



# REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

## Permanent Entry

1. **Data Base No.** 2463
2. **Name.** *Guildford Hotel* (1886, 1899, 1915)
3. **Description of elements included in this entry.** Guildford Tavern, and the land on which it stands, being Lot 18 on Diag. 42637, comprised in Certificate of Title 1904/943.
4. **Local Government Area.** Shire of Swan
5. **Location.** south-west corner James Street and Johnson Street, Guildford.  
Lot 18 D 42637 C/T 1904/943
6. **Owner.** Rosegate Holdings Pty. Ltd.
7. **Statement of Significance of Place (Assessment in Detail)**

### DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Guildford was established as an administrative and marketing town on the upper reaches of the Swan River in 1830. The layout was English in style, with a central "village green", surrounded by public facilities. Stirling Square originally extended from Swan Street to Helena Street, with Allotments 21, 26, 44, and 45 reserved for Government purposes. In the 1840s the square was cut in half, with the portion between James and Helena Streets, together with Allotments 21 and 26, assigned to private landholders. Guildford's role as a port and market for the colony's rural hinterland increased as farm land was developed in the Swan Valley, and east to York and Toodyay. In 1881, the Eastern Railway was completed linking the towns of Fremantle, Perth and Guildford. The establishment of the railway prompted the growth of a commercial strip along James Street, opposite the railway station.

The *Guildford Hotel* was built in 1885-1886. Sited on the south-west corner block of James and Johnson Streets, it was ideally located to benefit from the prosperity of the times. The first licensee was Henry E. Manning, who wrote early in 1886, requesting that two culverts be placed over the drain on the east side of the hotel.<sup>1</sup> There was a change of licensee nearly every year until 1891, when George Hiscox bought it. He retained the licence for ten years, during which time he was involved in a number of speculative ventures in Guildford and Midland Junction. Hiscox

<sup>1</sup> *Guildford Town Trust Minutes*, 4 February, 1886.

served on Guildford Municipal Council in 1897, and was later elected mayor of Midland Junction.

Guildford experienced an economic boom in the 1890s, being on the direct traffic route to and from the Goldfields. At the same time it became fashionable to build a residence on the riverside allotments in Guildford and West Guildford and commute to Perth. ("Woodbridge", "Earlsferry" and "Fairholme" are examples of these large residences.) From 1890 through to the end of World War 1 was the peak period of prosperity for Guildford as a residential and business centre, and it was in this boom period that Hiscox built the Vaudeville Theatre on land adjacent to the hotel.<sup>2</sup> The Christmas 1897 edition of *The Western Mail* includes a photograph of the site and a description of the hotel, which, "has for a long time been an ideal residence and it's here that bridal parties, aching tourists, picnickers and the like, love to congregate for no suburban hostelry can be found more homely in its character, nor more comfortable to halt at."<sup>3</sup> Already the hotel had become "not only a familiar institution, but is a prominent landmark".<sup>4</sup> Increased wealth provided by the goldrush led Hiscox to embark on flamboyant additions to the hotel in 1899.<sup>5</sup> These additions, in the Free Classical manner, obscured the earlier part of the hotel and included an eight sided belvedere prominently mounted on the north east corner of the building.<sup>6</sup>

In 1913 and 1914 the *Guildford Hotel* advertised that it had been renovated internally, and refurnished.<sup>7</sup> However, in March 1915, the Guildford Town Council approved a building license for alterations and additions to the *Guildford Hotel*, and noted that work had commenced.<sup>8</sup> These additions involved the construction of a completely new facade. In December of that year the Chairman of the Licensing Court, "complimented the owner Mr G. Hiscox and the architect on the splendid edifice which had been erected in place of the old building."<sup>9</sup>

The architect and builder of the later additions to the hotel are unknown at this time; however, Hiscox remained in ownership of the hotel throughout this period, and it is possible he contracted the work to the same people. It has been suggested that the 1915 addition was designed by the architect William Wolf, and built by Gustav Liebe.<sup>10</sup>

Wolf was born in New York City and trained as an architect in Germany. He migrated to Australia in 1877, and worked in Melbourne and Sydney before setting up a successful practice in Perth in the mid 1890s.

The location of the southern terminus of the Midland Railway in Midland Junction in 1895, and the relocation of the Government railway workshops from Fremantle to Midland in 1905, assured the growth of Midland Junction as a commercial centre, and the general decline of Guildford.

---

<sup>2</sup> Guildford Study Group, *Guildford: A Study of its Unique Character*, (Prepared for the Shire of Swan, August 1981). p.66.

<sup>3</sup> *The Western Mail*, Christmas 1897, p.37.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Ferguson, R.J. and Stephenson, G., *Survey of Historic Buildings in the Shire of Swan*, (Swan Shire Council), p.61.

<sup>6</sup> Bourke, M.J., *On The Swan, A History of the Swan District*, (UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987) p.267.

<sup>7</sup> Advertisements, *Swan Express*, 1913, 1914.

<sup>8</sup> Guildford Municipal Council Minute Books, 11 March 1915, p.26.

<sup>9</sup> *Swan Express*, 10 December 1915, p.3.

<sup>10</sup> to be verified.

As Guildford's role as an administrative and commercial centre continued to decline, the demand for accommodation also lessened. This change, coupled with the proliferation of more centrally located modern motels, saw the *Guildford Hotel* follow the growing trend and change its licence from hotel to tavern.<sup>11</sup> The introduction of tavern licences became law in 1970, following an investigation by the Australian Hotels Association (WA branch) into ways to overcome the uneconomical situation that had arisen in many hotels where the accommodation component of a hotel license was no longer utilised. The emphasis on food and beverage services within the hotel has been maintained and extended since that time.

The hotel developed structural problems, and in 1991 the Swan Shire Council began the process to condemn the building. However, in June 1991 new owners bought the *Guildford Hotel* and proceeded to restore the building.

The building has been described as "a well-loved landmark in the district."<sup>12</sup> In their 1975 survey for the Shire of Swan, Ferguson and Stephenson concluded that the *Guildford Hotel* is "a landmark, as well known as the Guildford Post Office."<sup>13</sup> They concluded that the area of Guildford centred on Meadow Street, including the *Guildford Hotel*, was of prime importance. The Guildford Study Group in 1981 placed the *Guildford Hotel* in its Category 1, as being of importance to the heritage of Western Australia.

The Town of Guildford was classified as an Historic Town by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in December 1983. The *Guildford Hotel* was entered into the Register of Heritage Places in October 1992, and is listed in the Guildford Conservation Policy (1992).<sup>14</sup> The newly restored and refurbished *Guildford Hotel* was also presented a Heritage Award by the Swan Shire Council in 1992.

## PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The *Guildford Hotel* is a two story building of load bearing brick with stucco ornamentation in the Federation Free Classical style. The building occupies a corner block, at the junction of James and Johnson Streets; opposite the railway reserve and diagonally across from Stirling Square. The prominent corner location of the hotel with its exposure to two major roadways and the railway line, ensures that the place is a dominant townscape feature. The eight sided tower belvedere mounted on the north east corner of the building accentuates the landmark quality of the hotel.

The building has a strongly modelled and embellished facade, expressing symmetry and massing that is typical of the Federation Free Classical style. The contrasting belvedere and variety of classical motifs used in the parapet and cornice details are characteristic of the range and freedom of expression found within the general language of classical architecture around the turn of the century.

The first hotel on the site was built in 1885 - 1886<sup>15</sup>, and although the basic structure remains relatively intact, the external form has been obscured by two later additions. A two storey extension to the north and south east wing of the hotel was added in

---

<sup>11</sup> Liquor Licensing Division advised that the current tavern license was issued in 1976. Further investigation as to the type of licence prior to this requires a written request.

<sup>12</sup> Wroth, B. and Cogan, M., *Bassendean and Guildford Sketchbook*, (Rigby Ltd, 1976) p.50.

<sup>13</sup> Ferguson, R.J. and Stephenson, G., *op.cit.*

<sup>14</sup> *Guildford Conservation Policy* (Swan Shire, 1992) plan 11.

<sup>15</sup> *Guildford Town Trust Minutes*, 4 February 1886.

1899<sup>16</sup>, and an extensive remodelling of the facade occurred in 1915<sup>17</sup>. Consecutive owners have since made minor alterations to the building fabric; however, the facades remain relatively untouched with the exception of the addition of a drive through bottle shop and beer garden to the southern end of the hotel.<sup>18</sup>

Located on the southern portion of the corner block, the 1886 section of the hotel comprised two parallel wings separated by a breezeway. During restoration work undertaken in 1992, it was discovered that this part of the hotel was built of convict made bricks<sup>19</sup>. In view of the nearby convict depot and numerous brickworks in Guildford at the time, it is probable that the bricks were also made locally.

Second storey verandahs to the north and north east facades are shown in a photograph taken c.1890s, prior to the 1899 development.<sup>20</sup> The verandahs were enclosed with simple colonial style balustrades and posts. Until its recent removal, a staircase and landing of similar style to the front verandahs ran along the length of the western wing providing access to the rooms above. It is highly probable that this staircase and landing was constructed as part of the 1886 development. The extant doors to the previous landing are in good condition and now provide access to the newly installed timber decking.

The upper floor of the 1886 west wing remains intact, and despite general wear and tear is in good condition. The planning configuration, and the small size of the rooms suggest that this section was built as workers accommodation. The lower level of the west wing contained the kitchen and maids quarters, and most likely a dining room which faced onto James Street.

While the front rooms of the second storey of the east wing reflect the detail and scale of the smaller rooms of the west wing, the southern room of the east wing is more generous in its proportions and is reported to be a later addition.<sup>21</sup> The gabled roof vents evident over this room also differ from the rest of the 1886 roof structure, and imply that it may have been built during the 1899 development.

The north facade and surrounding verandahs of the 1886 hotel were removed in 1899 to make way for an extensive addition. However, the location of the 1886 facade is still evident in the extant physical fabric of the hotel, particularly in the change in direction of the floor boards and joists in the dining room, which coincide with the general placement of steel beams used to support the northern upper floors.

The 1899 development was of load bearing brick construction, and continued the double hung casement windows and decorative timber eaves details of the 1886 hotel. However, the existing floor space was more than doubled, and the new rooms were larger and more decorative, reflecting the ebullience and increased wealth generated by the discovery of the eastern goldfields in the 1890s.

---

<sup>16</sup> Ferguson, R.J. and Stephenson, G., *op.cit.* p.61.

<sup>17</sup> Guildford Municipal Council Minute Books, 11 March 1915, p.26.

<sup>18</sup> See attached sketch plan of building development. Alterations since 1991 are detailed by R. Fishwick and Associates Architectural Drafting Consultants, *Drawing No 91 1233.1*, August 1991.

<sup>19</sup> C. Irving, the owner responsible for renovations undertaken in 1992, has advised that convict stamped bricks were discovered in the ground level walls of the east wing (lounge bar) and in several internal walls of the west wing (kitchen and servants quarters). Site visit January 1994.

<sup>20</sup> Bourke, M.J., *op cit.* p.267.

<sup>21</sup> C. Irving advised that the brickwork on the most southern wall face of the middle room of the east wing, revealed signs of weathering and was far less stable than the northern side of the bricks. This evidence has not been sighted due to the replastering of the northern side of the wall. Site visit January 1994.

The centrally placed 1886 entrance became the main point of internal access between the 1886 and 1899 developments, with a new main entry and hall located at the west end of the new James Street facade. The scale and detail of the entrance hall, including 12 inch skirtings, wide jarrah floor boards, picture rails and ceiling roses, reflects the overall graciousness of the hotel and is characteristic of the Federation era.<sup>22</sup>

Two smaller entrances were also created; a secondary entrance on the diagonal north east corner of the public bar, and a back entrance to the lounge bar off Johnson Street. A new staircase was installed adjacent to the 1886 arched entrance, to provide access to the upstairs rooms.

Although it is documented in 1915 that a "...splendid edifice...had been erected in place of the old building.<sup>23</sup>", there are no obvious changes to the internal physical layout. Plans of the hotel prior to the 1992 works, as drawn by Fishwick, indicate that some wall sections between the bars of the front room have been removed and the hall slightly narrowed to accommodate toilet facilities.<sup>24</sup> It is likely these changes were undertaken relatively recently.<sup>25</sup>

Fyshwick's drawings also reveal a change in wall thickness which indicates that a new facade was 'applied' to the 1899 structure. The thicker sections of the wall correspond to the location of the pilasters and sash windows in the 1915 facade, but do not exactly match the 1899 structure. The 1915 western facade commences at the northern end of the dining room rather than the initial point of the 1899 extension, and is the point at which the 1899 decorative timber eaves details stop.

The 1915 development is obvious by the weighty massing and symmetry of the Federation Free Classical north, north east and north west facades. These facades are characterised by the flat arched and triangular arrangement of pediments, set between structural pilasters. The symmetrical arrangement of the pilasters is broken in the eastern facade by a small inset balcony, and on the northern facades by two central columns.

The scale and delicate wrought iron work of the belvedere above the north east corner is incongruous with the heavy classical facades, and the decorative timber eaves provide further evidence of its earlier construction.

Condemned by the Swan Shire Council in 1991, the hotel was saved from demolition by the new owners, Mr and Mrs P. Irvin. The Irvins' commenced restoration work on the building in 1992. Major alterations to the ground floor included the removal of the interior walls of the lounge bar area, and the addition of three doors to the beer garden. Two of these doors were salvaged from the house of Dame Edith Cowan; the middle door is a reproduction. Wrought iron railings salvaged from the Boans complex have been used to divide off the two sections of the lounge bar.

The former maids' quarters were converted for public toilets. A feature of the female bathroom is the restored 1886 fireplace and surround.

The external staircase has been removed and the void enclosed to provide a link between the two former 1886 wings.

---

<sup>22</sup> C. Irving, Photographs taken prior to restoration work in 1992.

<sup>23</sup> *Swan Express*, 10 December 1915, p.3.

<sup>24</sup> Fishwick & Associates, Architectural Drafting Consultants; *Guildford Hotel Dwg No 91 1233.1*, August 1991.

<sup>25</sup> To be verified.

The proposed restoration of the second floor has not been fully completed, and the rooms south of the stairwell remain untouched.<sup>26</sup> Two main walls have been removed in the northern rooms to create a large gallery space, and new pressed metal dados have been installed. Ceiling roses were restored, sections of the ornate cornices were replaced with replicas, and the fireplaces were restored and returned to their original condition.

Extensive structural repairs were required to most floors and ceilings, and wherever possible any sound timber was reused. Generally the alterations are sympathetic to the existing fabric, including details of door and light fittings.

The colour scheme is not unattractive; however, the paint colours are brighter than the traditional colours for the period, and the external mouldings would have traditionally been painted a single colour defined by the play of light and shade rather than the use of contrasting colour.

The numerous and extensive additions and alterations to the hotel between 1886 and 1915 provide an important and continuous record of the physical development of the hotel and site. Despite minor changes to the hotel since 1915, and more recent neglect and vandalism, the deterioration of the fabric has now been arrested, and the structure is once again in a sound condition.

## **ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September , 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

### **1. AESTHETIC VALUE**

The *Guildford Hotel* has aesthetic value as a fine example of Federation Free Classical design, demonstrating the free but original use of classical themes typical of the era.

Occupying a prime location, the hotel is a dominant townscape element, impacting on the vistas to the railway and two major roadways into Guildford. The prominence of the corner belvedere reinforces its strong visual presence in the streetscape, and contributes to the landmark quality of the hotel.

### **2. HISTORIC VALUE**

The *Guildford Hotel* has historic significance because its 1899 additions demonstrate the prosperity and commercial development experienced in Western Australia over the gold rush period. The extensive additions and alterations to the hotel between 1886 and 1915 provide an important and continuous record of the physical development of the hotel and site, and the increasingly sophisticated use of architectural styles in Western Australia.

The property has some historic significance for its close association with persons of local note, particularly with Hiscox who was influential in the development of Guildford and Midland Junction.

---

<sup>26</sup> Fishwick & Associates, Architectural Drafting Consultants; *Guildford Hotel Dwg No 91 1233.2*, August 1991.

### 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

-----

### 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The *Guildford Hotel* has a high degree of social value. Since 1886, and particularly since the erection of the flamboyant 1899 additions, it has been important as a visual and social focus of the town.

*Guildford Hotel* contributes to the sense of place in the Guildford community.

### 5. RARITY

The *Guildford Hotel* is one of three surviving hotels built in Guildford during the Victorian and Federation periods. It is the only commercial example of Federation Free Classical architecture in the Guildford area.

### 6. REPRESENTATIVENESS

The *Guildford Hotel* is representative of the Federation Free Classical style, and represents the ebullient gold boom prosperity embodied in architecture at that time.

### CONDITION

Following recent restoration the *Guildford Hotel* is in sound condition.

### INTEGRITY

The *Guildford Hotel* has a high level of integrity. Despite numerous changes to its fabric, the hotel has been restored and continues to be used for the purposes for which it was designed.

## **AUTHENTICITY**

Since 1915 some modifications have occurred to the building, and it has lost some of its original detailing. However, damaged and lost fabric due to neglect and structural failure has been repaired or replaced with material as close to the original period and style as possible.

Overall, the *Guildford Hotel* is largely intact and has a high degree of authenticity.

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The *Guildford Hotel* has cultural heritage significance for the following:

the building is a fine example of Federation Free Classical architecture, demonstrating the prosperity and development of the Guildford area at the turn-of-the-century;

the building occupies a strategic position at the intersection of James and Johnson Streets, making a major contribution to the streetscape and providing a prominent landmark in the Guildford area;

for more than a century the hotel has been an important focus of social activity of the Guildford community, a role it continues to play.

## **8. REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES**

Interim entry                16/10/1992

Permanent Entry        01/03/1994

## **9. CONSERVATION ORDER**

## **10. HERITAGE AGREEMENT**

## **11. REFERENCES**

National Trust (WA) Exposition Sheet

Included in the Guildford Conservation Area(AHC), although the hotel is not separately listed

Molyneux, I., *Looking About Perth*, (Wescolour Press, Fremantle, 1981)