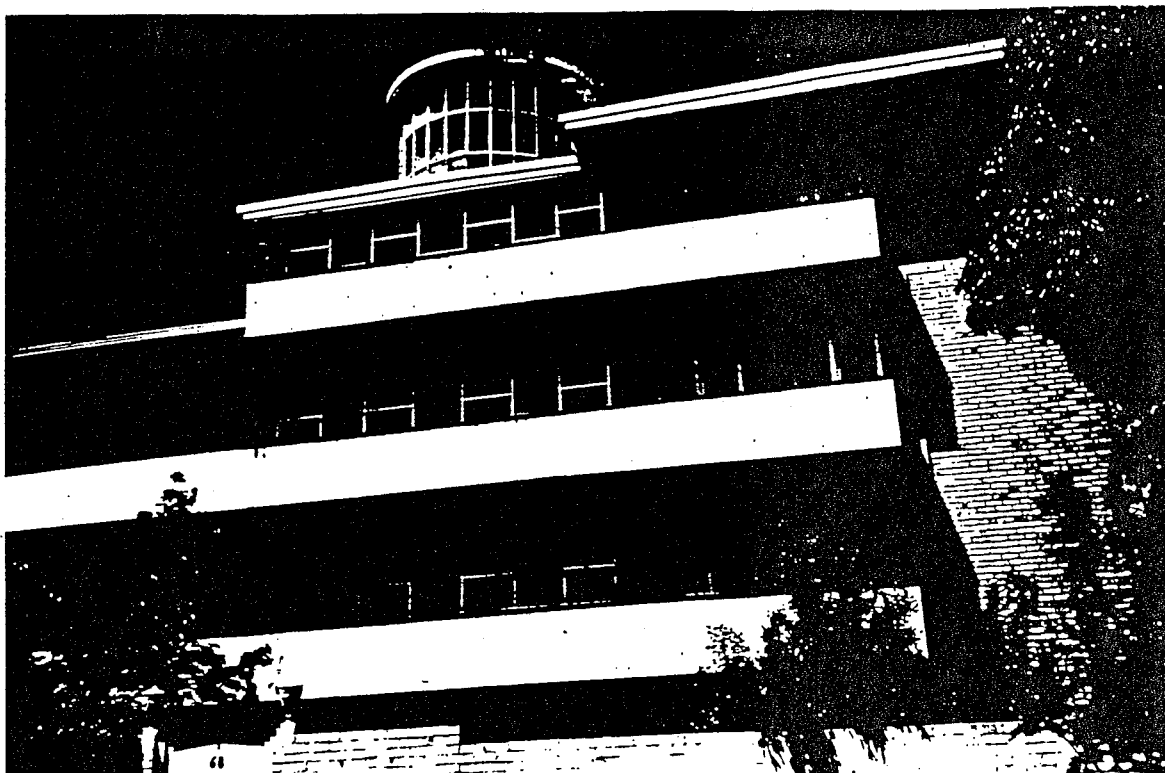


Moonbria Flats 68 Mathoura Road, Toorak



History and Significance

This large block of flats designed during the Second World War period by the architect Roy Grounds for Mrs. A. Rutherford was completed in 1942. These flats were rated in that year as a block of twenty two-roomed brick flats. They were mainly occupied by servicemen and women. First tenants included Wayne Gerard Clarke, USA Red Cross Official; Lennox Jack Clementson and Andreas Phillips, airforce officer; Clifford Clark, naval officer; Nancy Swanson and Peg Forbes, both members of the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS); and Mabel Miller, a WAAF officer.²⁶⁴ An MMBW drainage plan dated November 1941 shows the ground plan of the building.²⁶⁵

Grounds had completed the design for Quamby, in Glover Court, Toorak two years earlier, for which he was highly praised by architectural critics. Other work by Grounds at this time included the Clendon Flats in Clendon Road, Armadale.²⁶⁶

Like much of Grounds work, these flats are strongly based on geometric forms and have an overall horizontal emphasis. Strips of windows and smooth concrete balconies alternated with solid sections of cream brick and panelling. The roofs of the building appear to 'step up across the facade to a maximum of four stories'. The form of a central circular stairwell is a distinctive feature, maintaining the overall geometric theme.

264. Prahran Rate Book 1942-43 South Yarra Ward Nos. 3974-3994.

265. MMBW House Cover No. 23328.

266. Beiers, p.81-86.

Significance

Moonbria Flats are of state significance as a fine example of a large block of purpose-built flats designed by Roy Grounds using geometric forms. These flats have historical significance as a block of flats completed in the Second World War period and occupied then by servicemen and women.

Sources

Beiers, G. *Houses of Australia*, Sydney, 1948.

Hamann, Conrad, 'Grounds, Romberg and Boyd' in H. Tanner (Ed.), *Architects of Australia*, 1981.

MMBW House Cover No. 23328.

Prahran Rate Books, South Yarra Ward.

Sawyer, Terry, "Residential Flats in Melbourne" Research Report, University of Melbourne, 1982.

Analysis & Recommendations

It is recommended that this property be retained at A1 level.