



REGISTER OF HERIAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

The 1905 building is significant as an example of Federation Free Style architecture and as one of a number of important purpose built institutions in the Cottesloe area. (Criterion 1.1)

The 1905 building illustrates the diversity of the Federation Free Style period, and the adjacent Red Cross/Army recreation hall is an excellent example of a military, World War Two style of building. The recreation hall contains original features and is an visually pleasing, functional space. (Criterion 1.2)

Wanslea's prominent site, overlooking the railway line, gives the place a landmark quality, although the impact of this has been reduced by recent landscaping. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Wanslea has important historic significance as one of a group of similar institutions in the Cottesloe area involved in child care, hostels and convalescent homes. (Criterion 2.1)

Wanslea is of historic value for its association with the need for orphanages, convalescent homes, and hostels to provide services for families in the community. (Criterion 2.2)

Wanslea is important for its association with the organisations of: the Independent Order Of Oddfellows (IOOF); the Red Cross; the Army and women's service units; the Women's Australian National Service (WANS); and the *Wanslea* organisations. Prominent people associated with *Wanslea* include: architects Joseph Francis Allen and F. G. B Hawkins; State Governors and their wives, Sir Frederick and Lady Bedford, Sir and Lady William Ellison-McCartney, and Sir James and Lady Clara Mitchell; Florence Hummerston; prisoners of war; and politicians including H. P. Colebatch and John Tonkin. (Criterion 2.3)

Wanslea has links with a broader international tradition of philanthropy. The IOOF orphanage was the first built in Australia by an international organisation which had created similar institutions overseas. (Criterion 2.4)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Wanslea has importance as an early orphanage site and because it contributes to an understanding of the development of child welfare in the state. (Criteria 3.1, 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Wanslea is very significant for the association it has had with important community based organisations such as: the IOOF and friendly societies; the Red Cross; WANS; Wanslea; Child Welfare and more recently, the Cancer Support Association, Cottesloe Day Care, and the Western Institute of Self Help (WISH). (Criterion 4.1)

Wanslea, together with other social and community welfare organisations nearby, was important in contributing to the character and sense of place of Cottesloe at the turn of the century. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

In 1905, *Wanslea* was constructed to the design of orphanages of the time. Other orphanages were constructed before and after *Wanslea*. Whereas it is a typical style of building, the high degree of intactness of the place, together with subsidiary buildings reflecting the historical growth and usage of the place, make *Wanslea* rare. The 1905/1919 building is an excellent example in the State of a purpose built orphanage. The timber framed, wartime military structures were of a temporary nature, designed to be erected quickly. In other locations such buildings have been lost or are in poor condition. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The building and site are still highly representative of the original orphanage and child care institutions that were established in Australia and internationally, during the first half of the twentieth century. (Criterion 6.1)

The building is representative of similar institutions that were established in the Cottesloe area because of its proximity to the sea. (Criterion 6.2)

The orphanage building demonstrates an institutional use now replaced by fostering or family cottage type care. The grounds and land around the building illustrate the efforts of the orphanage to be self sufficient in the production of milk and vegetables, and provide vocational training for the orphans. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Wanslea has been continuously occupied since construction and has been well maintained. A conservation plan to guide future work has recently been completed by architect Bruce Callow for the Building Management Authority and Department of Land Administration. (Perth, May 1994).

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The original intention of the place as a service institution caring for those in need, is being continued in the current usage of *Wanslea*. *Wanslea* has a high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

A large percentage of the original fabric of *Wanslea* is intact and the former verandah structure and decoration could be reinstated. The internal spaces are close to their original condition. Where there has been intervention in the fabric, this could be reversed and still allow viable usage of the building, because of the functional nature of the original spaces and finishes. The main interventions that detract from the authenticity are in the alteration and infilling of the verandah. *Wanslea* has a high degree authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Wanslea is the name now given to a group of buildings comprising the Independent Order of Oddfellows (IOOF) orphanage (1905, 1919), the kitchen and dining room (1940), the recreation hall (1942-43), and the staff quarters (1958).

The orphanage was one of a number of institutions for the care of children located in the Cottesloe area at the turn of the century. *The Ministering Children's League* (1896), *The School for the Deaf* (1900), *Lady Lawley Cottage by the Sea* (1903) and the *Salvation Army Girls Home* (1918),¹ were all nearby. Cottesloe was selected because of the availability of Crown land and the perceived restorative qualities of sea air.

The IOOF orphanage was built on Cottesloe Lot 163, a site with an area of nearly four acres (1.6 hectares) in a location close to the railway line. The promise of a Crown Lease on 17 November 1904, was formalised on 14 June 1905.² Subsequent difficulties with funding procedures resulted in the lease being replaced by a Crown Grant on 18 September 1906.³ The site for the orphanage was later excised, in 1914, from 'A' class reserve 100, and the balance fronting Eric Street became the Eric Street (North Cottesloe) Primary School.⁴

The IOOF had been established in Western Australia in 1898,⁵ and, by 1904, it had the largest number of branches of the dozen major friendly societies.⁶ The orphanage was the first built for the IOOF in Australia, so as to accommodate the orphans of deceased members of the IOOF friendly society organisation.⁷ Its construction followed the IOOF tradition of building such institutions in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.⁸

The orphanage is a two-storey, Federation Free Style, 'blood and bandages'⁹ red brick and corrugated iron roofed building. Governor Bedford laid one of two foundation stones on 22 February 1905, and the building was completed by 13 August of the same year.

The honorary architect of the building was IOOF member and prominent politician and community leader, Joseph Francis Allen (1869-1933). Allen designed many domestic and commercial buildings in Perth and Fremantle

1 Jodrell, David. 'Burts Summer Residence'. (Department of Architecture, University of Western Australia, 11 May 1993) Architecture 280 Assignment.

2 *IOOF Journal* 1904-9.17 November 1904. p. 10; DOLA File .

3 Callow, Bruce. 'Conservation Plan and Report on the Cultural Heritage Significance of Wanslea Children's Home.' (Building Management Authority and Department of Land Administration, Perth, May 1994), pp. 16-20, 24-26.

4 Marchant-James, Ruth. *A Heritage of Pines*. 2nd Edition, (Cottesloe, 1992), p. 68.

5 Department of Land Administration (DOLA) File 3143/04.

6 *Wises West Australian Post Office Directory*, 1904, p. 887.

7 *Friendly Societies Gazette*. 24 December 1931, p. 21.

8 *Album of Odd Fellows Homes*. (Joseph Wolfe., 12th Revised Luxury Edition, 1927), p. 10.

9 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), pp. 136-139.

including the *East Fremantle Town Hall and Council Chambers* (c. 1899-1902) and, with his partner Claude H. Nicholas, the *Fremantle Chamber of Commerce* (c. 1912). From May 1914, until May 1920, Allen represented the West Province in the Legislative Council as a Liberal. Later, he was associated with the Nationalist Party in an unsuccessful attempt to re-enter political life in both the state and federal arena. He was an inaugural member of the Rottne Island Board and its Chairman from 1928, until his sudden death by drowning in the Swan River in May 1933.¹⁰

In 1919, the orphanage was extended with a Soldiers' Memorial Wing, also designed by Allen, to accommodate children of soldiers killed in the First World War. The extension provided accommodation for fifty children. A total of thirty-six children were in the home at the time of its construction. The extension was in an identical style and consisted of a two storey red brick and iron addition to the south west of the 1905 building. It also included the provision a boardroom and of timber infill lattice to the first floor verandah across the entire front elevation.¹¹ The *Fremantle Times* of Friday, 21 February 1919, detailed the laying of the foundation stone for the Soldiers' Memorial Wing by the Deputy Premier, the Hon. H. P. Colebatch MLC, on 15 February 1919,¹² and gave a precise room by room walk through the orphanage. The addition cost in the order of £1,100, and was officially opened on 13 September 1919, by the State Governor and Orphanage Patron, Sir William Ellison-Macartney, KCMG.¹³

The first matron of the orphanage was Sarah Eakins from South Australia. Subsequently, married couples who were members of the IOOF were appointed to manage the orphanage. The emphasis in bringing up the children was to prepare them for anticipated careers in agriculture or domestic service.¹⁴ Accordingly, part of the site was used for livestock and to grow vegetables for consumption or sale. Monthly meetings of the local IOOF branch were held in the boardroom.

By the late 1930s, the orphanage accommodation had been under utilised for nearly a decade, and this prompted the IOOF to negotiate a possible sale of the property with the State Government.¹⁵ This process was interrupted by World War II and, in August 1940, the Commonwealth Government (Department of Defence) requisitioned the orphanage and its site for a soldier's convalescent home and leased it to the Red Cross. In October 1940, F. G. B. Hawkins, honorary architect for the Red Cross, drew up plans and the Army constructed a new kitchen and dining room, built of weatherboard and asbestos cement sheet with a corrugated iron roof, onto the south-west corner

¹⁰ Callow, pp. 123-131.

¹¹ Photographic evidence as shown in, Callow, p. 31.

¹² *Fremantle Times*, 21 February 1919, For Soldiers Bairns: *West Australian*, 15 September 1919, p. 8.

¹³ *Fremantle Times*, 21 February 1919.

¹⁴ Kirkby, Jim. Telephone interview 9 August 1993. see Callow, appendix 4.

¹⁵ DOLA File 3143/04; *Friendly Societies Gazette*, pp. 19-21.

of the building.¹⁶ Donations from local business and prominent citizens helped refurbish the earlier buildings.¹⁷

Following completion of the alterations and additions, the site was renamed the *Lady Mitchell Convalescent Home* (LMCH), after Clara Mitchell, the Lieutenant Governor's wife and Western Australian President of the Red Cross. The official opening, by the Lieutenant Governor Sir James Mitchell, KCMG, took place on 4 March 1941.¹⁸ Male patients were transferred from the Lucknow Military Hospital and later the Hollywood (110th Military District) Hospital. Men at LMCH were generally segregated by rank. In the later stages of the war many returned prisoners of war recuperated there.¹⁹ The staff, both paid and voluntary, were drawn from the Army and the Red Cross. The new buildings were generally referred to as the Red Cross/Army buildings.²⁰

In 1942-43, LMCH underwent a series of alterations, with the installation of protective canvas blinds and infill balustrading on the front elevation, and the building of a recreation hall adjacent to the new kitchen/dining room.²¹ In the grounds, works included the construction of a circular drive, an air raid shelter and a cyclone shed. In December 1946, the Red Cross lease on the IOOF site expired. After extensive negotiations, by the Minister for Child Welfare, John Tonkin, MLA, LMCH was purchased by the State Government. The IOOF received £8,000 (\$16,000), the Red Cross £1,800 (\$3,600), and the Army (represented by the Commonwealth Disposals Commission) £200 (\$400), for their contributions to the development of the place.²²

The next lessee was the W.A.N.S. (Women's Australian National Service). From 1943, the W.A.N.S. had, since 1943, operated a facility, at 30 Bulwer Street, North Perth, for children whose parents could not care for them because of sickness and war related absences.²³ The imminent end of the Bulwer Street lease prompted the Wanslea Hostel Committee, and particularly its founder Florence Hummerston,²⁴ to lobby the government heavily for relocation on favourable terms to the LMCH site. This was achieved in early 1947, and despite an initial lease of only five years, the Wanslea organisation, with various changes of name, operated in the

16 PWDWA Plan 30895, October 1940; Department for Community Development (DCD) File 667/1943, vol 1; *IOOF Journal*, 17 July and 21 August 1941, p. 10.

17 *West Australian*, 5 March 1941, p. 13.

18 *ibid.*

19 Interviews with former staff and patients of LMCH, including Fay Bailey, Anne Ward, Ken Johnson, Joan Bower, Margot Rutherford, Val & Bernie O'Sullivan, and Mary Nicolson. May-August 1993. See Callow, pp. 34-47.

20 *West Australian*, 5 March 1941, p. 13.

21 Interviews with former staff and patients of LMCH, including Fay Bailey, Anne Ward, Ken Johnson, Joan Bower, Margot Rutherford, Val & Bernie O'Sullivan, and Mary Nicolson. May-August 1993; Callow, pp. 16-59.

22 DCD File; selected letters 28th May 1946-4th March 1947; *IOOF Journal* 1945-1949, 34th session, 16 August 1947, pp. 15-18.

23 *History of Wanslea 1941-1986*. n.d. c1986. Wanslea Family Support Services; DCD File, April-June 1943.

24 For more details on Florence Hummerston see Popham, Daphane, *Reflections: Profiles of Women who helped make Western Australia* (Carrolls, Perth. 1978), p. 143; Callow, pp. 52-53.

premises until 1984.²⁵ It was during this period that the place became known as *Wanslea*.

In 1948, following pressure from Mrs Hummerston, extensive alterations were made to the former orphanage building which consisted of a covered connection to the 1940 kitchen and dining room, and the upgrading of the bathrooms. In 1958, double storey cream brick staff quarters were constructed in an area previously occupied by an avenue of fig trees planted during the IOOF period. About this time, the upper floor timber lattice, front verandah balustrades and posts were removed from the original IOOF building. Deteriorating timber, through exposure to prevailing weather, was replaced with the present asbestos cement sheeting and glass louvre infill.

Sometime during the 1960s, the decorative stained glass, installed in the front doors in 1905 and 1919, was removed. In the early 1970s, further alterations were made in the form of partitioning to the bathroom areas and rebuilding of the front steps of the 1940 kitchen/dining area. In 1958, 1 acre 1 rood 11 perches (.53ha) of land was transferred to the adjacent North Cottesloe (formerly Eric Street) School.²⁶ During the 1970s, a program of extensive tree planting altered the previous open vista from the buildings to Railway Street.²⁷

In 1972, following concern about aspects of *Wanslea's* operations and changing philosophy about child care, a Committee of Inquiry was held and recommendations made to provide new premises. In October 1980, *Wanslea* Family Support Services was founded and, in June 1984, they relocated to new premises that reflected the prevailing ideals of family style care. In September 1988, Homeswest plans to build housing units for the aged were rejected by the local government councils and communities. In September 1990, *Wanslea* was offered for sale with a price-tag of \$1 million; however, a combination of local opposition and an economic recession results in no sale taking place. In February 1993, following a change of Government, plans to sell the site were revoked.²⁸

Wanslea continues to be used for welfare support by various community based organisations such as the Cancer Support Association (CSA), Cottesloe Day Care, and Western Institute of Self Help (WISH).

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Wanslea is sited on 1.0825 hectares of land with a frontage to Railway Street and adjacent to the North Cottesloe Primary School which fronts Eric Street.

Wanslea contains five main buildings. The oldest of these is the Federation Free Style two storey red brick and corrugated iron roofed former orphanage

²⁵ *History of Wanslea* .; Telephone interview (May-June 1993), with Bruce Dufty who is coordinating a new history of *Wanslea* and Jeff Clapton, present Director of *Wanslea* Family Support Services.

²⁶ Evidence of changes to *Wanslea* from former staff and children, interviews May-June 1993. Callow, pp. 48-59; PWDWA Plan Nos 31323 & 1646/53.

²⁷ *History of Wanslea* ; Smith, Les. Telephone conversation 18 June 1993. Mr Smith was the investigating officer of the Department of Community Welfare (now DCD) 1972 Inquiry.

²⁸ *Claremont-Nedlands Post*, 27 September 1988, p. 1.; *Mosman Park Cottesloe Post*, 4th October 1988, pp. 1, 8; *West Australian*, 13 October 1988, p. 29; *Mosman Park Cottesloe Post*, 15 June 1993, p. 21.

(1905) and its subsequent extension (1919). The others, adjoining and located to the south-west, are the weatherboard, asbestos cement sheet and corrugated iron roofed former Army built kitchen and dining room (1940), and recreation hall (1942-3) and staff quarters (1958).

The former orphanage (1905, 1919) and Army buildings dominate the south-eastern section of the site, with several less significant outbuildings and the former cream brick staff quarters (1958), to the north and north-east. Although the 1905 building was set well back from Railway Street, it was visible from the Eric Street corner and had views to the coast from the top storey balcony.²⁹ Today, heavy tree planting, possibly dating from the 1970s, obscure the vistas to and from the buildings.

The roof is corrugated iron, with a hip and gable form and an attached bullnose verandah. There are four projecting gables on the front elevation. The southern most of these is separate from the rest and was added with the Soldiers Memorial Wing in 1919. The other three gables would have been symmetrical around the entry to the 1905 building. The centre gable of the three is set lower and accentuates the entry. The IOOF symbol of the three intertwined rings of Friendship, Truth and Love is visible on the front centre gable of the original building.³⁰ The roofscape features three of the four original decoratively rendered and moulded red brick chimneys. The roof over the rear has a 'M' form with box gutter over the 1948 first floor addition.

The double-storey front and side walls of the orphanage are tuck pointed red brickwork with rendered bands which create a 'blood and bandages' effect.³¹ Brick coursing to the front elevation is english bond, with other walls in stretcher bond.³² The entry steps are wide with cement rendered brickwork with a curved balustrade sweeping down from the verandah and terminating at two short pillars either side of the foot of the stairs topped by splayed capping. To the right of the front entry steps, the 1905 foundation stone has been bagged and painted over. To the left of the steps, the 1905 opening stone remains untouched and readable behind the shrubbery. (In front of the 1919 extension an engraved granite 1919 foundation stone remains exposed, but is unreadable due to severe spalling of the surface.)

The verandahs on the front of the building represent the major intervention with the original fabric. At some time, the turned timber columns, decorative balustrade, scalloped frieze and lattice, evident in photographs from the period 1905-c.1958,³³ were replaced by stop-chamfered square timber posts, pipe handrail and a cyclone wire ground floor balustrade. All that remains of the original verandah are sections of the 125mm tongue and groove timber flooring. On the first floor, decorative timberwork and lattice has been replaced by flat asbestos cement sheeting on timber framing with glass louvres.

Most of the timber joinery appears to be original. Generally the windows are single pane double hung. The first floor telescopic windows have been

29 Callow, pp. 52,61.

30 *ibid.* front cover.

31 Apperly, p. 139.

32 *ibid.* p. 275.

33 Callow, pp. 31, 40.

replaced by five pane french doors to give easier access onto the verandah. Although the two original timber, five panelled front entry doors remain, their original stained glass side and highlights have been replaced with obscure glass.

Internally, the configurations of rooms and their finishes have changed little. Other than concrete in the bathrooms, all floors, on both storeys, are timber tongue and groove boarding. The walls of the front rooms and halls/passageway are hardwall plaster. The hallways have plaster moulded arches with decorative keystones. The former dormitory rooms are similar, with 1200mm high smooth plastered dados under painted bagged brickwork walls. Generally the walls have a picture rail 3600mm above the floor. Large 275mm timber moulded skirtings finish the base of the walls in the front rooms and hall. The dormitories are finished with a simple quarter round.

All the rooms originally had either pressed metal or mini-orb corrugated ceilings approximately 4.2m high. Of the mini-orb ceilings, only the first floor 1919 dormitory survives.³⁴ With the major alterations in 1948, all other mini-orb ceilings were replaced with plain plasterboard and coved cornices. Of the pressed metal ceilings, there are four different patterns, with the most elaborate being those in the ground floor front rooms and hall, which are complete with decorative pressed metal cornices. The exception to this is the ground floor former boardroom³⁵ where a suspended 'stramit' ceiling has recently been installed.

All the rooms have fireplaces, and decorative timber fire surrounds and mantles survive in the front rooms on both floors. Some are in their original condition, while others have been modified and/or sealed off. The internal doors are generally four panel doors with some of those in the front rooms having highlights over them. Door frames are surrounded by moulded timber architraves sitting on skirting blocks in the 275mm skirtings. The original rear door and sidelights were relocated from the back wall and fitted below the arch at the rear of the hall. The door under the stair landing connecting to the dining room covered access way was added in 1948.

The internal staircase has a carved jarrah handrail with turned balusters and newel posts. The only remaining stained glass window lights the stairs half landing. Circa 1948, the height of the handrail was extended with a small diameter brass rail. Bathrooms were added in 1948, and their fittings and fixtures are examples of what was provided in child care institutions at that time.

Wanslea is largely unchanged. Descriptions of the building in contemporary newspaper articles referred to in the Documentary Evidence³⁶ still provide a valid record that identifies elements that are still visible, for the most part, in the buildings today.

The 1940-43 group of dining room, kitchen and recreation hall building has walls constructed of weatherboard, asbestos cement sheet and a corrugated iron roof. Externally, the 1940 dining room and the 1942 recreation hall are

³⁴ (School Boys Dormitory).

³⁵ (Matron's Bedroom).

³⁶ *Fremantle Times*, 21 February 1919; *West Australian*, 15 September 1919, p. 8; *West Australian* 5 March 1941, p. 13.

identified by a change in the weatherboards on the lower half of the timber framed walls.

Internally, the dining room is very plain and austere, and nothing remains of the vertical jarrah boarded dado evident in early photographs.³⁷ Of considerable significance is the recreation hall. It has a polished jarrah floor and vertical jarrah boarded dado backing onto the built-in perimeter seating. This has boxed storage under the hinged seats. There are two brick fireplaces on the south wall featuring thin biscuit brick surrounds. The hall has a raised stage and proscenium arch with plaster moulded surrounds. A continuous Art Deco style ceiling vent runs the full length down the centre of the hall.

For a more detailed account of the physical evidence of *Wanslea* see Callow, Bruce. 'Conservation Plan and Report on the Cultural Heritage Significance of Wanslea Children's Home.' (Building Management Authority and Department of Land Administration, Perth, May 1994)

13.3 REFERENCES

Callow, Bruce. 'Conservation Plan and Report on the Cultural Heritage Significance of Wanslea Children's Home.' (Building Management Authority and Department of Land Administration, Perth, May 1994).

³⁷ Callow, p. 46.