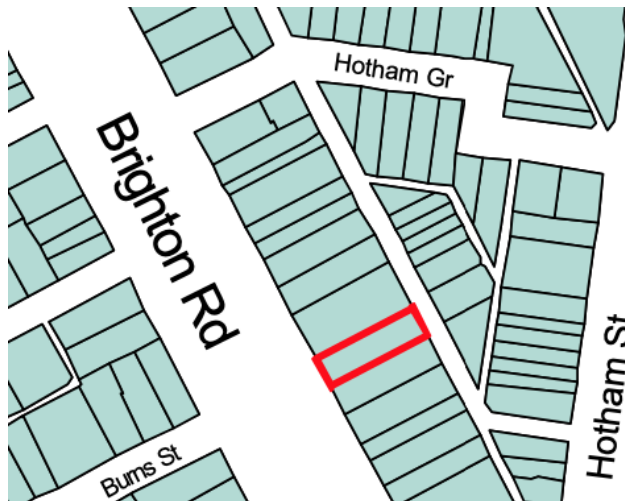


# City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

**Place name:** Laluma  
**Other names:** House

**Citation No:**  
**2269**



**Address:** 148 Brighton Road, Ripponlea

**Heritage Precinct:** Not applicable

**Category:** Residential: House

**Heritage Overlay:** HO355

**Style:** Victorian: Renaissance Revival

**Graded as:** Significant

**Constructed:** c.1885

**Victorian Heritage Register:** No

**Designer:** Unknown

**Amendment:** TBA

**Comment:** Revised citation

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## Significance

### *What is significant?*

Laluma, constructed c.1885 for George Connibere at 148 Brighton, Ripponlea is significant.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

Laluma at 148 Brighton Road, Ripponlea is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

### *Why is it significant?*

Laluma is historically significant as evidence of the limited first phase of suburban development in this area during the land boom of the nineteenth century. (Criterion A)

It is of aesthetic significance as.... (Criterion E)

- the house is an early and distinguished design in the Italian Renaissance manner, with its cement detailing, detached two-storey form and cast-iron ornament (Criterion F1);
- the house retains a mature period landscape setting which enhances the expression of the house's origins (Criterion D2);
- the house recalls the time when grand boulevards, such as Brighton Road, were the proper setting for gentlemen's villas, many having been demolished over time (Criterion A4).

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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 (5.3.1 Mansions and grand villas)

7. Governing: 7.4 Health and welfare (7.4.2 Community housing and development)

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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.

Mansion estates – large, detached homes on generous allotments – defined early, permanent housing in Elwood and St Kilda, in the mid-nineteenth century. Although the oldest surviving houses in Elwood – such as Vautier House, built in the mid-1850s – are terrace houses, it was mansions on large allotments that came to characterise the neighbourhood in its early years. The estates were located in four distinct clusters: St Kilda Hill; the semi-rural estates occupying the high ground on the south side of Dandenong Road from the Nepean Road (now St Kilda Road) to Orrong Road; those surrounding the St Kilda Botanical Gardens and along Brighton Road; and the remote 'sea-side' estates along Ormond Esplanade. Kearney's 1855 map of the area shows the contrast between dense residential development in St Kilda, and the large mansion estates to the east of the Nepean Road including Charnwood and Marlton, south of Carlisle Street (then known as Beach Road), and on both sides of Brighton Road, including Erindale and Chiverton, and Bramshaw, Osborne House and Wiltonia further south.

Apart from the mansion estates, most of the development in Port Phillip prior to 1880 was confined to the early township reserves. However, the boom era of the 1880s saw intense land speculation across Melbourne, with large estates and the original crown allotments carved up into much smaller allotments for residential development that filled in the gaps shown on that plan.

During the peak of Melbourne's building boom in the 1880s, almost all the remaining land in Port Phillip (except for the Elwood Swamp and the Fishermans Bend area) was subdivided and offered for sale. Prosperity saw land speculation intensify across the suburbs during that period in areas such as Elwood, Balaclava, Ripponlea, and St Kilda East that were remote from transport and services. When one of Elwood's oldest estates, Chiverton, was subdivided in 1885, it created 85 allotments. Despite the eager subdivision of land and colourful advertising, however, the actual building of homes in these remote subdivisions was slow. With the onset of the 1890s economic depression, many estates failed and remained undeveloped for a decade or more. Maps of Elwood in the late 1890s, for example, show that residential development was still sparse, and the beachside estates had failed spectacularly, with only a few houses on the Elwood Esplanade and Elwood Hill estates. Hood Street and Bluff Avenue remained entirely undeveloped at the turn of the century.

### Laluma

The road to Brighton or Arthur's Seat (now Brighton Road) was one of the first major thoroughfares in Melbourne and was consequently developed as a desirable place for the homes of gentlemen in semi-rural

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surroundings. One of these was Erindale, which was established c.1855 by Thomas Monahan to the south of Glen Eira Road.

At the Crown land sales, J.M. Holloway purchased portions 259, 268 and 269, Parish of Prahran, which consisted of about 11 acres of the wedge of land where Brighton Road and Hotham Street met, immediately to the south of Erindale. The opening of the railway to Brighton in 1859 (and its subsequent duplication in 1881), which included a station at Elsternwick encouraged the development of the surrounding area and Holloway subsequently had the area surveyed for a housing estate by surveyor, Sydney W. Smith (Figure 1). Each allotment along Brighton Road had two frontages or the benefit of an unusually wide (15 ft) Right-of-Way (now Bell Street). Hotham Grove at the time was named Susan Street. With some amendments, the sale of land later went ahead. Several houses were built in the subdivision in the 1880s, mostly within Susan Street before the economic depression of the 1890s halted development.

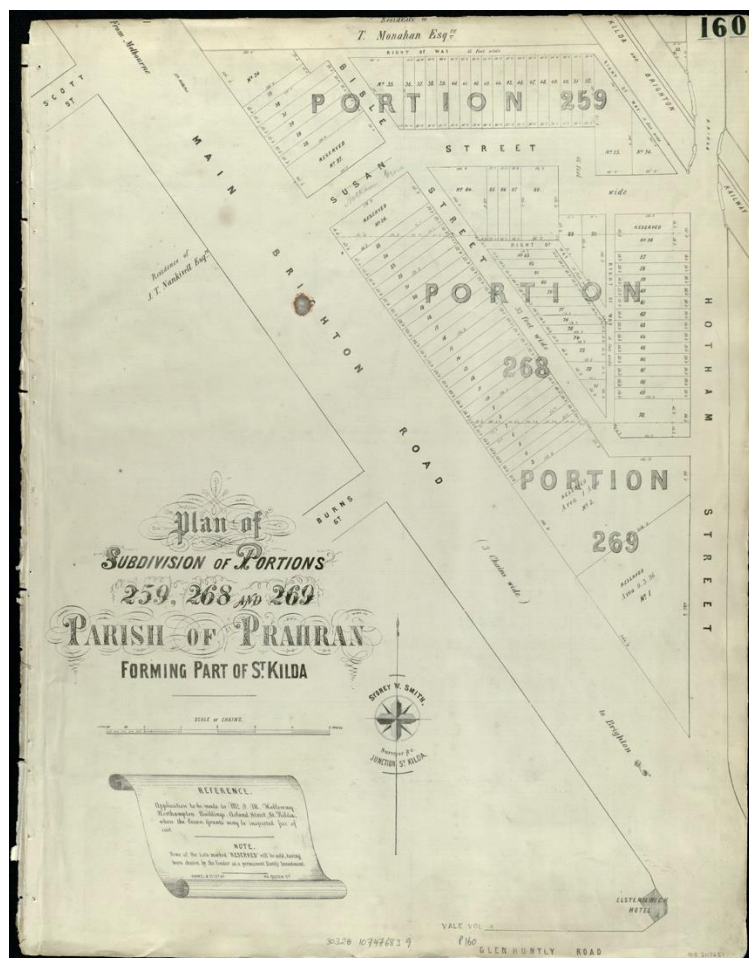


Figure 1: Subdivision Plan (Source: State Library of Victoria collection)

By December 1883, Frances Stuart Bell, a Doctor of Divinity, owned 284 feet of vacant land in the subdivision facing Brighton Road. Within a year, foundations were noted in rate records on a 65 feet frontage and a seven-room brick house followed in 1885, owned and occupied by Bell with one other into the 1890s. By the end of Bell's tenure, the house had gained two rooms, apparently added in 1897-8. Charles Fulwood, a gentleman, followed until another gentleman, Dennis Deasey, became the new owner c1908 (RB). The house is shown on the 1905 MMBW detail plan (see Figure 2). At that time, it was one of only a small number of houses in this area.

William Henry Deasey, a railway employee, appears to have inherited the house and stayed in residence until c.1923 when Alfred Levy (or Levi) took up the property and leased it to several persons including Alfred Robertson, an engineer, and James Wicks a wool sampler (RB).

Levy lived in Robe Street, St Kilda and was a St Kilda Councillor for West Ward in the 1930s, serving as mayor in 1936-7. In a survey of the wealth of Jews in Victoria during the immediate post Second War period, Alfred Levy was picked out as the richest, having left an estate of over £100,000 at his death in 1950 (Rubinstein 1991:129).

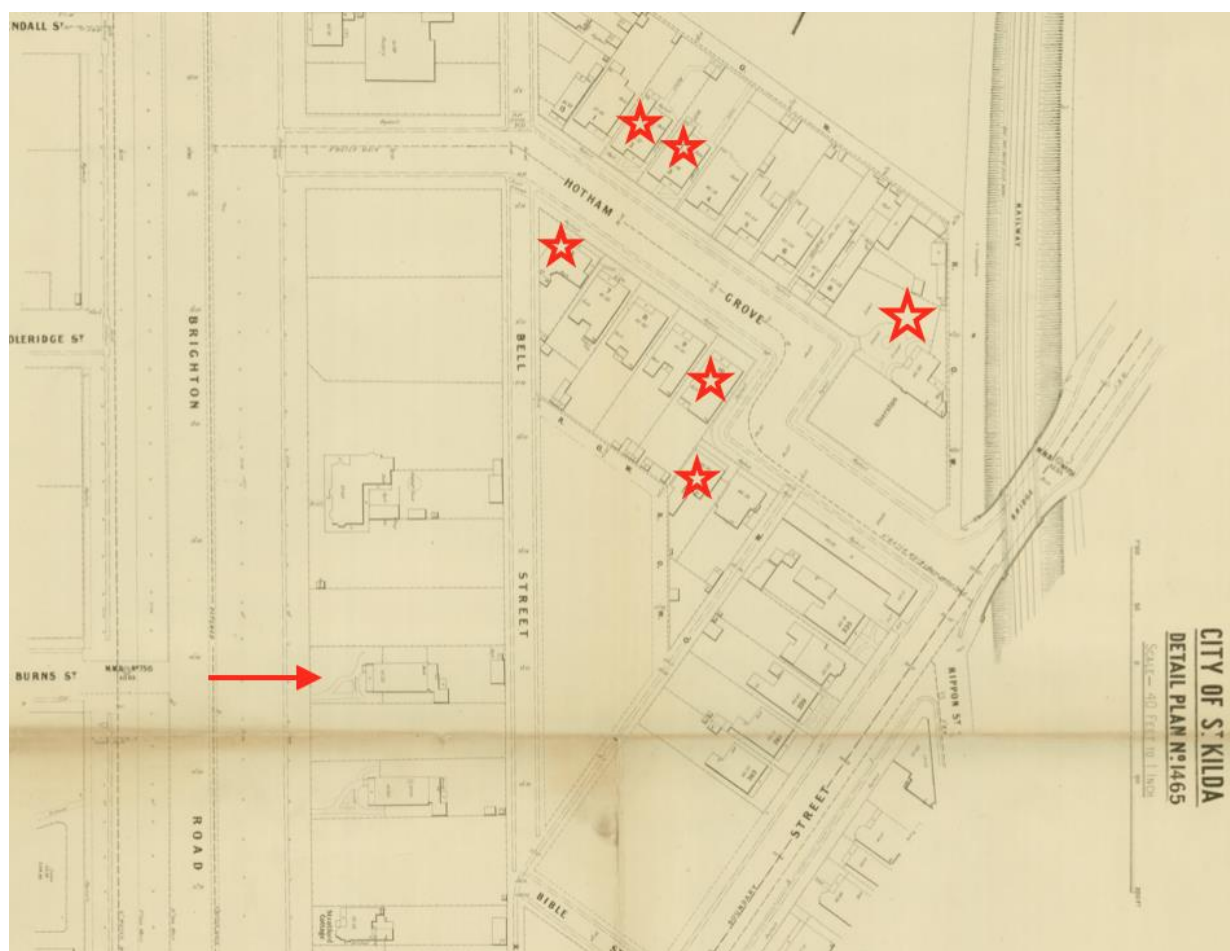


Figure 2: MMBW Detail Plan No. 1465 (detail) Laluma indicated by arrow, stars indicate the location of other surviving nineteenth century houses in the vicinity

## References

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan No. 1465, dated 1905

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

Rubinstein, W. 1991, *The Jews in Australia*. Volume 2

St Kilda Municipal Rate Book (RB) VPRS 8816, PI Central Ward

State Library of Victoria (SLV) 'Plan of subdivision of portions 259, 268 and 269, parish of Prahran, forming part of St. Kilda'

## Description

Laluma is a two-storey detached Italian Renaissance revival stuccoed villa set in a garden. The façade is parapeted, with main cornice and entablature brackets, and the upper-level balcony is open with a cast-iron balustrade and has three tall windows with simple architraves. The balcony is supported by a timber post with a cast iron frieze and the verandah has a tiled floor. At the ground floor, segment-arched openings are decorated with bold cement detailing, an impost mould is used between openings and the entry has top and coloured side lights on either side of a six-panel door. The rendered chimneys have cornices and other details.





The house in c.2015 (Source: realestate.com.au)

The house is hidden behind a high (non-original) stone front fence in a mature garden setting.

The building is in good condition and has good integrity. The verandah details are not original or have been altered and there are later additions at the rear.

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## Comparative analysis

No information.

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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.

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## Primary source

City of Port Phillip, *H07 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations (Part 2)*, 2022

## Other studies

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

David Bick, *St Kilda Conservation Study. Area 2*, 1985

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## Other images