
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	1 Montana Street, Glen Iris	Survey Date	20 September 2005, access visit 19 April 2006
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 BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Artist Douglas Harman was the first and major owner-occupier of this house after its construction in 1941.¹ He remained there at least until the 1950s.²

Additions were made to the side porch in 1945³ and a bedroom, garage and carport were added to the building in 1964.⁴ Rear additions were made for T. & J. Baker in the 1980s by A.V. Jennings;⁵ these comprised an additional bathroom, sun room, garage and 'garden room'.

(G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, additional research by Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

The house at 1 Montana Street was constructed in distinctive umber salt-glazed manganese brickwork in 1941, possibly to designs by C S Cameron, who had completed similar houses at 123 Mont Albert Road, Canterbury, and 6 Bulleen Road, North Balwyn.⁶ The house has an integral parapet, trimmed in white glazed brick, concealing a flat roof. All north and west facing windows in the living area share a continuous shallow cantilevered concrete awning as sun protection. The plan responded to the acute angled site, at the corner of Montana Street and Prosper Parade, combining a bank of bedrooms, kitchen and bathroom areas with an L-shaped living room at an acute angle to the bedroom wing. The living room area has two rounded north facing corners and a trailing apse-bay drawing in views to the south-west. Externally, this apse is marked by a recess in the umber brick and a streamlined light fitting. The original living area has broad windows facing north-west across the tapering front garden toward the intersection of Montana Street and Prosper Parade. The original steel window framing remains, though a glass brick window has been added to the original east elevation. A door on the Prosper Parade side of the house provided access to the garden, past a full height sidelight window in

amber glass. The current front entry is located at the intersection of the living and bedroom wings, and is screened behind a spur wall of manganese brick, patterned ornamentally.

The house appears to be intact to the extent of its principal elevations to Montana Street and to the Montana Street-Prosper Parade corner. The eastern elevation, to Prosper Parade, has had some alterations, with an additional window being introduced and a bedroom, garage and carport added in 1964. Additions have also been made at the southern end of the house in works undertaken by AV Jennings in 1986, when the bedroom wing was extended to include a garden room, bathroom, sunroom and garage. These additions were designed in sympathy with the existing house, with brickwork to match the original. Overall, though some changes have occurred, these are not such as to undermine the presentation of the building.

Historical Context

1 Montana Street is situated on a prominent corner site, and when approached from the north, it is the first house in a precinct of predominately single-storey residences constructed in the interwar period. The streetscape presentation of 1 Montana Street is enhanced by its plantation of cypress trees which further signpost the house's prominent position within its neighbourhood.

Comparative Analysis

The manganese glazed brick, parapet, flat roof and bull-nosed cantilever steel-framed window framing used at 1 Montana Street were all elements coming into favor in Melbourne suburban usage at this time.⁷ Glazed brick was used extensively in patterning in the Burwood - Ashburton area at this time, as seen on one nearby house in Adrian Street and several in the Ward Street-Highgate Grove area of Ashburton, immediately south. Manganese brick usage can also be seen on *Marston*, 24 Cristowel Avenue, on the Camberwell Golf Links Estate.

1 Montana Street is distinctive in terms of its planning. Canted wings were appearing in Melbourne houses from the late 1930s,⁸ but this design is unusual in elaborating the canted wing into a free-formed plan outline and squeezing its link to the bedroom and bathroom wing through a narrow hall and kitchen linkage. This acoustic and visual separation of living and sleeping areas to either side of an entrance is accentuated in the external massing of the building.⁹

While a direct influence seems unlikely in this suburban Melbourne context, there are some parallels between the plan of 1 Montana Street and the work of Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer in their plans for institutional buildings in the 1930s, where slab-form buildings were coupled to a more sculptural gesture-mass that projected out at an angle and often shifted into a canted, curving mass. In Corbusier and Niemeyer buildings this was usually a reception or dining area, or a lecture hall.¹⁰

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.

The house is a fine and relatively intact example of the glazed brick, parapet-roofed and conspicuously modern houses which appeared in Boroondara after c. 1937.

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.

The house is an assured and successful composition, using its corner siting well and incorporating a series of interesting building forms and materials. It is distinctive for the extensive use of glazed manganese brick to all facades.

It is of also some significance for its planning, specifically in its articulation of a bi-nuclear plan.

Statement of Significance

1 Montana Street, Glen Iris, is of local historical and architectural significance. It is a fine and relatively intact example of the glazed brick, parapet-roofed and conspicuously modern houses which

appeared in Boroondara after c. 1937. The house is an assured and successful composition, using its corner siting well and incorporating a series of interesting building forms and materials. It is distinctive for the extensive use of glazed manganese brick to all facades. It is also of some significance for its planning, specifically in its articulation of a bi-nuclear plan.

Grading Review

Unchanged, B.

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 G Butler cites 'BA in computer data'; *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* 1944-5; SLV Biography file.

² *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1952.

³ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #17045, dated 30 July 1945.

⁴ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 36202, dated 20 November 1964

⁵ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 798275, dated 26 February 1986, variation to this # 79966, dated 21 March 1986.

⁶ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, v. 4, p. 205, suggests the link.

⁷ See Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, v. 4. The most similar in materials is *Marston*, at 24 Christowel Street, which also used salt-glazed manganese bricks, and was built by JAE Humphries in 1939. The parapeted roof and streamlined style seen at 1 Montana Street was paralleled in a series of Camberwell houses. See pp. 27 (Beatrice Street Glen Iris, B-graded, 1941, q.v.), 46 (6 Bulleen Road Balwyn North, A-graded, 1951), 124 (24 Finsbury Way, C-graded, 1938), 128-9 (177 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris, B-graded, 1935, q.v.), 144 (1 Kalonga Road, Balwyn North, A-graded, 1948-55) 196 (123 Mont Albert Road, B-graded, 1942, demolished), and 229 (8 Reid Street, B-graded, demolished, 1937-8, by Mewton and Grounds), and 296 (15 Walbundry Avenue, Balwyn North, A-graded, 1936, the earliest Boroondara counterpart). 43 Kireep Road, Balwyn, A-graded, by Robin Boyd, was the first genuinely bi-nuclear house to appear in Camberwell after 1 Montana Street. See p. 152.

⁸ As with Billson and Mewton's house in Hopetoun Road Toorak, 1938. Straight-sided canted wings were popular in Age-RVIA Small Homes Service designs after 1949.

⁹ The house predates the bi-nuclear plans that became popular in Australian architectural circles around 1950-55. Indeed it precedes Marcel Breuer's highly publicized bi-nuclear plan houses in the US, which date from the mid 1940s, though these were predicated on a much more radical approach to structure and expression through a dynamic structure and roof form.

¹⁰ See for example, Corbusier's Salvation Army Refuge in Paris, 1931-3, and Pavillion Suisse, 1929-33; Niemeyer's Pampulha Yacht Club, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 1940.