

# WESTERFIELD



Westerfield\_house from drive\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_From Road\_RN\_Dec 08



Westerfield from north



Westerfield\_house garden lily pond\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfird\_Frankston\_rear\_KJ 08



Westerfield\_Frankston\_eucaly; paddock\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_drying shed & furnace\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_Frankston\_elevate water tank\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_Frankston\_north end of orchard & hedge from balcony\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_garage\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_caretaker's cottage & garden front\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_pump shed\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_dam\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_dam  
edge\_KJ\_Dec 08



Westerfield\_bushland\_KJ\_Dec  
08

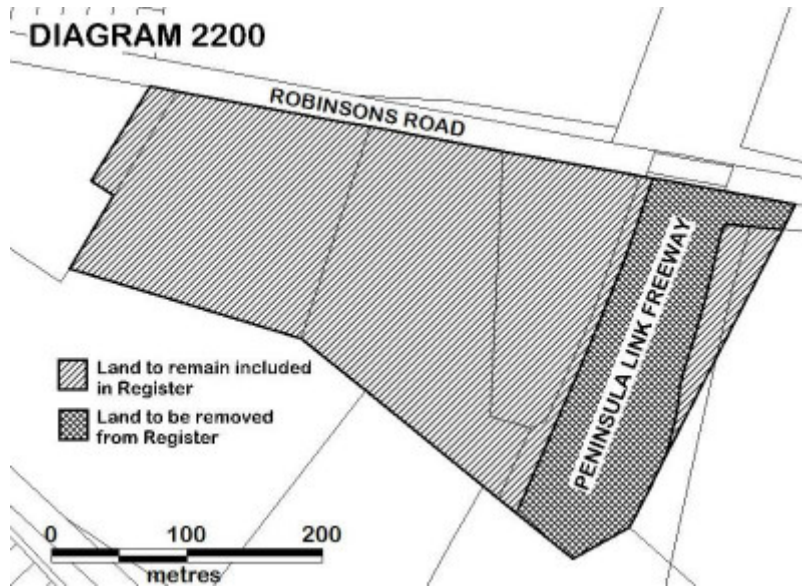


diagram 2200 final.JPG

**Location**

72-118 ROBINSONS ROAD FRANKSTON SOUTH, FRANKSTON CITY

**Municipality**

FRANKSTON CITY

**Level of significance**

Registered

**Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H2200

**Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO5

**VHR Registration**

April 6, 2009

## Amendment to Registration

July 24, 2014

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Westerfield was a 45 hectare property purchased in 1920 by Russell and Mabel Grimwade as a farm and rural retreat, in an area which became popular in the 1920s for the holiday houses of Melbourne's most prominent families. Russell Grimwade (1879-1955) was one of Australia's outstanding industrialists, scientists and philanthropists. He was trained in science, was chairman of numerous chemical companies, including the family pharmaceutical business, Felton Grimwade & Co, which later became Drug Houses of Australia, and of the Victorian Board of Scientific and Industrial Research. His interests included arboriculture, carpentry, photography and forestry, and he was an enthusiast for native plants who published an *Anthology of Eucalypts* in 1920. At Westerfield he began to plant what became a collection of more than fifty species of gums, as well as acres of lavender and roses, from which oil was distilled. A house designed by the fashionable Melbourne architect Harold Desbrowe Annear was built at Westerfield in 1924. Nearby was a terraced lawn, a garden and pergola, probably also designed by Annear, an orchard and vegetable garden, and a timber windmill (now demolished) designed to generate electricity for the house. An area of natural bushland east of the house was retained. With the onset of World War II Australia's supply of many essential plant-derived drugs was cut off, and Grimwade, with the aid of the Federal Government, obtained seed from England and cultivated at Westerfield crops of poppies, foxgloves, deadly nightshade, henbane and colchicum. He constructed a drying shed, and with the resources of the family firm's laboratories developed extraction techniques to produce many of the drugs essential for Australia's war effort. The poppy seed grown at Westerfield was distributed to farms around Australia, and was able to satisfy all of Australia's morphine requirements until after the war. Grimwade was knighted in 1950. The property was sold and subdivided after his death.

The Westerfield estate is now on 14 hectares and incorporates a house, garden, paddocks, dam and bushland. The two storey Arts and Crafts style house has ground floor walls of uncoursed locally-quarried granite rubble and a half timber and stucco upper floor. The plan is unconventional with three wings radiating out from a central stair hall. The house has no corridors, and many rooms have unusual shapes. The interior is remarkably intact, with many original details such as built-in furniture and door furniture. Much use was made of stained timber, for floors, skirtings, architraves, doors and built-in cupboards, but some is now painted white. A small timbered tower containing a water tank rises from the centre of the cement-tiled roof. In the angle between two wings is an east-facing semicircular porch, now glassed in, axially aligned to the main garden path. Above the porch is a balustraded deck, intended as a lookout towards Westernport Bay. To the south of the house are a caretaker's cottage and a garage.

The landscape still reflects the original design, with distinct but integrated features. A driveway lined with *Corymbia maculata* leads to the house. To the west is Grimwade's eucalypt paddock, with many species of gums remaining, including *Corymbia ficifolia*, *Eucalyptus saligna*, *E. cladocalyx*, and *E. sideroxylon*. To the east of the house is a long formal garden with a terraced lawn, flower beds, a fuchsia hedge, and a lily pond at the north end. The garden retains many of Grimwade's plantings, including a crab apple (*Malus floribunda*), Washington thorn, two old Lilacs and a Liquidamber. 'Sunny South' roses, which were once grown commercially on the property have been transplanted to the garden from the paddock where they were grown. The pergola that once divided the orchard from the garden was replaced by the 1950s by a privet hedge. In the orchard are many fruit trees planted by Grimwade, including three lemons, an old fig, Gravenstein, Democrat, Stewart's Seedling and Smith's

Late Red apples, and Packham Triumph, Honeyball and Beurre Bosc pears. West of the eucalypt paddock, at the edge of a paddock where the roses and later the drug crops were grown, is a timber drying shed and next to it the base of a brick furnace used for heating, and nearby is an elevated water tank relocated from the former Langwarrin Military Reserve in c1922. To the east is an area of natural bushland retained by Grimwade and cared for by later owners. The bush area contains the large dam constructed by Grimwade in 1926, a pump shed and the irrigation pipe leading from the dam to the upper tank, garden and paddocks.

How is it significant?

Westerfield is of architectural, historical and scientific (botanical) significance to the state of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Westerfield is architecturally significant as an example of the rural retreats built by Melbourne's wealthiest families in the 1920s. It is an outstanding example of an innovative Arts and Crafts style house and garden, designed in 1924 by the prominent Melbourne architect Harold Desbrowe Annear, who was a leader of the Arts and Crafts movement in Victoria. It is among the most intact of his houses, and retains many original features, including the built-in furniture and door fittings.

Westerfield is historically significant for its association with Sir Russell Grimwade, a man of extraordinary diversity, active in some of Australia's largest and most enterprising business concerns, particularly in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, and prominent in such bodies as the National Museum and the University of Melbourne. Grimwade was an early advocate for nature conservation, and had a great interest in native plants and their cultivation. The trees planted by him demonstrate his interests in forestry, conservation and experimental horticulture. The drying shed and the furrowed paddock west of the house associated with production of drugs during World War II demonstrate a rare experimental enterprise in biotechnology, which played important role in Australia's war effort.

The plantings and the bushland retained by Grimwade after his purchase of the land have scientific (botanical) significance. The bushland is considered to be extremely important for its biodiversity, forms part of an important wildlife corridor, and demonstrate Grimwade's passion for and knowledge of the Australian environment. The orchard contains a number of rare fruit cultivars.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### **Specific 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. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria 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.

#### Garden and landscape:

The process of gardening, including mowing, hedge clipping, bedding displays, removal of dead plants and replanting the same species or cultivar, disease and weed control, and maintenance to care for existing plants.

Removal of dead or dangerous trees if the tree is an immediate risk of personal or damage to property

Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; *Pruning of amenity trees* AS 4373

Replanting to maintain the landscape character or planting theme identified in the Statement of Significance

In the event of the loss of any plant specified in the Statement of Significance/Extent of Registration, replanting with the same species of tree/plant as that removed

Repairs, conservation and maintenance to hard landscape elements, buildings, structures, sculptures, fountains, monuments, ornaments, roads and paths, edges, fences and gates, drainage and irrigation systems

Removal of plants listed as noxious weeds in the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*

Non-structural works and installation, removal or replacement of garden watering and drainage systems that occur at a distance greater than 5 metres from the canopy edge of a significant tree, plant or hedge, (structural works may require a permit if still on the registered land)

Removal of vegetation to maintain fire safety and to conserve significant buildings and structures

Removal of (intrusive) plants not identified in the registration or management report

#### **ONGOING PERMIT EXEMPTIONS:**

These specifically relate to the portion of LMA-owned land that forms part of the Peninsula Link Road Reserve and surrounds that remains within the extent of the heritage registration of Westerfield.

#### **PERMIT EXEMPTIONS**

General:

\* Inspection, maintenance and repair of existing infrastructure associated with Peninsula Link which replaces like with like.

\* Inspection and maintenance of landscaping surrounding the road reserve which replaces like with like.

\* Inspection and maintenance of the 'Extent of heritage fabric to be retained in situ' as depicted with hatching in the plan attached to permit P15708 which will not impact on the cultural heritage significance.

Construction dates	1924,
Architect/Designer	Annear, Harold Desbrowe,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	6137
Property Number	

---

## History

### CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

[Information largely taken from Harriet Edquist, *Harold Desbrowe-Annear. A Life in Architecture*, Carlton 2004.]

From the nineteenth century the Mornington Peninsula area was a popular location for the weekend retreats of Melbourne's establishment. With improving transportation in the early twentieth century, and particularly the motor car, the numbers of these increased.

Harold Desbrowe Annear designed five houses on the Peninsula in the 1920s for some of Melbourne's most prominent families, who also socialised with one another.

The four houses designed in the Frankston-Langwarrin area between 1925 and 1928 were in the vanguard of the inter-war development of the Baxter-Langwarrin swamp from small rural holdings into an enclave of semi-rural retreats for members of Melbourne's establishment. Apart from Desbrowe-Annear's houses, there was Oakley & Parkes Heatherhill for Prime Minister Stanley Bruce in the Spanish Mission style, Osborne McCuthcheon's St Mirins for James Cook, and Lionel Teague's Holmcroft. As well as Westerfield, he designed Mulberry Hill [for Daryl and Joan Lindsay]; Merthon; Noorah and Delgany [for the Armstrongs]. This enclave seems to have developed "despite the area having an unfavourable reputation due to the Government treatment centre for venereal disease established in McClelland Drive in 1915. At first it was a prison hospital, but later became a sanatorium." ' (Edquist, *Harold Desbrowe-Annear*, P 172)

These houses formed an enclave of holiday mansions owned by Melbourne's elite, prominent in business, social and philanthropic circles.

### ARTS AND CRAFTS HOUSES

Arts and Crafts architects in England in the late nineteenth century developed a distinctive approach to design with building layouts determined by function rather than theoretical ideas of symmetry, the avoidance of ornament, the honest use of natural and local materials and of traditional crafts to relate a building to its landscape, and the abandonment of historical styles. The style was adopted in Australia partly through influence from the United States, with architects such as Henry Hobson Richardson, Greene & Green and Frank Lloyd Wright supplying alternative sources.

Houses with angled wings, called butterfly plans, became popular in the late nineteenth century, designed by architects such as Norman Shaw and E S Pryor, and they were adopted in Victoria from 1892 (at Boisdale homestead by Guyon Purchas), though here the planning is conventional, with rooms arranged either side of central passages.

### ARTS AND CRAFTS GARDENS

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century gardens moved away from the picturesque style, where the emphasis was on the plantings, typified by the gardens of William Guilfoyle's Dalvui. The leaders of the change were the architects, such as Walter Butler and Desbrowe Annear, committed to the Arts and Crafts ideal of the total work of art. The new type of garden, with a formal layout within clearly visible boundaries, and clearly related to the design of the house, emphasised the garden design. Annear's first garden was for Ballangeich, for May and Norman Macgeorge in Alphington in 1910. Annear did not construct 'outdoor rooms' here as Butler did, and

there was little in the way of hard landscape works, which would have jarred with the relatively plain Arts and Crafts bungalow. The Macgeorges were both keen naturalists, and the most important part of the garden was the plantation of sugar gums between the formal garden and Darebin Creek. This was an early example of the bush garden movement in twentieth century Melbourne. This movement according to Edquist 'may owe its origins in part to Arts and Crafts architects and their clients who incorporated a native garden into their planting schemes as an Australian version of the English wild garden'. Walter Butler's Warrawee is the best known of these. (Edquist, *Harold Desbrowe Annear*, pp 187-8)

Annear's most famous gardens were designed after WWI and were all formal in character. They had a number of built features, such as stone walls, stone- or concrete-edged pools, sundials and statuary, which provided the basis for his mature garden designs.

By the 1920s the relationship between the house and garden was recognised as an important one, and local design journals carried numerous articles calling for them to be designed in sympathy with one another. The profession of landscape architect did not yet exist. According to Edquist (p198) Edna Walling's rise to fame in the 1920s was possible because the groundwork had been laid by architect such as Butler and Annear.

### **Sir WILFRID RUSSELL GRIMWADE (1879-1955)**

[J. R. Poynter, 'Grimwade, Sir Wilfred Russell (1879 - 1955)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 9, Melbourne University Press, 1983, pp 126-128.]

Russell Grimwade was the third son of Frederick Grimwade, of Felton Grimwade & Co., which developed into firms manufacturing acids, salt, glass bottles, fertilisers and eucalyptus oil. Russell graduated B.Sc. at Melbourne University in 1901 and joined Felton Grimwade's in 1903 as director of the new research laboratory and was admitted a partner in 1907. In 1909 he married Mabel Louise Kelly, and a year later he bought Miegunyah in Orrong Road.

On their father's death in 1910 the three brothers inherited the original partnership and substantial interests in Felton Grimwade & Bickford's of Perth, J. Bosisto & Co., Cuming Smith & Co. Ltd, the Adelaide Chemical and Fertilizer Co. Ltd, and the Melbourne Glass Bottle Works Pty Ltd. The family's next venture, the establishment of the Australian Oxygen Co. in June 1910, arose from Russell's lifelong interest in industrial gases, and became his particular responsibility. Russell's interest in forests and their products led him to persuade Bosisto's to experiment with the extraction of oils and compounds from indigenous plants.

War strengthened the Grimwade enterprises. Russell took Harold's place on the boards of Cuming Smiths and the Melbourne Glass Bottle Works, which became Australian Glass Manufacturers Ltd. Felton Grimwade's itself lost overseas sources of supply, leading Russell to experiment with local production of tar derivatives and with drug-growing. His scientific ingenuity was challenged further by his membership of the advisory council set up in 1916, the forerunner of the CSIRO, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization.

In 1920 Felton Grimwade and other Grimwade partnerships were reorganized as proprietary companies. Russell became chairman of the new Australian Oxygen and Industrial Gases Pty Ltd. In 1929 threats from overseas persuaded the Grimwades to take their pharmaceutical and dental companies into a new national structure, Drug Houses of Australia Ltd (later D.H.A. (Vic) Pty Ltd). After Harold's death in 1949, Russell succeeded him as chairman of Felton Grimwade & Duerdins, and continued as a director of C.I.G. until 1953. Bosisto's, of which he had long been chairman, became a subsidiary of D.H.A. in 1951.

The brothers shared in succession membership of the Felton Bequests Committee, with Russell chosen to succeed Harold in 1949, and became chairman in 1952. (Sir) Daryl Lindsay, director of the National Gallery, was a close friend and Frankston neighbour.

Russell's other interests and commitments outside business were extraordinarily diverse. He was an early motoring enthusiast, the first to drive from Melbourne to Adelaide. He financed and organized an expedition to Goondiwindi, Queensland, to observe the eclipse of the sun in 1922 and another in 1947 to follow Edward John Eyre's route across the Nullarbor. His most frequent trips were into the forests; and the development of his remarkable garden at Miegunyah was but part of his life-long passion for plants and trees. He read widely in botanical literature, and published in 1920 *An Anthography of the Eucalypts*, a survey illustrated with his own photographs. He campaigned tirelessly for the conservation of forests as an office-bearer of the Australian Forest League and a contributor to its journal *Gum Nut*. He supported the opening of the Australian Forestry School, under his friend Charles Lane Poole, at Canberra in 1927, endowing the Russell Grimwade prize to encourage

scientific forestry. At home, in his workshop, he developed cabinet-making skills of a very high order, using native timbers. He gave financial support to the forest products division of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, as well as involving himself, for forty years, in C.S.I.R.'s advisory Councils.

Russell's interest in drug growth and manufacture involved him in medical research, and he was a member of the board of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research from 1935 and its chairman in 1942-48. In 1950 the Victorian branch of the British Medical Association admitted him to honorary membership, a rare distinction. An active member of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute, he was especially concerned to bring science and industry into closer relationships; in 1938 he was elected a fellow of the Institute, and in 1939 president of the chemistry section of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. His presidential address on 'The atmosphere as a raw material', was a remarkable synthesis of his preoccupations as industrial chemist and naturalist, earning him a place in the history of the conservation movement in Australia. Sharing his generation's admiration for the explorers and settlers he made James Cook a particular hero, and in 1934 donated the so-called Cook's Cottage to the people of Victoria as a centenary gift. In campaigning to preserve relics of the past at a time when Australians commonly despised everything old he anticipated the aims of the National Trust.

Russell also belonged to the advisory committee for the Botanic Gardens, the board of the National Museum of Victoria and the Council of Melbourne Grammar School. He was a member of the Council of the University of Melbourne from 1935, and deputy chancellor in 1941-43. Generous to many causes, Russell's largest gift during his lifetime was of £50,000 to the university in 1944, towards the building of the Russell Grimwade School of Biochemistry.

Russell Grimwade was appointed C.B.E. in 1935 and knighted in 1950. He died from coronary vascular disease on 2 November 1955. His estate was valued for probate at almost £1 million. His wife, who died on 6 September 1973, left a further \$2 million. Between them they left Miegunyah and a substantial endowment to the University of Melbourne, for its general benefit. They had no children.

HAROLD DESBROWE ANNEAR, (1865-1933)

[from George Tibbits, 'Annear, Harold Desbrowe (1865 - 1933)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 7, Melbourne University Press, 1979, pp 77-78.]

Annear was born in 1865 at Sandhurst (Bendigo), Victoria. In 1883 he was articled to the architect William Salway (d.1903) and set up on his own in about 1889. His papers on John Ruskin (1889) and on methods of architectural criticism (1893), delivered before the Victorian Institute of Architects, show him to be a staunch admirer of Ruskin and the American H. H. Richardson, whom he called 'the greatest modern architectural genius'. They also reveal his deep commitment to the arts and crafts movement. In 1900 Annear became a foundation member and first president of the T-Square Club, which brought together artists, craftsmen and architects. His designs were often praised for bringing artist, architect and craftsmen together.

Annear worked in a variety of modern styles; his most distinctive early design was the Springthorpe memorial in the Boroondara Cemetery, Kew (1897), described by the *Argus* in 1933 as 'the most beautiful work of its kind in Australia'.

In 1902-03 Annear planned the three houses for which he is best known: 32, 34 and 38 The Eyrie, Eaglemont. These were free and decorative adaptations of a half-timbered, roughcast, and Marseilles tiles genre called, in Victoria, Queen Anne style. They were planned so that one space could freely flow into another, with built-in cupboards and distinctive, vertically sliding windows. He persisted with the half-timbered and roughcast designs into the 1920s. His best known houses include those for the artist Norman Macgeorge at Alphington (1910), Broceliande (also known as Troon) at 224 Orrong Road, Toorak (1918, demolished), and Inglesby at 97 Caroline Street, South Yarra (1919, demolished).

While much of Annear's work resulted either from commissions by fellow artists or from wealthy clients, he expressed his desire for a universal Australian domestic architecture through a publication, *For Every Man his Home*, edited by him in 1922, which included modest villa designs featuring open-air rooms, American West Coast bungalow forms and rough-cast walls.

HISTORY OF PLACE

[largely from Poynter, *Russell Grimwade*, pp 136-143, 241-249.]



In 1920 Russell Grimwade bought 113 acres at Baxter near Frankston, with long views to Westernport Bay, as the site for a country house. This would allow him to indulge his interest in the cultivation of trees and plants and the extraction of essential oils. This was Grimwade's first country house, following his father's Coolart and older brother Harold's Marathon (VHR H946), both on the Mornington Peninsula. Grimwade noted in his diary (now in the University of Melbourne Archives, the following extracts are quoted from Poynter, *Russell Grimwade*):

It is a great and satisfactory experience to build a house. I do not mean to add another unit to the thousands that already exist in the urbs and suburbs of the established cities, towns and villages of the world, but to start with a virgin field or paddock miles from anywhere and on it make a home with conveniences and accessories that meet our modern standards. Furthermore it is a privilege to live in a country that makes such an experience possible. Our virgin paddock has no fence, no water and no shelter. It is 100 acres of poorish soil partly covered with natural trees and undergrowth and a lovely view of distant blue waters. Possums, snakes, echidnas, are at home there with occasional koalas and wallabies .

On earlier visits when contemplating the house to be, one planted trees so that they might be growing when the house was building.

Within a month of buying the land Russell had planted more than twenty varieties of eucalypt, a fifty tree orchard, and acres of lavender and geranium; by 1922 oil from these crops was being distilled at the Richmond Laboratory of Bosisto (one of the family companies). With his brother Harold's assistance he acquired from the old Langwarrin Military Reserve a hut and a huge elevated water tank, and in 1922 appointed W H Griffiths as a share-farmer tending the plants and running sheep for his own profit.

Between March and December 1924 Westerfield House appeared in the setting created for it. The Grimwades had commissioned the prominent Melbourne architect Harold Desbrowe Annear to design the house. Annear had completed the alterations for Grimwade's Toorak house Miegunyah in 1921. This reflects a pattern in Annear's work of designing both town and country houses for some clients. According to Edquist (*Harold Desbrowe-Annear*, p 163) 'it was natural that an enthusiast for indigenous and native trees like Russell Grimwade would want to build a house that expressed a sense of place. The desire was met by the architect, who returned to the principles of the Arts and Crafts, building a stone house with materials from the site.' Of the house construction Grimwade wrote

Now it was time to get in the foundations and build a house using, as far as possible, materials of the environment. Granite - there were tons of huge boulders not far away. At this stage of the proceedings one begins to get an idea of the weight of a house that will give permanent shelter to five or six people. Two hundred tons of granite spalls and the same weight of sand and concrete aggregate were dumped on the site and there was none left over when the house was finished. Six hundred tons without the timber, roofing tiles, plumber's fittings and window glass! Several hundred tons of water were also pumped from the dam by windmill, but the four winds of heaven no doubt have returned this to circulation long ago.

Russell paid particular attention to the fittings and especially to the woodwork, making the front door and the large living room mantel himself with timbers salvaged from H M A S Australia. A housekeeper was installed, and the Grimwades soon began to spend most weekends at Westerfield, and also attended the 'Millionaire's Golf Club (Frankston Golf Club) a site which he helped populate with native plantings. Many guests were entertained at the house, and it was popular for the honeymoons of younger relations.

There was at first no mains water, gas or electricity to the property. Grimwade built a large 'Dutch-type' windmill, located just east of the driveway and depicted in a drawing of the house by their neighbour Daryl Lindsay. It housed batteries in its base for storage of the electricity for use in the house. However Grimwade noted that 'for artistic effect it gained full marks - for the effective generation of electricity it hardly scored a point'. Grimwade and his wife were thankful when mains electricity reached them, and the windmill was taken down in 1935.

One of the first projects for Grimwade had been to build a dam, stocked with carp to control the yabbies. This water ran out in the drought of 1926, so he built another larger one (the present one at the east end of the property), with two 'romantic' islands, into which he released several thousand trout as well as more carp. The wall of this dam was later reinforced with piles of redgum and steel beams.

It is thought that Annear was involved with the garden design of Westerfield. As at the Macgeorge house the garden was composed of distinct but integrated features: a tree-lined driveway, a fenced garden close to the house, a rose garden, and nearby a hedged orchard merging into a thick plantation of eucalypts. The garden was cared for by Mr Bully 'a diminutive Cornishman who strutted like a sergeant-major amongst the Grimwade roses

at Westerfield, regimenting and sternly disciplining the flowers and humans under its rule.' (Edquist, *Harold Desbrowe-Annear*, p 190)

For thirty years Grimwade meticulously recorded the plants, native and exotic, procured for and tended at Westerfield. He was an enthusiast for native plants, and considered it 'strange how little contribution to garden making the Australian flora has contributed'. Grimwade documented the house and garden in a sequence of photos taken over several decades from 1925, when it was surrounded by vacant pastures. Within six years the surrounding garden and adjacent landscape had been planted, with avenues of trees along the drive and extensive hedges. By 1931 the house paddock (to the west of the driveway) alone contained hundreds of eucalypts of more than fifty species. South Australian olive specimens were planted along with many varieties of wattle in a lower paddock. By 1937 the formerly bare surroundings were covered with mature trees. He also recorded the birds which he observed at Westerfield.

The serious experimental and commercial aspects of Grimwade's country venture continued. The eucalyptus, lavender and geranium grown at Westerfield had undergone distillation for its oil at Bosisto in Richmond since 1922, but in 1929 a small still was installed on the property, and in good years more than a hundred pounds of each oil were produced. Peppermint and boronia were also cultivated, and some commercial flower-growing undertaken. These experimental projects were to prove of great value for Grimwade's ambitious ventures in drug growing during WWII.

The expansion of Nazi Germany and the Sino-Japanese war cut off the supply of many of Australia's (and England's) drugs of herbal origin. Grimwade had always longed to establish the cultivation of drug plants in Australia, and within days of the declaration of WWII he had made a list of drugs plants that were unavailable in Australia and could be cultivated at Westerfield. He ordered from England one pound each of five seeds types: poppies (for morphine), foxgloves (for digitalis, an important heart stimulant), deadly nightshade (for belladonna, which produced atropine, used as an antispasmodic; and hyoscine, used for the treatment of bomb and post-operative shock and for preventing travel sickness, vital for successful amphibious operations), henbane (or hyoscyamus, also the source of a powerful narcotic) and colchicum (for gout). The Federal Government, which was well aware of the danger of drug shortages, helped to obtain the necessary import permits. Under the sponsorship of the Wartime Medical Equipment Control Committee, drying sheds were built to process the crops. Grimwade was soon able to produce enough poppy seed to send it around Australia for growth in other regions.

Grimwade was not the only worker in the field, with the Council for Scientific and Industrial research (CSIR), State Departments of Agriculture and the universities all co-operating. Grimwade though, with the facilities and experience of his team at Westerfield and the professional assistance of DHA staff, was well equipped to make an important contribution, both in the production of seed and knowledge of extraction techniques. The family company spent £2000 on research into the extraction of morphine, and DHA later built an extraction plant costing £20,000, satisfying all Australia's requirements, and all produced from the fruits of Grimwade's original pound of seeds. Grimwade received considerable publicity for his work in drug growing during the war, his 'purely patriotic motives' were praised, and the story of his work was even described as 'one of the hidden romances of the war'. While others were involved, his contribution is considered unique in its personal initiative and scope.

Grimwade was ahead of his time in matters to do with conservation and land use, and believed that industry should be compatible with conservation. He was a founder-member of the Empire Forestry Association in 1921, and worked with Charles Lane-Poole to establish the Australian Forestry School in Canberra to train forestry graduates. As noted by Linden Gillbank [in the *Australian Forestry History Society Inc Newsletter*, No 43, April 2006, pp 4-5.]

Grimwade's eucalypt-rich arboretum in the grounds of his Toorak house Miegunyah was emblematic of his interest in Australian forestry and cultivation and use of Australian trees. He claimed that no genus could compare with Eucalyptus for hardwoods and cabinet timbers, and made an intricate cabinet from Australian timbers [now in the Ian Potter Museum of Art at Melbourne University] for his extensive collection of eucalypt fruit capsules. Grimwade's *An Anthography of the Eucalyptus* (1920), illustrated with his own photographs, was 'to assist in the identification of species, to stimulate research, and to promote the cultivation of the Eucalypts'. Grimwade campaigned tirelessly for forest conservation. A member and sometime president of the Victorian branch of the Australian Forest League, he contributed money and articles to its journal *The Gum Tree*. In the 1940s he was a leading spokesman for the Save the Forest Campaign.

The Grimwades made a number of minor alterations to the house over the years. The front entrance porch was enclosed, with a new front door built by Grimwade. The double garage which was on the ground floor was

converted to a store room and the entrances converted to windows. The curved porch was glassed in in 1938-9. The kitchen and dining area have been altered, with walls removed to increase the size of the dining area, but decreasing the size of the kitchen.

After Grimwade's death the property was sold by his wife Mabel to David Knox, who subdivided and sold all but 14 hectares. The property is now owned by Mr and Mrs Welsh, Mrs Welsh's father having purchased the property in 1959.

## REFERENCES

Harriet Edquist, *Harold Desbrowe-Annear. A Life in Architecture*, Carlton 2004.

Graeme Butler & Assoc. et al, 'City of Frankston Heritage Study', 1991.

J R Poynter, *Russell Grimwade*, Carlton 1967.

## Plaque Citation

This Arts & Crafts house was designed in 1924 by Harold Desbrowe Annear for the scientist, businessman and conservationist Russell Grimwade. The plant-based drugs produced here in the 1940s were important in Australia's war effort.

## Assessment Against Criteria

a. Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history

Westerfield was the site of a rare experimental enterprise in biotechnology, the production of plant-based drugs during World War II. These drugs had previously been imported from Asia and Eastern Europe, and Australia's supplies were cut off with the approach of World War II. With the help of the Federal Government, Grimwade obtained seed from England and cultivated at Westerfield crops of poppies, foxgloves, deadly nightshade, henbane and colchicum. He constructed a drying shed, and with the resources of the family firm's laboratories developed extraction techniques to produce many of the drugs essential for Australia's war effort. The poppy seed grown at Westerfield was distributed to farms around Australia, and was able to satisfy all of Australia's morphine requirements until after the war.

b. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

c. Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

d. Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.

Westerfield is an example of the rural retreats developed on the Mornington Peninsula in the first half of the twentieth century by many of Melbourne's most prominent families. The residence, an outstanding and innovative Arts and Crafts style house, and its garden, were designed by the prominent Melbourne architect Harold Desbrowe Annear, who was a leader of the Arts and Crafts movement in Victoria. This is the most intact of Annear's houses on the Mornington Peninsula.

e. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

f. Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

g. Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

h. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Westerfield has close associations with two figures of great importance in the history of Victoria: Sir Russell Grimwade and Harold Desbrowe Annear. Grimwade was a prominent figure in Australian business, science, philanthropy and conservation, and was a man of extraordinary diversity. He was active in some of Australia's largest and most enterprising business concerns, particularly in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, and prominent in such bodies as the National Museum and the University of Melbourne. Grimwade was an early advocate for nature conservation, and had a great interest in native plants and their cultivation, and Westerfield demonstrate his interests in forestry, conservation and experimental horticulture. The bushland retained by Grimwade after his purchase of the land is extremely important for its biodiversity, and demonstrate Grimwade's passion for and knowledge of the Australian environment.

Harold Desbrowe Annear was a leader of the Arts and Crafts movement in Victoria, and one of the state's most innovative and respected architects of the early twentieth century.

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by amending Heritage Register Number H2200 in the category described as Heritage Place.

Westerfield  
72-118 Robinsons Road  
Frankston South  
Frankston City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2200 encompassing part of Plan of Consolidation 158862, all of Lot 3 on Lodged Plan 42616, all of Lots 1 and 2 on Plan of Subdivision 637527 and part of Crown Allotment 2113, Parish of Frankston, minus the land shown cross-hatched on Diagram 2200 being all that land between the western edge of the western retaining wall and the eastern edge of the eastern noise attenuation wall and a line drawn from the northern end of the eastern noise attenuation wall eastward to the north-west corner of Lot 2 on Plan of Subdivision 637527.

Dated 24 June 2014  
TIM SMITH  
Executive Director  
[Victoria Government Gazette G 30 24 July 2014 p.1620]

---

*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/>*