

PLACE IDENTIFICATION FORM

ADDRESS

12 Yarra Street

TYPE

- Single Residence
- Shop
- Office
- Landscape feature
- View
- Multiple Unit Res.
- Outbuildings
- Industrial Building
- Public building
- Other

TITLE

"Leighhardt Villa"

EXISTING DESIGNATION

HBR [ ] GBR [ ] AHC [ ] NT [ ] VAS [ ]

STREETSCAPE LEVEL

1  2 [ ] 3 [ ]  
SIGNIFICANT [ ] SIGNIFICANT [ ]  
STREET TREES KERB & GUTTERS

GRADING

A [ ] B  C [ ] D [ ] E [ ]  
KEYNOTE BUILDING [ ]

RECOMMENDED FOR

HBR/GBR [ ] AHC  URBAN CONSERVATION AREA   
VAS [ ] PLANNING SCHEME PROTECTION   
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE [ ] OTHER [ ]

SURVEY DATE Nov. 91.  
NEG FILE 43.04.05  
Title  
Vol.  
Fol.

THEME

- Early Settlement
- Mansions
- Victorian Garden Suburb
- Municipal dev.
- 1870s growth
- Garden villas
- Working enclaves
- Commercial Centres
- Edwardian Prosperity
- Interwar Housing
- Flats and Offices

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Date 1874, 1886 additions??  
Architect James Wood,  
Builder 1886 additions?  
Elements



- Contributing garden
- Landmark tree
- Original or early hard landscape layout
- Original or early fence

NOTABLE FEATURES/SIGNIFICANCE

See attached

INTEGRITY Good  Fair [ ] Poor [ ]  
CONDITION Good  Fair [ ] Poor [ ]

CROSS REFERENCED INFORMATION

Associated significant garden [ ]

## 12 YARRA STREET

### "LEIGHHARDT VILLA"

#### History

Built in 1874 for James Henderson and listed in the Hawthorn rate book of that year as a house in Yarra Street, NAV 45 pounds, this brick villa residence is the most ornate of a row of houses built on the St. James Park Estate facing Yarra Street.<sup>9</sup> By the middle 1880s, James Grimes, gentleman, was listed as the owner of the Yarra Street house, by this time with an NAV of 65 pounds.<sup>10</sup> It has been suggested that during the early 1890s, when occupied by the Grimes family, No. 12 "got a facelift" and increased from five or six rooms to eight. The Grimes family called it "Leighhardt Villa".<sup>11</sup> A tender notice in the *Argus* dated 4 September 1886 refers to additions to a villa in Yarra Street, St. James Park, Hawthorn, to be designed by the architect, James Wood. This may refer to the Grimes house.

Daniel Cullen, one-time mayor of the Town of Hawthorn in 1886-87, owned the Yarra Street villa before World War I.

#### Description

Side elevations are not visible.

A magnificent single storey garden villa set in a commanding position overlooking the road. The design is symmetrical with bay windows on each side of the central door. These are so large that they leave almost no wall surface between the corner and the bay, and between the door and the bay. What little is left is taken up by large sculptures in niches. The verandah follows the cranked bay form. It is constructed in cast iron without a timber valence frame and utilizing a superb heavy, fern leaf pattern in the cast iron. The two cranked bays of the verandah frame the narrow entry, emphasised by the stairs and render urns at the base.

The verandah extends around each side of the building. These elevations cannot be seen. The roof is hipped, faceted over the bays to reflect their form.

#### Assessment

The design may be by the important architect James Wood. It is not clear how much the building was altered in the 1880s however. On-site inspection may assist in determining this. This design adopts the common 1880s villa form seen also at No. 1 Bayview Avenue of 1886 and at 71 Liddiard Street.

The quality of render embellishment is equal to No. 1 Bayview Avenue, but the sculptures are very unusual and must have a story to tell. Although used

---

<sup>9</sup>. Hawthorn RB. 1874-75 No. 24.

<sup>10</sup>. Ibid. 1886-87 No. 53.

<sup>11</sup>. Gwen McWilliam, "Burwood Park", 1988, p. 149.

## 12 Yarra Street continued

elsewhere in Melbourne, the fern leaf iron is also unusual and not found elsewhere in the balustrade form at Hawthorn. Overall, despite the unsympathetic colour scheme, the building appears to be substantially intact and an excellent example of its standard type.

### Significance

### Metropolitan

1. Architecturally significant as a good example of its double bay type, made more unusual by the sculptures and the use of the fern leaf pattern iron.
2. Historically significant for its contribution to the St. James Park Estate.

