
Name	<i>Banff</i>	Reference No	
Address	150 Winmalee Road, Balwyn	Survey Date	25 November 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1915	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Allotment 3 owned by Thomas Watt in 1910 was purchased by Allen D. Gilfillan of Castlemaine by 1914.¹ Gilfillan as owner applied to build a concrete and 'fibro' 25 square house at 230 Winmalee Road in late 1914; his architect was H. Crawford who is thought to have been Hugh R. Crawford, a noted concrete technologist from early this century. Crawford's patented (1907) hollow-wall reinforced concrete construction method was used to build Queen Anne style houses in Mont Albert Road, Canterbury and Camberwell East.² His own house is thought to survive at 1121 Dandenong Road, East Malvern.³

By 1915 Gilfillan had a nine roomed, concrete dwelling.⁴ Allen Gilfillan, a solicitor, lived here with Eliza, Charlotte, Eliza Mary, and Sheila Gilfillan until after 1952.⁵

Based on the MMBW Detail Plan No. 150, (of 1932 but possibly based on an earlier survey), Banff was originally located on a very large allotment which has been reduced substantially in size, through the subdivision and development of land to the east, west and south of the house.

By 1962 Arthur Morrison occupied this property and remained here until after 1974.⁶ In 1977 additions were made to the south-east corner of the house at an estimated cost of £8,100 by Vindin Suares Home Improvements to the residence for the owners, Mr. and Mrs. J. Van Schoonhoven.⁷

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

Description & Integrity

Banff, at 150 Winmalee Road, is an imposing house, set back from the street on a corner site and separated by a tennis court from its street corner. It is angled to take in views of the Dandenong Ranges and Great Divide. The house has a low pitched roof with a broad eave and exposed rafters,

supported on a series of diagonal struts in a manner evoking both the Swiss chalet and its derivations in the California bungalow. The gables under each roof are shingled. The walls are in reinforced concrete, overpainted white. This drains the house of visible weight, so that it could be as materially light as if it were in weatherboard or shingle. This sense of lightness is aided by the juxtaposed gabling, the textured stucco rendering, the fairly light treatment of the window framing and the well-scaled use of shutters. The house is generally intact externally, though it is not known whether it was originally overpainted.

Banff's tennis court appears to be of relatively long standing, as at the related 286 Union Road. A tennis pavilion, brick fence, drainage and lighting were added in 1984. There had been some internal alterations in the later 1970s, the addition of a swimming pool and then an 'open' garage and several added pool facilities, including a timber-framed timber pool house.⁸ A basic fence was added in 1990: in palings and cyclone wire, predominantly⁹.

Historical Context

As noted above, *Banff* was originally sited in much larger grounds, as were other early houses in Winmalee Road. The MMBW Detail Plan no. 150 of 1932 shows the street had only been partly developed by the interwar period.

Comparative Analysis

Banff compares well with No. 127 Winmalee Road; the houses were only four to five years apart and both attempted to reconcile the bungalow form with the space and programmatic complexity of large suburban houses. The strategy here was to take the bracketed and low-pitched roof seen in Californian designs and return it, to some extent, to its original Swiss Chalet roots. This also had the effect of then allowing two or more levels in relative compositional comfort. At the same time this bulk allowed the design to stay relatively close to important California bungalow prototypes, particularly Greene and Greene's Gamble and Blacker houses in the United States and others from the period 1904-8.¹⁰ Most so-called California bungalows- at least in the Pasadena area where they are seen as originating - actually accommodated two levels, notwithstanding the bungalow's traditional association with one storey. The majority of larger Melbourne houses in the 1920s opted for the attic bungalow as a solution to size, rather than the more cuboid chalet mode as in the case of 150 Winmalee Road. John Monash's revolutionary 'moulded' George Higgins house at 4 Ray Street Beaumaris of 1912 (now demolished, but interestingly, also in reinforced concrete) showed the same approach.¹¹

Banff is relatively early in the development of the modern bungalow form in Australia, indeed within about six years of the bungalow being identified as an architectural possibility for Australia and the appearance of Bungalows in Malvern and nearby at 17 Threadneedle Street (q.v., B-graded). *Banff* falls within what is generally considered the bungalow's 'first wave', marked by Edwin Orchard's early bungalow designs in Charles Slatyer's Sydney office, the prefabricated Redwood bungalow's arrival and Roscoe Collins' winning bungalow design for the Sydney Red Cross competition.¹² In the 1991 Camberwell Conservation Study, Graeme Butler observed a resemblance to Harold Desbrowe-Anne's houses of the same period, perhaps reflecting Desbrowe-Anne's own gravitation to Bungalow forms from around 1905-6.¹³

The reinforced concrete construction was unusual at the time, and compares with HR Crawford's better-known reinforced concrete houses, of which one at least was in the Camberwell area. It is not known whether any the Crawford houses survive, and one at least was demolished after being sold in 1972.¹⁴

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

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.

Coming relatively early in the development of the modern Bungalow form in Australia, *Banff* provides several signatures of the form generally: a fairly low-pitched roof, lightness in its external walling, lightness in its fenestration, and a good siting for views and sun, it is relatively uncommon in the Melbourne context as an example of a clear two-storey Bungalow form (as opposed to the attic form).

While largely confined to the eave treatment of the house, its Swiss Chalet references are also relatively uncommon in the Melbourne context; as noted by Bryce Raworth, 'Swiss-influenced bungalows are without doubt the most poorly represented style of bungalow in Melbourne'.¹⁵

CRITERION F: The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.

The house is of technological interest for its construction, using the patented system of reinforced concrete construction developed by Hugh R Crawford.

Statement of Significance

Banff, 150 Winmalee Road, Balwyn is of local historical and architectural significance as an intact and relatively early example of a two-storey Bungalow residence. While *Banff* provides several signatures of the Bungalow form generally: a fairly low-pitched roof, lightness in its external walling, lightness in its fenestration, and a good siting for views and sun, it is relatively uncommon in the Melbourne context as an example of a clear two-storey Bungalow form (as opposed to the attic form). The Swiss Chalet references are also relatively uncommon in the Melbourne context. With a construction date of 1915, *Banff* is also relatively early in the development of the modern bungalow form in Australia.

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 Town of Camberwell Rate Books, 1910-11, 2392; 1914-15, 3042.

² M Lewis, *200 Years of Concrete Construction in Australia*, Concrete Institute of Australia, Sydney, 1988, p.26

³ M Lewis, *200 Years of Concrete Construction in Australia*, see also M Lewis, *Australian Building: A Cultural Investigation*, p. 7.0515.

⁴ City of Camberwell Rate Books, 1915-16, 3092.

⁵ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1930; *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* 1952; Electoral Roll, 1938.

⁶ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1962; 1974.

⁷ Details sourced from City of Camberwell Building Index, # 60553, dated 2 February 1977.

⁸ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #60553, dated 2 February 1977 (internal alterations); #60577, dated 7 February 1977 (swimming pool); 63193, dated 1 June 1978, #76025, dated 31 July 1984 (a second, 'open' garage, the tennis pavilion brick fencing, drainage and lighting).

⁹ Detail sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #91430, dated 24 September 1990.

¹⁰ These are discussed at length in Randell Mackinson, *Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art*, Peregrine Smith, Los Angeles, 1977, pp. 92-3, 100-101 (Mrs James Garfield's house, Josephine van Rossem house, both 1904); 112, 116 (the LG and Marion Porter house, and Arthur Libby house, both 1905); 126-132 (the de Forest, Philips, and Pitcairn houses of 1906, and the Blacker and Gamble houses of 1907-8: pp. 150-5, 160-167.

¹¹ See the Heritage Victoria citation, www.heritage.vic.gov.au/page_239.

¹² These are discussed in both *Architecture and Arts* and *The Salon*, its new incarnation in 1912. The earlier Martin house was discussed in *Building* in April 1912. See Peter Cuffley, *Australian Houses of the '20s and '30s*, Five Mile, Melbourne, 1989, p. 57.

¹³ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, vol. 4, pp. 319-320.

¹⁴ (C Hamann) Personal recollections of the demolition. Lewis discusses Crawford's houses in *200 years of Concrete in Australia*, pp. 24-27.

¹⁵ B Raworth. A Question of Style, M Arch thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993, pp. 51-52.