



Barunah

circa 1892
82 Dundas Street Thornbury

One of Victoria's most significant, intact Nineteenth Century Tower Mansions.
Registered on the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission.

COULTONS
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One of the grandest homes in Melbourne's north is surely "Barunah", a classic Victorian Italianate tower mansion built in 1892 by a prominent pottery and brick manufacturer.

Also once known as the Tower House, the striking and imposing slate-roofed mansion sits like a gracious queen amid her subjects, seemingly impervious to time and change.

Age begets history. The house was once surrounded by splendid red gums which were used to build the Kensington sale yards. Later it was owned by a bookmaker whose fortunes slumped so precariously after Phar Lap won the 1930 Melbourne Cup that it was sold to pay his debts.

The original unpainted rendered walls, magnificent tessellated tile hallway and verandah, and elaborate and ornate interior plasterwork reflect the workmanship of days past. "Barunah's" large rooms have 14' ceilings with rosettes, decorative cornices, high architraves, brass picture hooks, octagonal bay windows in the lounge and main bedroom, and marble and timber mantels in all main rooms.

It has cedar panelled doors, a cellar with water valve, gas light taps in all main rooms and, in the paved courtyard, a two-storey coach house. But perhaps the home's grandest features are the return cedar staircase rising from the wide central hallway, and the three-storey tower with Grecian urns on each corner. It offers inspiring 360-degree views from Mt Macedon to the Bay, the You Yangs to the Dandenongs. The stairway landing has a huge etched and stained glass window that bathes the whole interior with coloured light.

Bluestone steps lead through a solid timber door with leadlight surrounds into the hallway and lounge at left. The white marble fireplace with Victorian tile inserts is dated 1884. Opposite is the drawing room, with a brown, white and black marble mantel, and full-height windows to the front garden. Along the hall is the dining room with box bay window and open fireplace with cast iron kettle holder. A doorway leads into what was once the breakfast room but is now the kitchen. It has leadlight windows, a dishwasher, wall oven and side pantry. A walkway overlooks a comfortable family room with exposed brickwork and french doors which open out to the paved rear courtyard. Overlooking the family room is a timber bar with period overmantel in what was once the scullery and a sitting room which was the original kitchen. Here there is a huge chimney space which once housed the old cast iron stove, and a smaller room which was the old pantry. Stairs lead down to the cellar.

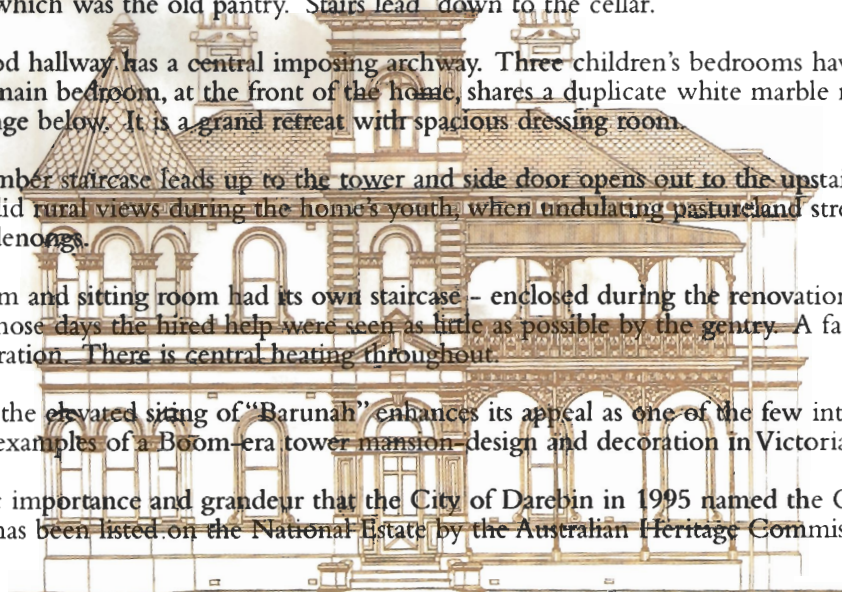
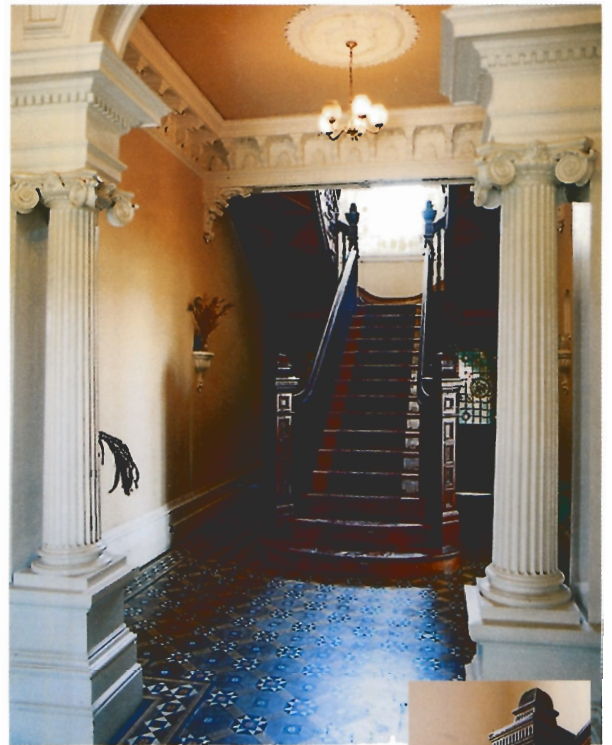
Upstairs the wide hardwood hallway has a central imposing archway. Three children's bedrooms have elegantly carved timber mantels while the main bedroom, at the front of the home, shares a duplicate white marble mantel and octagonal bay window with the lounge below. It is a grand retreat with spacious dressing room.

In the hallway a narrow timber staircase leads up to the tower and side door opens out to the upstairs verandah. It's not hard to imagine the splendid rural views during the home's youth, when undulating pastureland stretched unbroken all the way to the misty Dandenongs.

The former maid's bedroom and sitting room had its own staircase - enclosed during the renovations - which led down to the butler's pantry. In those days the hired help were seen as little as possible by the gentry. A family bathroom would respond to creative redecoration. There is central heating throughout.

The historical society says the elevated siting of "Barunah" enhances its appeal as one of the few intact late 19th century mansions; one of the best examples of a Boom-era tower mansion design and decoration in Victoria.

Such is the home's historic importance and grandeur that the City of Darebin in 1995 named the Council Ward south of Dundas St "Barunah". It has been listed on the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission as being of 'National significance'.



It is now your opportunity to own "Barunah" which is offered for sale by public auction on Saturday 21st of November 1998 at 3.30 pm.

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AUCTION SATURDAY 21ST NOVEMBER AT 3.30PM

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