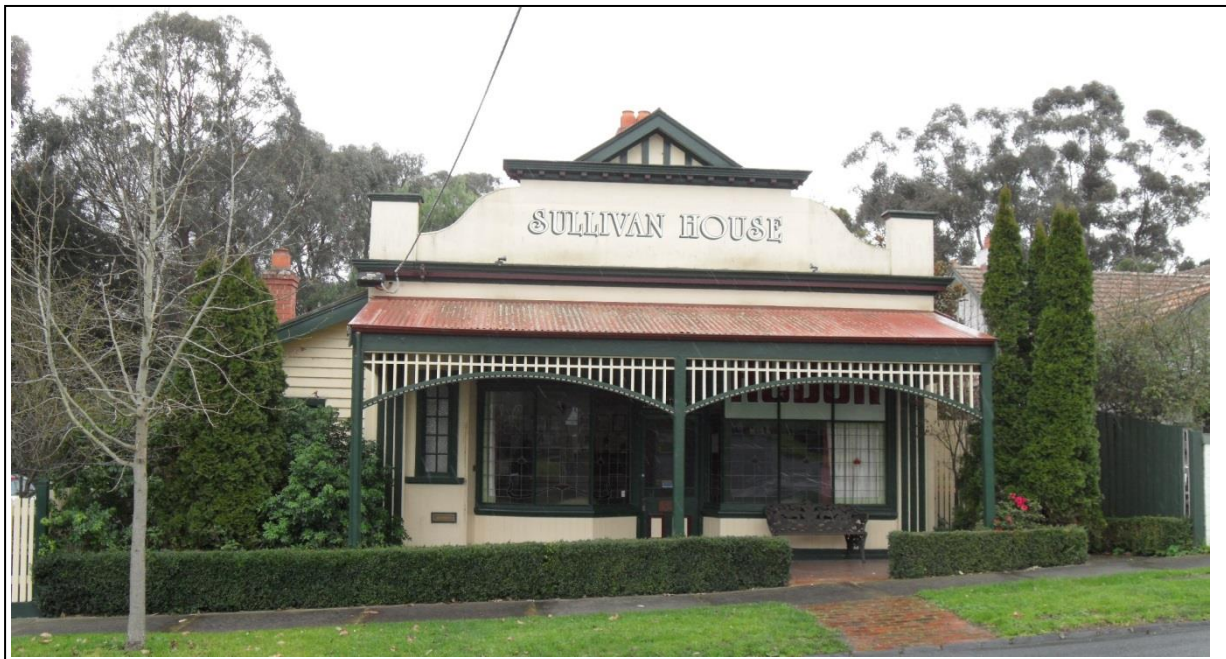


Willy's Store (A & J Sullivans)

Prepared by: Context Pty Ltd

Address: 35 MATLOCK STREET CANTERBURY

Name: Willy's Store (A & J Sullivans)	Survey Date: 30 June 2015
Place Type: Commercial	Architect:
Grading: Individually Significant	Builder:
Extent of Overlay: To title boundaries	Construction Date: 1912



Historical Context

The City of Boroondara Thematic Environmental History prepared by Built Heritage Pty Ltd (2012:236-237) provides an outline of the historical context – ‘Creating Australian Television and Film’ in which this property was used as A & J Sullivan’s store in ‘The Sullivans’ television program.

The Sullivans and the re-creation of “wartime Canterbury”

While the study area has had little significant association with the development of the Australian film and television industry, there was a time from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s when the streetscapes of Canterbury regularly appeared every Monday night at 8pm on Australian television as the backdrop to the popular drama series, The Sullivans. Set in Melbourne on the eve of (and subsequently during) the Second World War, the series followed the daily lives of a typical working-class suburban family led by Dave Sullivan (played by Paul Cronin), a foreman in an unnamed engineering factory, his wife Grace (Lorraine Bayly), their three sons and young daughter. As stated in the spin-off novel of the series, the Sullivan family occupied a “weatherboard Edwardian Villa at 8 Gordon Street in the tree-studded suburb of Camberwell”. This, however, was a fictitious address, as the real-life house used for filming was actually located at 7 Milton Street in Canterbury – the same suburb, incidentally, where the series' executive producer, Hector Crawford, maintained his own residence. As was reported in a women's magazine shortly before the series began screening in November 1976, “Crawfords have bought both a house and a shop in the Melbourne suburb of Canterbury especially for the serial, and are busy 'back-dating' them to a typical 1940s style”. Several other real-life local buildings were used for filming, including a nearby

house (which became the residence of neighbourhood gossip Mrs Jessup), a local store, and some of the shops in nearby Maling Road. A large house in Warrigal Road, known as Medlow, was also used in some episodes. Several buildings outside of Canterbury were also regularly used for filming, notably the Retreat Hotel in Nicholson Street, Abbotsford, and the Centenary Dairy and Milk Bar in Heidelberg Road, Fairfield.

The *Sullivans* remained popular until the last of its 1,114 episodes was screened in 1983. Like many Australian TV drama series, the programme subsequently became popular when it was shown in the United Kingdom, and also developed a following in, of all places, the Netherlands. For some time, the buildings in Canterbury that had featured so prominently in the series remained a source of pilgrimage for fans of the series, and a source of pride for locals. In 1982, when the series was still in production, there was concern when the general store building (which was leased by Crawfords from its actual owners, the City of Camberwell) was threatened with demolition. In 1988, the two houses in Milton Street (ostensibly occupied by the Sullivans themselves and their gossip neighbour Mrs Jessup) were sold to developers, prompting a minor community outcry regarding their fates. The former was demolished, and the latter acquired by an individual who intended to establish a small museum to the TV series; sadly, the project fell through, and the house was cut in half and relocated to a new site in Charman Road, Emerald, where it was enlarged and adapted as a new family dwelling. The loss of the Sullivans' own house was subsequently parodied in a 1992 episode of the TV comedy series *The Late Show*, which featured a sketch involving a bus tour of pop-culture sites around Melbourne. Pulling up in front of the still-vacant block in Milton Street, the tour guide pointed out that "this is where the original Sullivans' house used to be. They pulled it down a couple of years ago, but unfortunately, they forgot to tell Dave" – whereupon actor Paul Cronin (reprising his role as Dave Sullivan, complete with 1940s attire) approached the driver's side window and angrily muttered: "damn this war – they've even taken my house!"

A few years later, in 1997, another local house associated with *The Sullivans* was threatened with demolition – a large red brick Edwardian villa on a corner site at 27 Glenroy Road, Hawthorn. The proposal to clear the site and erect a higher-density residential development met with community opposition and, although much of this sprung from the potential impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, the cultural significance of the building's association with the TV series was still raised as a serious issue. In the end, the house (which, admittedly, had never been especially prominent in the series) was demolished. Of the remaining places that retain associations with *The Sullivans*, the most prominent and memorable is a former general store in Matlock Street, which is now used as offices.

History

George Jackson and his wife owned and occupied intermittently this four room shop and dwelling from its construction date in 1912 for three years. Jackson is first listed in the street directory in 1913 as a 'confectioner' (S&McD). A Mrs Clara Webb conducted grocery and confectionery shop there subsequently in the 1920s, continuing the Jackson's business, and Gilbert Williamson continued on there in the grocery line from the 1930s to the mid-1970s (G Butler 1991:180; F Barrett 2015 pers. comm.).

Because of the intactness of the building and its setting, it was purchased from the Williamsons and used from 1976 to 1983 by Crawford Productions in 'The Sullivans' television series, set during World War II. It served as the program's 'corner store' (Built Heritage Pty Ltd 2012:236). To this end, they repainted the exterior in colours of the building's period and adorned the parapet with the sign 'A & J Sullivan' (G Butler 1991:180).

The store was then purchased by Ken and Helen Loyal in the mid-1980s. They operated an AMP franchise business from the property with about 40 staff members. They also lived upstairs for a short period of time while renovating their own house. The property was then sold to the McKennas in 2002. Since this time they have operated the National Institute of Youth Performing Arts Australia

from the downstairs space and Align Concepts building company from the upstairs area (J McKenna 2015 pers. comm.; L McKenna 2015 pers. comm.).

Social History

Since its beginnings in 1912, 35 Matlock Street has been a commercial property. Members of today's community still remember when it operated as the '4 Square Store' grocer and confectioner, run by Mr and Mrs Williamson from the 1930s to the 1970s, where locals would buy such goods as milk, eggs and biscuits (M Gornalle 2015 pers. comm.). It was informally known as 'Willy's Store' after its owners (F Barrett 2015 pers. comm.).

Between the 1970s and 1980s the property became a focal point for the filming of 'The Sullivans' television series. Local community members today still remember gathering outside the store to watch these shoots. During this time, the store's shelves were stocked with goods representing the era (L Hollingsworth 2015 pers. comm.). 'The Sullivans' received much acclaim - it was sold to over 30 countries worldwide, received numerous awards, and enjoyed a run of 1114 episodes. As well as becoming a mainstay in Australian living rooms, it was also the longest running and most successful overseas daytime series in the UK (Crawfords & Only Melbourne [2] 2015).

Today community members and tourists, locally and from further afield, continue to regularly visit this property because of its associations with the television series. This contemporary community connection is evidenced in a number of ways - through people visiting the place daily - often taking photographs of themselves that include the property frontage (J McKenna 2015 pers. comm.; L McKenna 2015 pers. comm.); through the pride held generally in the local community in the place (F Barrett 2015 pers. comm.; L Hollingsworth 2015 pers. comm.); and through the continued public expressions of connection to 'The Sullivans' show and the Matlock Street shop found in popular and social media (Australian Screen 2015; Australian Television 2015; Flickr 2015; Kelksie75 2015; Michael Cooper 2015; Military History and Heritage Victoria Inc. 2015; Only Melbourne [2] 2015; Wikipedia 2015; The Soap Show 2015).

Description & Integrity

A grand scrolled stuccoed parapet wall, after the Queen Anne manner, supports a cornice moulding and reveals the gable-end of the roof behind, as a crowning half-timbered pediment to the facade. Two pylons or piers flank the parapet, rising above a string mould which shelters the skillion verandah roof's springing point. Sited behind this grand facade is a prosaic weatherboarded house with a corrugated steel roof and corbelled red brick chimneys.

The timber shopfronts with vertical lining boards to the stallboards and a recessed entry with glazed and panelled door appear original. The Chinese style mullions in the top-lights above and to the left of the doorway are notable. They are filled with a clear floral pressed glass (a pattern popular in the Edwardian period) which also survives in the colour margin glazing of the shop door and in a ten-pane arched window to the left side of the shopfront. The verandah frame and stop-chamfered posts also appear to be an original feature (though some elements have been replaced in kind, including the timber tongue-and-groove flooring). The current owner has been progressively replacing deteriorated elements of the façade with identical.

A series of changes have taken place, with extensions to the body of the building and some embellishment of the shop façade. There is a lean-to along the west (left-hand) elevation whose door and window details suggest it dates (in part, at least) to the 1920s. It includes a simple corbelled kitchen chimney one room back from the front. Under the ownership of the Loyals during the 1980s, a gabled upper-storey extension was added about one room back from the front, set just behind a chimney. The chimney was dismantled and rebuilt during this process – moved from the corner to the centre of the roof ridge. The kitchen was also doubled in size. Furthermore, the Loyals built a free-standing pavilion at the rear of the property (*The Age* 1995: page unknown).



Figure 1. The front of the shop in 2002. Note the clear glazing to the shop windows and absence of a verandah frieze. (Source: Karen Gornalle & Associates, 2002)

Following the 2002 sale of the property by the Loyals to the McKennas, alterations have been limited to the installation of Art Nouveau-style leadlight windows to the shopfront and along the west side of the building. An arched timber ladder frieze was also installed to the verandah, which is sympathetic to the period of the shop.

Comparative Analysis

Surviving timber shops are rare in the City of Boroondara. They were typically the first kind of commercial building in a newly settled area, being successively replaced with brick buildings once the area was more established.

This Edwardian-era shop is one of a small number of timber shops that survive from the Victorian and Edwardian eras in the City of Boroondara. Other than 35 Matlock Street, known examples include:

- Shops, 351-361 Canterbury Road, Canterbury (1888) – a rare surviving row of early timber shops (Built Heritage, Thematic Environmental History, 2012, p 99). The row is visible on a 1909 MMBW plan (Detail Plan No. 2222). The timber construction is only clearly visible in the pair of shops Nos 351-353, which each have a stepped parapet clad in horizontal boards, concealing the gable-fronted roof. Of the two, No. 351 is the most intact. It retains a timber shopfront with recessed entry, which appears to date from the late 19th century on the west side of the façade. On the east side is a double-hung sash window set into a wall clad in ashlar boards. This window appears to have been for the shopkeeper's residence. The timber-framed shopfront (and wall) of No. 353 and of other shops (Nos. 355, 357 and 359) appear to have been replaced c1910-20s. The shopfronts now cover the entire elevations (below the parapet), so all weatherboard or ashlar cladding has been removed. No. 359 retains its stepped parapet, while the others appear to have been altered in the interwar period (No. 361) or in more recent years (Nos. 355-357). The continuous verandah which covered the footpath in front of the shops has not survived.
- Shop and residence, 415-417 High Street, Kew – this timber shop and residence was built in 1887 to serve visitors to the nearby Kew Cemetery. It was enlarged and remodelled c1907. It is a very simple building, with ashlar-board cladding, large timber-framed windows, and timber doors. Later alterations include the removal of the posted verandah, replacement of a residential-sized sash window to one side of the façade with another shop

window, and the conversion of the hips at either end of the roof to parapeted gables (when the ends were extended to the boundaries).

- Shops and residence, 11-13 Peel Street, Kew - this site comprises a timber Victorian house of c1882, a small timber shop in front of it of c1911, and a small interwar brick shop beside it. All three elements have been substantially altered, and for this reason it was not recommended for the Heritage Overlay by Lovell Chen in their Review of B-Graded Buildings (2007). The c1911 timber shop retains original ashlar-board cladding, but the front door has been replaced and the shop window replaced with a much smaller opening.

In comparison to these examples, 35 Matlock Street is the most architecturally elaborate and fashionable in its design, particularly that of the parapet.

In terms of its intactness, the 1888 shop at 351 Canterbury Road is by far the most intact of the timber shops. 35 Matlock Street sits in the middle, with the roof extension and elaboration of the shopfront details (which could be reversed, if desired), but with the retention of the timber-framed shopfront (including Chinese-style highlights and margin-glazed door) and the timber-framed verandah.

Due to council by-laws in the 1950s, nearly all posted verandahs were removed in the former cities of Kew and Hawthorn, with some replaced with suspended or cantilevered designs. While many were removed in the former City of Camberwell as well, including all posted verandahs along Burke Road, a number survive on smaller commercial heritage precincts including:

- Union Road Commercial Precinct, Surrey Hills (HO532) - one cast-iron verandah and several original timber posted verandahs
- Auburn Village Precinct, Hawthorn (HO260) - two original cast-iron verandahs
- Maling Road Shopping Centre, Canterbury (HO145) - many original timber posted verandahs

In summary, the shop at 35 Matlock Street is one of a very small number of surviving early timber shops in the City of Boroondara. It is more elaborate architecturally than the other known examples, and is of an average intactness compared with this group. It retains its original timber posted verandah, along with a number of other shops in the eastern part of the municipality.

A number of sites can be compared with this property in terms of social value relating to 'The Sullivans' television series. These properties include the regularly featured Sullivan family house at Milton Street, Canterbury, which was demolished in the 1980s; and the regularly featured neighbour, Mrs Jessup's house, also originally in Milton Street, which was relocated to Emerald during the 1980s and underwent major renovations. Another house in Glenroy Road, Hawthorn, which did not appear as regularly in the show, was also demolished during the 1990s. At times, shops in Maling Road Canterbury featured, as did the Medlow residence in Warrigal Road, Surrey Hills. Outside of the local area, the Retreat Hotel in Nicholson Street Abbotsford and the Centenary Dairy and Milk Bar in Heidelberg Road, Fairfield made regular appearances (Built Heritage Pty Ltd 2012:236-237). The Retreat Hotel at 226 Nicholson Street, for example, is included in the City of Yarra Heritage Overlay (HO313). The place citation only mentions its architectural significance although the hotel's own website is titled: *Warm and friendly pub with old world charm where they filmed 'The Sullivans'*. The Retreat Hotel also continues to receive regular visits from nostalgic fans of the television series (Beat 2015). The shop at 35 Matlock Street and the Retreat Hotel in Abbotsford are the most socially significant and architecturally intact buildings associated with 'The Sullivans' show.

There are a number of properties around Melbourne and Victoria that are also valued due to their associations with a range of popular Australian television series – from 'Neighbours' and 'A Country Practice' to 'Prisoner' and 'Kath & Kim'. Public websites generally list around 15 such television shows and approximately 30 associated properties. 35 Matlock Street from the 'The Sullivans'

regularly features on these lists (Melbourne for Everyone 2015; Time Out 2015; Only Melbourne [1] 2015).

Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria referred to in *Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay*, Department of Planning and Community Development, September 2012, modified for the local context.

CRITERION A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Not applicable

CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (rarity).

The shop at 35 Matlock Street of 1912 is one of a small number of Victorian and Edwardian shops that survive in the City of Boroondara. Timber shops were the first to be built in new suburbs and shopping areas in the 19th century, but were gradually replaced by brick buildings, leaving few of this type in the metropolitan area.

CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (research potential).

Not applicable

CRITERION D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Not applicable

CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

The shop is architecturally distinguished by the unusual and elaborate treatment of the main façade for a timber shop, particularly the grand scrolled stuccoed parapet wall, after the Queen Anne manner, supporting a cornice moulding and revealing the gable-end of the roof behind, as a crowning half-timbered pediment. The Chinese style mullions in the top-lights above and to the left of the shop entrance are also notable.

CRITERION F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

Not applicable

CRITERION G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

The 'A & J Sullivan' shop (aka Willy's Store) continues to be valued today by both local community members and tourists alike because of its association with the television series, 'The Sullivans'. Local community members take general pride for the place based on this connection, as well as because of its nostalgic representation of a local neighbourhood store.

CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Boroondara's history (associative significance).

Not applicable

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The timber shop and residence at 35 Matlock Street, Canterbury, is significant. It was built in 1912 for George Jackson, who ran a confectioner's shop there. It continued to serve as the local neighbourhood store run by the Williamsons between the 1930s and the 1970s, and was known as 'Willy's Store'. It became a central location of 'The Sullivans' television series during the 1970s and 1980s, named A & J Sullivan's store.

It is a gabled weatherboard building with corbelled chimneys, with the roof set behind an elaborate front parapet. The shopfront sits beneath a timber skillion verandah and has an inset entry set between timber-framed shop windows.

Recent alterations and additions, including the upper-level extension, rear pavilion, Art Nouveau leadlight windows, and timber verandah frieze are not significant.

How is it significant?

The shop is of local aesthetic significance and rarity value to the City of Boroondara and of social significance to the metropolitan area and possibly further afield.

Why is it significant?

The shop is one of a small number of Victorian and Edwardian shops that survive in the City of Boroondara. Timber shops were the first to be built in new suburbs and shopping areas in the 19th century, but were gradually replaced by brick buildings, leaving few of this type in the metropolitan area. (Criterion B)

The shop is architecturally distinguished by the unusual and elaborate treatment of the main façade for a timber shop, particularly the grand scrolled stuccoed parapet wall, after the Queen Anne manner, supporting a cornice moulding and revealing the gable-end of the roof behind, as a crowning half-timbered pediment. The Chinese style mullions in the top-lights above and to the left of the shop entrance are also notable. (Criterion E)

The local community and the wider tourist community with connections to 'The Sullivans' television series socially value the 'A & J Sullivan' store. This series developed a strong following both in Australia and abroad during the 1970s and the 1980s through its depiction of Australian suburban family life during World War II. These communities have continued their connection to the property since this time, evidenced through regular community visits and expressions of connection in the public sphere. (Criterion G)

Grading and Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as an Individually Significant place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme:

External Paint Colours <i>Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?</i>	No
Internal Alteration Controls <i>Is a permit required for internal alterations?</i>	No
Tree Controls <i>Is a permit required to remove a tree?</i>	No
Victorian Heritage Register <i>Is the place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?</i>	No
Incorporated Plan <i>Does an Incorporated Plan apply to the site?</i>	No

Outbuildings and fences exemptions <i>Are there outbuildings and fences which are not exempt from notice and review?</i>	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted <i>Can a permit be granted to use the place for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?</i>	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place <i>Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?</i>	No

Identified By

G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

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Kelksie75, Welcome to my 'The Sullivans' special, <http://www.keksle75.de/andrewmcfarlane/imagesthesullivansspecial.htm>, accessed 26 June 2015.

Personal communications

Barrett, F, Secretary, Canterbury Historical Society, 28 June 2015.

Gornalle, M, General Manager Karen Gornalle and Associates (real estate agent that sold the property in 2002, lived in Matlock Street and regular visitor to 4 Square Store), 29 June 2015.

Hollingsworth, L, President Canterbury Community Action Group, 29 June 2015.

McKenna, L, Director Align Concepts (property tenant), 29 June 2015.

KcKenna, J, Managing Director, National Institute of Youth Performing Arts Australia (property tenant and owner), 29 June 2015.

Unpublished reports

Built Heritage Pty Ltd, Thematic Environmental History, prepared for the City of Boroondara, May 2012.

G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

