

DESCRIPTION

A severe and disciplined, early Modern, two-storey house of pale grey fine limestone (Mt. Gambier stone?). Triple fronted, with verandahs and balconies supported by plain square-section piers at the right-hand side, front and left-hand side, rear. These are only decorated with a plate 'capital'. The first floor balustrade has timber shingles, splayed at the base, supported on cantilevered joists. Hip-roofs have terracotta Marseilles tiles. Windows are double bay and the top sash is six-paned. The fence is similar (but cruder) masonry with a capping to match the house piers, with wrought iron gates in a geometric pattern, with both rivetted and welded connections. There is a similar hip-roof masonry garage. The paint colours of all timber joinery may well be original. There are mature oaks in the garden.

HISTORY

This substantial two storey house at 21 Virginia Street was the home from 1924 until at least 1960 of the notable Geelong architect, Thomas J. Buchan, of the firm Laird and Buchan⁴⁶⁸. The previous year the property was listed as vacant land 93 feet 9 inches by 229 feet owned and occupied by Thomas J. Buchan, architect⁴⁶⁹. Elevated sites in Newtown's North Ward had been popular locations for the residences of Geelong's more affluent citizens from the 1880s or earlier, and were often architect-designed⁴⁷⁰. Virginia Street was still described in the post-World War I period, as "the Best Residential Locality in Newtown" and was chosen for the homes of such men as Lewis Hirst, woollen manufacturer (1918-19)⁴⁷¹ and Stewart Balfour, garage proprietor (1930)⁴⁷². Buchan's partner, Laird lived at 19 Roebuck Street, a single-storey Italianate house which also still survives⁴⁷³.

SIGNIFICANCE

This substantial two-storey residence has state historical significance as the home from 1924 until at least 1960 of the notable Geelong architect Thomas J. Buchan, of the firm Laird and Buchan. It is typical of the fine houses constructed on elevated sites in Newtown, often architect-designed, favoured by Geelong's more affluent residents. It has architectural significance at state level as an important essay in Early Modern design by Buchan. Of interest are the modern interpretations of traditional elements such as the plate 'capitals', extensive double-storey verandahs and stone construction. The massing is particularly well handled. Contextual elements such as the fence, garage and garden contribute to the significance. The survival of the original colours is also important.

468. Newtown rate book 1924, North Ward, No 120,; 1960 No 139.

469. Ibid 1923 No 114.

470. Gladys Seaton, Model Borough, City of Newtown, 1983, p.28.

471. Auction Sale notice, Newtown, Geelong. "Yemoneit", 51 Virginia Street. Subdivisional Plan Folio 8/194. Geelong Historic Records Centre.

472. Balfour's former residence was at 41 Virginia Street.

473. "90 Prospect Road, Newtown", unpublished Conservation Report by Tan Hoong Wai, Deakin University, June 1990.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing Listings NONE

Recommend'ns HBR RNE LPS
 Area 2
 Place
