



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.10.1 Assisting Indigenous people into the cash economy
- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions
- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 6.5 Educating people in remote places
- 6.6 Education Indigenous people in two cultures

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 306 Domestic activities
- 402 Education & science
- 504 Depression and boom
- 601 Aboriginal people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The School Building and Teacher's Quarters (fmr) of *Menzies School* have aesthetic significance as good representative examples of their type in the Goldfields vernacular. (Criterion 1.1)

Menzies School is an identifiable education environment that contributes to the townscape of Menzies. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Menzies School was built as a result of the population explosion on the goldfields of Western Australia in the second half of the 1890s and represents also the decline in these populations as the goldfields were worked out. (Criterion 2.1)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. A *Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. Parks, *Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Menzies School is an example of expedient Goldfield region construction where local building materials were unavailable and the provision of easily transported lightweight, stackable corrugated iron was the most cost effective solution. (Criterion 2.1)

The development of *Menzies School* as a Remote Community School for Indigenous students with specialist teaching programmes marks a recognition of their particular need within the State's education system and the will to address it. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Menzies School was located in the town of Menzies, which developed as the administrative centre for the North Coolgardie goldfield. (Criterion 2.2)

Menzies School was designed by Hillson Beasley in his role as the Public Works Department's Architect in Charge, under the supervision of Chief Architect J. H. Grainger. After succeeding Grainger as Chief Architect, Beasley supervised the design of the dormer windows, added in 1912 for better ventilation and light, and which were a design innovation in response to the climatic conditions of the Goldfields region. (Criterion 2.3)

The dormer windows installed at *Menzies School* in 1912 were a design innovation developed to provide better ventilation and light for a climate that was not envisaged in the original design, which had changed little since the 1850s. (Criterion 2.4)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Menzies School is valued by the local community, as evidenced by its inclusion on the local Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

Menzies School is important in contributing to the community's sense of place, having provided, and continuing to provide, educational facilities on the site since 1898. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Menzies School is a rare remaining example of an iron clad Goldfields school of the 1890s with the ventilation windows providing a particularly distinctive feature. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The School Building and Teacher's Quarters (fmr) of *Menzies School* represent typical education facilities provided throughout the state. (Criterion 6.1)

The use of corrugated iron in *Menzies School* is representative of the Public Works Department's hasty response to urgent building works. The material was lightweight and easy to stack making it ideal for transport over long distances by camel or other means. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

Menzies School is generally in fair to good condition, with regular maintenance taking place.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Menzies School has retained a high degree of integrity as it continues to function for the purpose for which it was designed, an education facility. Although the Teacher's Quarters (fmr) no longer have a residential function this is still clearly evident and the current function continues to support the education facility on the site.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

A number of changes have taken place to *Menzies School* over the years, to facilitate the ongoing function. The alterations, addition and subsequent removal of the south wing are not evident in the remaining fabric of the School Building that remains mostly intact. Similarly, although a wall has been removed, wall and ceiling cladding replaced, and extensions have taken place, the Teacher's Quarters (fmr) still displays a high degree of the original structure, form and fabric. The Shelter Shed evidences minimal change. *Menzies School* demonstrates a high degree of authenticity of the original remaining fabric of the School Building, Teacher's Quarters (fmr), and Shelter Shed.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Irene Sauman, Historian and Laura Gray, Heritage and Conservation Consultant, in March 2007, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Menzies School comprises the timber framed iron clad School Building, Teacher's Quarters (fmr) and Shelter Shed built to standard Public Works Department plans in 1898, a 1992 demountable classroom, 2005 kindergarten/pre-primary classroom, and an ablution block, various support buildings and under cover areas.

In July 1896, the Menzies Town Clerk wrote to the Education Department requesting the establishment of a school in the town. There was no suitable building to rent and a school site had not been reserved when the town was surveyed. Agitation from Menzies residents extracted a promise from the Minister for Education in October 1896 that a school would be built as soon as a site could be selected. A four acre site was soon chosen by North Coolgardie Warden, James P. Walton, with the assistance of the Mayor, Henry Gregory, and the Town Clerk, but approval was held up by the need to first allocate land for the proposed railway.¹

In March 1897, the Menzies Mechanics' Institute building was opened on Walsh Street and use of this building as a temporary school was proposed by the Mayor.² A lack of response to the proposal from the Minister for Education prompted a telegraph from the Mayor on 30 March: 'School absolutely necessary; urgently recommend your renting Mechanics' Institute immediately, and sending schoolmaster at once to Menzies; fully 100 children here'.³ The Education

¹ Landgate File, Menzies school site reserve 5108, 1896-1982, SROWA, WAS 211 CONS 541, Item 7745/1896; Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 1497, Item 1896/3900 (on microfilm); *North Coolgardie Herald*, 13 January 1897, p. 2, 19 February 1897, p. 2, 24 February 1897, p. 2.

² *North Coolgardie Herald*, 5 March 1897, p. 2.

³ Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, Item 1896/3900, op cit; *North Coolgardie Herald*, 22 March 1897, p. 2 & 30 March 1897, p. 2.

Department deferred the matter until after the Easter holidays but eventually on 2 June 1897, a school was opened in the Mechanic's Institute with an enrolment of 79 pupils.⁴

The first boy on the roll was John Holt, and the first girl, Eliza Durant.⁵ The teacher in charge was Miss Marion Kilkelly. She was paid at the rate of £120 a year with a £20 allowance in lieu of quarters, but the amount was considered insufficient by both herself and Warden Walton. The cost of living in Menzies was estimated at £3 a week, and Marion Kilkelly considered that she may have to give up teaching as her 'strength was failing through lack of proper food'. Warden Walton considered that a teacher in Menzies should receive at least £160, and Superintendent Cyril Jackson, when apprised of the matter, stated that a teacher in the goldfields should be paid £185 a year. Jackson also considered it was 'unsuitable as a rule to keep female teachers as head of goldfields schools when they grow to any size', but Miss Kilkelly was understood to be exceptionally capable. The Minister for Education agreed to a provisional salary of £175, but noted that her position was also provisional and she could be moved at any time.⁶

Miss Kilkelly appears to have left Menzies by mid September as at that time the school was being run by an Assistant Teacher, Miss D. O'Meagher, with the subsequent aid of Pupil Teacher, Miss Mary E. Jowett.⁷ A Menzies deputation to the Under Secretary for Works in October 1897 brought forth an assurance that plans were being prepared for a school building estimated to cost £1,900, which would be built as soon as money was available.⁸

The delay in the construction of *Menzies School* was indicative of the fact that the government system as a whole was 'severely taxed by the impact of massive and rapid population increase during the gold rushes and the dispersal of that population into the remotest and most inhospitable parts of the state'.⁹ In the 1890s, the Public Works Department was experiencing a construction boom. As townsites sprung up where gold was discovered, the Government was responsible for providing services as soon as possible, but had the difficult task of judging which of the goldfields would last and therefore which townsites should be provided with permanent, substantial buildings.¹⁰

Design of the buildings was undertaken by the Public Works Department under Chief Architect J. H. Grainger. Tenders were called in November 1897 for the construction of the school and head teacher's quarters.¹¹ The successful

4 Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, Item 1896/3900, op cit.

5 Rodgers, P. & B., *No Sign of the Time: A Collection of Stories of the Menzies District* W.A, Shire of Menzies and Hesperian Press, 1992.

6 Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, Item 1896/3900, op cit.

7 *North Coolgardie Herald*, 28 September 1897, p. 2; *Menzies Miner* 29 January 1898, p.3.

8 *North Coolgardie Herald*, 19 October 1897, p. 2; PWD Plan 5595, Menzies School and Teachers Quarters, signed by Hillson Beasley, Architect in Charge of Drawing Room, 28 September 1897, PWD Microfiche 10510.

9 Gregory, Jenny & Smith, Lisa, *A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia*, Centre for Western Australian History, UWA, 1995, p. 10.

10 Oldham, R. and J. (1980) George Temple-Poole, architect of the golden years 1885-1897. University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, p.61.

11 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 19 November 1897, p. 2522; *North Coolgardie Herald*, 15 December 1897, p. 2.

tenderer was George Filmer, with a price of £1,654.¹² Filmer is listed in *Wise's Post Office Directories* as a contractor residing at Perth.¹³

Meanwhile, school attendances at the Mechanics' Institute were dropping 'due to the unhealthy position of the school and the intense heat of the room', and many parents refused to send their children to class until the new school was opened.¹⁴ The Minister for Education ordered the school closed from 15 December until after the Christmas break, and it was closed again by Dr Duncan, the local health officer, in January 1898 because of the excessive heat.¹⁵

The school site was officially gazetted as Reserve 5108, Lot 429 on 11 February 1898.¹⁶ The long awaited opening of *Menzies School* took place on 6 June 1898. Mayor S. B. Schlam referred to the great struggle the residents of Menzies had gone through to get a school for their town. At the conclusion of the opening ceremony the children were treated to a lolly and nut scramble with sweets donated by local storekeepers.¹⁷

The School Building consisted of two classrooms measuring 35ft x 22ft and 26ft x 22ft with verandahs on the east and west sides, cloakrooms, and three water tanks. One classroom had an area of infant's gallery seating. Standard plans were developed for school buildings by the PWD at this time, and among the plans for *Menzies School* were standard drawings for gallery seating and a school fireplace. Gallery seating was to be abandoned for regular desks and chairs within a few years. The Teacher's Quarters (fmr) was a simple square with three main rooms - bedroom, living room and kitchen, and a bathroom, pantry and lobby occupying the fourth quarter. There was a front verandah. Other structures included a Lunch Shed or Shelter Shed, located to the west of the School Building, and separate girls' and boys' latrines. All the buildings were timber framed and clad with corrugated iron. The School Building and the Teacher's Quarters were lined with ripple iron.¹⁸

The standard school designs being developed by the Public Works Department at the time could be adapted to suit regional areas, to take into consideration climate, available materials and cost.¹⁹ At the time of the construction of Menzies School, an influx of architects from the other colonies brought new knowledge and experience in building techniques and materials. Corrugated iron, which had been in popular use elsewhere, became the most ubiquitous building material in Western Australia²⁰ due to its relative cheapness, light weight and the stackability of the iron sheets, which had to be transported long distance by camel.²¹

12 Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, Item 1896/3900, op cit.

13 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1899 & 1900, alphabetical and trade listings.

14 Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, Item 1896/3900, op cit.

15 *North Coolgardie Herald*, 15 December 1897, p. 2; *Miners' Daily News*, 4 June 1898, p. 2 & 7 June 1898, p. 2 and *Menzies Weekly Times*, 11 June 1898, p. 15; *Menzies Miner*, 18 June 1898, p. 7.

16 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 11 February 1898, p. 337.

17 *Miners' Daily News*, 7 June 1898, p. 2.

18 PWD Plan 5595, op cit; Menzies school, Buildings & works 1961-1992, WAS 24 CONS 5957 Item 1961/F0281; Kelsall Binet architects in assoc with Kris Bizzaca, Education Department Heritage Inventory, February 2002, Federation School Buildings c.1890-c.1915, historical overview, p. 3.

19 Kelsall Binet Architects in association with Kris Bizzaca (2001) A pictorial guide to standard terminology for government school buildings (1890-1945). Prepared for the Department of Housing and Works.

20 Le Page, J.S.H (1986) Building a state, the story of the Public Works Department of Western Australia 1829-1985. Water Authority of Western Australia, Leederville, p.228.

21 Heritage Council assessment documentation for P01554 Menzies Post Office.

The head teacher at the time of the opening of *Menzies School* was Horace Thomas, who had arrived in Menzies in February. He was assisted by Misses O'Meagher and Jowett. There were 74 children on the roll. Thomas occupied the Teacher's Quarters (fmr) on 8 June.²² Two weeks after the official opening, the school was closed for a fortnight because all three teachers were laid up with measles.²³

The classrooms were almost immediately overcrowded and tenders for an additional classroom were called in June 1899. A contract was won by local builder Charles W. Arnott at a cost of £297-17-10.²⁴ A tennis court was established in the school grounds in 1902, and opened by Dr Corlis, chairman of the Menzies School Board.²⁵

The growing number of students continued to outpace the facilities. Even though more than twenty transferred to the Menzies Convent School when that opened in mid 1903, overcrowding and under-staffing at *Menzies School* remained a problem. Tenders were called for the addition of a fourth classroom early in 1904, and the contract was won by J. R. Douglas with a quote of £500. This additional room, which gave the school an 'L' shape,²⁶ was formally opened by the Hon. Henry Gregory, Minister for Mines and the former Mayor of Menzies.²⁷

Teachers during the first decade included Miss Elizabeth McKay, who arrived to take over from Miss O'Meagher in February 1899; assistant teacher Miss Disting, who started early in 1900 and stayed for nearly three years, and Headmaster Thomas who initiated night school classes for local residents in June 1900. Thomas was replaced by Wes McLintock in 1901, and soon after the start of the 1903 school year, Leonard J. W. Butler replaced McLintock as headmaster. Butler taught at Menzies until 1908.²⁸

The children attending *Menzies School* were without exception of European descent. Aboriginal children were excluded from government schools despite education being made compulsory under the *Elementary Education Act, 1871* and despite the education of Aboriginal children being made the responsibility of the Chief Protector of Natives under the 1905 Aborigines Act. Except in very rare circumstances, where European parents did not object to their presence in a school, Aboriginal children were excluded on the grounds of hygiene with the endorsement of the Education Department and the Chief Protector.²⁹

However, such exclusions proved needless as a scarlet fever epidemic caused the closure of the school for over four weeks in May 1910, and it was again closed for five weeks later that year because of an outbreak of diphtheria. A

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- ²² *Menzies Weekly Times*, 11 June 1898, p. 15; Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, Item 1896/3900, op cit.
- ²³ *Menzies Miner*, 18 June 1898, p. 7.
- ²⁴ PWD Plan, Menzies School Additions, 4 December 1903, PWD Microfiche 10510, op cit; *West Australian Government Gazette*, 9 June 1899, p. 1676 & 14 July 1899, p. 2025; *North Coolgardie Herald*, 31 August 1901 & 29 October 1902, p. 2.
- ²⁵ *North Coolgardie Herald*, 12 June 1902, p. 2 & 23 June 1902, p.2; Menzies School Journal, 1902-1920, SROWA, Acc 2268/1.
- ²⁶ Menzies School Journal, 1902-1920, op cit; PWD Plan *West Australian Government Gazette*, 1 January 1904, p. 34 & 5 February 1904, p. 337.
- ²⁷ *North Coolgardie Herald*, 31 March 1904, p. 2.
- ²⁸ *Wise's Post Office Directory*; *North Coolgardie Herald*, 31 August 1901, 29 October 1902, & 19 January 1903, p. 2; *Menzies Miner*, 4 February 1899, p. 18.
- ²⁹ Milnes, Peter D., *A history of the education of Aborigines in Western Australia with particular reference to the goldfields district since 1927*, PhD thesis, University of New England, 1985, pp. 123-126.

fresh outbreak of that disease caused a further closure for three weeks in April-May 1911. Several students died as a result of these epidemics.³⁰

In 1911, the Teacher's Quarters (fmr) were enlarged under a contract by Messrs Bell & West in 1911, creating a new bedroom, kitchen, bathroom and washhouse.³¹ In 1912, it was decided that the classrooms required an improvement in air-flow and a system of cross ventilation dormer windows was designed under the supervision of PWD Chief Architect, Hilson Beasley. A contract to undertake these alterations was secured by T. H. Bell in May and the work was commenced at the end of June.³²

In July 1924, tragedy struck when 18-year old teacher Mary Findlater Smith, of Boulder, died from burns received when her dress caught fire from a log that fell from the classroom fireplace.³³

By 1929, the population in the mining town had dwindled so much that the school had been reduced to one teacher with no more than twenty or thirty pupils attending. There was little need of four classrooms so the Education Department decided to sell two of them for removal. The successful tenderer was E. G. Wilkie, a pastoralist from Jessops Well, who intended using the timber to build a woolshed. The rooms that were removed were the 1902-04 additions to the original 1898 construction.³⁴

In the 1920s and 1930s Aboriginal children continued to be excluded from the State school system. Some were receiving some education in missions, and religious run institutions, where the emphasis was on producing useful servants and labourers, and also on religious education at the Christian missions. During World War Two Aboriginal people were perceived as being of greater use to European society and a wider range of employment activities were available to them. After legislative changes to admit them, larger numbers of Aboriginal children attended government schools, but inappropriate teaching methods and the myth of non-educability persisted. It is unlikely that *Menzies School* had any Aboriginal students during this time.³⁵

Extensive repairs and maintenance were carried out at *Menzies School* in 1948, and included construction of a new shelter shed by a contractor named Bunegard from Leonora. How much of the Shelter Shed was rebuilt is not known, as the existing building conforms to the original design and location as evidenced by the 1897 plans. The School Building and Teacher's Quarters (fmr), were painted by Baker & Johns in November 1948, and a basketball court was added in June 1949.³⁶

Some of the head teachers at *Menzies School* were: R. James Cuthbert (1910), C. R. James (1911), J. H. Woodland (1912), W. J. Robertson (1914), John C. Davern (1918-1921), G. W. Morton (1923-1924), A. T. Lay (1927-1930), H. J.

30 Menzies School Journal 1902-1920, op cit.

31 *Government Gazette*, 23 September 1910, p. 2551 & 9 December 1910, p. 3695; PWD Plan Menzies School Quarters additions [1911], PWD Microfiche 10510, op cit.

32 PWD Plan 16368, PWD Microfiche 10510, op cit; *Government Gazette*, 26 April 1912, p. 1571 & 31 May 1912, p. 2051; Menzies School Journal 1902-1920, op cit.

33 *Leonora Miner*, 5 July 1924, p. 2.

34 PWD Plan 25929, Menzies School, purchase & removal of class rooms, PWD microfiche 10510, op cit; *West Australian Government Gazette*, 18 January 1929, p. 123 & 8 May 1929, p. 771; Menzies School Journal 1928-1950, op cit.

35 Milnes, Peter D., op cit, 263-267, 292-296, 533.

36 Menzies School Journal 1928-1950, op cit; PWD Plan 5595, op cit; physical evidence.

Colmer (1931-1932/33), G. J. Rule (1933/34-1935/36), J. Temple (1936/37), H. G. Lake (1937/38-1942/43), E. C. Robinson (1944-1947), and M. Brechin (1948-1949).³⁷

In the late 1950s and 1960s, most Aboriginal children were in government schools and the general policy was one of 'guided assimilation', which served to alienate those unable to make the required cultural adjustment. There was 'increasing scepticism, truancy, unruly behaviour and apathy' among the students. Those who did achieve found racial exclusion in employment.³⁸ By 1970, *Menzies School* may have had some Aboriginal students but this is not clear.³⁹

The Education Department established an Aboriginal Education Section within its Division of Special Services in 1974 to assist teachers and schools in developing for the needs of Aboriginal children.⁴⁰ In September 1975, headmaster Kevin Rigg reported that the activity room at *Menzies School* had been put into use as a classroom again to teach 'a large number of aboriginal pupils', and needed improvements to its facilities. The blackboards were of the canvas type and torn in places, the iron walls had no pin-up boards, ceiling fans were missing and heating consisted of an open fireplace.⁴¹ Repairs and renovations were undertaken, but the separation of the Aboriginal students from the normal classes was a further example of the 'frontier type' treatment.⁴²

In 1978 there were 33 students enrolled in what the headmaster G. A. Hunter described as a 'socially deprived area'. A lack of cultural stimulation and limited opportunities for varied experiences presented real challenges. In 1979, enrolments numbered 15 male and 17 female students with three teachers and a teacher's aid.⁴³ Principals in post war years included R. J. Godley, Kevin Rigg, G. A. Hunter and Greg Thomas.

In February 1980, the Government Employees Housing Authority (GEHA) was looking for a site for a new teacher's house. The Head teacher at *Menzies* was the only Caucasian in that part of town and two more houses for Aboriginal residents were planned to be built near the school by the State Housing Authority. A transportable teacher's residence was located on a new site in Onslow Street 'near the local JP'. It was suggested that the vacated Teacher's Quarters (fmr) could be used as a resource centre by the school as it was too good to demolish but if excised and sold for private use it would hamper school activities.⁴⁴

The Teacher's Quarters (fmr) was put into use as a library and resource centre in the early 1980s. It was also used by the few students undertaking secondary studies by Distance Education until they outgrew their room. In 1992, a demountable classroom was installed for their use, and a sea container has since been attached to the classroom. The Teacher's Quarters were renovated to house the library, home economics room, teacher resource room, bathroom for the health/hygiene programme, and the laundry/laminating room. Since 1993, *Menzies School* has been known as *Menzies Remote Community School*

37 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1898-1947.

38 Milnes, Peter D., op cit, pp. 427-431, 466-467.

39 *Menzies school, Buildings & works*, Item 1961/F0281, op cit.

40 Education Department, *Annual Report*, 1973-74, p. 34.

41 *Menzies school, Buildings & works*, Item 1961/F0281, op cit.

42 Milnes, Peter D., op cit, p. 533.

43 *Menzies Primary School inspection report, 1970-1985*, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 5272 Item 1923/F1637.

44 *Menzies school, Buildings & works*, Item 1961/F0281, op cit.

Goldfields. A kindergarten/pre-primary classroom was built in 2005 and the School Building was restumped and raised in early 2006. Between 20 and 25 students attend Menzies Remote Community School. The enrolment is totally Aboriginal.⁴⁵

In 2007, *Menzies School* comprises the four-room School Building, the Teacher's Quarters (fmr), and the Shelter Shed, with various support buildings and facilities.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Menzies School, a group of single storey buildings, comprises the School Building with attached covered area, store room and associated junior school, the Teacher's Quarters (fmr) (now the library and resource centre) with garages, sheds and shadehouse, the Shelter Shed, secondary students' resource centre, ablution block, office and staff room, hard court quadrangle, playground, school bell and shaded seated area with memorial.

Located on Gregory Street east of the railway, at the northern extremity of the Menzies townsite, *Menzies School* is bounded by unformed roads to the west (Walton Street), north (Gill Street), and south (ROW), and on the east, the formed gravel roadway of Gregory Street. The main entry to the school is located to the south of the group of buildings, and is accessed off Gregory Street, across the south portion of the school reserve site that is undeveloped except for gravel access tracks and a level gravel informal carpark area in front of the entry. There is another entry on the Gregory Street frontage, immediately south of the office and staff room. Both entries are delineated by a simple gate, although the main entry also has a sign announcing 'Menzies School'. The group of buildings comprising the school are fenced around the perimeter with a 0.900 metre high chain link fence on a galvanised pipe frame. The fenced boundary corresponds with the site boundary to the west, north and east but the south fence separates a section of undeveloped site. The site is flat. There are no significant plantings although there are some mature plantings evident, namely a group of peppermint trees north of the School Building, adjacent to the Shelter Shed.

Menzies School is typically Goldfield region vernacular architecture in the basic bungalow design of the Federation period that does not correspond with any specific architectural style guides.⁴⁶ The School Building, and the library and resource centre (former Teacher's Quarters), are single storey timber framed structures clad with corrugated iron wall linings and roof sheeting.

School Building

The School Building at *Menzies School* is raised off the ground on milled timber stumps. The gable roof is clad with short sheets of corrugated iron roof sheeting and features dominant dormer windows along the east and west sides. The dormer windows have low pitched skillion roofs with spaced battened eaves. The side linings are corrugated iron, and the fixed glazing is in three vertical panes. The main roof extends to form a skillion over the offices (former cloakrooms), and over the verandahs on the north, east and west sides, with hipped corners. The chimneys on the west side and the south east corner (as evidenced on the interior) have been removed from the roof. The verandahs are supported by

⁴⁵ Education Department school profiles, www2.eddept.wa.edu.au/schoolprofile; *West Australian Telephone Directory*, 1990-1995.

⁴⁶ Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture Styles and terms from 1788 to the present*. Angus & Robertson Publishers, Sydney. 2002.

simple square timber posts. There is a small timber framed awning over the south entry where a raised deck and timber stairs are also evident. The entire building is clad with corrugated iron sheeting in horizontal configuration. The sheeting has been painted. The windows are timber framed double hung sashes. The window sashes are two-pane (Classroom 1) and four-pane (Classroom 2) with two-pane awning fanlights above.

The floor plan is rectangular, with a smaller rectangle along part of the west side. The interior layout has two connected classrooms in the main rectangle form, and a corridor along the west side of the classrooms between the main entry on the south, and the schoolyard entry on the north. The corridor also connects the classrooms and the two offices on the west side.

The interior retains a significant degree of original fabric in the tongue and groove timber floorboards throughout, and ripple iron wall and ceiling linings. There is a dado rail at window sill height. Both Classrooms have blackboard panels on the south walls, with standard cupboard fittings below. Other walls, particularly the north wall of Classroom 1, have flat sheet battened panels. There are fireplaces in both Classrooms; on the west wall in Classroom 1 and truncated across the south east corner in Classroom 2. Both fireplaces have original mantelpieces and face brick chimney breasts that have been painted. Both fireplaces have also been boarded over and gas heaters installed. The connecting door between the Classrooms is flush panel with a glazed upper section. The Classroom doors connecting to the corridor are original four panelled doors, with glazed infills, as are the office doors and the south and north entry doors. Both entry doors feature side panels and fanlights. The offices have some benches and shelving fitouts. The original ripple iron wall and ceiling lining is still evident in Office 2, which has the original raked ceiling. Office 1 has been reclad with a flat ceiling and flat battened sheeting to the walls and ceiling. There are extensive lighting and air conditioning fitouts in both Classrooms.

Teacher's Quarters (fmr) (Library and Resource Centre)

The Teacher's Quarters (fmr) at *Menzies School* is raised off the ground on milled timber stumps. The predominantly hipped roof is clad with short sheets of corrugated iron roof sheeting. It forms a skillion across the front verandah and at the rear over the storeroom extension. The corbelled face brick chimney has been painted. The entire building is clad with corrugated iron sheeting in horizontal configuration. The sheeting has been painted. The windows are timber framed double hung sashes.

The floor plan is approximately a rectangle with a symmetrical frontage that has a central door flanked by a window on each side. The interior layout comprises, from the front, one large room along the north side and two adjoining rooms on the south side. The main room opens into a short corridor with the kitchen on the left (south) and bathroom and open laundry on the right, before the rear exit and the storeroom at a lower level on the left.

The interior displays minimal original fabric, although tongue and groove timber floorboards remain throughout. The walls and ceilings are mostly lined with flush flat sheeting that replaced the ripple iron still evident on the corridor side of the kitchen wall. The interior wall that originally divided the existing main room into two rooms has been removed and there is no physical evidence of its original position. There is a fireplace in the kitchen, truncated across the south west corner, showing the bracketed timber mantel and more recent ceramic tile lining. The doors are mostly flush panel although the front door is still the original four

panelled door with fanlight. The bathroom and laundry have recent fitouts to suit the functional nature of the building. There are lighting and air conditioning fitouts in the main room.

Shelter Shed

The Shelter Shed is a single storey timber framed structure. It is clad with vertical sheets of corrugated iron on three sides, and open on the east side. The roof is a low pitch skillion clad with corrugated iron. The interior walls and ceiling are unlined. There are built-in timber benches around the inside walls. The floor is brick paved. Immediately north of the Shelter Shed is a freestanding steel framed bell frame with the school bell.

Shaded seated area

In close proximity to the Shelter Shed, and west of the School Building, is a small grove of peppermint trees and some shrub plantings with pathways and areas where steel framed timber bench seats have been installed. Nearby is a rock memorial with a plaque commemorating the 100th anniversary of the school in 1997.

Covered area

The covered area adjoins the east side of the School Building, and extends along the north side. It is an expansive area of steel framed construction with a low pitched (flat) zincalume roof. The steel posts are square steel elements and the parallel chord trusses span the open areas. The ground level is brick paved.

Junior school and storeroom

Immediately adjacent to the covered area, in the southeast corner of the site is the junior school. It is a transportable building elevated off the ground. Between the junior school and the School Building, under the covered area, is a steel framed and clad prefabricated storeroom.

Secondary students' resource centre

Bounding the west side of the hard court, at ground level, is the Secondary students' resource centre. It is a prefabricated building with a flat roofed steel frame verandah across the east frontage, and a sea container 'extension' along the west side. Murals have been painted on the entire east facing wall of the transportable building.

Garages, sheds, shadehouse

Located in the proximity of the Teacher's Quarters (fmr) are two steel framed and clad gable roof garages, and two steel framed and clad prefabricated sheds, all along the north boundary, in addition to a small steel framed and clad prefabricated shed on the north east corner of the site, in front of the library and resource centre. The shade house is a timber framed structure lined with shade cloth.

Ablution block

The ablution block located on the northwest corner of the hard court, is a prefabricated transportable structure elevated off the ground. A steel framed timber decked ramp provides access from the hard court area.

Office and staff room

The office and staff room is a recent prefabricated transportable building. It is located parallel, and immediately adjacent to the Gregory Street front fence,

south of the library and resource centre. It is elevated off the ground and accessed by a ramp at the south end.

Hard court quadrangle

The hard court is an expansive asphalt area with line markings for various sports. It is bounded by the new office and staff room to the east, the covered area, and a brick wall with a mural to the south and southeast, and a grassed area leading to the shaded seating area and Shelter Shed in the southwest area, the secondary students' resource centre to the west, and the ablution facility to the northwest, with the remainder of the north boundary open.

The covered area, store room, junior school, garages, sheds, shadehouse, secondary students' resource centre, ablution block, office and staff room, hard court quadrangle, playground, and shaded seated area are of no significance.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Corrugated Iron

There are 50 places on the Register of Heritage Places that have corrugated iron walls, seven of which are in the Goldfields region. They are P00557 *State Battery, Coolgardie* (1902), P01340 *Coolgardie Fire Station* (1938), P01459 *Gwalia Townsite Precinct* (1896), P01460 *Art's Place, Gwalia* (n.d.), P1461 *Mick Omedi's Camp, Gwalia* (1940), P10120 *Doctor's House (fmr) Norseman* (1939), P10520 *Leonora-Gwalia Water Supply Group* (1903-1907).

Menzies School is representative of the use of corrugated iron in the Goldfields region. The material was commonly utilised because of its light weight and stackability for transporting long distances by camel or other means.

Schools

There are 56 places in the Goldfields region on the HCWA database, that have or had an educational use, 16 of which are on the State Register. Most of these (14) were constructed at a comparable time to *Menzies School* (between 1890 and 1910) however none are listed as having walls made of corrugated iron. Registered schools in the Goldfields include the brick *Chamber of Mines Building* (1897); stone *Coolgardie Primary School* (1897); brick *Boulder Primary School* (1898); stone *Kalgoorlie Primary School* (1900) and the brick Williams House building (1900) of the former Christian Brothers College, Kalgoorlie.

Of the 56 educational places in the Goldfields, 10 others besides *Menzies School* have walls of corrugated iron. However, none of these are comparable to *Menzies School* as many are listed as being in educational use as museums, some were used as schools briefly but were not purpose built, and several are no longer extant.

Menzies School Building has been identified as a Type 1 Federation Hall & Gallery.⁴⁷ An early example of this design is the former Fremantle Boys School (now the Film and Television Institute), which was originally constructed in 1854. Other examples of the Federation hall and gallery design exist at *Coolgardie*

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Kelsall Binet Architects In assoc with Kris Bizzaca, *A Pictorial Guide to Standard Terminology for Government School Buildings (1890-1945)*, February 2002, p. 18.

Primary School, Highgate Primary School, Subiaco Primary School, and York Primary School. Former schools exhibiting this design were *Beaconsfield Primary School, North Fremantle Primary School, Pinjarra Primary School* and *Roebourne Primary School*.⁴⁸

Many of the hall and gallery schools built in the 1890s were enlarged with additions eventually creating an internal hall space. Clerestory windows and lantern lights were included in a number of these designs built in the metropolitan area. Other halls had skylights added. Better designs for light and ventilation for school buildings were developed around 1910, illustrated in the dormer windows in the hall at *Perth Modern* (1909-1911). The ventilation window additions at Menzies School Building followed from this. There are no other examples of these ventilation windows in the Education Department Heritage Inventory.⁴⁹

The Teacher's Quarters was constructed with a simple Georgian frontage with central door and double hung window either side. Examples of this style remain at Leederville and South Perth, although both those buildings are brick and their original plan provided more rooms. The style is also typical of the brick railway houses of the late 1890s and early 1900s.

Menzies School is a rare remaining example of an iron clad Goldfields school of the 1890s with the ventilation windows providing a particularly distinctive feature.

Public Works Department

Menzies School was designed from within the office of J.H. Grainger, Chief Architect of the Public Works Department from 1897 to 1905. The plans are signed by Hillson Beasley, Architect in Charge of the Drawing Room at the time. Beasley later became Chief Architect, succeeding Grainger.

There are 24 places on the Heritage Council database, attributed at least in part to Grainger and constructed during his time as Chief Architect, 18 of which are registered. Of all 24 places, only two are schools - P00203 *Boulder Primary School* (1898) and P01320 *North Kalgoorlie Primary School* (1902). Both are still primary schools and both are entered to the Register of Heritage Places. *Menzies School* is distinctive when compared to these, for the use of corrugated iron instead of brick. Due to fluctuating and unpredictable population patterns, it was the policy of the Public Works Department to construct substantial and permanent schools only in regions that were more densely settled. *Menzies School* represents a school that was probably intended to be temporary, as evidenced in its construction with corrugated iron instead of brick.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Research notes by Ian Elliott from Heritage Council file for P1556.

Education Department and Public Works Department files as referenced.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

More information is required about the highlight ventilation system. An analysis of the potential rarity of this system being applied to a corrugated iron building, as opposed to its use in brick which is more common, would be useful.

⁴⁸ Kelsall Binet Architects In assoc with Kris Bizzaca, *A Pictorial Guide*, op cit, Type 1, p. 5.

⁴⁹ Kelsall Binet Architects In assoc with Kris Bizzaca, *A Pictorial Guide*, op cit.

