

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** FAIRVIEW

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** 101 Church Street COLERAINE

**STUDY NUMBER:** 007

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**PRECINCT:** Coleraine

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**ALLOTMENT:** 2      **SECTION:** 30      **PARISH:** PARISH OF COLERAINE

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA430J G-5, on the south west corner of Church and Gage Streets, approximately five blocks south of the centre of Coleraine.

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Fairview, Church Street, Coleraine. Looking south west from the corner of Church and Gage Streets.

**Image Date:** 31/01/02

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the house, the drive, the Cupressus macrocarpa hedge and all of the land.

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## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The residence located at 101 Church Street Coleraine (Fairview) is a single storey timber residence with corrugated iron hipped roof and timber verandah which surrounds three sides of the house. The front door is set in a typical late Victorian surround with side lights and a semicircular fanlight. There are two bay windows with single-paned double-hung sashes on either side of the front door which are roofed with corrugated iron. The house is set on a large elevated corner allotment, facing Church Street and overlooking Coleraine. There is no substantial surviving garden other than a Cupressus macrocarpa hedge along the east side boundary and the remnants of the main drive with brick spoon drains.

## **HISTORY:**

The land on which Fintona now stands was first purchased from the Crown on November 11, 1868 by P. Quigley, being Allotment 2 of Section 30 (Township of Coleraine, 1955). Very little information is known about Quigley, although it is possible that he was in some way related to John Quigley who was the publican at the Wannan Inn at Redruth in the 1850s. However, there has not been any strong evidence to suggest this link.

Troeth (99) notes that in 1887, the Hamilton Spectator (05/11/87) reported that Leon Lesser, a Coleraine merchant had purchased the land and erected a timber residence facing Church Street. Construction of the residence was supervised by Arthur Hill, civil engineer, of Coleraine (ibid.).

Leon May Lesser was the eldest son of the important local merchant, Abraham Lesser and his wife, Elizabeth (Bessie) May. Leon Lesser was born in Coleraine in 1864, and educated at Scotch College in Melbourne. Stubbins, in Forth (ed.) states that Lesser was enrolled in 1875 and excelled in Latin, French and Mathematics, achieving a higher score in Mathematics than his fellow pupil who went on to become Sir John Monash. The Lesser returned to Coleraine to work in the family business in 1875.

When Abraham Lesser died suddenly in 1886, Leon became the head of the family and the business, establishing his independence by buying land and building what was reputed to be the "... first Architect designed home {in Coleraine}" (Stubbins in Forth (ed.), 84).

Lesser married Cyril Jean (Jeannie) Rosenbloom, daughter of Harris Rosenbloom of Heywood in 1875, and they had 8 children. Lesser was keenly involved in a variety of local clubs and committees, including the Coleraine Race Club Committee, and the Freemasons. In October 1908, was elected to the managing committee of the Coleraine Mechanics Institute, a position which he retained for over 20 years. Lesser was also made Justice of the Peace in 1922.

From the turn of the century on, the family relocated for several months each year to Melbourne, where they had a house in South Yarra. It appears that Lesser moved to Melbourne permanently in about 1919, when he purchased a house in St. Kilda Road (ibid.), however, he continued to travel between Coleraine and Melbourne until the family business was sold in 1932.

It is presumed that when the family business was sold, the house may have changed owners, although there is no conclusive evidence to prove this. The further history and ownership of the property are not known at this time.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

- 4. Building Settlements, towns and cities
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

## **CONDITION:**

The house is missing its chimneys and the decorative detailing of the verandah. The sputings on the main roof and verandah roof have been replaced with square section guttering. The fence has been changed to a late

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twentieth century steel mesh.

**INTEGRITY:**

Fair

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

Fairview is a single storey timber house located at 101 Church Street Coleraine, five blocks to the south-west of central Coleraine. It was erected in 1887 by a local merchant, Leon Lesser, and the construction was supervised by Coleraine's civil engineer, Arthur Hill. Fairview is symmetrical about the front door which has sidelights and an arched fanlight. There are two bay windows. The house has a timber verandah on all sides, now missing its decorative detailing and a corrugated iron hipped roof. The chimneys have also been removed. It is otherwise intact and is in fair condition. Service rooms complete the rear of the house. The garden includes a large Cupressus macrocarpa hedge on the east side boundary. The original drive with brick spoon drains survives.

How is it significant?

Fairview is of architectural and historical significance to the township of Coleraine and the Southern Grampians Shire Council.

Why is it significant?

Fairview is of architectural significance as one of a small number of professionally designed residences from the nineteenth century within the township of Coleraine. The unusual bay windows whose roofs merge into the main ridge are of architectural interest. Historically, it demonstrates the lifestyle of a successful middle class merchant, the proprietor of Lesser's Store.

**COMPARISON:**

510 Fintona 49 Gage Street, Coleraine

**ASSESSED BY:** AELN

**ASSESSMENT DATE:**

15-Jul-01

**EXISTING LISTINGS:**

**HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Include in VHR  Include in RNE  Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

**REFERENCES:**

Author	Title	Year	Page
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1873	
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1955	
Hamilton Spectator	Hamilton Spectator 05 November, 1887	1887	
Leon George Stubbings in Gordon Forth, ed.	Biographical Dictionary of the Western District of Victoria	1998	84
Malcolm Troeth	The Cultural Landscape of Coleraine	1988	99
Shire of Wannon	Shire of Wannon Ratebook 1887-1888	1888	#50