

## GEELONG CITY 'C' CITATIONS

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**Site Name:** Residence

**Project File No:** 1157

**Address:** 56 Swanston Street Geelong 3220

**Approx. Date:** c.1895

**Integrity:** High

**Significance Level:** C (Local)

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**Photograph No:** 07.17

**Survey Date:** March 2002

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### History

This site at 56 Swanston Street, Geelong, is located on part of Crown Allotment 19, Section 12, of the Geelong Town Plan of 1881. Robert Bell owned the land originally.

A 4-roomed weatherboard house was built for Senior Constable Thomas Devereux at this location (then known as 84 Swanston Street) at or about the time of his retirement from the Victoria Police Force at the end of 1895. He leased the property and one of his longer term tenants was labourer, Angelo Ruffin, who occupied the house from c.1898 for about 10 years. Devereux died on 28 December 1912 and this property passed to his widow, Elizabeth. The house (now numbered 60 Swanston Street) was extended to 6 rooms (plus a bathroom) by 1915, and an outside washhouse and toilet were added in 1917. Elizabeth Devereux continued to reside in Little Myers Street, a succession of tenants occupying the Swanston Street residence until her death on 12 December 1929. The property was managed by the Devereux Estate, c/- Miss H. O'Connor, for a further 20 years, before it was sold in the 1950s to a welder, Richard Henry, and Margaret Gladys Scott. They jointly owned and occupied the place for the next 20 years or so. The outside toilet and washhouse were demolished in 1969 and indoor sanitary facilities updated. Tenants who lived in the house in proceeding years included William McAllister, a painter, Edgar Martin, a superintendent of Police, an auctioneer, manager, an engineer, a

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woolclasser, and a hospital attendant.

### Description

The house at 56 Swanston Street, Geelong, is set on an average-sized allotment for the local area. The house has a modest front setback and narrow side setbacks. The front garden is rudimentary and consists of perimeter plantings and open grassed areas. The front is bound by a capped and decorative timber fence, and is approximately 1300 mm high.

The asymmetrical, single storey, horizontal weatherboard, Federation styled house is characterised by complex roof forms that include a recessed hipped roof, gables that project at the front and side, minor gable that projects towards the front and a hipped and broken back return verandah that projects at the front and side. These roof forms are clad in painted galvanised corrugated iron. Three early unpainted pressed red brick chimneys with multi-corbelled tops and terra cotta pots adorn the roofline. Modest overhangs and exposed timber rafters are features of the eaves.

A feature of the design is the return verandah. It is supported by introduced square timber columns with decorative incisions, and is decorated by a large timber Art Nouveau arch and decorative timber fretwork valances and brackets. This verandah decoration has been mirrored for the design of the front fence.

Early features of the design include the timber framed windows, arranged as a pair of double hung windows under the front gable (with a hipped window hood above having exposed timber rafters) and as a projecting rectangular bay of casements with highlights under the front verandah. The front timber framed doorway, timber and glazed door and sidelight and highlights also appear to be early.

Other early decorative features of the design include the timber shingling, battening and panelling above the window hood on the front gable, and the gable infill (timber shingling, timber brackets and timber battening).

### Statement of Cultural Significance

The house at 56 Swanston Street, Geelong, has significance as a predominantly intact example of the Federation style. Built in c.1895 for Senior Constable Thomas Devereux, the house appears to be in good condition when viewed from the street.

The house at 56 Swanston Street is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level. It demonstrates original design qualities of the Federation style. These qualities include the complex roof forms that include the recessed hipped roof, gables that project at the front and side, minor gable that projects towards the front and the hipped and broken back return verandah that projects at the front and side. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the asymmetrical composition, single storey height, horizontal weatherboard wall cladding, painted galvanised corrugated iron roof cladding, three unpainted pressed red brick chimneys with multi-corbelled tops and terra cotta pots, modest eaves with exposed timber rafters, square timber columns with decorative incisions, large timber Art Nouveau verandah arch, decorative timber fretwork verandah valances and brackets, the timber framed windows (including the pair of double hung windows under the front gable and the projecting rectangular bay of casements with highlights under the front verandah), hipped window hood above the front windows with overhangs having exposed timber rafters, front timber framed doorway, timber and glazed door and sidelight and highlights, timber shingling and battening and panelling above the window hood on the front gable, and the gable infill (timber shingling, timber brackets and timber battening). The decorative front timber fence also contributes to the significance of the place.

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The house at 56 Swanston Street is historically significant at a LOCAL level. It is associated with residential developments in Geelong during the Federation (c.1895-1915) period. In particular, this house has associations with Senior Constable Thomas Devereux and his wife, Elizabeth, original owners who instigated constructed in c.1895 and held the property for many years.

Overall, the houses at 56 Swanston Street is of LOCAL significance.

### References

Reports and Drainage Plans, Barwon Water profits system, 1969.  
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Geelong City Council Rate Books (Bellerine Ward), 1893-1960, Geelong Historical Records Centre.  
Town Plan of Geelong 1881, Geelong Historical Record Centre.