

NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (VICTORIA)RESEARCH INTO SEBROF, 514 ORRONG ROAD, ARMADALE F.N. 1562Historical Importance

Sebrof is historically important as one of five substantial mansions constructed between 1880 and 1889 for a group of prosperous Melbourne professional men<sup>(1)</sup> in the block in Orrong Road between Dandenong Road and High Street. M.M.B.W. drainage plans dated 1894 show these buildings in their prime in their splendid Victorian garden settings on large allotments ranging from three to eleven acres.<sup>(2)</sup>

Today only four of those mansions still remain.

They are:

- . Former Lalbert (west side of Orrong Road north of Lalbert Cres) built in 1880 for Cornelius Job Ham, auctioneer and Melbourne City Councillor.<sup>(3)</sup>
- . Larnook (519 Orrong Road) built in 1881 for W. H. Miller, banker, son of Henry "Money" Miller. Recorded by National Trust.<sup>(4)</sup>
- . Sebrof (514 Orrong Road) built circa 1884 for William Williams, merchant, and later owned by the Forbes family who renamed it Sebrof.<sup>(5)</sup>
- . Redcourt (506 Orrong Road) built in 1888 for Edward Yencken, merchant.<sup>(6)</sup>

The fifth mansion in this group, now demolished, was Karbarook, the home from 1881 of the distinguished barrister and politician, Thomas a'Beckett, M.L.C.<sup>(7)</sup>

- 
- (1) See rate book search for Larnook, F.N. 1561
  - (2) Ibid and see M.M.B.W. plan No. 46
  - (3) Prahran RB 1880 No. 3983
  - (4) F.N. 1561
  - (5) Prahran RB 1884-85 No. 5938
  - (6) Ibid 1888-89 No. 1205
  - (7) Ibid 1881 No. 4303

The four surviving mansions, however, no longer stand in their Victorian gardens and their grounds have been drastically reduced by the subdivisions which created Karbarook, Larnook and Lalbert Crescents on the west side and Redcourt Avenue on the east side.<sup>(8)</sup>

#### Brief History of Sebrof

A search of Prahran ratebooks showed that the first rating for Sebrof was in 1884-5 when it was listed as a brick house of 14 rooms and land with a very high NAV of £450, owned and occupied by W. Williams, merchant.<sup>(9)</sup> Its grounds were listed as 6 acres in 1886-87.<sup>(10)</sup> The following year a change in ownership was recorded; Mary Forbes was listed as owner/occupier.<sup>(11)</sup> As we have seen, at this date the building acquired the name of Sebrof.

M.M.B.W. Detail Plans dated 1894 show Sebrof (spelled Seabrof) with verandahs at its front and rear, asphalt paths leading back to large stables and a conservatory, and a carriage drive around circular garden beds sweeping up to its Orrong Road entrance.<sup>(12)</sup>

A further change in ownership took place in 1892-93 when Alexander Goldie became owner/occupier.<sup>(13)</sup> An article in the Prahran Chronicle of 10 June 1893 reported that Goldie had purchased,

"the two-storey brick mansion with tower known as 'Sebrof', situated in the Orrong Road, Armadale. Sebrof contains 16 rooms, ballroom, conservatory, stabling, coachhouse, man's room, and every modern convenience, the grounds comprising about 3 acres. The sale

---

(8) Compare 1894 and 1933 M.M.B.W. drainage plans

(9) Prahran RB 1884-85 vol. 2 No. 5938

(10) Ibid 1886-87 No. 6615

(11) Ibid 1888-89 No. 7923

(12) Copy on file

(13) Prahran RB Windsor Ward No. 7941

included the magnificent furniture and effects on the premises, and the whole realised nearly £10,000."(14)

Intactness

Larnook and the building opposite at 506-514 Orrong Road (Sebrof and Redcourt) have in recent times been converted to educational purposes. In the 1970s they were all listed in the directories as Larnook - Domestic Arts Teachers' College.

---

(14) Copy on file

---

LIST OF SOURCES

M.M.B.W. Detail Plans

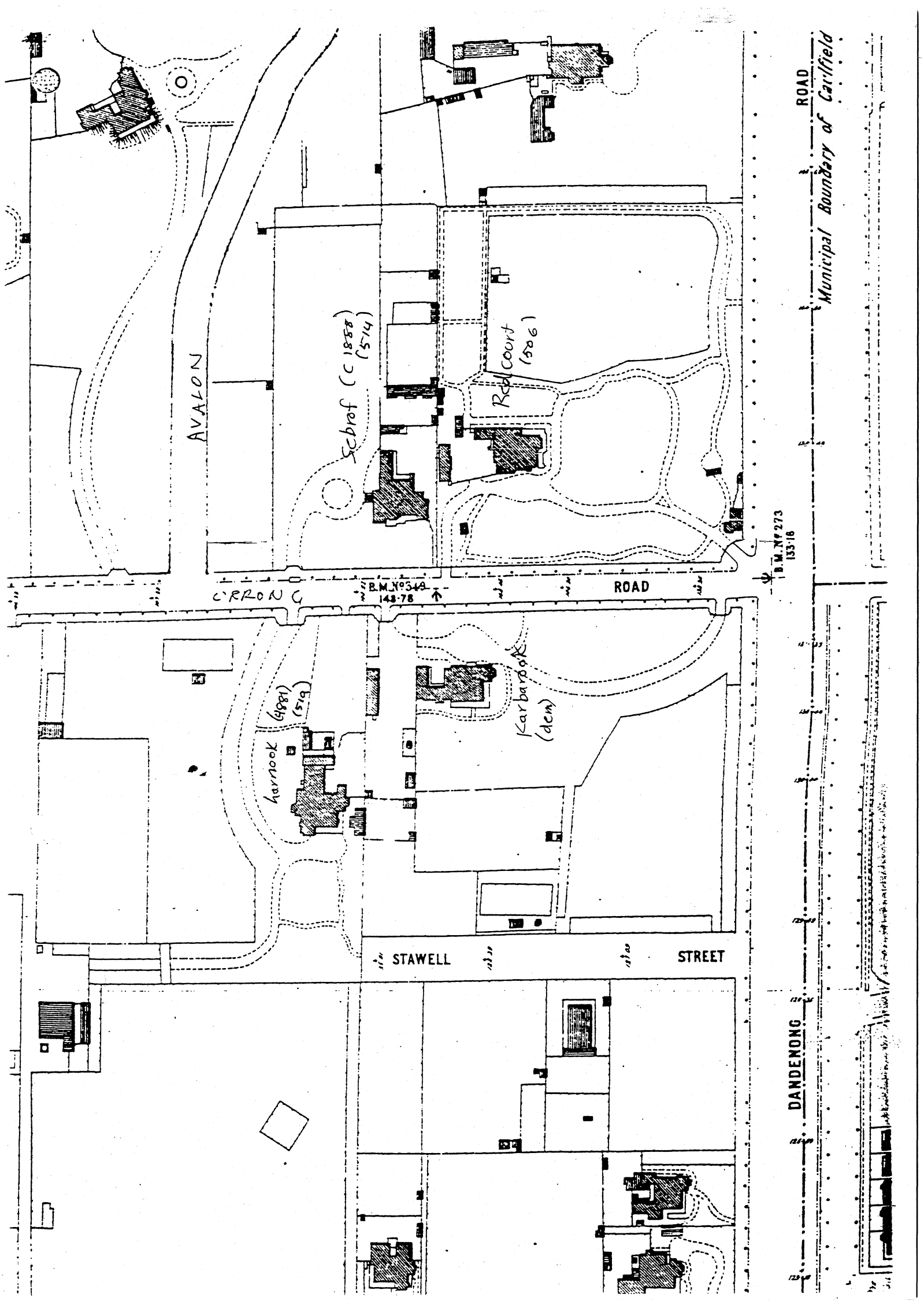
Prahran Chronicle

Prahran Rate Books (Windsor Ward)

---

C. KELLAWAY

21 March 1985



AVALON

Scraf (c 1888)  
(514)

Red Court  
(506)

CARRON C

B.M. No 543  
143.78

ROAD

B.M. No 273  
133.16

Karnook  
(4881)  
(519)

Karnook  
(den)

STAWELL

STREET

DANDENONG

ROAD

Municipal Boundary of Carlfield