

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R095

Name of Place: House at 36 Furneaux Street Griffith

Other/Former Names:

Address/Location: 36 Furneaux Street GRIFFITH 2603

Block 9 Section 3 of Griffith

Listing Status:		Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:		Level of Significance:	
Citation Revision No:		Category:	Residential
Citation Revision Date:	1995	Style:	Combination of styles of the Federation Period (1890-1915)

Date of Design:	1927	Designer:	LH Rudd & DE Limburg
Construction Period:	1928	Client/Owner/Lessee:	
Date of Additions:		Builder:	

Statement of Significance

The residence at 36 Furneaux Street is an example of significant architecture and an educational resource. The house is a late example of a combination of three Federation Styles (Queen Anne, Arts and Crafts and Bungalow) and the Shingle Style of John Horbury Hunt. The house design incorporates features which are peculiar to the styles including:

- Federation Queen Anne Style with its Marseilles pattern terracotta roof tiles, prominent gable facing the street and tall chimney with terracotta pots;

- Federation Arts and Crafts Style with its conspicuous roof, roughcast walling, tall chimney and informal window arrangement;

- Federation Bungalow Style with its prominent gable verge and wall hung shingles, and

- John Horbury Hunt's Shingle Style with its tall chimneys, shingle clad walls, steeply pitched roofs, awning like roof and informal window arrangement.

The architecture of this building may contribute to the education of designers in their understanding of both Federation and Shingle architectural styles which occurred mainly before 1915, given that authentic examples are rare in Canberra.

Description

A four bedroom house, including a surgery, was designed by L H Rudd and D E Limburg for Dr Mollison in 1927 and construction was completed in January 1928¹. The building is a late example of the combination of styles of the Federation Period (1890-1915)² including:

- Federation Queen Anne Style with its Marseilles pattern terracotta roof tiles, prominent gable facing the street and tall chimney with terracotta pots;

- Federation Arts and Crafts Style with its conspicuous roof, roughcast walling, tall chimney and informal window arrangement;
- Federation Bungalow Style with its prominent gable verge and wall hung shingles;
- John Horbury Hunt's Shingle Style with its tall chimneys, shingle clad walls, steeply pitched roofs, awning like roof and informal window arrangement ³.

It is a rectangular two storey building having a small segmented arched recessed entry located slightly off-set between the near symmetrical gabled front. The upper floor is located within the roof space. The front living room extends out slightly towards the north under a gable and the rear kitchen extends out to the south under an awning like roof. The original separate surgery entry is to the east and has a round arched recessed entry up some steps.

The entry to the residence opens into a spacious lobby with doors leading off to the rest of the house and the stair to the upper level to the left with a store room below the landing.

The living room is to the right. The dining room is to the south of the living room and is entered off the living room via wide double doors. The rooms are elegant and retain much of their original character with their moulded plaster ceilings and rendered segmented arched fireplaces. The original double hung windows have been taken down to floor level in the living room and the dining room window has been altered to doors of the same width which open out onto a western terrace.

The main bedroom, to the left of the entry and staircase, retains much of its original character with the large fireplace dominant. It is now used as a secondary bedroom.

The hall extends past the main bedroom to what was the original surgery and entry to the waiting room on the east. The surgery was to the right with the waiting room to the left. These rooms are now a bedroom and study respectively. The north east corner of the waiting room was indented to provide symmetrical window openings to the front gable facade.

The bathroom, kitchen and maid's room along the rear of the house have been altered.

The return staircase with its panelled and moulded balustrade leads to a small landing at the upper level where there are three bedrooms and a bathroom. The bedroom to the west consists of two sections, the first room entered being a dressing room. The original plan had partially enclosed 'sleep out' rooms at the east and west ends located under half-hipped roofs. These appear to have been built as enclosed bedrooms. The north west front gable also had a bedroom in the roof space in the approved plans, however this was deleted and there is only a wardrobe in this space. The bathroom is over the lower bathroom and has been renovated.

The dominant feature of this level is the ceiling following the angle of the roof pitch at the sides of most rooms which emphasises their containment within the roof space. The ceilings are flat in the centre.

The house is set centrally on the block and is oriented to the north, diagonally across the block addressing the corner of Furneaux Street and Murray Crescent. It is constructed of roughcast rendered cavity brickwork to the lower level and shingle clad stud framing to the upper level. The floors and roof are timber frame construction.

The base shingle course has a slight turn out, reminiscent of Hunt's houses ⁴, above a decorative timber moulding which separates the shingles from the roughcast render. The steeply pitched roof is clad with Marseilles pattern terracotta tiles.

The major architectural elements that are peculiar to the three Federation Styles (1890-1915) and the Shingle Style of John Horbury Hunt and that are displayed by this building relate to the external forms. They are all set out above.

The other architectural elements of these styles displayed by the building that relate to the external form are ⁵:

- Federation Queen Anne Style; ensemble of varied roof shapes, roughcast walling and wall hung shingles.

- Federation Arts and Crafts Style; prominent gable verge and contrasting colours and textures.
- Federation Bungalow Style; first floor room in roof space, awning like roof and roughcast walling.

The major architectural elements listed above show this building to be a late example of a combination of the Federation Queen Anne Style, the Federation Arts and Crafts Style, the Federation Bungalow Style, all 1890-1915, and the Shingle Style of John Horbury Hunt.

There are architectural elements that are important to the integrity of the building which are not necessarily common features of the Federation Period: the original plaster ceilings, the fireplaces, the arched entries, the half hipped roofs, and the decorative timber moulding that separates the shingles from the roughcast render.

The house is relatively unaltered except at the rear. In 1942 the laundry was opened to the inside and renovated to include a bathroom. In 1988 a building firm renovated the kitchen, rear entry and maid's room and enclosed the rear porch. The kitchen is now located where the rear porch and maid's room were and the original kitchen is now a sitting room with a solid fuel heater. A skylight has been added to the roof at the rear. The internal fittings and finishes of the 1988 renovation are not in the original style of the residence. The lounge room windows have been extended to the floor, the dining room and rear sitting room windows have been altered to double doors and the new kitchen has a single door where the maid's room window was.

Condition and Integrity

Background/History

The residence was one of the first large private residences built privately in Manuka.

The design of the residence and surgery in the Federation Styles (1890-1915) is a nostalgic revivalist architecture. It appears to be an attempt to combine the well established timeless appearance of these styles with the Shingle Style of John Horbury Hunt.

In addition to the above recognised Federation Period Styles that have influenced the architecture of the residence it is important to recognise the influence of John Horbury Hunt's Shingle Style of architecture during the 1880's which 'began the tradition of modernism in Australia'⁶. Examples of his work can be seen in houses such as the E. Du Faur House Warrawee (1888), the A J Horden House Waitara (1891), the P W Wright residence 'Trevenna' Armidale (1889) and the A Osborne 'Hamilton House' Moss Vale (1891).

The residence was built at the same time as St Gabriel's Anglican Grammar School, Deakin, now the Church of England Girls' Grammar School, designed by Rudd and Limburg, the architects for this house. The school is in the Inter-War Old English Style with the upper level constructed in imitation half timbering, alluding to late medieval Tudor architecture. Rudd and Limburg are recognised key practitioners of the Inter-War Old English Style (1915-1940)⁷.

It would appear that the residence at 36 Furneaux Street Griffith may be a building that represents a transition stage for the architects where their designs progressed from the Federation Styles to the Inter-War Old English Style, a style dominated by the aesthetic of imitation half-timbering to gable and upper storey walls.

In Canberra there are a number of buildings in the Old English Style, however authentic Federation Style or Shingle Style buildings are rare. Two examples of the Federation Arts and Crafts Style are the Old Canberra House (now the ANU Staff House) Acton 1911, by J Murdoch and the Olim's Canberra Hotel (now the Hotel Ainslie) Braddon 1927, by Clamp and Finch⁸. The former is much altered and the latter was constructed at the same time as the house at 36 Furneaux Street.

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time

(ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

The house exhibits the particular architectural elements peculiar to the Federation Queen Anne Style with its Marseilles pattern terracotta roof tiles, prominent gable facing the street and tall chimney with terracotta pots; the Federation Arts and Crafts Style with its conspicuous roof, roughcast walling, tall chimney and informal window arrangement; the Federation Bungalow Style with its prominent gable verge and wall hung shingles and John Horbury Hunt's Shingle Style with its tall chimneys, shingle clad walls, steeply pitched roofs, awning like roof and informal window arrangement.

The residence is significant because it combines many of the specific elements of the three Federation styles. In addition to these three styles the influence of John Horbury Hunt's Shingle Style during the 1880's is displayed by this building. Hunt was a significant architect in Australia at the end of the 19th century.

Other examples of these styles of architecture in Canberra are rare.

The original plaster ceilings, the fireplaces, the arched entries, the half hipped roofs and the decorative timber moulding that separates the shingles from the roughcast render are design features that are of additional significance.

The residence is valued by the RAIAs as a good example of the combination of three Federation Styles and the Shingle Style.

The building was designed by Rudd and Limburg who are recognised key practitioners of the Inter-War Old English Style (1915-1940). This building can be seen to represent a transitional period for the architects from the earlier Federation Styles to the Inter-War Old English Style.

(iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger or being lost, or is of exceptional interest

(iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations

(v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type

(vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

(xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site

References

- 1 Department of the Environment, Land and Planning (DELP). Building File for Block 9 Section 3 Griffith.

- 2 Richard Apperly Robert Irving Peter Reynolds. Identifying Australian Architecture Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present. Angus and Robertson 1989.
 - 3 Donald Leslie Johnson. Australian Architecture 1901-51 Sources of Modernism. Sydney University Press 1980.
 - 4 Ibid.
 - 5 Richard Apperly Robert Irving Peter Reynolds opcit.
 - 6 Donald Leslie Johnson opcit.
 - 7 Richard Apperly Robert Irving Peter Reynolds opcit.
 - 8 Rodney Garnett and Danielle Hyndes. The Heritage of the Australian Capital Territory. 1992.
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Other Information Sources