

Name	<i>Rab-Nov-Jea</i>	Reference No	
Address	10 Wimba Avenue, Kew	Survey Date	13 December 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	c.1928	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Heritage Status ☐ HV ☐ AHC ☐ NT ☒ Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Wimba Avenue takes its name from the house *Wimba*, constructed c. 1860 for J S Denbigh and still extant today.¹ *Wimba* is sited at the north west corner of Wimba Avenue and Cotham Road. Wimba Avenue was formed to facilitate the subdivision of the estate in c. 1927.

10 Wimba Avenue (originally 4 Wimba Avenue), was constructed in c. 1928. Municipal rate records for 1927-28 listed E Tanner as the owner of a vacant allotment.² By the following year the site was occupied by a brick house of 8 rooms, owned by E Tanner and occupied by J Tanner. It had a net annual value (nav) of £160.³ By 1941 as further development occurred on adjacent allotments the house became 10 Wimba Avenue. The Tanner family occupied the house until at least 1974.⁴

(Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

The house at 10 Wimba Avenue is a single-storey double-fronted interwar house of clinker brick construction with a transitional style between the Bungalow and Colonial Revival. The hipped roof is finished with terracotta tiles and is punctuated by plain brick chimneys with rendered caps and flat roofed window bays are finished with galvanised steel. An asymmetrical façade comprises a deep, centrally placed projecting entrance porch which is flanked by a pair of bays, each with a canted bay window, with additional recessed flanking bays. Square in plan, the porch has a pyramidal roof form which is supported by grouped Tuscan order columns on a rendered projecting coping. The porch floor is tiled in small rectangular tiles which vary in colour through cream, terracotta and brown tones.⁵ There are several wide steps. The recessed main entrance contains a pair of fully-glazed timber-framed doors and surrounds. The timberwork to the doorcase is over-painted black and the glazing incorporates some lead lighting with some textured glass, with fanlight and wheel motifs.⁶ While the fenestration is irregularly placed, it is consistent in the use of timber-framed box-framed double-hung and casement sash windows with corbelled sills and leadlight glazing. At the northern end of the façade is a pressed cement name plaque bearing the name *RAB-NOV-JEA*; the origins of the

name are unclear. The north elevation includes a basement garage with original folding doors with textured glass windows and a rendered lintel.⁷

With the exception of a steel garage (1972) and open garage and pergola (1977), both of which have since been removed, the house appears to have been intact to its date of construction until recent rear alterations and additions, including a new garage and southern wing.⁸ The garage has similar detailing to the walls and roof, albeit with modern panelled doors. The substantial extension along the southern boundary has matching bricks and similar roof tiling, however with near full height timber-framed openings. These works are largely obscured from the street, however the front fence has also been altered by the construction of additional courses of brickwork above the original and the introduction of new timber gates.⁹

Historical Context

Rab-Nov-Jea was one of the first houses to be constructed in this newly created street, formed by the subdivision of part of the *Wimba* estate. The estate was characterised by large inter-war houses on generous allotments.

Comparative Analysis

Rab-Nov-Jea, at 10 Wimba Avenue, typifies a typology of hipped roof house form which emerged in the late 1920s. In part it is an adaptation of Old Colonial house forms such as *Fernhill* at Mulgoa, NSW, of 1840-1, though with a squared rather than a semicircular porch, and early homesteads with paired colonnades, as with *Horsley* at Smithfield, NSW of 1832. Both of these were illustrated in Hardy Wilson's *Old Colonial Architecture*, published in 1928.¹⁰ Marcus Barlow published similarly proportioned Colonial Revival designs in his *Australian Bungalows* in 1926, including two designs of Barlow and Hawkins built in Boroondara- at Hawthorn and Camberwell, and two by Blackett, Forster and Craig in Balwyn.¹¹ *Rab-Nov-Jea*'s hipped roof form also suggests a return to the bungalow's Indian origins, and as both Graeme Butler and Peter Cuffley have observed, hipped roofed 'Indian Bungalows' recurred frequently in Australian domestic design.¹² *Rab-Nov-Jea* also compares very closely with G Burridge Leith's 10 designs for the State bank *Design Book*, differing primarily in having a projecting porch, four Tuscan columns instead of two and four-sash window bays under small flat roofs.¹³

In Boroondara 10 Wimba Avenue compares directly with Irwin and Stephenson's *Corrabert* at 112 Mont Albert Road Canterbury, of 1926-8, and the similar 10 Findon Crescent Kew, by Purchas and Teague, of 1929-30 (q.v., originally B-graded, downgraded to C in this review).

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

CRITERION D: *The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as a part of a class or type of places or objects.*

Rab-Nov-Jea, at 10 Wimba Avenue, Kew is of local historical and architectural significance as a good and externally relatively intact example of a hipped-roofed, symmetrically composed Indian Bungalow design of the late 1920s, in this case incorporating components of the Colonial Revival being popularized in magazines and books of the day.

Statement of Significance

Rab-Nov-Jea, at 10 Wimba Avenue, Kew is of local historical and architectural significance as a good and externally relatively intact example of a hipped-roofed, symmetrically composed Indian Bungalow design of the late 1920s, in this case incorporating components of the Colonial Revival being popularized in magazines and books of the day. 10 Wimba Avenue is of clinker brick construction with a terracotta tile roof, and the façade comprises a centrally placed projecting entry porch with a hipped roof supported on Tuscan columns, flanked by faceted bay windows with projecting angled brick sills. Other windows to the façade are set in box frames supported on several courses of stepped brickwork. The double hung windows have lead light with some textured glass panes in a geometric design.¹⁴

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Identified By

Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988

References

General: Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988, G Butler & Associates, Kew B-graded places study (draft), 2001.

Specific:

¹ Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, pp. 143-4.

² City of Kew Rate Books, 1927-28, #3215, E Tanner, allotment, nav £60.

³ City of Kew Rate Books, 1928-29, #3320, J Tanner, brick 8 rooms, nav £160.

⁴ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years between 1930 and 1974.

⁵ Further details on the porch are based on text from the peer review by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants, October 2008.

⁶ Further detail of the door case and its glazing are based on text from the peer review by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants, October 2008.

⁷ Information on the north elevation is taken from the RBA Architects peer review, October 2008.

⁸ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #3301, dated 6 June 1972, steel garage; and #6693, dated 1 June 1977, open garage and pergola.

⁹ Building Permit #20040125/0, dated 9 August 2004, construction of extension to dwelling, City of Boroondara Building File 40/408/15317. Description is by RBA Architects from their site inspection, included in the peer review of October 2008.

¹⁰ William Hardy Wilson, *Old Colonial Architecture in New South Wales and Tasmania*, private publication, Sydney, London, 1928; reprinted by Ure Smith, Sydney, 1975. A general listing of these sources is in *The Heritage of Australia*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1981, pp. 2/24 and 2/57.

¹¹ Marcus Barlow, *Australian Homes*, Melbourne, 1926. These included several designs of his in collaboration with FGB Hawkins, who later moved to Western Australia, and besides the Hawthorn and Kew designs included two by Blackett, Forster and Craig at Winmallee Road Balwyn, of which one at least survives.

¹² One implication for this hipped roof type was its proximity to the expressed solidity and construction technique of the suburban vernacular described generally as 'post war', which is seen as a post 1945 phenomenon but arguably stemmed from designs such as these and *Rab- Nov-Jea*. The link can readily be seen in viewing Leith's modified 1936 variant on his B10 designs, and in related houses after c. 1930, being produced by RM and MH King, GM Sneddon, L Hume Sherrard, Arthur Ziebell, Arthur Pretty, AV Jennings and various others. These gradually differed from houses of the *Rab-Nov-Jea* type, incorporating asymmetrical plans, stepped profiles, iron-framed fenestration and cantilevered windows, smaller porches and an abandonment of the turned columns. Otherwise, though, the hipped tile 'mushroom' roof, solidity of proportions, scale, brick veneer construction, and address of both the street and the car could be transposed directly into the hundreds of thousands of suburban 'vernacular' designs that appeared round Australia between c. 1945 and 1970. For this argument see Conrad Hamann, 'Architecture', in A Brown-May and Shurlee Swain, eds., contrib., *The Encyclopedia of Melbourne*, Cambridge UP, Melbourne, 2005, and Vol. 3 of Leon Paroissen, series ed., *A History of Australian Architecture (1900-1945)*, Educational Media, Melbourne, 1985.

¹³ See G Butler, *The Californian Bungalow in Australia*, Lothian, Melbourne, 1992, pp. 43: State Savings bank type B10, and a marginally broader weatherboard version, both designed by G Burrridge Leith.

¹⁴ This paragraph, providing further detail relating to the design elements of the façade, is based on text from the peer review by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants, October 2008. The inclusion of this additional detail in the statement of significance is at the direction of the Panel for Amendment C64 Boroondara Planning Scheme, December 2008.