



Document title: House at College Street South, Lane Cove (Sydney), 1961.

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Summary / abstract: Modernist architect and senior lecturer (University of Sydney) Arthur Baldwinson recommended to his client that I take over the commission to design her house, since he was going to absent himself from Sydney on study leave overseas for six or more months. Arthur had given me the record of his interview with the client. I checked this by conducting another interview. The accommodation was a conventional three bedrooms, living-dining, kitchen, etc. My architectural assistant, Ron Sutherland, did a sketch design, but it was "too avant garde". The client then told me that she only sought an architect because she did not trust a builder to build what she wanted -- a simple ordinary traditional house, a very ordinary typical suburban house with central entry, living area one side and bedrooms the other side, I wondered how a very ordinary pitched roof house might not appear ordinary for the time. It was decided that a difference could be made in the details -- window and front door designs -- and how the roof might appear in relation to its support. The last was designed with highlight windows to give an impression of "floating". With the typical timber floor above the ground, it was decided to "lower" the appearance by gently sloping up the site to close to floor level. This, the highlight windows, and simple low-pitched roof provided the house with a "ground-hugging" horizontality that, from much later research on house appearance, is a characteristic that social research respondents found attractive.



Key words: Housing design; Architecture.

Illustrations: Clive Kane of Max Dupain, Clive Kane & Associates P/Ltd

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*The house is a rectangular "box" with living room at left, central front door, while the bank of five tall windows span two rooms -- three sashes for one bedroom and two sashes for the second. There are highlight windows above all sections of wall on this front.*

*The entrance lobby had a unified door and sidelight across its full width, constructed of timber and narrow glass strips. The highlight windows, that "butt" against the ceiling (actually slipped into small channels in the ceiling lining), return along the sides of the entry porch to the door frame*





*The roof cantilevers over the driveway, forming a kind of porte cochere and terrace for outdoor sitting in hot weather. The doors, about central to the end wall, access the living area which extends for the full side of the house as well as along the front to the entrance. The night view shows the completely flat ceiling that extends from the eave line right through the house.*

