

# City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

**Place name:** Moira  
**Other names:** House

**Citation No:**  
**1497**



**Address:** 16 Glen Eira Road, Ripponlea

**Heritage Precinct:** Ripponlea  
Residential

**Category:** Residential: House

**Heritage Overlay:** HO7

**Style:** Interwar: Mediterranean,  
Moderne

**Graded as:** Significant

**Constructed:** 1936

**Victorian Heritage Register:** No

**Designer:** H.V. Gillespie

**Amendment:** TBA

**Comment:** Revised citation

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## Significance

### *What is significant?*

Moira, a two-storey, inter-war house, demonstrating Mediterranean and Moderne influences, designed by H.V. Gillespie and built in 1936 for Mrs. Eliza Parkinson, at 16 Glen Eira Road, Ripponlea is significant.

Alterations and additions and the garage/outbuilding are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

Moira at 16 Glen Eira Road, Ripponlea is of local representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

### *Why is it significant?*

Moira is of representative significance, as an example of the residential work of architect H.V. Gillespie, whose designs of the inter-war period are eclectic in as far as the way they overlayed differing styles and their elements. In the design of Moira, Gillespie uses detailing of the Mediterranean-style combined with Moderne detailing and materiality of large steel frame windows. Moira is of representative value of this key and innovative architect of the inter-war period and his work within the City of Port Phillip. (Criterion D)

Moira is of aesthetic significance as a fine, intact and unusually detailed Mediterranean-style house, overlayed with Moderne detailing. The Mediterranean-style is expressed on Moira with its rendered walls relieved in places with manganese brickwork applied as bands at eaves level, on window cills and heads, and around arched wall openings. Contributing to what is a busy composition is the introduction of elements

such as a small balcony and a chimney expressed on the upper level façade; and an entrance porch with a loggia and adjacent narrow arched window. Applied upon this Mediterranean-style canvas is evidence of contemporary design influences to fenestration, with large window openings with steel framed windows. (Criterion E)

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## Thematic context

### Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

### Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development), 5.3 Diverse Housing (5.3.3 Suburban bungalows)

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## History

### Contextual history

Private development in the City of Port Phillip began from the time of the first sales of Crown land in the 1840s and 1850s. The gradual development of infrastructure, including roads, public transport networks and utilities, paved the way for increasing development of private land. Private subdivision within the broad framework set out by Hoddle's survey saw neighbourhoods in the City of Port Phillip grow into populated, thriving communities (TEH).

Significant population growth after World War I created a demand for housing, leading to the subdivision (or re-subdivision) of the remaining pockets of vacant or underdeveloped land in the City of Port Phillip. This included vacant land previously thought to be unsuitable for housing, such as in Fishermans Bend, as well as the re-development of the remaining mansion estates. Apart from the mansion estate subdivisions, there were two major interwar subdivisions at either end of the City of Port Phillip: The 'Garden City' estates in Port Melbourne and the Brunnings Estate subdivision in Ripponlea (TEH).

### Moira

Land to the north and south of Glen Eira Road between Brighton Road and the Melbourne to Sandringham Railway Line was subdivided and offered for sale during the land boom of the late nineteenth century. By 1904 only eight villas had been constructed, including five along the south side (MMBW), as the economic depression of the 1890s halted development and it was not until the Ripponlea railway station was opened in 1913 that building recommenced. A shopping centre was rapidly established along Glen Eira Road between the railway and Hotham Street with most of the shops constructed from 1913 to 1918. This served the growing residential areas developed on the vacant land to the north and new estates including the Quat Quatta and Erindale subdivisions to the south of Glen Eira Road.

The electrification of the railway in 1919 and the extension and electrification of the tramway along Brighton Road in 1925 stimulated development and almost all the remaining vacant land to the north and south of Glen Eira Road was developed during the interwar period. This included the subdivision of the vast Brunning's Nursery as a housing estate, which included creation of the new streets of Los Angeles Court and Monkstadt Avenue.

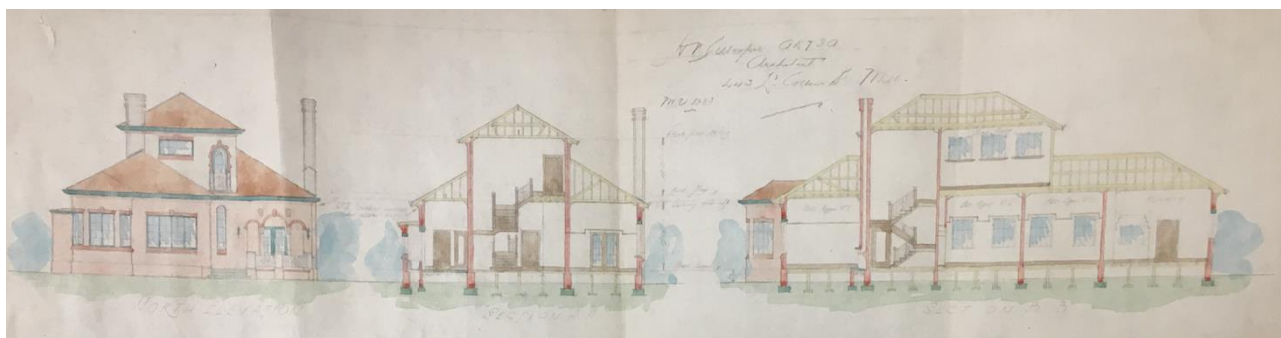
Moira was built in 1936 for Mrs. Eliza Parkinson as her own residence. A. Emmerson was the builder and H.V. Gillespie was the architect. The house comprised a ground floor containing three bedrooms, kitchen, lounge and dining rooms with a stairwell leading to an 'Upper Hall', which opened on to a 'Sun Room'. The entry was accessed through a 'Loggia' behind a paved patio. There was a small outbuilding at the rear containing a single garage, workshop and laundry (BP).



## H.V. Gillespie

Harold Vernon Gillespie (1888-1946), architect, was elected as an Associate of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects in 1921. He was a specialist in factory and hotel buildings, but most of his buildings in the City of Port Phillip were residential and he is represented by several distinctive houses and flats, and at least one commercial development, most dating from the decade after World War I. His buildings of the 1920s are highly individual and while they often drawn on disparate architectural motifs, most demonstrate the strong influence of the Arts & Crafts style. Among them is Darjeeling, built in 1924, which contained two flats, one of which became Gillespie's home. The exception is Moira, 16 Glen Eira Road, Ripponlea (1936), which is a two-storey house showing influences of the Moderne and Mediterranean styles (Citation 1497). Other buildings by Gillespie in Port Phillip are:

- Windsor Court, 24-26 Robe Street, St Kilda (1920). Conversion of a former hotel and terrace houses to flats. Arts & Crafts detailing (Citation 793)
- San Remo, 354 Beaconsfield Parade, St Kilda West (1923). Conversion of existing house to flats. Similar details to Darjeeling (Citation 420)
- House, 44 Mary Street, St Kilda West (1924) First floor additions to an existing house (Citation 449)
- House, garage and fence, 38 Eildon Road, St Kilda (1927). Large attic residence with Arts & Crafts details (Citation 903).



Extract of original building plans (Source: City of Port Phillip building file)

## References

Lewis, Nigel & Aitken, Richard, *City of Malvern Heritage Study. Appendix 1: Architects of Malvern*, 1992

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan no.1451, dated 1904

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH) **Version 1, July 2020**

St Kilda Council building permit (BP) no. 9272, 15 April 1936

Sands & McDougall Directories (SM) 1935-1940

## Description

Moira is a two-storey, rendered brick, Inter-war villa, with a hip roof clad in glazed terracotta tiles. The façade of the house is asymmetrically composed, its first floor recessed within part of the roof mass of the lower level of the house. Some of the detailing has Mediterranean influences, and this includes a triple-arched opening supported by pressed cement columns that leads to the entrance porch, a narrow-arched multi-paned window to the left of this loggia (The name of the house, Moira, is fixed to the wall between these features), and an arched wall opening on the first floor leading to a small balcony with a wrought iron railing. Windows have manganese brickwork at their heads and cills, and manganese bricks are used to detail surrounds of arched wall openings of doors. A band of manganese brick extends around walls below the eaves.

The window frames of the house, however, are more aligned with Moderne design, as they are steel frame, and many are large (multi-paned). At left is a curved bay window, which contributes to what is, overall, a busy compositional arrangement. Reinforcing this are two tall rendered chimneys on the side of the house, and a chimney expressed on the façade of the first floor.

A high, partially rendered brick fence, with a mural on part, obscures views of the house from Glen Eira Road. The base of this brick fence may be original.

The house is in good condition and has a very high degree of external intactness.

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## Comparative analysis

Following the economic depression of the 1890s, there was concern that inner Melbourne was becoming overcrowded. Terrace houses fell out of favour, as they were perceived as being cold and dark with limited garden space. Instead, detached bungalows became the most popular form of housing from the Federation/Edwardian period onward (TEH).

This concept of a 'garden suburb' (as distinct from the consciously-planned model Garden City estates that came later), comprising a reasonably spacious single-family dwelling in a secluded garden setting, became the ideal expression of urban living in the early twentieth century. Facilitated by improvements to public transport networks, particularly the electrification of the tram and railway networks, this housing defines the suburbs that developed during this era, including much of Middle Park, St Kilda East, Elwood and Ripponlea (TEH).

The inter-war period was a time of extreme stylistic diversity, to an extent that exceeded the diversity of approaches of the nineteenth century. Boundaries between styles were often crossed in the one building, creating eclectic fusions of features from different styles. Such buildings were very popular in St Kilda and Elwood and make an important contribution to the distinctive character of these areas. While such designs have sometimes been attributed to speculative builders and 'lesser' architects, this approach was also used by well-known or prominent architects such as James H. Wardrop, H.V. Gillespie and J.H. Esmond Dorney.

From the mid-1920s onwards Old English, Spanish Mission and Georgian Revival became the most popular styles for residential architecture in Victoria. As Lewis (1992:1) notes:

*The period after the Depression saw a shift towards the new and exciting modern idioms emanating from Europe and America. Nevertheless, period character was not put totally aside. Old English architecture lingered on throughout the 1930s and the Mission and Georgian idioms provided a formal framework through which modernism could be absorbed and modified.*

Moira is representative of the residential work of architect H.V. Gillespie, whose designs of the inter-war period are eclectic in as far as the way they overlayed differing styles and their elements. In the design of Moira, Gillespie uses detailing of the Mediterranean-style combined with Moderne detailing and materiality of large steel frame windows. The Mediterranean-style is expressed on Moira with its rendered walls relieved in places with manganese brickwork applied as bands at eaves level, on window cills and heads, and around arched wall openings. Contributing to what is a busy composition is the introduction of elements such as a small balcony and a chimney expressed on the upper level façade; and an entrance porch with a loggia and adjacent narrow arched window. Applied upon this Mediterranean-style canvas, is evidence of Moderne design influences to fenestration, with large window openings with steel framed windows

Moira compares favourably with other mixed-style residential buildings in Port Phillip such as La Tourelle (1935, W.H. Merritt), which combines Old English and Moderne with some Mediterranean accents, Zaneth Manor (1936, James H. Wardrop), a mix of Old English and Moderne, and El Sonia (1938, designer unknown), 6 Fulton Street, St Kilda East, and Olgemond Court (1940, Leslie J.W. Reed), both of which blend Georgian Revival and Moderne (with Art Deco flourishes at El Sonia).



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## Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, using the Hercon criteria.

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## Recommendations

Retain in the Heritage Overlay with paint controls.

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## Primary source

Peter Andrew Barrett *HO7 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations, 2021*

## Other studies

Andrew Ward & Associates, *City of Port Phillip Heritage Review*, 1998

Robert Peck von Hartel Trethowan, *St Kilda 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural study*, Volume 3, 1992

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## Other images



*Moir in 1998*