HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.21 Entertaining for profit
- 8.10.2 Creating visual arts

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 303 Mining (including mineral processing)
- 404 Community Services and utilities
- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment.
- 602 Early Settlers

11. 1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is an unusual and distinctive example of an entertainment venue designed in the Federation Free Classical style. (Criterion 1.1)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is a landmark building on account of its prominent location on Tower Street and its distinctive architectural style contributing to the streetscape and townscape of Leonora. (Criterion 1.3)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is important in illustrating the establishment and subsequent development of a public entertainment hall and activities in the small remote northeastern goldfields town of Leonora from 1899 until the early 1960s. (Criterion 2.1)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) and the Leonora Hotel (now demolished) were owned and managed by David and Philip Barnes from 1896 to 1901, and demonstrates the diversity of occupations and the initiative of the owners. (Criterion 2.1)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) was built in Leonora at the time of the town's economic and development boom following the discovery of gold in the Leonora

* 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 Roberston, 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

District in 1894, and reflects the period of development in Leonora since 1899. (Criterion 2.2)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) was constructed for and operated by David and Philip Barnes who established the neighbouring Leonora Hotel (now demolished) and later the *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr*). (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is highly valued by the community in Leonora and surrounding districts for its role as a key venue for recreational and entertainment activities from 1901 to 1926. (Criterion 4.1)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) contributes to the sense of place of the community of Leonora and surrounding districts, for its use as the Leonora Town Hall and, until recently, Leonora Community Telecentre, and by its inclusion on the Town of Leonora's Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is the last remaining building in the town of Leonora that is constructed of local stone, and one of a small number of structures of any kind constructed of local stone in the town. (Criterion 5.1)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is an important, distinctive and uncommon community facility for recreational entertainments that was constructed by two entrepreneurial brothers in the late 1890s. (Criterion 5.2)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is rare as an example of a theatre built in the Goldfields in the 1890s, a purpose built theatre, constructed from local stone and an example of a Federation Free Classical theatre. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is a fine representative example of Federation Free classical architectural style of 1889-1901, and of the use of local stone, in the remote northeastern goldfields town of Leonora. (Criterion 6.1)

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) demonstrates the characteristics of a community hall in the late 1890s. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The present condition of *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr*) is generally fair. Urgent roof drainage and ground level drainage works are required. The current drainage situation is exacerbating the rising damp problems that have caused some considerable damage to the stone walls on the south and north walls in particular. The hall ceiling is in urgent need of replacement as the inadequate frame is unable to support the sheets that are buckling and falling to the ground. The ceiling in the north front room similarly is inadequate and collapsing.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) has a moderate degree of integrity. The place has continued to be used, for various community functions, including as the Leonora Shire Hall and, until recently, the Leonora Community Telecentre. *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr*) has undergone some changes to accommodate its various functions since 1926.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The overall authenticity of *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr*) is moderate. A few alterations have been made to accommodate its various uses. The front verandah has been removed, the original roof has been replaced, ceilings relined, ablutions facilities installed, openings bricked up, and various other changes have taken place to facilitate a continued function.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The wording of this document has been adapted from 'Conservation Management Plan: Barnes Federal Theatre, currently known as Leonora Community Telecentre' prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Lynley Forgione, Historian, for Gwalia and Leonora Historical Museum Ltd in October 2003 with amendments and / or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

The Shire of Leonora confirmed that the *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)* is the last remaining extant building in Leonora that is constructed from local stone.

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to the 'Conservation Management Plan: Barnes Federal Theatre, currently known as Leonora Community Telecentre' (pp4-16), prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Lynley Forgione, Historian, for Gwalia and Leonora Historical Museum Ltd in October 2003.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to the 'Conservation Management Plan: Barnes Federal Theatre, currently known as Leonora Community Telecentre' (pp17-20), prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Lynley Forgione, Historian, for Gwalia and Leonora Historical Museum Ltd in October 2003.

13. 3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There are 84 cinemas/theatres listed in the Heritage Council of Western Australia (HCWA) database. Of these 84 cinemas/theatres 22 are on the Register of Heritage Places, of which one is in the Goldfields: Cremorne Theatre (fmr), Kalgoorlie, 1907 (P3468).

There are 4 cinemas/theatres on the HCWA database in the Goldfields; Palace Theatre (fmr), 1937, Boulder; Bijou Theatre, 1896, Esperance and the registered Cremorne Theatre (fmr), 1907, Kalgoorlie, as well as the *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)*. All were purpose built as a cinemas/theatres.

There are 6 other cinemas /theatres on the current assessment program; Bijou Theatre, 1896, Esperance, Goldfields; Quartermaine's Building, 1900, Fremantle Metropolitan; New Oxford Cinema, 1927, Leederville, Metropolitan; Plaza Theatre (fmr) and Arcade, 1937, Perth, Metropolitan; Beacon Theatre, 1937, Beaconsfield, Metropolitan and Liberty Cinema and Shops, Perth, Metropolitan, 1915. All of these places were purpose built cinemas / theatres.

Of the 22 cinemas/theatres on the Register of Heritage Places, 5 were constructed in Federation Free Classical design style; Theatre Royal and Hotel Metropolitan (fmr), 1894, Perth; His Majesty's Theatre (fmr), 1904, Perth; Old Mill Theatre, 1898, South Perth' Savoy Hotel, 1914, Perth and Cremorne Theatre (fmr), 1907, Kalgoorlie.

Of the 22 Cinemas/ Theatres on the Register of Heritage Places only 9 were purpose built as a cinema / theatre; Astor Theatre, 1914, Metropolitan; Regal Theatre, 1936, Metropolitan; Theatre Royal and Hotel Metropole (fmr), 1894, Metropolitan; Piccadilly Theatre and Arcade, Metropolitan, 1938; Cygnet Theatre, Metropolitan, 1938; His Majesty's Theatre (fmr), 1904, Metropolitan; Radio Theatre Building, 1937, Midwest; Lyric Theatre, 1905, Southwest and Cummin's

Theatre, 1928, Wheatbelt. Of these 9 purpose built cinemas/ theatres none are in the Goldfields.

Of the 22 Cinemas/ Theatres on the Register of Heritage Places; 4 were built within the same period (5 years prior and 5 years post the date of construction for this place); Victoria Hall, Metropolitan, 1896; Theatre Royal and Hotel Metropolitan (fmr), Metropolitan, 1894; Old Mill Theatre, Metropolitan, 1898 and Northam Town Hall/Lesser Hall, Wheatbelt, 1898.

Of the 22 Cinemas/ Theatres on the Register of Heritage Places; none were built of local stone. Only two of the 22 Cinemas/ Theatres on the Register of Heritage Places were built on stone; Albany Town Hall, 1888, Great Southern was built from Granite and was not purpose built as a cinema /theatre; and Victoria Hall, 1896, Metropolitan was built from Limestone and is not a purpose built cinema / theatre.

A search of the Shire of Leonora's Municipal Inventory and the Heritage Council's database indicated that there are 4 places still extant, in the Shire of Leonora made from stone. These places are *Barnes Federal theatre (fmr);* Leonora War Memorial, date unknown; Stone Water Tank, date unknown and Old Dam, date unknown.

Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr) is rare as an example of a theatre built in the Goldfields in the 1890s. *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)* is rare as a purpose built theatre. *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)* is relatively rare as a theatre constructed of local stone. *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)* is a rare example of a Federation Free Classical purpose built theatre. *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)* is a rare example of a local stone building in the Shire of Leonora.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

Gray, Laura, 2003. *Conservation Management Plan: Barnes Federal Theatre, currently known as Leonora Community Telecentre.* Prepared for Gwalia and Leonora Historical Museum Ltd.

HCWA database.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

It is uncertain whether the architect of *Barnes Federal Theatre (fmr)* is Mr Will Kelly or Mr W.J. Kirby, as searches with the Architects Board of Western Australia, Post Office Directories and genealogical indexes have revealed no information on either of these names.

There is minimal documentary evidence to substantiate the events of the decades of the 1950s through to the 1970s. Further research may reveal the facts pertaining to the loss and reconstruction of the roof.