

PLACE	HOUSE			Other name/s	Bird Residence		
Address	18 Broome Crescent WONTHAGGI						
Study No	WN004	HO No	-	HPD No	-	Allotment No	6 (Section 21)
LGA	Bass Coast	Ward	Hovell	Parish	Wonthaggi	County	Mornington



Image Date	17 July 2009	Extent of listing	Whole allotment				
Designer/architect	Unknown	Architectural style	Federation/Edwardian Period (1901-1918)				
Builder/maker	Unknown	Commenced	1911	Completed	1911		
Her Act Category	Heritage place	Historic Theme/s	13.2 Building Towns (Larger Centres)				
Her Item Group	Residential buildings (private)	Assessed by	S Reeves	Date	14/08/09		
Her Item Category	House	Reviewed by	-	Date	-		
Usage (2009)	Residence	Condition	Good	Intactness	Good		
Significance	Local	Recommendation	Include in VHR <input type="checkbox"/>	Include in RNE <input type="checkbox"/>	Include in HO <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The house at 18 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi, is a single-storey double-fronted weatherboard cottage with a symmetrical facade and a full-width verandah. It was erected during 1911 for Frank Bird, prominent local draper and one-time Mayor of Wonthaggi, and subsequently occupied for more than two decades by another McBride Avenue retailer, boot-seller Colin Rose.

How is it Significant?

The house is of historical and aesthetic significance to the Shire of Bass Coast.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, the house is significant for as one of several fine Edwardian residences built in this part of Wonthaggi by prominent local retailers, which demonstrates the early emergence of a prestige residential address near the Mine Manager's house at 10 Broome Crescent (AHC Criterion C.2). It is of some local interest as the former residence of Frank Bird, one of the Wonthaggi's pioneer retailers and city councillors, who opened a successful drapery business in McBride Avenue in 1910 and, two years later, become the town's second Mayor (AHC Criterion H.1).

Aesthetically, the house is significant as a particularly fine and substantially intact example of a symmetrically-fronted Edwardian cottage. It is distinguished by many of its contemporaneous counterparts in Wonthaggi by its well-executed decorative timberwork to the front verandah, and by its siting on a wide-than-average wedge-shaped block (AHC Criterion E.1). Set well back from the roadway, the house remains a prominent element in the streetscape (AHC Criterion F.1).

Physical Description

The house at 22 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi, is a single-storey double-fronted Edwardian weatherboard cottage with a steeply hipped roof clad in corrugated galvanised steel and penetrated by a tall red brick chimney with corbelled capping. The symmetrical facade comprises a central front entrance (with doorway, sidelights and highlight) flanked by rectangular windows with timber-framed double-hung sashes. The facade is sheltered by a full-width verandah comprising a bullnosed roof on turned timber posts with distinctive carved brackets of an atypical quadrant form. There is an addition to the left side of the house, with a matching hipped roof and weatherboard cladding.

The front fence, in the form of a high picket fence, is not original but is sympathetic to the style and era of the house.

Historical Notes

This house stands on part of Section 21 of the Township of Wonthaggi, a block of nine residential allotments bounded by Broome Crescent and Queen, Dunn and Billson streets. Despite the fact that this section was rather prominently located between Section 24 (site of the Mine Manager's House) and Section 17 (part of the development of Government Cottages), there is no reference to it in the first rate book of the Borough of Wonthaggi, dated June 1911. In the second rate book, compiled only four months later, the present site (designated as Lot 6 of Section 21) was rated as a house with a Net Annual Value (NAV) of £28, occupied by Frank John Bird, a draper. His house was one of several new dwellings that were referred to thus in the *Powlett Express* on 5 May 1911:

Building is very brisk in Broome Crescent and vicinity. Villa residences are in course of erection for Messrs Wilson, Mummery and Bird, and Dr Taylor has obtained plans for his residence. As the whole of the residences are in the hill overlooking the town, they will, when finished, add materially to the appearance of the place.

A pioneer retailer in the township, F J Bird (1873-1948) was one of first businessmen to set up shop in central Wonthaggi when sites for private commercial development were released in early 1910. In July, the *Powlett Express* reported that 'F J Bird, draper and outfitter, has just opened up a new shop in McBride Avenue with a large consignment of general drapery, boots and shoes'. Rate books confirm that Bird's shop (since demolished) stood on Lot 7 of Section 6 (at what is now 59-61 McBride Avenue). F J Bird was also a pioneer of local politics, being a foundation member of the Borough of Wonthaggi council. When the first municipal election was held in January 1911, fifteen candidates were nominated for the nine positions in the new council. F J Bird, with 405 votes, came in a close second behind J H Wishart, who, with only three more votes, became the first Mayor of Wonthaggi. According to the *Victorian Municipal Directory* for 1911, F J Bird also served in the official capacity of the Borough's Justice of the Peace. He went on to become its second Mayor in August 1912, following on from the second term of his predecessor, J H Wishart. After he left the township, Bird was elected to the Shire of Bass and, by the early 1930s, was serving as Shire President.

Frank Bird remained living at 18 Broome Crescent until 1917, when the property was taken over by another local businessman, boot-maker Colin Rose, proprietor of "The People's Shoe Store" in McBride Avenue. This is confirmed by the Department of Lands' plan of the Township of Wonthaggi, which records that the title of the property had been transferred to "E Rose" on 3 December 1917. Rate books reveal that the Rose family remained living there well into the 1930s.

Comparisons

Broadly, this house is a representative example of the type of modest double-fronted symmetrical timber cottages that proliferated in this part of the township during the first few years of its settlement. Retaining its original verandah with turned posts, brackets and bullnosed roof, this house is more intact than many of its counterparts in Broome Crescent (eg Nos 41, 51, 59, 66, 69, 101), which have had their front verandahs partly or entirely rebuilt. Its closest counterparts are the most intact survivors at Nos 68, 70, 73, 121. These, however, tend to be much simpler in their detailing, as they were occupied by miners. The present house at No 18, occupied by a prominent local retailer, is not only larger but also more assured in its decorative detailing, befitting its higher social status.

Recommended Management

Encourage the retention of the return verandah as a semi-open space, with no solid or glazed infill to be constructed.

References

Author	Title	Year
Borough of Wonthaggi	Rate Books (held by Public Record Office)	Various
<i>Powlett Express</i>	1 July 1910, 5 May 1911 and 4 March 1921	Various
	<i>Victorian Municipal Directory</i> , 1911, 192, 1913	Various
John M Coghlan (ed)	<i>The State Coal Mine and Wonthaggi</i> , 1909-1968, pp 55-56	1979