



Row Houses, 155-157 Yarra Street

History

(see 32-34 Eastern Beach)

Engineer, Ward Nicholson owned these two houses when they were constructed in 1902.¹ Within a decade all three had become the property of his daughter, Catherine Everett, who lived in 157 Yarra and leased out 155 Yarra Street and Nicholson's former home, adjoining. Eugene O'Connor, agent, and Mary Smith, were among her tenants.² When the pair was connected to the sewer (1916), architects Laird & Buchan acted for Misses Edith Everett (book keeper) & Mabel (milliner) Everett.³ Previous house designs for Nicholson were for 32-34 Eastern Beach by architect, E.M. Blake, in 1890. Either architectural firm may have done the initial design but it is more likely to be Laird & Buchan.

Having built and occupied 159 Yarra Street the year before, Nicholson remained there until his death in 1908.⁴ Nicholson died at Hexham (159 Yarra Street) in 1908, aged 72. He had been a 'colonist' for 51 years.⁵

Description

Early rate descriptions were: brick and weatherboard, two-storey, 8 rooms, bath and wash house for each.⁶ Externally they are red-brick row houses in the traditional Victorian-era manner, but their slatted verandah arches and frieze provide a pronounced Edwardian-era character and the Queen Anne revival style is embodied in the cement pediment to chimneys and the party wall. The convex verandah roof profile could be late Victorian or Edwardian but the border-glazing patterns of the verandah doors and the arched entry alcove below are further Edwardian characteristics. The square-top timber picket fence at 155, with alternating picket widths, is typically Edwardian, the row being marred by the high masonry wall at 157 Yarra Street. The shaped paling side fence to 155 is also original.

External Integrity

New intrusive fence to 157 Yarra Street and extensive visually unrelated additions at the rear of 155.

- 1 RB1901, 189; RB1902, 189-90
- 2 RB1909, 190; RB1925, 198-9; RB1915, 186-7; RB1911, 118-9
- 3 GW & ST, DRP208
- 4 RB1901-2, 191
- 5 GA 10/3/08 death notice
- 6 RB1902, 189-90

City of Geelong Urban Conservation Study
Significant Sites

Streetscape

The pair forms a group with Nicholson's 159 Yarra Street and links to the residential streetscape in Little Myers Street, extending east to Bellarine Street.

Significance

Architecturally, an accomplished and early design using both Queen Anne and Federation Bungalow detailing as a precursor to the more widespread use of both styles in the next 15 years, also contributing to an Edwardian and Victorian era residential streetscape and an example of local architects, Laird & Buchan's, prolific practice.

Historically, like 32-4 Eastern Beach and 159 Yarra Street, once linked with the noted Ward Nicholson, owner of the regionally important Humble & Nicholson foundry.

