



# GLEN EIRA

Historical Society Inc

Registration No: A0041700U

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## **Art Deco comes to Glen Eira**

**Talk on 28 November 2012 by Robyn Grow**

Over fifty members and visitors were treated to Robyn Grow's informative whirlwind introduction to the many aspects of Art Deco with examples drawn from Glen Eira and wider Melbourne. Art Deco is a design movement which originated in Europe and occupied the period between 1910 and 1950. It was a reaction by young designers after World War I to previous Victorian and Edwardian designs. These designers were impatient to use new materials and techniques to produce simple and elegant buildings, clothing and appliances. Finances also encouraged Art Deco which used such new materials as terrazzo, glass for improved lighting, and white metals such as stainless steel, aluminium, and chrome to build quick and cheaper buildings.

Buildings were plain, streamlined, functional and long, often anchored by a semi-circular feature.

Nautical themes featured and vertical fins and neon lights on the facades attracted customers. Houses may feature waterfall designs, sculptured chimneys, terrazzo steps and used materials that made the inside and outside of houses appealing. Housing estates produced houses with different designs. Cars, planes and trains were sleek with minimum ornamentation while industrial designers used such new materials as Bakelite to produce simpler and cheaper home appliances.

Local Art Deco buildings include the Percy Everett designed building and circular tower at Monash University Caulfield (pictured), houses at 195 and 197 Hawthorn Road, a 1930s Caulfield Town Hall extension, houses and shops designed by AV Jennings including the Beauville Estate in Murrumbeena, Acland Street shops, and the Dendy Theatre in Brighton.

Wider Melbourne buildings include the Heidelberg Town Hall, Manchester Unity Building, the former Russell Street police headquarters, Foy and Gibson, Myers and former Buckley and Nunn buildings in Bourke Street, Glenferrie Oval grandstand with its nautical theme, Melford Motors in Queensberry Street, and flats and apartments in Elwood, St Kilda and South Yarra.

**Robyn Grow is President of the Art Deco and Modernism Society.**

The Society's website is [www.artdeco.org.au](http://www.artdeco.org.au)