
GLENUNGA FLATS



Glenunga



Glenunga showing Canary
Island Palm



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Location

2 HORSBURGH GROVE,, ARMADALE VIC 3143 - Property No 2182

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO441

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Glenunga, 2 Horsburgh Grove, Armadale designed by Romberg and Shaw and completed in 1940, is significant. The significant attributes are the International Style form, materials and detailing of the flats contrasted with Heimatstil influences, and the garden setting with mature Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*).

Later alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Glenunga is of local historic and architectural significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Historically, it is significant as an illustration of the influence of European Modernism upon flat design in Melbourne and in particular the trend toward more compact flat layouts. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, as an outstanding pioneering Modernist small flat development by architects Frederick Romberg and Mary Turner Shaw. While the number of flat projects designed by the firm was small in number they were very influential. Glenunga is distinguished by the simple functional plan and building form (arranged around a garden court) with angled window bays providing interest. The contrast between International Style and Heimatstil materials and elements such as the rough hewn stone and smooth planes of render, and the porthole windows are hallmarks of Romberg's designs. (Criteria F & H)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - Residential Flats in Stonnington - Heritage Citations Project, Context P/L, 2013; Stonnington - City of Malvern Heritage Study, Nigel Lewis and Richard Aitken P/L, 1992;
Construction dates	1941,
Architect/Designer	Romburg & Shaw,
Other Names	Flats,
Hermes Number	31147
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Glenunga flats are located on an allotment no larger than those of the surrounding single residences. The linear planning has achieved a compact building accommodating four flats of four rooms each. The functional plan separates the entry side with driveway and external stairs, from the garden. The frontage is dominated by a mature Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix Canariensis*) and a front boundary wall shrouded in ivy. A row of conifers form the boundary to the garden side.

Glenunga flats exhibit many of the design features of the International Style for which Frederick Romberg and Mary Turner Shaw were noted. The flat roof form and modelling of form to reflect the function and hierarchy of the spaces contained within is a hallmark of the style, as is the stepped planning to achieve privacy for the occupants.

At Glenunga Flats Romberg and Shaw's interpretation of the International Style was softened with the addition of stone and the use of brickwork, which although painted white still retains evidence of the bricks beneath. This

design technique added texture and colour to their buildings that International Style architects often eschewed in favour of a plain white machine-made aesthetic.

Other architectural devices that are a feature of their work include the roof line being expressed with eaves and exposed rafters rather than concealed behind parapet walls, and the use of 'porthole' windows or decorative features (usually as part of a stair) as shown on the front elevation of Glenunga.

The stone wall forming the 'Heimatstil' (European chalet style) chimneys extends above the roof line terminating in a characteristic floating baffle over the shaft, and this feature is repeated for the rear flats. The stonework is presumably expressed internally in the form of fireplaces to each of the flats.

The layout and planning of Glenunga makes the most of its site through maintaining a garden overlooked by an array of projecting windows, before the space is enclosed by another double height volume with glazed window walls and an upstairs balcony. The projecting windows supported by triangular concrete sills are an arresting and unusual part of the design, allowing additional light and views into the garden. The entry side of the property has an external concrete stair and deck diving external access to the upstairs flats.

Alterations to Glenunga include the removal of one of the three feature stone chimneys, enclosure of three of the four balconies, replacement of roof and spouting materials, replacement of downstairs front windows and other windows, and replacement of the original front fence and driveway.

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/>