

**Mountfield,
6 Mont Albert Road**



Study Grading: B
Precinct: 24.00 **Streetscape:** 2
Construction Date: 1865
First Owner: Taylor, George H

History

A plan of the Boroondara Shire thought to date from the early 1870's, shows one G H Taylor's house sited on an ample sized block, fronting Burke and Mont Albert Roads. When Mont Albert Road was Surrey Road, Taylor owned 'house and land' there from as early as 1865, after owning vacant land since the surviving rate books commenced in 1863¹. Solicitor, George Henry Taylor's tenure was noted as 'house and ten acres' in 1885, his wife (?) Maria becoming the owner of numerous subdivision lots there in 1889, so predictable for the land boom era². Another of Taylor's subdivisions was 'Taylor's Paddock', six hectares south of Riversdale Road and west of Burke Road, at the junction. This was sold and mostly built on in the later 19th century. Taylor died in 1886.

Ten years later merchant and 'poultry keeper', Adam Taylor Wilkinson and John Francis Keep occupied a ten room brick house on the Taylor family's reduced acreage (lots 12 and 13, 3 acres) remaining there until at least the 1920's³.

By World War II the Grey sisters occupied the property and had carried out extensive additions to the site⁴. In 1947 the company of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament had erected a welfare centre, adding nurses quarters in 1951⁵.

Description

Appropriately Tudoresque for its present ecclesiastical use, the former Taylor house also

represents a favoured style for picturesque rural or suburban villas of the 1840's-70's at Port Phillip (particularly designs from architect Charles Laing). The high attic-roof and its two-storeyed porch are variations on that theme but the French windows opening on to the verandah reinforce the early villa type. Face brickwork, cement label moulds above windows and the grouped chimney stacks underscore the Medieval source but it is the fine timber verandah which best expresses the style, as well as fine craftsmanship. Sited still in large grounds facing a graveled driveway and surrounded by mature trees the house possesses a highly appropriate setting, still separate from the increasing number of institutional buildings around it.

Comparative Examples

The following Camberwell sites may be compared with this site.

- 2, BERWICK STREET, 1859
- 19, CANTERBURY ROAD, 1860
- 9, BARNSBURY ROAD, 1861
- 18, BALWYN ROAD, 1863
- 290, CAMBERWELL ROAD, 1868-
- 8, AIRD STREET, 1870
- 35, PROSPECT HILL ROAD, 1873-4

External Integrity

The verandah has been partly enclosed and a gabled wing added at one end.

Significance

Architecturally, among the earliest group of houses in the area, it has a high integrity for its age, an empathetic setting, fine verandah detailing and it represents an uncommon style among 19th century villas in Victoria.

Historically, it was also for a long period the home of the Taylor family, 'pioneers' of the district.

- 1 RB 1863-4; RB 1865-6, 282
- 2 RB 1885, 613; RB 1889, 732
- 3 RB 1896-7, 505 actual occupiers?
- 4 BA 1945, 17231, 17503, 17519; BA 1946, 17731, 18113, 18358, 18366
- 5 BA 1947, 19623; BA 1951, 8235