

Heritage Citation – Individual Place

3 Heritage Place: Yately
Address: 3 Yar Orrong Road, Toorak

HO Reference: HO346
Citation status: Final
Date Updated: 25 October 2023
Year of Construction: 1919

Designer: George Ballantyne
Builder: Unknown



Photograph of Yately (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Location map and extent of HO346.

Heritage Group: Residential buildings
Heritage Type: House

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 known at 3 Yar Orrong Road, Toorak (otherwise known as Yately), is significant. Specifically, the form, scale, fenestration and detailing of the early interwar Georgian Revival residence with strong Prairie style influences is of local significance. The front boundary wall is contributory towards the heritage values of the place. The landscaping and later alterations and additions to the property are not significant.

How is it significant?

Yately, is of local aesthetic and creative significance to the City of Stonnington. It also demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement, being one of the first dwellings in the area to anticipate both the Prairie style and the more stylised forms of the Georgian Revival style that gained popularity in the late 1920s and 1930s.

Why is it significant?

Yately has aesthetic significance as an intact and high quality synthesis of the interwar Georgian Revival and Prairie styles, a combination of architectural influence, which gives it a distinctive character. Key features contributing towards its aesthetic value include its alignment of windows with strong projecting drip moulds that give the residence a strong horizontal character, its projecting front portico, low pitched projecting hipped roof, and balanced asymmetrical façade. (Criterion E)

Yately demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement and innovation as one of the first dwellings in the area to anticipate both the Prairie style and the more stylised forms of the Georgian Revival style that gained popularity in the late 1920s and 1930s. This is derived from its form and horizontal emphasis, created by its fenestration, geometric form and balanced asymmetry. (Criterion F)

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>	This place does not meet this criterion.
E	<i>Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics</i>	Yately has aesthetic significance as an intact and high quality synthesis of the interwar Georgian Revival and Prairie styles, a combination of architectural influence, which gives it a distinctive character. Key features

		contributing towards its aesthetic value include its alignment of windows with strong projecting drip moulds that give the residence a strong horizontal character, its projecting front portico, low pitched projecting hipped roof, and balanced asymmetrical façade.
F	<i>Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period</i>	Yately demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement and innovation as one of the first dwellings in the area to anticipate both the Prairie style and the more stylised forms of the Georgian Revival style that gained popularity in the late 1920s and 1930s. This is derived from its form and horizontal emphasis, created by its fenestration, geometric form and balanced asymmetry.
G	<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.
H	<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

Yateley is a two-storey residence design in a restrained Georgian Revival style with Prairie style influences. The masonry structure is rendered in a white roughcast stucco. The structure has a robust and simple overall form with a low-pitched hipped roof clad in slate. The restraint in the design can be seen in its form and detailing but the Georgian Revival influences are still evident. There are five narrow chimneys that project from the main roof. The white roughcast chimneys have a simple form with a wide flat cap supported by simple bracket mouldings. The structure overall presents a strong horizontal character created by the fenestration and geometric form of the structure and front portico.

The single fronted façade facing the street features an entrance portico slightly to the left of the centre of the façade. The portico extends over the driveway which leads to the raised recessed front entrance porch. The portico is supported by two front square columns and a low wall with concave curved flanking ends. The base of the structure is emphasised by a subtle expressed lower section finished in a smooth wide render. The two levels on the north corner of the façade include a wide porch and verandah with a single unadorned rectilinear opening on the façade. The horizontality of the portico is emphasised by its flat projecting concrete awning detailed with extruded square and rectangular mouldings imitating rafters. The fenestration includes banks of paired single hung sash windows with

leadlight top sash. The windows have a projecting concrete sill with interspaced dentils. The sash box and lintel are also extruded, albeit a shorter distance compared to the sill. The simple façade includes recessed rectilinear forms on the façade. The façade terminates at the white timber boxed eaves of the slightly projecting roof.

The northern elevation includes evenly interspaced windows around the wide chimney breast beginning at ground level. The triple fronted western elevation includes single storey projections which may be a later extension. The southern elevation features two additional wide chimney breasts and a bay window at the south east side of the elevation.

The grounds of Yateley are landscaped. The structure is located on a large lot fronting a curved section of Yar Orrong Road which extends the visual street frontage of the property. The street front boundary of the property is demarcated by a low white roughcast masonry wall with wide piers with a low-pitched hipped cap. Two entrances give access to the return driveway. The gate piers are topped with a wrought iron light fixture and the northern most gate pier includes narrow metal lettering reading 'YATELEY'. The front yard includes the concrete paved return driveway, which extends to a paved parking area off the façade. The front lawn fronting the street features a round decorated cast concrete urn fountain. The backyard off the western elevation includes a sympathetic freestanding single storey structure and two large water tanks. The north side of the property includes an extensive lawn area with dense tree plantings on the street side and a hedge bisecting the area in two. The property includes several mature trees including pine (*pinus*) trees and a large Canary Island palm (*phoenix canariensis*) in the north east corner.

Yateley is located on Yar Orrong Road in front of the junction with Eden Court. Yar Orrong Road terminates to the north at Toorak Road and Albany Road to the south. Yateley is currently used as a private residence. Yateley is considered in good condition and with high integrity.

- [Alterations and Additions](#)

- Roof reclad in slate tiles.
- One skylight added to the main roof.
- Front wall rebuilt to match its original form, style and finish (after 2019).
- New sympathetic low timber entrance gates, painted black (after 2019).
- Original beige roughcast finish painted white (after 2019)
- Windows restored with leadlight single hung sash windows, painted black (after 2019)
- Brick paved parking area off the west elevation added.
- Two water tanks added to the west yard.

[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**

Yately at 3 Yar Orrong Road was erected in 1919 following the 1918 subdivision of Yar Orrong Estate. A subdivision plan shows twenty-five available allotments, and the land at 3 Yar Orrong Road is advertised as lot 21 (Patterson & Sons 1918). This allotment was soon purchased by Arthur E. Onians, and a house was subsequently erected in 1919 to designs prepared by George Ballantyne (MMBW Drainage Plan 1919).

As previous research suggests, while George Ballantyne is shown in records to be the agent, there is a chance that the original design may have been undertaken by his son J. F. W. (James Frederick Wilson) Ballantyne, who later took over his father's business in 1923 (Nigel Lewis and Richard Aitkin 1992). This is also reflected in the fact that J. F. W. Ballantyne worked under Walter Burley Griffin, a noted architect who pioneered the Prairie School architectural style in Australia that is readily evident at Yately (Goad 2012, 297-300). Further investigation is required to substantiate this.

Given the lack of available archival material, not much about Onians' identity is known. He owned the house for just under a decade and by 1928, James Tuson Thompson is listed as the official owner (Malvern Building Plan). Thompson was a successful insurance manager and was appointed the acting general manager of T & G Mutual Life Insurance Company by 1917 (Browne 2002). His leadership of T & G saw an intensive building program that resulted in the erection of several distinct neo-Renaissance style T & G buildings across major Australasian cities (Browne 2002). An example of this can readily be observed at the iconic A & K Henderson designed Melbourne T & G Building at 141-165 Collins Street. Thompson occupied Yately with his wife and daughter Enid Mary, and their occupancy saw several alterations and additions to the building. Records from 1928 reveal drawing plans for the addition of a bay to the dining room (A & K Henderson 1928). These additions were designed by A & K Henderson, who had also been commissioned by Thompson's company, T & G, to design the company office building.

Enid Mary Thompson married George Gardiner in 1940, and records indicate that the couple occupied the house alongside Enid's father James Tuson Thompson from this period (The Argus 1941, 4; Sands

and McDougall 1940-1960). James Tuson Thompson continued to live at the house until his death in 1954. Following his death, ownership of Yately was passed onto the Gardiners.

Comparative Analysis

Yately was designed in a restrained Georgian Revival form that was quite unique for its time. Its alignment of windows with strong projecting hood moulds and window sills create a strong horizontal character, and foreshadowed the Georgian stylistic expression that gained popularity in the late 1920s and 1930s. It also contains elements of the interwar Prairie style, and thus reflects the influence of Walter Burley Griffin, who is credited as introducing Prairie School architecture to Australia (Goad 2012, 297-300). As there are no comparable dwellings by George Ballantyne in the municipality that have been afforded heritage protection, the following comparative analysis draws from buildings in the area with Georgian Revival and Prairie style influences.

Comparable examples include:

- **1 Linlithgow Road, Toorak (HO507).** Erected in 1919 to designs prepared by the noted architectural firm W & R Butler, this early double storey Georgian Revival style residence is analogous to Yately in terms of its style, formal composition and Prairie style influenced low-slung horizontal form. Like Yately, it is also restrained in character, being an earlier application of the Georgian idiom. Distinct features that differ from Yately include its ionic columns, classically-derived pediment and domineering use of large scale chimneys. It thus makes use of features that are more typically associated with the interwar Georgian Revival style, and is considered a more elegant and refined synthesis of the two styles when compared against Yately.
- **Revell (9 Toorak Avenue, Toorak) (HO342).** This two-storey Prairie style residence was constructed in 1920 to designs by Edward F. Bilson. It is characterised by a low pitched hipped roof with a wide, low chimney on the ridge line. Like Yately, it has a strong horizontal emphasis, although derived from its boxed eaves with exaggerated overhangs as opposed to projecting hood moulds and window sills. Other similarities include its roof form and restrained use of ornamentation. Compared to Yately's unique synthesis of Georgian Revival and Prairie style influences, Revell is a more representative and orthodox example of Prairie School design.
- **2 Lascelles Avenue, Toorak (HO71).** Although a later example of the Georgian Revival style, this double storey residence, constructed in 1934 to designs by Marcus Martin, is comparable to Yately in terms of its composition, lack of ornamentation, low pitched hipped roof and asymmetrical front façade. While notable differences include the absence of a portico as well as its Spanish Mission derived entrance arch and its semi-circular wrought iron balcony, its overall design exhibits a restrained modernism that can be likened to the Prairie School's emphasis on simplicity and function that is exemplified in Yately's geometric form and front portico.

Overall, Yately is an important example of an interwar Georgian Revival residence that incorporates the Prairie School style sources. As an earlier example of the style that was forward-thinking for its time, it not only demonstrates how the Georgian Revival style evolved throughout the interwar period, but also exemplifies a unique synthesis of two design styles.

References

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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



View of front façade (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Chimney detail (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



View of the front fence prior to restoration works, showing the gate and post design (source: Google Streetview, 2019)



Sympathetic outbuilding at the rear of dwelling (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).

Authors

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