



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.11.2 Developing sources of fresh local produce
- 8.1 Organising recreation

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

- 301 Land allocation and subdivision
- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Ballymena* is a fine example of residential architecture in a vernacular interpretation of the Federation Queen Anne style. (Criterion 1.1)

The blackened block pattern weather boarding of *Ballymena* is unique to the Albany region and contributes to a distinctly Western Australian aesthetic of black walls and white detailing, set against the greens and browns of the Australian landscape. The house also displays some fine internal detailing. (Criterion 1.1)

In the garden is a large collection of English, African and Australian plantings that flourish on the rich river plain soils and benefit from the water available from the fresh water spring and adjacent river. Together with the house and its building elements and the nearby King River, the gardens contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the place and create a significant cultural landscape. (Criteria 1.1 & 1.3)

*Ballymena* is a distinctive residence on the King River and is well known landmark to both locals and others who know it as a tearoom or as a wedding venue. (Criterion 1.3)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

## **11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE**

The property on which *Ballymena* is situated, established c. 1906 as an orchard, has continued to operate as a small agricultural holding by a succession of owners since that time. (Criterion 2.1)

The relationship between *Ballymena* and the King River, with the front entry of the house facing the River, is a reminder of the days when the main access to the place was via the water. (Criterion 2.2)

In the early 1930s and again in the late 1940s, *Ballymena* operated as a guesthouse and tearooms and was a popular holiday destination in the district. The proximity of the King River and *Ballymena's* gardens contributed to the amenity value of the place. (Criterion 2.2)

The fruit packing shed demonstrates some interesting architectural detailing in its rough timber pole, weatherboard and galvanised corrugated iron construction. (Criterion 2.4)

## **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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## **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Ballymena* demonstrates landmark qualities as a distinctive residence on the King River. The place is well known to locals and others for its previous uses as tearooms and guest accommodation, and as a wedding venue. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

The blackened block pattern weather boarding of *Ballymena* is unique to the Albany region. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Ballymena* is representative of a number of farming properties established c. 1900 to meet the increased demand for fresh produce associated with Western Australia's growing population following the gold-rushes. (Criterion 6.1)

*Ballymena* is a fine example of a vernacular interpretation of the Federation Queen Anne style. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

The condition of the house is very good with the place being restored and continuously maintained over the last 10 years. The roofing is sound and no major construction or structural defects are evident in the house.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

Built originally as a residence the place demonstrates a high degree of integrity as it remains in use as a residence.

Retaining its black colouring with contrasting white timber detailing is a notable architectural colour scheme and should be conserved.

Encouragement should be given to reinstating the red coloured roofing to match the earlier distinctive colour scheme associated with southwestern Australian architecture.

## 12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The building demonstrates a high degree of authenticity with much of the fabric remaining from its original construction. Where fabric has been renewed generally, it has been replaced with matching materials or materials of similar appearance and performance. Services have been upgraded to ensure those living in the house enjoy modern conveniences whilst maintaining the original character of the house.

## 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary and physical evidence has been compiled by HCWA Staff, Jacqui Sherriff, historian, and Phil Bennett, architect.

### 13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Ballymena* comprises a single storey weatherboard residence in the Federation Queen Anne style, a cottage, fruit packing shed and associated gardens. *Ballymena* is situated on a property bounded by the King River, Willyung Creek, Dymsbury Park and an adjacent farming property. As the property has no road frontage, access to the property is via a small bridge over Willyung Creek. The main house is located on the bank of the King River, with gardens extending down to the River. The original farm cottage is located to the rear of the house.

Settlement of the King River area (about 10 kilometres from Albany) was sporadic until c. 1900, when a number of agricultural holdings were established on the lower reaches of the King River.<sup>1</sup> These holdings were taken up by farmers seeking suitable land on which to establish market gardens, orchards, dairy and poultry farms in order to meet the fresh produce demands of the growing population, which resulted primarily from the gold rushes.<sup>2</sup> Circa 1900, the Albany district also grew in popularity as a holiday destination and health resort, particularly with people from the Eastern Goldfields, and a small number of tearooms were also established at King River to cater for the growing number of visitors to the area.<sup>3</sup>

Herbert Harden of Albany first took up Plantagenet Location 940, on which *Ballymena* is located, on 31 January 1906.<sup>4</sup> Harden sold his stationary business in Albany and retired to his country property, which he named 'Ardens Gardens' and commenced farming.<sup>5</sup> In 1909, Harden's occupation was listed in *Wise's Post Office Directory* as 'fruit grower'.<sup>6</sup> It is thought that the cottage at the rear of *Ballymena* was built at this time.<sup>7</sup>

In November 1910, Abraham Henry Shannon and his wife Edith purchased the property. The Shannons renamed the property 'Ballymena' after

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<sup>1</sup> Garden, D, *Albany: A Panorama of the Sound from 1897*, Thomas Nelson (Aust) Ltd, Melbourne, 1977, p. 234.

<sup>2i</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1907; 1910.

<sup>4</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 359 Folio 31, 31 January 1906.

<sup>5</sup> Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

<sup>6</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1909.

<sup>7</sup> Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

Abraham's place of birth in County Antrim, Ireland<sup>8</sup> and soon built themselves a new residence. It is though that Harden's cottage was doubled in size at this time, to two rooms, by the Shannons to provide additional accommodation while the main homestead was being built.<sup>9</sup>

The homestead:

...formed an ideal home, which is looked upon as one of the beauty spots of the district. A flourishing poultry farm is managed on the most approved methods, and an orchard, not yet fully developed, gives promise of excellent harvests in the near future. Boating and fishing are constantly indulged in the river flowing just at the foot of the garden, where Mr Shannon and his wife have been very successful in the cultivation of flowers of many varieties. Besides these quieter diversions he is devoted to sport of a more exciting nature, and while at college was one of the prominent players in the football and cricket teams, winning trophies galore for his prowess in this direction...<sup>10</sup>

Abraham Shannon had been born into an 'old aristocratic family' and following an education at Campbell College, Belfast, he left Ireland on a 'world tour'. Shannon spent about two years at Gawler, South Australia, where he studied poultry farming before studying agriculture and allied sciences at Dookie College, Victoria. He continued his studies in New Zealand and Tasmania then went to South Australia, where he worked as a jackaroo on Moculta Station before arriving in Western Australia c. 1910.<sup>11</sup>

The Shannons operated *Ballymena* as an orchard and poultry farm until the property was purchased by George Medley, farmer of King River, in September 1920.<sup>12</sup> Medley retained ownership until 1925, when the property was sold to William Sounness, farmer of Mount Barker.<sup>13</sup>

Circa 1929, the property was leased by Mr and Mrs William H Humphrey, who ran the property as a farm and opened the homestead as tearooms and guesthouse.<sup>14</sup> The Humphreys renamed the place 'Strathmore' and the property became one of the popular resort areas at King River for boating and fishing, afternoon teas and playing games such as croquet on the lawns.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 475 Folio 44, 10 November 1910.; Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

<sup>9</sup> J Rayfield, correspondence to the Heritage Council, dated 6 June 2000 – HCWA File P3919.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p. 850. Mrs Shannon's name is stated as Edith Evaline on Certificate of Title, Volume 475 Folio 44, 10 November 1910.

<sup>11</sup> J S Battye, *Cyclopedia of Western Australia*, volume 2, Hussey & Gillingham for Cyclopedia Co, Perth, 1912, pp. 849-50.

<sup>12</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 755 Folio 74, 27 September 1920. The Shannons spent the rest of their lives at Middleton Beach. They died within two weeks of each other in 1951.

<sup>13</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 755 Folio 74, 4 February 1925.

<sup>14</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1929 to 1933/4; Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919. According to information held by the Albany Museum, a flood in 1927 inundated the house 'up to the keyboard of the piano', and this prompted Sounness to move.

<sup>15</sup> Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919; J Rayfield, information provided on nomination form, 30 April 1998, HCWA File P3919. The King River resort days are documented in a film entitled *Albany and Districts*, a collection of home movies. *Ballymena* (then Strathmore) features in a segment called Albany – Queen City of the South 1931.

In October 1935, the property was sold to farmer, Lancelot Shaw.<sup>16</sup> As he was frequently approached to provide guest accommodation, Shaw reverted the name of the property to 'Ballymena'.<sup>17</sup>

The property changed hands again in March 1945 when Arthur Burrow, a farmer from Upper King River, purchased it.<sup>18</sup> In addition to farming, Burrow reopened *Ballymena* as a guesthouse.<sup>19</sup> Three years later, the property was purchased by George Brown, farmer, and Evelyn Brooks of Albany.<sup>20</sup> Again, ownership was short term, as it was sold to Bonita Hammond, of 'Chittering', Kellerberrin, in April 1950.<sup>21</sup>

In 1957, John and Ada Wilkinson, from the adjoining property Dymsebury Park, purchased *Ballymena*, which was then run as a dairy farm.<sup>22</sup> The Wilkinsons retained ownership until 1972, when the property was purchased by their daughter, Phyllis and her husband, ex-player for Carlton Football Club and Brownlow Medal winner, Gordon Collis.<sup>23</sup>

In July 1976, *Ballymena* was purchased by Ian and Robin Lukis.<sup>24</sup> Mrs Lukis was a marriage celebrant, and it was during their ownership that several couples were married in the gardens at *Ballymena*.<sup>25</sup>

The most recent change of ownership was in 1988, when James and Jean Rayfield purchased the property.<sup>26</sup> The Rayfields operate *Ballymena* as a hobby farm.

In the 1990s, works were undertaken to the main homestead and cottage. These included painting the exterior weatherboards of the homestead, re-roofing with zincalume sheeting, the addition of a kitchen and bathroom at the rear and some internal rearrangements. The four-roomed cottage was modified to accommodate two rooms – a kitchen and bedroom. Also in the 1990s, a new two-storey house was built to the south east of the homestead.<sup>27</sup>

In 2000, *Ballymena* homestead continues to be used as a residence. The property is to be subdivided to smaller Lots taking advantage of its favourable location. The current owner states that people boating on the river often stop and comment on the aesthetic qualities of the place. Many of

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<sup>16</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 755 Folio 74, 1 October 1935.

<sup>17</sup> Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

<sup>18</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 755, Folio 74, 15 March 1945.

<sup>19</sup> Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

<sup>20</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 755 Folio 74, 20 May 1948.

<sup>21</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 755 Folio 74, 19 April 1950. In 1970, ownership was changed to John Wilkinson Pty Ltd of Dymesbury Park.

<sup>22</sup> Certificate of Title Volume 1203 Folio 713, 18 June 1957; Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

<sup>23</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 1203 Folio 713, 20 December 1972; Lionel Frost, *The Old Dark Navy Blues: A History of the Carlton Football Club*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1998, p. 197.

<sup>24</sup> Certificate of Title, Volume 1203 Folio 713, 19 July 1976.

<sup>25</sup> Notes from Albany Museum, provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919. Circa 1987, *Ballymena* was leased by criminal, Archie Butterly who was later shot in Victoria. Butterly threatened a real estate agent and prospective buyer with a sword, which instigated a police raid on the property.

<sup>26</sup> Certificate of Title Volume 1863 Folio 493.

<sup>27</sup> Information provided with nomination form, HCWA File P3919.

the older visitors have fond memories of going to *Ballymena* when it operated as a guesthouse and tearooms.<sup>28</sup>

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Ballymena* is a single storey weatherboard farmhouse with out buildings situated on the banks of the King River in the Lower King region of the City of Albany. The house is a fine example of the Federation Queen Anne style constructed from building materials available in the south of Western Australia at the time. Associated with the house are a two-room corrugated iron clad cottage, a fruit packing shed, a garage structure with attached stables and cattle yards. Surrounding the house are well-established gardens with sweeping lawns that flourish on the fertile soils along the river edge.

The house faces the river and has water access. Road access leads to the rear of the house passing the fruit packing shed, cattle yards and cottage. The whole farm is on the fertile flat plain adjacent to the meandering King River before the river enters Oyster Harbour. The fertile soils, water access and close proximity to Albany have allowed the property to be used as farmland, tearooms, wedding venue and retirement/hobby farm.

Adjacent to the house is a former tennis/croquet court that is defined by the leveled lawned area and the remnants of a large hedge. Next to the leveled court area is a natural spring that has been deepened by blasting dynamite. The water from the spring seeps into the adjacent river.

Some earlier garden structures associated with the tearoom era have been removed but traces of these timber-latticed structures are still evident in the gardens.

#### Relationship of Buildings on Site

The corrugated iron clad cottage at the rear of the house is thought to be the first house on the farm. Today road access to the house, once passing the fruit packing shed, is between the cottage and the house leading to the rear garden area containing the garage/stables. The house and gardens are surround by stock proof fencing on three sides with the river acting as a barrier along the front of the house. Essentially, the cottage and the garage/stables structure create an enclosed farmyard at the rear of the house with the River along the front.

The whole complex of buildings and the gardens surrounding the homestead make up *Ballymena*. The relationship of the buildings with the gardens and River is important in understanding the design, and the evolution, of the place from orchard and dairy farm to smaller hobby farm style land holding.

#### Homestead

Clad in jarrah weatherboards, this single storied timber framed building is recognised as being built in the Federation Queen Anne architectural style. The weatherboards have a block work pattern cut onto them and this pattern has been worked to fit between the various door and window

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<sup>28</sup> J Rayfield, information provided with nomination form, 30 April 1998; information provided to Phil Bennett, site visit, 1999.

openings. The weatherboards are painted black.<sup>29</sup> All of the timber framed windows, external doors, timber verandah columns, verandah iron lacework, brick chimneys, timber decorative barge boards, finial and details on the timber flying gables are painted white.

The timber-framed roof of the house is a simple hipped structure with a gable over the original sitting room. The roof is clad with unpainted corrugated continuous zincalume sheeting. Previously, the roofing was short sheeted corrugated galvanised iron painted red. The residence was re-roofed in the 1990s.

The painted white detailing against the black timber walls creates a strongly contrasting colour scheme (even without the red roof) that is distinctive of many buildings built in the south west of Australia built c. 1900.

The original timber verandah flooring has been replaced with a dark brown brick paving. The bases of the timber verandah columns have likewise, been replaced with small piers made from the same brick. The verandahs are roofed in bull-nosed corrugated zincalume that were replaced at the same time as the main roofing.

Additions have been made to the original house. These include the enclosing of the north western verandah adjacent to the main bedroom. The verandah is enclosed by aluminium framed sliding glass doors. Opening off this verandah is a sleep-out, which is clad in blackened weather boards with white timber framed windows to match the main building. Weather boards with the block patterning used in the additions were recycled from the back wall that was enclosed by the new kitchen, laundry and verandah area.

At the rear of the house a new kitchen (1991) and laundry have been built under a skillion roof and lead onto an enclosed semi-verandah that acts as the main entry to the house.

Generally, the house is built in an asymmetric manner with an L- shaped hallway used to access all the main rooms. Entering the house from the rear verandah, that today is the main point of entry, allows access directly into the new kitchen or to the laundry and small bathroom. This verandah area has louvered windows a ledge and braced door. All the floors in the house are jarrah boards over timber framing and timber stumps.

The kitchen built in 1991 has slate tile flooring and pine dado. The kitchen opens into the original pantry and original kitchen (now the dining room). The windows in the kitchen come from an earlier building and have been built in on their side creating horizontal panes rather than the originally intended vertical panes<sup>30</sup>.

The pantry has a pressed metal ceiling and cupboards with flywire doors. The room has a timber skirting and a door that opens into the dining room. This door would have been the access from the original kitchen.

In the fireplace of the original kitchen is a Metters Number 2 stove. This stove is not original and was installed in the 1990s. At about the same time, a pine dado was built into the dining room to match the kitchen. The room

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<sup>29</sup> Until the 1990s, the weatherboards were treated with oil, which sent the timber a distinctive deep black colour. To retain the colouring but to save the need to re-oil, the current owner painted the boards black to mimic the previous black oiled colouring.

<sup>30</sup> These windows were found on site in the shed by Mr Rayfield.

has a pressed metal ceiling, a double hung timber framed window and another door opening onto the side-hallway.

Connecting to the main hallway but separated by a plaster archway, the side-hallway has a door leading to the side verandah. This door is timber panelled with coloured lead-light glass. The house name 'Ballymena' is outlined in the lead light.<sup>31</sup> The side-hallway has a pressed metal ceiling and timber picture rail.

The main hallway leads into the house from the front door that would have been the main access if arriving by water. The front door is typical of the Federation era with timber paneling and coloured lead-lights. 'Ballymena' is spelt out in the leadlight of this door and was used by Rayfield when designing the lead light for the door that accessed the side-hallway. The original sidelights have been replaced with a clear glass that demonstrate a geometric design.

The hallway has a pressed metal ceiling, a picture rail and plaster vents. A small room at the end of the main hall opens via a double door opening into the hall, and has a slate tile floor. This room houses a timber burning fire box used to heat the house. This small room was an earlier bathroom but originally may have been a box room. It originally had a single door opening into the hall. When used as a bathroom the ceiling was lowered, this remains, and a window was added in the 1990s to the rear verandah. Hanging on the hallway wall adjacent to this room is a timber panel that would have been the backing of a former telephone.

The two hallways wrap around two sides of the original dining room (now used as a sitting room) that may be accessed from the main hall near the front door or from the side hall near the kitchen. This room has a pressed metal ceiling, without a border, plaster wall vents, a pressed metal ceiling rose with ventilating holes but no picture rail. Brass rods have been fitted to act like picture rails; however, it is not known if these are original.<sup>32</sup> Floored in 5 1/2 inch jarrah boards that have been polyurethaned with timber skirting, this room retains its original fireplace. The fireplace has Art Nouveau styling carved into its oak surround, and has original black and white hearth tiles bordered with green and maroon edging tiles. The backing tiles are laid in a brick pattern.

A pair of French doors with timber base panels and two glazed panels above open out of this room onto the side verandah. Apart from this door, which was broken when the police raided c. 1987, all doors have their original ceramic knobs and plates. The two four panel doors opening into the hallways have been stripped of their paint and are an Oregon pine. A double hung window opens out to the front verandah that has single glass panes.

Across the main hall from the dining room is the original sitting room that is now used as a television/family room. This room has a pressed metal ceiling with no border, plaster wall vents, timber picture rail, timber skirting and 5 1/2 inch floor boards. The room has a pair of double hung timber framed windows that overlook the river and are a focal point of the house as they are sited below the flying gable with its decorative timber detailing.

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<sup>31</sup> This leadlighting is not original and was installed by the owners in 1992.

<sup>32</sup> In 1988, an elderly lady who visited *Ballymena* as a girl remembered the brass picture rails in the dining room to Mr J Rayfield. J Rayfield, correspondence to the Heritage Council, dated 6 June 2000 – HCWA File P3919.



The fireplace in this room has a timber surround but this may not be the original as it appears too large for the size of the room.

Adjacent to the sitting room is the main bedroom with its fireplace backing onto the sitting room fireplace. The fireplace surround is of timber and is most likely original. This room has a pressed metal ceiling, plaster wall vents, timber picture rail, original timber skirting boards, a four panel door and a double hung timber framed window opening onto the enclosed side verandah. This window demonstrates two panes in the upper and lower sashes.

Opening off the main hallway is the second bedroom. This room has pressed metal ceilings, plaster vents, original timber skirting and a double hung window, with single panes, opening onto the rear verandah. From this bedroom, the third bedroom is accessed. Like the adjacent bedroom, this room has pressed metal ceiling, timber picture rail, and original timber skirting, with 4-inch wide floorboards. The room has a tall double hung window that allows access to the enclosed side verandah with timber base panel and single pane sashes, and a double hung window over which an exterior awning has been added. A bathroom is access off this third bedroom. The bathroom was built in the 1990s, and has a slate floor, skillion roof and houses a WC, claw foot bath, basin and shower over the bath. The room has two double hung windows, one of which has an exterior awning.

Off the main bedroom and accessible from the family room and sleep out is the filled in side verandah. Access from this verandah to the garden is available through sliding aluminium windows.

The sleepout is later fabric than the original house and has its own door onto the front verandah. It has a plaster ceiling and cornice with 75mm timber skirting. The room has a pair of double hung window opening out toward the river.

### **The Cottage**

It is thought that this timber framed galvanised iron clad structure was built by Harden.<sup>33</sup> Originally a single room, the cottage is now two rooms<sup>34</sup>, a bedroom and kitchen, that were fitted in the early 1990s. The ceilings of the cottage are on the rake with exposed rafters and collar ties.

### **Fruit packing shed<sup>35</sup>**

The fruit packing shed is constructed from rough timber poles and appears to have been extended as the older section is more substantially built with weather boarding and framing to dado height. Where there is no weather boarding, the structure is roofed and walled on three sides by corrugated galvanised iron and bears the trade mark 'Redcliffe'. This structure demonstrates some interesting architectural detailing and its retention and conservation is encouraged.

Adjacent to the fruit packing shed are the timber cattleyards.

### **Garage/ Stable**

This is a simple timber framed structure clad in corrugate galvanised iron and has its roof drainage into a large concrete tank. The structure houses

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Mr Jim Rayfield has in his possession a number of Zinc stencils and a set of apple sizing rings found in the shed.

two cars, a wood store and a store room in addition to the stable area. This building has been built over a period of time and further research may be required to ascertain its construction date(s).

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

*Ballymena* is the only place on the Heritage Council's database identified as being built between 1905 and 1915 in the Federation Queen Anne style located outside the Perth metropolitan area. A number of houses in the style and within this time frame are listed in Mount Lawley.

There are several grand country farmhouses in the plainer Edwardian style in the Great Southern district. These include Cubbine, Cunderdin, Wallinar, Kattanning, Hounsome, Moojebing and Wedderburn Park, Brunswick. Many of these farmhouses are illustrated in Battye's *Cyclopedia of Western Australia* (1913) and *Twentieth Century Impressions* (1901) and the majority of them still stand.

### **13.4 REFERENCES**

No key references.

### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

More research into the construction dates of the cottage and fruit packing shed may be necessary to fully determine their cultural heritage significance.