

the **glenard**  
**estate**  
and its **parks**

Griffin spoke of the internal reserves as “...favourite playgrounds. Here all the children from the different houses can play together, where their mothers can see them, and where they are safe from the motor traffic in the streets.”



### A SPECIAL HERITAGE

It does not take long for anyone arriving at the Glenard Estate to see that it is very different from most suburban developments of its time. Perhaps most striking is the sense that the roads and buildings fit into the original landscape rather than having been imposed upon it by a rigid grid. Here the roads are curvilinear, following the contours of the land; there are no crossroads or right-angled intersections; building lots are generous so there is space for trees between buildings and the absence of front fences means that the mature plantings in front gardens make a major contribution to the street scene. Most lots back onto private shared parkland which adds further to the balance of soft landscape over hard.

This was pioneering work when the Mount Eagle Estate and the Glenard Estates were designed in 1914 and 1915 respectively, and their qualities have rarely been matched since.

The Estates were designed by American architects Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin while their practice was based in Melbourne, when Walter was working half time as Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction in Melbourne on implementing his award winning design for Canberra. They owed these commissions to landowner Peter Kearn who was a founding member of the Town and Country Planning Association of Victoria. In 1917 Marion and Walter came to live on the Glenard Estate for up to 8 years; for the first three years with Walter's sister Genevieve and brother-in-law architect Roy Lippincott,

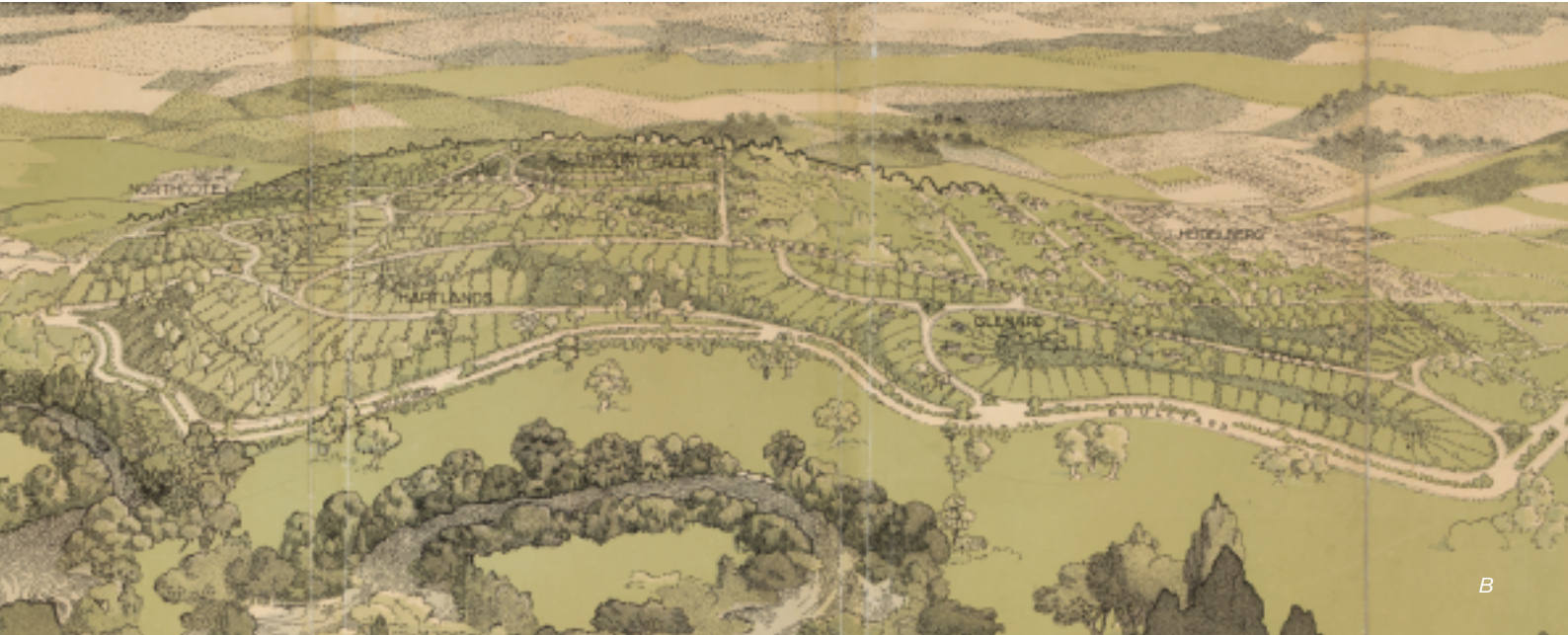
at the house Roy designed with input from the others at 21 Glenard Drive. They then moved into the tiny house Pholiota which they had built next door and which is still at the rear of No. 23. Both houses are on the Victorian Heritage Register

The Glenard Estate as a whole is also recognised as being of State significance, the road reserves and private shared parklands having been placed on the Victorian Heritage Register in 2007. This means that permits are required from Heritage Victoria for any works other than maintenance that change the character and appearance of the landscape. The rest of the Estate remains under a Heritage Overlay in the Planning Scheme and a permit is required from the Council for any buildings or works. In both cases the need for permits can be reduced by adopting an approved management plan. A covenant also restricts development on each allotment.

### PAST AND PRESENT MANAGEMENT OF THE PARKS

Every owner of allotments first subdivided on the Estate has a share in the ownership of both Homestead and Banksia parks conferred by a covenant on the title. Changes to the parks require the support of a majority of the owners. No official association or management committee has ever been established to manage the parks and consequently the parks have been developed and maintained through a general understanding that each owner that backs onto a park should be responsible for that portion of the park from where it adjoins the owner's rear property line to the centre of the park. This approach has been supplemented from time to time by residents getting together for a general working bee to undertake cleaning up, tree work and planting and by some residents occasionally collecting donations to pay for tree work or rubbish removal.

This informal arrangement has contributed to the unusual and informal character of the parks. Some owners have developed part or all of their 'maintenance area' as an extension of their own garden and this has been tolerated as long as the layout does not obstruct free movement by residents through the park and provided the mature trees are maintained. The resulting park character is therefore one of open grassland and open woodland with both native and exotic mature



trees, interspersed in some minor areas by domestic style shrub and garden planting. Tracks have developed where vehicle access to the rear of properties has been needed.

Today, few indigenous trees have survived and the majority of established trees are exotic including European deciduous trees, conifers and eucalypts, mostly dating from the 1920s and 30s. In Banksia Park the predominant species are English Oaks, Spotted Gum, Monterey Cypress, Southern Mahogany Gum, Elms, Manna Gum, Cherry Plum and Hawthorn (red and pink). In Homestead Park, Oak, Angophora, exotic (non-local) gums, Sugar Plums, Monterey Pines, and Remnant red Gums predominate.

### WORKING TOGETHER TO MANAGE THE PARKS IN THE FUTURE

What kind of park?

The covenant on each title in the original subdivision entitles the owner to use the parks 'for the purposes of recreation or

a garden or a park'. For the Griffins the reserves 'were to substitute for nature, fast disappearing in the suburban environment' and consequently a place where original native trees could be preserved. Interviewed in Melbourne in 1913, Griffin spoke of the internal reserves as "... favourite playgrounds. Here all the children from the different houses can play together, where their mothers can see them, and where they are safe from the motor traffic in the streets."<sup>1</sup>

It follows that the emphasis should be on native planting, preferably of local stock, and on preserving existing native trees where possible. However it would not be inconsistent with the Griffins' practice to use exotic trees for colour or contrast. An emphasis on large canopy trees with grass below, rather than encouraging a shrub layer, would best support the functions of the park and the objective of maintaining a grassy woodland character of substantial trees. In keeping with the desire for the natural landscape and plantings to predominate over structures, fencing

between the parks and private gardens should be avoided or at least its visual presence minimised and the landscape allowed to 'flow' between communal and private areas.

To maintain the required safety and tranquillity the use of parks by cars and trucks should also be minimised.

<sup>1</sup> Read, Stuart 'Landscape Architecture' in *Walter Burley Griffin Society* web site 2006-07 <http://www.griffinsociety.org/index.html>

#### Far left

Marion Mahony Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin gardening in the backyard of "Pholiota", Heidelberg, Victoria, 1918; nla.pic-an24429941 National Library of Australia

#### Above A

Walter Burley Griffin, one woman, two men and one child in the backyard of "Lippincott", Heidelberg, Victoria, 1918; nla.pic-vn3820119 National Library of Australia

#### Above B

Sales brochure for Glenard Estate, Mount Eagle, Victoria Melbourne : Farrow Falcon Press, 1916. nla.pic-vn3701541; detailed image National Library of Australia

# Managing Into The Future

## MAINTENANCE

Adjoining owners will continue to be expected to maintain adjoining parkland as far as the centre of the park (the 'maintenance area'). Where this is neglected other residents are encouraged to undertake maintenance work in the area. From time to time it may be necessary for donations to be collected for work on the parks.

Likewise access ways to the parks should be maintained by adjoining owners but it is open to any owner to prune vegetation for safety and clearance should this become necessary.

## GARDENING

It is acceptable for some garden beds to be created in the 'maintenance area' but these should not predominate or inhibit movement across and around the park.

## NEW PLANTING

The planting of large trees or substantial areas of shrubs has the potential to alter the appearance of the registered land and requires a permit from Heritage Victoria.

While every attempt should be made to preserve the few examples of the original vegetation and the planting of indigenous trees is encouraged, new or, where needed, replacement trees should also include similar exotic species to those that exist in order to retain the present character. Over-planting should be avoided. Tree stock should not be planted closer than 2 metres.

New garden beds also require a permit. These should not extend beyond 1.5 metres of the rear boundary of the private property. Shrub planting along fences and within 2 metres of the rear boundary is encouraged to soften the visual barrier between private and communal space.

## REAR FENCES

No fence, or a visually transparent fence, is preferred for rear boundaries. The removal of solid fencing is encouraged.

## PARKING

Regular parking within the park is not compatible with the future vision for the park. Cars should be stored on private property. Parking of construction vehicles for a limited period or parking in connection with a function or bar-b-que is acceptable.

## ACCESS

To minimise traffic, more vehicle movement through the parks than is necessary is discouraged. It is recognised that vehicle access is required to the rear of those properties that do not have a satisfactory front access. In Banksia Park no car ports or garages accessed from the rear should be constructed unless these can also be accessed from the front and in Homestead Park no additional rear access carports or garages should be built where access from the front is acceptable.

## ACCESS TRACKS

Making access track loops discontinuous could assist in reducing vehicle speeds.

## STORAGE OF BUILDING MATERIALS AND OTHER ITEMS.

Temporary storage of building materials during construction is not acceptable nor is the long term storage of materials, boats, trailers and the like.



The text of this brochure and the management system it suggests has been developed from ideas first suggested by participants at a public meeting open to all owners and residents of the Glenard Estate and then further refined and developed in meetings of a voluntary working group formed at the public meeting and subsequently augmented. A draft of the text was sent to each owner for comment in mid-2007 and adjustments were made by the working group in the light of the four, largely supportive, submissions received.

It can therefore claim to represent as close as possible the consensus view across the estate in 2007-08. There is nothing in this brochure that would preclude further development of management proposals in the future, presumably through the same or a similar process.

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