

# Hawthorn Heritage Places

The following place was identified in the Hawthorn Heritage Study 1991 as regionally significant

Hawthorn Keynote Buildings

## Identification and location

Name of place	Burnside		
Place Identifier			
Other Names	Shierlaw house		
Address	62	Riversdale Rd	
		Hawthorn	
Creation date(s):	1909	1991 Value (A-E)/Streetscape (1-3):	B2
Site Type		Map (Melway)	45 C12

Landmark tree  Garden  fence  hard landscape

## History and themes

### History

#### History of the area

The south side of Riversdale Road, from Glenferrie Road to the river, was the northern boundary of Crown Portion 50 (28 acres) bought by Michael Woodlock at Crown Land sales in March 1846. 1 His 'Rosebank' property was for sale only 7 years later, and the house was at the river end of the property, but the description suggests that it had been occupied for most of that time, with already an established garden planted with exotic trees:

'surrounded by a beautiful hedge of sweet briar, roses, woodbine etc... every variety of fruit grows to perfection and plenty... (and later)  
the industrious proprietor has clothed his hills with vines ...covered his fields with "yellow grain". He has made the wilderness blossom like the rose...' 2

Its purchaser, Edward Doherty, died not long afterwards and his executors advertised the property again in September 1855. 3 On the south side of the long narrow allotment was probably the original main government road, later the present Yarra Lane, above the homestead area of the Gardiner squatting run. Those Crown Portions had been bought and subdivided by Alexander Davidson, with access from a new private road (the present Fordholm Road), which ended at Yarra Lane until after 1900.

Crown Portion 50 was cut into half a dozen generous estates. Living in the most fashionable row of homes, along a main road, and with views across the river, the residents in these estates included some of the district's most influential pioneers. Most homes were two storeyed but were, over the years, unfortunately renovated in current architectural styles and eventually demolished. The purchasers were listed in the first Boroondara Road District Assessment Roll of 1857. One five acre property was acquired by solicitor Joseph Gibbs Duffett by 1858, with a 2-roomed house by 1863, then a 7-roomed house by 1866 (valued for rating at £100 in 1870). By 1886 it had grown to 13 rooms, still on five acres, occupied by 7 persons, and valued at £225. The family also owned 10 acres further east (part subdivided for Illawarra Road, and in Auburn Road), disposed of in the early 1880s. 4

As Duffett worked in town, it is presumed he and his family lived mainly in their Hawthorn estate named Oaklands. Mature trees in properties around the north end of Fordholm Road - and particularly the undeveloped garden just east of the present no 62 Riversdale Road - would remain from his time. Maxwell Bradshaw actually referred to two mature oak trees there in 1987. 5

MMBW plans from after the turn of the century show what would appear to be a large building, perhaps a coach-house or caretaker's cottage, and small building further east, in the Bradshaw property. 6 Bradshaw referred to a married couple's residence in the grounds of Oaklands, when he was a small boy, which suggests they lived instead behind or nearer the older house, still then near the west corner of Fordholm Road. 7 Perhaps excavations might discover an underground tank, or foundations of outhouses, or the 2-roomed cottage first on the Duffett's five acre block. However, Bradshaw also recalled that there were only 11 houses along Riversdale Road (of which six were mansions) and no vacant blocks, when there were actually 12 houses including his family home and at least two separately-owned pieces of vacant land. 8 Later he mentioned having been born in 1911, and the original numbering (2 to 26) of the existing houses had left space for an extra number or two for a new house. His family home possibly prompted a rethink in the numbering, and space was left for many more in the renumbering of Riversdale Road by the First World War.

Bradshaw claimed that Sir George Turner of Summerlee and Mr Ford '...were the nearest things possible in modern Melbourne to English squires', with neither of their homes having electricity or telephone until the late 1920s. 9 The Duffetts were apparently still living in Hawthorn in 1888, because Mr Duffett advertised for a lost dog in February, although by 1891 there were only two occupants in the 13 rooms of Oaklands, with still a five acre garden, and a note that the valuation was reduced from £400 to £380 by the Council. 10 Next year Duffett was an attorney; by 1895-6 (when the first proposed street numbers were added), Duffett's still un-numbered house was tenanted by importer James Wellsford, and Duffett's address was Oakbank, Heywood.

The next year the house was vacant, and Duffett was a gentleman (presumably retired) of Oakbank, Heywood. 11

Duffett's ownership of the land (brought under the Transfer of Land Act) was confirmed in October 1904, with right of carriageway over the lane behind (Yarra Lane), and with his country address. In 1905 the house was tenanted; the property had been acquired by John Ford (with the Turner family then occupying Summerlee) and was subdivided for sale in August 1907. 12 Ford had bought a house and land in Riversdale Road further west in 1875, another in 1882, and retained a vacant block facing Riversdale Road when he built a new home Riverside on the major part of the Crown Portion 14 below acquired in 1886. Fordholm Road was named for him and continued north through the property. 13

#### The family of Burnside

Mrs Mary Jane Shierlaw had lived in Airdrie, once number 6 Rochester Road, Canterbury from circa 1897. The street nearby was later changed from Kent to Shierlaw after she paid for the construction (and there were other roads named Kent). A Mrs G C Shierlaw had left Rochester Road by the 1910 Directory. 14 Maxwell Bradshaw confirmed that his maternal grandparents had lived in Canterbury and his grandmother bought 5 allotments - apparently Lots 1-3 facing Riversdale Road and Lots 4 and 5 behind in Fordholm Road (with the Titles conveyed in September 1908 and May 1909). 15 She commissioned Christopher Cowper to design a house. 16 Architect Christopher Cowper was well-known in Hawthorn at that time, building some of the large homes in the Grace Park estate, in Hilda, Linda and Chrystobel Crescents and Moore Street, which may be how Mrs Shierlaw knew of the variety of his work (as her address was briefly given as Linda Crescent), and her prominent home would have advertised him widely. 17

In the 1909-10 rate book, Ford was listed as owner of 140 feet of land and the 13 roomed house tenanted by bank manager Richard Vivian. Next was a block of 99 feet and an unfinished brick house of 10 rooms on Lot 3 and part of Lot 2, valued at £100, and in the name of Mrs Mary Shierlaw of Linda Crescent. She also owned Lot 1 and part Lot 2 (of 97 feet by 173 feet), valued for rating at £32.

The next year Burnside was occupied by six persons and valued at £145, with the next block still separated and £32. In 1913-14 the owner was listed as Equity Trustees and the estate of Mrs Bertha Shierlaw, owning also Lot 4 in Fordholm Road on the east side, followed the next year by John Bradshaw's Riverleigh (a seven-roomed brick house later numbered 3), and with a house on the land between after the Second World War. 18 According to Bradshaw his father John looked after the family's pastoral interests at Victoria River in the Northern Territory. 19 It was Miss Bertha Shierlaw

according to the Directory of 1919, but Mrs E M Bradshaw in 1926. In the 1925-6 rate book Mrs Shierlaw owned the house, and the block of land was in the name of her daughter Mary Bradshaw, and still in 1932-3 (when 4 flats were pencilled in the rate book on land formerly belonging to the Turner's Summerlee). 20

Mr F Maxwell Bradshaw's entry in 'Who's Who in Australia' 1991 has him as MA LLM, chairman of the Scotch College Council 1980-85, author of 'Selbourne Chamber Memories' in 1962 (and Barrister-at-Law, in the list of distinguished occupants of rooms there). His 'Rural Village to Urban Surge : a History of the Presbyterian Congregation at Hawthorn, Victoria' was published in 1964. He was a devoted member of the local Church (in Glenferrie Road), being on the Board of Management from 1936 and an Elder of the church in 1941. 21

Early in 1994 the property had been graded B2 by architect Meredith Gould, in a conservation study commissioned by Hawthorn Council. B buildings were those of regional or metropolitan significance which stand as important milestones in the cultural development of the metropolis. 22 Until the house was sold in 1999 it had belonged to the one family - the Shierlaws and Bradshaws - for whom it was built nearly a century ago. Maxwell Bradshaw, who died in 1992, spent most of his life there. 23

When advertised for sale it was described as:

'This grand Federation residence with an eclectic, Art Nouveau influence, is presented in near-original condition with many fine features of the era ... with land of 60 x 53/72 metres'

Associations:    Christopher Cowper

### Thematic context - the place expresses the following themes:

Australian Principal Theme:

PAHT Subtheme:

Theme 1 HHS 1991:

Theme 2 HHS 1991:

Theme 3 HHS 1991:

### Description

This is a large red brick Federation Bungalow style house, in the Anglo-Indian manner, with slate roofs, terra-cotta ridging, and an encircling verandah supported on coupled classical columns - a motif used by the designer, Cowper, in other Hawthorn designs. The main hip roof serves as a backdrop for multiple half-timbered gabled roof bays and an attic or sleep-out balcony with a shingled balustrade. Detailed composition includes the ribbed red brick chimney shaft which bisects one west facing gable along with other shafts, complete with splayed cemented tops and terra-cotta pots, rising more traditionally out of the roof elsewhere.

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## Hawthorn Keynote Buildings

The design addresses both frontages with gabled room and verandah bays, with ornate curved timber brackets to the eaves of one projecting gable. A hipped room wing at the south-east corner of the house has been altered.

The interior has not been inspected.

There is a Norfolk Island pine on the north and two oaks near the north-west corner of the block which may date from the house construction. The large garden area on the east has a number of mature shrubs and trees, including a silky oak, which may also date from early in the 19th century, providing a period landscape setting for the house. East of this block is the remains of a stone brick and iron palisade fence which once fronte the adjoining mansion (now flats). A recently built empathetically styled timber and metal fence surrounds the house yard frontage and the garden lot is fronted with a chain wire fence.

### Significance

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|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetic? | Burnside house at 62 Riversdale Road, and garden are significant to the City of Boroondara and the Melbourne metropolitan area as:<br>- The home of an important Australian, barrister F Maxwell Bradshaw, built, owned and occupied by his family from 1909 for 90 years;<br>- An externally intact and impressive example of a Federation Bungalow, designed by the noted architect Christopher Cowper's work;<br>- A garden with trees and shrubs dating from the construction date of the house, providing a period landscape setting. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic?  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social?               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific?           |  |

### Documentation

The history of this property was derived from Gwen McWilliam, 2000, 62 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn, and the following sources were cited:

1. Bonwick, James. 1858, 1868 'Sketch of Boroondara': 19;
2. 'Argus' 4/2/1853, 7/2/1853 to be sold 11/2/1853 - G McWilliam believes that some of the planting may survive;
3. 'Victorian Government Gazette': 529, 617 1856; 'Argus' 3/9/1855; VTO Memorial V 269A;
4. McWilliam, G. Research in Hawthorn Council ratebooks (Index), also for 'Callantina' Ms, in SLV;
5. Bradshaw, M. 1987 Letter to G McWilliam 5/1/1987;
6. MMBW Plan 56 11/10/1902. (Before no 62 was built);
7. Bradshaw, M. 1987 Letter to G McWilliam 5/1/1987;
8. McWilliam, G. Research in Hawthorn Council ratebooks;
9. Bradshaw, M. 1987 Letter to G McWilliam 5/1/1987;
10. 'Boroondara Standard' 3/2/1888, Hawthorn Council rate book 1891 (Feb-Sept) 2923;
11. Hawthorn Council rate book 1892, 2920; 1895-6, 2094;
12. 27/10/1904, 2/3/1905, 26/8/1907: Notes from Geraldine McFarlane from Ford descendants; Hawthorn Council rate books;
- 13 Hawthorn Council rate books, research for 'Callantina' ms 17

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14. Camberwell Library Local History Collection Index: Letter 262, 318/1923 from Cr McBeath claimed name changed circa 1908, and a note she paid for construction 10/7/1908;
15. McFarlane, Geraldine. pc 21/9/1908, 31/5/1909: 580085, 596084;
16. McFarlane, Geraldine, 1999. 'Hawthorn Sketches: Life on the Hill': 50, 53
17. Cowper's name on Titles, and in rate books for most homes in Hilda Cres, a quartet behind in Linda Cres, and 16-20 Moore St;
18. Hawthorn Council rate books 1909-10, 2087-90; 1910-11 2088-9; 1912-13, 2086-7; 1913-14, 2088; 1914-15, 2105-6; Sands & McDougall Directories;
19. McFarlane, Geraldine. 'Hawthorn Sketches': 53
20. Hawthorn Council rate books 1925-6, 2313; 1932-3 4385
21. Bradshaw, FM 1964. 'Rural Village ...': 115, 117
22. Heritage Buildings outside Heritage Areas (leaflet), 1994;
23. Bradshaw, M. 1987 Letter to G McWilliam 5/1/1987