‘Glenmore’

29 Winter Street, Malvern

Place type: Residential Buildings (private), Villa

Significance level: Local

(Locality history

Malvern was originally named Gardiner after the early settler John Gardiner, but was renamed Malvern after the property ‘Malvern Hills Estate’, which had in turn been named for its perceived likeness to the Malvern Hills in Hertfordshire, England. This was pleasant, rolling country on the southern bank of the Gardiners Creek, or Kooyong Kout, which was its Aboriginal name. Many praised the picturesque character of the area in the early settlement period (Strahan 1989: 1-3). Journalist William Kelly wrote in 1858 of ‘the one-time undulating stretches of green bushland of Malvern’ (Art Portfolio Ltd 1911). Early settlers made use of a fresh water spring in High Street that inspired the naming of the Spring Gardens; in the 1880s this local water supply was encased in a rustic rockery and became an ornamental feature of the public gardens.

Like Prahran, Malvern was the name of a municipality as well as a suburb. The Shire of Malvern was established in 1876 from the earlier Gardiner Road District. In the 1870s the higher areas were taken up for gentlemen’s estates, while small farmers, market gardeners and orchardists occupied the lower land near the Creek.

The railway attracted new settlers to the area and land was subdivided at a great rate through the boom years of the 1880s and early 1890s. Large areas of open paddocks and market gardens were rapidly transformed into pleasantly sited homes and gardens. Malvern in the 1880s epitomised the ideal suburb, providing a pleasant refuge for the affluent middle class, away from the bustle and noise of the city.

From its foundation Malvern was regarded as solidly respectable. This was reflected by a consistency in good quality homes, ranging from Victorian to interwar styles. The famed
Gascoigne and Waverley estates, developed from 1885, were some of the most celebrated subdivisions in the area. Housing was mostly detached and it was one of a group of new suburbs with a higher rate of home ownership compared to the older inner areas of Melbourne (Davison 1978: 181). Malvern was comfortably and solidly middle class. While there were several large mansions dating from the 1870s and 1880s, the suburb generally lacked the excessive wealth and flamboyance of Toorak. The north-west corner of Malvern, however, was comparable with Toorak in terms of elevation and grand homes. Here, on the east side of Glenferrie Road, John Wagner of Cobb & Co. erected the mansion ‘Stonington’ (1890). A short distance away was another mansion, ‘Moorakyn’ (1889). In 1901 ‘Stonington’ became the official residence of the Governor of Victoria, after the newly appointed Governor-General took up residency in Melbourne’s existing Government House in the Domain. This gave Malvern an added cachet of importance, and its residents valued proximity to wealth and influence.

Malvern was almost entirely residential, with major shopping strips established on Malvern Road and Glenferrie Road. There was barely any industry, though in 1879 there was a ropeworks and a tile factory (Whitworth 1879: 305). There was also a brickworks and clay pits near the corner of Elizabeth Street and Henderson Avenue. The population of Malvern was largely conservative and had a high rate of church attendance (McCalman 1995: 7).

Malvern’s rapid rate of growth led to the Shire being replaced by the City of Malvern in 1911. The Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust had been established in Malvern the year before. Large estates continued to be subdivided in the early 1900s, and many streets in Malvern are lined with Edwardian-era houses.

Several private schools in Malvern operated from large Victorian mansions, including Malvern Grammar School and Sacre Cour, as well as many smaller short-lived schools. Later private schools, including the Catholic secondary schools De La Salle and Kildara, also adapted Victorian residences for their schools.

**Place history**

In the 1880s the Malvern district was experiencing rapid growth and suburban development, with many lured by the new railway connection. It was a sought-after area for the affluent middle-class, with many subdivisions offering allotments for villas and mansions. Winter Street was created as part of the Winter Estate, which was subdivided in 1885 (Subdivision Plan 1885).

The north side of Winter Street, between Glenferrie Road and Irving Street, was divided into six uniform-sized allotments, with one additional larger allotment on the corner of Irving and Winter streets. This was marked as lot 11 and would be the site of two residences: numbers 25 and 29 Winter Street (Figure 1). In 1890-1891 brothers W. & P. Brokensha, contractors and plasterers, were rated as owners of the land at lot 11 (RB as cited in Foster n.d.). By 1892 a brick house of 10 rooms had been erected on part of allotment 11, which was later numbered 29 Winter Street (RB as cited in Foster n.d.). The house was most likely built by the Brokensha brothers, who owned the allotment and who also erected several other brick villas on Winter Street.

A newspaper advertisement of 1889 is presumed to relate to this group of houses, including 29 Winter Street: ‘MALVERN, Winter-street, … Beautiful new brick Villas, ten rooms, every convenience, £1400. Brokensha Bros’ (Age 28 November 1889).
The house was occupied by gentleman John Barry and family in c1892-94, during which time it was known as ‘Glenmore’. A photo of the house from this era survives, although it has been printed in reverse (Figure 2).
The MMBW Detail Plan, dated 1902, shows a residence on a corner allotment with a corner pedestrian entrance and serpentine path. No entrance for wheeled traffic is shown (probably the entrance was off Irving Street close to the stables). The house has a return verandah and a front bay window. Inside there is a bathroom with plumbed bath but the lavatory remains outside. At the rear of the house there is stabling, an asphalt yard and a bin for manure.

From 1913, 29 Winter Street was leased to the notable local Presbyterian Minister, the Rev. D. MacCrae Stewart (1863-1933), who was incumbent at the Malvern Presbyterian Church (RB as cited in Foster n.d.). Rev. Macrae Stewart was a significant and highly respected Victorian church leader and enlisted as a military chaplain in the First World War, serving at Gallipoli and on the Western Front (*Argus* 15 March 1933 as cited in ‘Australian Chaplains of WW1’).

By 1920 gentleman Francis Callanan had purchased the property, which included the adjacent land. Later occupiers included Henry Couch; then Cecil Arnall. A Balaam and Feile purchased the property in 1960 (Foster n.d.).

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*Figure 3. MMBW Detail Plan no. 1743, dated 1902 (source: SLV) no. 29 is the villa on the corner of Winter and Irving Streets.*

*Figure 4. MMBW Detail Plan no. 1743, dated 1902 (source: SLV) showing villas constructed on the north side of Winter Street between Glenferrie Road and Irving Street by 1902.*
Sources

Age 28 November 1889.


Art Portfolio Ltd 1911, City of Malvern Illustrated.


Doyle. Helen 2015, Suburbs at War: The cities of Malvern and Prahran during the Great War. City of Stonnington, Malvern.

Foster, Di, Stonnington History Centre [n.d], research report on 29 Winter Street, Malvern. Research generally included rate books (RB), subdivision plans and other holdings of the Stonnington History Centre (SHC) MH 13828.


Lewis, Miles. Australian Architectural Index, record 6479.


MMBW Detail Plan no. 1743, 1902, State Library of Victoria (SLV).

Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd 1992, ‘City of Malvern Heritage Study’, prepared for the City of Malvern (SHC, MH 8222).

Photograph of 29 Winter Street, Malvern, 1991, MP 13051, SHC.

Figure 5. Nigel Lewis, photo of 29 Winter Street, Malvern, 1992 (source: MP 13051, SHC).
Photograph c1893, MP 423, SHC.


Sands & McDougall, Melbourne and Suburban Directories (S&McD).

Shire of Malvern, Rate Books (RB).

Statham, John 2008, ‘HO367 Montrose House Heritage Assessment’, City of Stonnington [‘The Italianate mode’ quoted and paraphrased at length].


Physical description

Figure 6. Detail of front projecting canted bay window (source: Context 2016).

The residence at 29 Winter Street, known as ‘Glenmore’, is a substantial single-storey Italianate villa that occupies a wide allotment on the north-west corner of the intersection of Winter and Irving streets in Malvern. The house addresses both street frontages and is set back behind a reproduction timber picket fence and a mid-sized garden with a number of mature trees. The property extends to the rear right-of-way that is accessed from Irving Street.

Constructed in c1892, the building is asymmetrically planned with a return verandah set between two projecting bays. The asymmetrical form became popular during the 1880s. In this respect, the house at 29 Winter Street (as well as its neighbour at no. 25) is a relatively typical, although large, suburban Italianate villa. The major bay fronts Winter Street and is extended by a secondary canted bay window. The hipped roof, which is clad in slate laid in a diamond pattern, is dominated by a number of large ornately rendered chimneys with heavy cornices and decorative wythes. The rendered walls have elaborate cast and run details with mouldings,
brackets, garlands and rosettes at eaves level and large fielded quoins to the external corners of walls. The acanthus leaf is a recurring motif in the cast eaves brackets and hooded keystones to the round arched double-hung sash windows of the canted bay window.

The return verandah has a shallow bullnose roof, clad in corrugated iron with a dentilated verandah beam above high quality cast-iron work. It is supported on fluted columns with Corinthian capitals that contain the fine integrated cast-iron patterns to the frieze and brackets. It also retains decorative tessellated tiles to the verandah floor. The windows beneath the verandah are full height. The glazed and panelled front door has an elaborate timber surround which retains finely etched decorative glazing to the sidelights and highlights.

Figure 7. East side elevation from Irving Street (source: Context 2016).

An aerial in 2016 shows that the footprint of the house is largely unchanged from its plan in the 1902 MMBW except for a modest rear extension that is visible in real estate photos taken in 2011. Other changes to the building appear to be modest, relating to the enlargement and construction of new openings. A gabled weatherboard outbuilding has been retained along the rear boundary of the property which relates to the original placement of an outbuilding on the site, but further investigation is required to determine if it is original. The western boundary of the property has been altered to allow for the construction of an interwar dwelling between ‘Glenmore’ and its Victorian neighbour, ‘Laguna’, at 25 Winter Street.
Comparative analysis

As discussed in the Stonnington Thematic Environmental History, section 8.2.2, the suburban house on a garden allotment was an aspiration of many middle-class Victorians:

Davison (1978:145) describes the Victorian cult of the home in the fresh air and tranquillity of the suburbs as a haven from the noise and dirt of the city - the ideal of rus in urbe (country in the city) which, through Victoria’s prosperity and the growth of the public transport system, became possible for many working people. For most suburbanites this home was a single-storey detached house surrounded by its own garden. On a visit to Australia in the 1880s, Twopeny (1883:37) noted that this was the almost universal preference of Australians. During the boom of the 1880s many people found their ideal piece of rus in urbe in the Malvern municipality. Here streets of Victorian villas rapidly began to replace market gardens, especially in the vicinity of the railway lines.

The detached house was the typical Victorian house form in the middle-ring suburbs, in areas where the new tram and train lines facilitated travel and allowed lower density development. In this spacious suburban environment, they could be set in large gardens with side setbacks allowing for a return verandah on one or two sides. They were also built in inner suburban areas for better-off residents, but were usually restricted in form with a front verandah only and side walls near the boundaries.

The architectural expression of these small to medium sized houses ranges from quite simple to those lushly embellished on par with much grander houses. In keeping with the dominant style of the Victorian era, most of small to medium detached houses in Stonnington are Italianate in style. The simplest ones have a symmetrical façade with the front door in the centre. Many have added visual interest created by a projecting bay to one side of the façade, and a cast-iron verandah to the other, creating the classic asymmetrical Italianate suburban form.

The Italianate style had its origins in the landscape paintings of Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorrain over a century earlier. These two French artists were enamoured with the landscapes and architecture of rural Italy, depicting it as a vision of Arcadia. Their efforts inspired a broader pursuit of ‘the Picturesque’ in architecture.

Through the first half of the nineteenth century, the Italianate spread widely in Britain fuelled by the works of architects such as John Nash and Charles Barry and through designs promoted
in pattern books such as Charles Parker's Villa Rustica (1832). In 1845, the style received Royal endorsement when Prince Albert, working with architect Thomas Cubitt, designed Osbourne on the Isle of Wight as a retreat for Queen Victoria and the Royal family. Osbourne with its plain stuccoed expression and tall balustraded tower would become the model for many large residences throughout the Empire including Government House in Melbourne.

The style, which emerged as the preferred expression for Melbourne's grandest mansions of the mid-century, was quickly adapted to suit more modest suburban villas and terraces. As Hubbard notes (in The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture, 2012:357):

*Flexibility and adaptability were the secrets to the success of the Italianate style. It could range from the simplest of buildings to the grandest. It was not a precise style and could accommodate different levels of architectural sophistication. It could be formally symmetrical or informally asymmetrical. While towers were standard, they might be reduced to just a porch. The style was easy to copy and could be used by speculative builders buying stock items for decoration. Most importantly, the Italianate style used the vocabulary of classical architecture freely but sparingly, generally with relatively plain expanses of wall and hipped roofs with bracketed eaves.*

The Italianate house is so common in the Melbourne area that this is the standard image people hold of the ‘Victorian house’. Condensed to its key features, they would be a hipped roof with an M-profile (i.e., having a central valley to the rear half, which allows a low ridgeline), bracketed eaves, chimneys with a cornice at the top (a run cement-render moulding), and a timber or iron-framed verandah with cast-iron ornament to all but the grandest houses. Common extras included a faceted (canted) bay used to create an asymmetric composition (or occasionally used symmetrically), and windows that had a round or segmental arched opening, some of which were embellished with run cement-render mouldings or delicate hood moulds.

There were three general types of cladding for Italianate houses. The most modest were clad in timber weatherboards or blocked boards emulating expensive ashlar. The two most common types were finished in cement render or face brick. Rendered houses could obtain a high level of run and cast ornament at an affordable price, leading to some highly embellished examples. All, even the most modest, had ruled render with incised lines to emulate the more expensive stone construction. Face brickwork was also common, usually dark brown Hawthorn bricks with cream brick dressings (bichrome) from the late 1860s, and later in the century with red brick accents as well (polychrome). Some architects and designer-builders created bold patterns with the coloured bricks. As good building stone was not common in Victoria, very few houses were built of stone. Early examples were of bluestone, such as the grand ‘Bishopscourt’ in East Melbourne.

The development of the former City of Prahran and the western part of the former City of Malvern coincides with the emergence of the Italianate forms of expression in Victoria. Consequently, the City of Stonnington retains a disproportionate number of Melbourne's better examples of the mode. Moving further east, nineteenth-century residential development began later, and hence there are fewer Italianate houses in the suburb of Malvern.

Examples of Italianate houses that are of individual significance in Stonnington’s Heritage Overlay (both in individual HOs and HO precincts) can be divided into a number of groups according to the number of dwellings (attached or detached), their size, ornament and level of architectural sophistication.

The most obvious comparison for the house at 29 Winter Street, Malvern are the other houses built by Brokensha Brothers, along Winter Street, and in particular no. 25, which shares a similar form. Unlike 29 Winter Street, no. 25 is finished in bichrome brickwork with distinctive patterning.

More generally, ‘Glenmore’ at 29 Winter Street, Malvern can be compared to other medium-sized Italianate villas that are Significant in the municipality, of which there are a relatively high number that adopt the typical asymmetrical Italianate plan form. Examples include more modest houses set on typically narrow suburban allotments, including: 34 Northcote Road, Armadale (in HO130), 59 Northcote Road, Armadale (in HO130), 103 Kooyong Road, Armadale (in HO130), 14 Donald Street, Prahran (in HO456), 22 Donald Street, Prahran (in
HO456), 5 Fawkner Street, South Yarra (in HO131), 71 Tivoli Road, South Yarra (in HO149), 48 Davis Avenue, South Yarra (in HO150), and 50 The Avenue, Windsor (in HO148).

‘Glenmore’ can be better compared to other larger examples built on more generous allotments which allowed for a returned verandah, often terminating at a second projecting bay to the side elevation (as at 29 Winter Street). Examples include: 5 Royal Crescent, Armadale (in HO130), 11 Avondale Road, Armadale (in HO123), 860 Malvern Road, Armadale (in HO130), 46 Northcote Road, Armadale (in HO130), 34 Grandview Grove, Prahran (in HO135), 5 Wynnstay Road, Prahran (in HO135), ‘Otira’ at 56 The Avenue, Windsor (in HO148), and 46 The Avenue, Windsor (in HO148).

In comparison to the examples listed above, ‘Glenmore’ is closest in massing and detail to the villas at 11 Avondale Road, Armadale and 5 Wynnstay Road, Prahran. These examples also adopt typical asymmetrical Italianate planning with a cast-iron return verandah set between projecting bays. As at ‘Glenmore’ the villas both occupy corner allotments and take full advantage of the return verandah and perpendicular projecting bays to address both street frontages. The villa at 5 Wynnstay Road is further distinguished by its raised siting, utilising grand front steps complete with decorative urns to the raised verandah which has elaborate cast-iron work with paired columns and a balustrade of alternating panels and balusters. The villas at 11 Avondale Road and 5 Wynnstay Road vary in their level of intactness with the most obvious change to 5 Wynnstay Road being the overpainted brickwork.

The villa at 11 Avondale Road and ‘Glenmore’ utilise a similar range of bold cast and run cement render details with slight differences relating to their particular window, eaves and chimney detailing. They are both highly intact as viewed and appreciated from both street frontages, retaining their corrugated iron verandahs with high quality cast-iron work that return to rectangular projecting bays from the front canted bay window. 11 Avondale Road has a modest extension constructed to the rear.

Figure 9. 5 Wynnstay Road, Prahran, individually significant in HO135 (source: Context 2016).
In conclusion, ‘Glenmore’ at 29 Winter Street, Malvern is a highly intact example of one of the municipality’s collection of substantial single-storey Italianate villas. It is distinguished by the highly elaborate cement render detailing which includes: the paired ornate eaves brackets set between rosettes and garlands; the raised vermiculated panels and moulded cornices with consoles and floral motifs to the imposing chimneys; the large fielded quoins to the exterior building corners, and the hooded keystones of cast acanthus leaves to the canted bay windows.

Thematic context

This place illustrates the following themes, as identified in the Stonnington Thematic Environmental History (Context Pty Ltd, rev. 2009):

8.2.1 'Country in the city' - Suburban development in Malvern before WWI
8.4.1 Houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion
10.2 Worshipping

‘Glenmore’ is of historical interest for its association with Rev. Donald Macrae Stewart, Minister of the Malvern Presbyterian Church and a notable Victorian church leader, serving as a military chaplain during the First World War.

Assessment against criteria

Assessment of this place was carried out in relation to the HERCON model criteria as set out in the VPP Practice Note ‘Applying the Heritage Overlay’ (2015).

Statement of significance

What is significant?

‘Glenmore’ at 29 Winter Street, Malvern is significant. It was built in c1892 for gentleman John Barry and was likely built by Brokensha Brothers (William and Phillip, contractors and plasterers) who were the owners of the lot in 1890-91 and who also erected other brick villas in Winter Street. It was later occupied by notable local Presbyterian Minister, the Rev. Donald Macrae Stewart (1863-1933).

It comprises a substantial single-storey Italianate villa constructed to an asymmetrical plan form with a cast-iron return verandah set between two perpendicular projecting bays. The house is significant as viewed and appreciate from both Winter and Irving streets, and is
significant to the extent of its nineteenth century external form and fabric. Modern additions and alterations are not significant.

**How is it significant?**

‘Glenmore’ at 29 Winter Street, Malvern is of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

**Why is it significant?**

Architecturally, ‘Glenmore’ at 29 Winter Street, Malvern is a fine and highly intact representative example of a substantial Victorian Italianate villa residence built for middle-class residents of Malvern, of the sort that began to characterise the suburb in the 1880s and 1890s. ‘Glenmore’ exhibits typical features of this type including the asymmetrical plan form of a projecting canted bay to one side of a return cast-iron verandah, a hipped roof clad in slate and rendered chimneys with heavy cornices. 

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Aesthetically, ‘Glenmore’ is distinguished by the highly elaborate cement render detailing which includes: the paired ornate eaves brackets set between rosettes and garlands; the raised vermiculated panels and moulded cornices with consoles and floral motifs to the imposing chimneys; the large fielded quoins to the exterior building corners, and the hooded keystones of cast acanthus leaves to the canted bay windows. The return verandah with bullnose corrugated iron roof, dentil moulded verandah beam, and high quality cast-iron work supported on fluted columns with Corinthian capitals is also of note and is highly intact. (Criterion E)

**Recommendations**

Recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay to the extent of the whole property as defined by the title boundaries.

HO Schedule controls: None

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![Figure 11. Recommended extent of heritage overlay for 29 Winter Street, Malvern (source: www.land.vic.gov.au).](image-url)

Recommended grading: A2