

PLACE NAME "Clyde" Private Nursing Home **LEVEL:** B
ADDRESS 21 Skene Street
AREA 2 **DATE/PERSON** 23.4/RP **NEG:** 1.13, & 1.14



DATES Construction: 1924
USE Present Use: Community: Nursing Home
 Original Use: House
 Alterations?: Right-hand front addition (1960s) stair and rear. First-floor balcony infilled.

FORM **STYLE**
 Californian Bungalow

DESCRIPTION (I = Intact A = Altered * = significant)
ROOF **WALLS** **ROOF FORM**
 I Slate I Brick I Decoration: finials
 I Gable decoration

VERANDAH **FENESTRATION** **FINISHES**
 * Form * Doors I Unpainted: brick
 I lamp standards * Windows
 Window hoods

INTERIOR **GARDEN & SETTING** **OTHER COMMENTS**
 * Fences

CONDITION & INTEGRITY **THREATS**
 Condition: Excellent
 Integrity: Altered

DESCRIPTION

Red brick, gable-roofed, Californian Bungalow with a slate roof, terracotta finials and capping. There is a dominant central gable facing, with minor gables either side, projecting across the site and other gables projecting at sides. Upper gables have shingles jutting from brackets and rectangular bay-windows, either three or four sash. There is an attic in the central bay (once a balcony?) over the verandah, which is recessed and approached by a stair, with a scalloped hit & miss balustrade, with render capping and wrought iron lamp-standards. The verandah has a flat roof, supported on square Tuscan columns. There is a similar verandah at the left-hand side and a curved bay. The brick fence, perforated with slots has a catenary-curved render capping and render facing between piers.

HISTORY

Edith Mary Smith, who purchased land 100 x 187 feet in Skene Street from Charlotte Hitchcock in 1923⁴⁵⁹, was recorded as the first owner/occupier in 1924 of the residence at 21 Skene Street⁴⁶⁰. Edith was most probably related to Brigadier General Robert Smith⁴⁶¹, founder and manager in 1919-20 of the Phoenix Wool Scouring Works on the corner of Marnock and Riversdale Roads Newtown⁴⁶². The evidence for this relationship is supplied in the 1940 Newtown rate book when Edith Smith, owner/occupier of the Skene Street house, was listed c/o Robert Smith. At that time, four people were occupying the house⁴⁶³. A further link with the fellmongering business (another name for wool scouring) was the brief occupancy of the house in 1925 by William Skene, fellmonger⁴⁶⁴.

From the start this property had an unusually high net annual valuation. In 1924 it was 225 pounds rising to 275 pounds in 1925 and 288 pounds in 1930⁴⁶⁵. Edith Smith was owner/occupier still in 1940⁴⁶⁶. New owners were recorded in the 1950s, Emile F. and E. M. Verfurth. They were there still in 1960⁴⁶⁷.

SIGNIFICANCE

This building, originally a private residence, has regional historical significance for its associations with Newtown's woollscouring works, which played an important role in Geelong's early industrial development. The first owner in 1924 was Edith May Smith, a relation of Brig. Gen. Robert Smith, founder and manager in 1919-20 of the Phoenix Wool Scouring Works on the Corner of Marnock and Riversdale Roads Newtown. Later, the house was occupied briefly by William Skene, fellmonger, but Edith Smith was owner still in the 1940s. It has regional architectural significance as a substantial Californian Bungalow which is externally relatively intact. The use of Tuscan columns, indicating a Colonial Revival influence in the mid-1920s (derived

459. Newtown rate book 1923, North Ward, No 33.

460. Ibid 1924 No 33.

461. More biographical research required.

462. Gladys Seaton, Model Borough, City of Newtown, 1983, p.95.

463. Newtown rate book 1940 No 38.

464. Ibid 1925 No 34.

465. Ibid 1924 No 33; 1925 No 34; 1930 No 34.

466. Newtown rate book 1940 No 38.

467. Newtown rate book 1956 No 42; 1960 No 43.

from the popularisation of this period by Hardy Wilson), is of interest. The lamps and fence contribute to the significance of the context.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing Listings NONE

Recommend'ns RNE LPS
 Area 2
 Place
