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Ben Linden Narellan An Edwardian Gem

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Ben Linden Narellan An Edwardian Gem

Abstract

Ben Linden is an outstanding example of the Edwardian cottages across the local area. Camden has quite a number of Edwardian cottages in the town area, on surrounding farms and in local district villages. They are typical of the early twentieth century landscape in the local district. The housing style was evidence of the new found confidence of the birth of a new nation that borrowed overseas trends and adopted them to suit local conditions. These style of houses were a statement of the individualism and the national character.

Keywords

linden, gem, ben, narellan, edwardian

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Ben Linden Narellan J Kooyman 1997 (Camden Images)

Ben Linden at Narellan

Ben Linden is an outstanding example of the Edwardian cottages across the local area.

Camden has quite a number of Edwardian cottages in the town area, on surrounding farms and in local district villages. They are typical of the early twentieth century landscape in the local district.

The housing style was evidence of the new found confidence of the birth of a new nation that borrowed overseas trends and adopted them to suit local conditions. These style of houses were a statement of the individualism and the national character.

The name Edwardian is loosely attached to cottages and buildings erected during the reign of Edward VII from 1901 to 1910. This period covers the time after the Federation of the

Commonwealth of Australia in 1901 when the six self-governing colonies combined under a new constitution. They kept their own legislatures and combined to form a new nation.



Yamba Cottage, Kirrkham c. 1913 (Camden Images)

Australian architecture

Examples of Edwardian style cottages, including in and around Camden, were an Australian version of English Edwardian houses. Houses were plainer in detail, some with lead lighting in the front windows. Australian architecture was a response to the landscape and climate and the building style tells us about the time and the people who built them, how they lived and other aspects of Camden's cultural heritage.

The Edwardian style of housing also includes a broad range of styles including Queen Anne, Federation, Arts and Crafts and Early Bungalow. These styles often tend to be asymmetrical with a projecting front gable, can be highly decorated with detailed work to gables, windows and verandahs. Edwardian style cottages often fit between 1900 and 1920, although the style extends beyond this period influencing the Interwar style housing.

Ben Linden

Ben Linden was constructed in 1919 by George Blackmore originally from North Sydney. George Blackmore, born in 1851 was married to Mary Ann and had seven children. George and his family lived in Ben Linden from 1921 to 1926. After this time he retired as a builder and eventually died in 1930.

George's son George Sydney Blackmore, who was a merchant, lived across the road from Ben Linden in the 1920s with his wife Rena and two boys at Narellan Stores at 332 Camden Valley Way.

The house is located on Edward Lord's 1815 grant of Orierton Farm, which in the 1830s was reported as a productive farm mainly used for grazing. In the 1870s the hunting seemed to be a popular pastime with the pursuit of live hares by greyhound by owner William Rudd, when it was described as a grazier's property.

By 1920 it was recorded that there 'out-houses, building, erections and fences' on the property.

Ben Linden has some of the typical Edwardian Cottage Detailing

A number of Camden Edwardian style timber cottages have a projecting room at the front of the cottage with a decorated gable, adjacent to a front verandah, with a hipped roof line. This housing style is often characterised by a chimney that was a flue for a kitchen fuel stove and chip copper in an adjacent laundry. In some houses plaster cornices were common, sometimes there were ceiling roses, skirting and architraves. A number of been restored while unfortunately many others have been demolished.

Some Camden Edwardian homes had walls of red brickwork, sometimes with painted render in part. While there are many examples in the local area of timber houses with square-edged or bull-nosed weatherboards. Sunshades over windows supported by timber brackets are also common across the local area.

Doors in Edwardian style houses typically have three or four panels, with entry doors sometimes having an ornamentation. Common windows were double hung while later cottages may have had casement windows especially in the 1920s. Some cottages have return L-shaped verandahs, sometimes roofed with corrugated bull-nosed iron. Verandah post brackets had a variety of designs, with lattice work not uncommon feature. Verandahs featured timber fretwork rather than Victorian style cast iron lacework for ornamentation. Front fences may have had pickets, or just a wire fence in country areas.

Typical Edwardian colour schemes range from apricot walls, gables and barge boards, with white lattice panelling, red roofing and green coloured windows, steps, stumps, ant caps.



64 John St Camden, early 20th century(J Riley)

Edwardian Cottage Garden

Gardens were often more complex than Victorian examples. Amongst Edwardian gardens growing lawns became popular. Sometimes had a small tree in the front yard which could frame the house and might separate it from adjacent houses. Common trees included magnolia, elm, tulip tree or camellias, while shrubs and vines might have been agapanthus, agave, St John's Wort, plumbago, standard roses, begonias, day lily, jasmine and sometimes maidenhair ferns.



Window detailing Camden Edwardian Cottage Elderslie (I Willis)

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Camden Edwardian Cottage

In the March 2014 edition of Camden History Joy Riley recalls the John Street. Joy Riley vividly remembers growing up as a child and cottages her home. ‘I lived at 66 John Street for the first 40 years of my life. I moved to Elderslie with my husband Bruce Riley. The two rooms of 66 John Street were built by the first John Peat, Camden builder, to come to Camden. In the 1930s I had a rug put down in my bedroom, the floor boards were so hard, as they were 100 years old. It took 3 days to hold carpet, the carpet just kept curling up.’ She says, ‘The house was built by my grandfather, William Dunk. They lived next door at 64 John Street. He also built the Methodist Church at Orangeville or Werombi.



Carinya Cottage c.1890 Narellan Demolished 2010 (Camden Historical Society)

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