

Victoria Barracks, Melbourne

Imperial Beginnings

Victoria Barracks, fronting the magnificent boulevard of St. Kilda Road, stands four-square at the main southern entrance to the city of Melbourne, its heavy bluestone walls loom darkly in a formal and imposing military presence. Its original purpose was to house the British Imperial garrison troops and later the Victorian Colonial forces. Following Federation, it was to play a central role in the history of Australia's defence, housing the Defence Department and Army Headquarters for some 60 years. More recently it continues to provide accommodation for elements of the Defence Department, the Army and also the Royal Australian Air Force which has historic ties with the Barracks.

By far the most well-known of the buildings on the Barracks site is A Block, the frontispiece, which is one of Melbourne's landmarks. Today, few people, even in the Australian Defence Force, are aware that this block was built as quarters for officers and non-commissioned officers of the Imperial forces and their families. Indeed, there have been three distinct phases in the life of this building - as garrison quarters until 1870, as apartments until 1906, and overlapping, as principal centre for Defence administration since Federation.

The Barracks were to first appear on a map of the military reservation dated in 1859, however, construction did not begin until the following year. The progress of the construction of A Block was dependent on available funding, although its completion was clearly a priority with many of those in command. In March 1860, the Deputy Adjutant General's office wrote to the Honorary Commissioner of Public Works stressing its importance, '... it is desirable that the Officers Quarters should be proceeded with without delay, both as a matter of convenience and discipline'.

Drawings at the time indicate that the ground floor of the southern wing, or pavilion, was intended to house field officers. However, the 'Field Officers' Quarters' appear to have been occupied by the British Commander-in-Chief in Australia as a single three-storeyed residence until 1866, when a separate residence in St. Kilda Road, subsequently known as 'The Grange', was constructed. In the early 1850s, the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in the Australian Colonies had moved his headquarters from Sydney to Melbourne, ostensibly so that he could receive communications from London more quickly. However, correspondence on record indicates that the move might have been prompted as much by Major General Nickle's dislike of the unsatisfactory quarters provided to him in Sydney as any strategic considerations.



A Block, Victoria Barracks, is a Melbourne landmark, but few realise that it was built as quarters for the British Redcoats and their families.

It is noteworthy that the residence in the southern wing had two internal bathrooms with only external ablution facilities being provided for servants. Residential occupancy of the southern wing was to continue, as Colonel Hoad used it during the last residential phase of the building. While Hoad was probably the most historically important occupant of this residence it has also been associated with many other influential senior military officers during the Colonial period, notably the flamboyant Colonel Tom Price.

The linking wing contained four rooms for officers' quarters on the east and west side of a central hall and contained a stair at the rear, or western end, of another hall, which ran westwards from the front entrance. At least until the 40th Regiment returned to England in 1870, it is likely that they were used as accommodation for single officers and not for family accommodation. The central pavilion served as the social and administrative heart of the building and contained a mess room, reading room and ante-room on either side of a central hall, which ran east-west. Directly underneath the entry hall was a large wine cellar, and a large kitchen beneath the reading and ante-rooms connected to the main hall by a food lift. The impressive stairs at the rear of this wing linked this floor with the parade ground at basement level and also served the offices in the two upper floors.

Apartments for the Colony's Forces

The departure of the 40th Regiment, in 1870, reduced the number of officers living in the Barracks. Though local troops moved into the Barracks, many local regular officers, including the Commandant, Colonel W. C. Anderson, were married and tended to live in nearby private accommodation, especially in South Yarra. Despite this reduction in demand for officers' accommodation, in 1871, additional contracts were let for completing the 'north wing of the officers' quarters'. The work was done by 1876, its conclusion probably being more important for the political requirement to give the public the impression that the Colony was being securely defended.

Some two decades later, the British journal, *Navy and Army Illustrated*, in a series of descriptive articles on 'Our Colonial Defences' singled out A Block for its impressive appearance - '... a good serviceable-looking block; more so, in fact, than some barracks in the "Old Country"'.

Upon completion of the northern wing of A Block, it is assumed the non-commissioned officers vacated J Block for their new, albeit temporary quarters. The extent of their quarters appears to have been restricted to the narrow linking section, not including the main part of the northern wing or pavilion.

In 1883, Victoria's military forces were reorganised with the entire volunteer force being disbanded and a militia formed in its place. To facilitate the scheme, it was decided to bring a staff of officers of the British Army out to the Colony. Upon their arrival in Victoria in 1886, some of these high ranking British as well as local officers were accommodated in A Block.

By 1892, the officers' quarters were beginning to show signs of wear and tear. Sanitation was also becoming a problem and brought a spate of complaints from the occupants about offensive smells coming from drains behind the building as well as from the swamp behind the Barracks which was being filled with soil dug from the Yarra River. The drains were clogged regularly with vegetable matter from the mess kitchen and rats were a problem having undermined the drains of the quarters occupied by Mr Bray, the Ordnance Storekeeper, and causing them to sink. The plaster ceilings in the officers' quarters and staff offices were separating from the laths and falling, causing a considerable morale problem, if not injury, to those below.

The complaints continued on into 1893 with further discoveries that dry rot had found its way into the wooden floors of the basement rooms due to poor ventilation. A plague of mice caused the then Major Hoad to put pen to paper after the boards and skirtings in his quarters were removed and the holes blocked with tin to no avail. In a letter calling upon the Barrack Master, Captain George Watson, to inspect the damage he said, 'we are still bothered with great numbers and they run over the bedclothes and wearing apparel and every night do some damage by eating clothes etc. - eg. they are now eating away the matting around the carpet in the front room and have started to gnaw the front board of the piano and unless they can be stopped will probably soon quite destroy it'. Colonel Price also had grounds for complaint.

Colonel Tom Price

Price is one of the Army's more picturesque characters and a strong personality. He raised the Victorian Mounted Rifles and commanded that Regiment from 1885 to 1902. The Mounted Rifles proved to be the model for similar units raised in the other Colonies so he is widely acknowledged as the father of the Australian Light Horse.

A popular leader, he created a public controversy in 1890 with his order to his troops that if they were called out to face rioting Melbourne dockside strikers they were, in his words, to 'fire low and lay the bastards out'. He survived the public inquiry, if not the wrath of Trades Hall, and was later to successfully command a Victorian mounted contingent during the Boer War, before returning to be appointed as acting Commandant of the new Commonwealth's Victorian forces.

Price spent 22 years with the British Army in India as a young officer. He married Mary Dunnistone Baillie of Melbourne during his Indian service and she bore him four children. As Commanding Officer of the Victorian Mounted Rifles, Price occupied quarters No. 1 at the southern end of A Block, Victoria Barracks, where he complained that the health of his youngest son was being adversely affected by the conditions under which he was forced to live. His application for living out allowance was vigorously opposed, causing him to write vociferously about the problem:

bathrooms and privies on the west side of the officers' quarters in a filthy and dilapidated condition, no recreation grounds for the children of the Barracks and offensive and unhealthy surrounds caused in part by the stagnant swamp in the rear of the Barracks. Needless to say, some seven months after Price first requested to be allowed to draw a living out allowance, permission was granted.

But Price was to drift into relative obscurity in military annals. His adjutant in the VMR, Hoad, went on to become Australia's first native-born major gen-



Colonel Tom Price, flamboyant Victorian light horseman, who is credited with introducing the slouch hat to the Australian military forces. He had much to complain about in his married quarters in Victoria Barracks!

M 94/552

Head Quarters, Mounted Rifles, Melbourne, April 16th 1894

From the Officer Commanding Victorian Mounted Rifles,

To AAG

Sir,

I have the honour to draw attention to the conditions under which I live in my present quarters. My bedroom is situated with one window over the main drain of the quarters, the other within a few feet and over a privy and close to a drain from Mr. Bray's cottage. My dishes and cooking utensils have to be washed at a sink untrapped opening into the same main drain and within a few feet of another privy. The only covering accorded to my servant who washes up these dishes and cooking utensils is an iron lean-to opening to the South. In hot weather this lean-to is almost unbearable and in winter an icy blast sweeps through it whenever a South, South-east or South-West wind blows. Whenever it rains from any quarter with any Southing in it the rain pours in. I venture to say that in the commonest cottage of any working man in this city the conveniences are of a far higher order than this and more healthful for no-one can contend that sleeping over a drain open through the grating and in close proximity to the privies can be conducive to health. The so-called conveniences for the purpose of nature are an outrage on the lowest sense of decency; the basement is a dismal dark airless passage collecting all the fetid vapours that arise and acting as a medium of their dissemination throughout the quarters. So much for inside the quarters. Without some hundreds of tons of black oozy spuey slime and mud collected from the bottom of the Yarra near a spot where a main drain discharges itself are being spread near the Southernmost end of the barracks consequently whenever the wind is at all in the West, I obtain the full odour from this awful mass of filth - In the same manner from the filling up of the swamp at the Southern end of the barracks with putrid refuse I obtain a deathlike stench that pervades the whole of the Southern block of my quarters.

Since I was ordered into habitation, a large number of factories have grown up in proximity to the barracks. The air is thick with smoke which in the early morning hangs over the place and spreads itself into my rooms. The viaduct from Spencer to Flinders St has been completed and throughout the night trains run frequently with the accompaniment of shrieking whistles, steamers in the river sound sirens and machinery frequently works in the factories while to crown all the ever pervading and deadly stench comes into my windows whenever the least touch of West is in the wind. Sleep is absolutely impossible and whenever I am in quarters I suffer from insomnia caused by these nuisances. My family does the same and my health is suffering. I have been treated for insomnia by the Principal Medical Officer without any result as it appears he has treated me for nervous excitation. I am not suffering from nervous excitement or anything connected with my nervous system but I am suffering from a prolonged residence in a foul and fetid atmosphere aggravated by continuous noise. Dr Gray of the Board of Health has surveyed the surroundings especially at the Southern or my end of them and to me he pronounced a very decided opinion of their highly insanitary condition - nothing has been done so far as I can see to remove this state of affairs indeed the stenches now are more potent than ever. I seldom or ever wake without a headache, nausea and lassitude while strange to say while living as I have to do in the country with meals at irregular hours frequently wet for hours etc I am never for a moment in anything but rude health and capable of doing a severe days work. I have on several occasions drawn attention to the discomfort I have to live under; my condition of life has in no way been ameliorated but the horror of it have been rather accelerated for the stinks and noise have grown and the suffering of myself and family have been increased. I have now set forth in fuller detail than before the state under which I am compelled to live and do so as I wish to ask for a full enquiry into the matters now fully brought to notice. The following officers Lt Col Otter, Major Hoad, Captains Nethercote, Somerset and Eddy have informed me that they are willing to give corroborative evidence on the general points I raise as to Sanitation, decency, noise etc.

*I have the Honour to be Sir
Your Obedient Servant*

Tom Price

LTCOL

CO V. M. Rifles

The Assistant Adjutant General, a master of understatement, wrote back:

The Major General presumes that you wish an enquiry to be instituted into the sanitary condition of the Barracks. Is this so?

An enquiry was indeed instituted and Dr Greswell, Acting Chairman of the Board of the Public Health Department, reported on the sanitary condition of the Barracks in 1894. He found defective drainage, a lack of ventilation, dampness, the

eral; and General Sir Harry Chauvel's successes with the Light Horse in World War I overshadowed Price's earlier endeavours. Price's antipathy towards Major General Sir Edward Hutton, the first Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth Military Forces, led to Price spending the last two years of his service relegated from Victoria to Commandant of the smaller Queensland Forces. In 1904 at the age of 62, he retired to farming near Heidelberg, in Victoria, and died seven years later.

From Married Quarters to Defence Offices

Following the formation of the Commonwealth Department of Defence at the turn of the century and the decision to locate its headquarters in Victoria Barracks, the pressure for additional office accommodation was immense. In addition to the newly formed Department, the Headquarters of the Victorian District Command was also to be housed at the Barracks. As a result, A Block was converted from a residential to an administrative function.

In 1914, the *Argus* remarked upon this conversion of the building:

The commander-in-chief's residential quarters (of which the late Major General Hoad, as inspector-general, was the last tenant) have become the centre of activity for the general staff; bedrooms and reception halls in the officers' quarters are now furnished with desks, over which piles of official papers accumulate, apparently without end; the click of the typewriter resounds where tired 'non-coms' once slept, and the inspector-general's and adjutant-general's department have turned the north wing, which was intended as a haven of rest for men off duty, into a buzzing hive of industry.

Walls have been breached, and partitions erected everywhere. The residential aspect of Victoria Barracks has gone for all time, the caretaker being the only 'survivor' of all those who formerly lived on the main premises. And still the cry is for more room.

Hoad had a long association with the Barracks and had been in residence in his apartment at the southern end of the building for some years. This was a self contained three storey residential wing which comprised eleven principal rooms. In 1895, he had become the first Australian officer to be appointed to the position of Assistant Adjutant General at the Headquarters at Victoria Barracks and, in 1907, the first Australian officer promoted to the rank of major general. The conversion of the last residential accommodation must logically have occurred after this date.

After the formation of the Commonwealth, Hoad served under Major General Sir Edward Hutton, commander of Australia's military forces, as his principal staff officer. He left Australia in 1908, journeying to London to discuss the creation of an Imperial General Staff at the War Office. Arriving back in Victoria in early 1909, Hoad may have returned to his apartment at the Barracks, though this does not seem likely. At the end of 1909, he accompanied Lord Kitchener on his inspection of Australia's land defences. A little over a year after this tour, Hoad took ill and died.

For the duration of World War I, and prior to the completion of A1 Block, A Block accommodated the entire Defence Department's headquarters, the headquarters of the local military district having been 'elbowed out' of A Block, and moved into C Block around 1910. The Defence Department was to remain until the move to Canberra commenced in 1958.

A Block was designed in three distinct sections. The central section was built for officers' quarters, the southern section for

residential accommodation for officers and their families, and the northern section constructed several years later for the accommodation of non-commissioned officers. Crosswalls separated the interior into seven principal sections; four for officers, one for administration and two for non-commissioned officers. Although the plan provided some flexibility, the basic layout remained until after the Commonwealth took over Colonial defence facilities in 1901.

In the years before Federation, the building had been occupied by the principal military officers of the Colony, and subsequently during the early Federation period, by key military personnel such as Hoad and Colonel W. T. Bridges (later the first Commandant of the Royal Military College, Duntroon) who lived and worked in this building.

In 1891, A Block underwent considerable refurbishment works. Better conditions would have been required for the more numerous senior officers serving in Victoria. The northern linking section of the building was divided internally into two separate apartments. Doors were installed in the north-south corridor at the basement and ground floor to divide off the apartments. New stairs were built at the north and south ends of the central corridor which connected the basement and ground floor within each apartment. At basement level, a window in the southern section of the west wall was converted to a doorway which provided access to a large yard. The yard was fenced off into four separate sections, each of which contained a bathroom and earth closet at the western perimeter.

The original central fireplaces on either side of the east-west corridor were demolished to make way for the new north-south corridor and were replaced with corner fireplaces on the ground and first floors. The original fireplaces were retained on the first floor. The original stair in the east-west corridor was retained. The plan for each apartment was identical and set out as a mirror image of the other. The rooms at the basement level were not identified, but included at least a kitchen and presumably servants rooms. The ground floor level contained a dining room, sitting room and two bedrooms in each apartment.

A separate self-contained apartment was created on the first floor which contained a dining room, sitting room, kitchen, three bedrooms, two pantries and two other rooms. A new ante-room was created in the centre of the east side from which the principal entrance provided access to the original stair leading to the east-west hall below.

The northern wing contained four rooms, a hall and stair at basement level, three rooms, a hall and a stair at ground floor level and a similar arrangement at first floor level with the eastern end of the hall being partitioned off to provide a bathroom. It appears that the northern end was lit by gas. The ground floor remained much as before, however, the basement area was substantially subdivided.

The process of conversion to office accommodation was substantially underway from between 1905 and 1913. The solution to the cry for more room was the construction, during

World War I of A Block, which abutted the northern end of A Block. This extension was to house the War Cabinet Room during World War II.

The Married Men's Quarters

Plans for married soldiers' quarters were sufficiently advanced by early May 1862, for tenders to be called. In 1869, a newspaper report describing Victoria Barracks commented, '... just as you pass through the (south) gate are first the guard-room, next a range of rooms set apart for married couples'. Little is known of the usage of this building, except that it remained in use as a residence until very recently. Built to accommodate married soldiers, the building was later occupied by a caretaker and subsequently as a residence for public servants of the Defence Department. In 1992, the building was altered to accommodate the chaplaincy and serves as the Barracks chapel.

The original 'Married Men's Quarters' was a small, single storey cottage, of rendered brick construction, with a timber floor and originally a hipped slate roof, located on a raised bank. The principal facade is to the south, overlooking the roadway, and is L-shaped with a projecting wing to the west and a verandah to the east with double-hung timber sash windows. The verandah is roofed in corrugated iron and lined with timber boards which appear to be original while the east end of the verandah is detailed with round ended bollards. The verandah posts and concrete floor are not original. Three chimneys project above the roofline.

Internally, the building follows a typical villa plan with rooms opening off a central corridor which runs through to the back of the house. It was originally divided into three separate units, two leading from the central passage, providing accommodation for three married couples. Each unit contained a bedroom and living room, both with open fireplace, and access to a bathroom.

'Cerberus House', HMAS *Cerberus*, Western Port

Western Port and the Establishment of HMAS *Cerberus*

The explorer Bass in his epic whaleboat voyage south from Sydney entered and named Western Port in 1798. The name may now seem inappropriate, but at that time it was the furthest point west that had been explored from the new Colony.

Four years elapsed before another visit was made to Western Port, this time by Lieutenant Grant RN in the *Lady Nelson*. Despite her small size of 60 tons, the ship had successfully sailed from England and was the first to sail through Bass Strait. Also in 1802, a French ship the *Le Naturaliste* anchored off Wilson's Promontory and, utilising a copy of Bass's chart, explored Western Port.

Twenty years later, Governor Brisbane hearing rumours that the French were preparing to explore the southern waters, sent Hume and Hovell overland to report on Western

Port. Pleased with the report he received, Governor Darling sent an expedition to settle Western Port in 1826. Alas, Hume and Hovell when making their report on what they believed was Western Port were just one degree of latitude out in their calculations and were at what is now North Geelong not Western Port! The settlement was eventually abandoned but, in 1837, settlers came to the Peninsula to stay and some settled at Morradoo (aboriginal name for 'powder and shot') now named Crib Point, after the fishermen who called their hut a crib.

The first to take up 'runs' on the Peninsula were Barker at Flinders in 1840 and Meyrick at Collart-Sandy Point and Crib Point including the present site of HMAS *Cerberus*. In 1846, a man named Payne bought the Collart run from Alfred Meyrick and sold it to Joseph Hann in 1853, after whom is named the inlet on which *Cerberus* now stands.

In the early 1850s there was a small settlement at King Creek named after the owner Mrs King. Eventually it was



'Cerberus house', now home to the Flag Officer Naval Training Command. Was it built facing the wrong way?

named Hastings in honour of the Marquis of Hastings. Hastings was used for many years by the fishermen of Western Port to despatch their fish by cart to Melbourne. The railway was extended to Crib Point in 1889 due to the 'Russian scare', for although Queenscliff was fortified and the formidable monitor *Cerberus* was laying in wait for invaders in Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne could still be attacked via Western Port. The previous year a Russian warship spent quite a few days in Western Port before the authorities were aware of her presence. Immediately after this, a telegraph line was run through to Sandy Point to report on foreign visitors.

Naval training has taken place in Victoria since 1855, first on board HMVS *Victoria*. The Victorian Naval Force was to become the largest colonial navy in Australia. In 1870, the Torpedo Depot at Williamstown was established as a depot for Victorian naval ships and for general naval training. In 1885, Torpedo and Gunnery Schools were formally incorporated at Williamstown Naval Depot. In 1871, the monitor *Cerberus* arrived from England after an astonishingly hazardous voyage and was Victoria's main naval asset for many years. With federation and the formation of the Commonwealth Naval Forces she became HMAS *Cerberus*.

In 1910, the Government received a report from Admiral Henderson on the best sites for major naval bases in Australia. After extensive examination of the country's coastline, Henderson recommended the site at Hann's Inlet for a Destroyer and Submarine base. The site, some 4000 acres, was purchased in 1911. Naval barracks were to be erected to accommodate some 2000 personnel required to man the base and Torpedo School.

World War I intervened in these plan and only part of the program materialised. Rather than a base, the area was developed as the Flinders Naval Depot, the first sod being turned in 1913. The Depot was officially opened in September 1920 under the command of Commander F.C. Darley RN. The Depot was commissioned as HMAS *Cerberus* in the following year.

There was to be little expansion at HMAS *Cerberus* until the outbreak of World War II found the facilities inadequate to cope with the needs of wartime recruits coming in at the rate of 400 per month. Temporary buildings were erected to cope with the additional training, accommodation, recreation and hospital needs of this sudden influx. 1942 saw the introduction of an Officers' Training School to train selected recruits as officers for war service. The Royal Australian Naval College had been moved to *Cerberus* during the Depression and was to remain there until its return to Jervis Bay in 1958.

With the cessation of World War II, HMAS *Cerberus* geared up for the influx of recruits to make up the peace time Navy. The temporary buildings were utilised to cope with these recruits for many years. Progressively since 1950 many of the temporary buildings were dismantled and newer facilities constructed. Today, HMAS *Cerberus* is the premier training establishment in the RAN.

'Cerberus House'

The grounds of 'Cerberus House', built as the residence of the Commanding Officer, have always been a striking feature of HMAS *Cerberus* as is the residence itself. The house was constructed in 1915, being the first residence built in Flinders Naval Depot. Today, it is home to the Flag Officer Commanding Navy's Training Command.

The Governor General, Lord Stonehaven, planted a Camphor Laurel tree near the fish pond in 1926 but it was transplanted to a spot near the tennis court where it has flourished ever since. A large gum tree in the grounds was planted in 1931 and some years later a storm took the trunk and central branches out of the tree. It has since revived and flourished.

The Kurrajong tree in the grounds was also planted in 1931. About this time the fish pond was constructed and the Commanding Officer at the time, Captain G.H.G. Benson, DSO, RN, made the circular inscription around the ponds. The inscription covers the last two lines of the verse poem, 'God's Garden', by Dorothy Frances Gurney (1851-1932):

The kiss of the Sun for plenty,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden,
Than anywhere else on earth.

West of the Captain's Residence, a 'Ships' Memorial Garden' has been established with trees named for ships. The name of the ship and the species of each tree are engraved on a brass plaque at the foot of each as follows:

HMAS <i>Armidale</i>	1.12.42	Silver Birch
HMAS <i>Nestor</i>	15.6.42	Silky Oak
HMAS <i>Vampire</i>	4.3.42	Indian Cedar
HMAS <i>Perth</i>	1.3.42	Flowering Plum
HMAS <i>Parramatta</i>	9.4.42	Golden Ash
HMAS <i>Yarra</i>	27.11.41	North American Sweet Plum
HMAS <i>Waterhen</i>	30.6.41	Pyramid Tree
HMAS <i>Voyager</i>	25.9.42	Atlantic Cedar
HMAS <i>Sydney</i>	9.11.41	New Zealand Christmas Bush

Cerberus House and the other heritage homes at HMAS *Cerberus* have been extensively renovated by the Defence Housing Authority under the supervision of the Authority's regional manager for Mornington-Gippsland, Mr Bruce Anderson. New quarters recently built in Darley Road blend sympathetically with the older homes and won a coveted 1995 Housing Industry Association award for their design.

Living in Cerberus House - Extracts from a speech delivered by Mrs Sandy Cawardine to the Ex-WRANS Association, 13 May 1986.

Triple brick sounds solid but has its disadvantages. In summer the house is always cool - in winter absolutely freezing! And try putting in extra power points in triple brick! ... the house is large (approximately 40 squares) but I would estimate that the hall's stairwell and 'gallery' take up almost 10 squares. The house gives the impression of little sister wearing big sister's clothes. Underneath there is a neat little figure but it's swamped by voluminous folds and extra clothing. A previous incumbent described the house as having 'a dining room for 18, a sitting room for 12 and a kitchen that can cater for a family of 4'!

We moved into 'Cerberus House' in January of this year - I had seen the house in November 1985 and was saddened by the state of disrepair - there was extensive water damage to the main bedroom and everything was tired and old.

A submission was made in 1984 by the RAN that the house be nominated ... to go on the Register of the National Estate - I'm not sure whether it was this submission or the impending visit of the Queen, but suddenly funds were made available for repairs. You can imagine how thrilled we were when we arrived ... to find that the roof had been repaired and most of the 'function rooms' had been redecorated. Having moved into the house, however, I could not get over the feeling that something was wrong with it; that things just didn't 'hang together'.

Firstly, there is something wrong with the front entrance ... After living in 27 different houses all round the world and also working for many years in Real Estate, I have never seen a house where the front door is right next to the guest toilet (and to compound matters, the whole area has been glassed in and the toilet window opens onto the entrance foyer!) And yet, the circular driveway would appear to lead to this entrance.

Secondly, I have never seen a house where the servants' quarters, laundry and facilities were at the front of the house - the whole orientation seemed wrong.

Thirdly, most houses are placed on the block to either take advantage of the view or to make use of the sun, or they are orientated to the road. This house ... does not have any of these traits, nor do the other houses built in the Base at the same time. Hence the fiction arose that the houses were built to Royal Navy standards and no one thought to adjust the plans to suit the antipodes!

Fourthly, why is there a magnificent gateway and stretch of driveway leading up to the kitchen entrance?

... When Admiral Henderson released his report in 1911 and wrote, 'Port Western is a very good harbour and, until Cockburn Sound (Fremantle) is ready, this port should be used by the western divisions as one of its principal anchorages and a place where ships should be able to replenish with coal or oil fuel'.

Western Port also had the advantage of already being linked to Melbourne by rail and having telegraphic facilities ...

In those days it took 2 hours to get from Flinders Street to Crib Point and despite advances made in the last 100 years, it still takes 2 hours to get from Flinders Street to Crib Point!

Only part of the Henderson program materialised. Post war financial difficulties, stringency, naval limitations, political difficulties and Admiral Jellicoe's advice all contributed to fundamental changes to the plan. Williamstown Naval Depot, then known as HMAS *Cerberus*, had, after Federation, continued to serve as the RAN's primary training establishment, but it soon became too small, and to make matters worse, the Victorian State Government wanted the area for local shipping.

In 1921, it was decided that Flinders Naval Base would be dedicated to training and it lost its identity as a naval base. The name was changed to Flinders Naval Depot, and the Depot officially commissioned as HMAS *Cerberus* on 1 April 1921. (By the way, on reading the history of the many ships bearing the name *Cerberus*, I learned that the monitor *Cerberus*, later to become HMVS *Cerberus*, burned 50 tons of coal a day en route to Australia. After getting our first bill for hot water, I think that the old ship's boilers are being used to heat the water at Cerberus House!)

Far from being 'out of kilter', Cerberus House fulfils, its original function, that is the residence of a Naval Captain. ... In any harbour or port the houses face the sea and, as Flinders Naval Base was originally intended as a harbour, the concept would have been for the house to be pleasing when viewed from the sea and with a good view of the sea.

Early photos of the base show that the vegetation was sparse and stunted ... so there would have been an uninterrupted view from the house to Hanns Inlet. To illustrate this sparsity of vegetation, ... during the bushfire season in 1922 there was an attempt to burn a patch of bush on the opposite side of the road from the married quarters and bordered on the far side by Hanns Inlet. This patch harboured snakes which used to come onto the road at times. There was fear that some of the children might get bitten... what no one realised was that a bed of brown coal came to the surface in the middle of the bush. This caught alight and smouldered on the surface and underground for nearly three months. It was impossible to put it out and residents had to wait for the rains to do the job. In the meantime, when the wind blew their way, the married quarters lived under a pall of smoke.

A local Real Estate Agent advertised Flinders Naval Base as 'Australia's future Portsmouth' stating that 'the future for Western Port is assured because of Flinders Naval Base's proximity to Melbourne, depth of water, perfect shelter and abundant coal, supply'! So I think it would be fairly safe to conclude that there would be little growing on the top of a coal deposit and the view from the house would have been uninterrupted by trees and bushes... The house is not wrongly positioned - it faces the sea as it was originally designed to do.

To further add to my argument, ... the Architect, J. S. Murdoch, is renowned for his very Australian style. So this

disproves the folklore that the houses were designed for the Royal Navy and wrongly positioned for the Southern Hemisphere.

Then a plan was unearthed literally last week showing that the original layout for the driveway to Cerberus House included an additional loop running off the circular driveway and going round the garden, past what was intended as the front of the house and joining that mysterious piece of driveway leading to the gates on the kitchen side of the house.

Mrs Sally Were, writing on 'Some Memories of Life in Cerberus in the Forties', says:

In the post-war years there were few cars in the depot. Only one of the Darley Road families, reputed to be of 'independent means', owned a car. We cycled everywhere, even to Wardroom balls, long, full-skirted frocks safety-pinned up to clear the bike chains and our dancing shoes in the handlebar baskets. One Commander's wife had to dance all night in her gardening shoes as she had forgotten her high heels, and it was far too wet for anyone to cycle back home for them.

With no cars and in the days when Hastings was a tiny place and Frankston just one street of shops, we could not go far afield for provisions. In any case, this was pre-supermarket era. Our shopping was brought to us. The grocer, Mr Melville, sent his son weekly to call for orders and to deliver. The butcher called for orders and delivered twice weekly, an iceman brought great blocks for our ice chests and a travelling greengrocer brought fruit and vegetables to the door.

So I theorise that the circular driveway to Cerberus House (and for that matter the other house built at the same time, as the plans show they all originally had circular driveways) was to accommodate the vehicles of the visiting grocer, butcher, iceman, vegetable-man, firewood-man, etc. The current front entrance was, I suspect, intended as the tradesman's entrance and the true front entrance has been engulfed by the new formal dining room.

As for the house being little sister in big sister's clothing, I'm sure that the original concept for the Captain's residence was that it should have been a family home, catering for small intimate parties. After all, the ships and submarines visiting the Base would have had accommodation and space for entertaining on board. But with the alterations in the concept of the establishment's function, the visiting training specialists would have had to be housed and amused. So the 'function room' needed to be enlarged, and the verandahs on the seaward side of the house were enclosed.

Fort Queenscliff

When completed in 1885, Fort Queenscliff, together with the guns of Point Nepean across the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, reputedly formed the most heavily fortified defence of any British establishment in the southern hemisphere. The fort complex, which includes the earlier lighthouse and telegraph station of 1856-63, is said to be 'of paramount importance to the military and political history of Victoria, with notable structures being the walls, keep and signal station'. The old fort contains within its walls many buildings and works of historic significance including some which were built as married quarters, but are no longer used as such. Its high gunholed brick walls and imposing keep have long been notable landmarks in Queenscliff and dominate the southern end of the town.

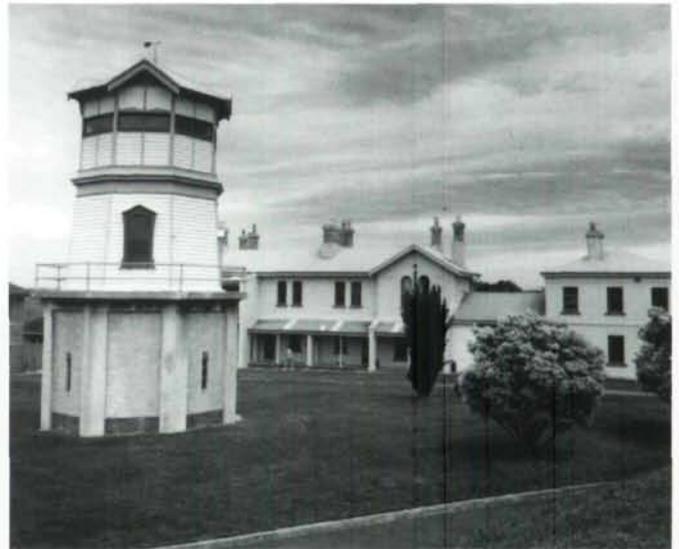
The first moves to establish a fortified defence of Port Phillip heads were made during the Crimean War (1853-56). Following the 'Russian scare' in 1882, the fort was built, incorporating the 1856 two-storey stone telegraph station and 1863 lighthouse, a turreted keep, moats, gates and extensive mounds. It housed the Victorian Permanent Artillery until 1901. Fort Queenscliff was extensively modified and new buildings erected after 1901 when the establishment was taken over by the Royal Australian Artillery. However, many of the original structures, placements and fortifications are recognisably intact.

The fort is part of a wider heritage-listed area, of about 20 hectares, which includes the Australian Army's Command and Staff College, the Pilot Station and jetty, the whole of the foreshore reserve, the old boat pier, the fishing jetty, the Anglican Church of St. George the Martyr, the Rectory, and portions of Gellibrand, Stokes, Bridge, Bay, Hesse, Beach, King and Learmonth Streets.

This area exemplifies the unique character of Queenscliff and its varied history as pilot station, fishing village, garrison town and holiday resort. It is said that in no other area in Victoria is the entire history of a town or locality so aptly displayed by its built form, its land use and its environment. Here one may see not only the fort, but also the pilot station, a reflection of the town's original function; Gellibrand street with its old guest houses and hotels, and the beautiful foreshore reserve, both of which reflect the town's long established and important function as a holiday resort; the boat pier and the old fishermen's village, which reflect the town's long standing as a fishing port; the main commercial street, Hesse street, which still retains much of its nineteenth century character; and Stokes street which presents an intact Victorian era residential streetscape.



Fort Queenscliff with its distinctive keep and turreted walls. The old and new lighthouse buildings are familiar landmarks overlooking The Rip at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay.



The view inside Fort Queenscliff. Behind the old lighthouse are some of the original married quarters built for the coast artillery garrison. They are now used as offices for the Army Command and Staff College.



This house at Gellibrand Street, Queenscliff, part of the heritage listed area, still serves as residence for a non-commissioned officer working at the nearby Fort Queenscliff.

'Maytone'

At the corner of Stevens Street, on the Esplanade, at Queenscliff stands 'Maytone', an 1880s residence, which has a long and intimate association with Fort Queenscliff, first as a residence for the Fort's commandants, later as the officers' mess, and as married quarters for various officers. It has strong townscape qualities, located close to the foreshore at Queenscliff.

Maytone was built in 1882-83 for barrister, Victorian parliamentarian, solicitor-general and Crown prosecutor, Mr Travers Adamson. In 1889, he leased it to the commander of the Victorian permanent artillery, Major Charles Edward Ernest Umphelby. In 1891, the Victorian government bought the property from Adamson to provide an official residence for Umphelby. From about 1900 to 1910, Maytone was the home of the Fort Queenscliff commandant and during this period, ownership passed to the Commonwealth at Federation, and has been used for a variety of purposes.

In 1910, the house became the Fort's officers' mess. Apart from two periods totalling about five years, Maytone functioned as a mess until 1945 after which it was divided into two flats, for visiting officers. For most of the post-war years, it provided two residences for the families of officers on the staff of the Army's staff college including overseas exchange officers.

Maytone is a two-storeyed, stuccoed house of Italianate style with a two level verandah trimmed by an asymmetrically placed, faceted bay. The hipped roofline to the bay is unusually high. Timber balustrading, panelled chimney shafts, moulded architraves and bracketed sills provide relatively sparse ornament. The house relates strongly to the adjoining house at No. 2 The Esplanade, the two buildings forming a pair. Perhaps this is not surprising as the adjoining house was built in 1888 for Mr Henry Wrixon, also a former Solicitor-General of Victoria.

Maytone is in good condition but the verandah has been altered and partly enclosed. An external stair has been added. An unsympathetic fence replaced the original picket fence and the interior was altered for the subdivision into two flats. Although affectionately remembered by many of the Army's senior officers and well known to the hundreds of officer students at the staff college, it proved to be unsuitable as a duplex residence. Consideration was given to restoring the house for use by the Commandant of the Army's Command and Staff College. However, after considerable discussion with the Army, the Defence Housing Authority sold Maytone in 1992. The new owners have carefully maintained the house which is operated as a boarding house for holiday makers.



The Army's Commandant continues to be housed in 'Staff College House' at 60 King Street, Queenscliff, which has recently been renovated.

'Maytone', built for a Solicitor-General, became the residence of the Commandant of the artillery garrison at Fort Queenscliff. Well known to students at the Army's Staff College in post-War years, it now operates as a seaside guest-house.



'The Portsea Cottages'

Point Nepean

Portsea is located in Port Phillip Bay on Point Nepean which is an area of considerable natural, aboriginal and historic significance. The natural environment of the Point provides a collection of relatively undisturbed coastal resources with significant geological features of sand dunes, potholes and steep, rugged and undercut cliffs. Portsea also has a long military heritage evident in the coastal artillery gun emplacements and Fort Franklin which served, with Fort Queenscliff and other batteries, to guard the entrance to the Bay. This heritage is also seen in the buildings and residences, 'The Cottages', presently occupied by the School of Army Health.

One of the guns emplaced on Point Nepean is credited with firing the first shots world wide from the British Empire in both World War I and World War II. In the first instance, a shot stopped the German merchantman *Pfalz* leaving port on the outbreak of war; in the second, an unidentified ship which turned out to be the Bass Strait freighter, *Wonoira*.

The Point was used for military training during World War I and Franklin Barracks served for a time as the School of Military Aeronautics, which gave elementary training to pilots before they advanced across the Bay to the Central Flying School at Point Cook. The militia continued the use of the area after World War I. During World War II, the area was garrisoned and used extensively for training.

In 1952, the quarantine station was made available to the Army to house the newly established Officer Cadet School, set up to produce officers for the Regular Army, particularly to staff the National Service training battalions. The temporary arrangement with the Commonwealth Department of Health, under which the buildings were made available when not needed for quarantine purposes, was to continue for many years until they were ultimately surrendered to Army's control.

The Officer Cadet School continued to operate at Portsea until its final graduation ceremony in December 1985, at which time the Royal Military College at Duntroon assumed responsibility for the production of all Regular Army officers. The Portsea site was then used to house the Army School of Health and named Norris Barracks. Present plans are for this school to be relocated in 1997 and the future for the area is not known.

The buildings in the Portsea heritage area are the earliest surviving structures of the first permanent quarantine station in Victoria, built over a period from 1857 to 1875. Heaton's Monument, built in the Victorian Egyptian architectural style, marks the site of the original cemetery for those who perished in the 'Ticonderoga' incident which led directly to the establishment of the quarantine station.

One structure of major historical significance is the 'Shepherd's Hut', now the Regimental Sergeant Major's Office, which is reputed to be one of the oldest buildings in Victoria. It also stands as evidence of the pastoral land use of

Point Nepean before the establishment of the quarantine Station in 1852. It has been suggested that the hut was built soon after 1845 for scientific research, but another view is that it was built as a small underground dairy topped with a rough shepherd's hut, later replaced with the present stone building when the quarantine station was built. It was certainly used as a dairy and residence until 1897 when it was converted into a dispensary and office. The cellar was rediscovered in 1941 and used as an air raid shelter.

The Permanent Married Quarters - 'The Cottages'

PMQ 966, originally the 'Superintendent's Cottage', c. 1916, is on the site of the former police quarters and was originally built to house Mr Kendall, the then station superintendent. Physically, the building is significant because of its simple utilitarian composition and dominant 'homestead' style, vernacular front verandah. Environmentally, it is significant as a supportive element to the general character of other timber cottages at the station and for its spectacular and relatively detached location near the crest of Police Point.

PMQ 1035, originally known as 'Pike's Cottage' and 'Matron's Cottage', c. 1856-8, is significant as the second oldest building at the station and the original stone cottage section is typical of early colonial cottages. It was one of three stone labourers' cottages constructed in the same years at the quarantine station. The intact original limestone, two roomed cottage with hipped roof still forms the centre of the house with the timber additions to the side and front giving a utilitarian charm which does not detract.

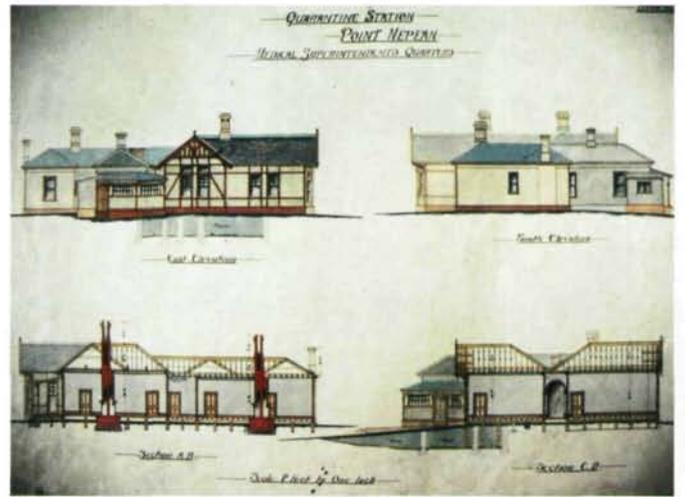
PMQs 1041 and 1037, originally 'Attendants Cottage Nos. 1 and 2', c. 1920, are a pair, highly representative of early Commonwealth domestic scaled timber architecture of the period. They have a gabled asymmetrical composition and strongly delineated utilitarian form and have a close stylistic relationship to adjacent quarters.

PMQ 1038, originally the 'Medical Superintendent's Cottage', c. 1899, and latterly 'The Commandant's Residence', is significant because it was originally built for the resident doctor and is an important example of a transitional style incorporating features of both the Victorian and Federation Periods. It features strongly varied roof forms and asymmetrical composition typical of the Queen Anne style. The panelled stucco work and timber detailing is unique for timber buildings at the station. It occupies a prominent site overlooking Port Phillip Bay in large private grounds and is the grandest historic residential building at the station.

PMQ 1040, originally the 'Caretaker's Cottage', c.1888, was first constructed as a 'Cottage for Boatman', presumably referring to one of the resident doctor's boat crew. It is of simple utilitarian form and is the second oldest remaining timber building at the station.

PMQs 1042 and 1043, originally 'Attendants Cottage Nos. 3 and 4', c. 1922, are also significant because they are representa-

tive of early Commonwealth timber cottage accommodation built during the period. The pair have dominant gabled roofs and strongly articulated simple utilitarian form. They are also significant as a supportive elements to the general character of other timber cottages at the station.



The former medical superintendent's cottage at Portsea.



RAAF Base, Point Cook

Point Cook is the birthplace of military aviation in Australia. The Central Flying School was established there on land purchased from the Chirnside family in 1912. Two intrepid aviators, Lieutenants H. A. Petre from Britain and Eric Anderson of Victoria were tasked with the formation of a military aviation corps. Point Cook was also home to the Australian Aero Club, the country's first, and after World War I was also used to train our foremost civil aviation pilots.

When the Royal Australian Air Force was formed in 1921 and took over the Central Flying School from the Army, Point Cook was already a well developed facility occupying a site of nearly 300 hectares. Ranged along the foreshore of Port Phillip Bay stood hangars, workshops, stores, offices and a seaplane jetty 177 metres long. Three quarters of a kilometre to the north-west, a single row of officers' houses built in 1915-16 faced towards the airfield, sitting behind picket fences and wide front verandahs as in a country town.

An ambitious masterplan drawn up in 1917-18 actually envisaged developing the residential part of the base into an attractive 'garden city' suburb, a planning approach not adopted on British air stations until the 1930s. Although suspended at the end of the war while the government decided its future aviation policy, the master plan remained the blueprint for subsequent development of the RAAF's 'No.1 Station'. By 1924, Point Cook was apparently a flourishing community with a village atmosphere.

Adding to the appearance of the area were trees which were first planted in 1921. Their original purpose was to provide some protection from the high winds that swept the flat, open country in which the station was sited, but these wind-breaks also helped soften the stark lines of houses and other buildings designed in what is described as 'Early Commonwealth Vernacular' style. The presence of families on the base itself played a large part in shaping the pattern of life on the station. A great deal of formality was observed, such as the practice of 'calling' carried on among officers throughout the RAAF, and indeed in the other two Services, which required new arrivals to observe the protocol of leaving calling cards at the home of their Commanding Officer and other senior unit officers.

The married quarters of significance at the RAAF base, Point Cook, are all grouped in the Cole Street Conservation Precinct, either in Dalzell Road or Cole Street. The names of these streets are closely associated with the story and development of the RAAF:

Air Vice Marshal Adrian Cole CBE, DFC, MC was born in Melbourne in 1896. During World War I, he distinguished himself as a pilot in the Middle East and in Europe. Cole was one of the original members of the RAAF when it was formed in 1921 and, for a time, was Station Commander at Point Cook.

Sergeant Abner Dalzell served in the Australian Flying Corps as a rigger in England and France during World War I. On his return to Australia in 1919, Dalzell joined the Aviation Instructional Staff at the Central Flying School at

Point Cook with the rank of corporal. In 1920, promoted to sergeant, Dalzell flew as the mechanic with Captain Stutt in a DH9A bi-plane in the search for a missing ship. The plane disappeared in cloud over in Bass Strait with the loss of both men. Dalzell and Stutt had both been popular members of the small community at Point Cook and their loss was keenly felt.

The married quarters in the Cole Street Conservation Precinct have been home to some of the most important figures in Australian aviation and in the RAAF, including most Chiefs of the Air Staff. A small selection of these residents follows:

His Excellency Lieutenant General Sir Edward Woodward was a pilot who served in the Army and the RAAF before becoming Governor of New South Wales.

Air Commodore Ray Brownell MC, MM was a distinguished World War I pilot, one of the original members of the RAAF, was later the Officer Commanding No. 1 Flying Training School at Point Cook and the first Commanding Officer of RAAF Pearce.

Air Commodore Arthur Henry (Harry) Cobby DSO (two bars), DFC, born in Melbourne, was a distinguished World War I pilot. Cobby engaged in a dog fight with Richtofen (the 'Red Baron') and was the top ace of the Australian Flying Corps with 29 air combat victories. Cobby was one of the original members of the RAAF and was a Commanding Officer of RAAF Richmond.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Scherger KBE, CB, CBE, DSO, AFC served as Chief of the Air Staff and Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff. He was Australia's first Air Chief Marshal.

Captain W. J. (Billy) Stutt was a distinguished pilot who trained many well-known aviators in Britain. On return to Australia, he trained pilots at the NSW State Flying School (later RAAF Richmond), then in 1919 he moved with his family to Point Cook. In 1920, Stutt was lost with Dalzell were lost on the flight over Bass Strait. His name is commemorated in Stutt Street at Point Cook.

Wing Commander Leslie G. Carter joined the staff at the Central Flying School at Point Cook in 1913 as a private. With Lieutenant-Colonel Williams (later Air Marshal Sir Richard Williams, Chief of the Air Staff), Carter, then a warrant officer, made the first non-stop flight between Sydney and Melbourne.

Group Captain Charles Eaton AFC flew courageous searches during the pioneering days of aviation to locate missing planes in the Northern Territory where a lake is named for him.

Air Vice Marshal Geoffrey Hartnell was a pilot who took part in a pioneering aerial circumnavigation exercise of Australia in 1938.

Air Marshal Sir Valston Hancock CB, CBE, DFC became Chief of the Air Staff. During the late 1940s, when he was

an air commodore and the first commandant of the RAAF College, he lived on the base and his two children attended Point Cook School.

Air Commodore Ernest Knox-Knight was an air cadet at Point Cook during the 1920s, when he was the subject of some humour at the base after he collided with a cow during a landing at Geelong. For some time after that incident, he was known as 'Ox-Knight'. He later lived on the base with his family.

Air Vice Marshal William Dowling (Bill) Bostock was a distinguished World War I pilot. During the late 1920s, his daughters attended the Point Cook school, having come from a private school in England which they attended while he was at Staff College at Andover.

Air Commodore F. W. F. (Frank) Lukis OBE was born in Western Australia and had been in the Light Horse before distinguishing himself as a pilot during World War I. He was the first Commanding Officer of RAAF Richmond.

The Historic Residences at Point Cook - 1, 2, 3 and 7 Cole Street and 20 Dalzell Road

For convenience, the houses at Point Cook have been divided into six groups according to their date of construction and architectural characteristics. These five houses were the first to be built at Point Cook. Their design was completed in 1914 in the offices of John Smith Murdoch, later the Chief Architect of the Commonwealth. Building commenced in 1914, and the first families took up residence in 1915. 1, 2 and 3 Cole Street were designed as married quarters for non-commissioned officers, but after completion, they became officers' married quarters. 7 Cole Street was designed for, and occupied by, the station warrant officer. 20 Dalzell Road was originally erected on the corner of the Laverton road and the Werribee road (now Williams Road and Stutt Street) facing east. This was then the entry to the base, and the house was built as the caretaker's cottage.

When the RAAF was formed in 1921, these houses became the first RAAF married quarters. Their design established the character of all married quarters built on the base up to the start of World War II, resulting in the visual harmony of the precinct.

The street which is now called Cole Street was the only internal street on the base at the time that these houses were built, and it did not then have a name. After the married quarters were built, it was known for many years as 'Harmony Row', a title that alluded to the fact that families on the base were expected to be decorous and discreet. While harmony did not always prevail, the homes were used regularly for social and intellectual gatherings, such as the music recitals held in the Stutt's' home.

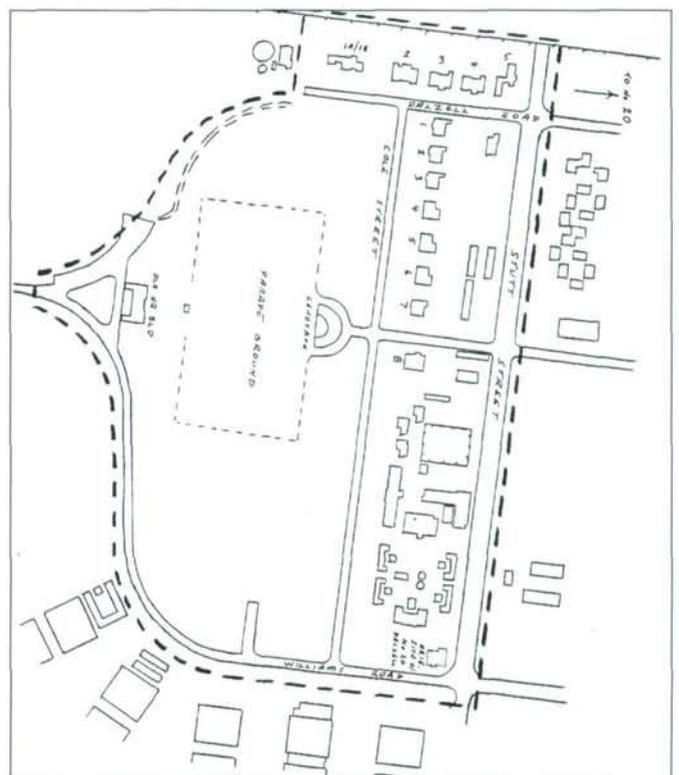
The design for these houses included architectural features that were new at the time and which are now considered to be characteristic of the Federation style. Examples are the inclusion of the front verandah under the main roof, the asymmet-

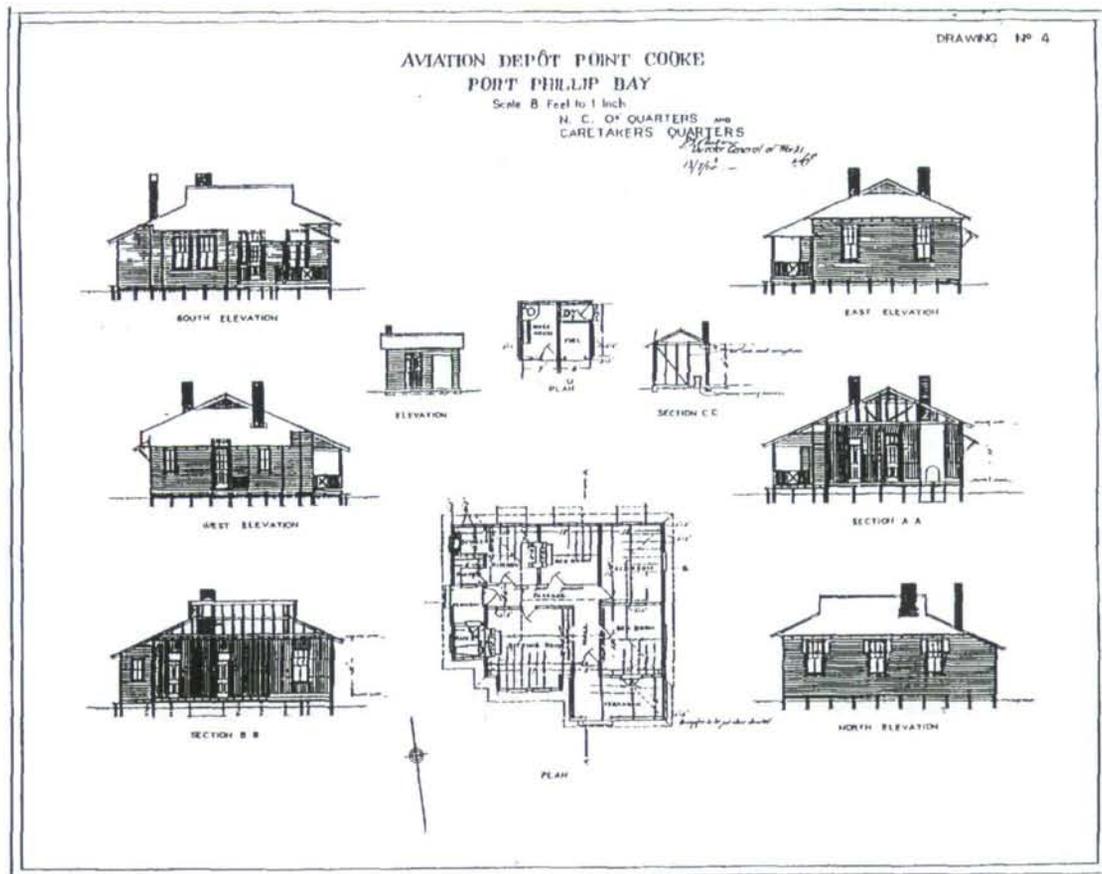
rical elevation, and the hipped roof with small upper gables. Some of the internal fittings were new to Australian architecture at this time, such as the picture rails and holland blinds. These houses were therefore quite modern in style when they were built.

The layout, with separate rooms opening off a central hall, and the materials used in the construction of these houses were typical of the time and the circumstances. The timber frames are clad in square-cut weatherboards, and the roofs are of galvanised corrugated iron. Timber floorboards are laid throughout, including the verandah. Double-hung sash windows are divided into six panes above and two below, and the rear (north) windows are shaded with awnings of fine profile corrugated iron. Windows are grouped in the living room to admit extra light, and french doors open from the main bedroom onto the verandah. The entry is asymmetrical, with one sidelight and a toplight to the doorway admitting light to the hall.

The verandah detailing is an important element in the design. The verandah roof is supported on thick posts that taper above the railing. The balustrading incorporates a cross in each panel. The roof is hipped with small top gables, each incorporating a louvered vent. The roof projects over the verandah, and where there are eaves, they are open with the ends of the rafters exposed. The roofs of all of the houses except 20 Dalzell Road have been extended with a small gabled section at the rear. 20 Dalzell Road is little changed apart from the small side verandah being closed in to provide an inside toilet. In the other houses in this group, however, the original scullery was used to create an indoor toilet. Therefore, these houses retain their side entrance, although the verandah has been closed in. The kitchen was then extended to the rear of the house, hence the need for the roof-line extension.

These houses project into the common space opposite the parade ground and cenotaph, and their picket fences run





Original Plan of 1, 2, 3, & 7 Cole Street & 20 Dalzell Road

between the fronts of the houses. The houses have recently been painted in colours that may have been used at the time of their construction. Each house has been treated with a different colour scheme, a concept that is new to this group of houses. The laundry outbuilding at the side of each house, with their gable roofs, and windows to match those in the houses adds to the picturesque view of the row of houses.

There were several plans to move the caretaker's cottage, including one proposal in 1922 to move it to the site of the present guard room near the front gate. The house was actually moved to its present site in 1936 to allow for the construction of two accommodation blocks facing Williams Road between Stutt and Cole Streets. However, as only one block was in fact built, the original site of the caretaker's cottage is still vacant. Consideration has been given to relocating the caretaker's cottage from 20 Dalzell Road to 6 Dalzell Road, to link it visually with the other historic married quarters or even to returning it to its original site. For the present, this house remains unoccupied awaiting a decision on its future.

'Harmony Row' - not always as decorous as it may seem !

One famous occasion is recorded during the early 1930s when a certain squadron leader came home early from a dining-in night at Laverton to find his wife in bed with another officer. The latter decamped through the bedroom window without opening it and made off naked and bleeding, in the direction of the officers' mess; the husband began searching for his service revolver; and the wife also left hastily and dashed along

the Row looking for refuge.

The house she chose happened to be the residence of Squadron Leader Fred Scherger who was in the front room studying for the entrance examination to the RAF Staff College. Confronted first with the scantily clad wife pleading for rescue, then the enraged husband brandishing a pistol and declaring his intention to shoot her, Scherger did the only thing possible in the circumstances. Reaching for a poker, he laid the man out on the floor with a single blow. While the husband was taken, still unconscious, to a guardroom cell to come to his senses, arrangements were made to move the wife off the station as quickly as possible. The other officer involved was permitted to quietly resign his commission forthwith!

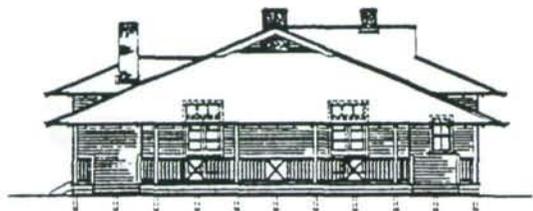
8 Cole Street

Also designed under Murdoch, this house was commenced in 1915 and completed in 1916. It was designed as a married officer's residence and, certainly from 1919, was the home of the base commander. From 1927, when a new house was built specifically for the base commander, this house was occupied by the commanding officers of No. 1 Flying Training School until the late 1980s, when it fell into disrepair. Several other officers and their families occupied the home, before it was finally left vacant and derelict. It was refurbished in 1995 and is now occupied by the Warrant Officer Disciplinary of the base.

Similar proportions and materials to the houses described above were used when this house was constructed, so that

although the design is different, the house blends well with its neighbours. The complex hipped roof has small top gables incorporating louvered vents and extends over the verandahs on three sides and a small verandah at the rear. The ends of the rafters are exposed in the eaves. This house has eleven foot ceilings, one foot higher than the earlier houses, and this, combined with the fact that this house had two 'public' rooms, a drawing room and a dining room, indicates that it was intended to be a representational house.

The design is typical of the Federation style, and externally this house retains most of its original features. It has lost two chimneys and skylights have been added. The rear and eastern verandahs had been enclosed, but they have recently been reinstated. One pair of french doors has been removed from the southern wall of the former drawing room, and a double-hung sash window has been added to the southern wall of the former dining room. Internally, the changes to this house have been extensive; and in the most recent works, the former kitchen, servery, pantry, scullery and maid's bedroom have all been opened into one large living area with a kitchen at the northern end. The house has recently been painted in a scheme that is appropriate for its style.



2 Dalzell Road

This house had been planned as early as 1921 as the new base commander's residence. It was built in 1927 by Neville and Company of Elsternwick and was occupied by the successive officers in charge of the base until 1938, when a new base commander's house was built at 1 Dalzell Road. Since 1938, this house has been occupied by high ranking officers involved in RAAF training.

Situated at the western end of Cole Street and looking out over the earlier married quarters, this house was constructed using the same materials as the earlier houses but on a larger scale. Spread under a wide hipped roof with two projecting hipped bays at the front, the house includes large public rooms that are connected by double doors, a progression towards more modern 'open plan' designs. Corrugated galvanised iron is used for the roof and weatherboards for the walls; but the weatherboards on this house have a rounded profile, indicating their more recent origin than the earlier houses. The eaves are open, with exposed rafter ends.

This is the first of the houses to have a symmetrical elevation and a totally hipped roof, and it is the first to have a purpose-built garage as part of the original design. The verandah does not have a railing, and the columns are plain square section and are in pairs. The large windows are not original, and two chimneys have been removed but the house remains sub-

stantially as it was designed. Internal features such as doors, fireplaces, light fittings and service areas have been modernised, and the cyclone wire fence and gates were removed in recent years.

The shed at the back of the yard is an aircraft packing crate. Such crates were often used as married quarter garden sheds in the 1930s, as most of the RAAF's new aircraft were delivered to Point Cook before World War II. The crate in 2 Dalzell Road is the last crate remaining.

4, 5 and 6 Cole Street

These houses were also designed in Murdoch's office, and the same materials and proportions as the surrounding houses were used in their construction. Until 1923, the site on which these three houses stand was occupied by the Mechanics' Mess, which was built in 1915. In 1923, the Mess was moved to the end of Harrison Street, and has only recently been demolished. In 1928, these three houses were built by A. L. Weiland of Camberwell as married officers' quarters. In recent times, however, they have been occupied by personnel holding various ranks.

The materials used match the earlier houses, and to the casual observer, the houses along Cole Street appear to be much the same. The roofs are of corrugated iron; the walls are weatherboard (although, like 2 Dalzell, the weatherboards are rounded); and the rafters are exposed under most of the eaves. The fronts of the houses project into the communal space to the same extent as the surrounding houses, and the verandahs and fences link the seven houses visually.

The hipped roofs of 4, 5 and 6 Cole Street do not have the small louvered gables of the earlier houses; the double-hung sash windows have no extra divisions; and the verandah posts and balusters are plain, without the cross and the taper of the earlier houses. The elevation is symmetrical, and an extra hipped section of roof extends over the verandah, which includes double entry doors without side or top lights. These are the first houses in the precinct to be designed with an internal laundry. Some modifications have been carried out on these houses, but they remain essentially as designed, except for No. 6, which has undergone internal changes.

3 and 4 Dalzell Road.

An early plan proposed that three houses be built on the sites of 3, 4 and 5 Dalzell Road, but only two houses, designed in 1936, were initially built. They were built by A. E. and G. W. Anderson of Coburg and completed in 1937. Designed as squadron leaders' residences, they were both until recently always occupied by senior officers. After 1 Dalzell Road (see below) was divided into two flats, 3 Dalzell Road was the base commander's house until the late 1980s, when it was occupied by two successive commanding officers of No. 1 Flying Training School. 4 Dalzell Road was for many years (possibly from its completion) home to the commanding officer of Base Squadron.

These two houses were constructed using the same materials as the earlier houses with features that link them with the rest of the precinct. The galvanised corrugated iron hipped

roof has a projecting bay at the front, and the designer of these houses returned to the asymmetrical elevation of the earliest houses built in the precinct. These are the first houses in the precinct with picture windows, a new feature at the time. These large windows are placed between pairs of double-hung sashes that match those in the other houses. Boxed-in eaves and the concrete verandah floor are also new features in these two houses. The verandah posts are in pairs, like those of 2 Dalzell, but have solid infill. The separate laundry and garage building was part of the original design. Both houses still have their original fences, gates and garden paths, and 3 Dalzell is the only heritage home on the base with its original kitchen.

These houses retain many features of their time of construction which are now virtually unknown, such as the maid's bedroom and bathroom, combined pantry and scullery, separate building for laundry and fuel-store, screened sleep-out, tradesman's entrance for delivery of ice, etc, built-in meat safe, picture rails, a tradesman's hatch for delivery of milk, and a maid's buzzer.



1a and 1b and 5 Dalzell Road

1a and 1b Dalzell Road, a large house, was built in 1937 as the new base commander's house, but it was only used as such for a short time, after which it was occupied by more senior officers. Later, it was divided into two flats (upper and lower) and has since been occupied by personnel holding various ranks. The builder was K. L. Garrett, who also built the new officers' mess on Williams Road and the sentry boxes at the front gate.

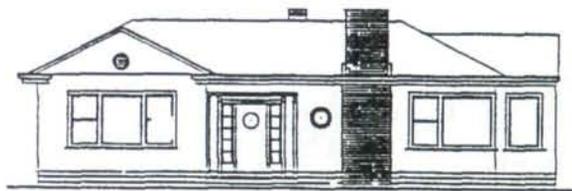
While most of the building materials used in this house are the same as those used in the earlier houses (including weatherboard cladding and double-hung sash windows with divisions), the style and scale are different. The house is the largest on the base and has very generous entertaining and living areas. A maid's bedroom and bathroom are included, and the large kitchen was designed for preparing and serving formal meals.

This house was loosely based on the English revival architecture which was popular at the time, and the design includes typical features such as narrow eaves, multiple window divisions, shutters on the windows (upper storey), projecting windows (lower storey), applied decoration (on the entry and lower windows), and rendered and painted chimneys. This was the first house on the base to have a tiled roof and to include a garage under the roof-line. The back verandah is shown on the original drawings as having a cross in the balustrades that matches the verandahs of the earliest houses in the precinct. The verandah has since been rebuilt without this decorative feature.

The yard was bordered on three sides by a parallel row of trees, some of which were removed to clear a site for the con-

struction of the house. A tennis court was already in the back yard, having been built for the use of the residents of No. 2, but has since been removed. An extra garage has been added beside the original, and the shutters have been removed from the upper windows.

5 Dalzell Road was the last to be built in the precinct, and it is the last house to be built on the base before World War II. It was built by Philip & Son of Brighton East in 1939-40, using the same materials as 1 Dalzell Road. No. 5 is architecturally related to all the previously built married quarters in the precinct, particularly No. 1, but has a layout and style that is unique in the precinct and was innovative for its day. It is an excellent, intact example of its type. The unusual layout of this house is due to the designer's aim to take advantage of the corner site. The house is spread across the corner, and its open shape makes a good northern entry to the precinct.



Constructed of weatherboards with a tile roof, this house has a wooden floor and a concrete entry porch. The front door is flanked by divided side lights, and the public rooms each have a picture window between double hung sashes, as in Nos. 3 and 4. This house also has a maid's bedroom and bathroom, and an attached garage. Like No. 1, this house has a gable roof, and the three gables are decorated with round louvered vents that match the round 'porthole' windows in the front door and the lounge room.

This is the only house in the precinct with 9'6" ceilings (all the others, except 8 Cole Street, have 10' ceilings). One chimney was lost when the kitchen was renovated, otherwise the house is intact. The original galvanised pipe and cyclone wire fence still curves around the corner. This fence once ran from No. 1 to No. 5 Dalzell Road, but was removed from Nos. 1 and 2 in the early 1980s.

The houses in the Cole Street Conservation precinct form a unique chronological record of the development of their architectural style. The houses were built using quality materials and a high standard of workmanship, and all are remarkably intact. The houses, their placement, and the trees all contribute to the visual harmony of the precinct, and all of these factors contribute to its historical significance.

These married quarters are much sought after by Defence personnel in the Melbourne area. The houses are appreciated and cared for by their tenants, who are sympathetic to the nature of these historic buildings and proud of their homes. In the past, valuable period features and fittings have been lost from these houses and unsympathetic alterations made. However, the intention to prevent the deterioration of the fabric of these buildings is evidenced by the exterior painting and the extensive works carried out on some of the buildings.

'Wrigley House', RAAF Williams, Laverton

The Officer Commanding's House at Laverton was built in 1937 at the same time as the Officers' Mess. The married quarter was located close to the Mess on the historic 'Aviation Road' which joins the Point Cook and Laverton bases. (The segment of Aviation Road on the Laverton Base was renamed Sir Richard Williams Avenue in 1977 as a tribute to the 'Father of the RAAF'.)

The first station commander to occupy the quarter was Group Captain Henry Wrigley, later Air Vice Marshal H.N. Wrigley CBE, DFC, AFC, now acknowledged as the RAAF's foremost early exponent of air power theory and one of its greatest airmen. The young Henry Wrigley won his Distinguished Flying Cross with the Army Flying Corps in France in 1917 and, in 1919, was the first to make the transcontinental flight from Melbourne to Port Darwin. During World War II, Wrigley was the senior RAAF officer in Britain. Many other occupants of the quarter have risen to high rank, including one Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal J.W. Newham AC.

The married quarter has an impressive facade and is set in attractive and spacious landscaped grounds. The house design shows picturesque influences, with a gabled terra-cotta tiled roof. There is a projecting wing with a gabled roof extending to the front facade, punctuated by a timber framed bay window. From its construction until 1988 when modern gas heating was installed, the house was known by Laverton officers as the 'Ice Palace' as its heating was woefully inadequate for Melbourne winters. In Wrigley's day, domestic chores were carried out by a live-in batman and a small bed-

room and bathroom in the rear wing of the building were provided as servant's quarters.

The house is approached along a circular driveway which sweeps around a formal rose garden. Group Captain Wrigley had a small lake constructed at the side on the course of the Laverton Creek which abuts the golf links. The lake has a large population of ducks and other water fowl and is flanked by willows. The lake includes an island with a classic wooden foot bridge leading through weeping willows to a large barbecue entertaining area. Until 1986, when a new house for the Air Officer Commanding Support Command was constructed behind the OC's quarter, the backyard of the married quarter stretched fully across two building sites. One OC, Group Captain John Gazley, constructed his own full size cricket pitch in the backyard!

From the outset, although constructed to modern scales and standards the AOC's house was always seen as being somewhat less grand than the OC's quarter, and had even been dubbed by wags as the 'OC's granny flat'. This situation was rectified in 1996 when coincidence of postings enabled the holders of the two appointments to exchange quarters. The imposing house at 13 Sir Richard Williams Avenue then became the residence of the Air Officer Commanding Logistics Command, Air Vice Marshal 'Mac' Weller, who named 'Wrigley House' in honour of its distinguished former occupant.

'Wrigley House', formerly the residence of the Officer Commanding the RAAF Base at Laverton, is now home to the senior RAAF officer in Victoria and others of the avian species!



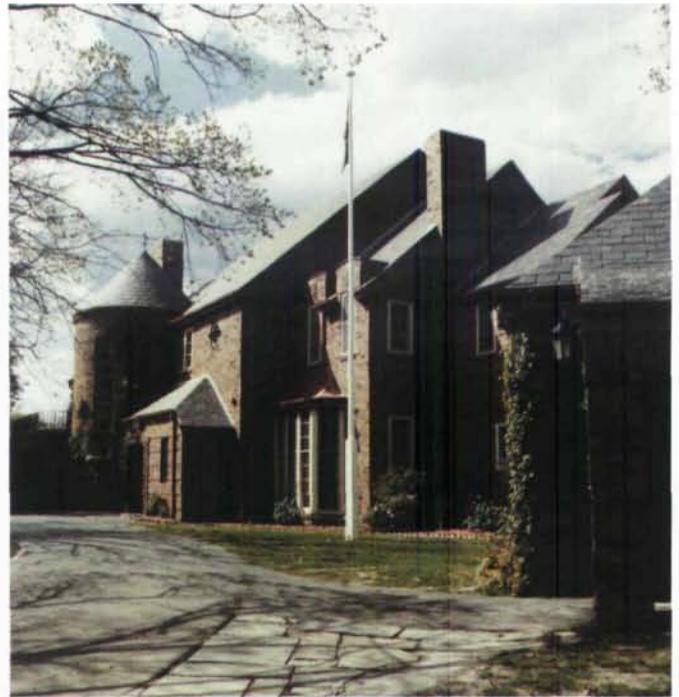
'Meares House', Watsonia

'Meares House' is a two-storey brick residence in the style of an English country manor. It was completed in 1936 for Dr Ainslie Meares as his first marital home on the heights of a 247 acre farm property near Heidelberg. Meares purchased the land from the Wragge family which had held it for nearly one hundred years. He was attracted by the magnificent sweeping view, a panorama embracing the Plenty Ranges, the Healesville and Warburton mountains, and the Dandenongs, as well as the big trees, yellow box along the top of the hills and red gums on the lower parts.

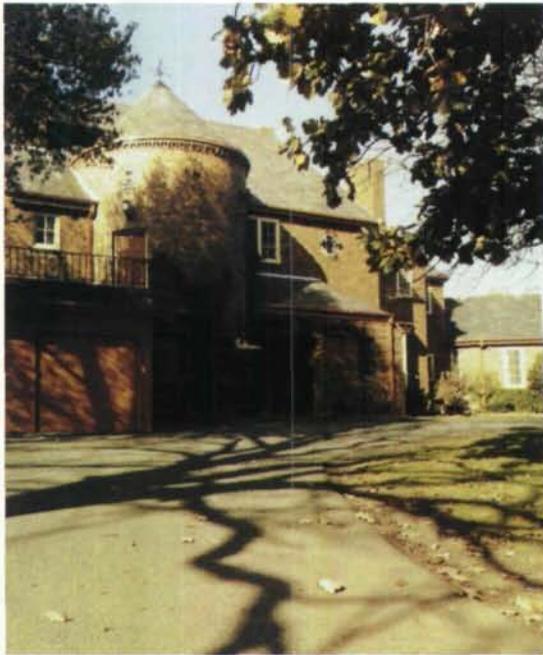
Many years later Meares wrote that, 'the old home in which I had been brought up was of unusual design with a central hall going up to the full height of the two storeys. We often try to relive our childhood fancies in later life, and I drew a plan for a house on this principle. I gave these ideas to the architect Mr. Les Forsyth, and he designed the details and supervised the building'.

A contemporary newspaper report describes the house:

The circular wooden staircase lies in a rounded turret and leads to the balcony, which surrounds the central hall ... all the main rooms open from this spacious hall, which is panelled with Queensland maple ... opening from the left hand side of the hall with folding doors is the long, light sitting-room at the end of which a tall bay window is carried from



'Meares House' was built in the style of an English country manor to fulfil a childhood dream by its first owner, Dr Ainslie Meares. Today it houses the headquarters of the Defence School of Music and resounds to the martial music of apprentice military musicians.



ceiling to floor ...directly opposite is the dining-room. One of the most attractive rooms in the house is the study, which is octagonal and is panelled with Queensland maple to match the hall. This delightful room has windows on three sides and a door opening to the garden from a fourth ...a breakfast room corresponding in shape and size opens from the opposite corner of the hall, and leads to the kitchen and servants' quarters which are in a separate self-contained wing.

With the threat of war, the government set up the Watsonia Army camp on land adjacent to the property on its northern side. When World War II finally came, the Meares home was taken over by the Army and was used as a hospital. By then, Meares was practising as a doctor and found himself in the Army. His daughter Mrs Garda Langley records that on one occasion he was billeted in the Watsonia Camp while others were living in his home! Dr Meares served in New Guinea and the Northern Territory and did much work to help mentally disturbed soldiers. This led him to an eminent career in psychiatry until his death in 1986.

The Meares returned to their home after the War but in 1951 it was again taken over by the Army to extend the Watsonia Camp site. In the 1970s, for a short-lived period, it was again used as a residence for the Army's Victorian Military District commander, but in 1984 it became the headquarters for a newly constructed complex built to house the Defence Force School of Music. The gracious 'Meares House' was to later greatly influence the Defence Housing Authority in its work on the adjoining estate.

Maintaining our Heritage - 'Streeton Views'

In 1991, some 50 hectares of Commonwealth land at the Watsonia Army Camp, by then named Simpson Barracks, was declared surplus to Commonwealth requirements and was purchased by the Defence Housing Authority. This was adjacent to 'Meares House', between Lower Plenty and Yallambie Roads, and included part of the original Meares property. The Authority entered into joint venture with Pioneer Property Group to develop and sell some 500 lots on the property, to be known as 'Streeton Views'. The Authority agreed to take half of the lots developed and build houses on them for Defence personnel and their families.

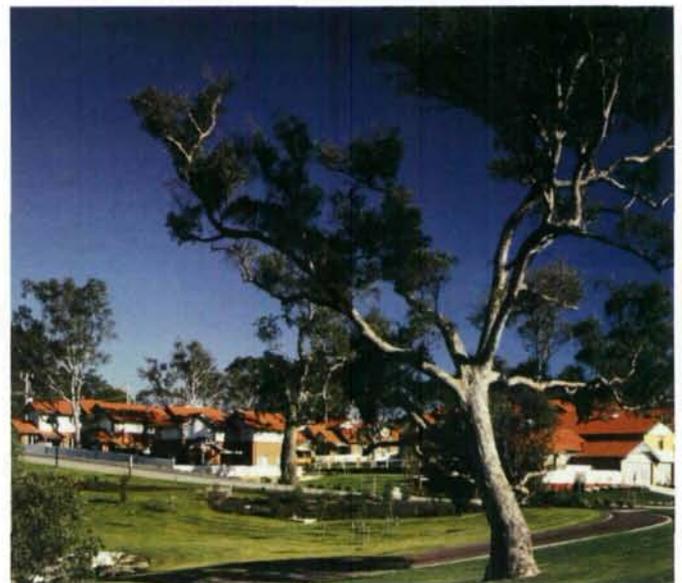
The joint venture, chaired by retired Major General Peter Phillips, set out to establish a quality estate which would maintain the Heidelberg character both in architectural design and in its gardens and landscaping. The joint venture partners were very much influenced by Meares House which seemed to capture the essence of the Heidelberg built form which they wished to see on the new estate. The partners also wished to capture in the natural environment the colour and tranquillity of the works of the Heidelberg school of painters, notably Sir Arthur Streeton, whose paintings of the area are much loved and who, coincidentally, had been a member of the Army medical corps in England in World War I before his appointment as an official Australian war artist on the Western Front.

The Authority's Regional Manager, Mr John Wilson, is especially proud of the Authority's development of an 18 two-

storey town house enclave within the estate at Red Gum Way, overlooking the ornamental lakes. These houses, grouped around a gaslit, grassy common, capture some of the style and heritage of Meares House. This development was to win the 1994 Housing Industry Association Award for best medium density development.

The efforts of the Joint Venture partners have proved to be an outstanding success. The Hassel Planning Group's town planner, Ms Meredith Withers, working with Pioneer Property Group's Project Manager, Mr Mike Purcell, have produced an attractive layout which won for the estate the Urban Design Institute of Australia 1996 Award for the Best Estate over 200 lots nationwide. This followed its 1994 award by the Victorian Division of the Royal Australian Planning Institute's prize for outstanding planning theory and practice.

The natural heritage has been preserved in the protection of native trees, including a large stand of Red Gums and another of *Eucalyptus x studleyensis* which is unique to the area. The ornamental lakes fashioned from the retarding basins, the restoration of Streamline Creek, and the extensive tree plantings, local bluestone revetments, and landscaping directed by Graeme Bentley and Associates have won high praise and attracted international visitors.



The 18 town house development set around a grassy common and the gas-lit Red Gum Way is a prize winning feature of Streeton Views and has a commanding view over the ornamental lakes. It houses soldiers from the nearby Simpson Barracks and their families.



Streeton Views estate preserves the best features of the Heidelberg heritage, best exemplified in neighbouring Meares House. Local bluestone has been incorporated into the retaining walls and entry statements.