

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: BOONAR

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Hamilton Highway TARRINGTON

STUDY NUMBER: 393

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: Tarrington

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: part 2 **SECTION:** XVI **PARISH:** PARISH OF HAMILTON SOUTH

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 474 J- ; VicRoads 73 C6; located on the south side of the Hamilton Highway

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Boonar, Hamilton Highway, Tarrington

Image Date: 15/05/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the building but excluding the interiors and all of the land.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Boonar is a single storey symmetrical house designed loosely in the Italianate style, which was conservative for the time. It is constructed of pressed cement blocks, an innovative material for the time. Otherwise the house is conventional in its form, planning, details and other materials. There is a timber verandah across the façade and on the western side. The central front door is four-panelled with a fanlight above. The two front windows are double hung sashes. There is a projecting wing on the west side which terminates the verandah.

HISTORY:

Pastor Clamor W Schurmann purchased allotment 2 of section 16 of the Parish of South Hamilton from the Crown in 1857. It comprised just over 112 acres. The north-eastern corner of the allotment was used for the development of the St Michael's Lutheran church and school from 1858. The remainder of the land was subdivided and became known firstly as German Town, then Hochkirk and, because of anti-German sentiment during the First World War, as Tarrington (Garden, 47-8). It was the beginning of the township. By 1865 it was described officially as "a German settlement, and postal village" and that "there are no hotels in the village, and the population of the district is about 1000 persons, who are engaged in cultivating the fine country on which they are settled" (Bailliere's, 184). But the town declined in the 1870s with the departure of many Germans to the Wimmera.

For some time from when it was built, Boonar operated as the Tarrington Post Office. There is a mark on the façade where there was opening through to the front, north-west room which served as the post office. The pressed cement blocks used at Boonar are simply load bearing and are not reinforced. They are textured to simulate stone and, for special details such as the chimney tops, are decorated with swags rather than the rock-face finish.

The 1913 classroom at St Michael's Lutheran School and at least four houses in Tarrington used the concrete blocks. There are several other examples in the district such as Pleasant View, Petschel's Lane, Croxton East. Walter Burley Griffin patented his system of concrete block construction called 'Knitlock' in 1917. It consisted of irregularly shaped and hollow blocks which fitted together with mortared joints and which were tied together by vertical galvanised iron wire.

There was a general revival of fortunes in the early twentieth century before the First World War and subsequently with the promotion of flax growing in the area. Boonar survived the serious bushfires in 1927 and 1944 which seriously threatened the town.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3 Developing Local, Regional and National Economies
3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity
3.14 Developing an Australian engineering and construction industry
3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
3.17 Inventing devices

Theme 8 Developing Australia's cultural life
8.12 Living in and around Australian homes
8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

CONDITION:

The house is substantially intact and is in excellent condition. (The interiors have not been inspected.)

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

Boonar is an early twentieth century house of conventional form, plan and style but built with pressed cement blocks. It is located on the north side of the Hamilton Highway in the township of Tarrington. The house was constructed after 1910, and served as the Tarrington Post Office for some time. There has been no architect or builder associated with the building. The building is in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

Boonar is of historical and architectural significance to the community of Tarrington and to the southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

Boonar is of historical significance for its previous use as the centre for communications in Tarrington, operating as a post office for some years. Boonar is of architectural significance because, on the one hand, its form, plan and style are conventional for the period but, on the other, it is an early use of pressed cement blocks as the main construction material and it is the best surviving example of several in the district.

COMPARISON:

382 St Michael's Lutheran Church Complex, 1913 Schoolroom, Hamilton Highway Tarrington
392 Pleasant View, Petschel's Lane, Croxton East

ASSESSED BY: AEN

ASSESSMENT DATE:

16-Jan-04

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
F F Bailliere	Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer and Road Guide	1865	184
Garden, Don	Hamilton A Western District History	1984	47-8, 54-5, 82, 110
Miles Lewis, ed.	Two hundred years of concrete in Australia	1988	