

Residence – 3 Little Ryrie Street, Geelong

Address	3 Little Ryrie Street, Geelong.
Significance	Local
Construction Date/s	1873
Period & Building Type	Victorian residence
Designer	Unknown
Previous Grading	C



Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The single storey timber residence at 3 Little Ryrie Street with faceted bays, recessed verandah and channelled boards to the façade.

How is it Significant?

3 Little Ryrie Street, Geelong is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Geelong.

Why is it Significant?

3 Little Ryrie Street, Geelong is historically significant as a mostly intact Victorian residence. Constructed in 1873 for local businessman James Wood, the house is one of the earliest residences erected on the Wesleyan Methodist Church reserve after it was subdivided and sold. Together with the adjacent house at no. 1, it is a remnant of the modest 19th century residential development which was once common in this part of Geelong. (Criterion A)

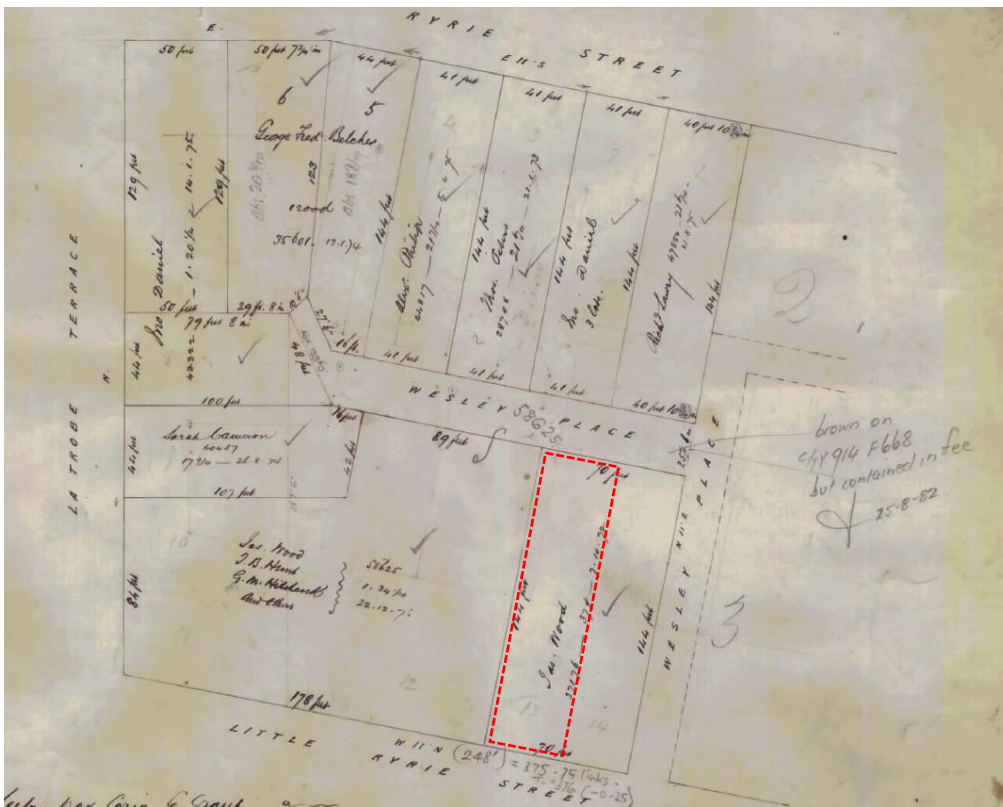
The single storey timber residence at 3 Little Ryrie Street, Geelong is of aesthetic significance as a mostly intact Victorian house that is distinguished by its unusual format including a recessed entry porch flanked by faceted bays. In Geelong, this format appears to have been used by prominent architects of the time for substantial houses that were more richly decorated. The refined design of the house is enhanced by the use of subtle details such as the recessed porch that delineates the entry and the channelled boards to the façade. (Criterion E)

History

3 Little Ryrie Street was originally part of an almost two acre allotment that was reserved for the Wesleyan Methodist Church on 11 March 1853.¹ This reserve covered about half of Section 46 and extended between Little Ryrie (north) and Ryrie (south) streets and between Latrobe Terrace (west) to roughly in line with the present railway tunnel (east).² A minister's residence was constructed on the reserve (now 1 Little Ryrie) sometime prior to 1854 and the site was sometimes referred to as 'the second parsonage in connection with the Yarra-street Wesleyan Church'.³

With the passing of the *State Aid to Religion Abolition Act 1971*, denominations were allowed to dispose of trust lands granted by the Crown and use the proceeds for denominational purposes. In July 1872, the Governor approved the Church's requested to dispose of the land with the proceeds proposed to be used for parsonages at Ashby, Chilwell and Geelong East.⁴ It is likely that this land was considered surplus with the Geelong Circuit having built on another land grant in Yarra Street.⁵

There were 12 trustees appointed by the church with the power to sell the land and ensure that the profits were used for approved purposes.⁶ This land was subdivided into 11 allotments in 1872 and an easement (Wesley Place) created to provide access to the rear of the smaller lots. The first of the allotments to be sold, of which the subject site is part, was acquired by one of the trustees, James Wood, a timber merchant, in October of that year. This allotment was bound by Wesley Place on the east side, included a right of way to the north (Wesley Place) and was about 37 perches (936m²) in area.⁷



Subdivision of Wesleyan Methodist Church Land
 The subject site (indicated) is little larger than half of the allotment acquired by James Wood
 (Source: Certificate of Title, Vol. 511, Folio 135)

- 1 Victorian Government Gazette 116, 22 October 1867, p2007
- 2 Parish Plan, G29 (10)
- 3 Geelong, County of Grant, J H Taylor, Surveyor Generals Office, 1853-54, State Library of Victoria. W R Brownhill, *The History of Geelong and Corio Bay*, 1955, The Geelong Advertiser, Geelong, p170
- 4 Victorian Government Gazette, 5 July 1872, p1259
- 5 Parish Plan, G29 (10). *Geelong City Urban Conservation Study*, Volume 4, p51, 1 Little Ryrie Street citation
- 6 Victorian Government Gazette, 5 July 1872, p1259
- 7 Certificate of Title, Vol. 511, Folio 135

It appears that Wood quickly commenced construction of a house on the subject site, it being one of the earliest erected on the Wesleyan Reserve following its subdivision. The subject site is listed in the 1873 rate book as an unfurnished weatherboard house with four rooms, kitchen, pantry and servant's room.⁸ By 1875, Wood was listed as the occupant.⁹ The rear of the house is shown in a circa 1870s-80s photograph (refer below) and consisted of a main hipped section to the front with verandah to the north and smaller hipped section to the rear.



'Geelong Railway Station. 45 Miles S.W. from Melbourne' (circa 1870-80, Charles Nettleton)
The rear of 3 Little Ryrie Street is indicated
(Source: State Library of Victoria H1918)

Other houses erected following the subdivision of the Wesleyan Reserve are also visible in the circa 1870-80 photograph, including 6 and 14 Ryrie Street, both constructed during the late 1870s.¹⁰ More broadly, many residences were erected in this part of Geelong during the 19th century, including nearby sections of Fenwick and Little Ryrie Street (refer to aerial below). Many of these houses, including 5 houses on the east side of Fenwick Street opposite the school, were modest timber types.¹¹



'Rail yards and Geelong Railway Station' (circa 1926, C D Pratt)
Looking south, the subject site is indicated
(Source: State Library of Victoria H91.160/677)

⁸ Rate Book, 1873, 306 (sourced from Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volume 4)
⁹ Rate Books: 1875, 304 (sourced from Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volume 4)
¹⁰ Victorian Heritage Database, entries for 6 and 14 Ryrie Street, accessed 28 April 2017
¹¹ Geelong Waterworks-Sewerage Trust, Detail Plan 26, Municipality City Geelong, 1957

In 1888, James Wood sold his land to Mary Aldwinckle. Three years later, in 1891, Aldwinckle subdivided the site forming 3 and 5 Little Ryrie Street (later W.G. Hearne & Co. manufacturing chemists). At this time, Aldwinckle sold no.3 to Frederick Band watchmaker. A covenant was placed on a narrow strip of land which extended halfway along the eastern boundary from Little Ryrie Street. This covenant prevented the construction of any building or placement of any obstruction on that part of the lot. 5 Little Ryrie was sold two years after no.3, in 1893, to Frances Jarman.¹² By 1900, when Band was listed as an occupant, the house had 5 rooms, a kitchen, a bathroom and a pantry.¹³

In 1909, Alice Smith acquired no.3, followed by Arthur Harry Langham Godfrey ten years later in 1919. In 1923 the land was transferred to Gustave Samuel Thomas Marendaz and then in 1929 to Clifton Heat who quickly sold the site to Alexander Ross Smith.¹⁴ In 1930, the house was described as having 6 rooms.¹⁵ The house is shown in a 1938 photograph (refer below) with the roof of the main part (front) and the hipped section to the rear clad in slate. A gabled addition to the rear of the house, constructed prior to 1926,¹⁶ is also evident as are a few small outbuildings to the rear of the site close to Wesley Place.



'St. George's Presbyterian Church, Geelong' with subject house indicated (C D Pratt, November 1936)

The roof of the main part and the hipped section to the rear are clad in slate

(Source: State Library of Victoria, H91.160/849)

The house was again sold in 1938 to Paray Paris Proprietary Limited of Melbourne and the following year was acquired by Ernest Albert Karlberg who lived at the site until his death in 1940 when the land was transferred to Susan Theresa Karlberg.¹⁷

In 2015, the hipped section to the rear of the main part of the house was demolished and replaced with a larger two storey addition. The following year, the slate roof cladding (to the outer part of the roof) was replaced with corrugated metal sheeting.¹⁸ Since the late-20th century, several early homes in the vicinity have been demolished.

¹² Certificates of Title Vol. 2376 Folio 075 and Vol. 2508 Folio 132

¹³ Rate Book, 1900, 269 (sourced from Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volume 4)

¹⁴ Certificate of Title Vol. 2376 Folio 075

¹⁵ Rate Book, 1930, 357 (sourced from Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volume 4)

¹⁶ Aerial photograph 'Geelong looking east', C D Pratt, 12 February 1926, State Library of Victoria, H91.160/799

¹⁷ Certificate of Title Vol. 2376 Folio 075

¹⁸ Nearmap aerial photographs. In 2015 the central valley was clad with corrugated metal sheeting.

Description

The single storey timber house is set back about 8 metres from Little Ryrie Street, and is partly obscured by a tall, late 20th century basalt fence. The house has a symmetrical façade clad in rebated boards and is distinguished from most other Victorian period houses by its central recessed porch (rather than a verandah). Other elevations are clad in weatherboards.

Either side of the porch are faceted bays with timber double hung sash windows. There are cast iron brackets to the porch opening (possibly introduced) and a wide timber architrave, matching those to the windows. The porch now has a modern concrete deck. There is a four panelled door with highlight and sidelights (possibly renewed). Modern glass has been introduced to the highlight (frosted with KFC [Kentucky Fried Chicken] branding).

The house has a hipped roof, which extends over the bays, and is now clad in corrugated metal sheeting (replacing slate in 2015). There are two rendered chimneys with moulded caps. Gutters are a modern type.

To the rear of the house is a two storey addition with a cuboid form and garage undercroft. The rear of the site, accessed from Wesley Place, is paved for parking.

Comparative Analysis

The symmetrical façade and refined form of 3 Ryrie Street is representative of an early to mid-Victorian residence and suggests that it is possibly architect designed. Subtle details, such the channelled boards to the façade, combined with the recessed porch which delineates the entry are suggestive of the Regency style. These features combined with the relatively modest scale of the timber house distinguish it from other residences in Geelong.

During the 1870s, some substantial houses in Geelong were constructed with a similar format having faceted bays to the façade and a central recessed entry porch. These typically more elaborate houses include the larger and much more richly decorated *Honduu Villas* at 41-43 McKillop Street and *Belleville* at 350 Ryrie Street, both of which were constructed in 1870. Both buildings were designed by noted local architects Davidson and Henderson who frequently included faceted bays in their designs.¹⁹

A similar format was also introduced at *Woodlands* at 354 Ryrie Street in 1878 when Joseph Watts designed the two faceted window bays to the façade, replacing the original verandah.²⁰ These additions are however more heavily ornamented when compared to 3 Little Ryrie Street and the house is a more substantial masonry building.

Thematic Context

Victorian Historical Themes

Theme 6.7 Making homes for Victorians – Middle class homes

Recommendations

It is recommended that 3 Little Ryrie Street (the land and the residence) be removed from the City Fringe Heritage Area (HO1639) and be included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay on an individual basis.

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and/or Fences	No

¹⁹ David Rowe, 'Architecture of Geelong 1860-1900', Architecture Research Thesis, Volume 1, 1991, pp37-38

²⁰ Victorian Heritage Database, entry for Woodlands, 354 Ryrie Street, Geelong

