

Beaurepaire claimed 90% Australian workmanship in the new manufacturing plant. Company employees and administrators were also wholly Australian when the factory was opened in May 1934. New and extended industry was welcomed then, in a time when youth unemployment was still suffering from the slump of the depression.¹

Dunlop Australia Ltd. had first manufactured cycle tyres in Australia during 1899. Using Dunlop's own British invention, they made pneumatic car tyres in Melbourne during the early 1900s. Tennis balls and garden hoses were included in their pre-war products. The advent of Dunlopillo foamed latex rubber cushioning in 1934, coincided with the Beaurepaire opening. This was again a British invention and perhaps provides a background to Beaurepaire's denial of 'overseas experts.'

Like Dunlop, Beaurepaire undertook research into synthetic rubber during the rubber shortage of World War Two. His efforts also produced the first Australian made *black* inner tubes, previously coloured red by the use of clay fillers. However, many later developments (tubeless tyres, 1955, and radial ply tyres, 1964) were based on overseas precedents, but always adapted to local conditions. Vulcanized rubber insulated cables were an Australian first in 1940 (generally Olympic Cables Pty. Ltd.), just as the co-axial cable was a first many years later.²

Description

A large complex which like many similarly sized contemporary complexes, possessed a stylish office and show-room front to the acres of unadorned factory floors behind. This front carried the firm's image and often the latest architectural motifs, particularly for those industries involved in innovatory production lines. The Olympic showroom and offices have the curves, coloured brickwork and architectural fins to qualify for an advanced Streamlined Moderne category.

Not unlike previous large 20th century industrial complexes such as the Bryant & May factory in Richmond, Olympic went one step further than some of its contemporaries along Geelong Road. Composed in three parts, the central, pedimented wing is set back behind a garden court and possesses an implied colonnade as

its main facade element and in doing so alludes to the Neo-Grec style current in the previous decade.

Moderne styling however is prominent in the flanking wings of the composition, these being composed as rounded tripartite forms with a central raised element containing the main fenestration which is divided by manganese brick fins. Like a picture theatre the easternmost of these has the rolling brick curved walls tucking into a recessed glazed entrance which sits beneath a curved concrete canopy. Either side of this, slim Italian Cypress provide the formal landscape elements so typical of this style. The British Hoover factory canteen (1932-5) is a contemporary overseas example which might have been an inspiration.³

External Integrity (Cross Street elevation only)

Generally original, possible alterations to fence.

Streetscape

Isolated from mainstream factory areas on the river or Geelong Road, yet remaining close to both the railway and main road transport.

Significance

Architecturally, an accomplished and extensive elevation substantially in the Moderne style which parallels with other industrial growth in Footscray just prior to and during the Second War. Historically, it is closely linked with the personal success story of Frank Beaurepaire and the development of an Australian industry in the face of international innovation and competition. Given the extent of the works visible from the street, the emphasis of this significance is on the Cross Street elevation.

Pebbles

57A Droop Street

History

Whitehill's Dairy was the historical precursor of this exotic Bungalow, presumably providing the means for

1 *The Age* 2/6/34

2 VYB 1973, p.748f

3 see Forsyth, *Buildings for the Age*, p46

the Whitehill family to diversify into subdivision and house building.

Three Whitehills, Ernest, Francis A. and Francis G., resided and worked at 61 Gordon Street, on the west side, south of Ballarat Road.¹ It was Francis George Whitehill who shifted into this five-room bungalow from Gordon Street, in 1920, having commissioned architects, Schreiber & Jorgenson, to design it. Rate book descriptions of George's occupancy changed from 'dairyman' in 1920-1 to 'gentleman' in 1922-3, paralleling with his brother's move into real estate.² Pebbles is remembered by some as the place where rent was paid from the Whitehill's nearby speculative housing developments. Mrs. C.L. Whitehill lived there until at least the 1950s, George not being listed from c1930.

Description

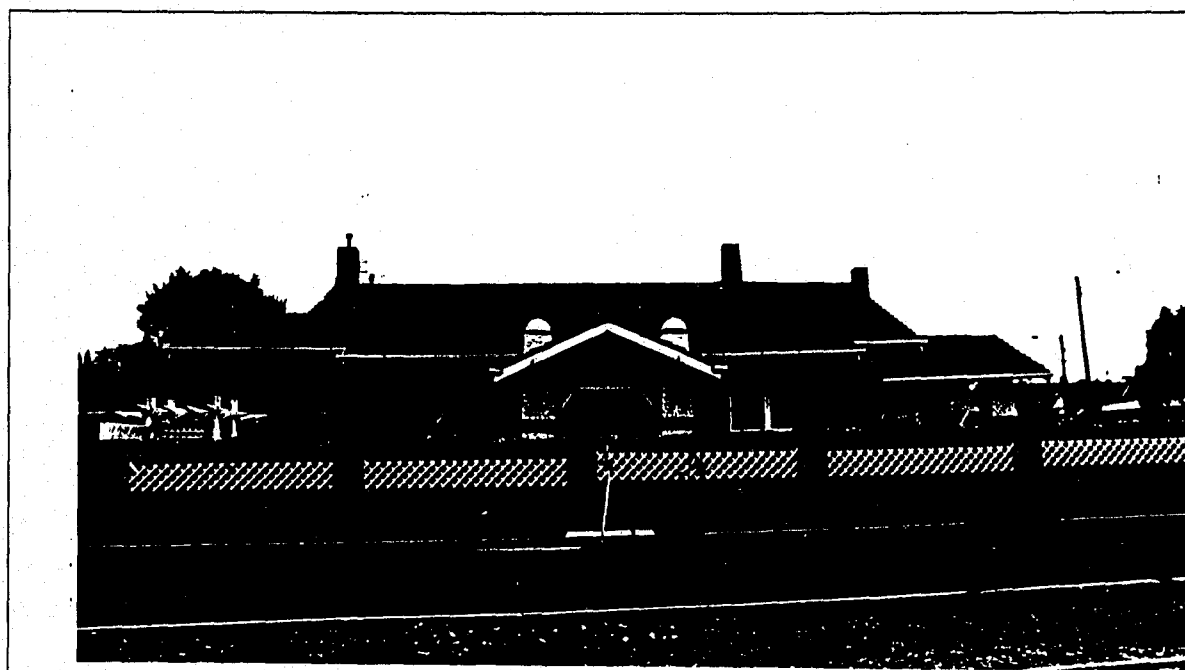
Crushed quartz 'pebbles' are used prolifically on the exterior and water-washed round pebbles on the inside (fireplace) of this exotically styled Californian Bungalow. The rest of the external walling is red pressed brickwork, rough-cast stucco and cedar gable shingling,

with the terra-cotta Marseilles pattern tiles on the roof. Timber also plays a major role in the subtle ornamentation of the house, either as slatted brackets or the impressive giant-trellis fence set between its brick piers. The form is after the Japanese model of central main gabled roof with gabled pavilions set on axis at the major elevations of the house. Similarly the Eastern influence is expressed through the timber verandah detail.

Inside there is much more of the timber detail but with a French polish and in a highly fretted form, each ornamental portal framing the path from one large space to another. Unlike the usual Bungalow plan which has a hall opening via glazed double doors into the adjacent receiving rooms, Pebbles main rooms communicate directly with the hall, the ornate timber screen being the only division.

External Integrity

Original.



4 - 35 57A Droop Street

- 1 ER1908
- 2 RB1918-19, p.66; RB1922-3, p.103

Streetscape

It presents bold elevations to both streets (Geelong Road, Droop Street) and relates to Edwardian and Bungalow housing further north in Droop Street. It adopts a frontage to the now established premier street for the district's elite (Geelong Road).

Significance

Architecturally, among Victoria's best and most distinctive suburban Bungalow designs and is in original condition while possessing important internal detailing. Historically, it has a long connection with the Whitehill family whose role in Footscray changed with the urbanization of the city itself, from dairying to real estate.

House

60 Droop Street

History

Representing a trade with strong Footscray associations, Joseph Considine (wholesale butcher) first owned and occupied this large Bungalow-style house in 1916.¹ His firm became J. Considine & Sons, Pty. Ltd.²

Members of the Considine family occupied the house until relatively recently, Joseph having died there in 1934.³ His widow, Margaret, and children, William, Michael, James, Eileen and Joseph, survived him.⁴

Description

Asymmetrically planned, of red brick and tiled in Mar-seilles pattern terra-cotta, the house shows some of the previous era's Queen Anne characteristics (form) but also the coming Bungalow manner, particularly the Indian Bungalow. The same high hipped roof serves as a basis for gabled room bays at either end of the verandah but the design approach is much simpler with the timber verandah brackets and posts showing an Eastern inspiration. Leadlight top casements to window groups are among the few ornamental gestures. A dressed stone verandah coping encloses plain terra-cotta floor tiles and even the projecting gables, with their stained shingling, show restraint. Distinctive



4 - 36 60 Droop Street

- 1 RB1916-17,p.67; D1920
- 2 D1955
- 3 FCR
- 4 *The Age* 8/6/34