

**'St Elmo'/'Westford'**

2 Ash Gve East Malvern

The house at 2 Ah Gve was erected in 1890 with a frontage to Pine (Ash) Gve, on land extending to Oak Gve. The house, named 'St Elmo', was designed by architect Arthur Fisher. The National Trust of Victoria considers the house to be the first Australian, fully developed example of the Nesfield/Shaw 'Old English' style, in Australia. An illustration of the proposed house appeared in the *Building and Engineering Journal* 28 June 1890.

The house was built at a cost of 2500 pounds for George Wood. Alfred Wilton occupied the house in 1891 and from 1914 – 21, Harrie Ford owned the property, which was re-named 'Westford'. In 1921 'Westford' was taken over and occupied by Grange School. Grange School had been established as a boys' prep. school in Caroline Street South Yarra in 1867 by the Misses Turner. In 1921, the school moved from Domain Road to the house in Ash Gve. A new weatherboard classroom, erected at the rear of the house, was built in 1922. Twenty- four boarders were accommodated in the house. Grange School closed in 1929.

From 1930-42, plumber, Horace Hawkins owned the property. The land at the rear was sold to the Scouting Association and the old classroom was used as a scout hall until 1991.

For ten years, from 1942, Mrs Ouida Wilkinson occupied 'Westford' with her uncle, artist Sam Grainger. At this time the house was divided into 2 flats. From 1952 –69 Harold Glowery, the chairman of the Wheat Board owned the property.

The house was classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) in 1990.

**Statement of Significance:**

*Erected for George Wood in 1890 to the designs of A H Fisher this house is one of the earliest examples in Australia of the half-timbered "Old English" Style as found in the works of W Eden Nesfield and R Norman Shaw, in England in the 1860s and 1870s. First Classified 1/10/90 Revised: Classified State 3/8/98*

*The use of half-timbered upper storey above a masonry base is characteristic of the 'Old English' style, as is the use of red brick work including tall strapped chimneys. Elements of particular interest include the use of cement in place of plaster, the hollow brick walls at ground level, and the elaborately decorated moulded panels in the gable ends.*

Lewis & Aitken Malvern Heritage Study (1992)