



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)

- 4.3 Developing Institutions
- 8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 407 Cultural Activities
- 504 Depression and Boom

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco, in particular the Inter-War Free Classical style detailing of the front elevation and the interior spaces, provides physical evidence of the eighteenth century origins of Freemason philosophy translated into the practical requirements of twentieth century suburban Perth. The intact vaulted plaster ceilings, in particular the clearly enunciated focal point in the main meeting room, has characteristics of Baroque interiors. (Criterion 1.1)

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is a landmark in a prominent location on Roberts Road, is a prominent feature in relation to Mueller Park and Kitchener Park on the north side of the street and is held in high regard by the Masonic fraternity and the community. (Criteria 1.3 & 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco provides evidence of the significance of the Masonic movement in the region, and of the environment in which Masonic ritual was practiced. (Criterion 2.1)

The building of *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco*, is closely associated with the growth of the Masonic movement in Western Australia during the early decades of the twentieth century as a result of immigration primarily resulting from the gold rush of the 1880's and 1890's. It was used by a large number of Perth's suburban lodges for their meetings for over sixty years (Criterion 2.2)

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is a very fine example of the architectural work of Percy William Harrison. (Criterion 2.3)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.
For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA, unpublished report, 1997.

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is significant as one of the most elaborately designed and furnished building catering for Masonic ritual in W.A. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

A number of Perth's suburban lodges used the special facilities provided by the building for their meetings for over sixty years. *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco* is highly valued by the fraternity of Freemasons for its symbolic and social associations. (Criterion 4.1)

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is regarded as an essential part of the heritage fabric of Subiaco, and as such contributes to the community's sense of place as indicated by its inclusion in the Municipal Inventory, and its classification by the National Trust of Australia. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is rare as one of the most imposing and finely designed Masonic lodges in the Perth metropolitan area. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Prior to its conversion, *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco* contained all of the furnishings associated with Masonic ritual, thereby being representative of, and a good example of a purpose-built Masonic hall. The building still contains sufficient structural, spatial and decorative detail in good condition to represent a fine example of a Masonic hall. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco* is in fair to good condition. There is minor cracking to the north façade and some small areas of joint erosion to the west, south and east facades. There is some evidence of rising damp to the north façade. The roofing is in good condition. The interior finishes are in a fair to good condition throughout with some minor damage to the detailing on the vaulted ceiling at first floor level.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Aside from the partitioning of the main spaces, the original intent of the place remains clearly legible. The place retains a moderate to high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Externally, *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco* has been painted in multi-coloured hues, picking out the details of the decorative elements. A number of new windows have been installed and others have been enlarged and re-framed and reveals of the new shape have been applied. Some decorative pressed steel canopies have been installed over new openings on the upper floor of the west elevation and the roof has been re-sheeted in zincalume custom orb. The external fabric is generally in its original state except for the insertion of new openings and the treatment of openings on the return facades.

Internally, much of the heritage fabric is intact in the Main Entrance, the Staircase (both floors) and the ceiling in the Main Hall, while some elements of the built form of the Vault remain evident on both floors. The condition of the detail, the panelling and floor of the vault appears to be good. The significant floor covering

in the Main Hall has been removed to allow the installation of air conditioning plant. Fixtures related to Masonic rituals have been removed.

Sufficient structural fabric remains, or is able to be restored, to demonstrate the ritual of and architecture produced for Freemasonry.

The underlying fabric remains authentic and overall the place retains a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Helen Burgess, Historian and Philip Griffiths and Brandon Pratley, Architects, in September 1996, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), *Subiaco* is a two-storey brick, stucco and Zincalume roof building in the Inter War Free Classical style, constructed in 1929 for the 'Freemasons' Hall Limited' in order to provide facilities for Freemasons in the Subiaco/West Subiaco and West Perth area.

Freemasonry is said to date back to the period when 'masons', the builders of cathedrals, abbeys and castles, practiced their craft. In the late 17th century, groups of men began to meet who shared an interest in the masonry craft. Drawing on the traditions and practices of the original masons, Freemasons share a belief in the Supreme Being and a concern in 'preserving a way of life founded on justice, integrity and compassion'. The symbolism of the square and compasses, which are recognised as the emblems of Freemasonry, represents the days when masons practiced their work.¹

Freemasonry in Western Australia dates from the 1840s. On 1 September 1841, a group of prominent Western Australian Freemasons, including Governor John Hutt and Colonial Secretary Peter Brown, sought a charter from the Grand Lodge of England granting them the right to establish a Lodge in Western Australia.² On 4 April 1843, the Lodge of St John, No. 712, E.C. (English Constitution), was consecrated.³

The growth of Freemasonry was slow until the 1880s, when gold rushes and regional agricultural development initiated a population boom. By 1894, there were six Lodges in the Perth metropolitan area and seven in the country.⁴ The increase in the number of lodges reflects the more prosperous conditions prevailing in the colony during this period.

On 27 February 1900, the Grand Lodge of Western Australia was 'regularly formed, assembled and properly dedicated to the work of the Ancient, Free and Accepted Masonry...'.⁵ The formation of a Grand Lodge, local and supreme, marked the attainment of autonomous government in matters Masonic.

By October 1899, there were 35 lodges in existence in the state, owing allegiance to the Grand Lodge of England, and this growth continued into the 1930s.⁶

The 1920s in the conservative, working class area of Subiaco saw little change to its community.⁷ By the end of the 1920s and into the 1930s the world was

1 This information is taken from a pamphlet entitled 'Freemasonry – What's it all about?' supplied and written by the Grand Lodge of Freemasons, 5 May 1999; as recorded in K. Bizzaca & J. Pidgeon, Assessment Documentation for HCWA place 7093 Freemasons Hall, Perth,.

2 Collins, N.R., 'Golden Jubilee History 1900 – 1950', Grand Lodge of WA of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, Perth, 1950, p. 5; as recorded in K. Bizzaca & J. Pidgeon, Assessment Documentation for HCWA place 7093 Freemasons Hall, Perth,.

3 Collins, N.R., 'Golden Jubilee History 1900 – 1950', Grand Lodge of WA of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, Perth, 1950, p. 5; as recorded in K. Bizzaca & J. Pidgeon, Assessment Documentation for HCWA place 7093 Freemasons Hall, Perth.

4 K. Bizzaca & J. Pidgeon, Assessment Documentation for HCWA place 7093 Freemasons Hall, Perth.

5 The Grand Lodge of Western Australia of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, Golden Jubilee History 1900 - 1950, Paterson Brokensha, Perth, 1950, p. 5.

6 The Grand Lodge of Western Australia of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, Golden Jubilee History 1900 - 1950, Paterson Brokensha, Perth, 1950, p. 7, 28.

7 Spillman Ken, Identity Prized : A History of Subiaco,, Nedlands, 1985, p 231.

marked by economic depression, caused by the Wall Street Crash in 1929. Subiaco was also affected and the plight of many was hard. It survived the decade on instinct and team spirit and it was an era where the community recovered their pride in the district and municipal government.⁸

By the 1920s, several Lodges and Chapters had been established in and around the Subiaco/West Subiaco and West Perth area, some of which were meeting in temporary accommodation, and membership numbers were also increasing.⁹ On 13 April 1927, a motion was passed by one of these Lodges, the Lord Nelson Lodge No. 46, that a committee be formed '...to look into the question of purchasing land and erecting a suitable building'¹⁰. The purpose was to combine the resources of the Lodges and Chapters within a certain radius and build a hall, which could accommodate all of them. W. Bro Harold Redcliffe¹¹, PJGD, on behalf of the Lord Nelson Building Committee, wrote to the ten Lodges and Chapters concerned requesting that '...each appoint a representative to discuss a co-operative scheme'¹². All but one agreed to this proposal. Grand Secretary, R W Bro Stevenson was invited to chair these early meetings and Redcliffe was Secretary.¹³

On 31 May 1927, the Freemasons' Hall Limited was incorporated, led by a Board of Directors with V W Bro Raad as the Chairman. The company commenced with a capital of £10,000, which was divided into 10,000 £1 shares. Lodges and Chapters of both the West Australian and the Scottish Constitutions were invited to take up shares. Initially it was proposed to issue 6000 shares at 1s each on application and the balance in calls of not less than 1s per month, with a guaranteed return of 6% on fully paid shares.¹⁴

Real estate agent and member of West City Lodge, Bro N. K. Brearly, assisted the Committee in locating a suitable site, which was found on the corner of Coghlan and Roberts Road - then Mueller Road. The selected site comprised several lots and with an existing residence, and the deposit to secure the land was provided by R W Bro J. McFarlane, PSGW.¹⁵ On 4 July 1927, portion of Perth Suburban Lot 190 and being part of Lot 16 (Section J) was transferred to the Freemasons' Hall Limited.¹⁶ On 25 August, 1927, the land comprising portion of Perth Suburban Lot 190 and being Lots 9, 10, 11 and 12 and part Lots 13 and 15 was also transferred to the company.¹⁷ The combination of these lots gave the company a 132ft frontage to Roberts Road, with a depth of 165ft to Coghlan Road. The sum total of the purchase was £2200, being £2,050-0-0 for the land plus legal and other minor expenses.¹⁸

8 Spillman Ken, *Identity Prized : A History of Subiaco.*, Nedlands, 1985, p. 260.

9 *Western Australian Freemason*, 12/12/1929, p. 9.

10 Helen to provide.

11 The spelling of Redcliffe was also given as Radcliffe in some sources.

12 Helen to provide

13 'Subiaco, Freemasons' Hall Limited, Roberts Road', 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2003, p. 26 & *The Western Australian Freemason*, 12/1/1930, p. 5.

14 'Subiaco, Freemasons' Hall Limited, Roberts Road', 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2003, p. 26.

15 'Subiaco, Freemasons' Hall Limited, Roberts Road', 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2003, p. 26; & *The Western Australian Freemason*, 12/1/1930, p. 5.

16 Certificate of Title, Vol. 967, Fol. 121.

17 Certificate of Title, Vol. 157, Fol. 29.

18 'Subiaco, Freemasons' Hall Limited, Roberts Road', 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2003, p. 26; & *The Western Australian Freemason*, 12/1/1930, pp. 4-5; & Certificate of Title, Vol. 198, Folio. 48.

Architect, R W Bro. P W Harrison, PDGM, was requested by the building committee to prepare plans for the hall, which was to accommodate over 200 Masons.¹⁹ Percy William Harrison was born in London and came to Australia in the late 1880s, arriving firstly to Victoria no doubt to capitalize on the gold boom being experienced there. By 1895, following the gold trail to Western Australia, Harrison had set up practice in Perth. In addition to the *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco*, some of the other more notable designs by Harrison include: St Andrew's Church, Katanning; St Mary's Anglican Church, West Perth; Congregational Hall, North Perth; Morawa Road Board Office; Anglican Church, Mundaring. Harrison also designed many residences in the West Perth, Cottesloe, Mt Lawley, Subiaco and Claremont areas.²⁰

The successful contractor for the new hall was W.H. Ennis & Co. for the sum of £7, 642-3-9 with furnishings costing £1,661-16-3.²¹ The existing residence was to remain to house the caretaker.²²

On 14 July 1929, the foundation stone for *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* was laid by the Acting Grand Master R W Bro. A C McCallum, DGM.²³

On 20 December 1929, *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* was declared opened and the Lodge room consecrated R W Bro A A Raad. In the Lodge Room, the more ceremonial part of the occasion was marked with scattering of corn and pouring of wine and oil, portions of the Volume of the Sacred Law read and prayers offered, and the National Anthem was sung. The gathering then retired to the Supper Room for speeches and toasts.²⁴

The final design was not quite as Harrison had originally intended owing to both budget limitations as well as meeting the differing desires and tastes of all the company Directors.²⁵ *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* was none-the-less considered at its time of opening as a credit to Freemasonry in the district, as well as being compared to the best halls and temples in the capital cities of Australia. *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* was elaborately designed and furnished and was at the time one of the most impressive built in WA. The ceilings were vaulted and decorated, the main stairs were made of marble, and the elaborate design of the Lodge Room was one of the only two similar in the State. The bulk of the seating purchased for the Main Hall was intricately decorated and probably came from the Prince of Wales Theatre, which was demolished at the time of the construction of this building. The other furniture made by Harris Scarfe and Sandover harmonised with the decorative motifs of the theatre seats, according to the National Trust Exposition, but no primary source was located to support the assertion.²⁶

A description of the newly completed Freemasons' Hall appeared in the *Western Australian Freemason* journal:

Entering from Robert's-road, up a bold flight of steps, under a large archway carried on Ionic pillars, a wide entrance hall is reached, paved with terrazzo and with

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- 19 'Subiaco, Freemasons' Hall Limited, Roberts Road', 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2003, p. 26.
 - 20 Kelly, I P, *Architectural Biography, 1890-1915: a brief biographical list of architects who practiced in Western Australia in the years 1890-1915*, thesis presented for Master of Architecture, UWA, 1991.
 - 21 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988.
 - 22 *The Western Australian Freemason*, 12/1/1930, p. 6.
 - 23 'Subiaco, Freemasons' Hall Limited, Roberts Road', 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2003, p. 26
 - 24 *The Western Australian Freemason*, 12/1/1930, p. 4; & *Building and Construction*, 27/12/1929, p. 18. The Freemasons' Hall first appeared in the Post Office Directory of 1930.
 - 25 *Western Australian Freemason*, 12/1/1930, p. 6 & pp. 36-38.
 - 26 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988.

panelled [sic.] marblette dados, and similar columns and pilasters with fibrous plaster ceilings. Cloak rooms open on each side of the entrance, compete with all toilet conveniences. At the end of the entrance hall is the large public hall, with special dancing floor and concert platform, and provided with supper room and kitchen fully equipped. The back verandah opens on a large yard with tradesmen's entrance from Coghlan Road. The bungalow on the property is occupied by the caretaker.

A large flight of stairs leads from the entrance hall to the first floor, reserved for masonic purposes. On the landing are committee, regalia and locker rooms. At one end a few wide steps lead to the assembly hall, provided with seats and hat pegs, desk for attendance book, and lavatory conveniences. On the right is the entrance to the Lodge room, with ante-rooms for candidates and for R.A. Masons.

The Lodge room has been handsomely fitted out, with raised platform all round and a low gallery, containing five tiers of seats in the W. A large organ chamber in the south wall, contains a pipe organ and tiers of seats for choir. The eastern end of the Lodge is circular in form, with circular platform carrying a domed canopy on Ionic columns; dark blue curtains are draped across this end of the room. The domed ceiling, in fibrous plaster panelling and coffer beams, with special provision for ventilation, is an outstanding feature; the acoustic properties are excellent. All seats in the Lodge room are cast iron, tip-up theatre seats, in dark blue leather with arm rests. The electric lighting installation is most complete, convenient switches being available for manipulation during ceremonial work; in other parts of the building the conveniences are most complete.²⁷

The location of *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* was also considered highly desirable, being on an elevated site, opposite a park (Kitchener Park) in which there were tennis courts, cricket and football clubs, shady trees lining the park side of the street, parking for cars on the four corners, and it was also close to the railway station, and tram and bus lines.²⁸

At the time of opening, Freemasons' Hall Ltd. had 478 shareholders, having sold 7862 shares, which valued £6,300. Another 60 were also sold at the opening night.²⁹ The desire of the company was to have the whole hall fully occupied by Masonic bodies, but until that time, and if no Lodge was meeting, the Supper Room and lower portion of the hall was going to be made available to the community for functions other than Masonic. This was to assist in the necessary revenue raising for the hall and to help pay off the £4500 the company borrowed from the West Australian State Government Treasury.³⁰

On 23 December 1929, the first meeting was held in the new *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* by the West City Lodge. Despite the striking aesthetics of the *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* by the second meeting of the West City Lodge, it was noted in the *Western Australian Freemason* journal some of the shortcomings of the new hall:

On this, the second occasion of meeting in the new Subiaco Hall, the capacious room seems ill-adapted to the resources of this Lodge, the 25 brethren present looking somewhat lost. It was mooted at one time that a curtain should be provided to screen off a portion of the room, and this seems very desirable if the small Lodges are to feel comfortable and not working in a wilderness. Other rearrangements appear necessary to overcome some acoustic weaknesses, but no doubt in a little time these faults will be remedied.³¹

The company leased the hall to various Lodges and Returned and Services League meetings were also held there. As well as the West City Lodge and the

27 The Western Australian Freemason, 12/1/1930, p. 6.

28 The Western Australian Freemason, 12/1/1930, pp. 4-5. The park referred to was originally known as Perth Commonage (shown on 1904 map 36/11 292C), then Mueller Park (shown on 1915 map 51/2 ID/40) and then Kitchener Park (shown on 1921 map 51/2 ID/40)

29 The Western Australian Freemason, 12/1/1930, p. 4.

30 The Western Australian Freemason, 12/1/1930, p. 5.

31 The Western Australian Freemason, 12/1/1930, p. 36.

Lord Nelson, other Lodges and Chapters to use the *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* included Darius No. 23, Robbie Burns No. 860 SC, Queen Victoria No. 50, Excelsior No. 61 (later merging with Wisdom No. 211), Caxton No. 140, Xenophon No. 200 (later amalgamated with Banksia No. 292) Argosy No. 202, Lodge of Sportsmen No. 218, and West Subiaco No. 113 (later amalgamated with Cottesloe-Clairemont No. 39).³²

The *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* ran at a loss for the first few years until 1934, thereafter making modest profits.³³

Around 1958, some renovations were made to the building.³⁴

On 13 October 1960, portion of Perth Suburban Lot 190 and being Lot 8 was transferred to the Freemasons' Hall Limited.³⁵

In 1966, the land owned by the Freemasons' Hall Limited was subdivided with the *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* being now situated on a much smaller Lot 26, being the corner portion of the larger block. The original residence/caretaker's house to the west of the hall, and which was still showing on a 1963 aerial photograph, was then excised on to its own Lot and was subsequently demolished.³⁶

In 1988, plans for the building to be sold became known. As a result of a request from a number of members of the various Lodges using the premises, a team from the National Trust was requested to prepare an assessment of the building prior to its sale. It is likely that news of the impending sale precipitated the request for the assessment.³⁷ The physical description in the 1988 assessment read as follows:

The building is a two-storey brick structure with a cream painted rendered facade decorated in Renaissance motifs facing Roberts Road. The main entrance is centrally positioned in the Roberts Road frontage under a domed arch. The other facades are red face brickwork with steel framed windows.

The building has a significant 'progression of formalities' from the entry - terrazzo floor and simulated marble painted dado and a fine marble plaque. The Grand Master Robing and Practice Rooms are each side of the Entry. A wide formal staircase with matching finishes leads up to the upper Foyer, Regalia Room and Robing Rooms. The Foyer has a portrait of Robbie Burns dated 1899.

The Robing Room has a timber floor, with coat hooks and lockers for personal regalia. At the end of the Robing Room, and up some steps is the Chapter Room which is a jarrah faced partition with locking for controlled admission to the Main Hall.

The Chapter Room, one of only two similar in the State, contains secret access to a two storey vault with painted, simulated chequer board floor and blue and white niches around the wall. The vault has rheostat lighting projected from the Chapter Room above through removable segments in the floor. The projection lamp is of interest, probably sourced from a theatre decommissioned around the time this place was fitted out. (There is additional access to the vault from the kitchen below via a door painted out internally to match the simulated niches of the wall.)

The Chapter Room leads progressively into the Main Hall which is surprisingly splendidly fitted out. The ceiling is barrel vaulted with a heavily coffered plastered

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- 32 The Western Australian Freemason, various issues 1929-1930 & Collection listing for Grand Lodge Archives, lodged with JS Battye Library of West Australian History Private Archives [MN1705].
 - 33 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988, however no primary corroborating evidence was located.
 - 34 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988, however no primary corroborating evidence was located.
 - 35 Certificate of Title, Vol. 198, Fol. 48.
 - 36 Certificate of Title, Vol. 1304, Fol. 713 & Vol. 11, Fol. 118A; & Aerial Photograph WA838 Run 17, Proj. D. 13/10.1963 .
 - 37 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988, but file source to substantiate the reasons were not located.

ceiling with an apse, arches and a rotunda at the southern end covering the main seating. The general seating plan is arranged around the four walls on tiers, each side with a rostrum position, timber light standard, all forming a symbolic hierarchy. The main ceremonial seats and smaller loose chairs are unusual carved jarrah made by Harris Scarfe and Sandovers which generally matches the remaining seats which are again unusual - probably flamboyant survivors from a very lavish cinema, the Prince of Wales theatre, demolished about the time this building was commissioned. The seats are blue upholstered with gilt painted cast iron frames with brass insert lozenges covering perhaps the original seat numbers. The walls and general colours are blue - of note, lodges are either blue or red. The floor is blue carpeted, with a central rectangular panel sheeted in black and white tiles with tassels in each corner, a symbolic pattern for the Masonic ritual. The building has a supper hall, kitchen and other facilities on the ground floor which are insignificant.³⁸

The subsequent entry to the list of classified places by the National Trust in 1988 elicited an angry response from the owners of the property.³⁹

The Freemasons' Hall Limited put the building up for public auction in March 1989.⁴⁰ In June 1989, the title for portion of Perth Suburban Lot 190 and being Lot 26 was transferred to a commercial company called 'Coab Pty. Ltd'.⁴¹ Subsequently, the building was converted into a series of commercial tenancies and as a consequence a serious foray into the significant heritage fabric of the place ensued. The main hall and adjacent spaces were divided up into offices, ceilings were modified and lowered to allow air conditioning to be installed, the majority of external openings on the east, west and south façade were enlarged, the north elevation was repainted, a new toilet and tea room was built on the south east corner and a new carport structure was built on the southern end of the building.⁴²

In November 1994, Avro Apparel purchased six tenths of the building, Richard and Polixeni Jones three tenths, and Awhina Nominees Pty. Ltd. one tenth.⁴³ The Avro Apparel group realised the potential of the place and immediately undertook, at considerable expense, a programme of restoration, most particularly of the subdivided Main Hall space on the upper floor.⁴⁴

In 2003 the main hall is used as a showroom for garments and the surrounding rooms as offices. The ground floor is now being utilised as office space.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is a two storey brick hall with a zincalume custom orb roof and an ornamental front façade in the Inter War Free Classical style, built in 1929 for the local Freemasons.

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco is located at 181 Roberts Road, Subiaco, facing Roberts Road on the south west corner of the intersection with Coghlan Road. There is a grassed football oval (Kitchener Park) and small bituminised carpark north of the *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco*, with Subiaco Oval to the north-west. Mueller Park, an open grassed area bounded by large Camphor Laurel Trees, is located to the north east of *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco*, on the east of Coghlan Road. Housing continues to the east of the *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco* along Coghlan Road and the south side of Roberts Road, and along Coghlan Road to the south of the site. The adjacent lot to the west of the *Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), Subiaco* is vacant, with housing continuing beyond it

38 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988.

39 J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988.

40 The West Australian, 8/3/1989, p. 66.

41 Certificate of Title, Vol. 11, Fol. 118A

42 Oldfield Knott Architects Pty Ltd, Drawings A.01, A.02, A.03 & A.04, Job No 8999, 3 August 1989

43 Certificate of Title, Vol. 11, Fol. 118A.

44 John Pidgeon and David Kelsall, Architects.

along the southern side of Roberts Road. Coghlan Road is lined with Queensland Box Trees (*Lephostemon conferta*). The housing stock is generally single storey, Federation with a number of more recent two storey apartment developments interspersed within.

The *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* is situated on the northern half of the lot with a bitumen carpark, accessed from Coghlan Road, on the southern half. The east boundary has a lapped timber plank fence, the southern boundary a corrugated iron fence and the west boundary corrugated iron to the southern half and a brick wall to the northern half. A free standing, low pitched, steel framed carport structure with metal roof sheeting is located at the southern face of the building.

The dominant feature of the building is Inter War Free Classical style⁴⁵ two storey north façade which has a decorative stucco finish. The façade is symmetrical divided into three bays with an A B A pattern with coved returns. The bays are divided vertically by four pilasters of the Ionic order with the coved return section terminated by one pilaster on each side. The facade is divided horizontally with stinger courses at dado and sill height at ground level, and at first floor level and just below first floor sill level. The façade has been painted to emphasise the architectural elements using dark and light terracotta and dark and light blue.

The central bay consists of a round arched recess sprung off a pair of ionic columns and imposts, with steps up to the main entrance from the street level. The arch is divided into voussoirs, with a keystone at the centre. The slightly projected and decorated pediment has tiered backing with a plain entablature containing the name 'Freemasons' Hall'. Two porthole windows are located above the arch within the central bay, additional windows are located either side of the entry door at ground floor level and over the ground floor entry door at first floor level in the plane of the recess.

Each flanking bay contains two high level, steel framed windows, divided into five equal panes wide by three high with a centre hinged three by three panel, one at ground level and the other at first floor level. The original foundation stone is located within the plinth to the east bay.

The remainder of the building is functional in nature with face brick, stretcher bond, walls and glazed openings. The building is organised about the larger and higher volume of the main hall, which is located on the south west with the shorter two storey sections containing the ancillary spaces flanking it to the north and east. A rendered stringer line runs around the main hall volume at eaves level.

The eastern section of the building is a two-storey brick structure with zincalume custom orb profile hipped roof with exposed rafter ends set against the larger volume of the main hall that steps down to a single storey on the southern end. The east wall consists of four bays with engaged piers with windows to each level in each bay then another bay that steps down several courses and then drops to a single storey going from north to south. The single storey section has a hipped roof with a skillion to the south. The windows to the east façade are generally powder coated aluminium with fixed tinted glazing set into openings that have been enlarged by lowering the sills to achieve the current proportions. The reveals and surrounds have been rendered. Three original steel framed windows remain to the east façade. High level vents are located centrally to each bay under the eaves of the main hall volume.

45 Apperly, Richard, Irving, Robert, Reynolds, Peter A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

The southern elevation consists of two elements, the two-storey gable end of the main hall to the west and the shorter two and single storey section to the east. A steel escape stair exits from the first floor level of the eastern section, extends over the roof of the single storey section and lands behind the building in the carpark. The stair has open steel treads with an SHS handrail and balusters with diagonal cross bracing.

The main hall southern elevation has engaged brick piers located approximately on the third points of the wall stopping a few courses short of the roof line, dividing the wall into three sections. A gable vent is located at the ridge of the hall. At first floor level there is an aluminium framed, fixed glazed, window to the west and east bay. At ground level there is a similar window to each bay. Four air conditioning condenser units are bracketed off the wall between the windows. The freestanding steel carport is located across the ground floor windows.

The west elevation is divided into seven bays by brick piers. The five southern bays define the extent of the main hall with a gable to the north and south end of this section. High level louvred vents are located centrally to each bay of the main hall. The second and third bay from the southern end step out from the plane of the wall and extend up to form a parapet with the roof continued out to this line. These two bays appear to be in line with the lot boundary. Windows have been formed at each level in the north and south face of the projected bays. The windows to each bay of the hall at first floor level have steel bull nosed sun hoods over. There are aluminium framed, single glazed, windows to each bay at first floor level apart from the two projected bays which are glazed with glass blocks and the original steel framed panel windows to the stair well in the sixth bay from the south. The ground floor has glazed double doors to the first, fourth, fifth and seventh bay from the south, with glass block glazing to the windows in the second and third bay.

The foyer of the building has a six panelled double timber entry door to the north with a later internal timber and glass screen and double door as an airlock. A small office (Office 1) is located to the west of the foyer through a glazed panel double door set within an arched opening. The stair to the upper level is to the south east of the foyer and sweeps around a curved wall. A small office (Office 2) and meeting room are located off the foyer to the east. The large office area (Office 4) is entered through a timber framed, glazed panelled, double door to the south. The flooring is white terrazzo with thin black bands as a border and dividing element, a tile and terrazzo stylised, five pointed, star inset is located centrally to the floor. The foyer has a faux marble painted dado and skirting. Two columns are located to the west and east of the foyer atop pedestals that align with the top of the dado. A coffered beam extends between each column dividing the ceiling. The ceiling has a decorative cornice with a border and panels defined by flat battens to the ceiling. A pendant type light fitting is attached to the coffered beam with recessed down lights to the remainder of the ceiling. Air conditioning grilles have been introduced in the west wall of the foyer over the door to the meeting room.

The meeting room has a carpeted floor with a low timber skirting. The walls are painted plaster with a picture rail to the north and west wall. The east wall has a high plinth with a bevelled top edge with windows that extend down beyond the top of the plinth. The north wall of the room has a cabinet across its length with a central whiteboard. The ceiling is divided into two halves by a coffered beam running east west from the central piers. Each ceiling section is divided up with flat battens consisting of a central square, a line from the midpoint of each square edge and additional lines to form a square grid. Lighting consists of recessed down lights and two pendant type fittings.

The two north west and north east corner offices (Office 1 & 2) are similar to the meeting room in internal fitout, with the exception of the retention of the high level, steel framed, panelled windows to the north walls and the simplification of the battening to the ceiling. The curved corner to the wall is expressed internally within these spaces.

The large office space (Office 4) to the south of the foyer is enclosed within the volume of the main hall. The floor is carpeted. The walls to the space are painted plaster with a plinth approximately 1500mm high with bevelled top, a rebated moulding has been run in the plinth just below the start of the bevel. The plinth is not evident on the west wall to the alcove. The ceiling is a suspended grid flush panel system with integral fluorescent light fittings and air conditioning registers. The space has been divided up with low height movable partitions. Office 5 has been formed in the north-west corner of this space with floor to ceiling partitions with glazed highlights. Office 7 has been formed in the south-west corner of the space with floor to ceiling stud walls.

Office 5, south of the meeting room is accessed from the main office area through an opening that has been made in the west wall with a new door. The interior is similar to that of the meeting room. This room was once part of the meeting room.

Store 2 has a set down floor, a painted exposed slab soffit with painted plaster walls.

Office 6 has carpeted floors, painted walls, an aluminium framed fixed glazed window and a suspended grid flush panel ceiling similar to office 4.

The tearoom and toilets to the south east corner are a later addition with tiled floors, painted walls and painted flush plasterboard ceiling. There is a double door from office 4 into the tearoom and an exit door to the carpark in the south wall of the tea room.

The stairs to the first floor level are configured in standard 'U' shape. The first flight opens up into the foyer level as it extends around the curved wall of the store. The stair is closed with grey terrazzo treads and risers. The dado from the foyer is continuous for the extent of the staircase and stops at first floor level. The balustrade is a brass circular section with rolled scroll ends, bracketed off the wall on small brass brackets. The balustrade is on the north and south wall of the bottom flight and stops at the first landing, and then starts again on the north wall of the top flight. Two steel framed four by three panel windows with centre pivot two panel by three panel section are located above the landing. An ornate glass and brass lantern fitting is fixed to the top of the newel post at first floor level.

The first floor foyer has timber floorboards, painted plastered brick wall with a picture rail to the north and south wall. There are two arched openings to the south wall of the foyer through to the show room, both have iron gates set within them. The central arch extends down to the floor level of the showroom, which is approximately 800mm higher than the foyer level with steps up to it from the foyer. The east of the foyer steps up to the offices with a stud framed wall with timber panelling to the east. The vaulted coffered ceiling is similar to that of the ground floor meeting room but with vented grille central square sections, which have been sealed off. Square air conditioning registers have been cut into the ceiling. Recessed down lights have been placed into the ceiling. A bulkhead is formed over the steps to the east of the foyer.

Office 8 to the north-west corner has a carpeted timber floor, painted plastered walls and a flat ceiling with similar detail to the ground floor meeting room. There is a picture rail to the walls. Office 9, located centrally to the north of the first floor, is similar.

Office 10 to the north east corner has a carpeted timber floor, painted plastered walls to the west, north and east, a painted full height stud wall to the south, and a cathedral ceiling with battens dividing the ceiling into sections.

Offices 11 and 12 are located on the east side of the building and have been formed by dividing up the original space with full height stud walls. The rooms are finished in a similar fashion to Office 10. The cathedral ceiling is cut short by the location of the stud walls.

The hall running to the west of offices 11, 12 and the kitchen has a timber floor and a flush plasterboard ceiling. The ceiling has been dropped below the level of the existing cathedral ceiling that continues through from office 11, 12 and the kitchen. A trapdoor is located at the southern end of hall adjacent the door to the shower, this leads into a mezzanine level above Store 2.

The kitchen area has tiled floors, painted stud walls to the north and west, painted plastered brick walls to the east and south, and a portion of the cathedral ceiling. A five by three pane steel framed window is located at high level in the east wall. A kitchen sink and cupboard unit is located on the middle of the south wall, with tiling over and a boiling water unit. The openings in the south wall for the doors to the toilets are later additions.

The male and female toilets have tiled floors, a skirting tile and painted walls. The ceiling is flush plasterboard divided by battens, raked for a section of the border with a flat central section. The west half of the female toilet has been converted into a shower accessed from the hall to the west. The walls are tiled to the underside of the plasterboard bulkhead over the shower.

The showroom area is the largest room at the first floor level, located on south west of the building. This room was the original main hall and was an integral part of the Freemasons activities; the apparatus for these activities have been removed from the space with the exception of the podium to the southern end of the space. The podium is located centrally on the south wall consisting of two steps up to a semi circular dais with a row of four columns parallel with the south wall to the rear and a domed vault over. The flooring throughout the showroom is carpet on timber, sections of the flooring have been replaced with particle board. The walls are painted plaster with a bevelled top plinth. The piers are decorated with capitals and chamfers; the line of the capital is run around the room with dentils and cornice. The ceiling is vaulted with a domed end to the south and a gable end to the north. The vault is divided into rectangular section with coffered beams running west to east at the pier centres, the domed end is divided into 8 segments. A series of decorative ventilation grilles run north south along the centre line and each side of the vault. The decorative plasterwork is very elaborate and is reminiscent of the Baroque style. Every second vent to the west side of the room has been replaced with an air conditioning vent.

The general fabric of the building remains intact with the major spaces still discernable particularly the main hall. The openings to the exterior south, west and east walls have generally been enlarged. The north façade is mostly unchanged apart from the current colour scheme. The roofing is a later zincalume custom orb replacement. The interior spaces are generally intact but they have been subdivided to form new spaces. The entry foyer and stair are generally intact with minor modifications to form an air lock. The ceiling to the large ground floor office area is a later addition set under the existing ceiling and provides access for lighting and air conditioning. The first floor retains much of the original ceiling fabric and spatial volumes in the foyer and showroom area. The eastern office spaces to the first floor level have been created by the subdivision of the larger volumes, but the original ceiling is still intact within these

smaller spaces. The subdivisions are largely reversible due to the lightweight nature of the construction.

The *Freemasons' Hall* (Fmr), *Subiaco* is in fair to good condition. There is minor cracking to the north façade and some small areas of joint erosion to the west, south and east facades. The roofing is in good condition. The interior finishes are in a fair to good condition throughout with some minor damage to the detailing on the vaulted ceiling at first floor level.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Masonic Halls built during the Inter-War period (1915-1940), although no longer operating as Masonic Halls, include the following:⁴⁶

Area	Address	Date Opened/Consecrated
Bayswater	Whatley Cres	6 March 1928
Boyup Brook	Jayes Road	29 April 1929
Bruce Rock	Dampier Street	17 October 1922
Dangin	York Road	30 November 1925
Derby	unknown	17 September 1934
Dumbelyung	McIntyre Street	27 April 1927
East Fremantle	Canning Hwy	11 December 1934 (2-storey)
Goomalling	Lockyer Street	22 April 1930
Kellerberrin	Hinchley Street	16 January 1918
Kununoppin	Glass Street	24 March 1926
Lake Grace	Bishop Street	4 March 1930
Leederville	Woolwich Street	7 January 1929
Maylands	Guildford Road	21 April 1938
Meekatharra	Darlet Street	20 January 1916
Merredin	Coronation Street	13 December 1921
Mukinbudin	White Street	2 August 1938
Mullewa	Jose Street	5 April 1926
Nannup	Folly Street	13 November 1936
Narembeen	Ada Street	23 April 1929
Nedlands	Broadway	26 November 1935
Swanbourne	Saladin Street	25 May 1923
Walkatchem	Riches Street	13 September 1926
Wiluna	Wotton Street	7 July 1934

46 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2002.

Other Masonic Halls to be built during the Inter-War Period (1915-1940), which still operate as a Masonic headquarters, include:⁴⁷

Area	Address	Date opened/Consecrated
Armadale	Fourth Ave	28 July 1934
Busselton	West Street	28 April 1934
Corrigin	Kirkwood Street	10 October 1927
Cunderdin	Forrest Street	18 February 1924
Dalwallinu	Leahy Street	13 October 1927
Dowerin	Government Road	9 May 1929
Geraldton	Augusta Street	10 February 1921
Gnowangerup	Aylmore Street	15 February 1924
Greenbushes	Torbaline Street	16 January 1924
Inglewood	Carrington Street	11 May 1925
Kulin	Gordon Street	25 October 1937
Leederville	Woolwich Street	7 January 1929
Leonora	Lot 148 Trump Street	26 June 1919
Manjimup	Mount Street	16 September 1933
Margaret River	Station Road	3 November 1936
Minginew	Victoria Street	25 October 1926
Moora	Gardiner Street	21 May 1915
Morawa	Caulfield Street	29 October 1938
Mt Lawley	Alma Road	7 September 1928
Mt Barker	Muir Street	11 October 1922
Mt Hawthorn	Shakespeare Street	26 October 1927
Mundaring	Jacoby Street	13 March 1926
Northampton	Hampton Street	17 December 1921
Pemberton	Ellis Street	15 December 1933
Shenton Park	Herbert Road	6 November 1928
South Perth	Forrest Street	17 December 1928
Toodyay	Fiennes Street	3 April 1925
Wongan Hills	Mitchell Street	24 October 1929
Yarloop	Station Street	30 April 1928
York	Jorquinn Street	29 July 1926

Freemasons' Hall (Fmr), *Subiaco* is one of the most elaborately designed and richly detailed of the extant Masonic halls of the period.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

J Pidgeon and D Kelsall, 'National Trust Assessment Exposition', 1988.

'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', A project by the Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

⁴⁷ 'Masonic Halls and Buildings in Western Australia, 1867-2000', a project by Archives Committee of the Grand Lodge of WA Freemasons, unpublished manuscript, 2002, index.