

McCraith House

Address 1 Atunga Terrace (cr Caldwell Rd), Dromana 3936

Practice Chancellor & Patrick

Designed 1955 Completed 1955

History & Description The McCraith house, constructed in 1955, for Ellen and Gerald McCraith was designed in the office of Mornington Peninsula architects Chancellor and Patrick. The defining structural feature is the triangulated tubular steel framing system. The building is constructed using two triangulated truss frames fixed at four points to the massive concrete footings on their inverted apex with 'C' section steel beams and steel cross bracing tying the main frame together. The two main steel floor beams break the truss at half height and these in turn support the deep timber floor joists which are cantilevered at either end. The butterfly roof is formed with timber joists in a similar configuration. The first floor extends beyond the small rectangular ground level, allowing for the parking of cars under the overhanging wings. Contained within the splayed walls of the ground floor are a bedroom and laundry area. The first floor contains a second bedroom, living area and amenities. The dominance of the structural form forces the use of triangular awning windows at ground level with horizontal timber infill panelling between and timber framed triangular sliding doors to the balcony. The original horizontal board siding to the first floor angled walls has been replaced with sheet roof decking.

The McCraith house was used as an example of the 'structural functional' idiom in the architectural journals of the time alongside the works of Robin Boyd, Roy Grounds, Harry Seidler and Peter and Dione McIntyre (extracts from VHR#1906)

Statement of Significance The McCraith House is significant as an example of structurally inspired modernism in the 1950's. The use of a prefabricated structural steel frame of this scale was unusual in domestic construction of the period.

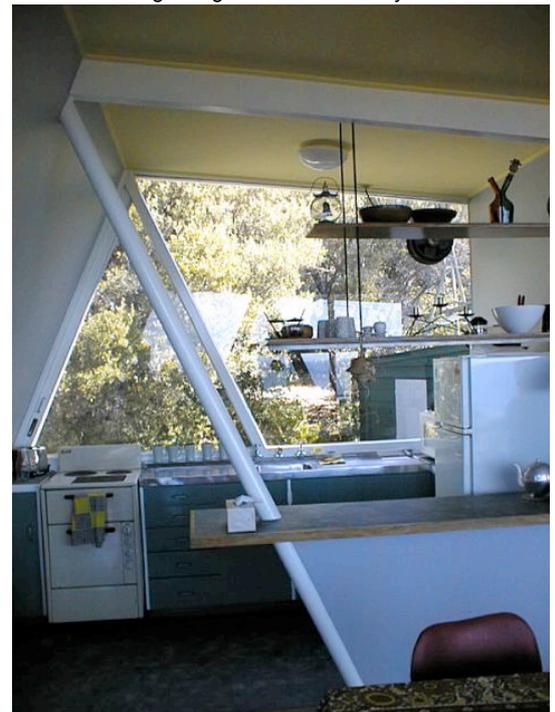
The design of the McCraith house displays a creative architectural response in a period when conventional building materials were in limited supply post WW2 and became highly influential at the time provided new directions for beachhouse architecture in the 1950s.

It is one of the most significant buildings designed by the prolific and widely published firm of the bayside architects Chancellor & Patrick.

Criteria Applicable 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 significant importance in our history



Sliding triangular door. Photo by Peter Johnson



Open plan kitchen. Photo by Peter Johnson



Rear View. Photo by Peter Johnson



Front view showing triangular structural frame. Photo by Peter Johnson