

## GEELONG CITY 'C' CITATIONS

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**Site Name:** Longville House

**Project File No:** 0925

**Address:** 2 Fitzroy Street Geelong 3220

**Approx. Date:** 1883-84

**Integrity:** Low-Moderate

**Significance Level:** C (Local)

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**Photograph No:** 04.09 & 04.10

**Survey Date:** March 2002

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### History

This site at 2 Fitzroy Street, Geelong, is located on Lot 2 of subdivisional plan 65757, which is part of Allotments 1 and 12, Section 57, of the Geelong Town Plan of 1881. This site was originally the property of W. Burrow.

A parcel of land measuring 118 feet by 114 feet fronting Victoria Parade (now Eastern Beach) and 100 feet by 118 feet fronting Fitzroy Street, was sold to John Longville Price from Henry Franks and J. M. Tulloch in 1883. On 10 July 1883, tenders were called for foundations for a villa residence at Victoria Parade to a design by Geelong architects Watts and Jackson. The 8 room, 2 storey brick and weatherboard house was constructed between 1883 and 1885 for John Price, with a balcony added by 1886 when the house was rated on an annual value of 150 pounds. More rooms appear to have been added over the following 3 years, including a servant's room, kitchen, bathroom and washhouse. By 1900, the property boasted stables and a coach-house, and the house enlarged to 18 rooms according to the Geelong Rate Books (Bellerine Ward) for the period 1910-1920. The weatherboard sections seem to have been replaced by brick at this time.

John Longville Price, born in Worcestershire, the son of Simeon Price and Ann Suckling, was a solicitor who established a practice in Geelong in 1872. He became Mayor of

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Geelong in 1883-84 at the time of the construction of the villa residence. Price died in 1908 at the age of 69. He left the property in Trust to his wife of 40 years, Elizabeth (nee Shepherd), a native of Devonshire, who outlived her husband by 6 years before her own death in 1915. His legal practice was acquired by Frank Vernon Higgins and was known as Price Higgins Solicitors. The practice continues to operate in 2002 in Yarra Street.

After 1915, the residence was occupied by John Longville Price (Junior). Under the terms of father's will, ownership of the property remained in the hands of the Trustees of the Estate of J.L. Price (Senior). There seems to have been some structural consolidation of the residence soon after Elizabeth's death, as the number of rooms was reduced from 18 to 14 by 1925. An aerial photograph of Eastern Beach, taken in 1926, appears to show that the house at that time faced the beach. The gate posts of what is now 52 Eastern Beach were most likely the main gates to the Price villa at that time.

When John Price (Junior) died in 1932, the property passed to "Lonzie" Longville Price, who may have been Elsie Myra, daughter of John and Elizabeth Price, and who died in 1939, aged 62, unmarried. The next owner was Ethelwyn Longville Marwood, who was another daughter of John and Elizabeth Price. She retained possession of the house as owner/occupier until her death in 1956, at the age of 81 years. By this time, the Rate Books were describing the house as a "12 room, brick, 2 storey" building, situated at 36-40 Victoria Parade.

Ethelwyn was the last of the direct descendants of John and Elizabeth Price to hold the house. By 1960, the owner of the property (which was initially renumbered as 34 and then 52 Eastern Beach) was Dudley Longville Campbell-Smith of "Nirrawi", Mount Lofty, South Australia. The Geelong Waterworks and Sewerage Trust plans drawn for 1964 list Frederick Duff as owner of the property, which by this time was addressed as 2 Fitzroy Street. It appears that the land fronting Eastern Beach was subdivided at this time. The Melbourne Directories, published in 1968 and 1972, described the building as "flats and apartments".

It is not known when the front of the house was altered from the north to the east side. The cast iron palisade fence has been relocated from another heritage site in more recent years.

### Description

Longville House at 2 Fitzroy Street, Geelong, is set on an average-sized allotment for the local area. The house, which now faces east, has a substantial front setback with and landscaped garden including perimeter flower beds, shrubs and grassed areas. The front is bound by a relocated cast iron palisade fence on a bluestone plinth, and is approximately 1500 mm high. At the rear is an introduced hipped garage accessed by a side concrete driveway.

The symmetrical, two storey, dichromatic and rendered brick, Victorian Eclectic styled house is characterised by a hipped roof form clad in dichromatic slate tiles. Broad overhangs and decorative timber brackets are features of the eaves.

The east facade of the building has a projecting two storey verandah and balcony with a flat roof. Early features of the verandah and balcony include the cast iron columns with decorative capitals, cast iron brackets and valances and the cast iron balcony balustrade.

The symmetry of the design is accentuated by the placement of the window and door openings. On the east facade is an early central doorway with an original timber framed

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six panelled door with sidelights and transom window, which is flanked by early timber framed double hung windows. On the first floor is a narrow central timber and glazed opening (with 3 paned transom window) and introduced flanking timber framed and glazed French doors.

The original north facade has a pair of centrally-positioned and introduced timber framed double hung windows on the first floor, flanked by early timber framed double hung tripartite windows.

Another early decorative feature of the design is the constructional coloration in the dichromatic brick construction on the east facade. The building corners and openings are accentuated by the cream brick quoinwork (some of the quoinwork on the main entrance may have been introduced). The north facade has been rendered.

### Statement of Cultural Significance

Longville House at 2 Fitzroy Street, Geelong, has significance as a legacy of the Victorian Eclectic style. Originally built in 1883-84 to a design by the Geelong architects Watts and Jackson for John Longville Price, Geelong solicitor and former Mayor, Longville House remains a substantial residence. Although there have been obvious changes since the neighbouring allotment fronting Eastern Beach was subdivided and the front of the house was altered to the Fitzroy Street facade, the building is in good condition when viewed from the street.

Longville House at 2 Fitzroy Street is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level. Although altered, it still demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian Eclectic style. These qualities include the hipped roof form clad in dichromatic slate tiles, broad eaves with decorative timber brackets, and the dichromatic brick wall construction with cream brick quoinwork to the building corners and openings. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the symmetrical composition, two storey height, projecting two storey verandah and balcony with cast iron columns, brackets, valances and balcony balustrade, timber framed six panelled door with sidelights and transom window, timber framed double hung windows (especially the tripartite windows), and the narrow central timber and glazed opening (with 3 paned transom window) on the east facade of the first floor. Although relocated, the cast iron palisade fence with bluestone plinth now contributes to the significance of the place.

Longville House at 2 Fitzroy Street is historically significant at a LOCAL level. It is associated with substantial residential developments in Geelong in the 1880s, and particularly with John Longville Price, solicitor, former Mayor and original owner from 1883-84. The property has long associations with the Price family until 1964. The house has further associations with the Geelong architects, Watts and Jackson.

Overall, Longville House at 2 Fitzroy Street is of LOCAL significance.

### References

Reports and Drainage Plans, Barwon Water profits system, 1964, 1994.  
Voters' Roll, Barwon Ward, 1992, Geelong Historical Records Centre.  
Sands & McDougall's Directory of Geelong, 1972, Geelong Historical Records Centre.  
Sands & McDougall "Invicta" Geelong Directory, 1968, Geelong Historical Records Centre.  
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Geelong Town Plan 1881, Geelong Historical Records Centre.  
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