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## Bel-Air



Bel-Air, 113 Yarrbat Avenue  
Balwyn



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### Location

113 Yarrbat Avenue BALWYN, BOROONDARA CITY

### Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

### Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO879

### Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 7, 2021

What is Significant?

'Bel-Air', 113 Yarrbat Avenue, Balwyn, built in 1938 by C F Wheatland, is significant.

Significant elements of the place include the garage and the low clinker brick fence with mild steel gate along the Yarrbat Avenue frontage. The later extension above the garage, built in 1965, is of contributory significance.

The later rear extension built in 1988 and the section of fence along the Narrak Road frontage are not significant.

How is it significant?

'Bel-Air', 113 Yarrbat Avenue, Balwyn, is of local architectural (representative) significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

'Bel-Air' at 113 Yarrbat Avenue, Balwyn is a fine representative and externally intact example of a two-storey Moderne dwelling. It is a particularly well designed and detailed example of the style that is carefully sited to take advantage of its prominent corner position. Constructed in cream brick with a roof of terracotta tiles, the house has subtle Moderne stylistic characteristics, especially emphasising horizontal and curved elements within its elevations. Of particular note is the dramatic semicircular entrance-cum-stairwell that introduces a strong contrasting vertical element to the otherwise streamlined horizontal facade. Whilst the integrity of the building is slightly diminished by the 1965 extension above the garage this has been designed in a style that matched the original design intent and is considered as contributory to the overall place. (Criterion D)

Heritage Study/Consultant Balwyn Heritage Study Peer Review Stage 2, Context, 2020;

Construction dates 1938,

Hermes Number 207067

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

'Bel-Air' at 113 Yarrbat Avenue is a substantial two-storied brick dwelling constructed in 1938. Built in the Moderne style, the house is positioned on an elevated allotment, gently sloping from east to west, on the north-east corner of Yarrbat Avenue and Narrak Road. Constructed in cream brick, the terracotta tiled hipped roof has exaggerated eave overhangs lined with narrow timber lining boards laid lengthwise. The house demonstrates subtle detailing to all four elevations that typifies the Moderne idiom. Of note, in this respect, is the projection of every third brick course to create a shadow line and the use of corner windows. These elements emphasise the horizontality of the elevations.

'Bel-Air's' southern elevation, facing Yarrbat Avenue, provides both pedestrian and vehicle access. It is dominated by a double storied semi-circular entrance porch-cum-stairwell, which divides this elevation in two. The principal section to the front/west contains the main double storey section of the dwelling under a hipped roof, whilst to the east/rear is the garage with (later) rooms above are under a skillion roof concealed by a parapet. Vertical concrete framing elements either side of the curved fluted glass stairwell window continue upward through upper wall and parapet, creating fins. (This motif was copied for the first-floor extension above the garage as well.) The entrance tower and these fins provide a contrast to the restrained horizontality of the rest of the facade. A decorative mild steel gate to the entrance porch introduces a subtle 'jazz' element to the elevation and provides a decorative overlay to the otherwise streamlined treatment. This blending of sleek horizontal lines and jazz ornamentation characterises the Moderne style in Australia (Raworth 1991:20), particularly the earlier examples. Horizontal steel framed casement windows are set into shallow reveals in the brickwork. The use of horizontal glazing bars further emphasises the width and shallow depth of the windows. The steel-framed curved glass windows positioned on the southwest corner of the house are another popular though costly device in Moderne architecture emphasising horizontal lines as they wrap around the corner. A simple stepped topped chimney, breaking through the roof line, completes this elevation.

The western elevation, facing Narrak Road, is also fully expressed as a principal facade and continues the horizontal expression of the design. An asymmetrical layout consists of a wide protruding bay with large curved glass windows at each level wrapping around to the southern elevation and rectilinear steel framed corner windows to the north. A cantilevered balcony with slim metal rails and curved end is positioned adjacent to this bay. The northern elevation features a steel framed corner window in the upper western corner with a distinctive curved wall below. The original mild steel nameplate spelling out "Bel-Air" in a modern sans serif font with a double-curved hyphen, is fixed centrally to the elevation on the background of two horizontal fixings.

The property is bound on its western and southern sides by a simple low stepped clinker brick wall with a protruding stringer course below a header course. Brick piers either side of a mild steel gate on Yarrbat Avenue mark the residence's main pedestrian entry.

'Bel-Air' is of relatively high integrity with very few changes visible to original or early elements of the place. The house retains its original building form, roof forms and fenestration. Whilst the integrity of the building is slightly diminished by the 1965 extension above the garage this has been designed in a style that matched the original design and is considered as contributory to the overall place. Later additions made to the rear of the property in 1988 are not visible from the street and therefore have little impact on the integrity of the building.

The integrity of the house is greatly enhanced by the high level of intactness of these main elements, which includes details such as the terracotta roof tiles, cream brick walls with raised banding, chimneys, exaggerated eaves overhang with narrow timber slatted soffits, distinctive semi-circular entry porch-cum-stairwell with fluted glass window, rendered vertical and horizontal elements and mild-steel gate, steel framed windows including curved glass to some corner windows, cantilevered balcony with slim metal rails and mild-steel name plate.

The integrity of the place is enhanced by the low clinker brick fence with mild steel gate which appears original or early along the Yarrbat Avenue frontage but of a later date along Narrak Road.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*