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5 LINLITHGOW ROAD, Churston, TOORAK

Architect: Marcus Martin

History

5 LINLITHGOW ROAD

1849

Crown Portion 26, bounded by present day Kooyong Road, Toorak Road, the line of Denham Place and Malvern Road, was purchased by Melbourne merchant, author and politician, James Jackson.¹ At the same time Jackson purchased 108 acres of land west of Kooyong Road, where he built his mansion 'Toorak House', which gave the district its name.

Following Jackson's early death, 'Toorak House' was leased as the official residence of the Governor of Victoria. However east of Kooyong Road, the 71 acres of 'Jackson's Paddock' remained undivided for more than twenty years. The land was fenced, a small brick house was erected and a succession of dairymen leased the land from Jackson's widow.²

1872

With the subdivision of 'Jackson's Paddock' in 1872, Albany Road was created. Western District pastoralist Albert Austin selected six acres of land in Albany Road and in 1886 built a 'stone' mansion to the design of architects Smith and Johnson.³ Austin named his home 'Eilyer' after his country property and by 1894 he owned a total of twenty-nine acres of elevated land fronting Albany Road.⁴

Albert Austin came to Australia in 1851 to learn about Australian farming methods from Thomas Austin, his uncle at Barwon Park in the Western District. Assisted by his uncles, Albert purchased a substantial crown leasehold in western Victoria. The property, 'Eilyer', was fully stocked with Merino sheep, and in 1871 Albert built a fine bluestone house where he and his wife Catherine had nine children. Albert increased his landholdings in Victoria and NSW, and his outstanding success with the breeding of Merino sheep has been well documented.⁵ Albert and Catherine Austin spent their last few years at 'Eilyer' in Albany Road where Albert died in 1916.⁶

1914

North of Whernside Avenue, Linlithgow Road (the north end) was created, when the Hillside

¹ Rob Bower, 'Malvern, a history of the subdivision, 1840-1989', volume 2, plan 1, (unpublished manuscript). Malvern Archives.

² Gardiner Road Board, rate book, Lot 25, 1864, no. 194.

³ Smith & Johnson. Tender notice, *Argus*, 27 March 1886, Miles Lewis Australian Architectural Index.

⁴ Shire of Malvern, valuation book, Western Riding, 1887, no. 24.

⁵ See Joan Austin Palmer, 'Albert Austin', unpublished manuscript, Malvern Archives.

⁶ The Australian Mercantile Land and Finance Company considered the account they had with Albert and his sons to be the largest they had ever handled. Albert was chairman of the Deniliquin Freezing Co. and a foundation member of the Pastoralists Association of Victoria and the Southern Riverina, Joan Austin Palmer; de Serville, *Pounds & pedigrees*, p. 37.

5 Linlithgow Road, Toorak

164
Estate was subdivided.⁷

1919

Legal manager, accountant and auditor, Edward Herbert Shackell, purchased 'Eilyer' from the estate of Catherine Austin.⁸ The mansion was demolished, the formal gardens sub-divided. Shackell engages Walter and Richard Butler to design a two-storey residence in Albany Road.⁹ 'Eilyer's' stables were retained as the laundry¹⁰ and this building was later converted to the property now known as 1A Linlithgow Road.

1922

Linlithgow Road was extended to meet Albany Road.¹¹ Shackell's house becomes 1 Linlithgow Road.

1935

A range of architect designed homes were erected in Linlithgow Road including 'Churston' designed by Marcus Martin for Dr and Mrs Ringland Anderson in 1935.¹² The property at number 5 Linlithgow Road incorporated one of Melbourne's earliest private swimming pools with the garden designed by landscape designer Edna Walling.¹³ Featured in a 1937 edition of the *Australian Home Beautiful* -

*'Churston' was planned so as to make the utmost of the magnificent view; huge windows ... look out ... and ... give the beholder an uninterrupted view across the tops of houses, over the hills, and as far as the eye can see.*¹⁴

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Malvern building plan (1,0040,01200)
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⁷ Lodged Plan 6459, 31 August 1914.

⁸ Edward Shackell in Smith (ed.) *Cyclopedia*, special part, Melbourne, 1903, p. 85.

⁹ Malvern building plan, no. 1959.

¹⁰ Malvern building plan, no. 2303.

¹¹ Linlithgow Road, LP8922. Lodged 26.7.1922, Bower, plan 1, p.27.

¹² 1935: Residence in Linlithgow Road Toorak for Mrs Ringland Anderson - Marcus W Martin IMalvern building plan (1,0040,01200)

¹³ Dixon & Churchill, *Gardens in Time : In the Footsteps of Edna Walling*, (North Ryde, 1988), p. 117; Malvern building plan, 5 Linlithgow Road.

¹⁴ Marcus Martin, 'Churston' in *Australian Home Beautiful*, 1 May 1937, p. 28-32.

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Smith, James, (ed.), *The Cyclopedia of Victoria: An Historical and Commercial Review*, The Cyclopedia Company, Melbourne, 1903.

Description

Churston has restrained design comprising a basic Georgian Revival form but relieved by detailing of a more streamlined horizontal Art Deco character.

The hip roof is in one single form apart from the projecting wing towards the street on one side, similar to 1 Linlithgow Road, now with a secondary flat roofed extension. It has a large terracotta tile roof and the walls are of an unpainted, natural sand render finish. The building has unusual wide eaves with an enclosed box gutter. Decoration is sparse other than some horizontal banding and a grooved art deco moulding running at the head of the upper floor windows.

The principal design emphasis is the entry, with its simple cantilevered concrete canopy and tripartite stair windows above. The wide double hung windows are squared in proportion, which creates a horizontal emphasis to the building form. The stair hall window above the entry employs simple patterned glazing bars, which contrasts with the other windows. The only contrasts to the render material are the rustic stone gate pillars and the wrought iron fence, set on a low dwarf stone wall. This building has a large rear garden, concealed from the street. The forecourt comprises a simple return drive and a low key garden.

It forms an important relationship with the pioneering design of the W & R Butler designed residence at 1 Linlithgow Road, and both have the same basic layout.

Integrity

The external design of building and landscape appears to be relatively intact. The only change is the flat roofed garage extension to the projecting wing. This has been designed to be sympathetic with the original design.

Analysis

This building displays many characteristics of Marcus Martin's work of this period, and represents one of his most important commissions. It compares with 42 Wallace Avenue Toorak which is now on the Victoria Heritage Register. These two buildings now the best of Martins large houses.

The hidden nature of the extraordinary rear garden and living areas are alluded to through the glazed stair hall. The house presents a very sophisticated, but low key presentation to the street.

Statement of Significance

Churston, 5 Linlithgow Road is of major significance as a stylish art deco form of the evolved Georgian Revival style, and for being one of Marcus Martin's more important commissions. It is of particular note for the elegant lines, natural sand coloured cement render finish, and refined detailing of small items.

Significant attributes:

- formal street presentation
- terracotta tile roof
- unpainted, natural sand render finish
- wide eaves with an enclosed box gutter
- sparse decoration including horizontal banding and grooved art deco moulding running at the head of the upper floor windows.
- the entry, with its simple cantilevered concrete canopy and tripartite stair windows above. wide double hung windows, squared in proportion
- stair hall window above the entry and simple patterned glazing bars
- rustic stone gate pillars and the wrought iron fence, and low dwarf stone wall
- large rear garden, concealed from the street
- return driveway
- relationship with W & R Butler residence at 1 Linlithgow Road
- relative intactness

Criteria

The building easily meets the criteria for local significance as required by state government guidelines. This is defined by the *Local Government Heritage Guidelines*, Department of Planning and Housing, 1991, (p6)

Places of local significance are of particular importance to a local community, or part of a community, which is usually defined by a local government area (this was pre amalgamation). The majority of places which are determined to be of cultural value will be of local significance. Relatively fewer places will be determined to be of state or national significance.

The normal means of management for places of local significance is inclusion ... in the local planning scheme.

More recently, the Practice Notes to the Victorian Planning Provisions included *Applying the Heritage Overlay*, Department of Infrastructure, February 1999, confirm the 1991 criteria and also recommend the use of the AHC criteria.

Under the Australian Heritage Commission's eight broad criteria, a place may possess significance or other special value for future generations as well as the present community.

This property has been considered to meet the following AHC criteria:

5 Linlithgow Road, Toorak

Criterion A: *its importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history*

One of the most refined and elegant Art Deco influenced mansions in Melbourne, representing the high point of the work of Marcus Martin, and a building of obvious influence

Criterion B: *its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history*

There are few equivalent houses in Victoria that demonstrate the abundant attributes of this property

Criterion D: *its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of:*

i) a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or

ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments

Demonstrates many of the best features of grand Toorak houses of the interwar period

Criterion E: *its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group*

One of the best designed houses in the Toorak area with high aesthetic values

Criterion F: *its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period*

The house presents the sophisticated culmination of traditional and modern architectural design before introduction of the more uncompromising modernism of the post war period

Criterion H: *its special associations with the life or works of a person, a group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history*

One of Marcus Martin's most important domestic projects

4 ARCHITECTS' BIOGRAPHIES

(Principally compiled by Bryce Raworth and Nigel Lewis in 1992; where acknowledged also includes material from Australian Dictionary of Biography, Miles Lewis etc.)

Martin, Marcus

- Alsop & Martin (1920-21)
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- Marcus W Martin (1924-26)
- W & R Butler & Martin (1926-1930)
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- Marcus Martin & Tribe (1938-41)
- Martin & Tribe (1946-49)
- Architects, Marcus Martin 1949-
- Marcus Martin & Dorling

Marcus Martin became one of Melbourne's most successful domestic architects in the 1920s, a position which was consolidated in the 1930s and the post-war period. He was best known for his Georgian and Spanish Mission designs prior to the Depression, but after 1932 became one of the foremost exponents of the conservative, inclusive modernist mode characteristic of Toorak and South Yarra. Highly respected within the profession, his practice was especially prolific in Prahran and Malvern. He was renowned for his careful planning, attention to detail and impeccable taste, and was the doyen of architects to the upper middle class in the inter-war period.

In the late 1930s and post-war period he also became involved in institutional design, most importantly the design of Free Kindergartens.