



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.

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Jacqui Sherriff, Historian, and Philip Griffiths, Architect, in July 2003, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 2.4.5 Changing the face of rural and urban Australia through migration
- 8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories
- 8.6.4 Making places for worship

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees
- 406 Religion

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The exterior of *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* is a fine though austere example of the Byzantine style. (Criterion 1.1)

The interior of *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* consists of a fine and well-designed series of spaces, translating the requirements of the Greek Orthodox plan to accommodate the requirements of the Orthodox liturgy and reflect traditional Greek Orthodox interior aesthetics. The exterior is a fine though austere example of the Byzantine style and the interior is fine and well designed series of spaces. (Criterion 1.1)

The interior of *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* is a very well resolved conservative design and is of a high order of aesthetic value. (Criterion 1.2)

* 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.

With its strong vertical emphasis and distinctive roof silhouette *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* is a local landmark. (Criterion 1.3)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is one of the more visually distinctive buildings that frame the eastern side of Russell Square, marking the entry to Francis Street. The two storey brick construction house on the southern corner, with its two storey belvedere, combines with the Cathedral to make a visual gateway to Francis Street. (Criterion 1.4)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene was the first purpose-built Greek Orthodox Church in Western Australia, taking over the role of place of worship from the adjacent Hellenic Hall, a combined community venue and church completed in 1925. It was built with funds raised by the comparatively small Greek Orthodox community over many years. (Criterion 2.1)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene was built in 1936-37 during a period of considerable building activity in the economic recovery that followed the Great Depression, became the Orthodox Cathedral in 1972 and, notwithstanding the development of further suburban churches over the past three decades, remains the spiritual focus of the Greek community in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene was designed by prominent local architectural firm, Oldham, Boas and Ednie-Brown and is an excellent example of their ecclesiastic work. Much of the interior iconography, including the painted alter screen, was done by Castellorizian-born and well-known Western Australian artist, Vlase Zanalis. (Criterion 2.3)

The Byzantine style of *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* reflects the religious and cultural heritage of its owners and users and is based on a church design on the island of Castelloizio. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is highly valued by Western Australia's Greek Orthodox community for its religious and spiritual associations and for the site's long association with the Greek community. (Criterion 4.1)

The place is also valued by the wider community for its aesthetic, historic and social values, as evidenced by its inclusion in the City of Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory and classification by the National Trust of Australia (WA). The Art Deco Society (WA) has also recognised the place as a significant example of Inter-War architecture. (Criterion 4.1)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene contributes to the community's sense of place as a well-known church facing Russell Square, Northbridge. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is one of five Greek Orthodox churches in Western Australia, it is the earliest of these churches, and is the only one to function as a cathedral. (Criterion 5.1)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is rare as the only known place designed in the Inter-War Byzantine style in Western Australia . (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is one of small number of buildings designed in the Byzantine style in Western Australia and it is a reflection of the religious and cultural heritage of the Greek community in the State, reflecting the cultural diversity of the State. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is in good condition. The building is well built and managed effectively, with some minor building defects, including small number of leaks and minor mortar fretting, together with aging timber joinery on the weather faces of the building. Past management practices have not detracted from the values.

The Hellenic Community Centre is in fair condition. There are a number of leaks, deteriorating ceiling panels, and tiles on the façade are losing adhesion. Generally the place receives adequate maintenance, but is reaching a point where a significant amount of work will be required.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene remains in use for its original purpose and there have been few changes, so that the original intent is clearly legible.

The Hellenic Community Centre remains in use for its intended purpose.

Both buildings retain a high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Apart from the addition of a steel escape stair between the gallery and the nave, there have been few changes to *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene*. It retains a high degree of authenticity.

Similarly the Hellenic Community Centre remains little changed from the time of its construction and it retains a high degree of authenticity also.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Jacqui Sherriff, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The local Greek community built *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* in 1935-37 following many years' fund raising for construction of a Greek Orthodox Church. Designed by architectural firm, Oldham, Boas and Ednie-Brown, the Cathedral has been the major place of worship and fellowship for members of Perth's Greek community since its construction and has undergone little change over the years. The Greek community has had a long association with the site, having built a combined hall and church on land to the north of the Cathedral in 1925. In 1969, this hall was replaced by the Hellenic Community Centre, which continues to be a focus of Greek community life in 2003.

Although Greeks have long had a presence in Western Australia (the first Greek family may have arrived in 1830 but only stayed a few years), their numbers remained quite insignificant during the colonial period. The 1881 census, for example, returned 14 Greeks (ten males and four females) out a total population of 29,708. Twenty years later, there were 148 Greeks in Western Australia.¹ The majority of Greeks who settled in Western Australia were of the Greek Orthodox faith², but there was no resident Orthodox priest in Western Australia until 1911, when Reverend Chysanthos Constantinides arrived to administer to the growing Greek community. By this time, there were 323 males and 12 females of the Greek Orthodox faith in Western Australia, scattered from the Kimberleys to Albany, with larger concentrations in Perth, Fremantle and on the Eastern Goldfields.³

Shortly after Reverend Chysanthos' arrival, an attempt was made to establish a local Greek Orthodox Community, with its primary aim of raising funds in order to build an Orthodox Church. However, nothing eventuated at this time and as a short-term solution, services were held in a small annexe on the side of Arthur Auguste's home in East Fremantle. Greeks residing in

¹ Reginald Appleyard & John N Yiannakis, *Greek Pioneers in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, 2002, pp. 7, 5.

² For further information on Greek migration to Australia, see Yiannis E Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora: Hellenic Settlement in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1998; and, Hugh Gilchrist, *Australians and Greeks*, volumes 1 and 2, Halstead Press, Rushcutters Bay, 1992. For further information on Greek Orthodoxy in Australia, see M Chryssavgis, 'Greek Orthodoxy in Australia', in A Kapardis and A Tarris (eds), *Afstraliotes Hellenes: Greeks in Australia*, River Siene Press, North Melbourne, 1988, pp. 53-65.

³ John Yiannakis, *Megisti in the Antipodes: Castellorizian Migration and Settlement to W.A. 1890-1990*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 1996, p. 102. Prior to the arrival of Reverend Constantindies, 'passing priests' Fathers Phocas and Kantopoulus occasionally visited Western Australia from the eastern states. During their visits, the fathers would christen children and perform marriages, ususually in the homes of local Greeks. It is believed that the first Greek Orthodox marriage took place in 1906. In the same year, the Greek Orthodox burial site at Karrakatta Cemetery was consecrated following a petition by the Greek Vice-Consul in Perth on behalf of the local Orthodox community.

Fremantle were regular visitors to Auguste's home on Sundays, while Perth Greeks made the journey for liturgy when they could.⁴ After Reverend Chysanthos left for Darwin in 1913, Germanos Illiou arrived to take up the community's pastoral care.⁵

Auguste was the first Greek from the small island of Castellorizio to settle in Western Australia.⁶ Others followed and the Castellorizian Brotherhood was formed with a primary intention of building an Orthodox church. From the mid-1910s, the Brotherhood took initiatives to raise funds for the building of a church, including raffles, bazaars, afternoon teas and concerts. In addition to direct fund raising (much of which was achieved by the community's women), the Brotherhood required that each family pay a sixpence levy into a fund from which a church might eventually be financed.⁷

During this period, a focus of Greek social activity was at 507 Wellington Street, the oyster saloon operated from 1912 to c. 1930 by long-term tenant of this commercial building, Panos (Peter) Coroneos.⁸ Coroneos took over the lease of the Royal Café at 507 Wellington Street from a fellow Greek, Evangelios Kalisperis. Coroneos' oyster saloon became an important meeting place for Perth's Greek community, and the location was so central that when the Hellenic Association (Union) was formed in 1918, its headquarters were located upstairs above Coroneos' café.⁹ The aim of the Hellenic Association was to 'cater for the neglected social and cultural needs of young Greek males'.¹⁰ It would appear that the association continued to meet at this location and another building in Wellington Street until their new hall was completed in Parker Street in 1925.

By early 1922, the Brotherhood had raised sufficient funds to purchase Lots 6 and 7 of Perth Town Lot Y137 in Parker Street, North Perth, on which to build a Greek Orthodox Church.¹¹ It is alleged that Arthur Auguste gave the largest single donation for the purchase and that an alternative site in Subiaco was passed over due to the lobbying of a few influential Castellorizians who lived in the Parker Street vicinity, including tobacco entrepreneur, Peter Michelides.¹² At the time, this area of Northbridge was

⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 103-04. Auguste had been the first to offer the Reverend accommodation on his arrival in Western Australia and his daughters would visit Greek homes and businesses in the area to solicit funds for the priest's weekly stipend.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁶ See Appleyard & Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, p. 13. Auguste established the Oyster Beds Restaurant in East Fremantle in the late 1890s.

⁷ Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 102, 106, 109. Yiannakis argues that the desire to build a church offered religious and cultural familiarity and was a means by which many Greeks believed they could preserve their Greek identity. Citing Nina Mistlis and Reg Appleyard, Yiannakis also argues that the increased number of Castellorizian women in Perth by the early 1920s influenced the community's desire to establish their own church. (By 1921, women comprised 29% of Perth's Greek community, compared with 4% in 1911.) The desire for a church was further compounded by many migrants choosing to raise families in their adopted homeland.

⁸ *Wises's Post Office Directory*, 1912; 1930, p. 99.

⁹ Appleyard & Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 128.

¹¹ Certificate of Title, Volume 81, Folio 95, registered 28 March 1922.

¹² For information on Peter Michelides, see Appleyard & Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-50.

still largely undeveloped, with a mix of modest residential and commercial premises.¹³

Meanwhile, Perth's Greek community continued to grow and diversify as more and more new arrivals came from mainland Greece or other islands. Realising that a wider Greek association would soon be formed, members of the Castellorizian Brotherhood took the initiative (perhaps also to have some control over the agenda of the new group) and elections for a new pan-Hellenic organisation were held in mid-1923.¹⁴ In September that year, the Hellenic Community of Western Australia had its inaugural meeting. Rule 2 of the Community's constitution stated that

The object of the Association is the erection of a Greek Orthodox church, Greek school and the improvement of the religious, moral, mental and social conditions of its members.¹⁵

Although the fate of the Parker Street property was contentious for some time, it appears that a verbal agreement was reached whereby the Brotherhood would surrender its land to the Hellenic Community for a church.¹⁶ When Archbishop Christophoros Knetes, Metropolitan¹⁷ of the recently established Orthodox Diocese of Australasia, arrived in Perth in July 1924, he grasped the opportunity to formalise the transaction by organising for the public laying of a foundation stone on the church site. On 27 July 1924, Archbishop Knetes, Reverend Germanos Illiou and Archdeacon Hudleston (Church of England) officiated at the ceremony at which Mrs J Michelides and Mrs T Kalafatas set in place a hollow foundation stone filled with gold coins and various documents. According to a report in *The West Australian*, Archbishop Knetes said:

...that for many years the Greek community had cherished the idea of building a church in Perth...He would have liked them to build a magnificent church in the Byzantine style, which should stand as a monument their unflinching belief in their Mother Church and be something worthy of this hospitable city Perth. But what they aimed at was a simple and modest church that would faithfully answer their religious needs. He hoped the church would become a centre from which a large congregation would draw spiritual inspiration and moral vigour so that they would become loyal citizens and promoters of progress and prosperity of this country, whose benevolent laws of justice and liberty they all enjoyed.¹⁸

The article goes on to say that the plans for the church provided for a 'dignified brick building in a combination of the classic Greek and Byzantine styles.'¹⁹ The detail and architect of the proposed church are not known.

13 See *Wise's Post Office Directories* and *City of Perth Rate Books*.

14 Yiannakis, op. cit., pp. 109-10.

15 Constitution and Rules of the Hellenic Community of WA, Perth, 1924, as cited in *ibid.*, p. 110.

16 There seems to have been some animosity between the local Greek community (notably the Castellorizian Brotherhood) and Germanos Illiou by this time. Illiou had made arrangements with other denominations for the use of their facilities for holding Greek religious services (such as the Anglican Assembly Hall in Pier Street and the Hibernian Hall in Murray Street) and had assumed authority of educational matters from the Brotherhood. By 1917, Illiou had established an evening school 'Pittakos', where reading, writing, Greek history, literature and geography as well as scripture were taught. See *ibid.*, pp. 105-06.

17 In the Orthodox Church, a Metropolitan ranks above an Archbishop and below Patriarch.

18 *The West Australian*, 28 July 1924, p. 8.

19 *ibid.*

Despite some members of the Castellorizian Brotherhood wanting to retain ownership of the Parker Street property, the title was officially transferred to the Hellenic Community on 2 June 1925.²⁰

However, the donation was not straight forward, as the Brotherhood (under Auguste's continuing leadership) imposed a precondition that Reverend Illiou be removed²¹ in favour of Archimandrite Nektarios, then working in southern Africa. The Hellenic Community had decided to build a more affordable hall that could be used as a cultural and community centre, as well as a religious venue on Sundays, instead of a large church as proposed by Archbishop Knetes. Known as the Hellenic Hall, the hall was completed by the time Reverend Nektarios arrived in early 1925.²² The Hellenic Hall was a single storey building, with a brick and render façade displaying little architectural reference to the heritage of its users.²³

By the early 1930s, the area around the Hellenic Hall had a definite Greek character. Newly arrived Greek families, as well as those that had been in Western Australian for some time, were choosing to purchase homes in Aberdeen, Francis, James, Lake, Newcastle and Pier streets. By way of illustration, there were nine Greek families in Aberdeen Street and 30 in Lake Street in 1936.²⁴ Post war immigration saw many more Greek families move into the area, and along with other immigrant groups (notably Italians), saw Northbridge develop into an inner city working class area.

The Greek community continued to raise money for a church through the 1920s and 1930s through dances, raffles and bazaars, as well as popular concerts held in the Hellenic Hall organised by John Aris. Grants and admission fees from various associations, such as the Women's Association (founded in 1923) and the Hellenic Union (later Club) were also directed towards the church fund. According to Yiannakis, the Greek-Macedonian 'Alexander the Great' fraternity was the only notable non-Castellorizian association that contributed towards the construction of the church, although many non-Castellorizian individuals contributed both time and money.²⁵ The total Greek Orthodox population in the whole State in this

²⁰ Yiannakis, op. cit., pp. 109, 111; Certificate of Title, Volume 801, Folio 95, registered 3 June 1925.

²¹ It appears that Father Illiou had fallen out of favour with the Castellorizian community by this time. He had made arrangements with other denominations for use of their facilities for holding Greek services (such as the Anglican Assembly Hall in Pier Street and the Hibernian Hall in Murray Street). He had also assumed authority for educational matters from the Brotherhood by establishing an evening school, 'Pittakos', where reading, writing, Greek history, literature and geography as well as Scripture were taught. See *ibid.*, pp. 105-06.

²² *ibid.*, pp. 111-13.

²³ Public Health Department, Plans Register, 'Proposed Hall for the Greek Community of WA', n.d., PHA 334, Cons 5094, Item 334, State Records Office (SRO).

²⁴ 'Golden Jubilee of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saints Constantine & Helene, Perth, Western Australia, 1837-1987', 50th Anniversary Commemorative Book, Hellenic Community of Western Australian Inc, Perth, 1987, p. 16.

²⁵ Yiannakis, op. cit., pp. 113-14.

period, including children, was only 750 in 1921 and 1749 in 1933,²⁶ making the fundraising effort a significant undertaking for the Greek Orthodox community.

By the mid-1930s, the Hellenic Community was in a position to approach a number of architectural firms for a design for a Greek Orthodox Church. Oldham, Boas and Ednie-Brown's quote of £4,500 for a Byzantine style church, designed by Harold Boas, based on the Saint Constantine Cathedral of Castellorizo as requested by the Hellenic Community, was eventually selected.²⁷ Apart from the size of the building (the church on Castellorizo is much larger), the only notable difference between the two churches are the square columns in the nave, as opposed to round columns in the mother church.²⁸

At an extra-ordinary meeting of the Hellenic Association in December 1935, approval was given to the executive to go ahead with the project. Building by F J Deacon & Co commenced the following month.²⁹ The Community had just over £1,000 and could raise another £2,500 with the English Scottish & Australian Bank, leaving another £1,000 to be raised.³⁰ Archbishop Timotheos Evangelinides³¹, who had been instrumental in persuading the Hellenic Community to support the erection of a 'suitable religious venue', together with Peter Michelides, called on Greek communities in the south-west to gather donations. As a result, Bunbury, Manjimup, Donnybrook, Pemberton and Bridgetown were visited and substantial donations collected. The Archbishop's own visit to Kalgoorlie in early 1936 resulted in substantial donations.³²

Archbishop Timotheos consecrated the church on 18 April 1937. Dignitaries from other churches participated in the ceremony, including Illiou (now preaching in Adelaide) and the local rector, Father Christoforos Manassis. Relics of saints from Europe, a gold coin and historical documents were placed beneath the altar:

The scene was impressive, the priests in their robes of gold, and scarlet, and blue; the acolytes with lighted candles; the interior illuminated by the large,

²⁶ Census data cited in Appleyard & Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, p. 36. In the same period the number of WA residents born in Greece was 576 (1921) and 1292 (1933), indicating the predominance of the Orthodox faith in the Greek community.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁸ Fay Katris, conversation on site visit, 21 July 2003. See Public Health Department, Plans Register, 'Proposed Church, cnr Parker St and Francis St, Perth for the Greek Community', Oldham Boas & Ednie Brown Architects, Job No 35/35, Cons 5094, Item 537, SRO.

²⁹ 'Golden Jubilee of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saints Constantine & Helene, Perth, Western Australia, 1837-1987', 50th Anniversary Commemorative Book, Hellenic Community of Western Australian Inc, Perth, 1987, p. 16.

³⁰ Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, p. 116. The bank loan was secured by mortgaging the Hellenic Hall and surrounding land. See also Certificate of Title, Volume 801, Folio 95, mortgage registered 11 July 1925. According to Yiannakis, the president of the Hellenic Community, Angelo Silverton, cleared the church mortgage in 1941 through the sale of personal assets in Leederville.

³¹ Archbishop Timotheos Evangelinides had been appointed Orthodox Metropolitan following Knetes' dismissal in 1928.

³² Yiannakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-17.

glittering central candelabra; the light of the sun, for a time streaming golden through the windows; the richly-painted altar screen and the music from an invisible choir of men.³³

The ceremony was followed by a reception in the Hellenic Hall.³⁴

There was little debate regarding the naming of the church for Saints Constantine and Helene, as suggested by the Castellorizian Brotherhood back in 1924. Constantine and Helene were the patron saints of Castellorizio and provided 'an identifiable aspect of their heritage and homeland...re-established in Australia, recognizable not only to Castellorizians but to all Greeks'.³⁵

The majority of the original iconography, including the painted alter screen, was done by Castellorizian-born artist, Vlase Zanalis.³⁶ An honour board at the rear of the church listed major financial contributors.³⁷ In 1952, Greek artist, J Krafilakis was commissioned to complete the interior iconography, including ceiling and wall frescos.³⁸

The second Greek Orthodox Church, the Annunciation of Our Lady, established in 1959 by the recently founded Greek Orthodox Community of WA (Evangelismos), in the old Anglican Church building, St Paul's, on the corner of Carr and Charles streets in West Perth. This church was founded mainly by post war immigrants, who found the Castellorizian domination of the Cathedral of Saints Constantine and Helene quite intimidating.³⁹ A new church to replace the Anglican Church was consecrated on 19 December 1970.

The third of Perth's major Greek Orthodox churches, St Nektarios in Dianella, was consecrated on 14 January 1990. Unlike the other two churches, St Nektarios had been initiated and controlled by the Archdiocese, while the two earlier churches were local community created, sponsored

³³ *The West Australian*, 19 April 1937, p. 16. See also J Yiannakis, 'The Church of Saints Constantine and Helene: Its Construction and Functioning, 1910-1936, Murdoch University Honors Thesis, 1986. also article in the *West Australian* on 19 April 1937.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Yiannakis, op. cit., pp. 117-18. The main opponent to the naming of the church was Peter Michelides, who wanted to name it Ayios Spyrition (Saint Spiro) after his father. Michelides was attempting to continue an accepted Greek practice of church benefactors being entitled to choose an appropriate name for the building, usually the name of the saint after whom the head of the family had been christened.

³⁶ Zanalis came to WA in 1914 at the age of 12. He worked with Robert James Linton and by the 1930s was a respected local artist. He decorated the interiors of some Orthodox churches in the eastern states, as well as painting canvases like 'The Birth of the Nation', before working on St Constantine and Helene. He studied Aboriginal art in his later years and worked extensively in the outback. He died in 1973. See *Western Mail*, 17 April 1937, p. 11.

³⁷ The Hellenic Community awarded differentiating status on donors, according to the amounts given. Titles given to those donating funds for the construction of the church were donors, great donors, benefactors and great benefactors. The 1937 List of Benefactors and Donors appear on the white marble honour board, placed on the western wall of the church. See 'Golden Jubilee...', op. cit., p. 16.

³⁸ National Trust of Australia (WA), 'Historic Places Assessment Form: Saints Constantine & Helene Cathedral', prepared by Palassis Architects, 1996.

³⁹ Yiannakis, op. cit., pp. 122-24.

and administered religious venues.⁴⁰ Greek Orthodox Churches have also been established in regional centres, including Bunbury and Geraldton

In 1962, the Hellenic Community purchased an old residence to the south of the Church for use as a Rectory. During the 1970s, the Greek School was located in the building.⁴¹

The Hellenic Community Centre was completed in 1969 as a new venue for social functions and a meeting place for Hellenic organisations. Located on the site of the 1924 hall, the Hellenic Community Centre was designed by D. S. Cooper and Associates and cost \$250,000.⁴² Over the years, the Centre has hosted a range of community uses. For example, the first Australia Dinner-Dance of the Greek Orthodox Community was held in the Centre in January 1981⁴³ and in September 1985, careers evenings organised by the Hellenic Community through its Youth Affairs Subcommittee were held in the Centre.⁴⁴

Archbishop Ezekiel Tsoukalas proclaimed the Church a Cathedral, which meant that it became the principal church of the bishop's diocese⁴⁵, on 21 May 1972.⁴⁶

The Hellenic Community of WA (Inc) celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Construction and Dedication of the Cathedral of Saints Constantine and Hellene on Sunday, 24 May 1987. His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos officiated at the Liturgy, which was followed by a celebratory lunch at the Community Centre.⁴⁷ At this time, repairs to the Cathedral were completed, including replacement of some roof tiles and ridge-capping, repairs to the dome and re-pointing of external brickwork.⁴⁸

In 2003, the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saints Constantine and Helene continues to be an important part of many Greek's lives.⁴⁹ The Church Committee is comprised of a band of dedicated volunteers and the congregation continues to raise funds for the decoration and upkeep of the Cathedral. For example, the Ladies Auxiliary raised funds for the purchase of the smaller chandelier above the nave and recently (2002/03) raised

40 *ibid.*, p. 100.

41 *ibid.*; Fay Katris, conversation on site, 21 July 2003.

42 *The West Australian*, 1 August 1969, p. 18. See Public Health Department, Plans Register, 'Proposed Hall & Centre for the Greek Community of WA', D S Cooper & Associates, July 1968, Cons 5094, Item 2817, SRO.

43 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, *The Greek Orthodox Community of Western Australia, Parish of "The Annunciation of Our Lady" 25 Years 1958-1983*, Perth, c. 1983, p. 52.

44 GAPBA Bulletin, 23 September 1985, p. 4.

45 www.dictionary.com/ (9/9/2003)

46 'Golden Jubilee...', *op. cit.*, p. 18. The Australian Archdiocese is endeavouring to cease the use of this term and wishes the place simply to be known as a church.

47 *Bulletin of the Greek Australian Professional and Businessmen's Association of Western Australia* [GAPBA Bulletin], July 1897, p.1.

48 National Trust of Australia (WA), *op. cit.*, citing Palassis Architects, job file for Greek Orthodox Cathedral (1978-1996).

49 See for example, Nicholas Peter Kakulus, oral history interview with Stuart Reid, 11 July 1996, Battye Library OH2709/4, p. 13; Towla Mylonas, oral history interview with Maryon Allbrook, 15 February 1993, Battye Library OH2681/5, p. 26.

funds for conservation works to the larger chandelier at the front of the church.⁵⁰

The Community Centre also continues to be well patronised by the local Greek community. It houses the Hellenic Community offices, and is regularly used for student functions and quiz nights. On the first Sunday of each month, the congregation meet in the Hall for a coffee morning following the church service.⁵¹ Notwithstanding the development of other suburban churches and the drift of Greek people away from the area north of the city, *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* remains the most important of the churches for the Greek community.⁵²

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene was classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in 1996 and in 2001 was included in the City of Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory with a recommendation for consideration for inclusion in the Register of Heritage Places. The place was also identified as a highly significant example of architecture from the Inter-War period in a survey prepared by the Art Deco Society of Western Australia in 1994.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is four-storey brick and tiled roof cathedral building in the Inter-War Byzantine style, translating the requirements of the Latin cross plan and Byzantine stylistic language into local brick and tile, combined with finely designed interior features that accommodate the requirements of the Orthodox liturgy. The Hellenic Community Centre is a two-storey concrete, brick, and metal deck roof community centre in the Late Twentieth Century International style.⁵³

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is sited on the north-east corner of Parker and Francis Streets, facing west into Parker Street, and this building combined with the two-storey residence on the south-eastern corner with its two-storey belvedere, form a visual gateway to Francis Street from Russell Square. Other late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings in Parker Street include the former Aberdeen Street Post Office (now a night club) and a much-altered house that is used by the Greek Orthodox church's Women's Auxillary.

The immediate environs of the place include bitumenised roads with ground beam kerbs, contrasting bitumen parking bays, brick pave footpaths, and plantings of young Jacarandas protected by steel bollards.

While the southern end of the southern transept is set on the southern site boundary, the remainder of the southern elevations is set back from the street, with the front or western side of the building set back from the boundary. The eastern wall to the chancel is set hard on the rear boundary of the site. The northern site of the church is separated from the Community

⁵⁰ Fay Katris, conversation on site visit, 21 July 2003.

⁵¹ Fay Katris, conversation on site visit, 21 July 2003.

⁵² Fay Katris, telephone conversation, 28 July 2003

⁵³ *Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989. pp. 232-235.

Hall by a narrow open strip of land, 1.2m wide at the point where the northern transept touches the old property line. The Hellenic Community Centre occupies almost all of its site, with the front of the building set on the property line and the remaining walls set about 1.2 metres off property boundaries.

The small amount of open area around the *Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene* is cultivated with roses. The property boundary is delineated with a low brick wall, with brick piers and a painted wrought iron screen fence that is consistent with the design of the front vestibule wrought iron doors.

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene (1936-37)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is a four-storey volume stretcher bond black jointed brick building, with a tiled roof. It has a cruciform plan with a pair of cupola topped towers flanking the entry at the western end of the building, a large cupola at the crossing of the of the nave and transepts, and an apsidal chancel at the eastern end of the building.

The western elevation comprises the entry vestibule, cloak and balcony stair elements. They are housed in a symmetrically composed elevation with a central bay and a pair of flanking bays. The central bay comprises three face brick arched openings, with stout concrete columns with exaggerated quadrafron capitals carrying the two centred arches. The arches feature special voussoir bricks, with a brick label moulds over them. Pairs of wrought iron gates are set between each of the arched bays, enclosing the vestibule beyond. A large arched window is set above the vestibule arcade. This arch is made in the same way as the ground floor arches, and contains a timber framed set of windows, divided into three bays and comprising opening and fixed lights with leadlight glazing. The central bay terminates with a gable also constructed in brickwork and the gable is corbelled out beyond the face of the wall with a single line of diagonally set corbel bricks, and the top of the wall is terminated with a row of Cordoba tiles that form a wall capping. A timber construction flagpole completes this composition. The flanking bays comprise square plan elements with piers and panels of brick to each face. At ground floor level, there is a single arched head window in each bay, with a voussoir brick head and label mould, and cant brick sill. At first floor level, there is a pair of windows in each bay, with voussoir brick arch heads, and the arches landing on a central column, also with cant brick sills. Squinches then carry octagonal cupola roofed towers a further storey high. The squinches are covered with Cordoba tiles. Each face of the drum has an arched window, with a brick string course forming the impost of each arch. The cupola roof is covered with clay plain tiles, a gutter at the base of the roof, and a silver cross at the top of each cupola.

North and south elevations are near identical and comprise the return elevation of the towers that flank the front entrance, three piered bays, the gabled end of the transepts, the chancel and finally the sacristies to the chancel terminate the eastern end. The towers at the western end replicate the faces that face west, minus the windows. The piered wall comprises three bays divided by two almost full height brick piers. Here the pattern of the west elevations is reversed with pairs of windows at ground floor level

and single windows at first floor level. Although the windows are arched, they employ only voussoir bricks and omit the label moulds that are employed on the west elevation. The end walls of the transept are gable roofed, with the bay being framed by brick piers. The walls feature windows at ground and first floor level, each enchain in sets of three. Equal arched windows at ground floor level, but at first floor level, the central window is taller than its flanking windows. Over the crossing, there are squinches that carry an octagonal drum and cupola, similar to but larger than those on the entrance towers, and a large cross terminates the cupola. The elevation terminates with a single storey sacristy with a pair of windows and doors, over which the apsidal chancel can be seen, with a window facing south-east.

The east elevation is quite plain as a consequence of being located on the property boundary and is a blank brick wall on the boundary. The apse and dome can be seen beyond to the west. A feature of the west elevation is a series of roof mounted ventilators that are designed to exhaust off hot air, and these were part of the original concept.

The plan takes a cruciform pattern, with the entry vestibule flanked by symmetrical rooms that comprise a stair hall to the north and a cloak room to the south, then the nave, transepts, and chancel, the latter flanked by sacristies. At the western end, there is a vestibule at first floor level, with stair hall and cloak room, then a stepped gallery. An additional steel construction stair provides access to the nave within the body of the cathedral.

The vestibule is more of an external space, with wrought iron gates to the west side and a double doors to the east that lead directly into the nave under the balcony. The floor is covered in polychromatic terrazzo work, with the colours separated by fine brass strips. The steps down to the street are constructed in brick, the walls laid in stretcher bond brickwork, and the ceiling plain plasterboard, with timber paneled doors leading off to the north, south, and into the nave. The nave contains a desk at the entry, timber construction pews, a marble honour roll, a carved timber construction throne, and devotional images.

To the north of the vestibule, the stair hall is simply arranged with a timber dog leg stair with square newels with ball tops, a shaped handrail, and square vertical balusters. The walls and ceilings are plain plastered surfaces.

The nave is a generous space divided into three bays by two rows of square brick piers with torus moulds, topped with a moulded impost, from which plasterboard vaulted ceilings are supported along the nave. There are cast plaster construction vents in the ceiling that are connected to the ridge ventilators. The aisle ceilings are flat plasterboard. The floors are the original timber boards, with a terrazzo strip laid down the central aisle. The walls are finished in plain plaster and the windows on the elevations are simply expressed on the interior. Major chandeliers are hung along the line of the nave and minor chandeliers in each bay of the aisles. The balcony extends over the first western bay of the nave and is all constructed in timber

with a plasterboard soffit, timber handrail and balustrade. The balcony is stepped and has an access from the rear vestibule, and a further and later access by a basic steel construction dog-leg stair.

At the crossing of the transept, the square bay converts to an octagon by way of pendentives, each of which has a painting on canvas applied to it in such a way as to appear as a mural. The octagonal drum is lined with plasterboard so as to appear as a cylinder internally, topped with a dome. Frescoes have been applied to the drum and dome interior. A richly detailed chandelier hangs from the centre of the dome, with a figure of Christ surrounded by angels in a heavenly setting as the dome's main images.

The transept ceilings are set at the same level as the nave and are vaulted also. The treatments are limited to the building elements, and works of religious art or iconography.

Between the chancel and the transept, there is a full width carved timber rood screen, set over the terrazzo steps that lead into the chancel. The screen extends from the top of the steps to just below the torus moulding on the abutting piers. A pair of half doors restricts entry to the chancel. The carved timber altar is located in the centre of the chancel, with iconic image of the saints arranged along the rear of the chancel wall. The northern side of the chancel has been partly partitioned off to provide a sacristy, or vestry.

The cloak room, vestibule and stair hall at the upper floor level are treated in the same manner as the lower stair wall, with carpet finishes to floors, plastered walls and plasterboard ceilings.

The overall impression of the internal space is one of simplicity of form, a good use of natural light, and the rich embellishment that arises from the growth of the cathedral's community and its enrichment of its place of worship. The rood screen, altar, and religious imagery enrich the visual experience of the place and give it an atmosphere conducive to prayer, reflection, and religious celebration.

The alterations that have taken place would appear to have been quite minimal and include the addition of a second stair between gallery and nave and a working sacristy to the northern side of the chancel. The terrazzo strip down the centre of the nave would also appear to be an addition, as this was not included in the original documents.

The exterior of the building is generally in good condition. There is some deterioration of joinery on the weather faces, but this would appear to be somewhat superficial. There has been some leaking that has caused minor internal damage. One of the two principal chandeliers in the nave is in need of conservation. Iron work to the entrance would benefit from a thorough cleaning back to remove rust and repainting.

The Hellenic Community Centre (1969).

The Hellenic Community Centre is a two-storey concrete, brick, and metal deck roof community centre in the Late Twentieth Century International style.

The Hellenic Community Centre is located immediately to the north of the Cathedral. It is a long low building with a strong horizontal visual emphasis, with a contrasting vertical element to identify the building entrance. The main design effort is concentrated on the Parker Street frontage. The eastern end of the ground floor, together with the minor elevations are constructed in plain red stretcher bond brickwork, with a recess at the entrance near the northern end of the building, then the final section of masonry at the ground floor level is constructed in thin biscuits of stone. The main entrance is recessed with a set of terrazzo steps landing, together with a set of glazed aluminium framed doors. The ground floor is completed with a long horizontal band of aluminium framed highlight windows. A series of pre-cast concrete exposed aggregate panels mask the ceiling void zone and extend beyond the first floor level to form a balustrade to the almost full width balcony. The words 'HELLENIC COMMUNITY CENTRE' are fixed to the panels in plain metal typeface. At first floor level there is a wide balcony, with a series of doors that open into the 'cocktail area' adjacent to the main hall. The elevation is completed with a deep fascia that masked a gable format low pitched corrugated asbestos cement roof. The fascia is made up with timber framing, covered with fibro cement sheeting, and then covered with a tiled border capturing a key pattern frieze, also made up in tiles. Many tiles have lost adhesion. The entry emphasis is achieved by a 'Tyrolean' rendered 'v' shaped panel that extends though the spandrel panel, first floor and fascia panel and extends beyond the roofline. There is a slender flagpole fitted to the ends of the panel and a bas-relief figure at the centre of the panel.

The community centre comprises a ground floor with a committee room, two classrooms, the lesser hall and stage, kitchen, store, lavatories and ancillary rooms, together with the entrance hall and stair. The second level contains the upper stair hall, balcony and cocktail area on the western side of the building, then the main hall, toilet, kitchen and store. The building is constructed with a concrete frame and floors up to roof level, with a steel framed roof. Ceilings are lined with metal strip and compressed strawboard, known locally as Stramit ceilings, with parquetry flooring that has subsequently been covered with carpet. The entrance hall has a terrazzo floor leading on to a terrazzo staircase. Generally the interior is very simply treated. Two steel construction staircases on the east side of the building give alternative means of escape. Service areas have vinyl tile or mosaic tiled finishes.

The alterations include the addition of carpets and minor alterations to kitchens and the like.

The place is generally beginning to approach the stage where major work is required to bring it to a good standard. There would appear to be a number of locations where water penetration has damaged finishes. Tiling to the façade is losing adhesion and decorative finishes are in poor condition.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The Church

The first Greek Orthodox Church in Australia, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was built in Sydney c. 1898.⁵⁴

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene was the first purpose built church constructed by and for the Western Australian Greek community. The second Greek Orthodox Church, the Annunciation of Our Lady, established in 1959 by the recently founded Greek Orthodox Community of WA (Evangelismos), in the old Anglican Church building, St Paul's, on the corner of Carr and Charles streets in West Perth. This church was founded mainly by post war immigrants, who found the Castellorizian domination of the Cathedral of Saints Constantine and Helene quite intimidating.⁵⁵ A new church to replace the Anglican Church was consecrated on 19 December 1970.

The third of Perth's major Greek Orthodox churches, St Nektarios, was consecrated on 14 January 1990. Unlike the other two churches, St Nektarios had been initiated and controlled by the Archdiocese, while the two earlier churches were local community created, sponsored and administered religious venues.⁵⁶ Greek Orthodox Churches have also been established in regional centres, including Bunbury and Geraldton.

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene the earliest of five Greek Orthodox churches in Western Australia, and the only one to function as a cathedral.

The style

The Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene would seem to be the only example of Byzantine architecture in Perth constructed in the Inter-War period. The style takes its name from the style developed in Byzantium (later Constantinople and now Istanbul) after it became the seat of the Roman Empire in the 4th century. The style is characterised by the use of domes erected over square bases and the use of a series of round arches.⁵⁷

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is the only known example of Byzantine architecture in the State.

The architects

The architectural firm of Oldham, Boas and Ednie-Brown comprised Harold Boas and Colin Ednie-Brown. Boas had taken over the firm started by Charles Oldham following Charles' death in 1920. Boas had been trained in Adelaide and came to Western Australia in 1905 and initially worked in partnership with Cavanagh and Cavanagh and then with Austin Bastow. He

⁵⁴ 'Golden Jubilee...', op. cit., p. 8.

⁵⁵ Yiannakis, op cit., pp. 122-24.

⁵⁶ ibid., p. 100.

⁵⁷ Paul Taylor, 'Greek Orthodox Cathedral – 1937', in *Waltzing Moderne*, Vol 12, No 3, Spring 1999, p. 10. The Byzantine style is not common in Australia; the related Romanesque style is more dominant. See Apperly, Irving and Reynolds, op. cit.

entered a partnership with Edwin Summerhayes in 1915 and then joined Charles Oldham a few years later. Colin Ednie-Brown had been one of Oldham's pupils.⁵⁸

Other buildings designed by Oldham, Boas and Ednie-Brown include:

- London Court, Perth (1937; entered in Register of Heritage Places)
- Young Australia League Building, Murray Street, Perth (1922; entered in Register of Heritage Places)
- Barkers Buildings, William Street, Perth (1925; recommended for RHP)
- Armadale District Hall (1936; recommended for RHP)
- ANZ Bank (fmr), Hay Street, Perth (1928; entered in Register of Heritage Places)
- Dalwallinu Shire Offices (1935, demolished 2003)
- Gledden Building (1935-38 entered in register of Heritage Places)

Cathedral of St. Constantine and St. Helene is an excellent example of the architectural firm's work.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

John Yiannakis, 'The Church of Saints Constantine and Helene: Its Construction and Functioning, 1910-1936', Murdoch University Honours Thesis, 1986.

John Yiannakis, "Strangers in a strange land": Religion and Ethnic Identity – Perth's Greek Orthodox Community Builds its own Cathedral, 1910-1936', in John Tonkin (ed), *Religion and Society in Western Australia: Studies in Western Australian History*, Issue IX, Centre for Western Australian History, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, October 1987, pp. 127-139.

'Golden Jubilee of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saints Constantine & Helene, Perth, Western Australia, 1837-1987', 50th Anniversary Commemorative Book, Hellenic Community of Western Australian Inc, Perth, 1987.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

⁵⁸ Pitt Morison, M 'Immigrant Architects and Their Work 1885-1905', unpublished paper, Battye Library; Kelly, I P, 'Architectural Biography, 1890-1915: A brief biographical list of architects who practiced in Western Australia in the years 1890 to 1915', prepared as part of Master of Architecture, UWA, 1991.