



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Permanent Entry

1. **Data Base No.** 0892
2. **Name.** Warehouse (Former) (c.1880)
3. **Description of elements included in this entry.**
The Warehouse building and the land on which it stands, being Fremantle Town Lot 92 comprised in C/T 1200/361.
4. **Local Government Area.** City of Fremantle
5. **Location.** 52 Henry Street, Fremantle
6. **Owner.** Mr P.N. Goellnicht and Ms K. Staniforth
7. **Statement of Significance of Place (Assessment in Detail)**

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

There is little archival evidence relating to this building. Town lots 91 and 92 were taken up in the 1830's by Henry Willet, who built a house on lot 91, but left lot 92 undeveloped. In 1862, William Willet sold lot 92 to Charles Alexander Manning, whose family continued to own it until 1921.

A map of Fremantle, dated 1845, indicates houses sited on adjacent lots, but lot 92 is shown as vacant. Later maps indicate only government and large buildings, and therefore provide no evidence of the site's development. The building is commonly referred to as the "former Hall and Solomon Building", because it is thought to have been built by commercial agents F. & C. Hall and Elias Solomon. However, there is no documentary evidence to substantiate this claim.

It is presumed the building was built during the third wave of development in Fremantle : following the convict period, but before the goldrushes. The building is modest in scale, as was most of the architecture of the time. The possibility of a shingled roof would be in keeping with the materials available locally at the time.¹

The first known record of the building is in the 1880 Fremantle rate book, which describes the building as an auction room, in the ownership of Manning and Company. Later rate books continue to describe the building as a "bonded store

¹ The present metal roof sheeting has been laid over the lapped timber boarding. This kind of sarking suggests the original cover was shingles. City of Fremantle *52 Henry Street Conservation Assessment* (NEGP Application supporting material.) p2.

and warehouse" until 1900, when the descriptions "office" and "stables" are included.

Ownership of the building remained with the Manning family until 1921, when it was bought by O.D. O'Connor.² During these years the building continued to be used as an office and warehouse by a number of different tenants, until 1930 when it began being used as a printing works.³ Between 1966 and 1985 the building was used to store wool by Davis Wool Stores.⁴ In the meantime ownership of the site passed to the Fremantle City Council (September, 1970).

Davis Wool Stores vacated the building in favour of Spare Parts Puppet Theatre in 1985. In 1987 Fremantle City Council proposed to upgrade the building for use by the theatre company, however the City Council was unsuccessful in its application for financial assistance and the work was not undertaken.⁵ As a result, it was later reported, "the deterioration of the building has progressed rather than been retarded."⁶ Following the departure of Spare Parts Theatre company, the warehouse has been used as a pottery studio and gallery.

In early 1993 Fremantle City Council sold the building. The new owners propose to adapt the building for a mixed residential and retail use. They have agreed to enter into a heritage agreement to cover the conservation of the building.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The building on Lot 92 Henry Street, close to Marine Terrace and the Esplanade, is situated in the earliest part of the port settlement.

The building has three walls of limestone random rubble walls, with brick quoins, however the facade is rendered brickwork. A portico with two doric columns addresses the street. The heavy looking portico and the symmetrically arranged arched door and windows behind are quite restrained, and "Georgian survival" in character. This formal treatment of the facade is at odds with its use as a warehouse, and may indicate alterations to the original facade to bring it in keeping with its later use (1880 onwards) as a public auction house. (The notion that the portico is a later addition is reinforced by the fact that it is not properly tied to the rest of the building.)

The northern elevation has four window openings and a doorway. The brick quoins indicate these openings are original. The joinery of front and side windows and doors is of fine design. Two smaller windows were cut into the north east corner of the wall in 1964, when the internal toilet was installed. At some stage the timber door has been replaced by a corrugated iron sliding door, attached to the wall under the brick arch. The rear elevation has a similar doorway, and metal sliding door.

² Rate Books, City of Fremantle

³ Rate Books, City of Fremantle

⁴ Wainwright, R., "Jack hangs up his hats" *West Australian* 31 August 1985.

⁵ City of Fremantle Council Minutes 18 April 1988 p 18;

⁶ City of Fremantle Agenda for Planning and Development Committee. Meeting date 29 March 1988 p13.

Exposed single span king-post trusses support timber rafters, with lapped horizontal timber boarding covered by metal decking.⁷ This type of sarking suggests the original roofing was timber shingles. There are three irregularly spaced roof lights on the southern portion of the roof.

Internally the building consists of one large volume, into which some small rooms have been added at later dates. The front room, in the south west corner, has masonry walls and its own ceiling. This room may have been built in the early 1890s, when the place was described in the rate books as "office and warehouse".⁸ The other walls forming the entry hall are plasterboard stud walls of more recent construction. In the north-east corner is a toilet and small airlock, of single leaf brick walls, which was built in 1964.

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

1. AESTHETIC VALUE

The facade of the warehouse at 52 Henry Street makes a strong visual statement in its context. The heavy appearance of the portico appears to signify a building of some importance, rather than the simple warehouse which lies behind.

Although not the most ornate of buildings, the warehouse has a simplicity of design, unity of materials, and sound joinery detail found in vernacular construction.

2. HISTORIC VALUE

The warehouse is one of the few commercial remaining buildings in the West End of Fremantle constructed in the period of development between the convict era and the gold boom. As such it has historic significance in demonstrating change and continuity in Fremantle.

The warehouse, with its unusual facade, adds an unresolved historical element to the significance of this historically diverse streetscape.

3. SCIENTIFIC

The building demonstrates vernacular construction used in the latter part of the nineteenth century, but no longer employed.

4. SOCIAL VALUE

The building had been used for a number of public functions: auction rooms, theatre and pottery studio, and has contributed to the diversity of cultural activities in Fremantle.

⁷ City of Fremantle Plan, *Davies Woolstore, 52 Henry Street*. Drawing number 3. Drawn by J. Smink, 6th August, 1985.

⁸ City of Fremantle *52 Henry Street Conservation Assessment* (NEGP Application supporting material.) p2.

5. RARITY

The unusual design of the building, particularly the disjunction between facade and warehouse, gives some rarity value to the place.

6. REPRESENTATIVENESS

The warehouse is representative of medium scale commercial development that continued in Fremantle between the convict era and the gold boom.

CONDITION

The condition of the building, in 1980, was cited as being generally sound. This was despite the problems of salt-damp, lack of maintenance and the facade being not properly tied to the rest of the structure and, as a result, leaning out over the street.⁹ Since this report there has been little maintenance on the building, and it has continued to slowly deteriorate.

INTEGRITY

The building is a large warehouse and continues to be used for a similar purpose, and therefore retains a high degree of integrity.

AUTHENTICITY

The building is substantially intact, despite the insertion of internal walls and partitions in the 1960s, and therefore has a reasonable degree of authenticity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The warehouse at 52 Henry Street, Fremantle, has cultural significance for the following reasons:

it is representative of the medium scale commercial development that continued in Fremantle between the convict era and the gold boom.

it demonstrates vernacular building techniques in the period between the convict era and the gold boom in Fremantle.

with its unusual facade, it is an oddity and local landmark.

it adds an unresolved historical element to the significance of this historically diverse streetscape.

8. Register of Heritage Places

Interim Entry 20/11/1992

Permanent Entry 19/11/1993

⁹ Campbell, R. *Conservation Study of Henry Street* quoted in City of Fremantle Council Minutes 18 April 1988 p 18; also City of Fremantle Data Sheet: 1981/82

9. Conservation Order

10. Heritage Agreement

11. References

National Trust Assessment Exposition

Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet

R Mc Campbell, *Conservation Study Of Henry Street*