

On my way to being miseducated at a catholic school in Glenorchy, Tasmania, most mornings I walked past Snow's Dry Cleaners.

It was different. In the midst of the Glenorchy strip (milk bar, butcher, Snow's, hardware), it gleamed. I didn't know it then but it was *designed*. The buildings that those other businesses were in, they were assembled.

Now, it's abandoned. The windows are wrong, and the strip surrounding Snow's has had its mediocrity updated – an inept urban renewal.

Snow's could have served as an exemplar. The city planners could have used it, and created out from it. But they ignored it, and even disowned it. So it gleams, not as it did when I bought lime milkshakes two doors down, maybe not enough to summon present and future mes to aesthetic urban disruption, but at least brightly enough for me to welcome a publication celebrating its designer, Esmond Dorney.

I was a kid then. Now I'm a man. But I'm trying to be an older kid, so I still walk past a Dorney house most days. That house is the Snow Thomas House. I'll buy that house one day. I expect to be ripped off.

I live one peninsula south of the Snow Thomas House. There are two Roy Grounds houses there, and I've incorporated them into my museum, Mona. Roy Grounds is a pretty bloody accomplished architect, but when I was dreaming of the museum that became Mona, I fantasized about building it at Fort Nelson in Sandy Bay. At least for a while, at least for me, I preferred one Dorney house to two Grounds houses.

There is accommodation at Mona called Roy. And there is accommodation at Mona called Esmond. Grounds has books about him. It about time Dorney had one about him.

Until fifteen minutes ago, I had no idea that the house I admire daily, the Snow Thomas house, and the building I admired as a child, Snow's Dry Cleaners, were commissioned by the same person. I learned that from this book. That's what books are for.

David Walsh.

