

External Integrity

Verandah, parapet and roof have been added/altered, the barge board replaced, brick and stone painted over, stucco added, door replaced and the top-light at the entrance door closed in.

Streetscape

In a line of late Victorian period hip-roof timber villas, many altered but retaining much of their form and detail.

Significance

Architecturally, despite its alterations the house is distinctive because of its form and the use of Medieval detail on this scale and type of house. The valuable front fence expresses aptly its stonemason first owner's craft and its association with Halliday connects with Footscray's industrial history and its important metropolitan role.

**Olympic Tyre & Rubber Co.
56-84 Cross Street**

History

The laughing, stocky, world record-breaking Olympic Games swimmer, Frank (later Sir) Beaufrepaire, who, exhibiting the same drive that rocketed him to world fame, established in Footscray an industrial undertaking that now (1959) ranks as one of Australia's biggest.

Beaufrepaire held eight world's records and represented Australia in the 1908, 1920, 1924 Olympics. He was Lord Mayor 1940-2 and knighted, also in 1942, then aged 51 years.² Under ten years previously he had founded the Olympic Tyre & Rubber Co. (1933) and, a year later, commenced to build one of the main components of this complex. Despite the scale of this undertaking, Beaufrepaire's absolute beginnings had been as a tyre retreader in 1922, (Beaufrepaire's Tyre Service Ltd.). The major face to the factory was opened November 1939, just before the war.



4 - 32 56-84 Cross Street, foundation stone laid 1939

- 1 FFOY
- 2 WWA1944

Beaurepaire claimed 90% Australian workmanship in the new manufacturing plant. Company employees and administrators were also wholly Australian when the factory was opened in May 1934. New and extended industry was welcomed then, in a time when youth unemployment was still suffering from the slump of the depression.¹

Dunlop Australia Ltd. had first manufactured cycle tyres in Australia during 1899. Using Dunlop's own British invention, they made pneumatic car tyres in Melbourne during the early 1900s. Tennis balls and garden hoses were included in their pre-war products. The advent of Dunlopillo foamed latex rubber cushioning in 1934, coincided with the Beaurepaire opening. This was again a British invention and perhaps provides a background to Beaurepaire's denial of 'overseas experts.'

Like Dunlop, Beaurepaire undertook research into synthetic rubber during the rubber shortage of World War Two. His efforts also produced the first Australian made *black* inner tubes, previously coloured red by the use of clay fillers. However, many later developments (tubeless tyres, 1955, and radial ply tyres, 1964) were based on overseas precedents, but always adapted to local conditions. Vulcanized rubber insulated cables were an Australian first in 1940 (generally Olympic Cables Pty. Ltd.), just as the coaxial cable was a first many years later.²

Description

A large complex which like many similarly sized contemporary complexes, possessed a stylish office and show-room front to the acres of unadorned factory floors behind. This front carried the firm's image and often the latest architectural motifs, particularly for those industries involved in innovatory production lines. The Olympic showroom and offices have the curves, coloured brickwork and architectural fins to qualify for an advanced Streamlined Moderne category.

Not unlike previous large 20th century industrial complexes such as the Bryant & May factory in Richmond, Olympic went one step further than some of its contemporaries along Geelong Road. Composed in three parts, the central, pedimented wing is set back behind a garden court and possesses an implied colonnade as

its main facade element and in doing so alludes to the Neo-Grec style current in the previous decade.

Moderne styling however is prominent in the flanking wings of the composition, these being composed as rounded tripartite forms with a central raised element containing the main fenestration which is divided by manganese brick fins. Like a picture theatre the easternmost of these has the rolling brick curved walls tucking into a recessed glazed entrance which sits beneath a curved concrete canopy. Either side of this, slim Italian Cypress provide the formal landscape elements so typical of this style. The British Hoover factory canteen (1932-5) is a contemporary overseas example which might have been an inspiration.³

External Integrity (Cross Street elevation only)

Generally original, possible alterations to fence.

Streetscape

Isolated from mainstream factory areas on the river or Geelong Road, yet remaining close to both the railway and main road transport.

Significance

Architecturally, an accomplished and extensive elevation substantially in the Moderne style which parallels with other industrial growth in Footscray just prior to and during the Second War. Historically, it is closely linked with the personal success story of Frank Beaurepaire and the development of an Australian industry in the face of international innovation and competition. Given the extent of the works visible from the street, the emphasis of this significance is on the Cross Street elevation.

Pebbles 57A Droop Street

History

Whitehill's Dairy was the historical precursor of this exotic Bungalow, presumably providing the means for

1 *The Age* 2/6/34

2 VYB 1973, p.748f

3 see Forsyth, *Buildings for the Age*, p46