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# RAVENSWOOD



RAVENSWOOD SOHE 2008



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1 ravenswood ivanhoe front view



ravenswood ivanhoe detail of stonework



ravenswood ivanhoe driveway and gardens

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## Location

40 BEAUVIEW PARADE IVANHOE EAST, Banyule City

## Municipality

BANYULE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0199

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO11

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Amendment to Registration

March 12, 1975

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 2, 2004

What is significant?

Ravenswood at Ivanhoe East was begun in 1891 for financier Robert William Kennedy on four acres of land rising from the north side of Lower Heidelberg Road. The house and its impressive garden were then surrounded by open farmland. The Heidelberg area had been popular for gentlemen's houses in the 1840s, but later went out of favour. Ravenswood was begun just before the 1890s depression, and was one of the last boom period mansions built anywhere in Melbourne. The house was built in several stages. The architects for the first stage were probably Hitchcock & Nicholson (though Twentyman & Askew or J Smith are also possibilities). It is not known whether the same architects designed subsequent additions. The first stage, comprising the main bulk of the house, was probably begun in 1891, the ballroom was added in 1895, and the rooms above the ballroom in 1910-1914. A ballroom extension of this kind was unusual for this period, and indicates that Kennedy was not affected significantly by the depression. A driveway led across a grand balustraded terrace at the front of the house towards the stables at the rear. The land was progressively subdivided from the 1930s, and in 1949 was bought by the Melbourne Ladies Benevolent Society and converted into a nursing home for elderly women, which involved many alterations to the house. Many original internal features were also lost in a fire. Restoration works were begun in the 1980s.

Ravenswood is a two storey mansion of rendered brick on a bluestone base in an ornate Renaissance Revival style. There is elaborate stucco decoration typical of the boom period on the exterior, with festoons, cornices, balustrades and parapets. A two storey arcade carried on cast iron Corinthian columns runs across the front (south) elevation and returns on both sides, past square columns on the corners. There is a decorative pedimented Corinthian entrance porch over the balustraded stairs leading from the terrace up to the verandah. On the west facade is a polygonal bay rising up two storeys. The ballroom on the east side of the house has arched fanlights, etched glass windows, and an elevated stage; its facade is more plainly rendered than the older facades. There was once a conservatory attached to the side of the ballroom. A second storey was added above the ballroom in 1910-14, comprising bedrooms arranged around an elegant timber balcony projecting beyond the ballroom. The north side of the house is not rendered, and toothed brickwork suggests that future extensions on this side were planned. Remnants of the original garden landscaping and planting survive.

How is it significant?

Ravenswood at Ivanhoe East is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Ravenswood is architecturally significant as a fine example of a Renaissance Revival mansion of the boom period in Victoria, and one of the last of this type built before the 1890s depression. It is also significant for the fine stucco decoration on the exterior.

Ravenswood is historically significant as a reminder of a way of life associated with the zenith of Melbourne in the Victorian era. It is also significant as one of the few mansions built on the outer northern parts of Melbourne in the late nineteenth century.

*[Online Data Upgrade Project 2004]*

## Permit Exemptions

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable.

Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates	1891, 1895, 1910,
Architect/Designer	Hitchcock, N,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	601
Property Number	

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## History

Ravenswood at Ivanhoe East was begun in 1891 for financier Robert William Kennedy on four acres of land rising from the north side of Lower Heidelberg Road. The house and its impressive garden were then surrounded by open farmland. The Heidelberg area had been popular for gentlemen's houses in the 1840s, but later went out of favour. Ravenswood was begun just before the 1890s depression, and was one of the last boom period mansions built anywhere in Melbourne. The house was built in several stages. The architects for the first stage were probably Hitchcock & Nicholson (though Twentyman & Askew or J Smith are also possibilities). It is not known whether the same architects designed subsequent additions. The first stage, comprising the main bulk of the house, was probably begun in 1891, the ballroom was added in 1895, and the rooms above the ballroom in 1910-1914. A ballroom extension of this kind was unusual for this period, and indicates that Kennedy was not affected significantly by the depression. A driveway led across a grand balustraded terrace at the front of the house to the stables at the rear. The land was progressively subdivided from the 1930s, and in 1949 was bought by the Melbourne Ladies Benevolent Society and converted into a nursing home for elderly women, which involved many alterations to the house. Many original internal features were also lost in a fire. Restoration works were begun in the 1980s.

The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Data Upgrade Project 2004. Sources were as follows:

Graeme Butler, 'City of Heidelberg Conservation Study'.  
John Lucy, 'Proposed Restoration of East Balcony at Ravenswood', 1990.  
National Trust Citation.

## Extent of Registration

199. Ravenswood, Corner Beauview Parade and York Avenue, Ivanhoe. (Entrance hall, stairway and exterior only of the old building, together with all of the grounds which lie to the south of the northern face of the old

building and of the easterly and westerly prolongation thereof).  
*Victoria Government Gazette* No.16. - March 12, 1975

*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.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*