



**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)**

- 8.5.2 Helping other people
- 8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes
- 8.14 Living in the country & rural settlements

#### **HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)**

- 306 Domestic activities
- 408 Institutions
- 604 Local heroes & battlers

#### **11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\***

*Poinciana House* is significant for the use of local stone, the pleasing scale and proportion of the building, and its rural setting. (Criterion 1.1)

*Poinciana House* is a good example of the innovative incorporation of passive cooling devices in a building showing consideration of the climate in the broad perimeter verandah and the breezeway configuration facilitating cross ventilation through all sides of the dwelling, with a focus on cross breezes in the central living space. (Criterion 1.2)

*Poinciana House* is a significant element in the townscape character of Marble Bar. (Criterion 1.4)

#### **11.2 HISTORIC VALUE**

As a substantial stone residence in a remote town, *Poinciana House* provides evidence of the successful operation of the Pilbara goldfield in the early twentieth century. (Criterion 2.1)

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\* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

*Poinciana House* was associated with prominent Marble Bar businessman and Member of Parliament George James Gallop Warden Miles, who had the place constructed for his family, and with his brother-in-law Claude Martin and son George John Miles, who managed Geo. W. Miles & Co from 1919 to 1949 and 1949 to 1967 respectively. (Criterion 2.3)

*Poinciana House* was associated with the Country Women's Association from 1967 to 1989, when it served as headquarters for the Marble Bar branch. (Criterion 2.3)

### **11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

The place incorporates innovative passive cooling devices for North West conditions. (Criterion 3.3)

### **11.4 SOCIAL VALUE**

*Poinciana House* is valued for its long association with two Marble Bar identities and their families and has particular value to the people, particularly the women, of the Marble Bar district as a venue of social interaction and community activity during the 22 years it functioned as their CWA headquarters. (Criterion 4.1)

*Poinciana House* contributes significantly to the sense of place for the Marble Bar district community for its contribution to the townscape and its historical associations. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1 RARITY**

*Poinciana House* is a rare example of a stone residence in the North West. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Poinciana House* is an excellent representative example of a Federation Bungalow style residence. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

*Poinciana House* is in good condition.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Poinciana House* has provided a residential function since it was originally constructed for the Miles family in 1909. Even during the period when the CWA owned and operated from the place it retained a residential function. The only changes that have taken place are the addition of ablution facilities and minimal changes in the kitchen, which have been done to continue the residential function. *Poinciana House* has retained a high degree of integrity.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

There is considerable evidence of the original fabric of *Poinciana House*, although the roof has been replaced in more recent years. The place has a high degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

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

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Poinciana House* is a stone and iron residence built in 1909 in Federation Bungalow style. The place was designed for George Miles by Mining Warden Charles Riches, and built by J. Jerredd.

The area in Western Australia known as the Pilbara was first settled by pastoralists in the 1860s, following the explorations of Augustus Gregory. The pastoralists and their shepherds were always ranging further afield in search of good land. When Nathaniel Cook saw the multi-coloured stone bar that stretched across the Coongan River, he thought he was looking at marble and named the area Marble Bar. The stone was actually jasper, but the name remained. The Pilbara Goldfield was declared on 1st October 1888 and in 1891, alluvial gold was discovered on the Coongan River, bringing miners to the district. A campsite was established near the bar but when deep gold reefs were found about five kilometres northeast, the camp followed the gold, and the townsite of Marble Bar was gazetted at the new site on 13 July 1893.<sup>1</sup>

Marble Bar grew rapidly, which was typical of gold rush towns. Two hotels and several stores were the first buildings of note, supplying prospectors with their requirements. In 1895, the town was selected as the site of local government for the region and impressive stone buildings were constructed, comprising Post and Telegraph Office and Quarters, Mining Registrar and Warden's Court, and Police Station and Sergeant's Quarters. In 1898, Mines Department statistics recorded 180 mine workers on 73 leases at Marble Bar and nearby Nullagine.<sup>2</sup>

In 1903, George James Gallop Warden Miles arrived at Marble Bar to work as accountant for Charles McDonald at the Marble Bar Liquor and General Store. Miles had been born in Fremantle in 1873, the son of Captain William Miles and Sarah Gallop. George Miles worked with William Sandover & Co, and the Canning Jarrah Timber Company, before spending a year in the pearling industry at Shark Bay with an uncle, and another five years on the Eastern Goldfields. He then spent some time as storekeeper to the Jarrah Wood and Sawmills Co in Busselton, before arriving in Marble Bar.<sup>3</sup>

By 1904, Miles had established himself as a commission agent, skin, hide and tin buyer and auctioneer and had purchased the principal interest in the Marble Bar Butchering Co. He then became managing partner in the firm of Mayer & Miles, general storekeepers and hotel owners in Moolyella. In 1906, he married Ellen (Nellie) Leyden, daughter of James Leyden of Nagambi, Victoria. The ceremony took place at the home of the Marble Bar postmaster. By 1907, the operations of

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<sup>1</sup> Mallett, Kathleen, *To the Bar Bonded: A history of early Marble Bar*, East Pilbara Shire & Hesperian Press, 1992, 27; Edwards, Hugh, *Gold Dust and Iron Mountains: Marble Bar and Beyond, The story of the Eastern Pilbara*, East Pilbara Shire, 1993, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Edwards, Hugh, op cit, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Battye, J.S. *The History of the North West of Australia: embracing Kimberley, Gascoyne and Murchison districts*, V.K. Jones & Co, Perth, 1915, p. 198.

the business partnership had expanded to the point where a division of assets allowed George Miles to set up on his own as G. W. Miles & Co.<sup>4</sup>

George Miles was active in the community life of Marble Bar, being involved in the Race Club, Progress Association and Pilbara Railway League and he was elected president of the Roads Board in 1908, a position he held until 1917. He and his wife occupied a house on Francis Street, consisting of two rooms with a bough shed at the rear. Their son Alex was born in 1907 and in 1908, Nellie Miles returned to Victoria to visit her parents and for the birth of her second child, expecting to be away for six months. Before joining his wife over east, George Miles had construction started on *Poinciana House* as a surprise, intending it to be completed for their return. Sylvia Cyclone Miles was born in Melbourne on Christmas Day 1908, but *Poinciana House* was not ready for their occupation when the family returned to Marble Bar.<sup>5</sup>

A newspaper item of 15 October 1909 noted that the Miles family expected to be in residence by the end of the year. George Miles was lauded for his faith in the district.<sup>6</sup>

Probably the best evidence a man can give of the faith he has in the resources of a district may be found in the amount of money he is prepared to permanently invest therein. In this connection it is with pleasure that we make reference to the somewhat imposing structure which has been erected on the east side of the township to the order of Mr. Geo. Miles, who is evidently persuaded that Marble Bar is not soon to be forsaken, but rather that its importance is on the ascendant.

The building, which is now nearing completion, is very substantial, the walls and partitions being of stone, and a 12ft. wide verandah shields the building on all sides; the whole being covered by a bungalow roof...

The outlay has been very heavy, but we believe that first-class work has been put into the building by the contractor, Mr. J. Jerred... The timber work forms a separate contract and is being well carried out by Messrs Thompson and Walters.

*Poinciana House* was situated on Marble Bar town lot 32, on the corner of Contest and General streets.<sup>7</sup> The plans for the place were drawn up by Mining Warden, Charles Percy Riches. The contractor, J. Jerred was a stonemason and builder from Devonshire. William Thompson, of Thompson and Walters, was the local blacksmith, timberman and carriage builder. The lime for the mortar came from Limestone Creek and was burnt on the Limestone Plains, while the timber came from Singapore as ships ballast.<sup>8</sup>

On Monday 20 June 1910, during Marble Bar's Race Week, George and Nellie Miles entertained about eighty guests at a private ball at *Poinciana House*.

Marble Bar Week. A Great Success. The 'week' started auspiciously on the 20th inst, with the reception at 'Pontciana' (sic) the residence of Mr and Mrs Miles, and continued throughout the following days... Too much praise cannot be extended to Mrs and Mrs Miles for the prominent part they took.<sup>9</sup>

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4 Battye, J.S., *The History of the North West*, op cit, p. 198; Mallett, K. op cit, pp. 144-145; *The Pilbara Goldfield News*, 1 June 1911, advertisement, p. 1.

5 Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (née Miles) to Marble Bar CWA, 25 July 1980, Marble Bar CWA records.

6 *Pilbara Goldfield News*, 15 October 1909, p. 2.

7 Certificate of Title, Vol. 336 Fol. 64, 9 June 1909.

8 Mallett, K. op cit, p. 145.

9 *Pilbara Goldfield News*, 1 July 1910, p. 2. The place is called 'Poinciana' in the correspondence of the Miles' daughter, Sylvia Vallentine.

While the name of the Miles' home is referred to as 'Poinciana' in all later references, in the newspaper item and on the dance programme for the ball the name was written as 'Pontciana'.<sup>10</sup>

The interior walls of *Poinciana House* were lime-washed in a soft shade and the ceilings were painted in green to counteract the outside glare. The place was lit by acetylene gas lamps, the first of their kind at Marble Bar.<sup>11</sup> The big central room had a red carpet down the centre. One end of the room was curtained off to form a reception area, with red curtains tied back with gold cords. The middle section of the room was the dining room, which received a breeze from every direction. The far end of the hall had a huge sideboard, and there was a sewing machine and writing tables scattered about. The room with the fireplace was the drawing room, and contained a piano. Everyone slept on the wide verandas and the bedrooms were used mainly as dressing rooms. A water bag hung at the back door, and on the back veranda was located a huge charcoal cooler with water running through it twenty-four hours a day. Outside the bathroom was an iron circular tank where the gas for the acetylene gas lamps was produced.<sup>12</sup>

The family employed a Japanese cook, Fooko, who occupied a separate building outside the garden fence, beyond the tank stand. 'Gracious living and lavish parties' were enjoyed. The dining table seated twelve and was set with white damask cloths, large starched serviettes to match, crystal and a rich blue dinner service. George Miles held card parties on a corner of the back veranda outside the drawing room, where there was a gaslight directly above and the breeze came from all directions.<sup>13</sup>

Aboriginal women helped in the garden and the place was soon 'surrounded by beautiful poinciana trees and lush green lawns. Down one side there was a row of oleanders, and vincas, zinnias and cosmos thrived'.<sup>14</sup> The place was an oasis in the hot town of Marble Bar.

George Miles continued to expand his business empire and work for the development of the district. As a prominent member of local public affairs he assisted in getting the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway (1909-11) and the Marble Bar State Battery (1910) established. In 1910, he purchased the Thomas R. Byass & Co store in Marble Bar. Included in the purchase were the Byass stores at Googlegong, Lallarook and Warrawoona. By 1911, Miles was lessee of the Ironclad Hotel and proprietor of the Marble Bar Hotel and the hotels in Moolyella and Warrawoona. In 1912, Claude Rendell Martin took over as manager of the Ironclad Hotel.<sup>15</sup> Claude Martin was a South Australian and a butcher by trade. He had arrived in Marble Bar in 1908. After two years managing the Ironclad, he moved to Port Hedland, where he continued in the employ of G. Miles & Co. In 1915 he married Nellie Miles' sister, Margaret (Peg).

In 1916, George Miles was elected to the Legislative Council for the North Province Seat and in 1919 he moved his family to Perth, partly for his political career but also for the education of his children, who then numbered four. George (1911) and Nell (c.1915) had been born at *Poinciana House*.<sup>16</sup>

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10 Mallett, K. op cit, pp. 145, 149, image of ladies dance programme p. 146.

11 Mallett, K. op cit, p. 145.

12 Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (nee Miles), op cit.

13 Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (nee Miles), op cit.

14 Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (nee Miles), op cit.

15 Battye, J.S., *The History of the North West*, op cit, p. 198; Mallett, K. op cit, pp. 33-34, 41.

16 Mallett, K. op cit, p. 41; Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (nee Miles), op cit.

Claude Martin returned to Marble Bar from Port Hedland to take over as general manager of G. W. Miles & Co. He and his family moved into *Poinciana House*, where they employed Chinese servants. In 1921, Claude Martin left Marble Bar, planning never to return to the north, but he was soon back as manager of Miles & Co. In 1926, the Martins entertained Governor Sir William Campion at a dinner at *Poinciana House* when he visited the region.<sup>17</sup> Claude was a member of the Marble Bar Roads Board and the Port Hedland Amateur Race Club.<sup>18</sup>

In 1935 the Marble Bar branch of the Country Women's Association (CWA) was formed at a meeting at the Flying Doctor Base on 15 May 1935. The first official meeting of the Branch was held at *Poinciana House* on 18 April 1936. Eighteen members were present for the occasion when officers were elected. Peg Martin was elected a joint vice president.<sup>19</sup>

The Country Women's Association of Australia was formed as a non-sectarian and non-political organisation in New South Wales in 1922. Its foundation was prompted by the formation of the Women's Institutes, first in Canada in the late 1890s, and then in Britain from 1913. The motto of the Association was initially 'Honour to God, Loyalty to the Throne and Empire, Service to the Country through Country Women for Country Women by Country Women', but this was eventually changed to the simpler 'For Home and Country'.<sup>20</sup>

The main aim of the Association was to provide services for countrywomen and children in Australia. To this end, the CWA established rest rooms and baby health centres in country towns; holiday homes at the seaside or in mountain districts; hostels for children attending school away from home; aged-care homes; instruction in first aid, home nursing and handicrafts; library services, music and drama groups, emergency housekeeping services, hospital visiting, and support for elderly citizens.<sup>21</sup>

The CWA formed in Western Australia in 1924, following a talk at the Karrakatta Club by Lady Forster, wife of the Governor General, on the development of the Association in New South Wales. By 1934, there were 124 branches and 26 rest rooms in the State. Twenty years later, the CWA had 113 rest rooms, ten seaside homes, five hostels and two clubs, one in Perth and one in Albany. There were 312 active branches in the State in 1974; another 136 had formed and disbanded over the period. The number of branches stood at 220 in 1998.<sup>22</sup>

The first fund raising venture of the Marble Bar CWA was for rent of a house in Port Hedland for holidays, as a sickness retreat, and for pregnant members waiting to be confined at Port Hedland Hospital. A venue known as Pilbara House was leased for a year. When women and children were evacuated from Port Hedland early in World War Two, the doctor also moved inland and a new restroom was sought at Marble Bar. The former home of Thomas Byass was rented for the purpose and known as Byass House.<sup>23</sup>

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17 Mallett, K. op cit, p. 150.

18 Mallett, K. op cit, p. 150; Battye, J. S., *The History of the North West*, op cit, p. 198.

19 'History of Marble Bar CWA', 1970, Battye Library, PR7662, quoted in Marble Bar heritage trail but not located during this research.

20 Erickson, R., Gibbings, B. & Higgins, L., *Her Name is Woman*, CWA, Perth, 1974, pp. 2-6, 109-113; West Australian Country Women's Association (Inc) (WA CWA), *Annual Report*, 1952, [p. 5].

21 Erickson, R., Gibbings, B. & Higgins, L. op cit, pp. 2-6, 109-113; WA CWA, *Annual Report*, 1952, op cit.

22 Erickson, R., Gibbings, B. & Higgins, L., op cit; Kelly, B., Haywood, R. & Smeeton, P. *A Continuing Story: A continuation of the history of the Country Women's Association of Western Australia 1974-1999*, CWA, Perth, 1999, pp. 177-181.

23 Mallett, K. op cit, pp. 259-262; 'History of Marble Bar CWA', 1970, Battye Library, PR7662, op cit.

CWA Meetings were held monthly, on 'Roads Board Saturdays', when the men came together for their own meeting, and were followed by a dance in the evening. These gatherings seem to have been held for a number of years at Limestone Station. Members included prospector's wives, Halley's Comet Mine women and women from surrounding stations. Regular functions after the War included the CWA Ball during race week and an annual picnic at the 'Bar Pool' on the Coongan River.<sup>24</sup>

In 1941, George Miles transferred a two-thirds share of G. W. Miles & Co to his son, George John Miles (Jr).<sup>25</sup> He retired from politics in 1949, having served for thirty-three years. In 1949, George Jr took over the running of the business from his uncle. Claude and Peg Martin retired to the south and George Jr used *Poinciana House* as his headquarters when in town.<sup>26</sup> George Miles (Sr) died in Perth in 1950. The same year, Marble Bar CWA purchased Byass House.<sup>27</sup>

Owing to the size of the district, much of the business of the CWA Branch was attended to by mail. Meetings were held irregularly at both Marble Bar and Port Hedland, with members travelling up to 300 miles to attend. In the late 1950s, Byass House was demolished and a single roomed cottage with bathroom was constructed on the site. By the mid 1960s, the cottage required extensive repairs, so it was sold and the funds put toward a new restroom.<sup>28</sup>

In 1966, George Miles Jr was retiring and *Poinciana House* and the other properties of G.W. Miles & Co were put up for sale.<sup>29</sup> The Marble Bar CWA Branch purchased *Poinciana House* in 1967 with the assistance of \$2,500 borrowed from the CWA Investment Pool and a grant of \$3,500 from the Lotteries Commission.<sup>30</sup> The place was one of three CWA restrooms in the Association's North West Division, the others being at Port Hedland and Carnarvon.<sup>31</sup> On the weekend of 24-26 April 1982, the CWA North West Division annual meeting was held at *Poinciana House*.<sup>32</sup>

*Poinciana House* was classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in 1984 and nominated for the Register of the National Estate in 1985.<sup>33</sup> In 1987, an architectural evaluation was undertaken for the WA Heritage Committee by the RAI(WA) and restoration work was outlined, some of which, including new roof cladding and repair and painting of timberwork, was subsequently carried out. The cyclone battens on the roof, which were in evidence at the time of the evaluation, were not replaced.<sup>34</sup>

Membership throughout the North West CWA Division fluctuated considerably due to the vicissitudes of mining. In 1988, the Marble Bar Branch had only 8

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24 Mallett, K. op cit, pp. 259-262.

25 Certificates of Title Vol. 132 Fol. 127 & Vol. 508 Fol 46, 9 April 1941.

26 Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (nee Miles), op cit.

27 Mallett, K. op cit, pp. 149-150; Certificates of Title, Vol. 611 Fol. 39 & Vol. 1109 Fol 539, 31 May 1948.

28 'History of Marble Bar CWA', 1970, Battye Library, PR7662, op cit. CWA branch buildings were referred to as 'Restrooms' until 1978, when the name was changed to 'Centre' (*The Countrywoman of Western Australia*, Annual issue, 1978, p. 122).

29 Certificates of Title Vol. 1223 Fol. 080, 1 July 1966.

30 Certificate of Title Vol 46 Fol. 171A, 30 October 1967; 'History of Marble Bar CWA', 1970, Battye Library, PR7662, op cit.

31 *The Countrywoman of Western Australia*, Annual issue, 1984, 1985.

32 *West Australian*, News of the North, 1 April 1982, np.

33 Heritage Council of WA database.

34 RAI Architects Advisory Service Pty Ltd, Architectural evaluation for the Western Australian Heritage Committee, no. 34/87, CWA House (former G.J.G.W. Miles' House), HCWA Place file 0817.

members, and this had dropped to 4 the following year.<sup>35</sup> *Poinciana House* was sold into private ownership and the Marble Bar Branch went into recess and was finally disbanded in 1992.<sup>36</sup>

*Poinciana House* was purchased by Peter and Jean Glover. In 1999, the place was entered on the Shire of East Pilbara Municipal Inventory. There is no management recommendation.<sup>37</sup> In 2000, *Poinciana House* was acquired by current owners Diane Edge and Jurgen Sommer.<sup>38</sup>

In 2005, *Poinciana House* continues to be occupied as a residence.

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Poinciana House* is located in the Marble Bar town site, on the west corner of the intersection of Augusta and Contest streets. *Poinciana House* faces Contest Street to the southeast, but is set back from the road some considerable distance, and is only metres from the Augusta Street boundary. The Augusta Street frontage is the current entry to the place. The street verges and the site are expansive with level gravel and mostly undeveloped, although there are some Eucalyptus wandoo plantings along the Augusta Street frontage and along the northwest side of the place. The place is separate from any other structures, and is on a slight rise overlooking the townsite, in an otherwise flat landscape of cleared and natural low scrub environment. The original garden is not extant. There is a low star picket and wire fence around most of the property perimeter.

*Poinciana House* comprises the dwelling, ablution facilities adjoining the southwest veranda, three corrugated iron ground level water tanks on the west corner, and the concrete slab remains of a garage on the northwest side.

*Poinciana House* displays characteristics of Federation Bungalow style. The place is a ground-hugging, single-storey building with verandas, simple massing and broad roof planes and is constructed of natural materials. Every elevation is symmetrical. The design also shows consideration of the climate in the broad perimeter veranda and the breezeway configuration facilitating cross ventilation through all sides of the dwelling, with a focus on cross breezes in the central living space.

*Poinciana House* is a single-storey face stone construction with a corrugated iron roof. The face stone is irregular in shape and laid in random coursing with black lined pointing. The walls are detailed with rendered reveals and quoining around the openings and corners. There are metal roof ties evident on the walls. The surrounding verandas under the main roof are supported by round steel posts. On the Augustus Street frontage there are two lattice infill panels between the veranda posts, and most bays are infilled with lattice panels on the northwest perimeter. The veranda floor is concrete with a ramp onto the veranda from the west on the southwest corner.

The hipped roof is clad with corrugated iron (c.1980), without cyclone battens. Two tall face brick chimneys with moulded corbel detailing relieve the roof mass. Under the veranda roof on the west corner, is a timber framed, horizontal corrugated iron clad bathroom enclosure. It features louvred windows at low level on the northeast and southwest walls, facilitating cross ventilation. Adjacent to the bathroom with a separate gable roof is a similarly clad WC. Immediately next

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35 *The Countrywoman of Western Australia*, Annual issue, 1988, p. 65 & 1989, p. 72.

36 *The Countrywoman of Western Australia*, Annual issues, 1990-1993.

37 O'Brien Planning Consultants, *Shire of East Pilbara Heritage Inventory*, 1999, Place no. MB20.

38 Certificate of Title Vol 46 Fol. 171A, 6 July 1989 & 19 September 2000.



to the WC is a corrugated iron covered laundry area with a concrete slab floor, which adjoins a c.1980 timber framed asbestos clad skillion ablution facility, accessed directly from the veranda.

The footprint of *Poinciana House* is a rectangle with surrounding perimeter verandas. Each of the four facades has central French doors flanked by pairs of French doors, except the main entry door (southeast) that is set within an arched infill surround.

The floor plan is simple, but unusual. There are four main rooms separated by a cruciform internal layout formed by a southwest-northeast corridor intersecting with a northwest-southeast breezeway, forming a large central space. The main entry door opens into the central space. The centre space is square with truncated corners of the four adjacent rooms. Three of the four rooms open into the central space, while the east room also opens into the corridor. The fourth room is the kitchen, which only opens into the corridor. Within the kitchen, there is a separate original pantry room.

French doors open onto the veranda from both external walls of each of the four main rooms and from the northwest of the central space and the northeast end of the corridor. The French doors are sets of two doors with three glazed panels above a timber panel, and with a fanlight above. The main entry is a panelled door with original doorknob on the exterior and original hardware on the interior. The front door is set into a large arched infill that is lined with ply board. It is unlikely the board infill is original, but there is no evidence of original fabric. On the left side of the front door arch infill, fixed to the stone wall, there is a plaque that reads:

Poinciana  
Built 1908 by  
Hon. Geo. W. Miles  
For his wife  
Ellen and family

There are no windows in the building.

On the interior, the walls are hard plaster. The centre space is detailed with truncated corners of the four adjoining rooms, and each truncated wall has a rectangular recessed element. The original 0.175m tongue and groove jarrah timber floorboards are revealed except in the kitchen, where the floor has a linoleum covering, and in rooms 1 and 3, which have replacement floorboards. The original 0.350m high timber skirting boards, and the architraves remain in place. The ceilings are plasterboard, and each of the 4 main rooms, and both ends of the central space, have pressed metal ceiling roses of the same design. In the centre of the central space there is a larger ceiling rose of similar design.

The rooms all have recent ceiling fan fittings and suspended fluorescent lighting. Ducted air conditioning is installed. There is a fireplace in the east corner of room 1, on the left of the main entry. That fireplace is original with detailed tile surround and mantelpiece. There is a fireplace in the kitchen, although the stove has been replaced with a modern stainless steel unit and fluorescent lighting has been installed within the chimney space. The kitchen has a simple cupboard fitout, but the cupboards extend across the southwest French door opening.

The bathroom, WC and ablution facilities have c.1980s fit outs.

*Poinciana House* is generally in good condition. The place shows minimal evidence of change, except in kitchen fittings and the installation of c.1980

ablution facilities. *Poinciana House* has retained a high degree of integrity. The place is mostly intact, and demonstrates a high degree of authenticity.

The remains of the garage slab, water tanks and the c.1980 ablution facilities are of little heritage significance.

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

Of the 171 single storey residences entered on the Register of Heritage Places, 27 are in Federation Bungalow style and a further 11 were built during a comparable period of 1904-1911. There are 67 registered places listed in Federation Bungalow style in total.

The Federation Bungalow style was popular for large residences from the 1890s to World War One, and examples are found in urban and rural settings. Those in rural settings, such as *Poinciana House*, tend to be a simpler interpretation of the style, while the urban examples are often more sophisticated. The suburb of Mt Lawley, for example, has many examples of fine Federation Bungalow style houses. Other examples of the style in stone construction in a goldfields setting include the *Three Railway Cottages*, *Goongarrie* (1898), comprising a five-room stationmaster's house and two two-room platelayer's cottages, all with surrounding verandas. They are unoccupied and in fair condition.

*Dr Bartlett's Residence (fmr)*, Dongara is a single-storey stone construction in Federation Bungalow style with a double hipped corrugated asbestos main roof and separate skillion veranda roof. It was built in 1897 on the banks of the Irwin River and has been occupied as a Benedictine retreat since the 1940s. *Balladonia Telegraph Station (fmr)* and *Eyre Bird Observatory* (formerly Eyre telegraph station) are excellent and substantial examples of the style in stone. Balladonia is falling into ruin, while Eyre is well maintained and occupied. The floor layout of these places is traditional, with little concession to the West Australian climate apart from the verandas.

There are only two registered places in Marble Bar: P814 *Government Buildings* (1895) and P14198 *Haley's Comet Gold Mine* (1936).

The HCWA database lists 270 places in the Pilbara region, 51 of which are constructed from stone. Eight of the 49 places are stone residences. There are 320 places in the Kimberley region, of which 16 are stone. None of these 16 places were/are residences. *Poinciana House* is a rare example of a stone residence in the North West region of Western Australia.

### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

Correspondence, Sylvia Cyclone Vallentine (nee Miles) to Marble Bar CWA, 25 July 1980, Marble Bar CWA records.

### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

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