

Place name: *Rosebank (9 George) and Milsom (7 George)*
Address: 7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds
Place typology: Residential
Construction date range: Circa 1889
Architectural style: Late Victorian
Assessment: heritage ALLIANCE, May 2021
Recommendation: That the place be included in the heritage overlay schedule.

Photo of place:



7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds. Photographs, heritage ALLIANCE, May 2021.

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds, are a pair of single fronted, Late Victorian semi-detached cottages built at the end of the land boom era in 1889. The significant and intact features include:

- Dichromatic brick patterning in diamonds across both facades
- Rendered parapet form with curved pediment, urns, scrolls and raised nameplate
- Corrugated iron gable roof with rendered chimneys
- Convex verandah and party walls between residences
- Original timber double hung sash windows with coloured sidelights and fan light above a moulded timber door
- Tessellated tiling to verandah floors
- Low timber picket fence.

The rear extensions are not of significance.

How is it significant?

7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds, is of local architectural (representative) significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds, represent an unusual semi-detached, Late Victorian cottage form this part of Moonee Ponds, which generally saw free-standing housing develop much later. They are representative of Late Victorian terrace style housing which is common in Flemington and Ascot Vale, but less so in this area of Moonee Ponds. (Criterion B and D)

Description:

7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds, are a Victorian terrace pair built in 1890. The two dwellings are single fronted with dichrome brick, an integrated parapet, pediment, and projecting party walls. To the rear of each building is a modern extension which rises to two storeys as both rear yards have sloping land.

The rendered parapet front of both dwellings hides a corrugated iron gable roof with a central chimney, also dichrome brick with rendered corbelling. A second face brick chimney is to the rear. The projecting party walls to the centre and at both sides of the verandahs have some moulded detailing and orbs. The raised curved pediment has a name plate with the name of each cottage in raised cement and the date '1890' above. Two more orbs decorate each side of the pediment and scrolls. The raised cornice has dentils below.

The convex verandah in corrugated iron has a narrow timber fascia with moulded decoration below the gutter with timber brackets. The verandah floor is tessellated tile and is set very low compared to the footpath. The dichrome brickwork is patterned in red and cream diamonds across the frontage of each house and wraps in bands around the party walls which enclose the verandahs. The single window of each cottage is a timber double hung sash with stone sill and coloured glass sidelights. The doors are moulded timber doors with a leadlight fanlight above.

There is a simple timber picket fence across the frontage and together the two present as a very harmonious whole with a single colour scheme and fencing and a similar level of alteration. It is possible there was once more moulded ornamentation on the parapet and it is not clear that the unusual fascia decoration across the verandah is original. Overall, the dwellings appear intact and present well, as interesting little Victorian terraces in an area of large mostly Federation villas. This section of George Street and its small Victorian allotments and cottages stands out in the area where most allotments are larger and wider and houses have deep setbacks from the street.

History:

Contextual History

City of Moonee Valley occupies part of the Traditional lands of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi-wurrung people. Many sites in the area now known as City of Moonee Valley show evidence of Woi-wurrung activities and spiritual connections. Fish were trapped in the rivers and creeks, stone was quarried from the river edges, murnong daisy was collected and kangaroos hunted across grassland areas, and bark was harvested from trees in the river valleys. This relationship between the Woi-wurrung and the land, water, animals and plants, continues to this day (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.29).

The first Europeans to explore the area known as Moonee Valley was a surveyor, Charles Grimes in 1803. In 1836, settlers moving from Van Diemen's Land crossed the area in the hope of finding empty, cheap and plentiful land for sheep. By 1842, surveyors had created the first map of the Parish of Doutta Galla and then Woi-wurrung lands were offered for sale by the British Crown to Europeans (noting that the land was never ceded). The Wurundjeri were moved off their land which had a profound impact on their culture, health and language. By 1860, the entire parish was sold (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.32-33).

Early development of the area began with the goldrush period of the 1850s which saw Mount Alexander Road used as a thoroughfare to the diggings with over 30,000 people estimated as moving along the dirt road each week. Businesses and shops sprang up providing sustenance, transport and accommodation to service the passing gold rush trade. Some very early wayside hotels and shops still survive from this period (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.51-54).

After the heady days of the goldrush, the 1860s saw Essendon, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds and Flemington develop into permanent townships. The development of railways by private companies gave huge impetus to suburban development of the area with the opening of the Essendon railway in 1860. The government purchased the line in 1868. Suburban trains terminated at Essendon and it wasn't until 1889 that Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds and Newmarket stations were completed. By 1893 stations opened at Strathmore and Pascoe Vale and in 1922 Glenberrie Station opened. The railways provided an enormous boost to residential development along the line and those who had previously moved to areas without trains, now clamoured for them (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.59).

By the 1880s Essendon had become a Borough and by 1891 had a population of 14,411. Many subdivisions occurred during the land boom of the 1880s and many failed to eventuate due to the depression of the 1890s. In the interwar period a boom in subdivision and residential infill occurred in Travancore, Essendon, Ascot Vale, Strathmore and Moonee Ponds, which was focused on new transport routes along the tram lines, first established to Essendon in 1905. In 1919 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board was formed and lines were extended and improved. The tram lines saw development occur either side of Maribyrnong Road, further along Mt Alexander Road, Buckley Street and Keilor Road (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.65-68; p.115).

In the three decades after the Second World War, Melbourne's suburbs ballooned outward to cater for post-war migration, the baby boom, an increasing need for new housing, and a more car-centred economy. Areas to the north of Essendon had been open paddocks in 1945, but by 1950 the Shire of Keilor found themselves with a developing suburb with no name. It was later called Niddrie. Similarly, Airport West was developing quickly with houses being built before the roads. By 1964 it was claimed that Airport West had the cheapest cream brick veneers in Melbourne (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012 p.120-121).

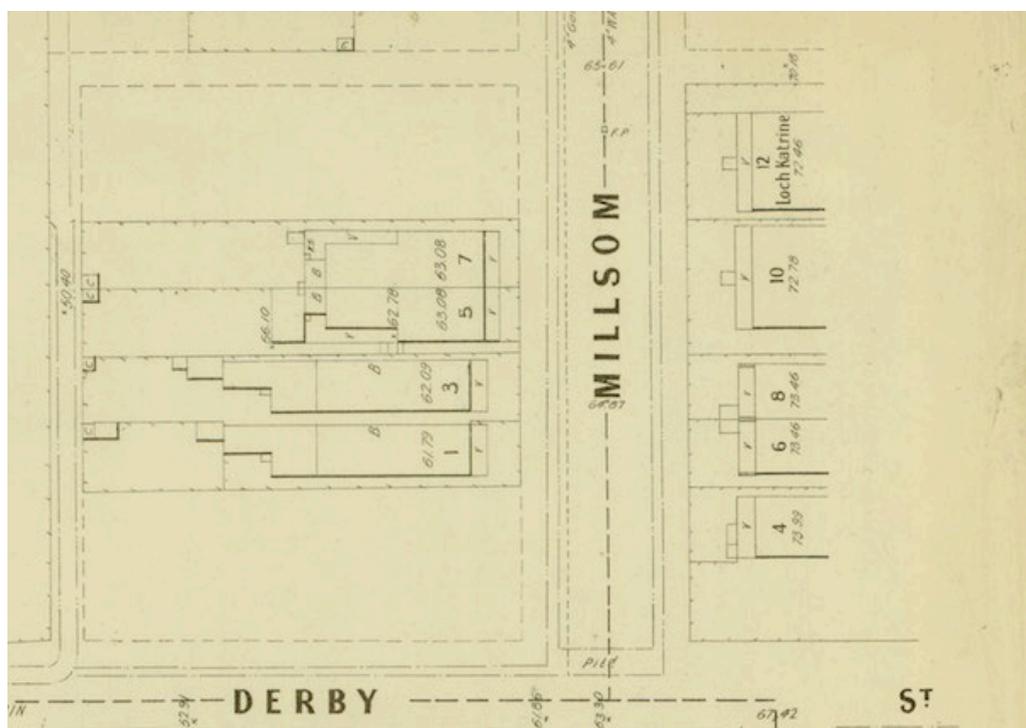
Many houses in these post-war areas were austere weatherboard or brick veneer bungalows, with a few scattered architect designed or project homes on new blocks, particularly along the Boulevard in Aberfeldie. These post-war housing areas were car-centred communities located close to industry along Keilor Road, Matthews Avenue around Essendon Airport and East Keilor. By 1960 Airport West had its first hotel, the famous Skyways Hotel and then in the 1970s the first shopping centre, owned by Westfield was begun (Heritage ALLIANCE, *Gap Heritage Study*, 2005: p.28-30).

Post-war housing pressure also saw a huge investment by the Housing Commission of Victoria who developed 150 bungalows in concrete, weatherboard and brick in Aberfeldie. They then began an ambitious estate of houses and flats on a 77-acre site at Ascot Vale in 1949. These low-rise walk-up flats eventually gave rise to the high-rise flats of Flemington which opened in June 1965 (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.123).

Many post-war migrants bought or built houses in the outer areas of the municipality, close to employment and industry and where new, cheaper housing was readily available. These developments and public housing in Aberfeldie, Ascot Vale and Flemington have had a long-lasting effect on the nature of the Moonee Valley community which today is one of the most diverse and vibrant in Melbourne (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.124).

Place history

Numbers 7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds were built speculatively in 1889 (Certificate of Title, Vol. 4963, Folio 581). (Numbered 5 and 7 Millsom Street until the 1920s) The subject site was part of the Centennial Park subdivision of 1888, a square block of about 3 acres that was purchased by Edward Dale Puckle in 1874 (Essendon Historical Society (EHS) Notes; *The Age*, 21 Jan 1888, p.7). During the 1870s, the land changed hands several times prior to the 1888 subdivision. Puckle sold the 3 acres to Elias James Wright in 1874, who then sold it to Carlton merchants, Abraham Samuel, Henry, and Joseph Moses De Young (EHS). In 1881, the land was transferred to the Australian Deposit and Mortgage Bank Ltd (EHS). Then it was conveyed to John Thomas of "Trinafour" in 1884, who retained the title until 1887 when it was transferred to Margaret Hutton, a widow of Middle St, Ascot Vale (EHS). It was Hutton who then subdivided the acreage into 15 building allotments with frontages along Ardmillan and Millsom Street in 1888 (*The Argus*, 30 Jan 1888, p.6).



Extract from *Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plan no. 1642*, State Library Victoria, 1905.

The subject site was located on Lot 8 of the subdivision, which was initially purchased at auction by merchant Edward James Roberts (EHS). Roberts conveyed the title to the Standard Mutual Building Society, at which time the lot was subdivided into two with frontages of 20 feet, 4 inches (9 Millsom St) and 19 feet, 8 inches (7 Millsom St) (EHS). It is likely that the houses were built for the Standard Mutual Building Society in 1889 before being sold to separate owners, Martha Law owning 9 Millsom Street and The Federal Building Society owning 7 Millsom Street (EHS).

In 1890, *Sands & McDougall* lists 5 properties on the eastern portion of Millsom Street and no properties on the western portion. By 1895, *Sands & McDougall* identifies four properties along the west side of Millsom Street (*Sands & McDougall*, 1895). Of these, three remain standing today, the one at 5 George Street being an altered, weatherboard cottage and the two at 7 and 9 George Street being brick cottages. The *Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) map* of 1905 shows no additional development between these years (*MMBW Plan no. 1612*, 1905). Tender notices indicate that an F. Moloney is the likely builder of nos. 7 and 9, with advertising showing the construction of two brick cottages in 1889 and their listing for sale in 1891 (*The Age*, 19 July 1889, p.3; *The Age*, 11 April 1891, p.2).

It appears that these properties were both rentals, with changes in residence every few years according to the directory (*Sands & McDougall*). The earliest resident identified at 7 Millsom Street is Richard West, who lived at the address in 1895

Secondary Sources

Essendon Historical Society Notes

Thematic Context:

City of Moonee Valley Thematic Environmental History, 2012

6. Building Towns, Cities, and the Garden State

6.7 Making Homes for Victorians

Comparative Analysis:

Victorian brick semi-detached houses and terraces are not that common in Moonee Ponds, whereas finding comparable examples is relatively easy in earlier areas such as Flemington. Terrace houses are well represented in the Moonee Valley Heritage Overlay, however as a typology they occur less frequently than detached houses. Moonee Valley's Italianate terraces range from single to double-storey, single and double fronted and are typically set in a shallow front gardens.

	Photos from heritage ALLIANCE and Google Streetview
<p>82-84 North Street, Ascot Vale (HO474). A pair of Victorian Italianate terraces built circa 1891-1892. They demonstrate a high level of integrity and intactness of original chimneys, slate roof, cement decoration to parapets and party walls, dichromatic brickwork, window and door joinery, and cast-iron frieze to the front verandah. They display more ornamentation than 7 and 9 George Street but are comparable as a terrace pair.</p>	
<p>6, 8 and 10 Glance Street, Flemington (HO186). They were built in 1890 for the engineer, Robert Kirkwood. They are representative examples of late Victorian Italianate semi-detached housing and share the characteristics of a parapet front, dichromatic brickwork and party walls.</p>	

Recommendation:

That 7 and 9 George Street, Moonee Ponds, be included in the Heritage Overlay schedule.

Schedule:

External Paint Controls	Yes
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Solar Energy Controls	Yes
Fences and Outbuildings	No
Prohibited Uses	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No