

Heritage Overlay No.: 025
Citation No.: 030
Place: House, 1374-1404 Gisborne-Melton Road

Other Names of Place: Mayfield, *Hurley House*
Location: 1374 – 1404 Gisborne-Melton Road, Toolern Vale
Critical Dates: 1889
Existing Heritage Listings: None
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

The house at 1374 – 1404 Gisborne-Melton Road is significant as a predominantly intact example of an unassuming Victorian style dwelling, and for its associations with early farming families in the Shire.

The house at 1374 – 1404 Gisborne-Melton Road is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D.2). Although slightly altered and unassuming in design (which is typical for a number of timber cottages in the Melton area for the era), the house still demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian style. These qualities include the hipped roof form, together with the recently added encircling verandah. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single symmetrical composition at the front, single storey height, horizontal timber

weatherboard wall cladding, corrugated sheet metal roof cladding, modest eaves, central timber framed front doorway, timber framed double hung windows and the timber verandah posts. The house at 1374 – 1404 Gisborne-Melton Road is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4). Situated on one of a limited number of surviving Melton Shire properties that pre-date the break-up of Melton's large Clarke, Staughton, Taylor, and Patterson pastoral estates, the construction of the house is expressive of both the typical generational change amongst pioneer families, and the general revival of farming, that occurred in the early twentieth century. It is associated with the Burton, Hurley, and Ferris families, pioneering farming families of the Shire.

Overall, the house at 1374 – 1404 Gisborne-Melton Road is of LOCAL significance.

Description:

The property at 1374 – 1404 Gisborne-Melton Road, is set quite prominently on a rise near the main road between Missens and McCorkells Roads. The house has a well-landscaped garden setting comprising an open grassed area at the front bound by flowers and shrubbery. A number of exotic trees also distinguish the front of the property.

The symmetrical, single storey, horizontal timber weatherboard, unassuming Victorian styled house is characterised by a hipped roof form, together with an encircling verandah. These roof forms are clad in galvanised corrugated steel. Modest overhangs are features of the eaves.

The symmetry of the front façade is accentuated by the early central timber framed doorway and the flanking early timber framed double hung windows. The other timber framed double wings at the sides also appear to be early.

A feature of the design is the return verandah. It is supported by timber posts covered in creeper. There is also an introduced simple timber verandah valance. The owner advises that this verandah and its recent decking were added in the 1990s, replacing a bullnosed verandah.¹ The house is essentially intact, apart from the introduced fabric previously listed and the minor additions towards the rear.

History:

The house is situated on Allotment 68, Parish of Yangardook, a property of 238 acres purchased by J&C Smith from the Crown on 13th June 1856. C, J and T Smith had purchased another five contiguous allotments at the Crown sales, an additional area of over 1000 acres.²

An 1892 map shows Hurley as the owner of Allotments 67 and 68, Parish of Yangardook.³ The ratebooks of that year record Henry Hurley as the owner. A penciled notation on the entry says 'house erected', indicating that a house was erected in that year.⁴ The owner advises that the dwelling was built in 1889.

¹ Mrs Rae Hurley, meeting & submission to heritage study, 23/01/07

² Parish Plan, Parish of Yangardook. (The Smiths had also purchased a considerable amount of other crown land in Toolern Vale.)

³ Shire Map Series (1892): Sunbury

⁴ Shire of Melton, *Ratebook*, 1892

Henry Hurley (born England 1856), married Mary Ann Burton (born Melton 1860), daughter of William and Margaret Burton of Toolern Vale, in Sunbury in 1879. Hurley rented property in Toolern before purchasing Allotments 67 and 68, Parish of Yangardook, from the Smith estate in 1888. Henry and Mary Ann had four children, both sons marrying daughters of John Ferris, Melton post master and electoral registrar, and the daughters marrying other well known Melton families: McCorkell, and Missen.⁵

The ratebooks of the years 1907-1910 record Henry Hurley as owning 309 acres, being allotments 67 and 68, with a Net Annual Value of £92. The 1911 ratebook records that William Hurley is now occupying tenant of the property, which is still owned by Henry Hurley. However, the property, still of 309 acres, now has a NAV of £154, and has '3 buildings'. By 1915 William Hurley was still the occupying tenant of the property, whose description and NAV remained the same as in 1911.⁶ It would appear then that in 1910 major improvements occurred on the property.

The owner states that there was only ever one house on the property, but extensive outbuildings and a hut for working men. There were stables, a dairy and an outdoor toilet, all erected in 1889. The house had 6 rooms and a passage and an encircling bullnosed verandah. In 1909 before Henry Junior was married, the floorboards a of the verandah were replaced as was the kitchen floor which was converted to a dining room. The dairy across the yard was converted to the kitchen. Henry Junior married Jessie Ferris and they lived in a house on a property belonging to Henry Hurley, known as *Park Avenue* under what is now Woodgrove Shopping Centre.⁷

In 1911 Henry's son William (1883 - 1937) had married Elizabeth Ferris. On return from their honeymoon William and Elizabeth were accorded a tin kettling, and moved into their home. There has only ever been one house on the property⁸. The family say that Mary and Henry moved into a house in Coburns Road, Melton. Henry died in 1931 and Mary moved into a house in High Street, Melton. This generational change that occurred in many pioneering farming families in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century coincided with major developments in farming at the time, as new science, technologies, grains, fertilisers, transport and markets enabled great productivity increases. (Dairying in particular suddenly boomed, as inventions such as the Babcock separator, the development of local co-operative creameries and butter factories, and advances in refrigeration creating new export markets, came into play.)

Mary Ann Hurley inherited land west of Station Road, south of High Street Melton from her father William Burton. After Henry died, she then married Henry Smith and moved to the city.⁹ In 1939 she died in 'her residence in Windsor'. The local paper described her as 'a member of one of the oldest pioneer families associated with the Toolern Vale district'. 'Until her death' it said, 'she was the sole surviving member of the family of the late William Burton, one of the district's earliest settlers.' She herself had 'aptly typified the active, hard working pioneer spirit of the district'.¹⁰

⁵ J Bilszta, genealogical files.

⁶ Shire of Melton, *Ratebooks*, 1907, 1910, 1911, 1915

⁷ Rae Hurley, Personal conversation, 23/01/2007

⁸ Helen Kirpatrick, Submission to draft study, 28/5/07

⁹ J Bilszta, genealogical files.

¹⁰ Melton *Express*, 24/6/1939

William and Elizabeth had 5 sons and 2 daughters. A separate laundry and bathroom was built. After William Hurley died in 1937 aged 54 years, Elizabeth extended one of the bedrooms on the south side of the house and moved the kitchen back into the house.¹¹ The family advises that a pantry and bathroom on the west of the house was also built.¹² The *Melton Express* reported that he had been in ill health for some time. He had lived all his life in the Toolern Vale district ‘where he took a keen interest in local affairs and was an active member of the school committee.’¹³

His sons William and Henry rented land from the McIntosh estate in addition to allotments 67 and 68 Parish of Yangardook. The brothers had a large amount of grazing land in the district. William(1919-1990) who was the third son of William Hurely senior married Rae Beattie and they continued to live at *Mayfield*. They had one son and one daughter. A further extension was built on the rear of the house in 1977.¹⁴

Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:

Shire of Melton Historical Themes: ‘Farming’; ‘Community’

Comparable Places in Shire of Melton:

Architecturally a typical example of a Victorian style, this dwelling shares similar design characteristics with other Victorian and Late Victorian houses in the Shire. Other comparable dwellings include:

- House, Leakes Road, Rockbank (Place No.403). Although altered with an introduced verandah and a carport at the side, this house shares a similar hipped roof form, scale and construction.
- Hickey, 30 Hickey Road, Melton (Place No.288). A predominantly intact example, this house features a hipped roof form and a projecting front verandah with early timber fretwork valance (some components of the valance are missing however) and early timber posts.
- House, 1180 Exford Road, Exford (Place No.274). Another timber example of the type with a hipped bullnosed front verandah that has been altered. Only one of the early turned timber posts survive.
- House, 161 Bulmans Road, Melton South (Place No 174). A similarly constructed and designed dwelling, the front verandah has also been altered, with introduced timber posts and aluminium valances and brackets.
- House, 911 Melton Highway, Sydenham (Place No.127). A more intact example of the Late Victorian type, although of unassuming design quality.
- House, 32 O’Neills Road, Melton (Place No.230). A less intact example of the Late Victorian type, the building features a similar hipped roof form, although the front verandah is bullnosed. The front windows have been altered.

¹¹ Rae Hurley, Personal conversation, 23/01/2007

¹² Helen Kirpatrick, Submission to draft study, 28/5/07

¹³ *Melton Express*, 11/12/1937

¹⁴ Helen Kirpatrick, Submission to draft study, 28/5/07

Historically, the house is comparable with the farming houses created at the time, most in association with the break-up of the pastoral estates.

Condition:

Good

Integrity:

Substantially intact

Recommendations:

Recommended for inclusion in the Melton Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

Recommended Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls:

External Paint Controls:	<i>No</i>
Internal Alteration Controls:	<i>No</i>
Tree Controls:	<i>No</i>
Outbuildings and/or Fences:	<i>No</i>