

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Former Player House, 333 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (HO262)



Figure 1. 333 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (GJM Heritage, July 2020).

DATE: **June 2021**

Place type: House	Architect: Arthur and Hugh Peck
Construction Date: 1918-19	Builder: Unknown

Historical Context Summary

The City of Stonnington stands on the Traditional Lands of the Woi wurrung and Boon Wurrung Peoples of the East Kulin Nations. Archaeologists believe that Aboriginal People have been in Victoria for more than 30,000 years. Throughout this long history their relationship with the landscape (where and how they live) has changed according to factors such as climate change, resource availability, and cultural change (Context 2006:10).

The first European settler in the Malvern district was John Gardiner in 1835, a pastoralist from New South Wales who was one of the first overlanders to Port Phillip. He pastured his stock near the junction of Gardiner’s Creek and the Yarra River and is the namesake of Gardiner’s Creek, Gardiner’s Creek Road (now Toorak Road) and both the locality and the Shire of Gardiner (before they were re-named Malvern). The first recorded use of the name Malvern was in January 1854, when barrister Charles B. G. Skinner named his hotel on the corner of Malvern and Glenferrie roads the ‘Malvern Hill’ after a district in England. The name for the Shire of Malvern was derived from Malvern Hill Estate, a private subdivision in the area dating to 1856 (City of Stonnington [CoS]; Context 2006:34).

The first land sales in the area were held in 1854 and most original Crown grantees subdivided their allotments for resale (Context 2006:41; 2009:4). Gardiner’s Road District was proclaimed in 1856 before Gardiner Shire was formed in 1871, which was renamed Malvern Shire in 1878 (CoS). The municipal boundary comprised the current localities of Malvern (previously Gardiner), Malvern East, Glen Iris (south of Gardiners Creek), Kooyong, Armadale (east of Kooyong Road), Toorak (east of Kooyong Road) and Chadstone (west of Warrigal Road). Early directories listed Malvern and Malvern East as the one locality, until 1910.

The former Malvern Shire saw slow population growth to 1881, by which time it totalled just under 2,000 people (Victorian Places). In 1879, the Oakleigh Railway Line was opened along the southern extent of the municipality, through Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn to join the existing line at South Yarra. The arrival of the Oakleigh railway coincided with the start of the land boom, which resulted in considerable urban growth. In the 1880s the district comprised substantial residences on large allotments, as well as pastoral and agricultural holdings (including market gardens and orchards) and commercial development (Context 2006:41, 65-6). During the 1880s boom period, the municipality saw a dramatic increase in population, quadrupling to approximately 8,000 by 1891, and steadily increasing to 10,000 by 1901 (Victorian Places). In the 1890s a number of timber houses were built in Malvern as an economy measure, but some residents complained that wooden houses would degenerate into slums. Concern about this development led to a slum abolition movement and subsequently, c1912, Malvern Council began to declare brick areas, where timber houses were not permitted. By 1916 the Council had also fixed a minimum area for individual housing allotments at 6000 square feet, with minimum frontages of fifty feet (Context 2006:128).

The railway line along the northern extent of the municipality was established in 1890 through the Glen Iris Valley from Burnley. Stations were established at Heyington, Kooyong, Tooronga, Gardiner, Glen Iris and Darling, however, expected residential development in their vicinity stalled during the 1890s following the economic collapse (Context 2006:66). The 1893 *Australian Handbook* (as cited in Victorian Places) described Malvern as ‘an elevated residential suburb’, served by a line of omnibuses from Prahran, with many leading merchants and professional men living in the area in pleasantly situated ‘dwellings of a superior class’. The entry noted that a number of notable mansions had been erected by this date, and that the market gardens and orchards were ‘steadily being reduced, and cut up into building allotments, on which [were] being erected

many handsome villas and business establishments' (Victorian Places). The municipality saw rapid development and urbanisation from 1900 and it was declared a Borough and then a Town in 1901. In 1911 the municipality was declared a City, with a residential population of 16,000 (Context 2006:86; Victorian Places).

The Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust was established in 1908, with electric tramlines opening along High Street in 1910-14, Glenferrie Road in 1910-13, to the south along Wattletree Road in 1910-12, and Malvern Road in 1915. The arrival of the tramlines further drove the development of commercial centres in the immediate vicinity and residential development beyond. New train stations were built at Armadale, Hawksburn, Malvern and Toorak between 1908 and 1918, and at Malvern East in 1929 (Context 2006:70-2, 113; Victorian Places).

Residential development during the early twentieth century generally occurred on newly subdivided estates or on nineteenth century subdivisions that had remained partly or wholly undeveloped during the 1890s depression (Context 2009:5). In 1912 it was reported that 800 houses a year were being built in the (by then) City of Malvern, which boasted 'a progress unprecedented by any other suburb' (Context 2009:128). In the decade between 1911 and 1921 the population in the City of Malvern doubled, from 16,000 to 32,000 residents, and then increased steadily to 43,000 by 1933 (Victorian Places). This population growth saw development spread to the Glen Iris Valley and the outer reaches of the City, in Malvern East. The housing stock in this eastern part of the municipality was more characteristically uniform and unadorned in comparison to housing in Malvern. Kooyong's development was substantially completed by the end of the 1920s (Context 2006:128, 131).

By 1946 the Australian Blue Book (as cited in Victorian Places) stated that Malvern was one of the 'leading residential suburbs of the Metropolis'. It comprised the substantial homes of many of Melbourne's leading citizens, in what was termed 'The Garden City' due to the number of parks and public gardens. Development in the City of Malvern steadied from the 1930s, with the population averaging 45,000 until the 1990s (Victorian Places). The City of Malvern amalgamated with the City of Prahran in 1994, to form the City of Stonnington

Place History Summary

The Former Player House was constructed in Glenferrie Road in 1918-19 (SHC MB592) on land purchased by Alfred Sikes in 1854 as Crown Portion 21 in the Township of Gardiner, Parish of Prahran. Henry N Woolaston purchased this land in 1874 and constructed a house at the rear of the northern portion of the large site. In 1881 he subdivided the land and sold the southern portion (Statham 2011).

A later owner further subdivided the northern allotment, creating the Trescott Estate, with seven building sites offered for sale in October 1906 (including the subject site) (Auction Notice for Trescott Estate, 1906). The three properties fronting Glenferrie Road were purchased by Bowes Kelly and the two northern allotments were purchased by James Evans in 1911, which were then on-sold to Dr Charles Player in 1915 (Statham 2011).

Architects Arthur and Hugh Peck designed a 12-roomed brick house for Player (Figure 2, SHC MB592) which was built on the northern allotment at 333 Glenferrie Road in 1918-19. A tennis court was constructed across the rear of the property (evident in aerial photographs by c1925-c1935, see Figure 3) and a garage was built at the south-west corner of the house (it is unclear whether the garage is evident in Figure 3, it is clear in an aerial photograph dated 1945, see Figure 4). Both remain in 2021. The front of the adjacent allotment to the south was subdivided and sold as a smaller site and a house built simultaneously in 1918 (Lewis 1992:157).

Major (Dr) Charles Player formerly practiced at 'Llaneast', on the northern corner of Llaneast Street and Glenferrie Road, Malvern, in which he also resided. Player subsequently worked in the Children's Department of the Alfred Hospital, later becoming a special magistrate of the Children's Court. He was a local Justice of the Peace (Statham 2011).

The Player family lived in this house until 1939 when it was sold to Dr William Denehy (Statham 2011). The property has continued to change ownership since that time.

Description Summary

The following description includes detail contained within '333 Glenferrie Road, Malvern Heritage Assessment' by John Statham (March 2011).

The Former Player House is set on a large L-shaped property on the west side of Glenferrie Road, between Malvern Road and High Street. A tennis court at the rear of the property extends across land to the rear of neighbouring 331 Glenferrie Road.

The Former Player House is a substantial attic-storey dwelling with rendered walls and massive intersecting gabled roofs clad with Marseilles pattern unglazed terracotta tiles. The chimneys are of a simple tapered design. One chimney, to the south, incorporates a corbel extending beyond the wall line. The gable end to the street has a sleep-out balcony with a distinctive terracotta shingled balustrade of a bell-cast profile. More terracotta shingles are set into the apex of the gable to serve as an awning. This and the large archways to the two front verandahs are significant features, along with the projecting bowed and boxed window bays on the north (living room) and east (drawing room) sides.

The façade has been rendered in recent decades to produce a textured finish in place of the original face brickwork. This has impacted on the original architects' intent with respect to the presentation of the building to the street. Other changes to the principal elevation include new quarry tiles to the porch and glazing of the 'sleeping out' balcony to the northern elevation.

Key Features:

- Late Federation Bungalow/attic-style house
- Simple overall massing with large street-facing gable
- Broad roof planes of steeply pitched gabled forms with dominant bell-cast roof to the front elevation and hipped roofs at the rear
- Unglazed terracotta tile-clad roofs
- Asymmetrical front elevation with prominent central gable bay composed of asymmetrically placed elements flanked by deep side verandahs
- Deep front balcony with bell cast terracotta shingled balustrade and terracotta shingled gable apex
- Large unadorned verandah archways
- Projecting bowed and boxed window bays
- Simple tapered chimneys
- Gable-roofed garage clad with unglazed terracotta tiles at south-west corner of house
- Rear tennis court.

Intactness/Integrity

Despite some alterations, the house remains largely intact to its period of construction and retains a high degree of integrity.



References

Auction Notice for Trescott Estate, 1906 (SLV).

Context Pty Ltd, Stonnington Thematic Environmental History, 2006 & 2009 addendum.

J B Cooper, *The History of Malvern, From its First Settlement to a City*, Melbourne, 1935.

G Butler & Associates, *Citation for 333 Glenferrie Road*, Malvern, 2003.

N Lewis & Associates, *City of Malvern Heritage Study*, 1992.

Statham, J., *Citation Assessment for 333 Glenferrie Road, Malvern*, 2011.

Stonnington History Centre (SHC), Building plans.

Victorian Places, 'Malvern' & 'Malvern East', <http://www.victorianplaces.com.au>.

Historic Images and Plans



Figure 2. Proposed residence Glenferrie Road for Player, A & H Peck 1918 (Source: SHC MB592)



Figure 3. Detail of aerial view showing 333 Glenferrie Road from the south, C D Pratt, dated c1925-c1935 (Source: SLV)



Figure 4. Detail of aerial view, 1945 (Source: Landata)