

PLACE	HOUSE			Other Name/s Baptist Manse (former)			
Address	4 Hunter Street WONTHAGGI						
Study No	WN027	HO No	-	HPD No	-	Allotment No	6 (Section 20)
LGA	Bass Coast	Ward	Hovell	Parish	Wonthaggi	County	Mornington

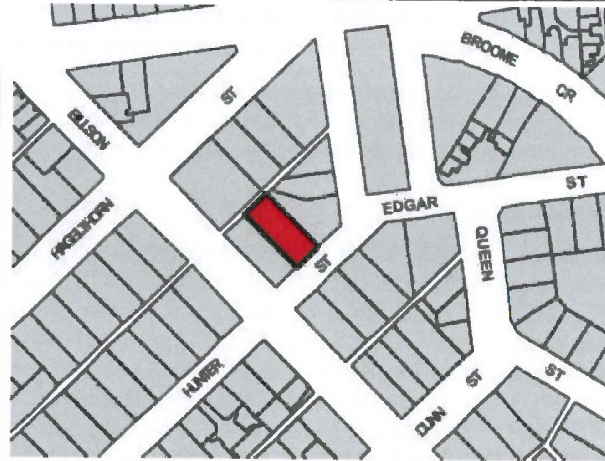


Image Date	17 July 2009	Extent of listing	Whole allotment				
Designer/architect	Unknown	Architectural style					
Builder/maker	Unknown	Commenced	1913	Completed	1913		
Her Act Category	Heritage place	Historic Theme/s	13.2 Building Towns (Larger Centres)				
Her Item Group	Residential buildings (private)	Assessed by	S Reeves	Date	14/08/09		
Her Item Category	House	Reviewed by	-	Date	-		
Usage (2009)	Residence	Condition	Fair	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 former Baptist manse at 4 Hunter Street, Wonthaggi, is a single-storey Edwardian weatherboard house expressed as two offset rectangular hip-roofed wings with symmetrical street facade balanced by a bullnosed return verandah. Built in 1913 by the local Baptist church, it incorporated an existing building moved from another site, and remained in use as a manse for the next 60 years

How is it Significant?

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

Why is it Significant?

Historically, the former Baptist Manse is significant for associations with the early development of the local Baptist church, which was the first religious denomination to have a resident minister and a building at the State Coal Mine (AHC Criterion D.2). The present building, which incorporates an early building relocated from elsewhere in 1913, provides evidence of the gradual expansion of local church infrastructure during the boom period of the early 1910s (AHC Criterion A.4). It is rare as one of only two early purpose-built clerical residences that remain (albeit no longer in use as such) in the central township (AHC Criterion B.2).

Aesthetically, the house is significant for its unusual expression, comprising a pair of attached but discrete hip-roofed rectangular wings with a street frontage that is both symmetrical (with its central front door flanked by windows) and asymmetrical (with a return verandah extending back to the offset rear wing) (AHC Criterion E.1). This distinctive and atypical form, which can be seen in only a few other surviving examples in Wonthaggi (AHC Criterion B.2), represents a contrast to both the humble miner's cottages (which are otherwise comparable for their symmetrical facades) and the grander Edwardian villas (which have similar return verandahs).

Physical Description

The house at 4 Hunter Street, Wonthaggi, is a single-storey double-fronted Edwardian weatherboard villa in what has been termed the Victorian Survival mode – that is, a style evocative of timber dwellings of the later nineteenth century. The house comprises two attached rectangular wings, each with a separate hipped roof clad in corrugated galvanised steel, with the rear wing being slightly offset to one side, allowing for a return verandah along the front and right side of the house. The street frontage is otherwise symmetrical, with a central front door flanked by rectangular windows with timber-framed double-hung sashes and moulded architraves. The verandah itself comprises a low hipped roof of corrugated galvanised steel, supported on turned timber posts with a simple timber slat frieze. The street boundary is marked by a low timber and wire fence, now largely engulfed by a hedge.

The house is in a somewhat neglected condition, with much of its external timberwork (weatherboards, verandah posts and window joinery) in need of repainting, and rusting to the corrugated steel roof. The red brick chimney, which rises from the ridge of the rear roof, is damaged to one side and requires partial rebuilding.

Historical Notes

The earliest rate books for the Borough of Wonthaggi contain no reference to Lot 6 of Section 20. A house on the site, fronting Hunter Street, is first recorded in the rate book for 1914-15 (dated 4 October 1914), which noted that the property had a Net Annual Value of £16 and was occupied by one Edwin R Thorne, clergyman. The celebratory booklet, *Wonthaggi & District*, published in 1934, confirms that Reverend Edwin Richard Thorne (1881-1962) was minister to the local Baptist congregation. This had been the first denomination to establish itself at the State Coal Mine, with both a resident minister and a building in the tent settlement. Following on from a succession of very short-term predecessors, "it fell to the lot of Reverend E R Thorne to consolidate the work of the pioneers". He was described as "a true man of God beloved by all, and his character and work are still [in 1934] spoken of in Wonthaggi". He left the town in 1917, later serving the Baptist congregations at Alberton, South Australia, and at Williamstown.

According to information provided by the current Baptist minister, the church's original manse at 4 Hunter Street incorporated a three-roomed timber house from South Dudley, which had been purchased in 1913 for £80 and then transported to its present site at a cost of 13 shillings. It was then enlarged to five rooms, with a new verandah added. Rate books reveal that after the house was vacated by the Reverend Thorne in 1917, it was briefly occupied by local dentist Henry Baker. As it is known that Baker was then in the process of erecting his own house (at what is now 38 Graham Street, qv), it might be surmised that he was a member of the Baptist congregation who was permitted to reside temporarily in the manse until the arrival of Thorne's replacement. This was Reverend H W Henderson, whose tenancy is first recorded as a scribbled amendment in the rate book for 1918-1919 (dated October 1918). The rate books also show a substantial increase in the Net Annual Value, from £20 to £29, which suggests that some further additions may have been made to the dwelling at that time.

During the 1920s, the Manse was occupied by a fairly rapid succession of clergymen, including the Reverends S Whitchurch, A G Bennett, H W Long, T V Paul, E Bungey and W Briggs. During 1931, the dwelling became occupied by Reverend Robert Haley, who remained there for several years. It continued to function as a clerical residence until 1974 when, at the commencement of the ministry of the Reverend Tuck, the property in Hunter Street was sold. Wonthaggi's Baptist ministers were subsequently accommodated in another residence in Peverill Court and, since 1984, at 219 Graham Street.

Comparisons

The unusual appearance of this house, with two rectangular hip-roofed wings placed parallel but slightly offset, is presumably a consequence of it originally comprising an existing building (relocated to the site from elsewhere) and a new addition built *in situ*. This distinctive configuration presents a street facade that is both symmetrical in the manner of a traditional double-fronted cottage (with a central front door, flanking windows and full-width verandah) and asymmetrical (with the verandah returning down one side to meet the offset rear wing). It can be seen in only two other contemporaneous houses in this part of Wonthaggi: the respective former residences of blacksmith R H Dilworth, at 117 Broome Crescent (qv) and tailor George Hinneberg, at 5 Dunn Street (qv).

Recommended Management

Encourage the undertaken of basic maintenance and repair, including reconstruction of the damaged chimney.

References

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Year</i>
Borough of Wonthaggi	Rate Books (held by Public Record Office)	Various
Pastor Geoff Pegler	Personal comm. (Wonthaggi Baptist Church)	2009