130 POPLAR AVENUE

Integrity

The integrity is good.

History and Historical Context

From early 1843 H G Ashurst and Co was in control of the Tallygaroopna Run and by Sherbourne Sheppard in May 1844. Travelling to the UK in 1846, Sherbourne left power of attorney with Henry Arthur Smith, with his friend and fellow-Irishman Brabazon Purcell running the station. In 1849 Smith, owed large sums by the absent Sheppard for his service, gained court approval to sell 6200 of Sheppard's sheep to Edward Khull, and the Khulls took over control of the station in late 1849. After a physical confrontation which resulted in Sheppard re-occupying the run, and a number of subsequent court cases brought by Khull, Sheppard was clearly in control of the run by September 1852. For a subsequent period Hugh Glass was then listed as licensee, as Sheppard owed him money. In July 1854, prior to travelling to England to marry the daughter of J B Were, Sheppard changed ownership to a partnership consisting of Sheppard himself and his friends A A C Le Souef and W H Atkins. Ownership transferred to stock and station agents in July 1857 and the run was sold to Charles Ryan and Robert Hammond in May 1859, and in February 1886 William Fraser took over the run.

After the Land Act 1869 came into force, Fraser obtained a number of allotments, some 'dummied' under his children's names, for which he was later challenged and found guilty, some allotments being forfeited. Fraser's Allotment 25, 26 and 27, Parish of Shepparton covered parts of the south section of the Study area and became part of Shepparton Estate No 2 under Closer Settlement, from early 1912. Also comprising some of the Study area were other allotments selected under the Land Act 1869 which then became part of Estate No 2: 23A and 23D (PS Dowson), 23B (James O'Dea), and 23C (Edmund Doyle).

The Shepparton Estate 2 was established in 1912. During its establishment the area was known locally as Settlement 2, today the area is recognised as Orrvale. Successful settlers who obtained land through the Closer and Soldier Settlement Acts were generally those with family members and extended family with whom to pool effort, enlarge the area of land held, and could diversify into side activities to counteract the variability of

the fruit seasons. Success was also supported by the development of intensive irrigated agricultural and this is especially pertinent with regard to the orchard industry.

The Shepparton Estate 2 (and 1) was part of the Tallygaroopna squatting run, one of the large stations in the lower Goulburn River region. Before the Tallygaroopna run was formally recorded, however, it seems the Study area was part of the huge swathe of territory extending from Mitchellstown to the Murray River of both sides of the Goulburn which was occupied by the Manton brothers, Frederick, Henry, Charles and John. The Mantons also held other stations further south, and Wyuna west of the Goulburn River.

Jewish Settlement

A community of Jewish settlers became established in Settlement No 2 from 1913. The first group, eight families, arrived on 14 April 1913. This was the second year of the Shepparton Estate 2.

The first 1913 arrivals

Moshe Feiglin: Allotment 17

Raphael Beresinsky: Allotment 3

Bere Feiglin: Allotment 19

Isaac Rubenstein: Part Allotment 1

Samuel Gorr: Allotment 20

Nehemiah Rosenbaum: Allotment 21

B. Bendel: Part Allotment 1

J. Moritz: Allotment 22

The geographical nucleus of this community was the area bounded by Poplar Avenue, Archer Street, Channel Road and Doyle's Road (originally Doyle's Lane). All but the Gorr and Rosenbaum families were within this area, with the latter immediately to the east of Doyle's Road; other later arrivals were more dispersed. This community of Orthodox Lubavitch Jews stood out as distinct from the other settlers in Shepparton Estate 2 (Settlement No 20, their beliefs and daily religious practices setting them apart. However, they had a reputation for helping other settlers.

Each of the eight families had received a loan of £200 from the Jewish Agricultural Settlement Fund, a newly-established organization (constituted on 6 March, 1913) by a group of prominent Melbourne Jewish identities and philanthropists to aid Jewish immigrants who wished to settle on the land. David Feiglin notes that its aim was to deflect Jewish immigrants from problematical and impoverished lives in the city onto land settlement.**[1]** This is borne out by a plea to the international Jewish Colonisation Fund in early 1914 for assistance regarding Jewish immigrants to Australia. The organisation felt it was not in '*the best interests of the Jewish community at large if their honourable desire were to be frustrated by the lack of aid and encouragement, and they were consequently compelled to congregate in the cities and fall back upon the undesirable occupations of huckstering and peddling, some of them perhaps being ultimately reduced to sacrifice their self-respect by the acceptance of eleemosynary [charitable] doles from our charitable institutions'.*[2]

The Jewish settlers' hard work, industry and dedication to success was notable. An article in the *Jewish Herald* in late September that year captures the determination exhibited by these families, who, unlike many other Closer Settlers, brought agricultural experience, if not of the new conditions.**[3]**

In the five months, it was reported, Raphael Beresinsky and his brother in law had cleared the 17ha (41 acre block), erected a boundary fence, and twice ploughed 6ha (15acres), which was now showing 'a nice crop of oats'. Four hectares (10 acres) were ready to be sown with lucerne (the crop Elwood Mead**[4]** encouraged settlers to plant), and 2ha (5 acres) had been planted with peach, apricot, orange, cherry and pear trees, underplanted by a crop of peas; the fruit trees had been coated with a solution of lime and sulphur to discourage hares. A plot of land was ready for the planting of a summer crop, and well-built sheds sand a cottage erected. A poultry run, kitchen garden was 'already well-stocked with vegetables', and a nursery set up

to propagate vines.

In contrast Sam Gorr had chosen dairying (Departmental encouragement of dairying proved to be misleading, the blocks soon proving to be inadequate in size), and had constructed a redgum milking shed roofed with galvanised iron, pigsties and a fowlhouse. On his 22 ha (53 acres), 4 ha (10 acres) were planted in flourishing lucerne, 6ha (15 acres) in oats, 10ha (25 acres) in late oats, 3ha (8 acres) with millet and 4ha (10 acres) with lucerne, and he had just harvested 30 tons of millet for fodder. He was milking nine cows, this alone earning £2.10 per week.

Moshe Feiglin, Bere Feiglin, Moritz, and Bandel and Rubenstein (who worked together on Allotment 1), while all planting a range of crops including lucerne, had also hedged their bets with small acreages of the fruit trees soon to be the hallmark of the Shepparton East area.

However, in common with the other settlers, they were all experiencing blocks that were too small to support the dairying which had been the presumption of the authorities. Mead, not deflected from his advocacy of dairying based on the irrigated cultivation of lucerne, in reporting progress of the Jewish settlers to the Fund noted the 'good cultivation record' but politely pointed out 'the small numbers of cows in relation to the volume of crops', and wondered 'what they will do with their crops in order to get a revenue for them. They ought now to begin to get an income from something, and cows seem to be the most reliable stand-by.'[5]

Synagogue

It is unclear when the synagogue was established, but it seems from newspaper reports that a synagogue of some type was in operation by at least June 1920. Services were first held in Isaac Cyprus' house, who allotted one room for a schule (synagogue). In November 1915 the community applied to the senior Jewish congregation in Victoria, the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation at the Bourke Street synagogue, for help in erecting a synagogue and school (at this time the construction of the synagogue in Carlton was also being mooted). The community was referred back to Laurence Harris, a Jewish tailor and Labour Party and community stalwart living in Shepparton, who was 'acting as a representative of the Jewish farmers'. The community had borrowed a Sefer Torah (a handwritten Torah) from the city synagogue a few months after their arrival.[6]

On 19 April 1926, the board members of the Jewish Agricultural Settlement Fund purchased the synagogue site, Allotment 16, a .41ha (one acre) block at the south-western corner of Poplar Avenue and Doyles Road. This had been in the hands of settler FW Stagg, but was advertised for sale by tender by the SRWSC[7] on 22 October 1925. Given that synagogue services were reported from June 1920, and that various accounts refer to Stagg's house as becoming the synagogue, it seems likely that the congregation had been utilizing the two-room dwelling by arrangement with Stagg.

The community established a 'Hebrew School' for religious instruction at the end of 1917, with financial assistance from S Slutzkin. The teacher, S Rosner, had been located by the Jewish Education Board. The religious instruction was intense: the classes were held every evening except Friday, from 5pm to 7.30pm following attendance at the local Orrvale State School, and on the Sabbath from 2pm till 5pm. Fourteen students were attending in February 1918, three months or so after the classes commenced, and it was claimed there had not been a single absentee from any class. This rigorous regime, reflecting the intensity of the ardent Orthodox Lubvitch views of the community, was criticised as overly harsh by a number of writers to the *Jewish Herald*, and it is unclear how long it prevailed, [8]

Within three years of the original Jewish settlers taking up their holdings at Orrvale, the following Jewish families from Melbourne also acquired properties on an individual basis: Messrs Isaac Dabscheck & Sons (Abe and Woolf), Robert Rothberg, Louis Rothberg, and Eli Wynn (a cousin of Samuel Wynn, founder of Wynn's Wines). The latter three took up their holdings a few miles to the east of the original settlers, whilst Dabscheck purchased land in a central position of the Jewish settlement. It is noteworthy that this second group consisted mainly of established Melbourne businessmen residing in Melbourne, who purchased as a business venture rather than as farmers. They retained their properties for varying relatively short periods of time and eventually sold out to

both Jewish and non-Jewish buyers who lived on their properties and successfully farmed them. Of the original

settlers, the brothers- in-law Bendel and Rubenstein returned to Melbourne within a couple of years and their holdings were taken over by Messrs Sonkin and Jacob (Jack) Rosenbaum (son of N. Rosenbaum). The Sonkin family remained on the settlement for a few years only.**[9]**

130 Poplar Avenue is part of the original Allotment 6 of Section 7D, Parish of Shepparton.

Abraham Feiglin obtained his Crown Grant on 2 June 1944, so if he had taken the 31 years to pay it off, he would have arrived in 1913, although he is not in the first group of Jewish settlers.

The house is similar in design to 27B but is the mIrror (reverse).

In 1952 a small house block was cut off on the east, on Poplar Avenue, possibly 130 Poplar Ave, and in 1969 the remaining 11 acres was sold from Feiglin hands to Wlima Fairley Graham.

[1] David Feiglin, 'The origins and development of the Jewish Agricultural Settlement at Orrvale, Shepparton', Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal, November 2004 Vol. XVII Part 3, p 341.

https://www.ajhs.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/AJHS-1-23-TOC-202-287.pdf

Accessed 28/11/2022.

[2] *Jewish Herald*, 2/1/1914, p 8.

[3] *Jewish Herald*, 26/9/1913, p 7.

[4] Elwood Mead (1858-1936), irrigation engineer and advocate of planned rural settlement, was born on 16 January 1858 at Patriot, Indiana, United States of America. At the Colorado State Agricultural College he received a professorship in irrigation engineering, the first of its type in the USA. IN 1907 he arrived in Victoria after accepting an invitation from the Victorian government to become chairman of its newly formed State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. The government-controlled irrigation in Victoria owed a great deal to the early efforts of Prime Minister Alfred Deakin who expected Mead to advise at both national and State levels. Mead embraced the opportunity to demonstrate the social utility of an enlightened irrigation programme. He also supported a higher-yielding uses of water and land. The Water Act was passed in 1909 despite the fierce opposition of large landowners. Mead's influence on rural development was increased by his assumption of overriding control in the planning of closer settlement in Victoria's irrigation districts.

[5] *Jewish Herald,* 7/11/1913, p 12.

[6] *Jewish Herald,* 19/11/1915, p 9; 11/9/1914, p 10.

[7] State Rivers and Water Supply Commission

[8] *Jewish Herald*, 8/2/1918, p 17.

[9] Ibid p 343.

Description

Physical Description

The Interwar bungalow is a single storey rendered masonry building that demonstrates many of the typical features associated with this style. It has a large pyramidal hipped corrugated metal clad roof that falls to create a roof over a shallow porch. This porch has masonry columns with a decorative pattern to the front of the column. There is a low masonry wall to the front of the porch area. The projecting front has a similar styled roof clad with corrugated galvanised metal. This house is very similar to those found at 27(B) and 27 (C) Feiglin

Road, Shepparton East.

Intactness

The bungalow is relatively intact.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The house at 130 Poplar Avenue, Shepparton East is significant.

This includes the garden setting to the front of the house and the side settings and rear yard area.

130 Poplar Avenue and 27 (A), 27 (B) and 27 (C) Feiglin Road, East Shepparton as a group are significant.

How is it significant?

130 Poplar Avenue, Shepparton East is of local social, historic and aesthetic cultural heritage significance to the City of Greater Shepparton.

Why is it significant?

The house is of significance for its association with Abraham Feiglin and the Melbourne Jewish community.

It provides tangible physical evidence of the scope of Jewish land settlements in Victoria during the early 20th century.

Shepparton and Berwick were the two main places in that were settled during this period. Funds were raised by the Melbourne Jewish community provided support for immigrants and refugees, mainly from Eastern Europe and part of this program was the re-settlement on the land. The first such settlement occurred in Shepparton in 1913 and in Berwick in 1927. The Shepparton community lasted longer than the community founded in Berwick.

(Criterion A)

130 Poplar Avenue is of aesthetic and architectural significance as it is

representative of the Bungalow style as found in the region.

(Criterion D)