

Young House

Revised 16.04.2010

Address 536 Churchill Avenue, Lower Sandy Bay
Practice James Henry Esmond Dorney
Designed 1958

History & description Situated on a ridge overlooking the Derwent River, the Young House was constructed in a new suburban subdivision from which the dramatic topography of the setting could be appreciated. The building sits above the street on a stone plinth which supports the living platform and presents to the street interlocking, convex roofs. The walls are predominantly glass, lightly framed in tubular steel with integral diagonal bracing in plane with the glazing.

The simple open plan extends to include an enclosed entry garden and exposed sundeck with carport under.

Statement of significance Esmond Dorney is well recognised as a unique design innovator who developed a consistent body of architectural work strongly characterised by geometric structural ordering and curved roof forms.

Educated in Melbourne, his only architectural training was in the office of Walter Burley Griffin. Following a successful Melbourne practice and then war service, he relocated to Hobart. There he undertook numerous residential and small commercial projects and for an extensive period, work for the Catholic Church. This was followed by consultancies for the design of hospitals in Victoria where he developed polygonal plan forms.

The Young House is considered to be his most refined residential work and is popularly known as the 'Butterfly House'. It exhibits a minimal use of structure as glazing frames supporting a complex curved roof are engineered to fine and logical proportions. Simple planning that integrates complimentary garden spaces, takes advantage of the elevated site and distant views. The resulting synergy of building and landscape is remarkable for its time.

"Dorney's ... buildings in Tasmania were highly experimental in structure and plan, daring and insectile in form and profile." ... "these post war buildings set Dorney apart in Tasmania and in Australia as a committed and highly inventive architectural individualist."

James Henry Esmond Dorney A Tribute., Philip Goad. written address to the RAIA TAS Chapter, RAIA Awards 2008.

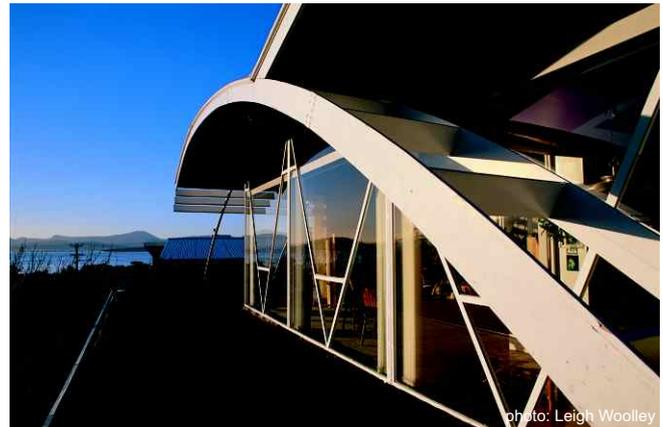
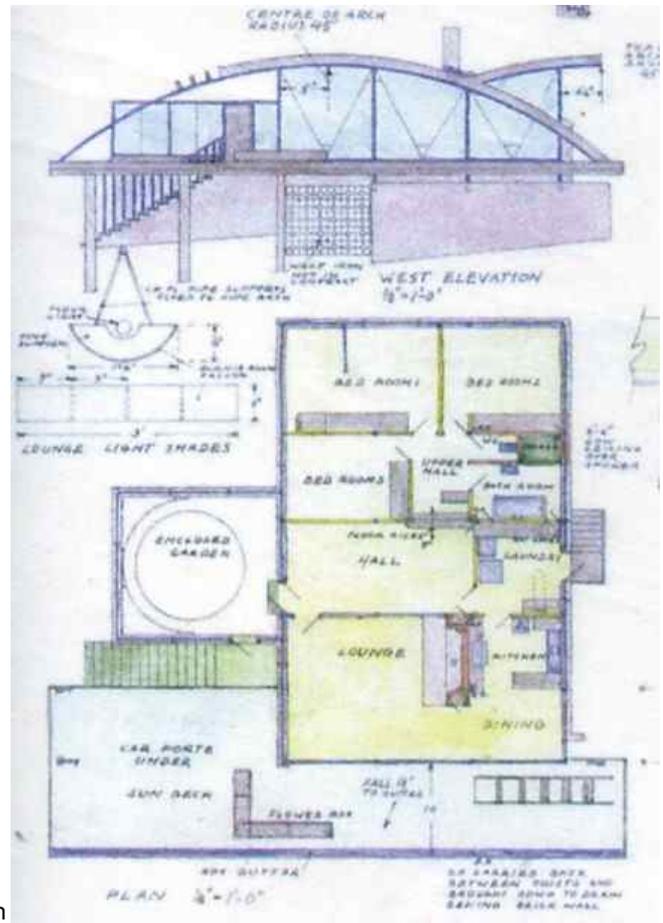


photo: Leigh Woolley

Living room and deck connect with river views beyond



Original drawings



photo: Leigh Woolley

The 'butterfly' house within its suburban context

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| Criteria applicable | N1 | Significant heritage value in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design. |
| | N2 | Significant heritage value in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. |
| | N3 | Significant heritage value in establishing a high degree of creative achievement. |
| | N5 | Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of importance in our history. |
| | N6 | Significant heritage value in demonstrating a high degree of technical achievement of a particular period. |