
Motel, 7-9 Newall Street, MARNOO



MA 18 - Shire of Northern
Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage
Study, 2004

Location

7-9 Newall Street MARNOO, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 31, 2004

The motel, 7-9 Newall Street, Marnoo, has significance as an intact example of a Modern Functionalist style that was typical for roadside architecture in Australia from the mid 20th century. Having its roots in American roadside buildings and motels from the interwar (c.1920s-1940s) period, the Marnoo motel reflects the progress of the township in the mid 20th century, with the need for visitor accommodation after the popularisation of the motor car.

The motel, 7-9 Newall Street, Marnoo, is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It demonstrates original design qualities of a mid 20th century Modern Functionalist style typical for roadside motel design. These qualities include the flat and raking roof forms, wide eaves, box-like composition, single storey height, cement sheet wall cladding, and the flat roofed front verandahs supported by hollow steel columns. Another intact quality

includes the visually distinctive horizontal banks of timber framed windows (punctuated by timber framed door openings) on the front facades.

The motel, 7-9 Newall Street, Marnoo, is **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is associated with the progress of the Marnoo township in the mid 20th century with the need for visitor accommodation. It also represents a legacy of the popularisation of the motor car that provide greater access to outlying towns such as Marnoo, which subsequently provided roadside accommodation along similar architectural lines to that established in America during the interwar (c.1920s-1940s) period.

Overall, the motel, 7-9 Newall Street, Marnoo, is of **LOCAL** significance.

Heritage Study/Consultant Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004;

Hermes Number 108195

Property Number

Physical Description 1

The motel, 7-9 Newall Street, Marnoo, is set on a very wide allotment with a modest front setback.

The single storey, cement sheet, Mid 20th Century Regional Modern styled motel building is characterised by its flat and raking forms having wide eaves and box-like compositions, and flat roofed front verandahs supported by hollow steel columns. The front facades are visually distinctive for the horizontal banks of timber framed windows punctuated by timber framed door openings.

COMPARATIVE

The Roadhouse: American Contextual Background

Motel design in Victoria in the mid 20th century was largely based on American roadside architecture of the interwar period. Not surprisingly, this type of architecture had its roots in the popularisation of the automobile on the early 20th century America. Around the time of the First World War, entrepreneurs began to find ways to profit from the motorist's freedom by erecting roadside structures to sell a variety of products and services.

The motel at Marnoo is a combination of the roadside and motel buildings and types developed in America in the 1920s and 1930s. The American roadside buildings included petrol stations, lunch and refreshment stands, self-service food stores, family restaurants, drive-in restaurants, and diners. By the 1930s, these buildings were largely designed in a Modern Functionalist style, being white boxes with flat roofs, streamlined corners and large corner windows. Other Modern Functionalist buildings included architectural boxes with raking roofs having wide overhangs, visually distinctive glazed fronts and prominent roof mounted signs. This latter type represented the typical American roadside commercial design idiom from the late 1940s until the mid 1960s. Examples include Bea's Sandwich Bar, c.1940s, Methuen, Massachusetts; Brite Cleaners/Laundrerers, 1958, Worcester, Massachusetts. Earlier refreshment stands included Carpenter's Sandwiches, c.1930, Los Angeles.

Other Early Roadhouses and Motels in Victoria

Other examples of roadhouses and roadside architecture in Victoria (including motels) is given below:

Four Kings Roadhouse, Great Ocean Road, Anglesea, 1946-47. Designed by the Geelong architects, Laird and Buchan, this building represents the earliest known extant purpose-built roadhouse in Victoria, whose main function was the sale of food and refreshments. The external form and construction of the roadhouse is largely intact and it is a distinctive example of immediate postwar Modern Functionalist design. Its widely projecting and

thin flat concrete snack bar roof and streamlined curved corners, and glazed walls, and cement rendered and parapeted rear shop building, became the hallmarks of roadside architectural design in Victoria several years later in the 1950s and 1960s;

Wayside Inn, Kallista, 1945. Designed by Frederick Romberg, this streamlined, heavily glazed Modern Functionalist two storey building had a distinguished structural frame and curved end. A lobby and terrace were situated on the ground floor, with the upper floor accommodating a tea room and dance floor. It is not known whether this building was actually constructed, and whether it is extant today;

Billabong Roadhouse, Fernbank, c.1950s. This roadhouse building was a modest, Modern Functionalist architectural white box with a parapeted roof, timber framed corner windows and banks of basement windows. It is not known if the building is extant;

Roadhouse, Olinda, c.1950s. This building was designed to a similar scale and style as the Billabong Roadhouse, being a distinctive white cuboid form with timber framed windows. Large openings punctuated the right end of the building to allow for vehicular access as a motor garage, while the left end had a projecting cantilevered porch. It is also not known whether this building is extant;

Oakleigh Motel, Oakleigh, 1957. This building has been classified by the National Trust as being of State significance. It is the first motel to be built in Victoria, being influenced by the American experience and represents the vanguard of a new type of building that came to dominate the travelling and holiday experience in the 1960s. The Oakleigh Motel is possibly the best example in Victoria of a regional Modern Functionalist style, with its various angles, lightweight structure, entry canopy supported by zig-zag struts, angled window wall and visually striking billboard that is illuminated at night;

Koala Motel, Stoney Rises, c.1950s. This lightweight Modern Functionalist complex has a roadhouse, motel and 'zoo';

Later Roadhouses in Victoria: The new form of roadside architecture known as the roadhouse was largely popularised in the early 1960s, with Shell leading the way. These roadhouses were petrol-oriented and not food centres and snack bars as originally established at Anglesea. For further details of the later roadhouses in Victoria, see D. Catrice and M. Summerton, *The Motor Garage & Service Station in Victoria: A Survey*, Heritage Victoria, 1997.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

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