgar & Holgar Pty Ltd, "Proposed residence at No 82 Lumeah Road, Caulfield, for Mr & Mrs [redacted]", working drawings dated 17 April 1972. City of Caulfield Permit No 42,443.

Simon Reeves, "Gold-plated doors if you want them: Holgar & Holgar and the Architecture of Opulence," in Ann Marie Brennan & Philip Goad (eds), *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand*. Vol 33 (Melbourne, 2016), pp 568-577.

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*The Lumeah road house, photographed soon after completion*  
*Source: Holgar & Holgar Archive (Private collection, Melbourne)*

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	MURRUMBEENA BAPTIST CHURCH	<b>Citation No</b>	PW20
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	69 A4
<b>Address</b>	44 Murrumbeena Road MURRUMBEENA	<b>Date/s</b>	1961-62 1967 (addition)
<b>Designer/s</b>	Eric Lyon (both stages)	<b>Builder/s</b>	Platt Brothers (1961-62)



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Religion	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Church	<b>Intactness</b>	Good (some changes)

<b>Thematic context</b>	8.1 Maintaining spiritual life 9.3 Achieving design and artistic distinction
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The Murrumbeena Baptist Church at 44 Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena, is a large orange brick building in a stark post-WW2 modernist style, erected in two stages to the design of the same architect, Eric Lyon (formerly of Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Brock). The older portion, fronting Murrumbeena Road (1961-62) is a tall hall-like structure with zigzag roof, narrow copper spirelets and a façade of angled bays, while the rear addition (1967) is a smaller hip-roofed wing; both components have rose windows to the Sydney Street elevation, with coloured glazing.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior to the entire building to the extent of the original 1961-62 building and the 1967 addition. The subsequent rear addition, containing office space and such, is not considered significant.

### How is it significant?

The Murrumbeena Baptist Church satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

The Murrumbeena Baptist Church is aesthetically significant as an unusual example of post-WW2 ecclesiastical architecture incorporating historicist references in a modernist framework. By his own admission, Eric Lyon took inspiration from Milan's celebrated fifteenth century Late Gothic cathedral, built in the Flamboyant style characterised by a spiky roofline of pinnacles, spirelets and flying buttresses. For Murrumbeena, Lyon re-interpreted this intricate effect with a minimalist modernist sensibility, reducing it to a low zigzagging roofline (a motif popular in the early 1960s, mostly for commercial and industrial architecture) with a row of slender copper spirelets. Along Sydney Street, a parabolic arched entry bay and rose windows (with coloured glass in an abstract pattern) provide more generic historicist references. While the church has been altered by removal of the concrete block screens along Murrumbeena Road, it remains a distinctive and eye-catching example of post-WW2 ecclesiastical architecture, demonstrating a high degree of creative achievement in its deft melding of contemporary and traditional influences. (*Criteria F*)

## History

The present Murrumbeena Baptist Church was erected in 1961-62, superseding an earlier building occupied by the congregation for the seven decades prior. According to the church's centenary booklet, Baptist presence in Murrumbeena dates back to 1888, when a married couple initiated a youth ministry from their home in Emily Street. As local interest burgeoned, the couple held a meeting in April 1890 "for the purpose of considering the advisability of forming a Baptized [*sic*] Church at Murrumbeena". With a committee appointed and a congregation formally established, the first service took place at the couple's home on 28 May. As membership grew, services transferred to the dining room of another congregant's house on Dandenong Road, and then to a rented hall in Neerim Road. The need for a purpose-built venue loomed large and, in 1891, the present site at the corner of Murrumbeena Road and Sydney Street was acquired. Plans for a modest timber church were prepared by architects Laver & Fick. Set well back from Murrumbeena Road, with its principal frontage to Sydney Street, the completed building was officially opened on 10 April 1892. Two years later, the all-important baptistery was added.

In 1907, with an eye on future expansion of the church facilities, negotiations took place to acquire adjacent vacant land fronting Sydney Street. A "beautiful and commodious Sunday School hall" was erected thereon, officially opening in February 1916 (*Oakleigh & Caulfield Times* 11/03/1916:4). In 1925, a Building Fund was established on the expectation that a new church would eventually be erected, although money raised was diverted to repairs on the existing building. The proposal to replace the old church gained further impetus after the appointment in 1929 of a new minister, the Reverend Ivor Hopkins, who initiated a Building Committee. Although architectural drawings for a new church were reportedly prepared at that time, nothing would eventuate for some time. A church hall was built in 1953, but it was not until later that decade that plans for a replacement church were revived by Reverend F Milton Lee, who became minister in 1957 and re-established the long-dormant Building Fund. With Lee prematurely resigning due to ill health, it was his successor, Reverend Max Kingdom, who would see the building program to fruition.

To design its new building, the church turned to Beaumaris architect Eric Lyon. Eric Donald Lyon (1918-2006) and his younger brother Ronald (1920-1996), both destined to become architects, had studied at Gordon Institute of Technology in Geelong and later at the University of Melbourne Architectural Atelier. In the late 1940s, the brothers travelled to London, where each spent time in the office of leading modernists Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew. Retuning to Melbourne in 1950, Eric was invited by his former atelier classmates Des Smith and Noel Tracey to join their newly-formed partnership, which, with the addition of another friend Leslie Brock, became Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Brock. The practice thrived for a decade, best known for modern churches, parish schools and other projects for the Roman Catholic Diocese. Around 1959, Lyon and Brock left to join the office of hospital design specialists Leighton Irwin & Company, whereupon Smith & Tracey carried on under that abbreviated name. Lyon would remain with the Irwin office for the rest of his career.

Lyon's scheme for the new Murrumbeena Baptist Church had developed by mid-1961, when a daily newspaper published a perspective drawing of a building with a zigzag roofline, slender spires and decorative grille screens (*Age* 14/07/1961:12). Titled "Cathedral in miniature", the article explained that the architect took inspiration from Milan Cathedral in Northern Italy, a Late Gothic edifice with famously spiky profile. It was noted that Lyon's building would incorporate "several unusual features" including concrete slab floor (unusual at the time), and a principal facade "screened by perforated cement brick walls set like louvres, forming a colonnade" to reduce traffic noise. Inside, the church was to provide seating for 150, along with a choir of 25, "a raised tiled baptistery with mosaic background and a projection gallery for film services".

Intriguingly, the working drawings for the church, dated September 1961, bear a title block with Lyon's own name and home address rather than that of Leighton Irwin & Company, where he was employed at the time. Given that he is not known to have formally maintained his own private practice during (or prior to) his time with Irwin, it can be assumed that this was an outside commission, perhaps in an honorary capacity. A prior personal connection with the church seems likely. The Lyons were local residents in a broad sense: when they moved from Geelong to Melbourne in the late 1930s, they settled in Glen Orme Avenue, McKinnon, where Eric lived until he married in 1949 and moved to a new house of his own design at Beaumaris. His parents were still residing in Glen Orme Avenue in the early 1960s, when the Murrumbeena church was mooted. It is unconfirmed if they were Baptists themselves; in any case, their nearest such church at that time would have been the one in Vickery Street, Bentleigh, rather than Murrumbeena.

Erection of the Murrumbeena Baptist Church, by Platt Brothers of Parkdale, was slated to start in October 1961. However it was not until early the next year that it was reported that "building operations for our new church have commenced" (*Victorian Baptist Witness*, 05/04/1962:23). Seven months later, it was noted that "we look forward to the opening of our new church on 25 November" (*Victorian Baptist Witness*, 05/11/1962:27). The ceremony itself, attended by over 150 people, including a presentation to the secretary of the Building Committee, a plaque unveiled by the builder, D Platt, and greetings from local ministers, the Secretary of the Baptist Union and the Mayor of Caulfield. The first wedding took place in the church the following Sunday: fittingly, that of the minister himself, Reverend Ian Staunton.

Such was the congregation's subsequent growth that, within a few more years, it was already apparent that further expansion was needed. To allow a new wing to be added to the building, it was proposed to demolish the old timber church still standing alongside. In 1967, architect Eric Lyon (then still employed with Leighton Irwin & Company) was re-engaged to prepare plans for the new wing, which was conceived in a matching style. In more recent years, the church has been altered by removal of the concrete block façade screens and construction of a rear office wing.

## Description

The Murrumbeena Baptist Church is an ecclesiastical building in the post-WW2 modernist style. Occupying a corner site, the complex comprises the original church on Murrumbeena Road, a slightly smaller rear wing (added eight years later), and more recent additions that extend further along the Sydney Street frontage. Although varying in date and expression, these various components of the building are united by a consistent palette pale orange brickwork.

The original church is a large hall-like building with zigzag roofline boldly expressed along the Murrumbeena Road side by six repetitive bays of angular eaves and along the Sydney Street side (and also the partially-concealed south elevation) by upward sloping eaves. On Murrumbeena Road, these gabled eaves align with a series of stepping angled façade bays. The final bay, at the north end, has a brick pier at the corner, defining a tall recessed porch with a raked ceiling. At roof level, each of these six gabled bays is accentuated by a tapering copper-clad spirelet, and there is a single larger spire, set further back, in alignment with the main entry on Sydney Street.



The Sydney Street elevation of the original church is a mostly blank wall, with rusticated quoining at each end and a slightly recessed central entrance bay of parabolic form. This bay contains a tapering doorway with metal-framed glazed double doors, projecting canopy roof, and a rose window with panels of coloured glass in a radiating pattern reminiscent of a Maltese cross. The corner porch contains a memorial plaque inscribed thus: THIS BUILDING / WAS OPENED TO / THE GLORY OF GOD / AND TO / THE EXTENSION OF HIS KINGDOM / AND DEDICATED BY THE PRESIDENT OF / THE BAPTIST UNION OF VICTORIA / REV JOHN MORLEY MA DIP ED / ON 25TH NOVEMBER 1962.

The rear wing is of slightly lower height and has a conventional tile-clad hipped roof. While physically connected to the earlier building, it is visually separated by a narrow niche with a vertical strip window containing panes of coloured glass. The street elevation is asymmetrical, with a conventional rectangular window to the left side and another rose window (with the same Maltese cross pattern) to the right. Further east, extending along Sydney Street, the church office is articulated as a lower gable-roofed brick building with a larger gable-roofed timber-clad hall to the rear. It has a recessed and elevated entry bay, accessed by concrete steps and a ramp.

### Comparisons

Architecturally speaking, early post-WW2 places of worship in the study area (ie, those dating from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s) can be placed into two broad categories: the progressive and the conservative. The latter group effectively represents a continuation of a tradition already well established by the late 1930s, where churches were expressed as plain brick structures with gabled roofline, towers and simplified historicist details such as arches, buttresses and mouldings. This approach can be seen in such pre-WW2 examples as the Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, 707 Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield South (O H Jorgenson, 1937) [part of HO66], the Ormond Uniting Christ at 264 Booran Road (Louis Williams, 1937) and St Paul's Church of England, Dandenong Road, Caulfield (Louis Williams, 1938-39) [part of HO14]. It was continued in the early post-WW2 era by St Kevin's Roman Catholic Church, Glen Orme Avenue, Ormond (Cyril Kelly, 1953) [part of HO75] and Bentleigh Presbyterian (now Uniting) Church, 495-497 Centre Road, Bentleigh (J F D Scarborough, 1958).

The emergence of a more progressive modernist approach, with stark articulation of volumetric forms, flat or low pitched roofs and minimal ornament, can be traced back to St Margaret's Presbyterian Church in Hotham Street, St Kilda East (K Murray Forster, 1952-53). The later 1950s saw very relatively few modern churches (or other places of worship) built in what is now the City of Glen Eira; the new synagogue for the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation at 572 Inkerman Road (Bridge, Hayden & Associates, 1958-61) was a notable exception. In the first half of the 1960s, local churches tended to embrace a wholly modernist expression, with bold box-like forms, generous windows, and ornament reduced to stone feature walls or projecting brickwork patterns, as seen in such examples as the Eastleigh Gospel Chapel at 216 East Boundary Road, East Bentleigh (1963), the Church of the Temple Society at 152 Tucker Road, Bentleigh (1964) and recently-demolished East Bentleigh Uniting (former Methodist) Church, 31 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh East (1964).

As a late example of a church that merges conservative and progressive styles, the Murrumbeena Baptist Church is perhaps most comparable to St Anthony's Roman Catholic Church at 74 Grange Road, Carnegie (T G Payne, 1963), where traditional gabled form and red brickwork is combined with a façade of red-and-white vertical stripes and a round archway with concentric banding. However, it should be noted that this church's amalgam of old and new was not conceived from scratch, but rather represented a substantial renovation/rebuilding of the congregation's original red brick Baroque-style church dating back to the 1919. In the early 1960s, the existing church was extended, its interior entirely remodelled (including a fashionable parabolic-arched sanctuary) and a new façade added, which involved the removal of a flanking pair of domed towers.

One of the most striking features of the Murrumbeena Baptist Church is its zigzag roofline, a bold motif that was fleetingly popular amongst Melbourne architects in the later 1950s and early 1960s. Most frequently, it was used to create a deliberately eye-catching form for commercially-oriented buildings such as shopping centres, showrooms, factories, hotels, motels and bowling alleys. Relatively few examples remain intact today, and only two others have been identified in what is now the City of Glen Eira: a multi-unit residential building at 218 Kooyong Road, Caulfield North (Winston Hall, 1956) and a medical centre at 868 Centre Road, Bentleigh East (architect unknown, 1960). The use of a zigzag roof on an ecclesiastical building is unusual in a broader metropolitan context, with one notable example being the contemporaneous but recently-demolished St Mark's Church of England in Sunshine (Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, 1960).

## References

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"Cathedral in miniature", *Age* 14 July 1961, p 12.

Eric Donald Lyon, "Proposed brick church for Murrumbeena Baptist Church, Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena", working drawings, dated 1 October 1961. PB File No 12,896, *loc cit.*

"Murrumbeena Church", *Victorian Baptist Witness*, 6 August 1962, pp 1, 19.

"New church opened at Murrumbeena", *Victorian Baptist Witness*, 5 February 1963, p 14.

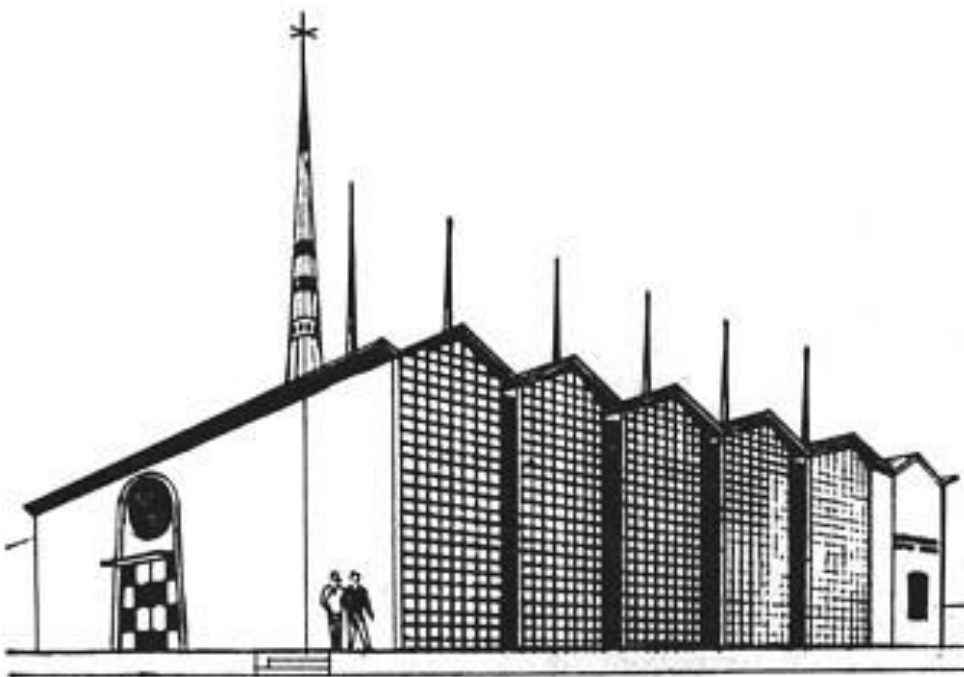
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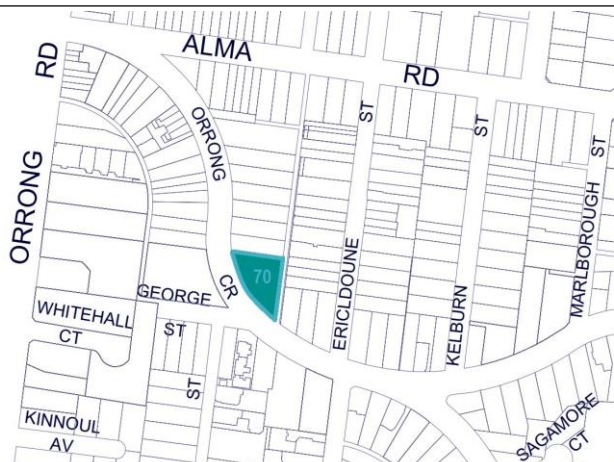
*Eric Lyon's original perspective drawing for the Murrumbeena Baptist Church, 1961*



<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FLATS	<b>Citation No</b>	PW21
<b>Other name/s</b>	<i>Fountain Court</i>	<b>Melway ref</b>	58 J10
<b>Address</b>	70 Orrong Crescent CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1967-68
<b>Designer/s</b>	Holgar & Holgar	<b>Builder/s</b>	Elie Litvak



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Flats	<b>Intactness</b>	Good
<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians		
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration <input type="checkbox"/> Trees		

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

*Fountain Court*, at 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North, is a flat-roofed three-storey block of flats on an elongated curved plan, extruded upwards to create two storeys of flats above an open undercroft. It has a varied but symmetrical façade of full-height window walls, brick spandrels and projecting or recessed balconies, with textured concrete block screen walls, mosaic-tiled columns and glass-walled lobbies at ground level. Erected in 1967-68, the flats were designed by the Polish-born husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the building.

### How is it significant?

*Fountain Court* 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 F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.



### *Why is it significant?*

*Fountain Court* is aesthetically significant as highly distinctive and idiosyncratic example of post-WW2 modernism. The concave plan, adopted as a specific design response to the challenging convex curvature of the street frontage, has resulted in a building of unusually striking form and bold streetscape presence. Although a number of Melbourne architects in the 1950s and '60s were intrigued by such applications of pure geometry, relatively few actual examples were realised; this concave-planned building has virtually no true comparators in the City of Glen Eira and is rare even on a broader metropolitan scale. Its external treatment, while adopting a standard modernist vocabulary of stark walls, full-height windows and *pilotis*, has introduced an uncommon degree of complexity in its varied fenestration and alternating projecting/recessed balconies, its use of contrasting texture (eg stack bond brickwork and concrete block screen walls) and evocation of luxury (eg gold mosaic tiling, anodized aluminium and marble flooring). (*Criterion E, Criterion F*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The flats at 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North, were built in 1967-8 to a design by architects Holgar & Holgar. The site, then known as 88-94 Orrong Crescent, was hitherto occupied by a brick shop (No 88) and timber dwelling (No 94). Dating from circa 1909, the house was erected as a local builder's own dwelling. A few years after his death in 1911, his widow added the shop, which the family operated as a grocery business. After the widow died in the late 1930s, her son continued to live in the house (while renting out the adjacent shop to others) until his own death in May 1965. The following year, the combined property of the house and shop were jointly offered for sale as "an outstanding development site" (*Age*, 21/08/1966:23).

By the mid-1960s, a major boom of apartment construction was well underway in what was then the City of Caulfield. Orrong Crescent, close to public transport and retail hubs, and characterised by allotments of slender proportion, soon became an epicentre. The large site at No 88-94, tightly held by the same family for half a century, indeed represented an "outstanding development site". However, any prospective purchaser would have to deal with the fact that, while the site offered an uncommonly expansive street frontage of 227 feet (70 metres), this curved to follow the form of Orrong Crescent. As a result, the oddly-shaped block (geometrically speaking, a quadrant), was only about 50 metres deep at its longest point. To develop such a site for apartments, an ingenious design solution was required. To that effect, the new owners of the block turned to the husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar, well known in the Caulfield area with several local houses (and apartment blocks) already under their belt.

John Holgar (*ne* Władysław Aleksander Janusz Holgar-Ptaszyński) (1922-2006) and his wife Helen (*nee* Helena) (1923-2012) were both born in Poland, fleeing separately during WW2 and meeting for the first time while both were studying architecture in Rome. Moving to London in 1947, they married, completed further studies and gained professional experience before migrating to Australia in 1952, where they worked separately for various Melbourne practices including Godfrey Spowers, Arthur Purnell, Brian Lewis and D F Cowell Ham. In 1957, after the couple won first prize in a high-profile competition for an exhibition house, John began private practice under his own name, with an office in Swanston Street. Eighteen months later, he was joined by Helen, who was latterly employed by Grounds, Romberg & Boyd. Circa 1963, the practice was rebadged as Holgar & Holgar, relocating to Collins Street. It soon fostered a reputation as designers of large-scale houses for fellow European migrants, initially working in a strict modernist style before embracing a more eclectic and idiosyncratic approach characterised by unusual forms and luxurious materials and finishes. High-end residential projects of this nature would continue to sustain their practice well into the 1990s.

Responding to the awkward site at 88-94 Orrong Crescent, the Holgars chose an elongated plan, described as “a segment of a circle”, curving in the opposite direction to the street frontage. This concave form was extruded upward to form a ground level undercroft carpark, with two storeys providing eight apartments. As was later reported, “the curved design gives the building the best perspective for the site and a sweeping drive to serve all entrances; it also provides off-street parking for visitors and plenty of space between the building line and the street for a front garden with a thirty-foot eye-shaped lily pond and fountain” (*Herald* 09/08/1968:19). The geometry was reflected in the internal planning: “all rooms are irregularly shaped, and cross walls follow radials converging from the centre”. The flats, with two or three bedrooms, were atypically grand and luxurious. Larger units had a separate dining room, while smaller ones had a combined living/dining room and a study that could be adapted as a third bedroom. Kitchens, described as “above average size”, included innovations seldom seen in Melbourne at that time, such as wall ovens, bench hotplates, double-bowl stainless steel sinks with waste disposal units, and an alcove for a dishwasher. Ground floor foyers, with Italian marble floors, carpeted stairs and mica wallpaper, included entry doors that could be remotely unlocked from the units upstairs. It was also noted that the undercroft carpark area included storage units for each flat and an area “of about fifteen squares... designed for community outdoor entertainment”.

The building was erected by Israeli émigré Elie Litvak, a qualified engineer and Caulfield resident who had previously built at least two other local buildings by the Holgars. In early August 1968, the forthcoming sale of the flats prompted a flurry of publicity including a write-up in the *Herald* property column, and advertisements for the “gala opening” of “the Pride of Caulfield”. Referred to as *Fountain Court*, the flats were promoted as a “unique sweeping semi-circular ultra-modern building featuring 200 feet of garden frontage and beautiful fountain setting”, noting such features as the “fully ducted central heating”, “enormous entertainment area opening onto sun balcony” and “unique outside living area”. Priced from \$26,000 to \$28,000, the flats evidently sold quickly. The first resident appears to have been a retired Russian-born jeweller who was already listed at the address in 1968. Several other retired European émigré businessmen were amongst the original or early residents of the flats.

## Description

*Fountain Court*, at 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North, is a three-storey flat-roofed block of flats in the post-WW2 modernist style. Occupying a quadrant-shaped block with a curved street frontage, the building has a linear plan that curves in the opposite direction (ie concave not convex). It is expressed as an elongated and canted double-storey volume (containing the flats proper) elevated on concrete columns (or *pilotis*) to form an undercroft carpark. The street frontage is varied but symmetrical. At the upper levels, the concave façade is articulated as a row of faceted bays. In the centre, full-height window walls with glazed doors open onto pairs of canted balconies, divided by glazed partitions. Outer bays have smaller rectangular windows and spandrels of beige brickwork laid in stack-bond. End elevations have three bays of multi-paned window walls to each level, with the central bay recessed to form a slightly projecting balcony.

At the ground floor level, the columns are clad in bronze-coloured glass mosaic tiles and support a series of tapering concrete beams that create the effect of a low vaulted ceiling within. The carparking area is partially screened by walls of narrow textured concrete bricks enlivened with a pattern of projecting headers. There are also two entry foyers marked by paired columns, with white marble thresholds and glazed doors and sidelights windows in gold anodized aluminium, and narrow flanking alcoves containing recessed timber letterboxes. Each of the two entrances is marked by a recessed light-box bearing the name of the flats, and the numerical designation of the four individual flats accessed within. Inside, the foyers contain staircases with floating treads and simple metal rod balusters, and a full-height window to the rear.

The convex elevation to the rear of the building, fronting a laneway, is similarly but more simply detailed, with blank rendered walls alternating with window bays, most of which have matching spandrels of stack-bond beige brickwork. The undercroft level is open, with the row of concrete columns (finished in a rough-textured Spraycrete coating rather than mosaic tiled) defining individual parking spaces.

The “30-foot eye-shaped lily pond and fountain”, mentioned in early publicity, is no longer extant.

### Comparisons

The office of Holgar & Holgar was notably active in what is now the City of Glen Eira, designing many buildings in Caulfield and St Kilda East as well as a few others further afield in McKinnon and Bentleigh East. While virtually all of their local output was residential in nature, it is mostly represented by large-scale single dwellings. Apart from *Fountain Court* in Orrong Crescent, only two other examples of the Holgars’ apartment architecture have yet been conclusively identified in the study area: a three-storey block of four flats at 32 Narong Road, Caulfield North (1964), and a group of four single-storey townhouses at 9 David Street, St Kilda East (1970). The former, with the two upper storeys elevated above an open undercroft for carparking, is broadly comparable to *Fountain Court*, albeit expressed in an orthodox rectilinear fashion. While it may lack the curved geometry used at *Fountain Court*, it otherwise anticipated the latter in the scale and opulence of its internal planning and fitout, with spacious entry foyer, storerooms and larger-than-average three-bedroom apartments with separate dining rooms, central heating/air-conditioning and kitchens with waste disposal units (*Herald* 30/04/1964:26). The development in David Street, postdating *Fountain Court*, was different again, with dwellings expressed as individual (and individualistic) flat-roofed brick villa units clustered in an informal landscaped setting (*Herald* 01/05/1970:25).

Ultimately, it is the curving geometry that sets *Fountain Court* apart from other blocks of flats in the study area, including those designed by the same architects. Research to date has failed to identify another local apartment complex comparable in this regard. While a number of sites along Orrong Crescent have curved street frontages, no other building was designed to respond to this aspect in quite the same way (although one block of flats, at No 44, does have a splayed façade to follow the acute angular shape of the site). The same can be said of buildings along similarly sinuous roads elsewhere in the municipality, such as Park Crescent (Caulfield East), Murrumbeena Crescent (Murrumbeena), Chesterville Drive (Bentleigh East) and Leamington Crescent, Derby Crescent, Truganini Road, Railway Road and Toolambool Road (Carnegie). To date, the only building in the study area that is vaguely comparable in date and form is St Patrick’s Roman Catholic Church at Dalny Road, Murrumbeena (1963), which has an oval plan. After *Fountain Court*, the next building to use curved geometry as a specific site response would not appear until the mid-1980s, when an acute angled corner site at 840 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, was redeveloped with a curved two-storey glass-walled building, reportedly commissioned by Dr Geoffrey Edelsten as a 24-hour ‘superclinic’ (but ultimately never used as such).

### References

“A new style in flats... now they are curved”, *Herald*, 9 August 1968, p 19.

“Gala opening: The Pride of Caulfield”, *Age*, 10 August 1968, p 37.

Simon Reeves, “Gold-plated doors if you want them: Holgar & Holgar and the Architecture of Opulence,” in Ann Marie Brennan & Philip Goad (eds), *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand*. Vol 33 (Melbourne, 2016), pp 568-577.

### Identified by

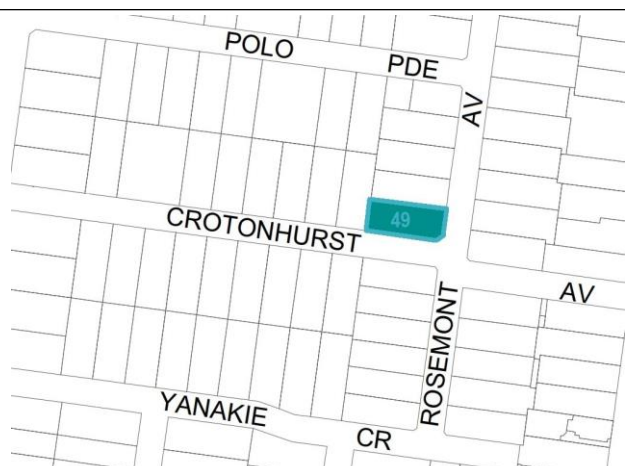
Built Heritage Pty Ltd (also flagged by City of Glen Eira)

**Council determined to remove this place from inclusion in the Heritage Overlay on 23 November 2021.**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	HOUSE	<b>Citation No</b>	PW22
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	68 A1
<b>Address</b>	49 Rosemont Avenue CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1972-73 1979, 1986 (minor additions)
<b>Designer/s</b>	Holgar & Holgar (original house and later works)	<b>Builder/s</b>	Unknown



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019



Location map and extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	House	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent

<b>Thematic context</b>	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
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<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as an individual heritage place		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

*What is significant?*

The house at 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield North, is a two-storey flat-roofed house of a characteristic post WW2 modernist form, with the upper storey expressed as a rectilinear glass-fronted volume (in this case, atypically embellished by an ornate perforated grille screen) that projects over a recessed lower level, supported on curving piers. The house was erected in 1972-73 for a Cypriot-born cinema magnate and his wife, to a design by Polish-born husband-and-wife architects of Holgar & Holgar.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the house, including rear verandah and boundary wall. The detached garage, while also designed by Holgar & Holgar, is a utilitarian structure of limited interest, and is not considered to be significant.

*How is it significant?*

The 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, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.



### *How is it significant?*

The house is aesthetically significant as a highly idiosyncratic example of post-WW2 modernist residential architecture. While it adopts the trademark European modernist expression, with a glass-walled upper storey projecting above a recessed lower level, it is overlaid with some unusual detailing that hints at overseas influences rarely seen in Melbourne, except in other houses by Holgar & Holgar. Rendered piers, curving to form a porch balustrade, recall the expressionistic work of Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, while the full-width decorative screen at the upper façade evokes the glamorous 1960s residences of the Hollywood hills. An outstanding and remarkably unaltered example of this rare type of glamorous post-WW2 residence, so strongly associated with Holgar & Holgar, it remains a striking element in the streetscape (*Criteria E*).

The house is historically and architecturally significant for associations with the Polish-born husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar, which was notably active in Caulfield and environs in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Dating from 1972-73, this house is one of the finest and most intact local examples of the partnership's high-end residential work from the peak period of their career in the 1970s. Remarkably intact on account of still being occupied by the family that commissioned it, the house has undergone only minor changes. Some of these, namely the rear verandah (1979) and boundary wall (1986) were also designed by Holgar & Holgar, demonstrating a rare sense of continuity where, for over a decade after completion of the house, the architects maintained an ongoing association with it. (*Criterion H*)

### **History**

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The house at 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield, was erected in 1972-73 for a Cypriot-born cinema magnate and his wife, to a design by the Polish-born husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar. Born in the mid-1930s in a village near Limassol, the future owner of the house became involved in the cinema business from the age of fourteen, working during his summer holidays as a ticket-seller at an open-air cinema in Limassol. He also assisted the projectionist and, after stepping in for an ailing subtitler during a screening of Charlie Chaplain's *Limelight* (1952), took on that role on a more regular basis. Gaining experience as a cashier, subtitler and projectionist, the young man was later poached by the owner of the more upmarket Rialto Cinema. Later still, he was offered the position as manager of the new Cine Volos, only to turn it down because he had already decided follow in the footsteps of his sister, who had already migrated to Australia.

Arriving in Melbourne in the mid-1950s, the future house owner worked in a clothing factory in Richmond before becoming an assistant projectionist at the Plaza Theatre in Collins Street, later transferring to the Brunswick Padua. In 1957, he formed his own film company and imported a popular Greek-language film, *Golfo*, which he screened at the Melbourne Town Hall to much acclaim (and indeed profit). The next year, he joined two Greek émigré colleagues, to establish a new film company. Over the next few years, the firm acquired eight cinemas in Melbourne (plus two in Adelaide and one in Perth) and leased several others in regional centres. Providing Australia's burgeoning post-WW2 Greek community with a unique opportunity to view films in their own language, the venture soon became a booming success.

After the future owner of the house married in the early 1960s, he and his wife settled in Bentleigh East (her parents having long resided in Caulfield South). The couple's growing family may have hastened plans to build a new residence. In June 1972, they acquired the title to a property at 49 Rosemont Street in Caulfield, which was then occupied by a triple-fronted brick villa. This was to be demolished for a new and grander residence, designed by architects Holgar & Holgar.

John Holgar (*ne* Władysław Aleksander Janusz Holgar-Ptaszyński) (1922-2006) and his wife Helen (*nee* Helena) (1923-2012) were both born in Poland, fleeing separately during WW2 and meeting for the first time while both were studying architecture in Rome. Moving to London in 1947, they married, completed further studies and gained professional experience before migrating to Australia in 1952, where they worked separately for various Melbourne practices including Godfrey Spowers, Arthur Purnell, Brian Lewis and D F Cowell Ham. In 1957, after the couple won first prize in a high-profile competition for an exhibition house, John began private practice under his own name, with an office in Swanston Street. Eighteen months later, he was joined by Helen, who was latterly employed by Grounds, Romberg & Boyd. Circa 1963, the practice was rebadged as Holgar & Holgar, relocating to Collins Street. It soon fostered a reputation as designers of large-scale houses for fellow European migrants, initially working in a strict modernist style before embracing a more eclectic and idiosyncratic approach characterised by unusual forms and luxurious materials and finishes. High-end residential projects of this nature would continue to sustain their practice well into the 1990s.

Holgar & Holgar's working drawing for the Rosemont Avenue house, dated September 1972, proposed a large two-storey dwelling dominated by a central circular lobby with a grand curving staircase incorporating a small garden and fountain at its base. The ground floor provided capacious living areas, with open planned living room, dining room and family room with built-in bar, while the upper level had four bedrooms and a vast playroom that extended the entire width of the building. Externally, the house was starkly articulated, with its principal frontage to Rosemont Avenue incorporating parabolic arches and, at the upper level, an element described on the plans as a "perforated feature grille". The drawings also indicate an attached carport to the south side, a detached flat-roofed garage to the rear (accessed from Crotonhurst Road) and "future swimming pool" of an unusual wedge-shaped design.

While construction was in progress, the family resided with the wife's parents in Caulfield South. Completed during 1973, the new house appears to have been built in accordance with what was indicated on the working drawings, including the attached carport and detached garage, although a handwritten amendment records that the swimming pool was to be omitted for the time being. It was eventually installed in the 1980s, in the intended position but to a different shape. When other changes were made to the property during this period, the owner entrusted the work to his original architects, Holgar & Holgar. In 1979, he commissioned them to enclose the rear terrace with a new skillion-roofed verandah of a simple but eye-catching arcaded form. In 1986, the architects were engaged again, this time to remodel the detached garage and provide a tall boundary wall along both street frontages.

## Description

The house at 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield, is a two-storey flat-roofed rendered brick house in an idiosyncratic post-WW2 modernist style. It is expressed in a characteristic European Modernist manner, where the upper level is given emphasis by projecting outward over the recessed lower level. The façade is symmetrical, with a continuous window wall at the upper level screened by a full-width decorative grille in a pattern based on a repeating T-shaped motif. At ground level, the projecting upper storey is supported on a pair of rust-coloured circular columns and two large rendered piers that curve around at the lower end to merge with a low horizontal balustrade. Two large window bays open onto the front porch, which has a tiled floor. The front entrance, set into a recessed central bay between the two columns, comprises a pair of timber doors (inlaid with an inverted T-shaped motif in a contrasting darker tone) with two flanking sidelights.

The side elevation, to Crotonhurst Street, is much simpler in its expression, with plain rendered walls and a central double-height window bay in the centre, with multi-paned sashes separated by a small spandrel. The rear elevation, partially visible from the street, has a full-width screen of vertical louvres to the upper storey. At ground level, there is a large skillion-roofed verandah with timber-lined ceiling and a supporting structure of metal pipes that include round arches with leadlight infill to the spandrels. A tall brown brick wall, with regular narrow niches, extends along most of the Crotonhurst Road boundary, stepping down at the Rosemont Avenue end.

## Comparisons

Polish-born architects John and Helen Holgar were notably active in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Their first collaborative project in Melbourne, and the one that prompted them to open their own architectural office, was a prize-winning scheme for the Herald Ideal Home (1957) that was moved to Centre Road, Bentleigh East, after being displayed at the Ideal Home Show. From 1963, when the burgeoning practice was rebadged as Holgar & Holgar, they undertook a steady stream of residential work that included many houses and blocks of flats in the Caulfield area (and others in Elsternwick and McKinnon). Over the next quarter century, they are known to have completed at least twenty projects in what is now the City of Glen Eira. Their output encapsulates several discrete phases: the academic modernist style of their earliest work (c1958-63), which gave way to a more hybrid and inclusive approach (c1963-68), and then to their mature style, the individualistic and highly idiosyncratic approach for which they are best-known (c1968-79).

Dating from the Holgars' late period, the house in Rosemont Avenue (1972-73) is one of many grand and luxurious residences commissioned by clients who, almost without exception, were wealthy self-made European émigré families. While five other examples are recorded in the Caulfield area, few remain intact. A nearby house at 45 Rosemont Avenue (c1971), and another at 18 Howitt Road (1969), have both been remodelled beyond recognition. The latter originally had a decorative facade screen at its upper level, which would have made it the most pertinent local comparator to the subject building. Another example at 8 Hartley Avenue (1975) has also been altered, but remains recognizable. Considerably more intact are two outstanding and virtually unaltered examples at 49 Aroona Road (1970) and 82 Lumeah Road (1972). Like the subject building, both are two-storey flat-roofed houses with a glazed upper storey over a recessed lower level. However, instead of the façade screen, they are enlivened by equally quirky details: the Aroona Road house has a concrete feature resembling a huge faceted crystal, and the Lumeah Road house has a Moorish-style arcade with grand entry staircase. All three houses are exceptional examples of the Holgar's mature work.

## References

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Holgar & Holgar, "Proposed verandah to No 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield, for [redacted]", working drawings, dated 23 October 1979. City of Caulfield Permit No 51,573.

Holgar & Holgar, "Proposed alterations to garage and new fence to residence at No 49 Rosemont Avenue, Caulfield, for [redacted]", working drawings, dated June 1986.

Simon Reeves, "Gold-plated doors if you want them: Holgar & Holgar and the Architecture of Opulence," in Ann Marie Brennan & Philip Goad (eds), *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand*. Vol 33 (Melbourne, 2016), pp 568-577.

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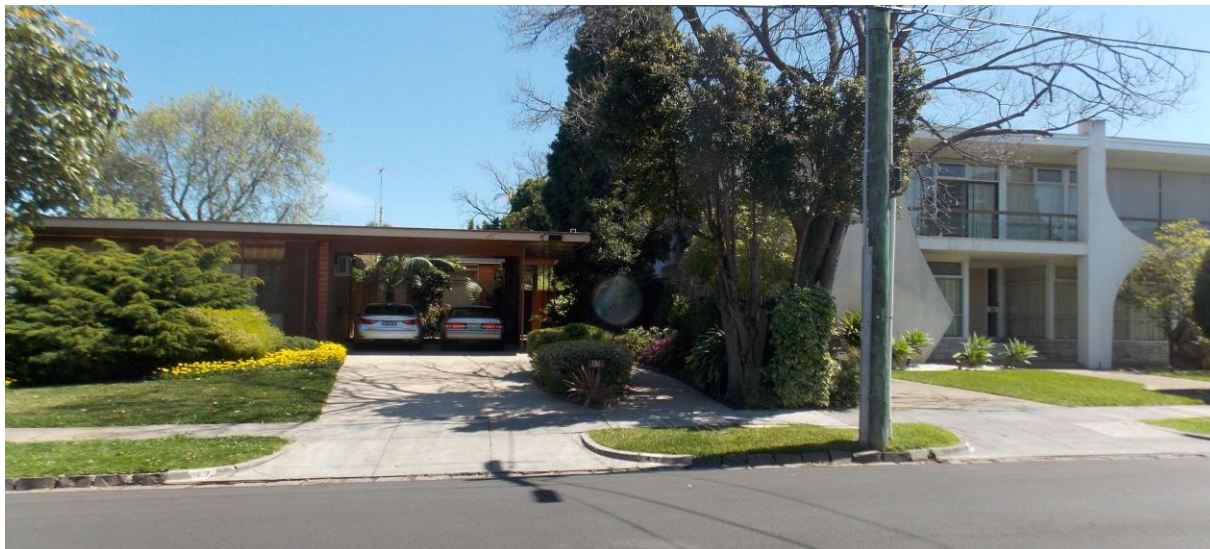
Built Heritage Pty Ltd

## E: CITATIONS FOR PRECINCTS

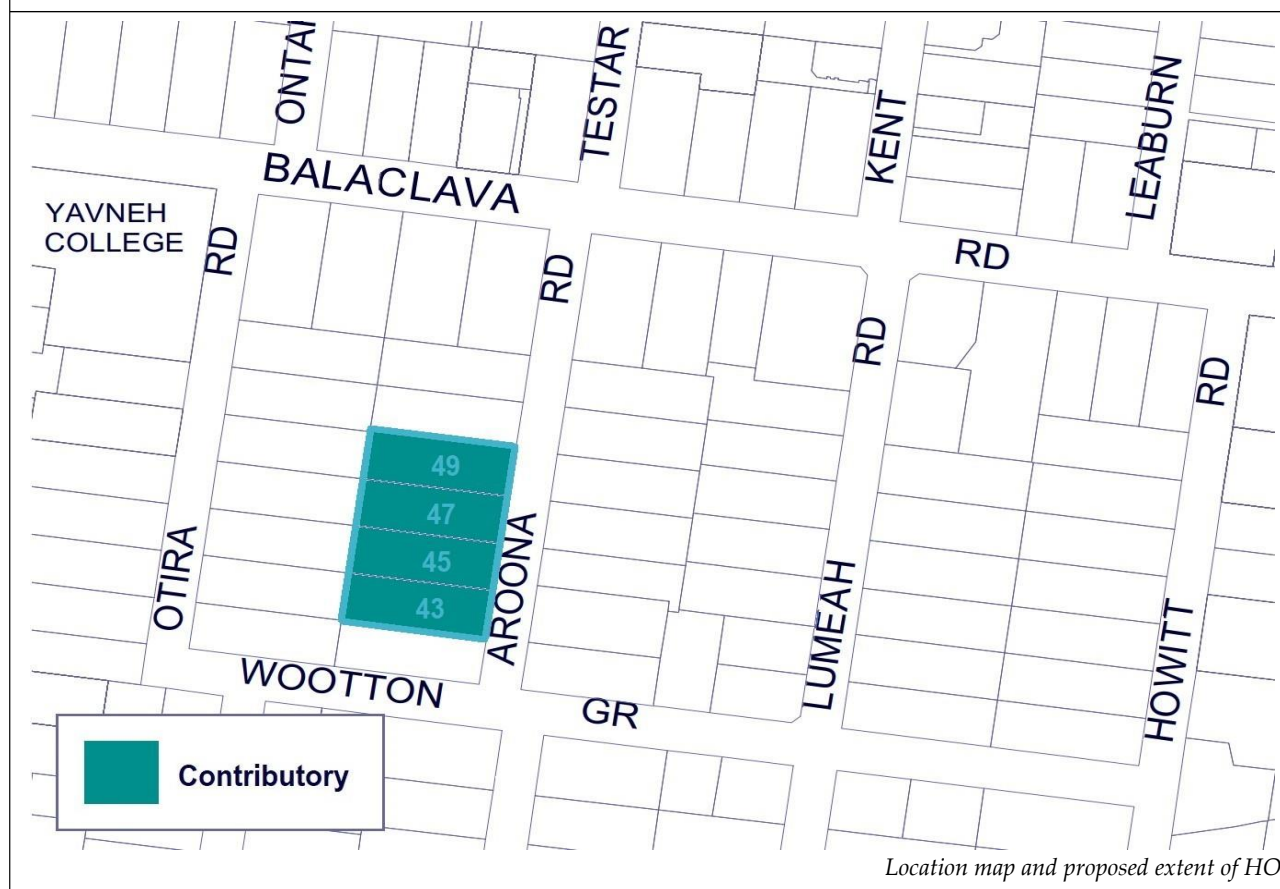




<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	AROONA ROAD MODERNIST PRECINCT	<b>Citation No</b>	P01
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H12
<b>Address</b>	43-49 Aroona Road CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1961- 63, 1970-71



Houses at 47 and 49 Aroona Road, October 2019



Location map and proposed extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential precinct	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as a heritage precinct		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### *What is significant?*

The Aroona Road Modernist Precinct comprises a cohesive row of four post-WW2 houses at the northern end of Aroona Road, Caulfield North, erected between 1961 and 1971. Although quite differently articulated, the four houses are all designed in a consistent European Modernist style characterised by bold rectilinear massing, flat roofs with broad eaves, and expansive windows. Commissioned by European émigré families who engaged architects of similar background (two houses designed by Austrian-trained Ernest Fooks and two by Polish-born Holgar & Holgar).

The following houses are deemed to be *contributory* elements in the precinct:

- Aroona Road: Nos 43, 45, 47, 49

### *How is it significant?*

The Aroona Road Modernist Precinct satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
- Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant?*

The Aroona Road Modernist Precinct is significant for associations with post-WW2 redevelopment of the former *Talbot Estate*, a prestigious inter-war subdivision that was transformed from the mid-1950s as original houses were replaced by grander modernist counterparts, mostly built by well-off European émigré families who commissioned architects of similar background. As these large and prepossessing modern houses proliferated in the 1960s, '70s and into the '80s and beyond, the area acquired an envied reputation as Caulfield's "Golden Mile". (*Criterion A*)

The Aroona Road Modernist Precinct is significant as small but excellent collection of post-WW2 modernist houses. Designed by architects who were born and trained in Continental Europe, the houses are unified by a consistent hard-edged modernist style associated with such designers, broadly characterised by bold rectilinear massing, flat roofs with broad eaves, and expansive windows. This is tempered by more unusual forms and detailing that reflect each architects' gradual departure from academic modernism towards a more idiosyncratic approach. The house that Fooks designed at No 43 (1963) shows the emerging influence of Japanese architecture that he saw during a recent trip overseas, while the canted façade of the early Holgar & Holgar house at No 45 (1963) hints at the unusual geometry that would so strongly define the firm's later work, typified by the house at No 49 (1970-71), with its eye-catching façade elements. (*Criterion E*)

The Aroona Road Modernist Precinct is significant for associations with two leading post-WW2 émigré architectural practices that each maintained an important and enduring connection with what is now the City of Glen Eira. Czechoslovakian-born and Austrian-trained Ernest Fooks began practice in Melbourne in 1948 and, after designing his first building in Caulfield in 1951, completed many more over the ensuing quarter-century, including his own celebrated residence in Howitt Road. Holgar & Holgar, comprising Polish couple John & Helen Holgar, launched their practice after winning a high-profile exhibition house competition in 1957 (the outcome of which was relocated to a site in Bentleigh East), and remained similarly active in the study area from the early 1960s to the late 1980s. While Fooks and the Hologars undertook much residential work in what is now the City of Glen Eira, some of their most outstanding houses were to be found in this prestigious enclave loosely defined as Caulfield's "Golden Mile". (*Criterion H*)

## History

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

Aroona Road was created in 1912 as part of the *Talbot Estate*, a vast residential subdivision that extended south from Balaclava Road to Hume Road, creating nearly 200 allotments with frontages to Balaclava Road, Kooyong Road and the new north-south streets of Lumeah Road, Otira Road, Howitt Road and Aroona Road. The land was released in seven stages over the next five years, and by the time that the last 44 blocks were offered for sale at a “grand final auction” in November 1917, the area could be loftily promoted as “the famous Talbot Estate”, “a marine [*sic*] panorama of rare beauty and vast extent, with the clear line of the You Yang Ranges in the background, presenting a picture on a sunny day which will command the admiration and surprise of the seeker after specially choice and freehold sites” (*Argus* 03/11/1917:3).

Aroona Road was first recorded in the *Sands & McDougall Directory* in 1915, with a single entry for a “house being built” between Balaclava Road and Wootton Grove; rate books confirm this as a six-roomed timber dwelling on Lot 46 (47 Aroona Road). By 1920, the number of entries had increased to twenty-four, split fairly evenly between the east and west sides of the street, including five houses “being built”. The early residents of Aroona Road represented comfortably middle-class, white-collar families, with electoral rolls citing such occupations as civil servant, accountant, engineer, doctor, draper, manufacturer and detective. One resident, listed as being of “independent means”, hinted at the early presence of more affluent families. By the early 1920s, Aroona Road had certainly attracted some prominent Melburnians, such as former ANZAC commander Lieutenant-Colonel Vernon A H Sturdee and Dame Elizabeth Davies, widow of Sir Matthew Davies. Some of the early houses are known to have been designed by leading architects of the day such as Percy Oakley, who called tenders for a brick residence in Aroona Road in 1921 (*Age* 19/03/1921:21) and Marcus Barlow, who designed a pair of villas there as early as 1916 (*Age* 25/05/1916:3). By 1930, directory listings for Aroona Road had more than doubled to fifty, filling out the entire street save for a pair of vacant lots at Nos 7 and 9. By then, a decidedly more high-status demographic was evident amongst residents, with electoral rolls listing such professions as manager, company director, importer, investor, agent and, again, “independent means”.

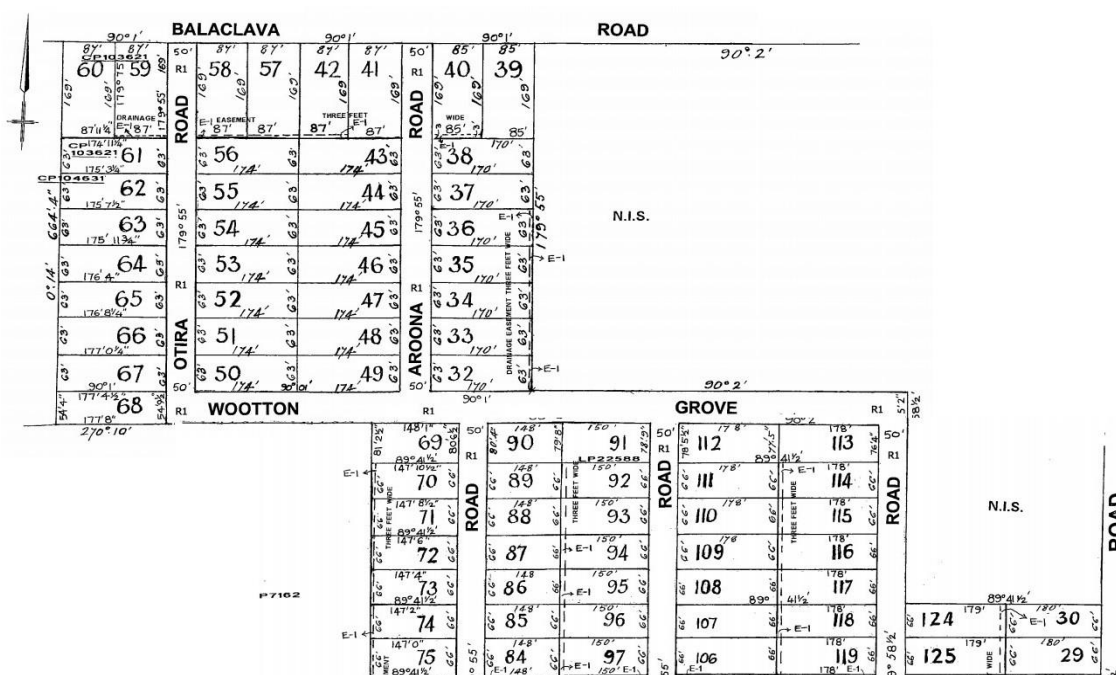


Figure 1: Excerpt of Lodged Plan No 6,109 (1913) showing northern portion of the *Talbot Estate*  
Source: [www.landata.com.au](http://www.landata.com.au)



Directory listings show that, by 1950, only about a third of Aroona Road's pre-war residents were still living there, including five widows. Over the next two decades, the streetscape would be fundamentally re-shaped as more original residents departed (in either sense) and a younger generation was drawn to the prestigious enclave, albeit not necessarily to its existing building stock. The post-WW2 transformation of Aroona Road effectively began in 1954, when the last remaining vacant block in the street, at No 7, was acquired by a Polish-born manufacturer who commissioned Austrian-trained architect Ernest Fooks to design a new house. This not only marked the start of the post-WW2 transformation of Aroona Road, but also of the significant two-pronged theme that would characterise it: the settlement of well-to-do European émigrés who invariably commissioned architects of similar background.

Not surprisingly, the post-WW2 redevelopment of Aroona Road initially focused on the northern (Balaclava Road) end, where the oldest houses were located. On the west side of the street, the block between Wootton and Balaclava Roads included four houses (Nos 43-49) that dated back to the initial settlement of the *Talbot Estate* in the late teens, including the one at No 47 that (erected circa 1915) had been the first house in the street. In the early 1960s, three of these early houses would be razed and replaced in fairly rapid succession by larger and grander counterparts in the modernist style, all designed by European émigré architects.

The first of these, erected at No 43 for (and presumably by) Polish-born builder Leopold Getreu, was designed by Ernest Fooks, who, in 1954, had been responsible for the new house at No 7. This was merely a coincidence, as Getreu had an important prior association with the architect: he was the contractor of record for several Fooks projects in the 1950s, notably the Mount Scopus War Memorial College in Burwood, designed in association with Anatol Kagan and completed in several stages from 1951 to 1960. While unconfirmed, Fooks probably designed Getreu's previous residence at 28 Ontario Street: a cream brick modernist house of similar form to a confirmed (but since demolished) Fooks house next door, at No 26. In any case, Getreu's new house in Aroona Road, for which working drawings are dated November 1961, was suitably grand for a builder's own home: a large and partly split-level brick dwelling that opened to a rear swimming pool area. The following year, Fooks would be commissioned by another Polish émigré to design a house only two doors away, at No 47. Working drawings, dated August 1962, proposed a single-storey flat-roofed brick house on a stepped plan, with a capacious living area and sunroom opening onto a north-facing terrace.



Figure 2: The house at 47 Aroona Road, Caulfield, photographed in 1965  
Source: *Australian House & Garden*, January 1966.



Figure 3: The Japanese-style front garden at 47 Aroona Road, photographed in 1965  
Source: *Australian House & Garden*, Jan 1966



Figure 4: An undated but early photograph of the house at 49 Aroona Road  
Source: Holgar & Holgar Archive

In April 1963, the pre-war weatherboard dwelling at No 45, forlornly wedged between the two recently-completed Ernest Fooks houses, was acquired by a company director and his wife (Certificate of Title 4503/534). The couple, who had previously resided in a stylish modernist block of flats at 124 Balaclava Road, proceeded to have plans for a new residence drawn up by Holgar & Holgar, a sought-after Collins Street practice comprising the Polish-born husband-and-wife team of John and Helen Holgar. The architects, known for their idiosyncratic style, proposed a house on a sprawling single-storey plan, with an unusual canted façade and stone-clad carport, and a U-shaped rear terrace of curvilinear form. The company director and his wife resided in the new house for only a brief period; in 1966, the property was acquired by a Polish-born wholesaler, whose brother and sister-in-law just happened to live next door at No 47.

The new residential development along Aroona Road garnered press attention as early as 1965, when the Fooks-designed house at No 47 appeared in the architectural column of the *Herald*, in which it was reported to show “some resemblance to the restrained and carefully proportioned Japanese house” (*Herald*, 12/02/1965:23). This was a telling allusion, given that Fooks had only recently returned from an overseas trip (including Japan) at the time that the house was commissioned. The observation would be echoed when the house was belatedly profiled in the *Australian House & Garden* early the following year, with a full-colour front cover photograph and a four-page feature article within. With the house lauded as “a treasury of good, practical ideas”, attention was drawn to overt Japanese influences that included a minimalist interior of shoji screens and built-in furniture (designed by Fooks himself) and, outside, an orientalized front garden with pebbled beds, feature boulders and low plantings of cacti and succulents.

Towards the end of 1966, opportunity for further redevelopment in this part of Aroona Road arose following the death of the longtime resident who had lived at No 49 since the early 1920s. Belatedly offered for sale in 1970, his former home was advertised as “a large brick house of seven fine rooms”, with “a spacious well-planned interior ideally suited for imaginative modernization”. Its new owners, a Czechoslovakian-born clothing manufacturer and his wife, clearly had “imaginative modernization” in mind when they engaged architects Holgar & Holgar (who had designed the nearby house at No 45) to design a grand new house for the site. Working drawings, dated, November 1970, proposed a large two-storey house with entry foyer, maid’s quarters and other service areas at the lower level and the principal living spaces upstairs. Construction commenced early the next year, when a notice in a newspaper column advertised for “building material: brick house being demolished at 49 Aroona Road, Caulfield (*Age* 13/02/1971:101).



The families that occupied these four adjacent houses by 1971 would also continue to live there for many years. The two Polish brothers at Nos 45 and 47 remained next-door neighbours into the 1990s, while the Czech businessman at No 49 resided there until his death in the early 2010s.

By the mid-1970s, this part of Caulfield had acquired such a reputation as a prestigious residential area that estate agents had begun to refer to it as the “Golden Mile” (*Age* 13/11/1976:38). Initially, this term seems to have been rather loosely applied to properties located anywhere in the area bounded by Inkerman Road, Glen Eira Road, Orrong Road and Hawthorn Road. From the 1980s, however, it tended to be applied more selectively, with properties in Aroona, Howitt and Lumeah Roads regularly promoted as being “in the heart of the Golden Mile” (*Age* 01/12/1993:77).

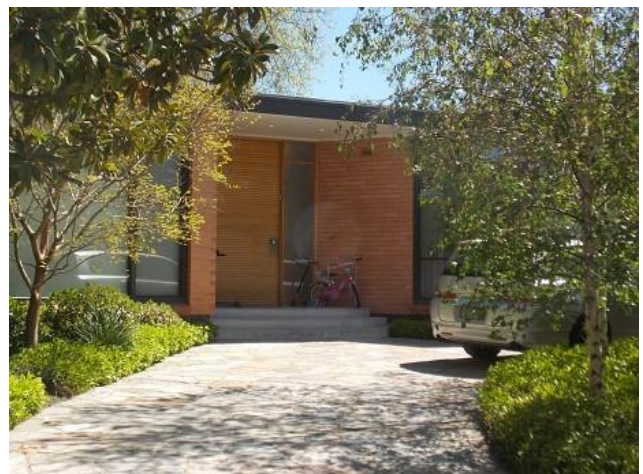
## Description

The Aroona Road Modernist Precinct comprises a row of four detached flat-roofed brick houses in the post-WW2 modernist style, three of which (Nos 43, 45 and 47) were erected between 1961 and 1963, and the fourth (No 49) in 1970-71. Typical of that period (and of the work of their respective European trained architects), all four houses are expressed with a bold rectilinear massing of intersecting box-like volumes, forming asymmetrical facades. The houses at No 43 and 47 (both by Ernest Fooks) incorporate projecting/recessing bays, albeit differently articulated: the former has a projecting two-storey wing with enclosed garage at the lower level, while the latter incorporates an open carport into the recessed northern end. The houses at Nos 45 and 49 (both by Holgar & Holgar) are more idiosyncratic: the former has a canted façade with two angled walls flanking an off-centre entry porch, while the latter expresses its upper level as an elongated horizontal volume, hovering above a slightly recessed lower level.

The houses are of brick construction: the three earlier ones (Nos 43, 45 and 47) in orange-coloured face brickwork and the later one (No 49) with a rendered finish. Two houses are further enlivened by feature stonework, to the carport wing wall (No 47) and ground floor plinth (No 49). All four houses have flat roofs with broad eaves. At No 47, eaves merge into the carport roof (penetrated by a large skylight) and are supported on metal pipe columns to form a narrow colonnaded porch across the street frontage. At No 49, the eaves link with a wing wall and projecting floor slab to define a frame to three sides of the upstairs balcony. All four houses have expansive windows to the street, with continuous bays of multi-paned sashes that are variously full-width (No 43), full-height (No 45 and 47), or both (No 49). At No 47, the glazed sashes alternate with tall louvred screens to form an oriental effect.



*Figure 5: The house at 43 Aroona Road  
(Ernest Fooks, 1961)*



*Figure 6: The house at 45 Aroona Road  
(Holgar & Holgar, 1963)*



*Figure 7: The house at 47 Aroona Road  
(Ernest Fooks, 1962)*



*Figure 8: The house at 49 Aroona Road  
(Holgar & Holgar, 1970-71)*

There is some variation in the articulation of front entrances. No 43 has a small flat-roofed front porch set into the junction of the two front bays, while the entrance to No 47 is entirely concealed, set into a side wall towards rear and accessed via a covered walkway alongside the carport. At Nos 43 and 49, the front doors are set into recessed alcoves in the street facades, albeit differently expressed as an off-centre angled alcove (No 45) and a centrally-placed rectilinear alcove (No 49). A particularly distinctive feature of the latter house is the curving T-shaped structural element and faceted polygon motif that flank the main entry.

Comparable in setback, the four houses are enhanced by their settings: two with front lawns and feature garden beds (No 47, 49) and two with expansive areas of dense low plantings (No 43, 45). Wide driveways have crazy paving (No 45) or a pebbled concrete finish (Nos 43, 47 and 49); two houses have matching concrete paths (No 47, 49) and another (No 43) has a flagstone path.

## Comparisons

The transformation of Aroona Road from a streetscape of pre-war villas and bungalows into a more prestigious enclave of larger and grander modernist residences is demonstrated by a number of scattered houses from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s that survive among a subsequent layer of residential redevelopment from the 1980s onwards. The former Bryon House at 7 Aroona Road (Ernest Fooks, 1954), which effectively kick-started the post-WW2 re-shaping of the streetscape, still stands but has been significantly altered in recent years. The three extant and intact houses at Nos 43, 45 and 47, erected between 1961 and 1963, represent the next earliest surviving examples.

Other houses in Aroona Road tend to be somewhat later, dating from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. These include, in chronological order, those examples at No 32 (Robert Cutts, 1963), No 30 (Michael R E Feldhagen, 1963), No 24 (Harry Ernest, 1966), No 35 (Terry Holt, 1967), No 33 (Harry Ernest, 1967), No 27 (John Thompson, 1968), No 31 (Sina Lenko, c1971) and No 20 (Kenneth Edelstein, c1972). These houses all appear to have been commissioned by European émigré clients, while virtually all of the designers (with the notable exception of Woodend-born John Thompson) were of similar background, either first generation migrants born and trained over there (eg Feldhagen from Germany; Cutts from Austria and Lenko from parts unknown, perhaps Yugoslavia) or second-generation migrants (eg Edelstein and Ernest) who qualified in Melbourne. A few of the houses, such as Nos 27, 35 and 30, are individually notable while others, such as Nos 24 and 33, tend to be more representative of the era or of their architect's work in general.



This pattern of settlement was not only evident in Aroona Road but also in the parallel streets that comprised the *Talbot Estate*. In Howitt Road, post-WW2 modernist houses were dominated by the work of Ernest Fooks, whose own residence at No 32 (1963), virtually unaltered when his widow died in 2012, has since been added to the *Victorian Heritage Register*. Fooks was also responsible for the houses at Nos 39 (1952), 43 (1965) and 27 (1978), although the two earlier ones have since been demolished and the later one is in a peculiarly neo-classical style that is far removed from Fooks' early work in the modernist vein. While a striking modernist house at 18 Howitt Road (Holgar & Holgar, 1969) has been altered beyond recognition, that firm's work is otherwise well represented in nearby Lumeah Road, with an excellent two-storey residence at No 82 (1972) and a more modest single-storey one at No 72 (1988), designed for the same clients who commissioned the Howitt Road house two decades earlier. Fooks was responsible for at least three houses in Lumeah Road, at Nos 49 (1967), 13 (1969) and 42 (c1971), while other architects are represented by No 52 (Bernard Slawik, 1967), 53 (Sol Sapir, c1971), 58 (Kurt Elsner, 1967), 70 (Joshua & Mary Pila, 1975) and 78 (Robert Knott, 1963). As is the case in both Aroona Road and Howitt Road, some of these Lumeah Road houses have been demolished (eg Nos 53 and 78), and those that remain include a few individually notable specimens (eg Nos 58 and 82) among others that, while intact and evocative, tend to be more representative of the era.

While the streets within the former *Talbot Estate* contain some notable specimens of post-WW2 architect-designed dwellings, invariably commissioned by European émigré clients from designers of similar background, they tend to survive as scattered individual specimens rather than as a cohesive streetscape. The row of four houses at 43-49 Aroona Road not only stands out as the most expansive remaining group, but also for the inclusion of some of the earliest houses (circa early 1960s) demonstrative of this pattern of re-development.

## References

Lodged Plan No 6,109, dated 1 July 1913.

The Office of Dr Ernest Fooks, "Brick residence, 43 Aroona Road, Caulfield, for Mr & Mrs L Getreu", working drawings, dated November 1961. City of Caulfield Permit No 27,703.

The Office of Dr Ernest Fooks, "Brick residence, No 47 Aroona Road, Caulfield, for Mr & Mrs [redacted]", working drawings, dated 20 August 1962. City of Caulfield Permit No 28,888.

Holgar & Holgar, "Proposed new residence for [redacted]", at No 45 Aroona Road, Caulfield", working drawings, dated 1963. City of Caulfield Permit No 24, 297.

Holgar & Holgar, "Residence for [redacted]", 49 Aroona Road, Caulfield", working drawings, dated 10 November 1970. City of Caulfield Permit No 40,294.

"Japanese style for Caulfield House", *Herald*, 12 February 1965, p 23.

"West blends with east in a great home of ideas", *Australian House & Garden*, January 1966, pp 10-11, 58-59.

Simon Reeves, "Gold-plated doors if you want them: Holgar & Holgar and the Architecture of Opulence," in Ann Marie Brennan & Philip Goad (eds), *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand*. Vol 33 (Melbourne, 2016), pp 568-577.

## Identified by

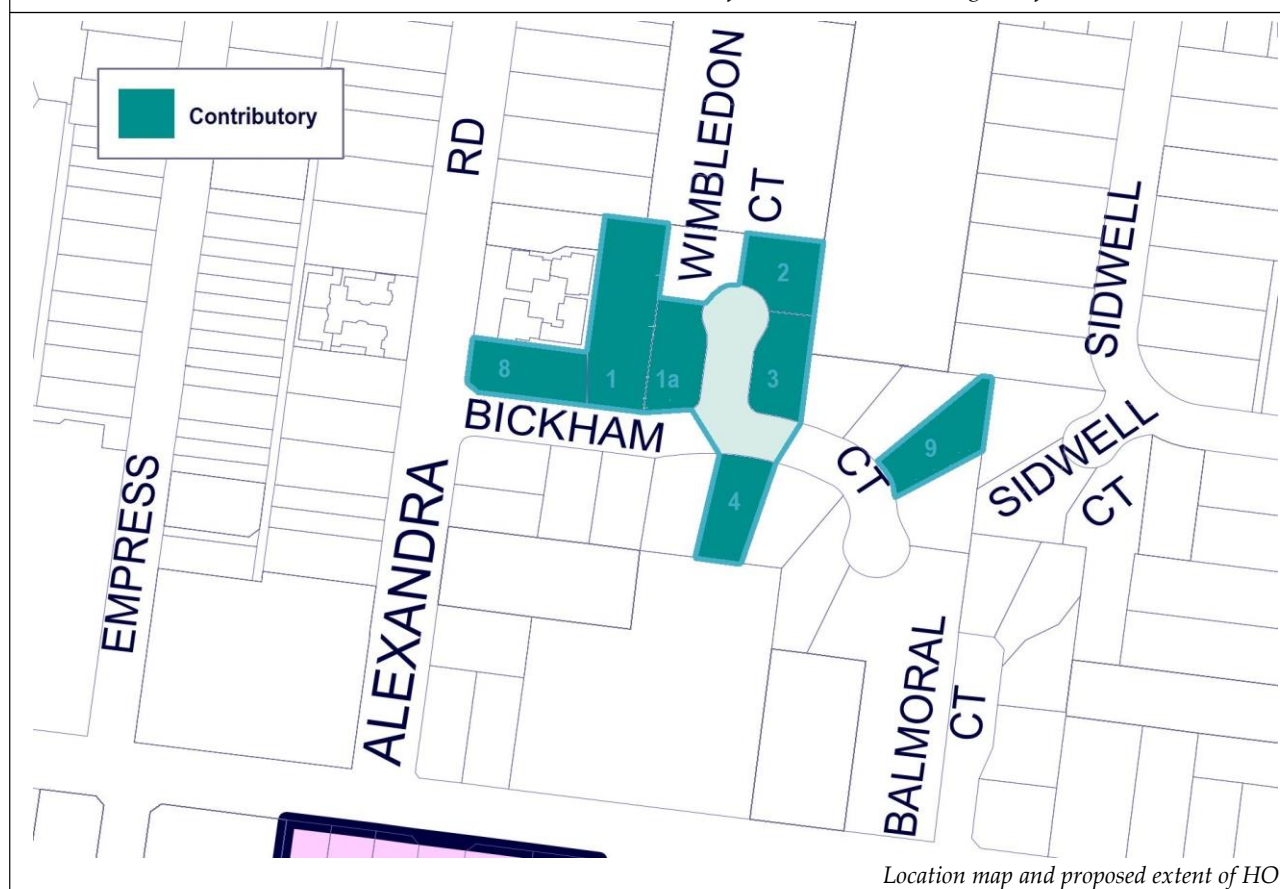
Built Heritage Pty Ltd

(No 47 also identified individually by Heritage Alliance and Glen Eira Historical Society)

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	WIMBLEDON ESTATE PRECINCT	<b>Citation No</b>	P02
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H12
<b>Address</b>	Bickhams/Wimbledon Court ST KILDA EAST	<b>Date/s</b>	1960-1973



North side of Bickhams Court, looking west from No 3, October 2019



Location map and proposed extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential precinct	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent (generally)
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as a heritage precinct		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### *What is significant?*

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct comprises a group of post-WW2 houses in the cul-de-sacs of Bickhams Court and Wimbledon Court, and one adjacent block on Alexandra Street, built after the 1960 subdivision of what had been the Wimbledon Public Tennis Courts, established in 1923 by the eponymous Charles Bickham. With their stark rectilinear massing, flat roofs and large windows, the individual houses are all reflective of the prevailing modernist idiom of the time. Mostly completed during the 1960s (with a single slightly later example from 1972), the houses in the precinct were all designed for European émigré clients by architects of similar background.

The following houses (including any original garages, carports, front fences and hard landscaping where still extant) are deemed to be *contributory* elements in the precinct:

- Bickhams Court: Nos 1, 1a, 3, 4, 9
- Wimbledon Court: No 2
- Alexandra Street: Nos 1/8 and 2/8 (semi-detached pair on corner site)

### *How is it significant?*

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
- Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

### *Why is it significant?*

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct is significant as one of very few cul-de-sac residential subdivisions in the Caulfield area that were created and developed from scratch in the post-WW2 era. By the 1950s, most of the north-western part of the present-day City of Glen Eira was already densely settled, leaving only a few atypical pockets of land for further expansion. The Wimbledon Estate, laid out in 1960 on the site of public tennis courts operated by the Bickham family since 1923, thus provided one of the last opportunities for homebuilders to establish themselves on a new subdivision within a well-established suburb. Consequently, allotments were keenly sought-after and, without exception, would be developed by wealthy European émigré families to create a residential enclave that encapsulated Caulfield's post-WW2 migrant demographic. (*Criterion A*)

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct is significant as small but excellent collection of post-WW2 modernist houses. The earlier houses, erected between 1960 and 1967 and mostly designed by European-trained émigré architects, were all conceived in a consistent hard-edged modernist style, broadly characterised by bold rectilinear massing, flat roofs with broad eaves, and expansive windows. Within this dominant modernist idiom, most of the houses incorporated a degree of embellishment (such as feature walls of stone, slate or tile) that evoked the early '60s fad for applied ornament, famously dismissed by Robin Boyd as 'Featurism'. These contrast with the later house on the south side of Bickhams Court that, of monumental and expressionistic form, demonstrates a return to a purer and more unadorned approach. (*Criterion E*)

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct is significant for associations with a number of architects of Continental European background (including Holgar & Holgar, Robert Rosh, Erwin Kaldor and Harold Shafer) who, consequent to their strong personal and professional links to Caulfield's thriving post-WW2 Jewish émigré community, are known to have been notably active in this part of the present-day City of Glen Eira during the 1950s, '60s and '70s. (*Criterion H*)



## History

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

Bickhams Court and Wimbledon Court were created in 1960 by the subdivision of land owned by the eponymous Charles Bickham, who had operated public tennis courts there for thirty-five years. Born in Fryerstown in Victoria's central goldfields region, Charles Albert Bickham (1880-1965) was a miner's son who initially followed that vocation but, by the time he married in 1912, embraced a different career as an engine driver. Towards the end of the decade, the entire Bickham family (Charles, his parents and two unmarried sisters) relocated to Melbourne and settled in Balaclava. Charles initially continued to work as engine driver but, following the early death of his wife in 1919, decided to embark upon a new venture as a proprietor of public tennis courts.

In early 1923, Bickham opened the L'Arona Public Courts in Tennyson Street, Elwood. An immediate success, it proved so popular that he promptly established a second set of courts off Alexandra Street in nearby St Kilda East. Known as the Wimbledon Public Courts, these opened in March 1923: a local newspaper reported that "the new courts are situated in good surroundings, and an up to date pavilion, fully equipped, is almost completed. The players may have the use of the courts at all times at moderate charges; refreshments will also be available" (*Prahran Telegraph*: 09/03/1923:2). Twelve months later, Bickham established a third venue, the Malvern Road Public Courts, near the corner of Malvern and Glenferrie Road, with an additional four tennis court that brought his total to twenty. By the end of the decade, during which time Charles' younger brother Harry established the Lynton Tennis Courts in Valley Parade, Glen Iris, the total had risen to 35. These four centres remained popular for many years, with the Wimbledon Public Courts often mentioned in the press as a venue for tennis parties, charity matches and open tournaments. Such was its success that, in 1933, the Bickham family (having previously lived beside their original Elwood courts), moved to St Kilda East to take up residence in a large Victorian villa at 34 Balaclava Road, abutting the south boundary of the Wimbledon Courts.

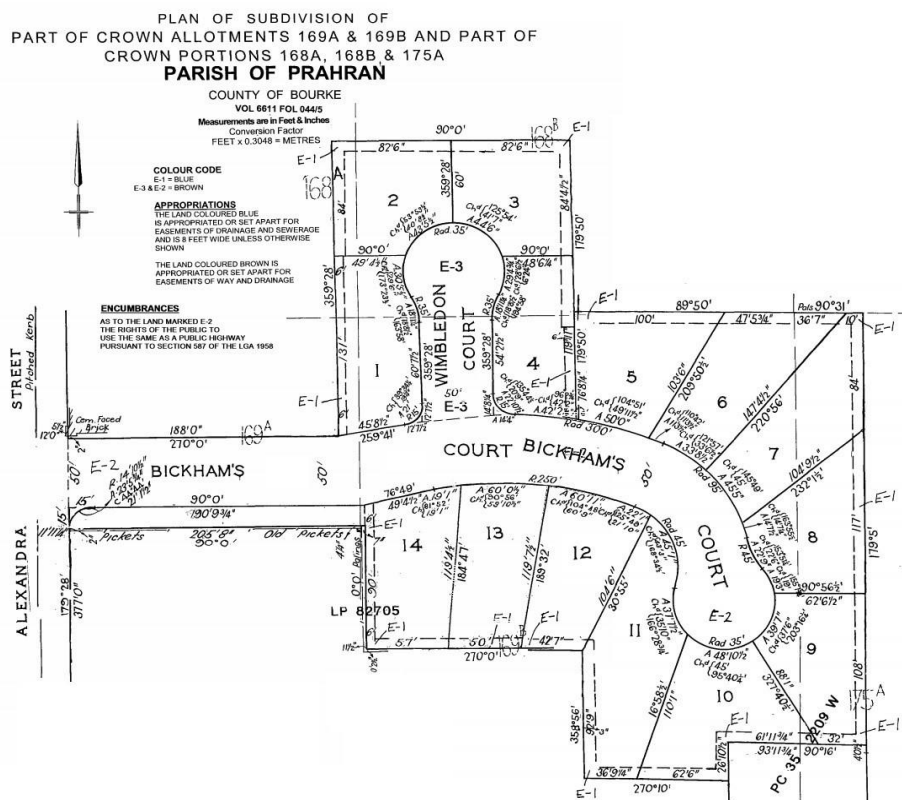


Figure 1: Lodged Plan No 51,982 (1960), showing original subdivision of the Wimbledon Estate

Source: [www.landata.com.au](http://www.landata.com.au)



While the Bickham family's chain of suburban tennis court facilities were well patronised into the post-WW2 era, there was inevitable pressure as such expanses of undeveloped land become more valuable for other purposes. In the mid-1950s, the Lynton Tennis Courts in Glen Iris were sold to J A Tippet, who continued for just a few years before selling the land for residential development. In 1960, the Bickhams opted to follow suit and subdivide the Wimbledon Tennis Courts. The awkwardly T-shaped piece of land, with its narrow frontage to Alexandra Street, was duly carved up to create fourteen allotments with frontage to two new cul-de-sacs: Wimbledon Court (Lots 1-4) and Bickhams Court (Lots 5-14). The Bickham family's existing residence, at 34 Balaclava Road, was retained on a separate block, Lot 15.

The new subdivision, known as the *Wimbledon Estate*, was released for sale in March 1960, when the first "eight magnificent home sites" were offered for sale by auction (*Age*, 19/03/1960:45). All eight blocks were sold for prices between £5,000 and £5,900, realizing a grand total of £41,800; the reporter for the *Age* implying slight incredulity that such high prices would be generated by "eight irregular-shaped home sites without roads" (*Age*, 21/03/1960:11). The first residents of the new estates were a hosiery manufacturer and a builder, who respectively acquired Lots 1 and 4: the two choice corner blocks where Wimbledon Court and Bickhams Court intersected. The two men had much in common: of Polish origin, each had migrated to Australia in the late 1940s and, after humble beginnings, established successful business for themselves.

The hosiery manufacturer born in north-eastern Poland in the early 1930s (*Good Weekend*, 08/04/1989:55). When the region was taken over by the Soviets in 1939, his father was declared a capitalist and he and his mother were exiled to Siberia; he never saw his father again. Returning to Poland in 1945, he and his mother migrated to Australia four years later and settled in Carlton North, where he obtained work in a sock factory. When he and his mother commenced making stockings themselves, this formed the basis of what would become a phenomenally successful hosiery manufacture business.

During the 1950s, the hosiery manufacturer and his wife lived in Kew and later Glen Iris before buying a vacant block on the Wimbledon Estate at St Kilda East. To design their new house, the couple turned to Harry Ernest, a young Melbourne-born architect whom they probably knew through his Polish-born father, Aaron Ernest, proprietor of a well-known bakery in Carlton North. Harry, who graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1953 and promptly launched his own practice, acquired early fame for starkly modernist box-like house that he designed for his parents in Kew, which later appeared in Neil Clerehan's *Best Australian Houses* (1961). The house in Bickhams Court that Ernest designed for the hosiery manufacturer, for which working drawings are dated 8 September 1960, was very much in a similar vein: bold rectilinear massing with expansive full-height windows and a stone-clad feature wall.

The builder who became the other early resident of the *Wimbledon Estate* was Kalman Katz, who was born in the early 1920s in what is now Ukraine, but was residing in Prague at the time of his marriage in 1948. He and his new wife migrated promptly, arriving in Melbourne that October. Little is known of Katz's early activity as a builder, although he had worked with architects Ernest Fooks and Ben Alexander (both of European émigré background) by the time that he purchased land on the Wimbledon Estate in 1960. However, when it came to choosing someone to design his own house, he turned to Czech migrant Robert Rosh (1909-1982), who had been imprisoned in a labour camp during WW2 before migrating to Australia with his wife in 1947. Although qualified as an architect in Europe, Rosh was unable (or disinclined) to become registered as such in Victoria, but, from the early 1950s, fostered a thriving career as a building designer that included industrial, commercial and residential projects, invariably for clients who were fellow European émigrés. Rosh's drawings for the new Katz Residence in Bickhams Court, dated September 1961, proposed a large flat-roofed brick house in a lively Featurist mode, incorporating slate feature walls, an egg-crate pergola and vertical stripes to the boundary fence and garage door.

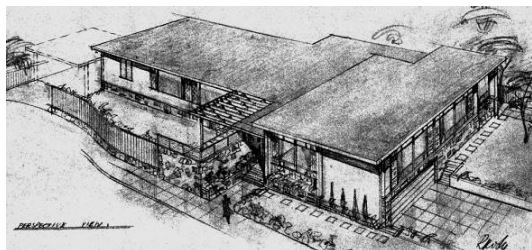


Figure 2: The house at  
3 Bickhams Court (Robert Rosh, 1960)  
Source: City of Glen Eira

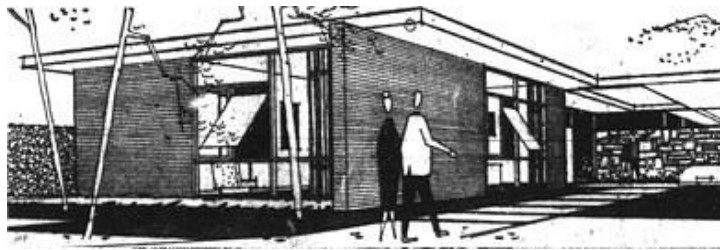


Figure 3: The house 9 Bickhams Court  
(Harry Ernest, 1962)  
Source: *Herald*, 5 July 1963

Such was the post-WW2 cultural milieu in East St Kilda East/Caulfield that the backgrounds of these two original Bickhams Court residents would resonate with those of the estate's subsequent residents. All of those who settled there over the next decade were European émigrés who migrated in the late 1940s, achieved success as self-made businessmen in the 1950s, and then engaged architects of similar background to design new houses on the Wimbledon Estate in the 1960s. After the aforementioned two families, the estate's next resident was a Polish-born clothing manufacturer who acquired Lot 7 (9 Bickhams Court). Born in Warsaw, he had migrated to Australia in 1949 and became involved in the booming Rag Trade. He and his wife resided in a block of flats in Glen Eira Road before electing to settle on the Wimbledon Estate, and, following the lead of their neighbour at No 1a, engaged Harry Ernest to design the new house. Ernest's drawings, dated January 1962, proposed a smaller but not less striking single-storey dwelling, in his trademark minimalist style.

Intriguingly, this wasn't the last time that the same architect would be commissioned by different residents on the *Wimbledon Estate*. In 1963, Hungarian-born architect Erwin Kaldor designed a house for Lot 8 (11 Bickhams Court) for a textile agent who migrated here in 1950 as a stateless refugee. The following year, Kaldor was retained by a Hungarian-born jeweller to design a house on Lot 3 (2 Wimbledon Court). The architectural firm of Holgar & Holgar, comprising Polish-born husband-and-wife John and Helen Holgar, was responsible for two houses on the Wimbledon Estate. The first of these, erected during 1963 on Lot 2 (1 Wimbledon Court), was commissioned by a Polish-born builder named Jack Berk. It was followed, three years later, by a house for a Polish-born manufacturer, built on a previously unsold allotment on Bickhams Court, west of the house that was erected in 1961 by the hosiery manufacturer. On completion, the newer house was designated as 1 Bickhams Court, prompting the neighbouring house, which originally had that address, to be renumbered as 1a.

The intervening years between the two Holgar & Holgar houses saw development of the prime block at the corner of Alexandra Street and Bickhams Court. This became occupied by a semi-detached pair of two-storey dwellings designed by Ermin Smrekar, an Italian-born emigre architect who had only recently commenced his own practice. Smrekar's drawings, dated May 1965, proposed two discrete but connected flat-roofed units that, while addressed to Alexandra Street (designated as Nos 1/8 and 2/8), had their principal frontages to Bickhams Court. Both were initially occupied by European émigré families.

Thus, by the end of the 1960s, all but one of the blocks on the north side of Bickhams Court (and all four in Wimbledon Court) had been developed. Aside from the fact that three architectural offices each designed two houses therein, at least two of the buildings are known to have been built by the same builder: another émigré, Polish-born Max Sachs (*ne* Makysimilian Sachs), who was then a frequent collaborator of Harry Ernest and later worked extensively with Sol Sapir.

Meanwhile, the seven blocks along the south side of Bickhams Court remained vacant. During 1972, an enthusiastic potential resident engaged yet another émigré architect, German-born Tom Jacobi to prepare plans for two different dwellings on adjacent Lot 12 (No 6) and Lot 13 (No 4). Neither of these, however, was built. The following year, the undeveloped Lot 13 was finally built upon by another émigré family, who engaged architect Harold Shafer (also of European descent) to design them a large house of unusual form. With a stark façade dominated by two squat cylindrical towers flanking a blank wall with painted symbol, the building would later be described in the daily press as the “space age” house (*Age* 04/06/1977:17).

The remaining undeveloped blocks on the southern half of the *Wimbledon Estate* would be built upon in the later 1970s and early 1980s. Ermin Smrekar, who designed the semi-detached dwellings at 8 Alexandra Street in 1965, returned to Bickhams Court a decade later to design a large residence on Lot 11 (No 8) for yet another émigré family. It was also during 1975 that the owner of the “space age house” at No 4, erected a smaller and much more conventional flat-roofed brick house on the adjacent site (2 Bickhams Court), while the hitherto unsold block on the south corner of Alexandra Street became the site for a small townhouse development by Polish-born architect Ben Alexander. One of the last additions to the cul-de-sac for many years was a house on Lot 12 (6 Bickhams Court), designed by architect John Saunders for the daughter and son-in-law of original resident Kalman Katz, still living across the road at No 3.

Aside from the Katzes, most of the other original residents of the *Wimbledon Estate* still lived there in the late 1980s, including those at 1 Bickhams Court, 1a Bickhams Court, 9 Bickhams Court, 11 Bickhams Court, 1 Wimbledon Court, 2 Wimbledon Court, and both families at 8 Alexandra Street. From the early 1990s, however, an increasing number of these houses would change ownership as original residents died or downsized. Kalman Katz, one of the first occupants of the *Wimbledon Estate*, fittingly became one of its last survivors: he remained at 3 Bickhams Court for nearly half a century until his death in 2008.

Since the 1990s, the streetscape of the cul-de-sac has been somewhat altered by the substantial alteration or enlargement of several houses, especially those at 2 Wimbledon Court and at 8 Bickhams Court, as well as the demolition of the house at 11 Bickhams Court. A new house now occupies the site.

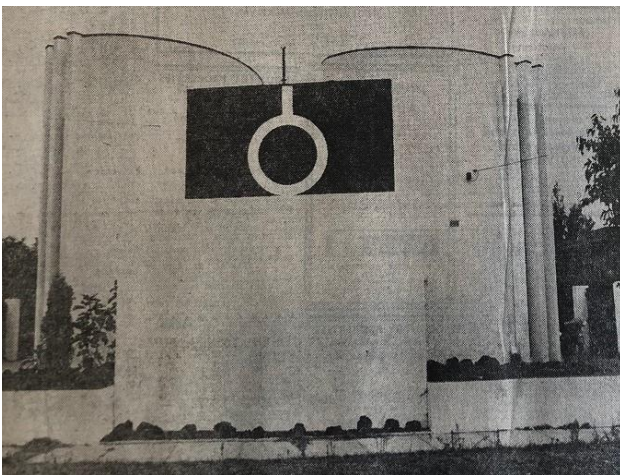


Figure 4: The house at  
4 Bickhams Court (Harold Shafer, 1973)  
Source: *Age*, 4 May 1977



Figure 5: The house at 11 Bickhams Court,  
(Erwin Kaldor, 1963), photographed in 2006  
Source: [www.onthehouse.com.au](http://www.onthehouse.com.au)



## Historical summary of houses

Address	Date	Designer	Builder
8 Alexandra Street	1965	Ermin Smrekar	Unconfirmed
1 Bickhams Court	1967	Holgar & Holgar	Unconfirmed
1a Bickhams Court	1960	Harry Ernest	Max Sachs (attrib)
3 Bickhams Court	1961	Robert Rosh	Kalman Katz (attrib)
4 Bickhams Court	1973	Harold Shafer	Unconfirmed
9 Bickhams Court	1962	Harry Ernest	Max Sachs
2 Wimbledon Court	1964	Erwin Kaldor	Unconfirmed

*These houses, originally also part of the cul-de-sac estate, have since been demolished*

11 Bickhams Court	1963	Erwin Kaldor	Max Sachs
1 Wimbledon Court	1963	Holgar & Holgar	Jack Berk (attrib)

## Description

The seven residential buildings included in the Wimbledon Estate Precinct, erected between 1961 and 1967 (plus a slightly later one from 1972), are unified not only by their close construction dates but also by a consistent Modernist expression typical of that period. With the exception of the duplex on the corner site (8 Alexandra Street), the houses are all detached single family residences. They vary in form: there are two single-storey houses on elongated plans (9 Bickhams Court; 2 Wimbledon Court), two split-level buildings with garages underneath (8 Alexandra Street; 3 Bickhams Court), one double-storey house with a projecting single-storey wing (1a Bickhams Court), and two fully double-storey houses (1a and 4 Bickhams Court).

The six houses from the 1960s, sited along the north side of Bickhams Court and into Wimbledon Court, are all expressed in a stark European Modernist vein. They exhibit bold rectilinear massing, comprising box-like volumes that interlock vertically and/or horizontally. Consequently, they have asymmetrical facades characterised by projecting and recessing planes that accommodate windows, front porches and (in the case of 1 Bickhams Court), a large balcony and double carport. All houses are of brick construction, with two rendered examples (1 and 1a Bickhams Court) and the others in bright orange-coloured face brickwork. Plain wall surfaces are often relieved by feature walls, variously of coursed or uncoursed stonework (1, 3, 9 Bickhams Court, 2 Wimbledon Court, 8 Alexandra Street) or textured mosaic tiling (2 Wimbledon Court). All of the houses have prominently-expressed flat roofs with broad eaves, most with timber lining boards, and expansive windows with multi-paned sashes, often in striking geometric patterns.



Figure 6: North side of Bickhams Court, looking west from No 1 (Holgar & Holgar, 1967)



Figure 7: East side of Wimbledon Court, looking north towards No 2 (Erwin Kaldor, 1964)





Figure 8: 8 Alexandra Street  
(Ermin Smrekar, 1965)



Figure 9: 1a Bickhams Court  
(Harry Ernest, 1960)



Figure 10: 3 Bickhams Court  
(Robert Rosh, 1961)



Figure 11: 9 Bickhams Court  
(Harry Ernest, 1962)



Figure 12: 2 Wimbledon Court  
(Erwin Kaldor, 1964)



Figure 13: 4 Bickhams Court  
(Harold Shafer, 1973)

Built relatively close to their street boundaries, the houses have compact front gardens. Most properties have small areas of lawn and garden beds; some have integrated planter boxes (3-5 Bickhams Court, 2 Wimbledon Court). Most properties have concrete driveways and paths, while some have terrazzo steps and terraces to front porches (8 Alexandra Street, 3 Bickhams Court, 2 Wimbledon Court). A few retain original dwarf walls along their property boundaries. The house at 3 Bickhams Court has an eye-catching vertically striped screen fence and a tall brick wall with tinted bottle-glass panels, enclosing a courtyard with an egg-crate pergola. This house also has a tennis court on the opposite site, occupying the other half of the double-width block.

## Comparisons

While the City of Glen Eira (and particularly the former City of Caulfield) contains an unusually high proportion of fine architect-designed houses from the 1950s, '60s and '70s, these tend to be scattered across established streets in the suburbs of Caulfield, Caulfield North and Caulfield South. The *Wimbledon Estate*, by contrast, represents a more atypical phenomenon whereby the houses were associated with an entirely new subdivision created in the post-WW2 period.

The largest comparator identified to date is the *Matlock Estate* in Caulfield North. Subdivided in 1963, this comprised ten allotments around the curving cul-de-sac of Matlock Court, and three more on Dandenong Road. In much the same way as the *Wimbledon Estate*, sites sold quickly and soon developed with architect-designed residences in a progressive Modernist vein. In Matlock Court, those at Nos 3 (1963), 10 (1964) and 12 (1966) were designed respectively by Harry Ernest, Geoffrey Woodfall and Oscar Gimesy, while Ernest was also responsible for the corner house at 474 Dandenong Road (1964). Since the 1980s, the estate has undergone much redevelopment. Several original houses (including 474 Dandenong Road and 5 Matlock Court) have been razed, and those that remain have all been much altered (including rendering of the face brickwork to Nos 3, 10 and 12 Matlock Court). As such, it can no longer be considered as a potent evocation of post-WW2 residential modernism in the same way as the *Wimbledon Estate*.

Kier Court, off the east side of Kooyong Road in Caulfield North, also developed from the early 1960s. Half the size of Matlock Court, it comprises seven lots: five clustered around the cul-de-sac, and two more flanking the Kooyong Road junction. Its original building stock included two houses by Ernest Fooks, at Nos 1 (1961) and 3 (1963), and another by Harry Ernest on one of the corner sites at 117 Kooyong Road (1963). The streetscape has since been altered by the demolition of both houses fronting Kooyong Road, and also the one at 4 Kiers Court. The Fooks-designed house at No 1 has been altered by rendering and a second storey addition, leaving only the other Fooks house at No 3, a block of flats at No 5, and an elevated box-like house at No 5 (architect unconfirmed) as evidence of this 1960s cul-de-sac estate.

Rather more intact, albeit even smaller in scale, is Balmoral Court, off Balaclava Road in St Kilda East. Developed from 1960, this modest cul-de-sac estate (which abuts the east edge of Bickhams Court) comprises only five allotments, although each is occupied by a flat-roofed brick modernist house. These include one confirmed to have been designed by Kurt Popper (No 4, 1961) and another by Harry Ernest (No 2, 1963). While the four houses fronting Balmoral Court appear to remain substantially intact, the corner house (36 Balaclava Road) has been much altered with a hip-roofed second-storey addition.

## References

- Harry Ernest & Associates, "Two-storey brick residence for [redacted] at Lot 1, Wimbledon Court", working drawings, dated 8 September 1960. City of Caulfield Permit No 25,977. Lodged Plan No 51,982, dated 19 September 1960.
- R Rosh & Associates, "Brick residence & garage at Lot 4, Bickhams Court & Wimbledon Court, Caulfield, for Mr & Mrs [redacted]", working drawings, undated [c1961]. City of Caulfield Permit No 27,344.
- Harry Ernest & Associates, "Brick residence for [redacted] at Lot 7, Bickhams Court, East St Kilda", working drawings dated 30 January 1962.
- "Planned to suit an irregular block", *Herald*, 5 July 1963, p 22.
- E Kaldor, "Proposed new brick residence at Lot No 8 Bickhams Court, Caulfield, for [redacted] working drawings, dated January 1964. City of Caulfield Permit No 30,666.
- E Smrekar, "Two residential units at corner Alexandra Avenue and Bickhams Court, Caulfield", working drawings, dated May 1965. City of Caulfield Permit No 32,594.
- "Designed for an odd-shaped block", *Herald*, 19 September 1965, p 28.
- Holgar & Holgar, "proposed residence at Lot No 2 Bickhams Court, Caulfield, for [redacted] working drawings, not dated [c1967]. City of Caulfield Permit No 35,313.
- "Harold D Shafer, "Brick residence for [redacted] at [Lot] 13 Bickhams Court, St Kilda", working drawings, dated April 1973. City of Caulfield Permit No 43,345.
- "Space age house at St Kilda", *Age*, 4 June 1977, p 17.
- "A grand tribute to tennis", *Age*, 14 April 1993, p 7 (property supplement)

## Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd

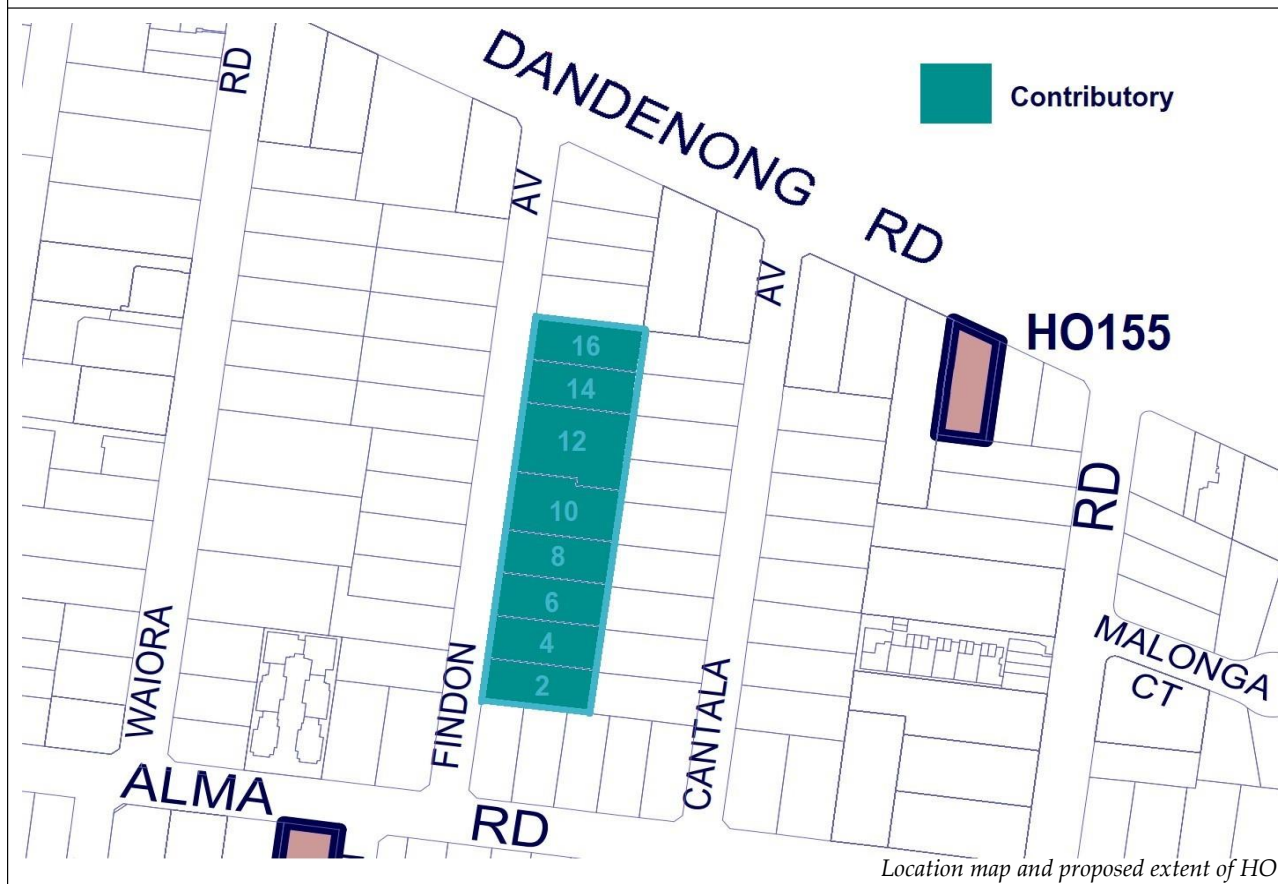




<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	FINDON AVENUE PRECINCT	<b>Citation No</b>	P03
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H12
<b>Address</b>	2-16 Findon Avenue CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1939-1941



East side of Findon Avenue, October 2019



Location map and proposed extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential precinct	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent (generally)
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as a heritage precinct		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees



## Statement of Significance

### *What is significant?*

The Findon Avenue Precinct comprises a row of detached double-storey brick residences of grand scale and prepossessing architectural form, occupying elevated sites on the east side of the street. They were erected over a period of three years following the 1938 auction of allotments on the *Cantala Estate*, created from the subdivision of the eponymous mansion, *Cantala*, former home of the Miller family, which occupied fourteen acres on Dandenong Road. The houses, all built by wealthy families (some of whom engaged leading architects such as Edward Billson, Frederick Morsby and the firm of Yuncken, Freeman Brothers, Griffiths & Simpson), express a range of fashionable architectural styles of the day including Moderne, Functionalist and Georgian Revival.

The following houses are deemed to be *contributory* elements in the precinct:

- Findon Avenue: Nos 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16

### *How is it significant?*

The Findon Avenue Precinct satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

### *Why is it significant?*

The Findon Avenue Precinct is historically significant for associations with the creation and early development of the *Cantala Estate*, which was the largest, most ambitious and most prestigious inter-war residential subdivision in Caulfield. Created from a fourteen-acre property that had been held by the Miller family since 1895, the *Cantala Estate* (released in three stages in 1933, 1938 and 1939) attracted considerable attention from the press and potential buyers. While allotments on the estate were all highly desirable for their proximity to Dandenong Road (and the electric tram line thereon), it was the elevated land along the east side of Findon Avenue that proved to be the most sought-after. These sites, sold and developed within only three years of the 1938 auction, were snapped up by wealthy families who proceeded to build suitably grand dwellings (some designed by noted architects) to exploit the elevated position and bayside views. This continuous row of eight dwellings now remains as the most extant collection of original houses on the entire *Cantala Estate*. (Criterion A)

The Findon Avenue Precinct is aesthetically significant as a cohesive group of stylish and palatial residences of the late inter-war period. Erected by wealthy families who engaged the services of leading architects and builders, the houses exhibit notable consistency through their imposing scale, common setbacks, elevated siting, and various elements (such as expansive windows, balconies and sun decks) that were incorporated to take advantage of bayside views. The houses demonstrate the pervasive influence of the fashionable architectural styles of the period, including outstanding individual examples of the Georgian Revival (No 10), Streamlined Moderne (Nos 4, 12) and Functionalist (No 16), and others (Nos 2, 6, 8 and 14) displaying a confident melding of different styles. Collectively, the houses form a consistent and substantially intact streetscape of uncommonly grand dwellings from the late 1930s and early 1940s. (Criterion E)

## History

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

Findon Avenue was created in 1938 as part of the ongoing subdivision of *Cantala*, former estate of Septimus Miller. His huge property, bounded by Dandenong, Waiora and Alma Road, comprised fourteen acres “laid out in lawns, flower beds, shrubberies and beautiful trees” (*Age*, 20/05/1938:4) on which stood a two-storey mansion, built in 1895 to an eclectic design by architect William Salway. The MMBW plan, dated 1902 (Figure 1), shows that Miller’s vast estate included a monumental entrance gateway on Dandenong Road (with gate lodge at corner of Waiora Road), a network of curving pathways and driveways, a vast stable, two freestanding conservatories, sundry other outbuildings, a kitchen garden on Dandenong Road and cultivation paddock to Alma Road. After Miller died in 1925, his widow, Helen, resided at *Cantala* for a few years before relocating to new house she had built in St Georges Road, Toorak, also christened *Cantala*.

Subdivision of the original *Cantala* estate on Dandenong Road commenced in early 1933, when the western edge was carved up to create nine allotments on the east side of Waiora Road and two more fronting Alma Road. Auctioned on 27 May, all eleven lots were promptly snapped up (*Age*, 29/05/1933:11). Another five years went by, however, before a second phase of subdivision took place, creating 32 residential allotments with frontages to Dandenong Road, Waiora Road and a new north-south avenue linking Dandenong Road and Alma Road. This avenue was named after *Findon*, the palatial Kew mansion that had been occupied from 1871 by Septimus Miller’s father, the Hon Henry Miller (and which was demolished in the 1910s for a residential subdivision that similarly included a new street named Findon Avenue).



Figure 1: Composite of MMBW Plans 1413 & 1414 (1902) showing original extent of Septimus Miller’s vast *Cantala* property (outlined), bounded by Dandenong Road, Waiora Road and Alma Road

Source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria

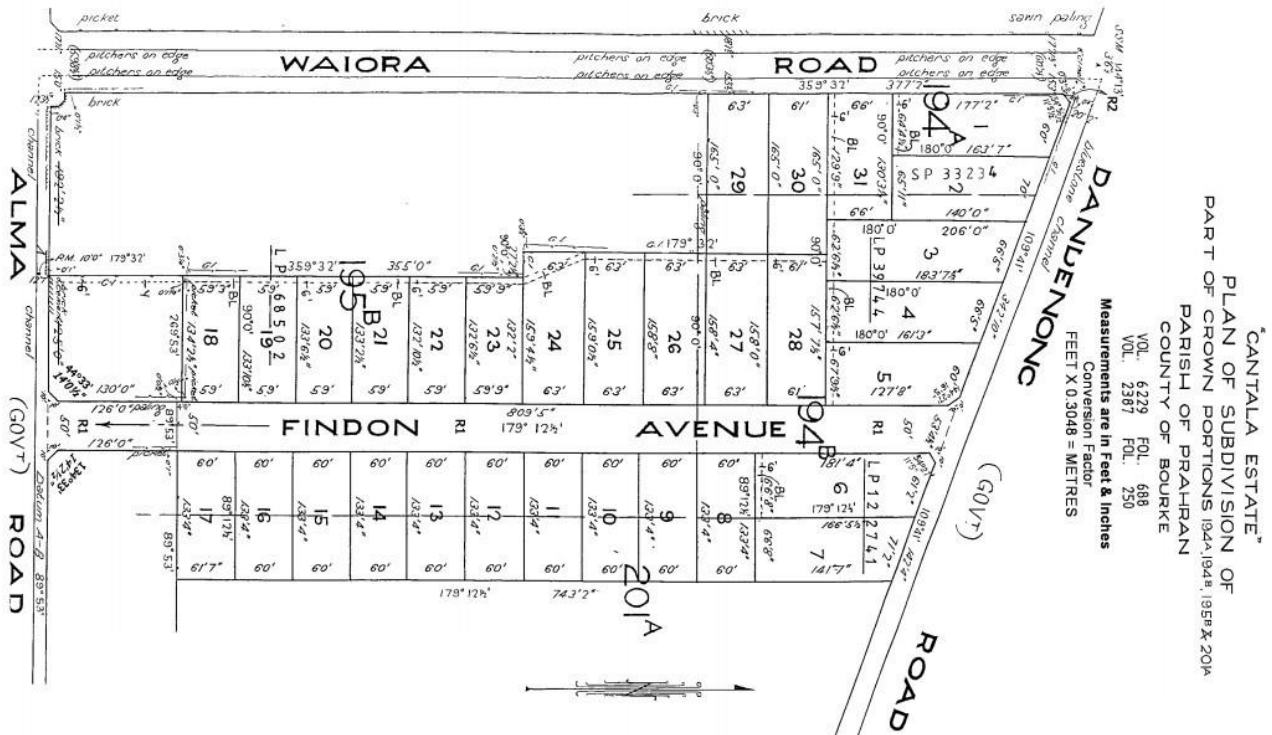


Figure 2: Subdivision plan LP14,813 (1938) showing second release of the Cantala Estate to create 31 allotments with frontages to Dandenong Road, Waiora Road and newly-created Findon Avenue  
Source: [www.landata.com.au](http://www.landata.com.au)

The second release of the *Cantala Estate* generated a certain degree of publicity, with the auction promoted as “one of the largest subdivisational sales for the year” (*Argus*, 20/05/1938:13), and an event “expected to attract a big attendance of buyers” (*Argus*, 22/04/1938:6). This proved far from overstatement: while the estate agents provided seating for five hundred on the day, the crowd of attendees was estimated to be almost three times that number. Bidding was reportedly “brisk, and remained animated until the last lot was disposed of” (*Age*, 23/05/1938:10). While seven prime blocks on Dandenong Road garnered the highest sale prices, it was noted that “there was strong competition from those fronting Findon Road”. Particularly sought-after were those blocks on the elevated east side of the avenue, praised for their “high position and glorious bay views”.

According to the title records, the first lots on the *Cantala Estate* were transferred to individual ownership during the last quarter of 1938, which included most of the blocks along Waiora Road and Dandenong Road, but only two in Findon Avenue: Lot 20 (west side; present-day No 5), and Lot 15 (east side; No 6). On 24 October, the title to the latter block was transferred to a man who had recently engaged architects H Vivian Taylor & Soilleux to design a house for the site. Although the original drawings for his house, dated July 1938, are preserved in the collection of the State Library of Victoria, the house itself was ultimately not built; the owner duly sold his still-vacant block and established himself elsewhere.

It was not until early the following year that the first house would be built on the elevated east site of Findon Avenue, at what is now No 18. The title to this site (Lot 8 of the original estate) was transferred to its new owner on 4 April 1939. Two weeks earlier, on 21 March, the City of Caulfield had issued a building permit for a house, described as a “brick residence, Findon Avenue” to be erected by Bastin & Richardson of Studley Street, Footscray. While the architect’s name was not recorded, the timing of the permit seems to coincide with a tender notice of 31 January, for a two-storey brick residence in Findon Avenue, designed by leading society architect Robert Hamilton & Associates in association with Marcus R Norris.





*Figure 3: Perspective drawing of the house at 12 Findon Avenue (Edward Billson, 1939)*  
 Source: *Herald*, 6 December 1939



*Figure 4: Perspective drawing of the house at 8 Findon Avenue (Frederick Morsby 1940)*  
 Source: *Herald*, 2 April 1941

On 21 March, the same day that a building permit was issued for the new house at No 18, architect Edward Fielder Billson called tenders for another two-storey brick house in Findon Avenue. Commissioned by a leading manufacturer, and erected by builders A C & B Richardson & Son, this large house spread across a double-width block at what is now 12 Findon Avenue. As the site was formed by consolidation of Lot 11 with most of adjacent Lot 12, the land title would not be transferred to the owner's name until as late as 1944.

Land titles to the seven remaining vacant sites on the east side of Findon Avenue were transferred to individual owners over a period of about eighteen months, from June 1939 and January 1941. A flurry of house construction followed in parallel. In May 1939, the City of Caulfield issued a building permit for a "large brick villa and garage" in Findon Avenue, owned by a woman who was a member of a prominent and wealthy family that had made its fortune in meat exporting. Her new house at 10 Findon Avenue (Lot 13) was designed by sought-after society architects Yuncken Freeman Brothers & Griffiths, leading exponents of the fashionable Georgian Revival style, and erected by Pollard Brothers. In July 1939, a permit was issued for "large brick house" in Findon Avenue. Erected by builder J A Trencher, this was located at No 6 (Lot 15), the same site for which H Vivian Taylor & Soilleux had designed a house (unbuilt) back in 1938.

Thus, by the end of 1939, four new houses had already been completed on the east side of Findon Avenue, at Nos 6, 10, 12 and 18. In March 1940, architect Frederick Morsby called tenders for a two-storey brick house in Findon Avenue, commissioned by a manager. Erected by Carnegie builder C L McIntosh, this new house filled the vacant block at No 8 (Lot 14), between the recently-completed residences at Nos 6 and 10.

The four remaining vacant sites on the east side of Findon Avenue were all developed during 1941. The first half of that year saw building permits issued for new houses at No 2 (January 1941), Nos 4 and 14 (both April 1941), and No 16 (May 1941). The original owners of these houses were (respectively) a sales representative, a grocer and two manufacturers. While no architects have been conclusively linked with the four houses, those at Nos 2 and 4 are known to have both been erected by builder S H Hough of Malvern, No 14 was the work of local designer/builder J W Fairbanks & Sons, and the owner of No 16 was also credited as its builder (although he was evidently not a builder by trade).



Befitting the prestige of the *Cantala Estate*, the original residents along the east side of Findon Avenue were wealthy individuals. While the owner of No 10 hailed from old money, most of her neighbours either held esteemed positions in major firms, or were self-made businessmen. The owner of No 2, was the Victorian representative for northern Tasmania's pre-eminent daily newspaper, the *Launceston Examiner*, while the owner of No 4, was the proprietor of a venerable licensed grocery in High Street, St Kilda (*Age*, 25/02/1978:36). The owner of No 12 not only ran a successful hosiery mill in Brunswick under his own name, but also served as a co-director of a woollen mill in Abbotsford, with several other businessmen including his Findon Avenue neighbours at Nos 14 and 16. It remains unclear whether these three men knew each other before they purchased adjoining properties in the same street, or whether their professional association subsequently arose from living nearby.

With some of these earliest residents of Findon Avenue engaging leading architects of the day to design their new houses, press attention inevitably followed. The adjacent residences at Nos 10 and No 12 were both reported in the property column of *Herald* newspaper, lauded for the way in which they were designed to exploit their elevated sites. The former house ("situated on the highest part of the *Cantala Estate* and commanding an extensive view of the Bay") incorporated a sun deck with "simple white railings"; a "Colonial influence" was also evident in the "smooth white painted stucco", "roof of green shingle tiles" and "wrought iron grille at the entrance designed with classical feeling" (*Herald*, 17/01/1940:12). Although conceived in a sharply contrasting Streamlined Moderne style, the adjacent house at No 12 was similarly praised for the way it responded to its elevated site ("planned as a trap for the sun and to invite delightful bay views, this distinctive home has been erected on a picked block of the famous *Cantala Estate* in Findon Avenue, Caulfield").

During 1940, both houses would be published further afield, by Sydney-based journals. In February, the house at No 10 appeared in the architectural section of the venerable *Art in Australia*, in which it was described as "very much apropos of Colonial architecture", with specific praise for its "slender columned entry porch and gabled end with returned eaves and mock window, typical of Georgian architecture" (*Art in Australia*, 23/02/1940:83). In November, the house at No 12 was illustrated in *Building* magazine (which observed that "the nautical aspect of streamlining rather suggests itself in the lines of this residence") as well as a slender monograph, entitled *Fifty Modern Homes*, issued by the same publishers.



Figure 5: The house at 10 Findon Avenue  
(Yuncken Freeman, 1939)

Source: *Art in Australia*, 23 February 1940



Figure 6: The house at 12 Findon Avenue  
(Edward Billson, 1939)

Source: *Building*, 25 November 1940

The final architectural hurrah for Findon Avenue arrived in early 1941, when the recently-completed house at No 8 (“a distinctive suburban home”) appeared in the *Herald*. It was observed yet again that “situated on the highest part of the *Cantala Estate*, attention has been taken of a fine view across the bay”, in this case “by provision of large plate glass landscape windows to all front rooms” and “a roomy open balcony”.

Few of the original residents of these houses were destined to remain in Findon Avenue for a long time. The owner of No 18 died in 1944, followed a year later by the owner of No 4, although the latter’s widow would continue to live in the house for another three decades. The original residents of Nos 2, 8, 14 and 16 all moved elsewhere during the 1950s. The woman at No 10 remained there until her death in the mid-1970s; her longtime neighbor at No 12 died soon afterwards, as did the widowed resident of No 4. The last survivor of Findon Avenue’s original pre-war residents was the hosiery manufacturer’s widow at No 12, who remained there until her death in May 1984, aged 91 years. Four months later, her former home was offered for sale by auction, promoted as “an outstanding gentleman’s residence with tennis court, gas central heating and superb bay views” (*Age*, 30/08/1984:12). The house, seemingly unaltered at the time of the sale, was refurbished by a subsequent owner, whose changes include a new projecting balcony to the street facade. Aside from this, and the more recent loss of the relatively modest house at No 18 (demolished 2009), the original pre-war houses along the east side of Findon Avenue still appear substantially intact when seen from the street.

#### Historical summary of houses

<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designer</i>	<i>Builder</i>
2 Findon Ave	1941	Unconfirmed	S H Hough
4 Findon Ave	1941	Unconfirmed	S H Hough
6 Findon Ave	1939	Unconfirmed	J A Trencher
8 Findon Ave	1940	Frederick Morsby	C L McIntosh
10 Findon Ave	1939	Yuncken Freeman etc	Pollard Brothers
12 Findon Ave	1939	Edward F Billson	A C & B Richardson
14 Findon Ave	1941	J W Fairbanks & Son	J W Fairbanks & Son
16 Findon Ave	1941	Unconfirmed	Morris Pitt

#### **Description**

The Findon Avenue Precinct comprises a row of eight detached houses that are prominently sited on the elevated blocks along the east side of the street. These houses are not only consistent in their dates of construction (ie, erected in a relatively narrow timespan between 1938 and 1941) but for their scale, setback and overall form. All eight houses are large, double-storey residences of brick construction, with a generally grand character that hints at the wealth and social status of their original owners. All designed to take advantage of bayside views afforded by their elevated allotments, the houses variously incorporate sun decks (Nos 4, 6, 10, 12) and/or balconies (Nos 12, 14, 16) and uncommonly large windows (No 4, 6, 10, 12, 16).

Within this overall consistency, there are a few variations. While most of the houses are rendered, those at No 2 and 4 are of face brickwork, respectively in clinker and orange tones. All of the houses are double-storeyed, but that at No 2 is the only one where the second floor level is articulated as an attic storey (**west facing attic window is a non-original element**). The large house at No 12, the only one to occupy a double-width block, consequently presents an uncommonly elongated façade to the street that contrasts with the other houses that are more conventionally double-fronted (No 6, 8, 12) or even triple-fronted (No 2, 4, 14). The larger house at No 12 is also the only one of the eight houses with an actual flat roof; most of the others have hipped roofs clad in terracotta tiles (in a few cases, partially concealed by parapets) while one house, at No 10, has a gabled roof with slate cladding.





*Figure 7: 2 Findon Ave (1941)*



*Figure 8: 4 Findon Ave (1941)*



*Figure 9: 6 Findon Ave (1939)*



*Figure 10: 8 Findon Avenue  
(Frederick Morsby, 1940)*



*Figure 11: 10 Findon Avenue  
(Yuncken Freeman, 1939)*



*Figure 12: 16 Findon Avenue  
(architect unknown, 1941)*



*Figure 13: 12 Findon Avenue  
(Edward Billson, 1939)*



*Figure 14: 14 Findon Avenue  
(J W Fairbanks & Son, 1941)*

There also is a degree of stylistic variety amongst the houses, reflecting both progressive and conservative tastes in domestic architecture of the late 1930s and early 1940s. The simple articulation of the triple-fronted attic-storey clinker brick house at No 2 contrasts with the mannered character of the rendered Georgian Revival house at No 10, with multi-paned windows, louvred shutters and side portico. The streetscape is dominated by houses in the fashionable Moderne idiom, which incorporate such typical elements as corner windows, horizontal banding or stringcourses, and curved edges; a few have particularly striking features such as projecting half-round bays (No 6, 12 and 16), the last of which forms a stairwell with double-height multi-paned glazing.

Set well back from the street on their elevated sites, most of the houses have expansive front lawns or terraced gardens raised above a masonry retaining wall (or a series of walls), typically with formalised landscaping of clipped hedges, low shrubs or creepers. Some of the properties incorporate new garages on the street, but these not considered to be intrusive.

## Comparisons

The subdivision of the fourteen-acre *Cantala* property, held by Miller family for over four decades, was a significant and high-profile undertaking during the 1930s. With a total of 64 residential allotments sold off in three stages (11 lots in 1933, 31 lots in 1938 and the final 21 lots in 1939), the *Cantala Estate* was one of the largest releases of residential land in Caulfield during a period when the grounds of many venerable local mansions were carved up for closer settlement. As such, the building stock along the east side of Findon Avenue can be compared with that on the east side (Nos 1-21), both sides of Cantala Avenue (Nos 1-3, 9-17, and Nos 2, 4, 10-12), the south side of Dandenong Road (Nos 424 -446), the north side of Alma Road (Nos 310 to 330), and the northern end of the east side of Waiora Road (Nos 14-18).

The north side of Alma Road, east of Waiora Road, is largely characterised by unprepossessing single-storey 1930s brick houses (eg Nos 322, 324, 330), with only one larger two-storey residence (No 328), in a grander Tudor Revival mode. The modestly-scaled and fairly generic dwellings are not only smaller and less architectural distinguished than those on the east side of Findon Avenue but, interspersed with more recent development (eg houses at Nos 316 and 318, and a block of villa units at No 310), do not even form a consistent pre-war streetscape. This lack of cohesion becomes even more pronounced along the contiguous east side of Waiora Road, where none of the original pre-war houses appears to survive today.

Low cohesion is also evident in the other streetscapes within the boundaries of the *Cantala Estate*. It is worth noting that, while the blocks on the east side of Findon Avenue were amongst the first to be purchased and developed in the late 1930s, comparable development along the west side of Findon Avenue, and both sides of Cantala Avenue, was delayed by the increasing gravity of WW2 (and the consequent introduction of restrictions on private residential construction).

While all nine allotments on the east side of Findon Avenue had been built upon by 1942, only five houses had appeared on the corresponding west side: Nos 7 and 9 (both 1939), Nos 1 and 21 (1940) and No 17 (1941). Two have been confirmed as the work of noted architects: No 1 was designed by Reid & Pearson, and No 7 by Sydney, Smith & Ogg. With further development hampered by WW2, it was not until the late 1940s that house construction resumed in Findon Avenue, when two new dwellings were built at Nos 13 (erected by builder John Seccull for his own use) and 19. The street would not completely fill out until the early 1950s, with houses at Nos 3, 11 and 15. With three of the original pre-war houses (at Nos 1, 9 and 17) demolished in recent decades, the last two survivors (at Nos 7 and 21) now hardly form a cohesive streetscape amongst the subsequent layer of post-WW2 infill.

A similar pattern was evident in the parallel thoroughfare of Cantala Avenue, which was formed in 1939 as part of the third and final release of the *Cantala Estate*. By the early 1940s, eleven of the seventeen blocks fronting Cantala Avenue had been built upon: five new houses on the east side (Nos 2, 4, 6, 12 and 14) and six on the west side (Nos 1, 3, 9, 11, 15 and 17). One of these has been confirmed as the work a noted architect: the Colonial-style brick residence at No 3, designed circa 1940 by Bates, Smart & McCutcheon (*Age*, 12/03/1960:42). But, as was the case with the west side of Findon Avenue, the remaining vacant sites in Cantala Avenue would not fill out until the 1950s, when new houses were built at Nos 5, 8, 10 and 16, followed by at least two more, at Nos 7 and 12, dating from the early 1960s. Quite a few of the pre-war dwellings in Cantala Avenue still stand, including the aforementioned Colonial-style house at No 3 (by Bates, Smart & McCutcheon), an even grander Georgian Revival house on a double-width block at No 15, and others in contrasting styles such as the Moderne (eg No 11) or Tudor Revival (eg No 6, 17). While these large brick residences may be broadly comparable, as individual specimens, to those on the east side of Findon Avenue, they do not combine to form a cohesive streetscape.



It is only along the Dandenong Road frontage of the *Cantala Estate* where a comparably cohesive pre-war streetscape remains: an uninterrupted row of large brick residences or blocks of flats between Waiora Road and Findon Avenue. Chief amongst these is a particularly prepossessing Moderne-style rendered house, designed by architect W H Merritt, on a double-width block at No 430-432 (*Herald*, 08/06/1940:22). However, even this streetscape consists of only four individual buildings, half of what survives in nearby Findon Avenue. Pre-war building stock along this part of Dandenong Road is otherwise represented by only a few isolated individual specimens, such as by the *Olgita* flats at Nos 440, and a large cream brick house at No 446, scattered amongst the later post-WW2 development.

### References

Lodged Plan No 14,813, dated 7 October 1938.

“Modernist planning for home at Cantala Estate”, *Herald*, 6 December 1939, p 19.

“Colonial influence in new home design”, *Herald*, 17 January 1940, p 12.

“Glendalough, Findon Ave, Caulfield, Melbourne”, *Art in Australia*, 23 February 1940, pp 82-83.

“A Streamlined Home”, *Building*, 25 November 1940, p 23.

“Modern home built on Cantala Estate”, *Herald*, 2 April 1941, p 14.

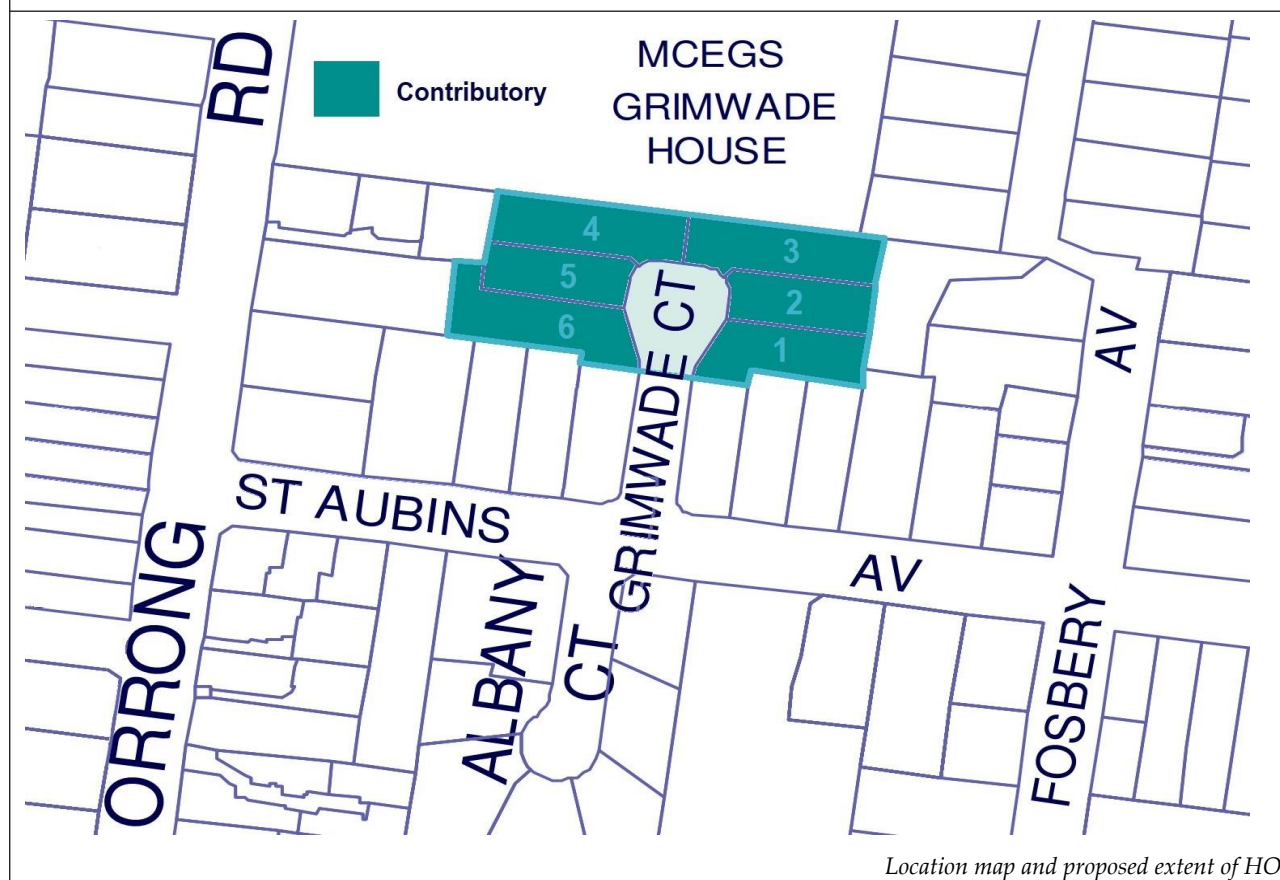
### Identified by

Built Heritage Pty Ltd

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	GRIMWADE COURT PRECINCT	<b>Citation No</b>	P04
<b>Other name/s</b>		<b>Melway ref</b>	58 H12
<b>Address</b>	1-6 Grimwade Court CAULFIELD NORTH	<b>Date/s</b>	1935-1940



Grimwade Court looking north-west, October 2019



Location map and proposed extent of HO

<b>Heritage Group</b>	Residential building (private)	<b>Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Residential precinct	<b>Intactness</b>	Excellent
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as a heritage precinct		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### *What is significant?*

The Grimwade Court Precinct comprises a cluster of six large detached brick houses built between 1935 and 1940 following the creation of a 1928 cul-de-sac subdivision from the former site of the Victorian mansion, *St Aubins*. The houses, built by different owners who selected their own architects, reflect the fashionable Moderne and Tudor Revival styles of the period. While varying in their articulation and detailing, they are broadly similar in form, scale and setback.

The following houses are deemed to be *contributory* elements in the precinct:

- Grimwade Court: Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

The significant fabric is deemed to include the exterior of all six original houses (and original garages) as well as original brick walls to driveways and street boundaries, and other elements of the front garden that contribute to the inter-war character of the precinct.

### *How is it significant?*

The Grimwade Court Precinct satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

### *Why is it significant?*

The Grimwade Court Precinct is historically significant as an exceptional example of an interwar cul-de-sac estate developed on the former site of a Victorian-era mansion. From the 1910s, this pattern of settlement became increasingly common in Melbourne's desirable inner-southern suburbs as demand for residential allotments rapidly outstripped the need for grand mansions in expansive grounds. Characteristically, sprawling Victorian-era properties were nibbled away by subdivision until the original residence remained with a nominal curtilage. Grimwade Court, created in 1928 when the mansion *St Aubins* (originally fronting Orrong Road) was finally demolished, was conceived as a high-end development, taking its name from the adjacent private school. Although subsequent development was delayed by the Depression, the cul-de-sac filled out in the second half of the 1930s as the blocks were snapped up and built upon by wealthy residents (most of whom already lived in the area) who saw a rare opportunity to furnish themselves with a grand residence in an exclusive new enclave. As such, Grimwade Court is quite distinct from contemporaneous cul-de-sac estates more typically created by a single builder/developer who erected all the houses and then sold them off individually. (*Criterion A*)

The Grimwade Court Precinct is aesthetically significant as an intact and cohesive cluster group of large detached brick dwellings, erected within a few years of each other in the later 1930s and early 1940s. Although designed by different architects for different clients, the six houses display a notable sense of consistency in their scale (ie double-storey), materials (ie, brick and terracotta tile), articulation (ie, asymmetrical double-fronted facades), setbacks and general sense of grandeur. With four of the houses designed in the Streamline Moderne idiom and two in the Tudor Revival mode, they collectively illustrate the two parallel trends in domestic architecture of the period, favoring progressive and conservative design respectively. Even within the framework of their stylistic similarities, the houses are distinct in their form and detailing. This melding of cohesion and individuality has formed a striking residential enclave, enhanced by the retention of original front walls, driveways, garages and front gardens that, with their expansive lawn areas, garden beds, low plantings and mature trees, remain highly evocative of the interwar period. (*Criterion E*)

## History

*Note: Identifying details of property owners and their families have been deleted as per Council direction*

The site of Grimwade Court, on the north side of St Aubins Avenue, was originally occupied by the eponymous mansion, *St Aubins*, the grounds of which extended all the way to Orrong Road. Built for accountant Henry William Danby, *St Aubins* is first recorded in the rate book for 1880-81 as a twelve-roomed brick house on the west side of Orrong Road. Towards the end of that decade, it was described as “a lovely home, standing in a picturesque position which dominates the heights of Balaclava” (*Leader*, 16/12/1889:11). After Danby died in late 1890, his widow rented the property to others until her own death in 1903. Seven years later, the vast seven-acre property was carved up to form the *St Aubins Estate* (“23 splendid villa sites with frontage to Orrong Road, St Aubins Avenue and Jersey Street”), with the mansion itself (“a substantial and commodious brick family residence”) retained on a smaller block, measuring 300x350 feet, on St Aubins Avenue (*Argus*, 24/09/1910:2). In 1920, the mansion was acquired by clergyman, Robert Horne, who, eight years later, succumbed to inevitable development pressure and sold the property to George Seeley, a builder from Malvern, who clearly intended to raze the mansion and subdivide its grounds for residential use (Certificate of Title, 4298/572).

In late 1928, a plan of subdivision was gazetted for a small estate of eight allotments: six fronting to a new cul-de-sac (named Grimwade Court, after the adjacent private school, *Grimwade House*), and two corner blocks to St Aubins Avenue (Lodged Plan No 12,737, dated 01/11/1928). However, work appears to have progressed slowly, doubtless stymied by the onset of the Depression. Little had been achieved by April 1930, when the City of Caulfield’s annual statement of accounts for the previous year noted a deposit lodged by Messrs Sealy, Lee & Company for drainage works at Grimwade Court and St Aubins Avenue (*Prahran Telegraph*, 17/04/1930:2). The first block of land to be sold was Lot 1, on the east corner of Grimwade Court and St Aubins Avenue, which was acquired in early 1932 by an engineer, who promptly built a house thereon.

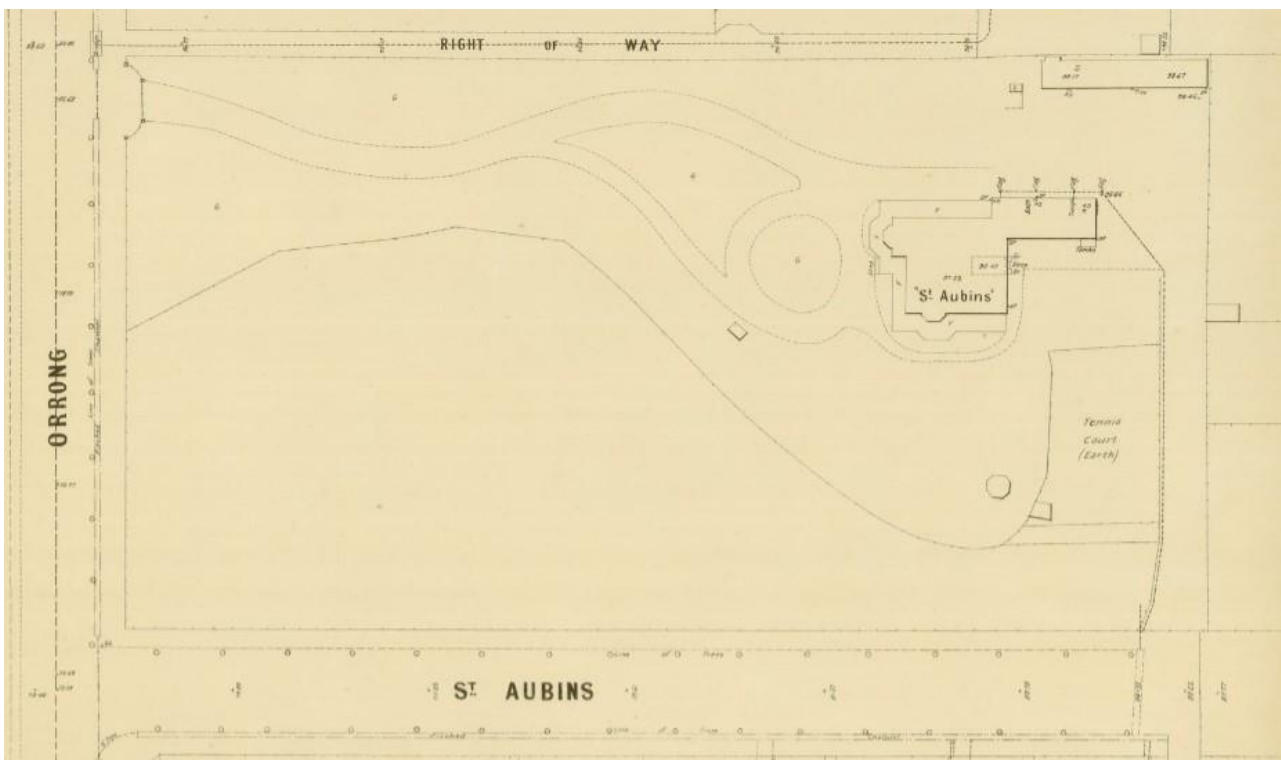


Figure 1: Excerpt of MMBW Plan (1902), showing H W Danby’s estate, *St Aubins* prior to early twentieth century subdivision, and demolition of mansion to create Grimwade Court  
 Source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria



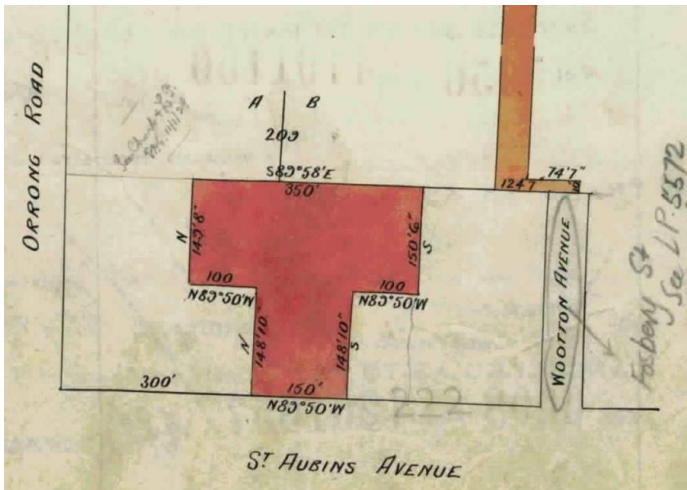


Figure 2: The reduced curtilage of *St Aubins* at the time of its purchase by Robert Horne in 1920  
Source: [www.landata.com.au](http://www.landata.com.au)

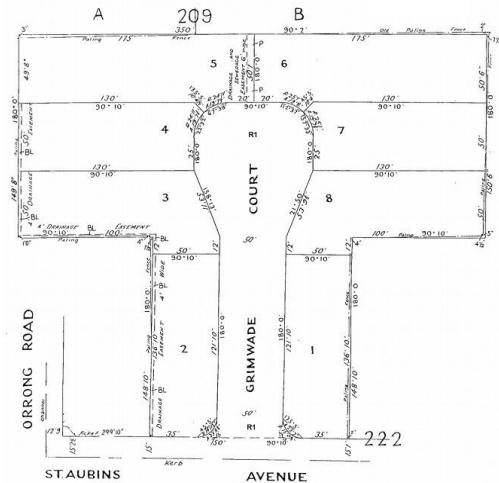


Figure 3: Detail of Lodged Plan No 12,737 (1928), showing layout of Grimwade Court  
Source: [www.landata.com.au](http://www.landata.com.au)

There would be no further development until after 1934, when the developers prepared to sell off the remaining vacant blocks. It was at this time that the adjacent private school, *Grimwade House*, took belated exception to the appropriation of its brand. In a written complaint to the City of Caulfield, the school insisted that, as its name acknowledged the Grimwade family's donation of the site it now occupied, "it would detract from the significance of the memorial if neighbouring places were allowed to bear similar names" (*Argus*, 05/09/1934:17). The Town Clerk pointed out that the name had been approved by Council "three or four years earlier" (ie, when subdivision was first gazetted), while one Councillor quipped that "there might be better sales if the name were changed to Gloucester Court". Although it was resolved that the developers be approached to submit an alternative name, nothing clearly came of the matter: Grimwade Court it remained. In December 1934, the first of the remaining allotments was sold: Lot 2, on the west corner of St Aubins Avenue, which was acquired by a prospective homebuilder. Early the following year, tenders were called for construction of a single-storey brick dwelling on the site, designed by architects R M & M H King (*Argus* 29/05/1935:3, 20/06/1935:13).

During 1935, in anticipation of further construction, work resumed on formalising the subdivision. In February, surveyors Tuxen & Millar called tenders for the removal of 500 cubic yards of sand at Grimwade Court (*Argus*, 02/02/1935:13). In August, the MMBW included Grimwade Court in a list of new subdivisions shortly to be connected to the mains water supply (*Argus*, 28/08/1935:20). It was also during this year that the first allotment in the cul-de-sac property, Lot 6 (3 Grimwade Court) was sold. Its new owner was an engineer, who promptly had a two-storey brick house erected thereon, by builder Stewart Handasyde (*Age*, 26/11/1935:18). In December, the five remaining vacant blocks on the subdivision were acquired by Hume Investments Pty Ltd, a property development company. Finally, early the following year, the City of Caulfield called tenders for the construction of Grimwade Court itself (*Argus*, 01/02/36: 27).

The second half of the 1930s saw all five remaining vacant blocks in Grimwade Court sold and developed with grand two-storey brick residences. All of these are likely to have been architect-designed, although not all have been conclusively attributed. During 1936, a commercial traveller engaged architect Clive Lord to design a house on Lot 5 (4 Grimwade Court) in the Tudor Revival style. A building permit was issued in March 1937, and construction (by Pollard Brothers) duly ensued. Many years later, the widowed owner recalled Lord's fastidious attention to detail ("He came out to check things every single day... I doubt many architects do that now."), noting that he personally selected each individual brick from the kilns (*Age*, 07/02/1983:23).

In late 1937, architect W H Merritt called tenders for a two-storey brick residence in Grimwade Court (Age, 16/10/1937:15). Located on Lot 8 (1 Grimwade Court), it was commissioned by a skin merchant. The adjacent house at Lot 7 (2 Grimwade Court) duly followed. This was designed for a grazier by architect Walter Mason, and erected by builder R B Hallett. Upon completion, both houses were lauded in the daily press, with illustrated profiles in the respective architectural columns of the *Herald* (15/06/1938:15) and *Argus* (11/05/1939:10) newspapers. The grazier's elegant Tudor Revival residence, which he named *Green-Halt*, was also the subject of a five-page feature article in the popular journal *Australian Home Beautiful* (01/08/1939:17-21), in which it was praised as "a modern home in an Old World setting". With the article appearing some time after completion of the house, it could be noted that "the garden already shows great promise of beauty. Crazy paths run here and there through green lawns and terraces formed of Broadford stone give a welcome break in the scheme".

The last two vacant blocks in the estate, Lots 3 and 4 (Nos 6 and 5 Grimwade Court) were developed during 1940, with both sites purchased by prominent Jewish businessmen. The house at No 6, for which a building permit was issued in February, was commissioned by a manufacturer and erected by builder Norman Dess. The adjacent house at No 5, for a merchant, duly followed. Its designer/builder remains unconfirmed.

Thus, by the start of 1941, all eight of the allotments in the Grimwade Court subdivision had been purchased and developed. The estate's original residents represented a group of typical middle-class middle-aged professionals. At the time that they took up residence, the males were aged from their late thirties to early fifties and held white collar jobs such as engineers, agents, manufacturers, and a commercial traveller. Most of the couples had been married for some time, although the couples at Nos 1 and 2 had only recently wed when their new houses were completed. Several of the other couples had previously resided elsewhere in the area, variously in Caulfield, Elsternwick or Elwood.

Some of Grimwade Court's original residents remained there for a short period. The man who built the first house in the cul-de-sac in 1935, had already sold it by 1940. The owner of No 5 died in 1942, followed by the owner of No 4 in 1946, although the latter's widow continued to live there. The families at Nos 1, 2 and 6 would all remain in residence well into the post-WW2 era. By the mid-1960s, only the houses at Nos 2, 4 and 6 retained their original occupants, and only the widowed owner of No 4 by the mid-1970s. The last of the Grimwade Court's original residents, she finally sold her house in the early 1980s, after nearly fifty years in residence.



Figure 4: The Moderne-style house at 1 Grimwade Court (W H Merritt, 1937-38)  
Source: *Herald*, 15 June 1938

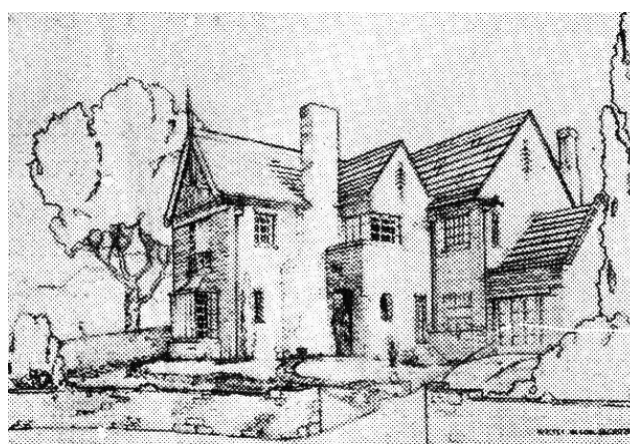


Figure 5: The Tudor Revival house at 2 Grimwade Court (Walter Mason, 1938-39)  
Source: *Australian Home Beautiful*, Aug 1939

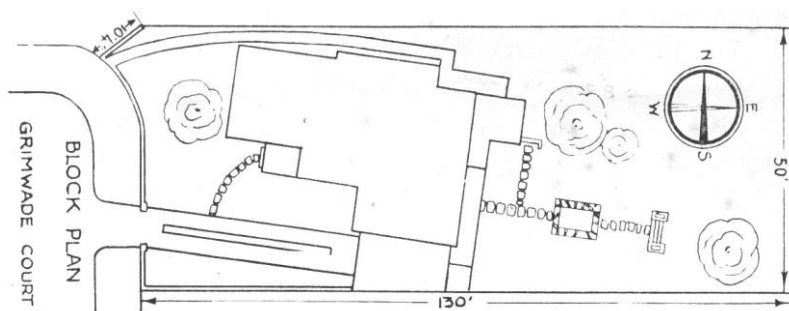


Figure 6: Site plan of the grazier's house at No 2, showing original garden layout to front and rear.

Source: *Australian Home Beautiful*, Aug 1939

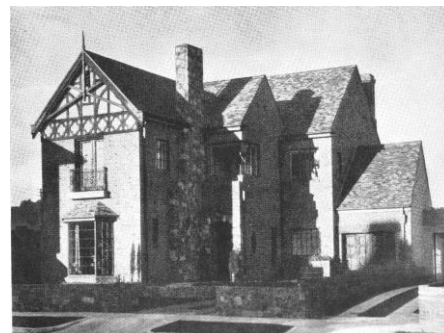


Figure 7: Early photograph of the grazier's house at No 2.

Source: *AHB*, Aug 1939

Partly consequent to this low rate of ownership turnover, the properties in the Grimwade Court estate remained significantly intact well into the 1970s. Towards the end of that decade, the single-storey house at 3a St Aubins Street, erected in 1935, was sold and demolished for construction of a small-scaled block of flats. Its counterpart on the opposite corner, at No 5, would also be razed for redevelopment. However, the six original houses that radiate around the cul-de-sac of Grimwade Court have since remained as a virtually unaltered streetscape.

#### Historical summary of houses

Address	Date	Designer	Builder
1 Grimwade Court	1937	W H Merritt	Unconfirmed
2 Grimwade Court	1938	Walter Mason	R B Hallett
3 Grimwade Court	1935	Unconfirmed	Stewart Handasyde
4 Grimwade Court	1937	Clive Lord	Pollard Brothers
5 Grimwade Court	1940	Unconfirmed	Unconfirmed
6 Grimwade Court	1940	Unconfirmed	Norman Dess

*These two houses, originally part of the cul-de-sac estate, have since been demolished*

3 St Aubins Avenue	1935	R M & M H King	Unconfirmed
5 St Aubins Avenue	1932	Unconfirmed	Unconfirmed

#### **Description**

The Grimwade Court Precinct comprises six detached pre-war dwellings clustered around the northern end of the short cul-de-sac known as Grimwade Court. Two others houses that formerly occupied the corner blocks, flanking the entrance to Grimwade Court at Nos 3a and 5 St Aubins Avenue, both have been demolished; the buildings that currently occupy these two sites are not included within the boundaries of the precinct.

Although the six houses were built at different times by different owners, who employed different architects and builders, they are broadly similar in date, scale, form and materials. Built between 1935 and 1940, the houses are all large double-storey brick residences of decidedly grand character, with a consistent setback and streetscape presence. Except for one with a rendered finish (No 3), they are of face brick construction, variously cream (No 1, 5, 6) or dark red clinker (Nos 2, 4). Facades are double-fronted and asymmetrical, and roofs are variously hipped or gabled, clad in terracotta tiles. Some of the houses have partial flats roofs, concealed by low parapets.





Figure 8: 1 Grimwade Court  
(W H Merritt, 1937-38)



Figure 9: 2 Grimwade Court  
(Walter Mason, 1938-39)



Figure 10: 3 Grimwade Court  
(architect unknown, 1940)



Figure 11: 4 Grimwade Court  
(Clive Lord, 1936-37)



Figure 12: 5 Grimwade Court  
(architect unknown, 1940)



Figure 13: 6 Grimwade Court  
(architect unknown, 1940)

Stylistically, the houses are demonstrative of the two fashionable trends in residential architecture at the time: the progressive Moderne (Nos 1, 3, 5 and 6) and the more conservative Tudor Revival (Nos 2 and 4). The examples in the Moderne mode incorporate such typical details as projecting curved bays (No 3, 5, 6), stringcourses (Nos 1, 5), portholes (No 3), balconies or sun decks with simple metal balustrades (No 1, 3, 6), and corner windows (Nos 1, 3, 5 and 6), often with curved or faceted glazing in steel-framed sashes. The two Tudor Revival houses have steeper roofs with prominent chimneys, canted bays and smaller windows with double-hung sashes, enlivened by multi-paned glazing (No 2) or shutters (No 4). The house at No 2 has a half-timbered gable end and feature stonework to the chimney and entry porch.

All six houses have their original brick garages, set well from the street at the end of long driveways, most of which retain the characteristic concrete paved finish. Boundaries between properties, and to the street, are marked by low masonry walls, either in face brick or uncoursed stonework. Front gardens tend to remain evocative of the pre-war period, with lawns bordered by low shrubs and hedges, incorporating mature deciduous trees and hard landscaping such as paved steps, pathways and retaining walls.

### Comparisons

Grimwade Court is indicative of a recurring trend in Melbourne's inner southern suburbs in the late 1930s: the creation of cul-de-sac residential estates on sites formerly occupied by Victorian mansions. Reflecting a typical pattern, these mansions originally stood in expansive grounds that were gradually whittled away by subdivision in the early twentieth century, leaving the house itself on a greatly reduced curtilage by the 1930s. As these grand residences became less desirable as modern family homes, some were converted for other uses (such as flats, school or hospitals), and others simply demolished so that what remained of their grounds could be carved up for new houses or apartment blocks.



Not surprisingly, the phenomenon of the 1930s cul-de-sac subdivision was most strongly evident in the most desirable inner bayside suburbs, where demand for higher density living soon outweighed the demand for large grand residences, but became increasingly less evident further afield, as such development pressure subsided. Thus, while examples proliferate across St Kilda and Elwood, they are less common in Brighton, Elsternwick and Caulfield, and rarer still (if not entirely unrecorded) further afield in Sandringham, Bentleigh, Carnegie and Murrumbeena.

Within what is now the City of Glen Eira, cul-de-sac subdivisions of this type are concentrated in areas adjacent to the former City of St Kilda: St Kilda East, Balaclava and that part of Caulfield west of Kooyong Road and north of Glen Eira Road. A few examples are recorded further south in Elsternwick, notably Sandham Court (c1935) and Callista Court (c1937), and there is an atypical example in Crompton Court, Caulfield South (c1930). All three courts are characterised by modestly-scaled single-storey houses of similar form and design. In a few cases, the estates have been confirmed as the work of a single developer/builder who built houses that were sold, on completion, as a “house and land” package. This contrasts with Grimwade Court, where vacant sites were sold to individuals who then commissioned their own architects independently.

While at least half a dozen comparable 1930s cul-de-sac estates can be found in St Kilda East and Caulfield’s western fringe, virtually all of them now exhibit decreased cohesion due to subsequent redevelopment. Examples such as Avoca Grove (1932), Lockerbie Court (1936), Pullman Court (1937) and Malonga Court (1939) retain only a few of their original houses (or apartment blocks), interspersed with larger-scaled post-WW2 counterparts. Sidwell Court (1932) is perhaps the only such estate that retains all of its original houses; although it is duly noted to be an exceptionally short cul-de-sac, (effectively, a minor kink from the curve of Sidwell Avenue) with only three houses therein. It was undertaken by Dickson & Yorston, the leading local building/development firm responsible for several cul-de-sac housing estates in the area, including the aforementioned Avoca Grove as well as the celebrated and notably earlier Lempriere Avenue (1927).

To date, the only inter-war cul-de-sac housing estates on the City of Glen Eira heritage overlay schedule are the substantial and pioneering example at Lempriere Avenue, St Kilda East (H074) and two smaller and slightly later ones at Crompton Court, Caulfield South (H017) and Bruce Court, Elsternwick (H086). All three are quite different to Grimwade Court, not only for being earlier in date (ie, initiated in the late 1920s and completed by the early 1930s) but also for being conceived by a single developer/builder as an estate of middle-class dwellings of similar design and form. By contrast, the surviving houses in Grimwade Court date from the later 1930s and were grander in scale and more sophisticated in design, being individually commissioned by more well-to-do residents who engaged leading architects to design in the two fashionable styles of the day: the conservative Tudor Revival and the progressive Moderne.

## References

Lodged Plan No 12,737, dated 1928.

“Garage and the house”, *Argus*, 20 June 1935, p 13.

“Caulfield home planned around entrance hall”, *Herald*, 15 June 1938.

“Old English style for new home”, *Argus*, 11 May 1939, p 10.

“Green Halt: Modern home in Old World setting”, *Australian Home Beautiful*, Aug 1939, pp17-21.

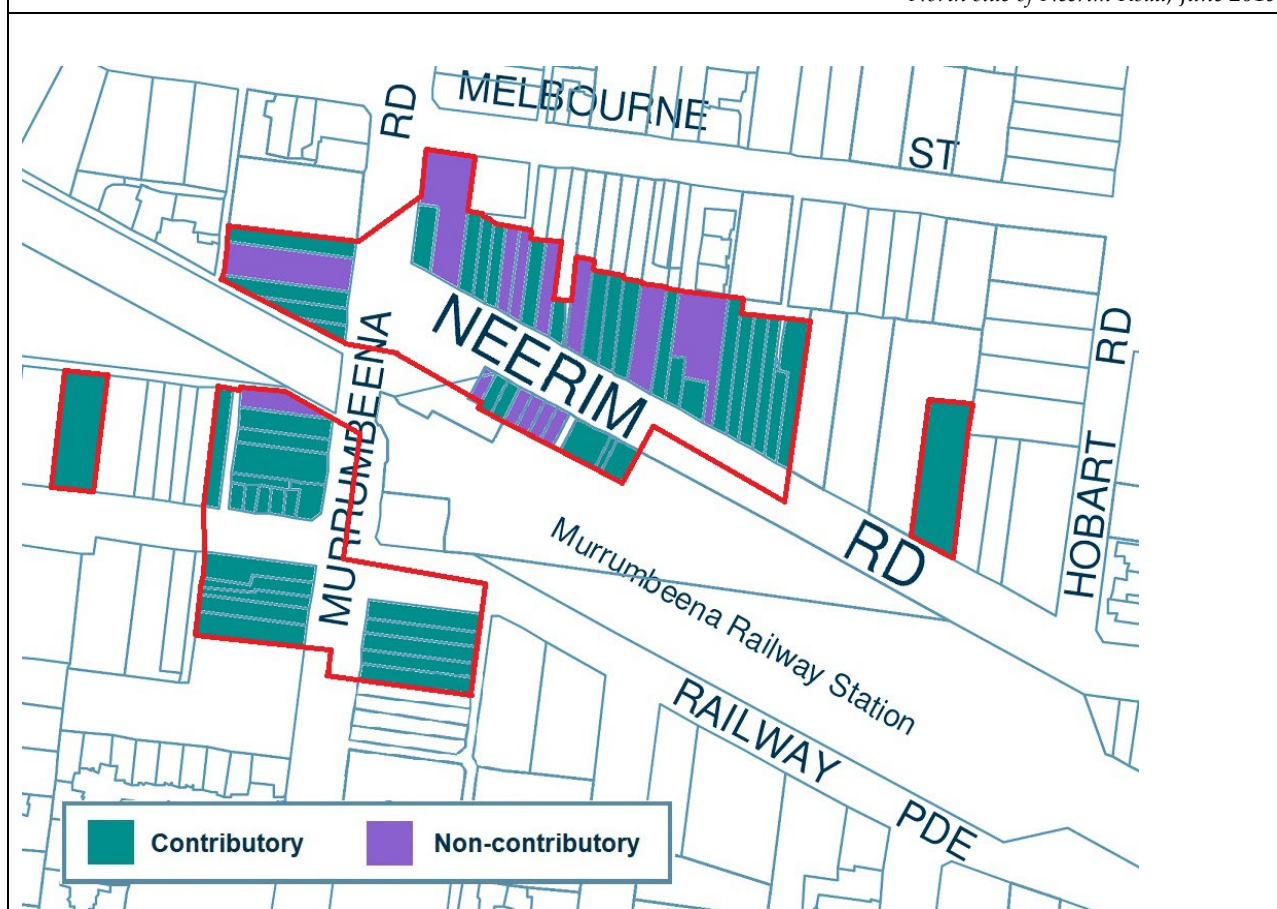
## Identified by

City of Glen Eira (2 Grimwade Court also individually identified by Andrew Ward)

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	MURRUMBEENA VILLAGE PRECINCT	<b>Citation No</b>	N/A
<b>Other name/s</b>	Murrumbeena Shopping Centre	<b>Melway ref</b>	69 A5
<b>Address</b>	Neerim/Murrumbeena Road MURRUMBEENA	<b>Date/s</b>	mostly 1889-1939



North side of Neerim Road, June 2019



<b>Heritage Group</b>	Retail and Wholesale	<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Heritage Category</b>	Retail or Wholesale Precinct	<b>Intactness</b>	Good
<b>Recommendation</b>	Include on heritage overlay schedule as a heritage precinct		
<b>Controls</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External Paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Trees

## Statement of Significance

### *What is Significant?*

The Murrumbeena Village Precinct, extending along both sides of Neerim and Murrumbeena Road where the latter crosses the railway line, comprises cohesive commercial streetscapes made up of single- and double-storey buildings predominantly dating from the first four decades of the twentieth century, punctuated by two rare survivors from the late-Victorian era and a small number of post-war buildings of sympathetic scale and form.

The following are deemed to be *contributory* elements in precinct:

- Neerim Road: Nos 398, 412, 414-422 (row of five; *Wardrop's Buildings*), 430, 436, 438, 440, 446, 450, 453-455 (pair), 456, 458, 460, 465-473 (row of five), 466, 468, 470-472 (pair), 476-486 (row of six), 504.
- Murrumbeena Road: Nos 55, 61, 63, 65, 69-71 (pair), 73-75 (pair), 77-79 (*Wardrop's Buildings*), 81, 83-83a (pair), 85, 87, 88, 90-92 (pair), 94 (former bank).

The following are deemed to be *non-contributory* elements within the precinct:

- Neerim Road: Nos 432-434, 442, 444, 448, 452 (at rear), 457-459 (pair), 461, 463, 462-464 (former bank), 474 (factory at rear), 454, 461; also coffee kiosk adjacent to No 453.
- Murrumbeena Road: Nos 57-59 (former bank), 67.

Post-WW2 buildings to the rear of 430 Neerim Road are deemed to be *non-contributory*.

### *How is it Significant?*

The Murrumbeena Village Precinct satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

### *Why is it Significant?*

The Murrumbeena Village Precinct is significant for historic associations with early development of the suburb of Murrumbeena. A local retail centre emerged promptly after subdivision and sale of land on the north side of Neerim Road in 1887-88. Of ten shops built by 1900, two survive (Nos 430, 468) to provide rare evidence of the strip's origins. A commercial boom from the mid-1910s to the mid-1920s, echoing the suburb's rapid residential growth, is illustrated by so many buildings from that era, including not only shops but also motor garages, a bank, outposts of leading city retailers such as Moran & Cato and Bruce & Carey, and George Wardrop's eponymous corner office/retail complex. Shops on the south side of Neerim Road, built on railway land, demonstrate what was then an unusual and controversial phenomenon, while a breezeway that once provided access to the station is amongst the last remaining physical evidence of the railway complex at ground level prior to the recent completion of the elevated Skyrail. (*Criterion A*)

The Murrumbeena Village Precinct is significant as a mostly pre-war commercial streetscape of unusual form, radiating in all four directions from an offset crossroad bisected by a railway line. The pre-war shops display noted cohesion through consistent single- and double-storey scale, single-fronted expression with low parapets, and a recurring palette of materials (face red brick, smooth and roughcast tender) coupled with an array of decorative detailing. Many are atypically intact, retaining elements of original shopfronts (eg recessed doorways, metal-framed windows, leadlight, spandrel tiling), and some with painted signage or rendered lettering. These shops, as individual specimens, pairs or longer rows, are punctuated by other building types of similar vintage, notably two motor garages and a monumental branch bank. (*Criterion E*)



## History

Although Murrumbeena railway station opened in 1879, the land to the north was not subdivided and offered for sale until October 1887, when an auction was held for all 150 allotments of the new *Murrumbeena Reserve* (bounded by Neerim, Murrumbeena, Hobart and Dandenong Roads). More than two thirds of the lots were sold at that time, including nine of the thirteen on Neerim Road, opposite the station. When a second auction took place in September 1888, only 43 lots remained, including the last three with coveted Neerim Road frontage: Lot 127 at the Murrumbeena Road junction, and Lots 141 and 142 near Hobart Road. The latter two blocks would remain vacant into the twentieth century, but the prime corner site at Murrumbeena Road was snapped up by builder Alfred Ramsden, who duly erected four shops there. First recorded in the rate book for 1890, each was described as a "brick house, land & shop" on part of Lot 127. A pair of two-storey residential shops on the corner (corresponding to present-day Nos 430-432) was occupied by grocer Herbert Brine, and the two single-storey shops (Nos 442-444) by estate agent B C Lavender and baker C L Lorden. The 1890 rate book also included four more entries for "brick house, land & shop" on nearby Lot 149, occupied by underclothing retailer Mrs Hughs, stationer George Preston and grocers George and William Hitchcock.

After Alfred Ramsden declared bankruptcy in 1892, his shops on Neerim Road were acquired by others, although grocer Herbert Brine remained as tenant of the corner premises. By 1893, a small timber shop had been built alongside (No 436), also occupied by Brine. By the turn of the century, the five shops on Lot 127 (four in brick, one in timber) were owned by Robert Lindsay, who used three for his own grocery business and rented the others to greengrocer William Hansen and butcher David Couper. Further east, the early shops on Lot 149 had become flanked by two more, occupied by newsagent Thomas Newing (No 458) and grocer James Bullock (No 468), while five large detached villas had been erected on the remaining lots extending towards Hobart Road.

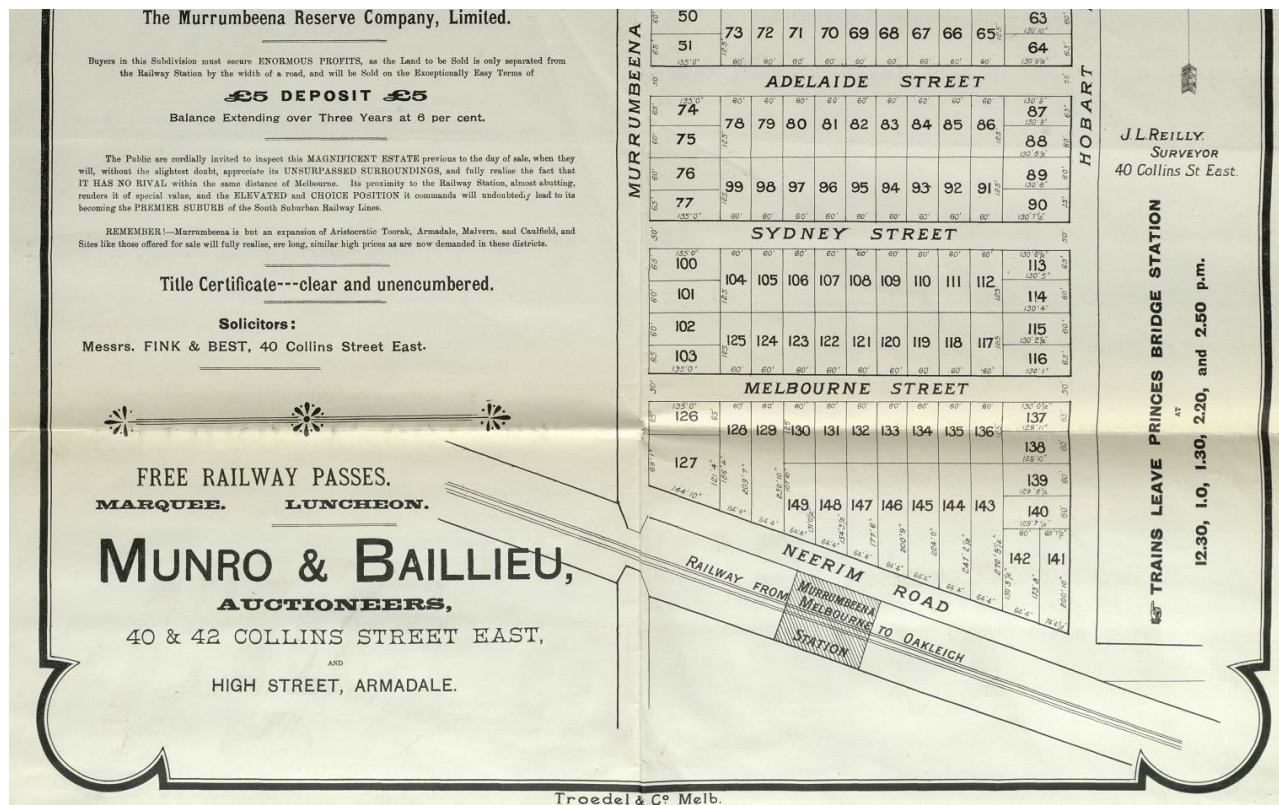


Figure 1: Excerpt of advertisement for auction of *Murrumbeena Reserve* in October 1887, showing the twelve prime allotments along the north side of Neerim Road (Lots 127-129 and 141-149)  
(Source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)





Figure 2: View of the north side of Neerim Road, looking east from Murrumbeena Road, circa 1910.  
(Source: Colin G Smith, *Merric Boyd and Murrumbeena*)



Figure 3: View, looking north along Murrumbeena Road towards Neerim Road, circa 1915  
(Source: Colin G Smith, *Merric Boyd and Murrumbeena*)

The MMBW plan of the area, dated April 1918, shows that the number of shops along Neerim Road had increased from ten (as recorded in the 1900 rate book) to sixteen. At that time, the two-storey corner shops had recently been taken over by grocer James Telford (No 430) and butchers R L Dick & Son (No 432), and the timber shop (No 436) by draper Lucy Ford. Two retailers from the 1890s still remained, namely grocer James Bullock (No 468) and newsagent Thomas Newing (No 458), although the latter had since purchased his property and erected larger premises on the site in 1912. Amongst the other new additions was the premises of chemist W B Perry (No 448), erected in 1915 to a design by noted city architects Eggleston & Oakley. By 1918, only three vacant shop sites remained in the strip (at Nos 434 and 450-452), along with a larger tract of undeveloped alongside Bullock's shop that was used as a woodyard. Further east, the commercial streetscape of Neerim Road gave way to the row of detached villas; however, pressure for redevelopment was already evident, with the MMBW map showing two villas had already been adapted for non-residential use, as a branch of the State Savings Bank (No 488) and a post office (No 492).



(Source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

By contrast, the 1918 MMBW map shows scant development beyond this stretch of Neerim Road. The land on the south side of the street, owned by Victorian Railways, was taken up by the station itself, siding, sundry outbuildings, stationmaster's residence and, at the corner, a rockery. Further afield, the largely vacant land along Murrumbena Road was punctuated only by a pair of shops on the west side, between Neerim Road and the railway line (Nos 73-75). Erected in 1915-16, these were occupied by confectioner Hugh Carr and butcher Arthur Hawting. In 1919, Hawting moved into new premises along Murrumbena Road (No 81), on the south corner of Neerim Road. That year, commercial development spread to the east side of the street with the opening of Victoria's seventy-fourth branch of the Moran & Cato grocery empire (No 88). Further north, expansion continued with the Centre Motor Garage (No 51) operating by 1920, soon joined by a row of four shops (Nos 51a, 53, 55 and 57) occupied by a bootmaker, butcher and two confectioners.

A notable addition to this burgeoning commercial centre was *Wardrop's Buildings* on the prominent northeast corner of Neerim and Murrumbeena roads, erected in 1920-21 by the eponymous George Wardrop, proprietor of a successful chain of tailors. The work of local designer/builder S D Page, the premises comprised a two-storey corner building (77-79 Murrumbeena Road) with offices over the shops, and a single-storey row of six shops along Neerim Road (Nos 414-420). Amongst the original tenants of *Wardrop's Buildings* were a bootmaker, costumier, ironmonger and hairdresser, along with a dentist and a dressmaker upstairs. Completion of the project, coinciding with the electrification of the railway line, spurred a minor commercial boom in the vicinity. Development spread across to the south side of Neerim Road, with a timber merchant (No 401) and an estate agent's office (No 403) in operation by 1921, and a newsagent (No 407) by 1922. Evidently following Wardrop's lead, Pahrnan-based draper Israel Carey erected a branch of his own chain next door (No 412) in 1923. The opening of *Wardrop's Buildings* also had repercussions elsewhere in the expanding retail centre. In 1922, one of the project's financiers, George Swan, engaged the same local builder, S D Page, to erect (and presumably design) a row of six two-storey residential shops at the east end of the Neerim Road strip (Nos 476-486) on land that had formerly been occupied by a large late-Victorian villa known as *Dereen*.





Figure 5: Official opening of Wardrop's Buildings on corner of Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads, 1921  
(source: Herald, 6 April 1921, p 4)

While the early 1920s saw a little further expansion along the established Neerim Road strip (eg a pair of shops at No 470-472), development was mostly focused on Murrumbeena Road. By 1923, five more shops had been built (at Nos 61, 63, 65, 85 and 87), joined the following year by another two pairs (Nos 69-71 and 83-83a) and a commercial laundry (No 67). It was during this period that Victorian Railways made its controversial decision to allow the land around Murrumbeena Station to be leased for retail development. The proposal brought strong opposition from local residents, who urged that the underdeveloped land be given over as a public reserve. Ultimately, the project proceeded, with the agreement that leftover land would be handsomely landscaped. During 1923, four new shops (Nos 80-84) were built along the Murrumbeena Road frontage, between Neerim Road and Railway Parade, and the stationmaster's residence on Neerim Road demolished for the construction of seven more shops: a semi-detached pair near the corner (Nos 453-55) and a row of five (Nos 465-473) bisected by a covered walkway to provide access to the station beyond.

By contrast, the second half of the 1920s saw relatively modest expansion of the commercial area, including buildings other than ubiquitous shopfronts. Chief amongst these were two new branch banks on Murrumbeena Road, erected by the English, Scottish & Australian Bank (No 59) and the State Savings Bank of Victoria (No 84). The year 1925 saw the completion of two purpose-built motor garages effectively marking the east and west extremities of the Neerim Road commercial strip: the respective premises of E A Green (No 398) and James Head (No 504).

In 1928, the *Sands & McDougall Directory* for 1928 listed nearly sixty separate businesses along the intersecting stretches of Neerim Road and Murrumbeena Road, which included six confectioners, five grocers, five drapers, four butchers, four bootmakers, three fruiterers, three hairdressers, three banks, two dressmakers, two estate agents, two bakers, a chemist, a newsagent, an ironmonger, a milliner, a dentist and a post office. Many of the Neerim Road retailers had maintained a presence there for a decade or more, with bootmaker Joseph Jackson (No 466) in operation since 1905 and grocer F T Bullock (No 468) the sole survivor from late nineteenth-century.

By the end of the 1920s, some of the more established businesses had moved on, including grocer J W Telford and butcher R L Dick and, who had long occupied the double-storey Victorian shops at the Neerim Road corner (Nos 430-432). The former building was taken over by A W Woodland, whose family would continue the grocery business there for more than seven decades. It was also in the later 1920s that the old timber shop nearby (No 436) was demolished by its long-time occupant, draper Lucy Ford, for construction of a larger two-storey brick premises. This trend continued into the next decade. During the year 1934 alone, three other venerable retailers all razed and rebuilt their premises: hairdresser George Beck (No 438), draper Margaret Whitburn (No 440) and ironmonger F G Hawker (No 460).



Figure 6: Shops along north side of Neerim Road, as viewed through the corner rockery, circa 1926  
(Source: Colin G Smith, *Merric Boyd and Murrumbena*)



Figure 7: Looking north along Murrumbena Road, showing new buildings and State Bank (right), 1930  
(Source: *Weekly Times*, 26 July 1930)



The early post-war era brought relatively few significant changes to the shopping precinct. One notable new occupant of the Neerim Road strip was local artist Arthur Boyd, who took over an existing shop (No 500) as his pottery studio. Boyd remained there for fifteen years until moving to London in 1958; his former studio was then absorbed by expansion of the adjacent premises of Murrumbeena Hardware. The second half of the 1950s saw the hitherto vacant sites on the south side of Neerim Road finally infilled with a group of modernist shopfronts occupied by the post office (No 457), a dentist's clinic (No 459) and the *Aladdin Dry Cleaners* (No 463). Several pre-war shops were also renovated or rebuilt during this time, notably W B Perry's chemist shop (No 448), which was given a smart new shopfront with Castlemaine slate cladding. In 1960, the former commercial laundry building at 67 Murrumbeena Road was demolished for a new single-storey office building designed by architects Morrish, Nelson & Vaughan.

Several major changes to the precinct took place after 1960. That year, the appropriately named *Original Motor Garage* at 51 Murrumbeena Road, dating back to 1920, was replaced by the Mobilgas Self-Service Service Station, prompting a flurry of other petrol stations in the area including three on Neerim Road (Nos 391, 473 and 510) and two more on Murrumbeena Road (Nos 60 and 80-86). The last of these, dubbed the Beena Gates Service Station, was built on the site of the four shops erected on railway land back in 1923. The late 1960s saw a few new buildings appear on the edges of the strip, including *Chain House*, a two-storey shop/office block at 96-98a Murrumbeena Road, and several small offices, factories or showrooms on Neerim Road (eg No 400). The early 1970s brought the loss of one of the centre's original buildings: the two-storey Victorian shop at No 432, one of a pair built by Alfred Ramsden in 1889. It was replaced by a single-storey double-fronted building that enlarged the frontage of Woodland's supermarket to 430-34 Neerim Road. This period also saw the replacement of two pre-war branch banks with larger modern counterparts, for the ANZ Bank (57-59 Murrumbeena Road) and Commonwealth Bank (462-464 Neerim Road).

Since the 1980s, all five of the post-war petrol stations have ceased operation. The Beena Gates Service Station was razed to provide a carpark for the adjacent railway station, while the sites of three others were developed for larger-scale residential or commercial buildings. Only one former petrol station remains at 60 Murrumbeena Road, latterly re-purposed as a drive-in coffee shop. The completion, in 1997, of a three-storey townhouse block at 502 Neerim Road (former site of Arthur Boyd's pottery studio) marked the start of a new era of higher-density residential development at the fringes of the precinct, including multi-storey apartments in both Neerim Road (Nos 398-395, 403-407 and 488-90) and Murrumbeena Road (Nos 51-53). However, the most significant recent change has been the removal of all railway infrastructure (including buildings, rails and boom gates) for the elevated Skyrail. A flat-roofed post-war toilet block on Neerim Road was also demolished, and a small café erected nearby, abutting the pre-war shop at No 453.

## Description

The Murrumbeena Village Precinct, focused on the offset junction of Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads, consists largely of low rise (single and double-storey) commercial buildings built right to the property line, forming continuous commercial streetscapes along both sides of these two major roadways, bisected by the (now elevated) railway line. While the built fabric within the boundaries of the precinct spans over a century, from the late 1880s to the mid-1970s (and beyond), the bulk of it dates from the first four decades of the twentieth century, and particularly the boom period of expansion from the mid-1910s to the mid-1920s.

The core of the precinct includes a few small-scaled post-WW2 buildings. Larger and more intrusive counterparts at the fringes of the commercial streetscapes such as the former petrol station (60 Murrumbeena Road), two-storey office block (96-98a Murrumbeena Road), sundry industrial or commercial buildings at the far ends of Neerim Road (eg Nos 394, 396, 492, 500, 506, 508, 510) and recent apartment complex (eg 51-53 Murrumbeena Road; 389-95, 401-407, 490 and 502 Neerim Road) have all been excluded from the precinct.

While the commercial precinct traces its origins back to the late nineteenth century, only two of the ten original Victorian shops survive today. The larger and more prominently-sited of these is a two-storey residential shop at 430 Neerim Road (corner Murrumbeena Road), the sole survivor of an identical pair built in 1889. Representative of its type and era, it is a rendered brick building with moulded architraves to each ceiling line and a parapet with rectangular panel to the Neerim Street façade. While it retains original windows along Murrumbeena Road, with projecting sills and double-hung sashes, the corresponding windows to Neerim Road has been concealed or infilled. The other surviving Victorian shop, at 468 Neerim Road, is a smaller single-storey and single-fronted building of similar date, with rendered façade incorporating parapet with moulded cornice between two projecting consoles with scrolled brackets underneath. Both early shops have been altered, and neither appears to retain any evidence of its original shopfront.

The buildings dating from c1905 to c1935 are broadly similar in scale, form and materials. They are split fairly evenly between single-storey shops and larger two-storey shops with a dwelling or office above. The former are represented by a dozen examples along Neerim Road (Nos 414-424, 450, 453, 455, 456, 465-473 and 470-472) and six more in Murrumbeena Road (Nos 61, 65, 73-75, 87 and 88). Two-storey counterparts typically exist as scattered individual specimens (eg 412, 436, 438, 440, 458, 460 and 466 Neerim Road; 55, 63, 81 and 85 Murrumbeena Road), as well with three sets of identical pairs in Murrumbeena Road (Nos 69-71, 83-83a and 90-92) and a unique row of six at the eastern end of Neerim Road (Nos 476-486).



Figure 9: Two-storey Victorian shop on north-east corner of Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads (1889)



Figure 10: Wardrop's Buildings on north-west corner of Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads (1921)



Figure 11: Inter-war shops along west side of Murrumbeena Road (Nos 81-87)



Figure 12: Inter-war shops (and bank) along east side of Murrumbeena Road (Nos 88-94)



Inter-war shops appear to be exclusively of brick construction; some earlier examples are in face brick (eg 435-455 and 465-473 Neerim Road; 63 and 85 Murrumbeena Road) and others have a rendered finish, variously smooth (eg 73-75 and 87 Murrumbeena Road) or roughcast (eg 446 and 476-486 Neerim Road, 61 Murrumbeena Road). A few examples combine face brickwork with rendered banding (eg 77-79 and 81 Murrumbeena Road) or façade panels (eg 453-455 and 465-437 Neerim Road); some have since been partially or completely overpainted. Later shops from the 1930s tend to have a smooth rendered finish (eg 90-92 Murrumbeena Road).

While most of the inter-war shops incorporate the ubiquitous low parapets with moulded cornices and capped piers, there is a degree of variety amongst individual specimens. Some parapets are curved (eg 61-63 Murrumbeena Road; 418 Neerim Road), stepped (eg 436 Neerim Road) or raked (eg 438 Neerim Road), and a few others are even more ornately articulated (eg 77-79 and 97 Murrumbeena Road; 412, 446 and 458 Neerim Road). Some facades are enlivened by ornament such as dentillation (eg 73-75, 77-79 and 81 Murrumbeena Road; 414-422 Neerim Road) or feature brickwork (eg 438, 440 and 476-486 Neerim Road). Notably, three buildings retain the names of their original owners in rendered lettering: *Wardrop's Buildings* (77-79 Murrumbeena Road) and the former premises of grocers Moran & Cato (88 Murrumbeena Road) and draper Israel Carey (No 412 Neerim Road). A number of the two-storey shops have recessed balconies at the upper level (eg 55, 63 and 85 Murrumbeena Road; 476-486 Neerim Road), although some have been infilled. Others have wide rectangular windows (eg 436, 438 and 440 Neerim Road), some retaining original multi-paned or leadlight sashes, and three shops have curved bay windows (412 Neerim Road; 77-79 and 81 Murrumbeena Road), two with timber shingled cladding.

Several of the precinct's inter-war buildings stand out. *Wardrop's Buildings*, on the north-west intersection of Neerim and Murrumbeena Roads, uniquely combines a two-storey corner building (77-79 Murrumbeena Road) with adjacent row of five single-storey shops (414-242 Neerim Road), all with a consistent expression of curved parapets, roughcast render and dentillated cornices. The row of six shops at 476-486 Neerim Road, by the same designer/builder, is similarly striking for its repetitive use of segmental arches, stepped balustrades and diaper brickwork. The group of five shops on the south side of Neerim Road (Nos 465-473) stands out for its unusual incorporation of an off-centre breezeway (between the splayed corners of the third and fourth shopfront) that once provided access to the railway station. Of the inter-war buildings other than retail shops, the two early motor garages on Neerim Road (Nos 398 and 504), with their symmetrical rendered facades and central vehicle bays, are early and intact examples of this unusual type. The former State Savings Bank branch at 94 Murrumbeena Road remains as an uncommonly monumental presence, with its bold Free Classical ornamentation and tall windows with diagonal glazing bars.



Figure 13: Inter-war (and later) shops along north side of Neerim Road (Nos 434-454)



Figure 14: Inter-war shops (and post-war bank) along west side of Murrumbeena Road (Nos 57-65)



Figure 15: Row of six 1920s residential shops on north side of Neerim Road (Nos 476-486)



Figure 16: Detail of intact 1920s shopfronts on south side of Neerim Road (Nos 465-469)

Typical of any well-established suburban retail strip, individual shopfronts vary in intactness, with many altered or refitted in the post-WW2 era. Notably intact are the five shops at 465-473 Neerim Road, which retain recessed doorways (Nos 465, 467, 471) or corner entries with paired timber doors (Nos 469, 471), together with metal-framed shop windows, leaded highlights, and spandrels with black and pink tiling. Elsewhere, many other shopfronts still have their recessed doorways, and a subset of these retain original or early fabric such as metal-framed windows, highlights in reeded, leaded or louvred glazing (eg 61, 77, 81 and 83a Murrumbena Road; 414-416, 420-422, 438, 446, 456 and 460 Neerim Road) or remnant spandrel tiling (eg 453-455 Neerim Road). The shop at No 438 Neerim Road is exceptional for the survival of a highlight window bearing the gilded name of longtime occupant, hairdresser George Beck, who rebuilt the premises in 1934. The cantilevered awnings to several inter-war shops in Neerim Road still retain their original pressed metal ceilings in various decorative patterns (eg Nos 438, 456, 460, 465-473, 470-472 and 480).

The breezeway between the shops at Nos 469 and 471 Neerim Road incorporate two paintings by local artist Anthony Breslin, entitled *Frogtopia* (2018). These artworks, which are panels attached to the wall rather than murals painted directly onto the brick surface, form part of the City of Glen Eira's art collection. There is also a small metal plaque, unveiled in 2017, that unofficially designates the breezeway as "Attwood Lane" in honour of longtime local newsagent (Eric) John Attwood (born 1929), whose long association with the community earned him the nickname "Unofficial Mayor of Murrumbena". While this plaque, and Breslin's *Frogtopia*, are not directly connected with the significance of the precinct as a pre-war commercial streetscape, they are of some local interest in their own right.

## Comparative Analysis

In a broad sense, the *Murrumbena Village Precinct* can be compared to a number of other local strip shopping centres that were typically established in the late nineteenth century and underwent several successive phases of expansion in the twentieth century, particularly during the inter-war years and again in the early post-WW2 period. Four such commercial streetscapes are already included on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira Planning Scheme, as follows:

### Elsternwick Village, Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick (part HO72)

The heritage precinct known as *Elsternwick Estate and Environs* (HO72) spans a large part of Elsternwick, roughly bounded by Glen Eira Road, Gordon Street, Orrong Road and Glenhuntly Road. Although the precinct is predominantly residential in character, its southern boundary incorporates part of the major commercial streetscape of Glenhuntly Road.



The portion of Glenhuntly Road covered by the HO extends from Gordon Street to Beavis Street on the north side, and from Elsternwick Railway Park to just beyond Devonshire Road on the south side. This streetscape is strongly characterised by two-storey late-Victorian residential shops with rendered facades, incorporating typical Boom-style details such as arched windows, moulded cornices and balustrading. These gradually give way to a more mixed streetscape with Edwardian and inter-war shops of various sizes and styles (akin to those seen in the Murrumbeena Village), as well as a number of post-WW2 buildings.

#### Caulfield South Shopping Centre, Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield South (HO66)

Further east along Glenhuntly Road, in Caulfield South, a smaller stretch of commercial streetscape has been protected as HO66. Extending west from the Hawthorn Road intersection, this precinct spans the north side of Glenhuntly Road from Nos 705 (Holy Cross Church) to 791 (west corner of Hawthorn Road), and the south side from Nos 702 (west corner of Alder Street) to 792 (east corner of Hawthorn Road). No Victorian-era fabric appear to survive; the streetscape remains largely defined by inter-war buildings, typified by single or double-storey brick shops as individual specimens, in pairs, or groups of three or four. It also includes two former banks: an imposing Free Classical example from the 1920s (704 Glenhuntly Road) and an unusually intact modernist one from the 1950s (751 Glenhuntly Road).

#### Derby Road, Caulfield North (HO71)

The *Derby Road Precinct* in Caulfield North (HO71) is a relatively small commercial precinct that extends between Dandenong Road and the Caulfield railway station, incorporating properties along both sides of Derby Road (Nos 2-18 along the east side; Nos 1-25 on the west side) and a few others around the corner, on the north side of Sir John Monash Road (Nos 11-15). The streetscape consists principally of two-storey residential shops from the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, interspersed with a couple of single-storey shops of similar vintage. The relatively small number of inter-war buildings are dominated by two monumental branch banks in the Free Classical style (Nos 9-11 and 26), the Caulfield Club Hotel at the Dandenong Road corner (as rebuilt in the 1920s) and an almost incongruous single-storey Streamlined Moderne shop (No 13). A group of single-storey 1920s rendered shops around the corner (11-15 Sir John Monash Road) are representative of their type and era, with shaped parapets, capped pier and original tiling to the shopfronts.

#### North Road, Ormond (part HO75)

The *Ormond Precinct* (HO75) is split into two sub-precincts that radiate from the intersection of Booran Road and North Road in Ormond. These sub-precincts, which nominally extend north as far as Beatty Grove and south to (and slightly beyond) Murray Road, are predominantly residential in character, but also include a portion of the North Road commercial streetscape. However, only the north side of the street, extending from Nos 455 (Dalmor Avenue) to No 481 (Newham Grove), is included within the extent of the HO. The streetscape comprises a continuous row of interwar shops of fairly typical form and style, variously single or double storey, in red brick or rendered, and with a range of parapet forms and decorative embellishments. A few them (eg Nos 455, 459, 461, 473) retain at least some of their original shopfront fabric.

#### McKinnon Road, McKinnon (part HO75)

In addition to the above, the *Ormond Precinct* (HO75) includes a stand-alone strip of commercial streetscape along McKinnon Road at nearby McKinnon, albeit extending only along the north side of the street, from No 129 (Elm Grove) and No 169 (McKinnon railway station). It consists almost entirely of a row of double-storey inter-war residential shops, distinguished by unusual fenestration and rendered embellishment, and an uncommonly high level of physical intactness evidenced by the retention of face red brickwork, unpainted render and original shopfronts.

Aside from the four aforementioned commercial streetscapes already included on the heritage overlay schedule, these two further examples have recently been recommended for inclusion as part of the *Glen Eira Heritage Review of Bentleigh & Carnegie Structure Plan Areas* (2018), undertaken by RBA Architects.

#### Bentleigh Retail Precinct, Centre Road, Bentleigh

Bentleigh's principal commercial strip, extending along both sides of Centre Road from Cairnes Grove to just east of Jasper Road, is comparable in length to those at Elsternwick, Caulfield South and Ormond, although it contains a higher proportion of post-WW2 development than most. It is the most cohesive section, extending along the south side of Centre Road from Robert Street to just west of Loranne Street, that has been recommended for a heritage overlay. This streetscape is characterised by some typical and largely intact inter-war shops with brick or rendered facades, including identical pairs or rows of three (eg Nos 354-358) or more (eg Nos 374-382). The north side of Centre Road, not included in the proposed HO precinct, includes a few places of individual heritage significance, such as a monumental 1920s bank (No 385) and the *Centre Arcade* (No 325), an intact 1950s shopping arcade with curtain-walled façade and vintage neon signage.

#### Carnegie Retail Precinct, Koornang Road, Carnegie

At Carnegie, a comparable commercial streetscape extends along both sides of Koornang Road from Dandenong Road to just south of Neerim Road. The most cohesive portion, recently recommended for a HO, comprises both sides of the road between the railway line and Neerim Road, and part of the east side extending north of the railway line towards Dandenong Road. This streetscape is strongly characterised by inter-war fabric, with single- and double-storey brick shops, often in pairs or rows. The southern end of the strip, at Neerim Road, is flanked by a pair of imposing 1920s buildings with splayed corners, notably *Phillips Corner* at 145 Koornang Road, (Gawler & Drummond, 1920). The strip otherwise seems to have an above-average proportion of buildings from the late 1930s, including some rows of Moderne-style shops (Nos 41-49, 99-101a), a State Savings Bank branch in a Free Classical style (No 75a ) and a one-time outlet of the G J Coles retail chain built to an unmistakable standard design by architect Harry Norris (Nos 106).

#### Commercial Streetscapes without Heritage Overlays

Obviously, there are many more commercial streetscapes in the City of Glen Eira than these four examples on the heritage overlay schedule, and two more recently recommended for inclusion. It is worth noting that, in a few of these cases, the streetscapes extend beyond the boundary of the HO, albeit typically becoming less cohesive. This is evident at Elsternwick Village (HO72), where rows of shops continue west of the railway line and east of Devonshire Road as far as Hopetoun Gardens, while the commercial streetscape at Caulfield South (HO66) extends east as well as west of Hawthorn Road intersection. The *Ormond Precinct* (HO75) does not include any of the North Road shops east of the railway line, or along the south side of the road. These omitted streetscapes, extending as far as Jasper Road, comprise a mix of inter-war shops and post-war development, and a monumental 1920s bank branch (No 476).

Amongst other comparable commercial streetscapes are some further examples on Glenhuntly Road. One in Caulfield South, radiating in either direction from the Kooyong Road intersection, is also dominated by single- and double-storey inter-war shops while also retaining rare evidence of late-Victorian development in the form of an ornate Boom-style residential shop (No 605). Much further east, the commercial streetscape extending along both sides of Glen Huntly Road at Glen Huntly, between Roseberry Grove and Grange Road, also retains a smattering of Victorian-era development (eg prominent pair of double-storey residential shops at No 1180-1182) amongst the more dominant inter-war fabric, which includes yet another monumental 1920s bank (No 1175).

## Conclusion

Historically, the Murrumbeena Village is comparable to other commercial strips that developed around new railway stations, as was the case at Elsternwick, Carnegie, McKinnon, Glen Huntly and Caulfield. Most of these, however, expanded in a linear fashion except for Derby Road, where further growth was hampered by the proximity of the Caulfield Racecourse, south of the station. By contrast, Murrumbeena Village is noted for a more unusual radial layout, where commercial development extended in all four directions from an offset crossroad intersection that was bisected by the railway. Murrumbeena Village is otherwise comparable to counterparts elsewhere in the City of Glen Eira in its predominant inter-war character, albeit interspersed with a couple of rare survivors from the strip's late-Victorian origins, as similarly evident at both Glen Huntly and Caulfield South (ie, the portion of Glenhuntly Road at Koornang Road, not HO66 at Hawthorn Road). As a largely inter-war streetscape, the Murrumbeena Village is more cohesive than most, with few non-contributory elements and some notably intact shopfronts and original signage.

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## **Authorship**

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