



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEMES

- 4.1.2 Making suburbs
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian houses
- 8.13 Living in cities and suburbs.

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEMES

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 602 Early settlers.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is an example of a Colonial cottage constructed in the Victorian Georgian style, altered and extended later in the twentieth century. The place is important for its early Colonial form and, as an early cottage, for its contribution to the streetscape in Helena Street. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is important as a cottage dated c.1872, which was occupied by Military Pensioner John Reilly who was granted the land in 1872. (Criterion 2.1)

The place contributes to the initial subdivision and residential development in Helena Street in that locality in Guildford; whereas the street currently demonstrates a wide and divergent mix of architectural styles, early house forms survive within the progression of housing development in the street. The place at No. 53 is one of the early houses. (Criterion 2.2)

The place has further associational value through ownership by Dr. Merab Tauman, author and founding member of the Institute of Public Administration

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O., *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Australia, who owned the property from 1946 to 1985, and her husband Dr. Leon Tauman, associated with the Australia Humanities Research Council, the Australia Academy for the Humanities and the Department of French Studies. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford retains the potential for information derived from archaeological material to be discovered on the site, to contribute to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of the place and the locality in general. (Criterion 3.2)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is valued by the local community for its contribution to the built environment of Guildford and its historic associations with Pensioner Guard John Reilly, and as a result contributes to this community's sense of place. This is evidenced by its inclusion in the City of Swan's Municipal Inventory. (Criteria 4.1 and 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is rare as a house occupied by a Pensioner Guard, and particularly as a likely Pensioner Guard cottage, in continuous use as a residence from the 1870s to 2006. (Criterion 5.2)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is a representative example of an early mid nineteenth century Colonial style cottage, built in a typical form and (formerly) construction details comprising symmetrical plan form, high-pitched hipped roof form, verandah across the front, substantial wall construction and built close to the street boundary. Notwithstanding subsequent alterations to external details and finishes, substantial extensions at the rear and internal modifications, the place as viewed from the street retains the major early elements of the form of the building. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is in sound physical condition. Alterations to the original external finishes, major additions at the rear and alterations internally have changed the original presentation of the place and reduced its former aesthetic value. In the past, the fabric has been maintained in sound condition. There are no current known proposals to change the fabric of the place. The condition, as a consequence of past maintenance, is good.

There does not appear to have been major site disturbance that could affect any potential archaeological material.

12.4 INTEGRITY

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford continues in the original use as a residential building, and as a consequence of upgrading of amenity and services, retains a high level of compatibility for ongoing residential use. There is no known program for restoration or alteration to the existing fabric. The place, as a consequence of past refurbishment and upgrading, demonstrates a high level of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford retains some authenticity through the overall form of symmetry, high-pitched roof and verandah across the front, in a landscaped garden setting. As a consequence of alteration to roof covering

material, wall finishes externally, reconstruction of both chimneys, alteration of windows, rear extension and internal refurbishment, the degree of authenticity is low.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation is based on the heritage assessment researched and compiled by Ronald Bodycoat, Architect, and edited by Kristy Bizzaca, Historian, in March 2006; with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford comprises a single-storey cottage likely to have been constructed c.1872 in the Victorian Georgian style, occupied initially by Military Pensioner John Reilly, and extended and altered later, including in the 1940s. Three timber-framed outbuildings clad in corrugated metal sheeting are located towards the southwestern corner of the lot.

Prior to forming the Swan River Colony in 1829, Captain James Stirling had explored the Swan River area in 1827 on a previous visit to the western side of the continent, noting the arable land bordering the river and naming the Guildford locality after his birthplace in England.¹ Stirling, accompanied by Surveyor Roe, traversed the Swan River beyond Guildford and well into the Swan district to the north. The first rural grants in the Colony resulted from this exploration of September 1829.²

The first districts outside of the townsites of Fremantle and Perth to be settled after 1829 bordered onto waterways and fertile land for agriculture. Swan and Helena, the Great Lakes and Canning, and the Swan, Helena and Canning Rivers were the initial districts.³

The agricultural settlers in the Swan District were serviced by the town of Guildford, laid out late in 1829 at a bend in the Swan River, navigable and adjacent to the junction with the Helena River tributary. Guildford thereby became the country town and centre for the agricultural Swan District.⁴ Large allotments of 4 acres each were located within three parallel streets in the central part of Guildford townsite. Smaller riverside lots were long and narrow, of about 2.5 acres each. The townsite was intended to serve agriculturalist settlers as well as settling landless people, many stranded by the failed Thomas Pell venture, and discharged servants of the early European settlers.⁵

Arrowsmith's Plan of Guildford dated 1832, published 1833, shows the land subdivision of long thin lots fronting onto the Swan and Helena Rivers, grouped around a central church square, with provision for a marketplace and school property, both abutting the rivers. Major land holdings are recorded on this plan within and outside the townsite subdivision for James Stirling, W. Tanner, S. Dodds, Captain Picking and N. S. Talbot. Helena Street appears as one of the streets in the early townsite and Lot 83, the lot associated with John Reilly's cottage, is one of the lots extending down to the Helena River.⁶

The *Scindian* arrived in Fremantle on 1 June 1850 with seventy-five adult male convicts, fifty Pensioner Guards, a few Warders, five non-commissioned Royal

1 Bourke, M. J., *On the Swan. A history of the Swan District of WA*, UWA Press, 1987, pp. 31-32.

2 Bourke, op. cit., p. 52.

3 Pitt Morrison, M., and White, J., (eds.), *Western Towns and Buildings*, UWA Press, 1979, p. 15.

4 Pitt Morrison and White, op. cit., p. 15.

5 *ibid.*

6 Arrowsmith's 1832 Plan of Guildford (refer to copy in the attachments to this Heritage Assessment), taken from *ibid.*, p. 17, Fig. 1.10.

Sappers and Miners, under the control of Captain E. Y. W. Henderson, Comptroller-General of the Imperial Convict Establishment, following agreement by a group of prominent colonists to request the Imperial Government to 'erect the Colony into a regular Penal settlement'.⁷

Pitt Morrison and White explain the Pensioner Guard status within the convictism in Western Australia as follows:

Pensioner Guards had been formed in Britain by Acts of Parliament at seasons of civil unrest during the 1840s. Regulations made for the enrolment of army pensioners as special constables provided for their status in British Colonies to which they might be sent as convict escorts. In Western Australia they were accompanied by their families and regarded by the home government as assisted migrants. To give them encouragement to settle and fend for themselves, they were allowed small parcels of land sufficient for sustenance cultivation and were free to offer their services to colonists provided they were immediately on call in the event of trouble with the convicts.⁸

Pensioner Guards were no longer active as soldiers, but lived on a small pension from the British Treasury. Each man was expected to live in Barracks for six months while mounting guard over convicts. Their allotments of land were usually close to convict depots. None were independently wealthy. Taking on free passage to a new penal colony, they were men of few resources, generally being only the skills they had previously acquired. The Convict Depot at Guildford was established as a base for unemployed Ticket-of-Leave men and men under sentence to work on local roads and public buildings.⁹

The 1 to 10 acres offered to Pensioner Guards was granted as a 7-year lease after which freehold title applied. A gratuity of £10 was bestowed on each Pensioner with a promise of convict labour to assist in clearing the land.¹⁰

John Reilly¹¹

John Reilly, an enrolled Pensioner Guard, arrived in the Colony on the *Sultana* on 19 August 1859, with his wife Anne (née Stafford). The *Sultana* carried fifty Pensioner Guards, thirty-one wives and forty children. Reilly was assigned to the Pensioner Barracks in Perth until appointment as Sergeant-in-Charge at the Convict Depot in Meadow Street, Guildford. The Depot in Meadow Street was close to Reilly's subsequent cottage in Helena Street and he lived at Guildford until his death in 1902.

Reilly was born at St. Mary's, Dublin, in 1820. In 1838, then as a tailor at the age of 18, he enlisted in the army on 22 January. As service man No. 995, he was promoted to the rank of Corporal on 1 November 1854 in the 57th Regiment and was discharged on 10 October 1856 with a pension of 9 pence per diem. Reilly saw military service that included 10 to 12 years in Malta and 8 years in the East Indies, a total service of 18 years and 293 days. He was holder of the Crimea and Turkish-Crimean Medals as a consequence of action in those campaigns.

7 ibid, p. 26; and Bosworth, M., *Convict Fremantle*, UWA Press, 2004, p. 7.

8 Pitt Morrison and White, op. cit., p. 28.

9 Bosworth, op. cit., pp. 31-36.

10 Battye, J. S., *Western Australia*, Clarendon Press, 1924; and *Perth Gazette*, 5 July 1850.

11 Broomhall, F. H., *The Veterans, a history of the enrolled pensioner force in Western Australia 1850-1880*, Hesperian Press, 1989, p. B237 - Biographical Index of the Enrolled Pensioner Force; Bourke, op. cit.; and Erickson, R., *Dictionary of Western Australians 1892-1914*, Volume 3 *Free 1850-1868*.

Reilly was appointed to the Convict Depot at Guildford as Temporary Assistant Warder on 20 September 1871 at a pay rate of 3 shillings per day, and was promoted later to Sergeant-in-Charge at Guildford.

Guildford was declared a Municipality in 1871, and land was granted to Reilly, Military Pensioner, in 1872 at Lot 83 Helena Street, Guildford. He lived in the cottage built on that lot until his death in Guildford on 16 September 1902 at the age is 82. The title of the land at Lot 83 was transferred to his wife Anne in 1900. His surviving family on his death were his widow and a grown-up family of three sons and five daughters.

The Municipal Inventory of the City of Swan lists the date of the cottage as c.1860.¹² There is to date no discovered documentary evidence to validate this date; it appears more likely that the cottage dates from the 1870s after the land was allocated to John Reilly in 1872.

In 1931, Lot 83 was transferred to Anne Harris whose death is recorded as 1946. The alterations and additions carried out in the 1940s, and possibly later, comprise the rear addition to the original cottage (study, kitchen, laundry, bathroom, and east and west verandahs). Modifications to the original cottage are likely to be the alterations of front wall windows, external render to walls, reconstruction of the front verandah, total rebuilding of the two brick chimneys, and replacement of internal architraves, skirtings, window sashes, ceilings and most but not all doors. The property was subsequently transferred to Merab Tauman (nee Harris), and later in 1985 to Jessie Elizabeth Price, who had been administrator of the estate. The property was gifted to The University of Western Australia in July 1987 and is currently (March 2006) in process of sale to a new owner. Gifting to the University was on the condition that the place would be occupied for life by Caleb Benjamin and Grace Park. The last surviving of the two, Grace Park, moved to a nursing home in August 2005.¹³

Merab Tauman PhD was a founding member of the Institute of Public Administration Australia. Her husband, Dr. Leon Tauman, who died in October 1981, was a founding member in 1956 of the Australian Humanities Research Council, and Foundation Fellow of that Council, later restyled and established in 1969 as The Australian Academy of the Humanities. He was also Foundation Head of the Department of French Studies at The University of Western Australia. Both were distinguished academics.¹⁴

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is currently (2006) vacant and is in process of sale as a residential building.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford comprises a single-storey former cottage now altered and extended, the original section dating from the 1870s and the addition from c.1940.

The lot has a frontage of approximately 22 metres with side setbacks on both sides of the house of approximately seven and ten metres. The front of the house is set back a short distance from the northern (street) boundary of the lot. The area of the lot around the house and south to the rear fence line is landscaped with mature trees, shrubbery and creepers. The rear yard is grassed. The mature

¹² Municipal Inventory, City of Swan, Assessment No. 162610 - ID 206, 11 November 1995.

¹³ Certificate of Title, Plan 222536, Volume 2083, Folio 174; and UWA archival records.

¹⁴ UWA archival records.

trees are three jacarandas and two palms in the front setback, and one Siberian elm, two Norfolk Island pines and one conifer in the rear garden. None of the landscape treatment is original, including the low plumbago hedge to the street boundary and along part of the western boundary. The street boundary has a link mesh fence within the hedge, and double link mesh gates to the driveway along the western side of the house. The western boundary fence is link mesh within the hedge and shrubbery. The eastern boundary fence is high vertical close timber-pickets.

Three outbuildings in the southwest corner of the rear garden are timber-framed clad in corrugated iron sheeting with pitched corrugated iron roofing to two of the three. The northern building is now a garage with a steel roller shutter door and concrete floor. The framing of the garage is substantial square timber posts braced at the top and a trussed timber roof.

The original northern section of the house comprises the initial four-room cottage, built with thick masonry walls rendered and painted externally. The material of the walls appears to be solid brickwork as indicated by a deteriorated section of wall onto the verandah. The masonry is sand-finish rendered, later cement rendered and now finished to the original cottage external walls in roughcast render painted. A bituminous damp proof course, one course above floor level at the exposed front wall, is incongruous with an 1870s cottage. Extensive re-rendering at the base of external walls and continuing rising damp damage to internal walls above floor level, indicate no effective damp barrier and inadequate subfloor ventilation.

The 1940s rear addition is built in cavity load-bearing red brickwork, rendered and painted in part onto the enclosed verandahs at the south-west and south-east corners, and face brickwork to the exposed external south elevations. The additions have been constructed in stages with hipped or lean-to roofs as an extension to the main roof, and the verandahs are now enclosed with adjustable glass louvres to the south-east verandah and timber casement sashes to the south-west verandah, all above a fibrocement lined dado.

The material of the footings to both sections of the building is not discernable without opening up the external finishes and brick paving.

The roof form over the original four-room cottage is a high-pitched hipped roof, indicative of early cottages. The additions are roofed in hipped roofs with continuous roofing at a flatter pitch extending over the southwest and southeast verandahs. The roof to the southwest verandah continues along part of the western wall of the original cottage as an awning to two windows in that wall. The entire roof area is clad in corrugated galvanised iron sheeting in short lengths painted red. Gutters are moulded metal to narrow eaves overhangs with rafter ends expressed behind timber fascias and scotia gutter beads. Downpipes are round section galvanised sheet metal with some PVC replacements. It is likely that the present corrugated metal roofing replaces an earlier roof covering in a different material. Roof framing throughout is in hardwood.

Two tall red face brick chimneys on the western wall service fireplaces to the two rooms on that side of the original cottage. Both chimneys are recent replacements. A third tall face brick chimney services the former kitchen fireplace and laundry copper at the rear of the 1940s addition. Chimneys and fireplaces do not survive to the two eastern rooms of the original cottage.

Across the front of the house a timber-framed verandah comprising timber boarded floor in narrow width boards, square section plain timber posts without

decoration, timber-framed roof in a single straight plane separate to the main roof, clad in painted corrugated iron sheeting and lined with fibrocement sheeting on the incline of the roof and with cover battens. The verandah appears to be a complete reconstruction.

Internally, floors are timber boarded and generally carpeted except concrete to the bathroom and laundry; walls are plastered and painted; ceilings are fibrous plaster or plasterboard with narrow plaster cornices, some battened; skirtings and architraves are simple chamfered timber sections painted to the northwest room and kitchen, stained dark elsewhere. Doors and windows are treated similarly internally and externally throughout. The two front windows are replacements comprising a fixed central pane and casement sashes on each side. The front door is a replacement five-light obscure-glazed timber door with modern aluminium security screen door externally. Rear doors are vertical boarded ledged and braced doors. All other windows are casement sashes, singles or doubles; all of the doors and window sashes in the original cottage are replacements. The style of joinery in the rear addition is characteristically 1940s with a horizontal glazing bar close to the top of each sash.

The accommodation of the house comprises the original cottage of four rooms, with the entry directly into the living room off the verandah across the northern front wall. The 1940s addition at the rear incorporates a central passage, a kitchen opening onto the southwest verandah, now enclosed. The laundry extends beyond the southern wall of the kitchen and opens onto the southwest verandah. Along the eastern side the addition comprises two rooms, a study/bedroom and a bathroom, and the southeast verandah now enclosed and accessed off the two bedrooms. Both verandahs have external doors in the south wall, and adjoining rooms open out onto the verandahs.

Alterations

The following changes have been made to the original 1870s cottage:

- the front verandah is a reconstruction;
- external walls are rendered and painted except to the south wall of the additions at the rear;
- substantial additions have been built onto the south wall of the cottage;
- a terrace and flat roof over has been added onto the south wall of the house;
- southwest and southeast verandahs are enclosed;
- internal finishes have been upgraded;
- the two western chimneys are reconstructions;
- the two windows in the front wall are substantial enlargements of the original windows;
- windows or at least the sashes in the east and west walls are replacements;
- an awning has been provided to the narrow windows on the western wall of the original cottage;
- services including an air conditioning unit have been installed;
- brick paving and a pathway have been added at the front section of the house and a pergola at the north-east corner.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The following information is extracted without amendment from the Comparative Information section of the Government Heritage Property Disposal Process

document prepared for this place by HCWA for consideration by the Register Committee, January 2006.

There are 175 single-storey buildings on the State Register of Heritage Places, of which 46 were designed in the Victorian Georgian architectural style. Of the 46 Victorian Georgian single storey houses, 29 are made of brick. Eight of these places are located in the metropolitan area, of which only two are comparable; *Grasmere*, Melville, 1886 is a single storey, rendered brick and corrugated iron homestead (1886) in the Victorian Georgian style, together with iron clad outbuildings. *Moulton's House (fmr)*, Guildford, 1842 is a much older example of a Victorian Georgian brick house. It is comparable in size, however the corrugated iron roof extends over the verandah and the verandah is supported by timber posts.

There are 145 single storey buildings in the Current Assessment Program, of which, 27 were designed in the Victorian Georgian architectural style. Of these 27 Victorian Georgian single storey buildings, 12 were made of brick. Of these 12 brick, Victorian Georgian single-storey residences, only 3 are located in the metropolitan area and all three are located in Guildford; House, 12 Victoria St, House, 21 Market Street, and House 138 Swan Street. All three are comparable in construction materials and size.

The place is representative of a Victorian Georgian single-storey residence in Western Australia.

The single-storey residence was originally the home of a Pensioner Guard, of which there are few directly comparable places on the database. There are a total of 22 other places on the HCWA database associated in some way with the Pensioner Guard force in Western Australia. Of those, 15 relate specifically to accommodation. Within those 15, five are ruins (including those at Port Gregory), one is a remnant (Barracks Arch) and one is a two-storey terrace (Warder's Terrace, Fremantle), which leaves eight comparable, extant, single-storey residences built for Pensioner Guards on the database:

- P1400 *Elverd's Cottage*, Kojonup (Registered, and now a museum);
- P131 *Pensioner Guard Cottage*, Bassendean (Registered, and open to the public once a month);
- P3731 Pensioner Kelly Cottage & Barn, Greenough (which has been extensively renovated);
- P12153 Kirk's (Pensioner) Cottage (fmr), Toodyay;
- P12155 Hackett's (Pensioner) Cottage (fmr), Toodyay;
- P12156 Pensioner Guard Cottage (Jas Smith's) (fmr), Toodyay (which is now a shop);
- P2661 Pensioner Guard Cottage (fmr), Northam; and
- P4662 Sawles House, Henderson.

House, 53 Helena Street, Guildford is rare as a house occupied by a Pensioner Guard, and particularly as a likely Pensioner Guard cottage, in continuous use as a residence from the 1870s to 2006.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Broomhall, F. H., *The Veterans, a history of the enrolled pensioner force in Western Australia 1850-1880*, Hesperian Press, 1989;

Bourke, M. J., *On the Swan. A History of the Swan District Western Australia*, UWA Press, 1987.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research should discover not only the early history of the use of the place but the actual date of construction of the original section of the cottage, the physical characteristics of that cottage at that time, such as material and finishes to walls and roof, the dates and details of alterations and additions up to the present day in 2006, and whether or not in fact the cottage was built for John Reilly and initially occupied by him and his family.