

MODERN 1935-1965

Form

The 1930s depression and shortage of materials after the Second World War had a major effect on the development of house forms and styles within the first half of this period. The first Housing Commission and War Service Homes were built within this time.

Verandahs gradually disappeared, roof pitches became lower, roof overhangs narrower, and materials cheaper. By the 1960s, a new bungalow style had emerged, which developed into the widespread elevated brick veneer houses that typified new housing estates into the present. Roof forms included hipped, pitched and Dutch gable roofs.

Materials

Widespread and popular use of asbestos cement known as "fibro" for external and internal wall linings. Also hardwood weatherboards and narrow chamferboards were used, and facebrick increasingly favoured from 1960 onwards. Roofing materials included corrugated asbestos cement, corrugated galvanised iron, terracotta and concrete tiles. At the end of the period, new clipped down metal rib and pan roof sheeting such as "Kliplok" was developed for very low or "flat" roofs. Timber windows were of silky oak casement type with figured and clear glass panes. During this period the use of glass louvre windows became widespread. By 1960 the sliding aluminium framed glass window was the most popular. Joinery became simpler, without elaborate mouldings, and skirtings and architraves were of painted pine.

By 1960, plasterboard wall and ceiling linings were developed and used in preference to fibrous plaster or asbestos cement. Houses after 1960 were generally built on reinforced concrete floor slabs although elevated floor levels were still of timber frame. Concrete stumps replaced timber stumps for timber buildings.

Ornament/Decoration

Depression years and post-war austerity led to the abandonment of ornamentation or decoration in all but the most expensive houses. Paintwork was generally relied upon as the main decorative element together with "feature walls" of brick or timber veneered hardboards and plywoods, and wallpaper.

If you wish to restore and furnish your house in a sympathetic manner, it is useful to know its date of construction. It is also interesting to learn the names, occupations and history of its earlier owners or occupants. This information can sometimes be useful in understanding any unusual aspects of the home.

