

Heritage Citation – Individual Place

Heritage Place: Residence
Address: 68 Hopetoun Road, Toorak

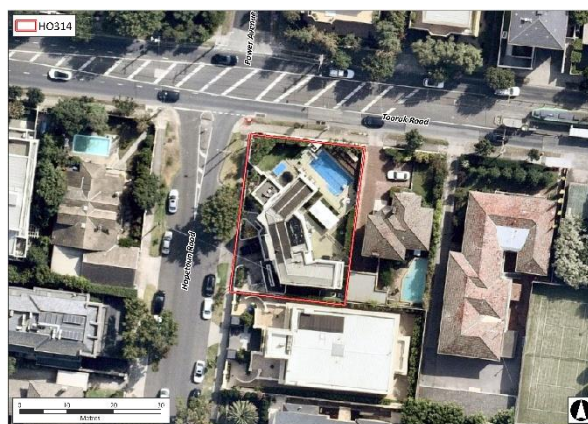
HO Reference: HO314
Citation status: Final
Date Updated: 24 October 2023

Designer: A. Mortimer McMillan
Builder: Unknown

Year of Construction: 1936



Photograph of 68 Hopetoun Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Location map and extent of HO314.

Heritage Group: Residential buildings
Heritage Type: Residence

Key Theme: Building suburbs
Key Sub-theme: Creating Australia's most 'designed' suburbs – houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion

Significance Level: Local

Recommendation: Retain as an individually significant place on the HO

Controls:	<input type="checkbox"/> External paint colours	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal alterations	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree controls
	<input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Heritage Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Incorporated Plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Outbuildings and fences exemptions
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prohibited uses may be permitted	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Heritage Place	

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The property at 68 Hopetoun Road, Toorak is significant. Specifically, the built form, fenestration and materiality of the residence is locally significant, as well as the original driveway entry, integrated garage and low wall/garden beds along Hopetoun Road. Later alterations and additions to the property are not significant.

How is it significant?

68 Hopetoun Road, Toorak is of representative significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The residence is an outstanding example of the Interwar Streamline Moderne, or International, style which achieves its starkly modern, almost timeless architectural character through functional design without resorting to any decorative devices. Designed by well-known architect A. Mortimer McMillan, it exhibits key characteristics associated with the International Style, including a high parapet concealing the roof, smooth rendered walls with no detailing, multi-paned long strip windows and a built form that accentuates the horizontal nature of the building. The building presents much like an ocean liner in its form and siting on the street corner. (Criterion D)

HERCON Criteria Assessment

A	<i>Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
B	<i>Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
C	<i>Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
D	<i>Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments</i>	The residence is an outstanding example of the Interwar Streamline Moderne, or International, style which achieves its starkly modern, almost timeless architectural character through functional design without resorting to any decorative devices. Designed by well-known architect A. Mortimer McMillan, it exhibits key characteristics associated with the International Style, including a high parapet concealing the roof, smooth rendered walls with no detailing, multi-paned long strip windows and a built form that accentuates the horizontal nature of the building. The building presents much like an ocean liner in its form and siting on the street corner.

<i>E</i>	<i>Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
<i>F</i>	<i>Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
<i>G</i>	<i>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 the continuing and developing cultural traditions</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
<i>H</i>	<i>Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.

Description

• Physical Analysis

68 Hopetoun Road is a two-storey interwar era residence built in the Interwar Streamline Moderne style. The structure has a half polygonal shape on plan and is sited on an angle with the main street front addressing Hopetoun Road. There are two single storey projections on facing north west on the street front and at the rear opening onto the backyard. The masonry structure is finished with a white render. The structure has a low-pitched hipped roof clad in corrugated galvanised iron. The single storey projections have a flat roof. The roofs are hidden behind a raised, flat parapet that sits flush to the façade.

The residence is simply detailed with just the windows, wall vents, downpipes and rainwater heads applying detailing. There are square windows and rectangular corner windows with a white aluminum frame.

The western Hopetoun Road elevation presents on two fronts meeting at an angle where the raised main entrance is located, which accessible via a flight of steps to an open porch. The porch is located above the garage located at street level. There is another set of stairs hidden behind walls leading up to a secondary entrance located to the right of the garage. There is a verandah over the street front projection overlooking the junction of Hopetoun Road and Toorak Road. The verandahs have a low and thin black steel balustrade.

The rear of the structure creates an internal courtyard bounded by the east wall that opens up to the swimming pool and yard area. The rear is similarly detailed in its form and façade elements.

The street front boundary along the north edge with Toorak Road consists of a tall wall with a flat cap, stepped to the slightly sloped topography. The wall angles inwards at the corner of the two roads and a low wall forms a raised triangular garden bed with a stand of mature aloes and ornamental shrub grasses. The tall wall angles inwards to meet the main structure at the verandah projection, closing off

the internal front yard. The Hopetoun Road frontage is demarcated by a low wall with breaks at the entrance steps and short driveway to the garage. The walls form raised garden beds planted with mature succulents such as *yuccas*, *aloes* and *crassulas* and a young boxwood (*buxus*) hedge. The wall garden beds are top dressed in white river pebbles. The masonry boundary walls are rendered white, similar to the finish of the main structure.

The grounds of 68 Hopetoun Road are heavily landscaped. There is a triangular and square shaped lawn area located in the rear courtyard mirroring the angled form of the main structure. The rest of the courtyard is paved in square stone tiles. There is a swimming pool located at the north-east corner of the property at an angle adjacent to the main structure. There is a timber deck seating area forming the rest of the north east corner between the swimming pool and boundary wall. There is a tall wall hedge and mature *aloes* rising above the height of the Toorak Road boundary wall. The north west corner of the property includes a larger lawn area. Recent photographs indicate there were at least three mature trees in the backyard that have since been removed.

68 Hopetoun Road is located on the junctions of Hopetoun Road and Toorak Road. It remains in use as a private residence. The structure and property are considered to be in good condition. Past images show some movement cracking in the front wall that have since been repaired. While backyard has been relandscaped and the Toorak Road front wall added, the property has otherwise remained intact. 68 Hopetoun Road is considered to be of high integrity overall.

- [Alterations and Additions](#)

- Swimming pool added.
- Backyard has been relandscaped.
- Mature trees in the backyard removed (after April 2012)
- Timber deck seating area by the swimming pool added.
- New high wall along the Toorak Road frontage added (1992).

[History](#)

- [Historical Context](#)

For thousands of years preceding European colonialism, the area now known as Stonnington was the traditional home of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung people of the Eastern Kulin Nation. This environment would have provided Traditional Owners with access to pre-contact plains, grassy woodland, and floodplains on the banks of the Yarra River (Birrarung), Gardiners Creek (Kooyong Koot), and Hawksburn Creek (now channelised), in a rolling landscape on the northern shore of Port Phillip Bay. It is important to note that the rich cultural heritage of Traditional Owners in Stonnington did not end with colonialism—it has a rich presence to this day.

Following the establishment of Melbourne in 1835, squatter John Gardiner and many others like him sought out land in what would become present day Toorak and surrounds on account of its densely timbered landscape, undulating terrain and proximity to water. By 1840, crown land sales marked the area's transition to pastoral settlement, and later in 1851, with the purchase of land in Hawthorn by Thomas Herbert Power, the surrounding environments gradually became a place where the early merchant and squatter elite of Melbourne built their homesteads. In Toorak, this is best represented by the purchase of lot 26 by James Jackson, associate in Jackson, Rae & Co. soap and candle merchants.

Jackson was described by politician William Westgarth as ‘Melbourne’s greatest merchant of this early time’ (Forster 1999, 10). It is only fitting that his house, called Toorak House, would be the namesake of what would become arguably the most affluent suburb in Melbourne. Following the discovery of gold in the 1850s and the wealth this produced for ancillary trades, the Toorak area drew in Melbourne’s newly wealthy. Today, over a century later, Toorak still has connotations of wealth and prestige as best represented in its history and built environment (Forster 1999, 5–26).

- [Place History](#)

The residence at 67 Hopetoun Road was erected in 1936 for Dr Howard Boyd Graham to designs prepared by architect A. Mortimer McMillan. McMillan ran a small practice and was primarily accomplished for his interwar Old English designs, though he also designed a number of European Modern style buildings.

Early records of the dwelling show that construction was near completion by March 1936 (Australian Home Beautiful 1936). Described as ‘conspicuously placed’ and ‘ultramodern in style’, the property comprised nine rooms and several sun decks at the time of its erection (Australian Home Beautiful 1936). Embodying the International Style or European Modern style, the dwelling was notably angled to ‘take as great advantage as possible of sunlight and air’ (Australian Home Beautiful 1936). The original architectural drawings of the dwelling show a two-storey brick house with numerous multi-pane windows and a below ground garage (McMillan c. 1935). The ground floor comprised a library, lounge, hall, dining room, maids room, kitchen, bathroom and three terraces, while the second floor comprised four bedrooms, a bathroom, and two large decks (McMillan c. 1935). A notable physician, the initial owner and occupant, Dr Howard Boyd Graham, served as a medic in World War I, and later became the medical superintendent at the Royal Melbourne Children’s Hospital (London Gazette 1918, 8803; Hughes 1923). He was also an avid book collector and served as the treasurer of the Kipling Society, a literary society for those interested in the writings of British author Rudyard Kipling (The Herald 1938, 8).

Boyd’s occupancy at the dwelling ended in the early 1950s when it was sold to couple Henry Haskin and Leah Haskin (née Wertheim) (Sands & McDougall 1955; The Australian Jewish Chronicle 1930, 3). Leah Haskin was particularly active in the local Jewish community and, as a result, regular speaking events, social gatherings and meetings were held at 68 Hopetoun Road. These included a National Council of Jewish Women luncheon with guest speaker Leon Freedman in 1952, an evening social event with guest speaker Professor E. Hills in honour of Hebrew University Week in 1955, and regular Mt. Scopus College Mother’s Club meetings (The Australian Jewish News 1952, 16; The Australian Jewish Herald 1955, 8; The Australian Jewish News 1958, 6). The Haskins resided at the dwelling with their three children Mark, Ruth and Leon until at least 1974.

Given the lack of historical material concerning the house from this period onwards, it remains unknown as to precisely how long the Haskins owned the property. Property records indicate that the house was put up for auction several times throughout the late 20th and early 21st century, with the most recent sale taking place in 2015.

[Comparative Analysis](#)

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) publication ‘Our Inter-war Houses’ includes a succinct description of the Moderne idiom of the 1930s written by Bryce Raworth:

The Modern idiom of the 1930s – the Moderne and International styles – were a local response to the influences of modernism emanating from Europe and America. They exerted a strong influence on design in this period, particularly through their emphasis of minimal decoration. Where decoration was used it was often stylised character.

First popular in the 1930s, this style of typified by streamlined wall surfaces and a horizontal emphasis. Its aesthetic was related to that of contemporary ocean liners, automobiles, and it attempted to capture the sleek lines and sharp or rounded corners associated with the fast and the modern (Raworth 1991, 19-20) .

The A. Mortimer McMillan building design at 68 Hopetoun Road, Toorak has strong Moderne idiom characteristics that would be referred to as Streamline Moderne after the World War II. McMillan was primarily accomplished for his interwar Old English designs. Key works include English Domestic Revival style residences at 46 Albany Road, Toorak (1936-37), 20 Heyington Place, Toorak (1933), Mindai at 407 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (1934) and 8-10 Marne Street, South Yarra. However, he also worked in Streamline Moderne style on a small number of known places. One such place was the now demolished Jazz Moderne Richardson house opposite St Catherine's in Heyington Place. Apart from 68 Hopetoun Road, Toorak, McMillan also designed the residence at 13 St Georges Road, Toorak:

- **13 St Georges Road, Toorak (HO348 St Georges Precinct).** Designed by McMillan and built in 1939, this freestanding residence is directly comparable to 68 Hopetoun Road owing to both the architect and the style. As with 68 Hopetoun Road, the building adopts a strong Streamline Modern character through the use of minimal decorative detailing, a high parapet concealing the roof, no visible chimneys, smooth rendered walls, long strip windows, a ground floor garage inbuilt into the structure, and a built form that accentuates the horizontal nature of the building. It is differentiated from 68 Hopetoun through the use of curved walls and a flat roof.

Other comparable dwellings within the municipality that were not designed by McMillan include:

- **35 Hampden Road, Armadale (Contributory place within precinct HO136).** A Streamline Modern residence designed by that presents much like 13 St Georges Road, Toorak.
- **55 Lansell Road, Toorak (HO70).** A Streamline Modern residence designed by that presents much like an ocean liner.

The majority of interwar era Moderne properties afforded heritage protection within the City of Stonnington are either residential flat buildings or dwellings that only adopt a selection of Modern characteristics. Such buildings thus still reflect traditional styles and features such as hipped roofs.

On an international level, 68 Hopetoun Road, Toorak has also been likened to the 1920s European Modern designs of the De Stijl group, Luckhardts' Berlin houses and the Bauhaus Masters' houses by Gropius in terms of its sophistication.

It is clear that when 68 Toorak Road, Toorak was first constructed it would have been considered cutting edge and modern, in a period when Interwar design in Toorak largely meant Old English Revival. Is not overly common within the municipality – with much of this style protected under the HO relating to residential apartment buildings or buildings with traditional forms. This freestanding residential building

is thus a fantastic example of the style and is considered one of McMillan's most outstanding architectural achievements.

References

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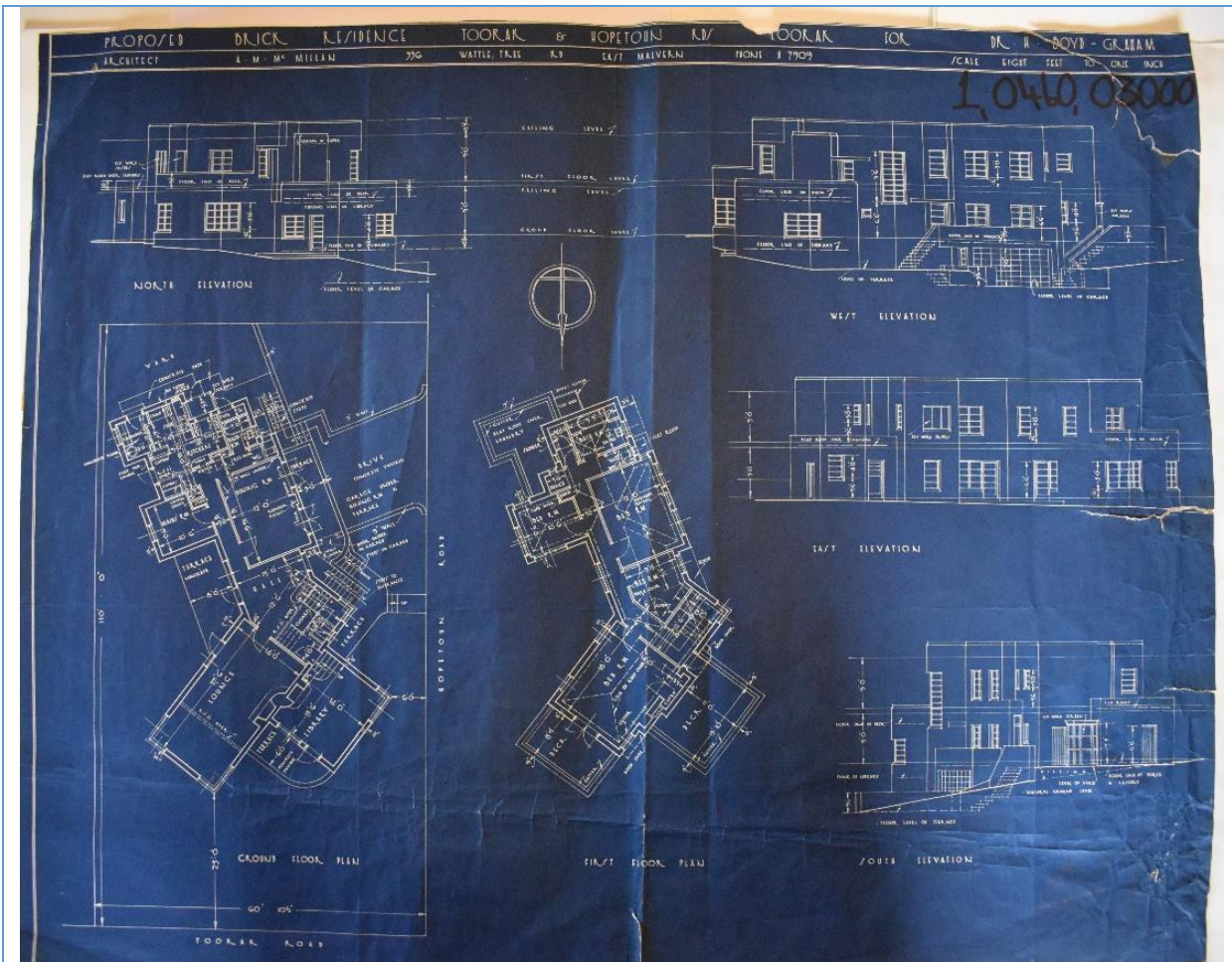
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Limitations

1. Access to all heritage places was limited to a visual inspection from the public domain. The interiors of buildings and inaccessible areas such as rear gardens were not accessed as part of this heritage study.
2. Condition and site modification assessment was limited to a visual inspection undertaken from the public domain.
3. The historical notes provided for this citation are not considered to be an exhaustive history of the site.

Further Images



Original architectural drawings for 68 Hopetoun Road, c. 1935. Source: A.M. McMillan (c. 1935) (source: Proposed *Brick Residence Toorak & Hopetoun Rds Toorak for Dr H. Boyd- Graham* [architectural plan] Stonnington History Centre collection).



View from the corner of Hopetoun Road and Toorak Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



View from Hopetoun Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



View from Hopetoun Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of windows as viewed from Hopetoun Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).

Authors

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