



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Assessment Documentation

Permanent Entry

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)

- 3.4.3 Mining
- 4.3 Developing institutions
- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 6.5 Educating people in remote places
- 6.6 Educating indigenous people in two cultures

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 110 Resource exploitation & depletion
- 303 Mining (incl. mineral processing)
- 402 Education & science
- 404 Community services & utilities
- 601 Aboriginal people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Coolgardie Primary School has aesthetic value with its mellow stone, complex roof shapes, numerous chimneys and deep verandahs of the Main School Building. (Criterion 1.1)

Coolgardie Primary School is set in an aesthetically pleasing context and makes a significant contribution to the streetscapes of Hunt and Shaw Streets. (Criterion 1.3)

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

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

* 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, 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Service, Canberra, 1991; additional references to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

The construction of *Coolgardie Primary School* as a substantial stone building, followed shortly after by extensions and additional buildings, is indicative of the rapid expansion and population growth of the Eastern Goldfields in the 1890s and the importance and support given to this development by the Government. (Criterion 2.1)

Changes to *Coolgardie Primary School*, with the removal of early buildings and more recent additions, reflect the fortunes of the Eastern Goldfields in general and the town of Coolgardie in particular. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Coolgardie Primary School is associated with Government Architects George Temple-Poole and Hillson Beasley, who were responsible for many of the public buildings of the gold boom period. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Coolgardie Primary School is highly valued by the local community for social, cultural and, particularly, educational associations since 1897, as shown by community involvement in the provision of facilities, including the involvement of various mining companies. (Criterion 4.1)

The role of honour is a significant record of service in both World Wars, and reflects the school's role as a central community venue. (Criterion 4.2)

Coolgardie Primary School contributes to the local community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Coolgardie Primary School is the only Government school building in Coolgardie. (Criterion 5.1)

Coolgardie Primary School was one of the last schools built in the Hall and Gallery style in Western Australia, one of only three still in use as a school, and the only one of these outside the metropolitan area. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Coolgardie Primary School represents typical education facilities provided throughout the state in the late 1890s. (Criterion 6.1)

Coolgardie Primary School is a representative example of a Western Australian Hall and Gallery type school. (Criterion 6.1)

Coolgardie Primary School is representative of schools designed by Government Architects George Temple-Poole and Hillson Beasley. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Coolgardie Primary School is generally in good condition, with regular maintenance taking place.

12.4 INTEGRITY

The Main School Building has retained a high degree of integrity as it continues to function for the purpose for which it was designed, as an education facility.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Some changes have taken place to the Main School Building of *Coolgardie Primary School* over the years. The 1975 alterations have had the most impact with the door intervention on the north wall, partitions and toilet installations in the south-west entry on the south side, and the western staircase at that entry. Subsequently, the entire roof replacement is a significant intervention. *Coolgardie Primary School* retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

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 May 2008, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Coolgardie Primary School comprises a group of single-storey buildings, including the Main School Building (stone, 1897, 1900), administration building (1987), junior school and playground, library building, commemorative feature and school bell, undercover area with canteen, hard-court and sheds. The Teacher's Quarters (1897), Infant School (1899) and Manual Training Centre (1902) have been removed.

Coolgardie townsite was surveyed in August 1893 and was initially a town of canvas and hessian shanties and bush shelters. In July 1894 Coolgardie was declared a municipality and the newly elected council set about cleaning up the streets, arranging sanitation and requesting government services such as water, communications, education and medical services. Temporary buildings, comprising timber framed tents with a timber floor were provided for the post office and warden's office, with plans drawn up by the Public Works Department (PWD) for more substantial buildings in stone. At this early stage in the gold boom period, the Public Works Department (PWD) were able to keep up with the demand for new buildings, and hadn't yet resorted to 'permanent' timber and iron buildings, as they did a few years later.¹

While the construction of some of the required public buildings was underway, nothing had yet been done about educational needs. In August 1894, *The West Australian* noted the rapid growth of the town and need for a school.

So many families are now settled in and around Coolgardie that a State school is badly wanted... If this were done speedily, it would be an inducement to the miners to send for their families from the other colonies. It would be better for all concerned if this were done, and it would be to the great advantage of the Government and the town, because the money now sent east would be spent in the colony.²

Two months later, a large tent was provided for a school until a permanent building could be erected. 'An excellent site has been chosen for school purposes just beyond the northern boundary of the town and in an elevated position'.³ The school, consisting of a timber-framed tent 20ft by 30ft in size, with a timber floor, was opened on the 12 November 1894 by Mayor James Shaw 'in the presence of a large and representative gathering of guests'. Following the brief opening ceremony, the children were 'regaled with diverse juvenile luxuries' in the nearby Wesleyan Church under the watchful eye of the Revs McNeil and Trestrail while the adults partook of speeches and champagne in the school tent and welcomed the new schoolmaster George Crabbe. Mayor Shaw regarded the establishment of the school as an important factor in the march of civilisation, and believed that it would have an ennobling and refining influence on the whole population, and encourage families to the town.⁴

1 PWD *Annual Reports*, 1895, pp. 1, 4 & 6; 1896, pp. 49 & 51-52; 1896-97, p. 57.

2 *West Australian*, 13 August 1894, p. 3.

3 *Coolgardie Miner*, 13 October 1894, p. 2.

4 'Our first public school', *Coolgardie Miner*, 15 November 1894 p. 3.

On 14 November, George Crabbe reported to the Education Department that 'on the next day, Tuesday the 13th inst, twenty-three children attended and today two more came'. Mr Crabbe resigned a year later and was replaced as head teacher by Jonathon McIntyre.⁵

A second tent was soon added to the school accommodation, and in mid 1896 it was reported there were between 300 and 400 children enrolled, with a daily attendance of 160 and only two teachers. A third tent had been promised and it appears a timber-framed iron clad structure was eventually provided. Whether this replaced the tents or was additional is not known.⁶

The discrepancy between the number of children enrolled and the average attendance was due to several factors, including non-compulsory attendance, the itinerant nature of the goldfields population where children enrolled may have already left the district, and the weekly one shilling fee required of each family, which was payable every Monday. While those claiming to be paupers were able to have their children educated for free, most families preferred to scrape up the fee than be classed as such, but this meant the children did not attend when the shilling could not be found.⁷

Plans were drawn up for *Coolgardie Primary School* by the PWD and tenders called in January 1896, but no contract was awarded as the planned building had already been outgrown.⁸ The PWD prepared new plans:

The new building will contain an assembly room 45ft by 30ft, two class-rooms 21ft by 24ft, and an infants' room, 21ft by 29ft, will be surrounded by a wide verandah. It will be built of stone, with an iron roof, and constructed with a view to future extensions.⁹

In the 1896-97 PWD *Annual Report*, the place was described as accommodating 240 children, but the *Annual Report* of 1898 described it as a 'school for 300 children', with the assembly room supposedly accommodating 120, the two classrooms 50 each, and the infants room, 75. There were also two cloak rooms provided within the building, and included in the works was a 'Master's quarters' of timber and iron, which plans indicate was initially a two-room dwelling.¹⁰

Coolgardie Primary School was designed by the PWD under Chief Architect George Temple Poole. Temple Poole had taken up the position of Superintendent of Public Works in 1885, and with responsible government in 1890 he became the first Colonial Architect, Superintendent of Public Works, and Assistant Engineer in Chief. He retired from these positions in 1896, while continuing to work as an architect and engineer in private practice. Temple Poole was the first President of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects WA. Because of his position, his early work involved numerous public buildings and included: Beverley (1886), Perth (1894), Fremantle and Coolgardie (1896) railway stations; the Royal Mint; York hospital, court house, police station, and post

5 Ridders, John, *Western Australian Schools 1830-1980*, Part two: schools and teachers 1872-1895, Perth, Ed. Dept, 1968, alphabetical listing.

6 *Coolgardie Miner*, 27 June, p. 4 & 23 July 1896, p. 4, 8 December 1897, p. 2; PWD, *Annual Report*, 1896-97, p. 65.

7 *Coolgardie Miner*, 2 April 1898, p. 3, quoting Headmaster Clayton.

8 *The Golden Age*, 16 June 1896, p. 3; *West Australian*, 17 June 1896, p. 6; *West Australian Government Gazette*, 1896, p. 27.

9 *Coolgardie Miner*, 27 June 1896, p. 4.

10 PWD, *Annual Report*, 1896-97, p. 65 & 1898, p. 95; PWD Plans 04707, SROWA CONS 1647.

office; the Titles Office, Perth; Perth Observatory; Albany Post Office, and a number of schools built during his period in office.

Coolgardie Primary School was designed as a Hall and Gallery type school building. This design had the hall as the main teaching area, with smaller rooms with gallery seating for specific lessons.¹¹ It had been intended that, as student numbers increased, further rooms could be added around the hall. However, since the halls had windows rather than roof lights, the Hall and Gallery design did not allow for much expansion, as this would have impeded both light and ventilation. For this reason, this style of school was abandoned in the early 20th century in favour of the central hall style where the hall was lit and ventilated through the roof, and completely surrounded by classrooms.¹² Stylistically, *Coolgardie Primary School*:

Like some of George Temple Poole's earlier schools, the massing of the building and its elevation treatments show the strong influence of the English Queen Anne Revival style.¹³

New tenders were called for *Coolgardie Primary School* and a contract was awarded to builders John Philp and James E. Royle (Philp & Royle), whose tender of £4,240 19s 3d was accepted in August 1896.¹⁴ Philp & Royle were listed in the Post Office Directory between 1896 and 1898 at Sylvester Street, Coolgardie and Cassidy Street, Kalgoorlie.¹⁵ *Coolgardie Primary School* was constructed on Lot 567, Reserve 3034, on the north side of Shaw Street facing the tent school site on the south side of the street, which was Reserve 2981.¹⁶ The building as constructed had a less elaborate roofline to that shown on the plan. The plans also show the building frontage to the west, when in fact it faced south onto Shaw Street.¹⁷

The opening of *Coolgardie Primary School*, in comparison to the ceremony for the opening of the tent school, was an informal and impromptu affair. In April 1897, Edward H. Wittenoom, Minister for Mines, was visiting the goldfields with a large party and on a tour around Coolgardie with Mayor A. W. McDonald on 8 April, he inspected the new school building. The contractors took the opportunity of handing him the keys to the building, and he duly declared the place open.¹⁸ It is not known exactly what date the place was occupied.

In December 1897, during a visit to *Coolgardie Primary School* by Governor Sir Gerard Smith, there were 300 children enrolled. The Governor was impressed with the standard of the school and asked Headmaster H. Clayton to grant a special holiday, which he promised to do. The temporary iron-clad building on the other side of Shaw Street had again been called into use as a classroom, and at the Governor's suggestion, the Municipal Council and the *Coolgardie Miner*

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- 11 Kelsall Binet Architects in assoc with Kris Bizzaca, *Education Department Heritage Inventory*, February 2002, 'Federation school buildings', Type 1, pp. 4-6.
- 12 Kelsall Binet Architects, 'A Pictorial Guide to Standard Terminology for Government School Buildings (1890-1945)', Type 1, p. 1.
- 13 Kelsall Binet Architects, 'Federation school buildings', Type 1, op cit, p. 4.
- 14 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 1896, p. 1180; Oldham, Ray & John, *George Temple Poole, architect of the golden years: 1885-1897*, Perth, UWA Press, 1980, p. 68.
- 15 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1895-1900.
- 16 Lands & Survey file, 'School site - Reserve 3034', SROWA, WAS 211 CONS 541 Item 1895/3340.
- 17 Physical evidence; PWD Plans 04707, op cit.
- 18 *The Golden Age*, 9 April 1897, p. 4.

joined in calling for the PWD to immediately undertake the planned extensions to *Coolgardie Primary School*.¹⁹

It has been noted that out of the 500 children on the roll at *Coolgardie Primary School* in 1897-98, not one had been born in Western Australia, and 80% had come from Victoria. In 1897, Coolgardie was one of eight places in the state where an Evening School was established for those 'whose education was neglected and for those who wished to carry on their education to a higher point'. It ran only from 13 September to 19 November 1897, and none of the other six country Evening Schools survived past 1909.²⁰

In January 1898, the *Coolgardie Miner* called for a school in the Coolgardie suburb of Montana. The population of Coolgardie had reached 'upward of fifteen thousand', and yet had only one public school. The children were expected to go home for lunch and for some, such as those in the suburbs of East and West Montana, this was too far a distance in any weather, yet there were no facilities for lunch at the school in a bare playground, and in any case, it was argued, the teachers needed the break also and should not be required to supervise the children during the lunch hour.²¹

Minister for Education, H. B. Lefroy, visited Coolgardie to ascertain the situation but felt that he would not like to spoil the standard of excellence maintained at *Coolgardie Primary School* by establishing smaller institutions a short distance away. He advocated different schools, such as an infant school, that would be feeders to *Coolgardie Primary School*.²² A stone and iron Infant School for 175 children was duly built on the school site and opened on 30 January 1899.

By September 1899, regular attendances at *Coolgardie Primary School* meant there were 280 in the Main School Building, comprising 133 children in the large classroom (the hall) with one female teacher and a monitor, and two classrooms overcrowded to the point that the children appeared to be very uncomfortable and the teachers had difficulty moving about the room. At the Infant School the situation was less crowded, but this was expected to change as children as young as three were to be admitted, and compulsory education was about to become law.²³

Tenders were called in late 1900 for additions to the Main School Building, and a contract valued at £671 was awarded to Williams & O'Donnell. This entailed the addition of two rooms at the eastern end of the place, the design of which was approved by current PWD Chief Architect Hillson Beasley.²⁴

As student numbers increased, Hall and Gallery type schools were extended by constructing further galleries and classrooms around the hall. When the hall was

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- 19 *Coolgardie Miner*, 2 Dec 1897, p. 6 & 8 Dec 1897, p. 4. Mr Clayton's initials are recorded as A. G. in later reports.
- 20 Ridders, John, op cit, Part 3: A Spread of Schools 1896-1945, pp. 22, 87.
- 21 *Coolgardie Miner*, 28 Jan, 1898, p. 4.
- 22 *Coolgardie Miner*, 25 April 1898, p. 3.
- 23 *Coolgardie Miner*, 14 Sept 1899, p. 4; *West Australian Government Gazette*, 1898, p. 1106; PWD, Annual Report, 1898, p. 95; Ridders, John, op cit, Part 3: A Spread of Schools 1896-1945, p. 22.
- 24 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 1900, p. 4885; PWD, *Annual Report*, 1900, p. 108; PWD Plan, Additions to Coolgardie Primary School, 1900, signed by Hillson Beasley, courtesy Dept of Housing & Works.

completely surrounded, the hall was modified by adding roof lights for natural lighting and ventilation.²⁵

PWD plans show that the Quarters were enlarged to four rooms around this time.²⁶

In 1902, a Manual Training School was added on the corner of Hunt and Forrest streets, adjacent to the Quarters, which fronted Forrest Street.²⁷

Even as the additions were being constructed, the enrolment at *Coolgardie Primary School* was decreasing. In 1898, the Post Office Directory had estimated the population of Coolgardie at 15,000 and by 1900 it was down to 6,000. The administrative centre of the Eastern Goldfields was relocating to Kalgoorlie and businesses and families followed. By 1906, the population had fallen further to 4,880 as gold production declined throughout the goldfields, and by 1910 the town had a population of only 3,000.²⁸ In 1909, the Infant School was 'consolidated', which appears to have meant that infant classes moved back into the Main School Building as a result of falling enrolments. Household Management classes, specifically 'housewifery', were conducted at *Coolgardie Primary School* from 1908-10 and 1912-13, and the Manual Training Centre operated until 1916.²⁹

Education Department records for *Coolgardie Primary School* from c.1900 to 1969 have not survived, making the operation of the place during this period difficult to determine with certainty. In the intervening years, the Infants School was sold for removal in 1937, a small office, built of stone to match the rest of the Main School Building, was added beside the eastern entrance, and the 1897 Quarters and toilet block and the 1902 Manual Training School were removed.³⁰ *The Education Circular* lists teaching appointments to all West Australian government schools and the number of teachers employed at *Coolgardie Primary School* gives some indication of the functioning of the place. Throughout the 1950s there were at least three teachers employed, with four in 1957. These were the baby boom years for primary schools with many schools struggling to cope with increasing enrolments. In the 1960s, the staff consisted of only two teachers, compared to a staff of twelve at Kalgoorlie Primary School.³¹

It has been suggested that the place closed for some years, re-opening in 1969. However, *The Education Circular* indicates that teachers were appointed to *Coolgardie Primary School* continuously from 1950 to 1970.³² Any break in the operation of the school would have been for a period of months, rather than years, and it is possible that this occurred in 1968. To aid the smooth running of a school the Department attempted to carry over at least one teacher to a following year (except in one-teacher schools), but in 1969, for the first time since 1950, two new teachers were appointed to *Coolgardie Primary School*, possibly

25 Kelsall Binet Architects, 'Federation school buildings', Type 1, op cit, p. 5.

26 PWD Plan 04707, op cit.

27 Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, with Dorothy Erickson & Robin Taylor, *Historic Kalgoorlie-Boulder school preliminary heritage assessments*, January 1997, p. 17.

28 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1898-1910.

29 Ridders, John, op cit, Part 3: A Spread of Schools 1896-1945, pp. 22, 95-96, 100.

30 PWD Plan 04707, op cit, dated 7 November 1936, Coolgardie School, Sale of Infants' School. Other buildings removed later have a line drawn through them on the plan.

31 *The Education Circular*, East Perth, Education Dept, 1950-1970.

32 Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, op cit, pp. 13 & 23.

indicating at least some break in operation.³³ This date also tallies with a lack of archival records.

In 1969, *Coolgardie Primary School* had an enrolment of 163 with two teachers. Head teacher Richard Pugh was teaching 86 students in Years 4-7 and Mrs Annette Montgomery had 77 students in Years 1-3. Attendances depended on the fluctuating fortunes of the mining industry. The building, although old, was considered presentable, well preserved and tidy, with Arbor Day plantings planned to assist the outside appearance.³⁴ Renovations in 1975 included new shelving and cupboards and general repair, and the introduction of a doorway into the hall from the verandah.³⁵

In 1976, *Coolgardie Primary School* was classified by the National Trust, and in 1978 it was placed on the Register of the National Estate.

In 1984, enrolments numbered 130, with 106 in five primary classes and 24 in pre-primary, and a total staff of seven. The pre-primary was housed in a demountable classroom, and there was one transportable classroom in use. Issues affecting the students were identified as transience, single parent upbringing, welfare dependency, and low self-esteem due to difficult physical and emotional conditions in the home. Issues of behaviour and self-esteem were matters addressed by the school with some success.³⁶ The school population included a percentage of Aboriginal students, but the exact proportion at that time is not known.

In October 1984, the place celebrated its 90th birthday with a weekend of events, including a 'back to school' cabaret attended by some 240 people, at which \$2,000 was raised for Coolgardie Lions Club, a concert, novelty sports carnival and barbeque tea. Eight ex-students who had attended *Coolgardie Primary School* in 1910 or earlier were present, including the oldest, George Crabbe, who was a 1905 ex-student, and 86-year-old Robert Davidson, who was a student in 1906. A time capsule was buried, to be opened in 2019 on the 125th birthday.³⁷

The birthday event increased awareness of *Coolgardie Primary School* within the community. In 1984, the Main School Building was re-roofed, carpeted, air-conditioned and repainted. Work on the grounds included fencing and some rejuvenation of lawn areas. Despite these improvements, the place retained iron-clad toilets and the small office and former cloakrooms were used for offices, staff area and store room. Because the Main School Building had been classified by the National Trust, it was decided that new buildings were required to house support facilities. In 1987, an administration building was added at the north-west corner of the Main School Building by Jaxon Constructions for \$279,250. It comprised a reception area, staff room, Principal's office and a second office.³⁸

In 1991, a new play area was established by the local community. Mining companies, the community and the school contributed approximately \$120,000 in materials and labour in constructing the area. The cost of \$7,500 to upgrade the

33 *The Education Circular*, op cit, 1950-70.

34 Coolgardie School file, Inspections, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 5957 Item 1922/F2099.

35 PWD Plan, Coolgardie Primary School Improvements, April 1975, Bruce Williams Architect, Courtesy Dept of Housing & Works.

36 Coolgardie School file, Inspections, Item 1922/F2099, op cit.

37 Newspaper item, 'Coolgardie Primary School welcomes back old pupils', 4 October 1984, Coolgardie School file, Inspections, Item 1922/F2099, op cit.

38 Coolgardie School, Buildings and works 1983-92, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 5957 Item 1983/F1073.

water supply to service the grassed areas was covered by the Education Department, after the school argued it was being penalised for being an old school with a new play area, when new schools had their grassed play areas included in the original works.³⁹

In 1992, accommodation problems were acute with an additional 30 students enrolled. The library room was in use as a classroom and the computer room had been set up in the hall. One of the mining companies operating in the area donated a transportable unit so the computer room could be set up independently. In 2000, a covered assembly area with canteen, P & C Association room and sports store was built. In 2005, a \$350,000 purpose-built library centre was added at the north-east corner of the Main School Building, replacing the use of two converted classrooms. A commemorative feature in the form of a low semi-circular wall with the old school bell and a circular mosaic was built beside the new Library and a time capsule containing student material was buried to be opened in 2025.⁴⁰

Coolgardie Primary School has several trophies and memorials hung in the hall including: an honour roll for Coolgardie men who served in World War I; a plaque erected in 1945 honouring the pioneers of the Coolgardie Goldfield; and, a plaque unveiled on 2 October 1994 commemorating the 100th anniversary of the opening of the tent school.⁴¹

In 2008, Coolgardie has a permanent population of approximately 1100 and a transient population who reside in town in the short to medium term, depending on work opportunities in the gold mining industry. As a reflection of this in recent years, while local work opportunities have been excellent, enrolments at *Coolgardie Primary School* from 2004 to 2008 have gradually reduced from 90 to 57. The 2008 enrolment comprises 19 Aboriginal and 44 non-Aboriginal students and the staff includes the Principal, four teaching staff and nine support staff.⁴²

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Coolgardie Primary School, a group of single storey buildings, includes the Main School Building (stone, 1897, 1900), administration building, junior school, library building, commemorative feature and school bell, undercover area with canteen, hard-court, playground and sheds.

The administration building, junior school, library building, commemorative feature and school bell, undercover area with canteen, hard-court, playground and sheds are of no heritage significance.

Located on Hunt Street, on the north-east edge of the Coolgardie townsite, *Coolgardie Primary School* is bounded by Hunt Street to the west, and unformed roads to the south (Shaw Street), east (Ford Street) and north (Forrest Street). The main entry to *Coolgardie Primary School* is located on Hunt Street, towards the south end, with the main building along the south of the site. *Coolgardie Primary School* is fenced around the perimeter of the building group with a 0.9 metre high chain link fence on a galvanised pipe frame with gates at various locations. There is a limestone wall immediately adjacent to the Hunt Street entry with a sign announcing the name of the school. The site is predominantly flat,

³⁹ Coolgardie School, Buildings and works 1983-92, Item 1983/F1073, op cit.

⁴⁰ Physical evidence; Ministerial media statement, Government media office, 22 October 2003.

⁴¹ Physical evidence.

⁴² Department of Education and Training, Schools Online - Coolgardie Primary School.

falling away on the south side, and to the east where the site remains undeveloped. The pathways are concrete. There are some grassed areas evident, although the site is mostly gravelled except for the asphalt hard-court central to the buildings, and another asphalt area along the south frontage of the Main School Building. There are no significant plantings although there are some mature plantings, including a group of peppermint trees in the vicinity of the south frontage of the main building, and Eucalypts in various locations throughout the site.

Coolgardie Primary School is typically goldfields vernacular architecture in the basic bungalow design of the Federation period that does not respond to any specific architectural style guides, despite the Federation Queen Anne style features of the original George Temple Poole design. The south elevation is clearly the intended frontage of the building. Although it is symmetrical with the central gable flanked by porches and rooms beyond, the eastern rooms were added in 1900 after the original building construction in 1897. Original drawings show a more complex roof form than existing with three gables along the south frontage.

The main school building at *Coolgardie Primary School* is a substantial stone building with a predominantly gambrel hipped roof clad with long sheets of pre-painted corrugated steel sheets. The main roof extends to encompass perimeter verandahs on the west (street front) north and east sides, and the return east and west corners on the south side. The verandahs are entirely lined on the underside of the roof with tongue and groove painted boards. A former verandah gable end on the north verandah provides further evidence of the east extension. The south side features a dominant gable with flanking skillion roofs over small entries with infilled semi-gable details of pebble infill between vertical timbers. The chimneys are tall and simple rendered square forms. Dormer windows shown on the original plans have been removed. The verandahs are supported by the original round cast iron columns. The south side entries flanking the main gable each have concrete porches with concrete staircases the width of the porch. The western porch has staircase on both sides (west and south), although the west steps are more recent.

The building is constructed of local stone in warm mellow pink and cream tones. With the exception of the two classrooms on the east side, the building has darker contrasting stone of the same type, forming quoins. The regular random stone is laid in courses and pointed. The windows on the north wall and west are double hung sashes and physical evidence shows that the central door was previously a window opening, as indicated by the height of the fanlight above the door. Windows on the north wall have concrete lintels and sills. However the set of three windows central on the south frontage are central pivot windows with 10 pane highlights above and have splayed header stones with a keystone. Windows on the interior west wall of the hall, and west wall of the adjacent entry on the south side, suggest that perhaps the west end rooms were also a later addition to the main central hall and south entry. Notable details on the east extension are the wall vents. On the exterior of the south wall of classroom 3 are horizontal metal vents at approximately 2 metres from ground level. They correspond with vents on the interior. Vents on the exterior of Classroom 2, on the east wall have replacement clay wall vents.

The floor plan is rectangular with the south gable a prominent element protruding beyond the rectangular form, but within the overall footprint that includes the

perimeter verandah. The interior layout shows the hall central on the north side, flanked at the east and west ends with two rooms. Adjoining the central hall on the south side is the protruding central south room flanked by small entry areas (storeroom and toilet facility) each side. A small section of the south verandah at the east side of the south-east entry has been enclosed to form a small room, also in the same stone construction as the main building.

The interior has a significant degree of original fabric in the tongue and groove timber floorboards throughout (not visible), the hard plaster walls and tongue and groove timber lined coved ceiling in the hall with roof lights. The roof light formations within the roof space are lined with tongue and groove boards and it seems that translucent roof sheeting is in place on the exterior, to the same form as the main roof, with the centre of each of the two roof lights being the roof ridge. The remaining ceilings with the exception of the two south entries that are lined with tongue and groove boards on the rake are lined with replacement flat plaster ceilings. The rooms all have various blackboards, pinup boards, shelving and benches fixed in various locations on most walls. There are boarded fireplaces evident in most rooms, with truncated fireplaces in classrooms 2 and 3; in the south-east corner in class 2, and the south-west corner in classroom 3. The interior doors are original six panelled doors. Both south entry doors feature side panels and fanlights. The wall vents in classrooms 2 and 3 remain in situ. There is extensive lighting and air conditioning fitouts throughout. Two Rolls of Honour are in place in the hall, commemorating both World Wars.

The hardstand is enclosed to form a quadrangle, with the main building to the south, library east, covered area to the north, and the administration building on the west side, with the junior school in front (west) of the administration building, fronting Hunt Street. These associated school buildings are all recent constructions of masonry and steel roofs, in pavilion form with expansive hipped gambrel roofs similar to the form and scale of the main building. There is a small commemorative element immediately in front (west) of the library comprising a low curved brick wall constructed of Coolgardie bricks, a circular mosaic within the curved wall, and a time capsule that has been concealed in the wall. Central on the wall is a decorative steel scroll frame housing the original brass school bell.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The *Education Department Heritage Survey* (2002) identifies several other schools built to the same Hall and Gallery design as *Coolgardie Primary School*. These are York Primary School (1894), Beaconsfield Primary School (fmr) (1894), North Fremantle Primary School (fmr), *Roebourne Primary School (fmr)* (1891), *Pinjarra Primary School (fmr)* (1894), *Highgate Primary School* (1895), and *Subiaco Primary School* (1897). *Old Primary School (fmr)*, Southern Cross (1895) is also a Hall and Gallery type. The variation in styles currently attributed to these schools indicates the individuality of each place despite its basic school type, and also the changes that have been made to many of the buildings over the 100 or so years of their use.

Coolgardie Primary School is a Hall and Gallery type school, which was built with the hall to be used as a large classroom. Extra rooms were added around the hall as required. However, as the hall had windows rather than roof lights, the design did not allow for much building expansion before the lighting and ventilation of the hall was impeded. The nature of teaching was also changing in the late 1890s with the introduction of Cyril Jackson's 'New Education' policies

where each class was housed permanently in a classroom, and the hall was used for assemblies rather than teaching. Roof lights were sometimes added to this type when additions reduced the window area. Plans show that *Coolgardie Primary School* was designed with additional dormer windows in the Hall to address this situation. These have either been removed during later re-roofing – a not uncommon occurrence – or were not included in the original construction as planned.⁴³

The Central Hall type was the later version of the Hall and Gallery school. It was typically built in established Perth suburbs and larger country towns, particularly the Goldfields. The Central Hall generally followed a standard plan, with a series of identical lineal wings with gable roofs that surrounded a central higher volume hall, which was added later when warranted by the size of the school. The hall had a large roof lantern for ventilation.⁴⁴

Beaconsfield Primary School (fmr) was built in 1894. It is a brick building with a complex roof indicating a number of additions. It ceased to house the Beaconsfield school c.1980, when new school buildings were constructed on another site and currently houses the Fremantle-Peel Education District Office. A conservation plan was undertaken in 2005 and the place is in good condition. *Beaconsfield Primary School (fmr)* is entered on the Fremantle Municipal Inventory.

North Fremantle Primary School (fmr) is a limestone building, with the roof exhibiting 'four dominant gables'. The place was modified for use as a bail hostel in 1983, with some partitioning, false ceilings and fluorescent lighting. The stone facades have been painted. The layout demonstrates the more random additions typical of the Hall and Gallery school. The place is on the State Register and Fremantle Municipal Inventory.⁴⁵

York Primary School is a brick and iron example of the Hall and Gallery type, and the place retains the teacher's quarters. It was built in 1886 in Victorian Rustic style. It is the most similar to *Coolgardie Primary School* in form, with additional decorative elements typical of its style and earlier period. The northern end of the main building is described as representative of the WA government hall and gallery schools. The place was relocated in 1998 and in 2001 was unused and in only fair condition. The place is on the State Register, classified by the National Trust, on the Shire of York Municipal Inventory and is nominated for the Register of the National Estate.

Roebourne Primary School & Quarters (fmr) was built in 1891, in local stone. The school building has concrete floors. It originally had a roof lantern for ventilation (removed) and verandah roofs lower than the main roof (now under the main roof). The school building has a simple hipped roof, with a lower roofline than in other schools of the type in deference to the cyclonic conditions of the region. The roof lantern was unusual for this school design and appears to have also been a modification for the climate. Since the early 1970s, *Roebourne Primary School & Quarters (fmr)* has been in use as a community facility. The place is on the State Register, the Register of the National Estate, classified by the National Trust and entered on the Shire of Roebourne Municipal Inventory.

43 Kelsall Binet Architects, op cit, Federation Type 1; PWD Plans 04707, op cit.

44 Kelsall Binet Architects, op cit, Federation Type 2.

45 HCWA database and heritage assessment documentation for *North Fremantle Primary School (fmr)*.

There are seven other school buildings surviving in the Yilgarn and Eastern Goldfields region at Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie-Boulder. *Old Primary School (fmr)*, Southern Cross (1895), *Boulder Primary School* (1898), *Kalgoorlie Primary School* (1900), *North Kalgoorlie Primary School* (1902), *Kalgoorlie School of the Air* (1905) (formerly Boulder Technical School), *East Kalgoorlie Primary School* (1907), and *District Education Office* (formerly *Eastern Goldfields Senior High School*) (1914).

Old Primary School (fmr), Southern Cross, now the Forester Resource Centre, is a stone construction with brick quoining, built in 1895 with additions in 1896. This Hall and Gallery type school retains the Federation Queen Anne features of the original design, with dormer windows and curved valance to the verandahs. It is part of the Southern Cross District High School, which caters for kindergarten to Year 12. The place is on the Shire of Yilgarn Municipal Inventory.

Boulder Primary School (1898) is a Central Hall type design in limestone rubble construction, in Federation Arts and Crafts style. The place comprises the original school building only, with the Infants School, Intermediate school and teacher's quarters having been removed. *Boulder Primary School* has been enlarged to twelve classrooms. Modern re-roofing has removed many of the roof features. The place is on the State Register, classified by the National Trust and on the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Municipal Inventory.⁴⁶

Kalgoorlie Primary School (1900) comprises the Infants and Primary School buildings in Federation Arts and Crafts style in limestone rubble construction. *Kalgoorlie Primary School* is a Central Hall type and has had a number of additions resulting in a total of nine classrooms. Modern re-roofing has removed many of the roof features and altered the roof lantern. The place is on the State Register, classified by the National Trust and on the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Municipal Inventory.⁴⁷

North Kalgoorlie Primary School (1902) is a red brick and render Federation Arts and Crafts style building, with an iron roof. It is a Central Hall type design. The Infants School and teacher's quarters have been removed. Alterations include removal of roof features due to re-roofing, window openings made into doorways, and linking of rooms not previously linked. The place is on the State Register and the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Municipal Inventory.⁴⁸

East Kalgoorlie Primary School (1907) comprises three classrooms built in brick with an iron roof in two stages. The verandah has been enclosed with fibre cement planks. There is a separate administration building. The place is on the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Municipal Inventory.⁴⁹

Coolgardie Primary School is a representative example of a Hall and Gallery type school, and one of only three still in use as a school. When constructed in 1897, it was one of the last two schools built to this design in the State.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

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- 46 HCWA database and heritage assessment documentation for *Boulder Primary School*; Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, op cit, pp. 39-46.
- 47 HCWA database and heritage assessment documentation for *Kalgoorlie Primary School*; Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, op cit, p. 26-34.
- 48 HCWA database and heritage assessment documentation for *North Kalgoorlie Primary School*; Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, op cit, pp. 53-58.
- 49 HCWA database; Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, op cit, pp. 78-80.

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research is required to establish if the Hall and Gallery type is important as a transitional type and why.

Further research is required to establish how the place demonstrates adaptation to modern teaching methods including a focus on Aboriginal students.

Further research is required as to which quarry the stone used in the construction is from.