

# THE PEBBLES



THE PEBBLES SOHE 2008



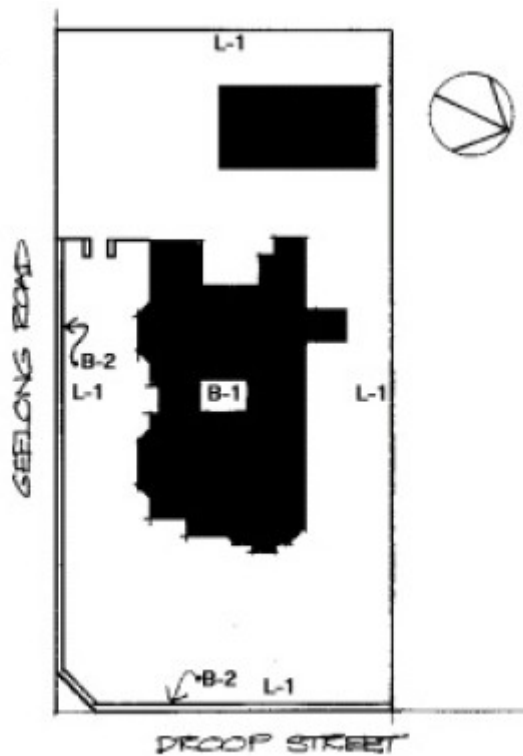
1 the pebbles droop street footscray front view 1997



THE PEBBLES October 2016



THE PEBBLES October 2016



the pebbles plan

---

## Location

57A DROOP STREET FOOTSCRAY, MARIBYRNONG CITY

## Municipality

MARIBYRNONG CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1308

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO35

## VHR Registration

October 16, 1997

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 2, 2000

The Pebbles was designed by architects Schreiber and Jorgenson and commissioned by Francis George Whitehill, who occupied the dwelling from the time of construction in 1920 until about 1930. Francis George Whitehill was one of three Whitehills who moved from being dairymen at Whitehill's dairy to subdivision and house-building. The Pebbles is a Californian bungalow of red brick with rough cast and cedar shingles to the gable ends, and large crushed quartz "pebbles" as decorative elements in the verandah piers, chimney, and infill panels to the fence. There is also extensive use of timber in the pergola gateway, pergola, and verandah brackets.

The Pebbles is of architectural importance to the State of Victoria.

The Pebbles is of importance for its design excellence, being one of Victoria's best and most distinctive suburban Californian bungalows. It presents bold elevations to two street frontages and displays a wide variety of typical bungalow elements including low pitched gabled roof and distinctive roof forms with widely overhanging eaves, squat piers decorated with pebbles supporting the verandah roofs, and use of shingling and roughcast. The extensive use of timber and unusual internal and external joinery details highlight the Japanese influence on bungalow design. Of particular note are the fireplaces, and timber work in the entry hall, dining room and sitting room. The Pebbles is complete with its original fence and pergola gateway.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

#### EXEMPTIONS FROM PERMITS:

(Classes of works or activities which may be undertaken without a permit under Part 4 of the Heritage Act 1995)

As shown on Diagram No 607284B

Works to the fernery area and the exterior of the kitchen extensions.

All interior non structural works in B-1 such as painting decorating, wiring plumbing, new bathroom and kitchen fit out other than in the entry hall, front sitting room dining room, and the fireplace in the main bedroom. Interior Alterations must not have affect on the exterior of the building B-1 other than in the kitchen extension area.

Demolition of non registered buildings and structures is permit exempt

Construction dates	1920,
Architect/Designer	Schreiber & Jorgensen,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	4921
Property Number	

---

## History

### Contextual History:History of Place:

The bungalow, from the Hindi *bangla*, meaning house, changed many times from its original bamboo and straw Indian peasant housing form. The European adaption of the bungalow from the 16th century largely developed into two types; the hipped, double-roofed bungalow, and the less common gabled example. The hipped form progressed through the 19th century as the Colonial Bungalow, and in Australia this simple pyramid hipped roof dwelling with verandah became a typical early Australian housing form. Inspired by the Indian summerhouse, these sun-conscious buildings with their lack of ornament and pleasing rusticity, became favoured as rural retreats. The earliest surviving European house in Australia, the Macarthur's Elizabeth Farm at Parramatta, and the prefabricated country house, Woodlands, at Tullamarine, are notable bungalow examples.

### The American Influence

The gabled form went on to develop with strong Japanese influences in the United States, and became the Pasadena or Californian bungalow. The Japanese pavilions at the Philadelphia Centennial and Chicago Columbian Exhibitions of 1876 and 1883 may have influenced this development. In any case by the 1890s houses with decidedly Japanese forms, having roofs with a floating horizontal quality, were being designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and others of the Prairie and Craftsman schools. On the American west coast, the highly influential architectural partnership, Greene & Greene began to develop their own characteristic Japanese bungalow theme after 1903. Just as the east coast Craftsman bungalows were based on the east coast farmhouse vernacular, so too the Californian version of the style was seen as a derivation from west coast vernaculars such as the local Spanish Colonial style. Several other architects in the Pasadena area were also designing in a similar Japanese style with admixtures of Swiss and Arts and Crafts as well as other local vernacular elements. The Greene brothers emphasised simplicity and beauty in the use of roof timbers, broad overhanging eaves, and simple open internal planning, a feature that was eminently suited to the increasingly informal American domestic lifestyle. Their designs were a bold attempt to combine traditional forms and construction types, including heavy stucco or adobe Mission vernacular of the west coast with Japanese elements; broad low pitched open eaved roofs, as well as strongly featured rafters, purlins, and eaves brackets. Uprturned ridgework, as well as light timber pergolas and trellis work could also be included. Such elements were common to many of the designs published in a number of American and international journals. Contemporary to the Greene brothers, Arthur S. Heinemann's designs were more typical of the Californian idiom, but also had a strong Arts & Crafts orientation, with rubble piers, cylindrical columns and plastered plinths. His houses were more generally single storey and smaller than those of the Greenes, but still had low-pitched intersecting and nested gables with exposed rafters.

### The Californian Bungalow in Australia

In the early years of this century the rising flood of publications illustrating examples of Californian bungalows made this building the most discussed subject in articles on domestic architecture in Australia. The small free-standing house was becoming the favoured type of housing in Australia, and it adapted easily to the bungalow form. In particular the basic asymmetrical Federation house could be convincingly accommodated to the style. Californian houses featured in the Australian magazines *Building* and *Real Property Annual* from as early as 1907, and were influential in the designs of local firm Oakden & Ballantyne from at least 1909. American bungalow plans became much sought after, and local 'bookstalls displayed a wide selection of plan collections and homebuilder's guides from the U.S.A., each with numerous illustrations'.

In response to the high profile of these American publications a number of Australian bungalow books were also produced by architects, building companies, and real estate developers. Architect, R. Prevost published *Australian Bungalow and Cottage Home Designs* (1912), Marcus Barlow his *Bungalow Homes* (1919), and Les Perrott's *Concrete Homes* (1916) also echoed the increasingly popular bungalow designs. Thus the Californian bungalow with its projecting gabled entry, low pitched gable roofs, heavy tapering piers, broad eaves, strongly expressed rafters and purlins to eaves, as well as stained timber detailing, was to have a strong influence on Australian bungalow design. Local examples differed from their Californian counterparts by their tendency to be designed with a single dominant roof and subsidiary projecting gables or hips which were directly derivative of the Federation house. The use of an asymmetrically placed front gable over a projecting room was identified by Robin Boyd as one of the characteristics of the Australian vernacular type. Many bungalows of California did not have this roof hierarchy, but featured roofs treated as broad planes of similar height and massing.

### Japanese Bungalows

The distinctive Japanese-inspired bungalows of California, with characteristic low-pitched roofs and strongly expressed eaves timbers, were equally well publicised in Melbourne from about 1908 onward, but local designers

were reluctant to exchange the higher pitched roofs of their own bungalow forms for the new oriental look. Consequently the hovering, oriental character of the Japanese style bungalows designed by American firms such as Greene & Greene, were comparatively rare in Melbourne. The preference for tiled roofs which needed a steeper pitch to guard against rain penetration, helped to sway designers away from the Japanese style. As well as terra cotta, another local characteristic was the use of red brick. The new materials and roof line resulted in a local hybrid style which was developed in many variations throughout Melbourne's suburbs.

Oriental influences identified in Melbourne bungalows are largely confined to the treatment of timber elements, such as the roof beams and purlins which project beyond the line of the eaves, interlocking wood detailing, and ornate timber pergolas, trellises and gateways. The Bert Hurry house at 14 Alfred Road, Burwood, designed by Marcus Barlow in 1916, was one of the earliest, notable examples of the style. The American influence is evident in the stained weatherboard base and roughcast weatherboard walls. Charles Greenhill, a builder active in the Kew area built numerous bungalows with Japanese features. His own house at 330 Cotham Road Kew (demolished) was designed with projecting rafters with rounded, disc-like terminations. There were horizontal timbers with rounded ends above the brick piers of the porches lending an oriental appearance to the structure. Other bungalows with this kind of timber detailing were built in the suburbs of South Yarra, Malvern, Brighton, Toorak and Footscray.

## HISTORY:

### The Pebbles, Footscray

The Pebbles, is a red brick and roughcast stucco bungalow with Japanese style timber detailing and terra cotta roof. Designed by architects Schreiber and Jorgenson in about 1920, it was owned for many years by the Whitehill family, owners of the locally known Whitehill's Dairy.

Three Whitehills, Ernest, Francis A, and Francis G, resided and worked at their dairy at nearby 61 Gordon Street, on the west side, south of Ballarat Road. In 1919, Francis George Whitehill purchased land at 57a Droop Street from Sarah Knowles of Williamstown, and built The Pebbles. He moved into the five-room bungalow from Gordon Street the following year. Ratebook descriptions indicate that George's occupation changed from "dairyman" in 1920-21 to "gentleman" in 1922-23. He died in 1924, and Mrs C L Whitehill continued to reside at the house until the current owners purchased the property in 1988.

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1308 in the category described as a Heritage Place:

The Pebbles, 57A Droop Street, Footscray, Maribyrnong Council

### EXTENT

1. All of the buildings marked B-1 (main house), and B-2 (fence) on Diagram 607284A held by the Executive Director of the Heritage Council.
2. All of the land marked L-1 on Diagram 607284A being all the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1803, Folio 459.

Dated 20 March 1997

RAY TONKIN  
Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* G 41 16 October 1997 2869]

*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/>*