Name	House	**Reference No**	
Address	2 Beatrice Street, Glen Iris	**Survey Date**	21 June 2005
Building Type	Residence	**Grading**	B
Date	1941	**Previous Grading**	B

Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness ✓ Good   ☐ Fair   ☐ Poor

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

History

This house was constructed for the prominent cartoonist 'Mick' (Harold Barry) Armstrong (1903-1978). Armstrong, who grew up in Sydney, initially drew for the Sydney *Sun,* before moving to Melbourne by 1935. In Melbourne he worked for the *Herald, Star, Argus, Smith's Weekly* and *Truth.* [1] His wartime cartoons in the *Argus* are particularly well-remembered for their amusing and comic 'take' on events during grim times.

Previously a resident of Glen Iris, Armstrong acquired the prominent corner block of land in 1940, where it was rated as a vacant allotment. Construction of the home, described as a 7-roomed brick dwelling, followed during 1940-41 at an estimated cost of £2100. [2] Armstrong resided at the address until 1953 when the house was occupied by Edward Daggard and then an L. A. Daggard until 1966. The house was subsequently occupied by G. Rogers until at least 1974, before it was acquired by the McLaren family. [3] The house was sold to a new owner in 1998. [4]

To date no architect has been associated with this building.

(G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991)

Description & Integrity

2 Beatrice Street, Glen Iris, is a two storey house displaying a Moderne asymmetrical massing of face cream brick construction. The parapeted walls conceal upper level terraces and flat roofs and a continuous projecting concrete band above the ground floor windows delineates the floor levels and individual concrete hoods project over first floor windows. The windows generally contain non-original timber-framed awning and fixed sashes screened by canvas awning blinds however the curved corner window adjacent to the main entrance retains an original steel-framed sash. The terraces are

accessed via pairs of timber-framed fully glazed doors whereas the entrance contains a panelled solid timber door. A single door at ground floor level has been replaced with glass bricks.

The terrace and garden paths are concrete paved and a matching cream brick double garage is located at the rear of the property. The frontage is unfenced; however a ti tree fence encloses the rear yard adjacent to the garage.

Historical Context

Burwood developed as an agricultural area during the mid to late nineteenth century, and as late as the 1930s a number of farms still remained. The inter-war period saw a boom in development, with major improvements to public transport and a rise in popularity of the car.   The immediate surrounding area appears to have been subdivided from this period.

Comparative Analysis

Initially taken up in the late 1920s and early 1930s for use on commercial buildings including city offices and shops and suburban hotels (both new and remodelled), the American Streamlined Moderne idiom was adopted in the early to mid-1930s in a range of domestic commissions by noted architects.[5] The approach gained publicity through its application to cinema design, and consciously stylish film sets, streamlined trains such as the *California Zephyr* and the appearance of unibody streamlined cars such as the 1933 Chrysler *Airflow* or the 1936 Lincoln *Zephyr*. The mode also reflects the radical change to streamlined aircraft design in the 1930s, as with the De Havilland Comet, Boeing 247 or DC 2, of 1933-1934.[6] By the mid-1930s the Moderne had been embraced by the wider community and was popular for small to medium sized middle class houses (both builder and architect-designed).[7] Most adopted a two-storey form with a basically rectilinear plan but generally with some conspicuous curved or 'streamlined' element. Some, like the subject property, had a flat roof, but the majority had a hipped roof, fully or partially concealed by a parapet. These two-storey examples were often constructed in Melbourne's wealthier suburbs, including Kew, Canterbury, Malvern and Caulfield, but examples of Streamlined Moderne occur all over Melbourne in the years surrounding World War 2. Moderne is often hard to distinguish from chapters in European Modern Movement architecture, as witnessed by the waterfall front of Emil Fahrenkamp's 1931 Shell building in Berlin, Fritz Hoger's vast and ship-like Chilehaus in Hamburg or the streamlined machine-forms of Erich Mendelsohn's public buildings and department stores to 1933. All three architects were well-publicised in Australian architecture and building magazines. Californian historians such as David Gebhard and Esther McCoy were also more inclined to see the bullnosed American Moderne as basically a local development of European Modernism.[8] Gavin Stamp has also noted how widespread it was in Britain.[9]

2 Beatrice Street, Glen Iris, can be compared to the following properties in the municipality:

- 6 Bulleen Road, Balwyn North (A-graded), is an overtly Moderne design with strong massing, defined slab edges and curves and intact details including steel-framed windows and wrought iron balustrades, 'architecturally, a superior residential example';[10]
- 24 Christowel Street, Camberwell (C-graded), while it does not have a flat roof, the house is a good example of Moderne design displaying steel window frames and open terraces;
- 24 Finsbury Way, Camberwell, (C-graded), while the first floor level has a hipped roof form, the ground floor areas and other Moderne stylistic traits such as massing, steel-framed windows, horizontality, curves and terraces distinguish this house;
- 1 Kalonga Road, Balwyn North (A-graded), while initially single-storey, the house evolved in the 1950s and now displays similarities with the Beatrice Street property including Moderne elements, prominent concrete sunhoods, terraces and parapets;
- 1 Montana Street, Burwood (B-graded), manganese brick separates this example from the subject;
- 56 Riverside Avenue, Balwyn North, (B-graded), an alternative form with only the ground floor similar to the subject with exposed, projecting slab edge and steel-framed horizontal fenestration;
- 15 Walbundry Avenue, Balwyn North (A-graded), has a more distinctive Streamlined Moderne character with rendered walls, prominent curves and portholes; and
- 28 Holyrood Street, Kew (B-graded), distinctive triple-fronted parapeted curved façade which addresses its corner siting with strong Moderne horizontality

Considered in the context of the other examples cited here, the subject property appears to lack the distinction (including stronger massing and distinctive detailing) of the A-graded examples, but to be broadly comparable to other B-graded examples. The intactness of the building has been compromised by the apparent replacement of some of the original steel-framed windows with timber and the infilling of a door with glass bricks.

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.

2 Beatrice Street is a representative and broadly intact example of a substantial and comfortable Moderne-styled suburban residence of the late inter-war period.

CRITERION E: The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

2 Beatrice Street is an assured example of the application of the Moderne idiom to a comfortable two-storey suburban residence of the late inter-war period. It is a relatively simple and austere example, given interest through its asymmetrical massing of forms.

Statement of Significance

The house at 2 Beatrice Street, Burwood, is of local historical and architectural significance as a good example of a Moderne house of the late inter-war period. The asymmetrical massing of forms takes advantage of the prominent corner siting to address both frontages, a context which sets it apart from the more traditional planning and form of the neighbouring properties. While the integrity of the building has been compromised to a degree by the alterations to windows and a door, the overall composition remains unaltered.

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

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

Identified By

G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

References

General: G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991
Specific:
[1] *Who's Who in Australia* 1941, p. 121.
[2] Details sourced from City of Camberwell Building Index #13799, dated 1940.
[3] *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years.
[4] Enquiry dated 24/7/1998 held in the City of Boroondara Building File 40/408/010097.
[5] B Raworth. A Question of Style, Masters of Architecture thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993, pp. 119-121.
[6] The local counterparts to these, respectively, were the streamlined cinemas of Guy Crick, Bruce Furze, Taylor, Soilleaux and Overend, Cowper, Murphy and Appleford and Le Poer Terry: see Ross Thorne, Cinemas of Australia via USA, Sydney, University of Sydney, 1972, and the distributors' magazines *Film News* and *Film Weekly* of that period.
The trains were paralleled in Australian examples such as Stephenson and Turner's design of the *Spirit of Progress*, 1937, and NSW's *Silver City Comet* of the same year. Holden paralleled new American car design with their locally-modified *Sloper*, a streamlined utility, also in 1937. See Simon Jackson, The Discipline Without a Name: Industrial Design in Australia, Ph D Thesis, Monash University, 2002. Radically streamlined aircraft such as the DC 2 and DC3 and Lockheed 10, were quickly bought by Australian airlines after 1935 and their virtues were being disseminated to the Australian public. See *Home Beautiful*, 'Now We Fly in Comfort', July 1938. The new aircraft were also focal in a series of

hugely popular films, from Shirley Temple's *Bright Eyes* of 1934 to Howard Hawks' *Ceiling Zero* (1936) and *Only Angels Have Wings*(1939). The *Comet* was an earlier namesake of De Havilland's post-war jet airliner.

[8] See, esp. David Gebhard et al., *Guide to the Architecture of Los Angeles and Southern California*, Peregrine Smith, Salt lake City & Los Angeles, 1980, and Esther McCoy, *Richard Neutra*, Braziller, New York, 1961.

[9] See Gavin Stamp, ed., *Britain in the Thirties*, whole issue of *Architectural Design*, 47, 1977.

[10] B Raworth. A Question of Style, M. Arch thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993, p. 123.

[10] G. Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991, vol. 4, p. 47.