



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

DRAFT – Register Entry

1. **DATA BASE No.** 11451
2. **NAME** Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth (1920)
OTHER NAMES Silver Chain Cottage Homes; Silver Chain Nursing Association; Silver Chain Nursing League; Dr Gertrude Mead Cottage
3. **LOCATION** 19 Wright Street, Perth
4. **DESCRIPTION OF PLACE INCLUDED IN THIS ENTRY**
Portion of Lot 101 on Diagram 69483 being part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1731 Folio 241.
5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA** City of Vincent
6. **HERITAGE LISTINGS**
 - Register of Heritage Places: -----
 - National Trust Classification: -----
 - Local Planning Scheme – Heritage List: Adopted 22/11/2005
 - Local Heritage Survey: Adopted 13/11/1995
 - Register of the National Estate: -----
 - Aboriginal Sites Register: -----
7. **ORDERS UNDER SECTION OF THE ACT**

8. **HERITAGE AGREEMENT**

9. **STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth is a single storey brick and tile building with elements of the Federation Queen Anne style constructed in 1920. The place has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

The place is closely linked to the services provided by Silver Chain, a private organisation established in WA in 1905 to support less fortunate families, providing nursing services from 1907. It was one of the earliest structures

built for Silver Chain's cottage home complex, established at this location in 1916 to accommodate elderly patients who could no longer live independently (Factor A).

The place is an example of the type of facilities provided by Silver Chain, demonstrating the rise and growth of the organisation from its early beginnings in child health and maternity nursing, to its expansion into aged care. It is the only structure remaining from Silver Chain's previously expansive cottage homes complex (Factors B & D).

Representing an organisation primarily pioneered by, and employing, substantial numbers of women, the place is an important reminder of the contribution of women to the health and care system in Western Australia. Notable women associated with the establishment and growth of the organisation include Muriel Chase, Dr Gertrude Mead, and Frances Drew (Nurse Cherry) (Factors A & G).

The place is highly valued by the WA community for its strong association with the work of Silver Chain. From its charitable beginnings, Silver Chain provided a range of nursing services and facilities throughout the state since 1907 and remains a prominent organisation throughout Australia (Factor E).



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REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES **DRAFT – Supporting Information**

PLEASE NOTE: This Assessment Documentation¹ is intended to provide sufficient information to consider the place for inclusion in the State Register. It is not intended to provide a complete record of the history of the place or its physical presentation.

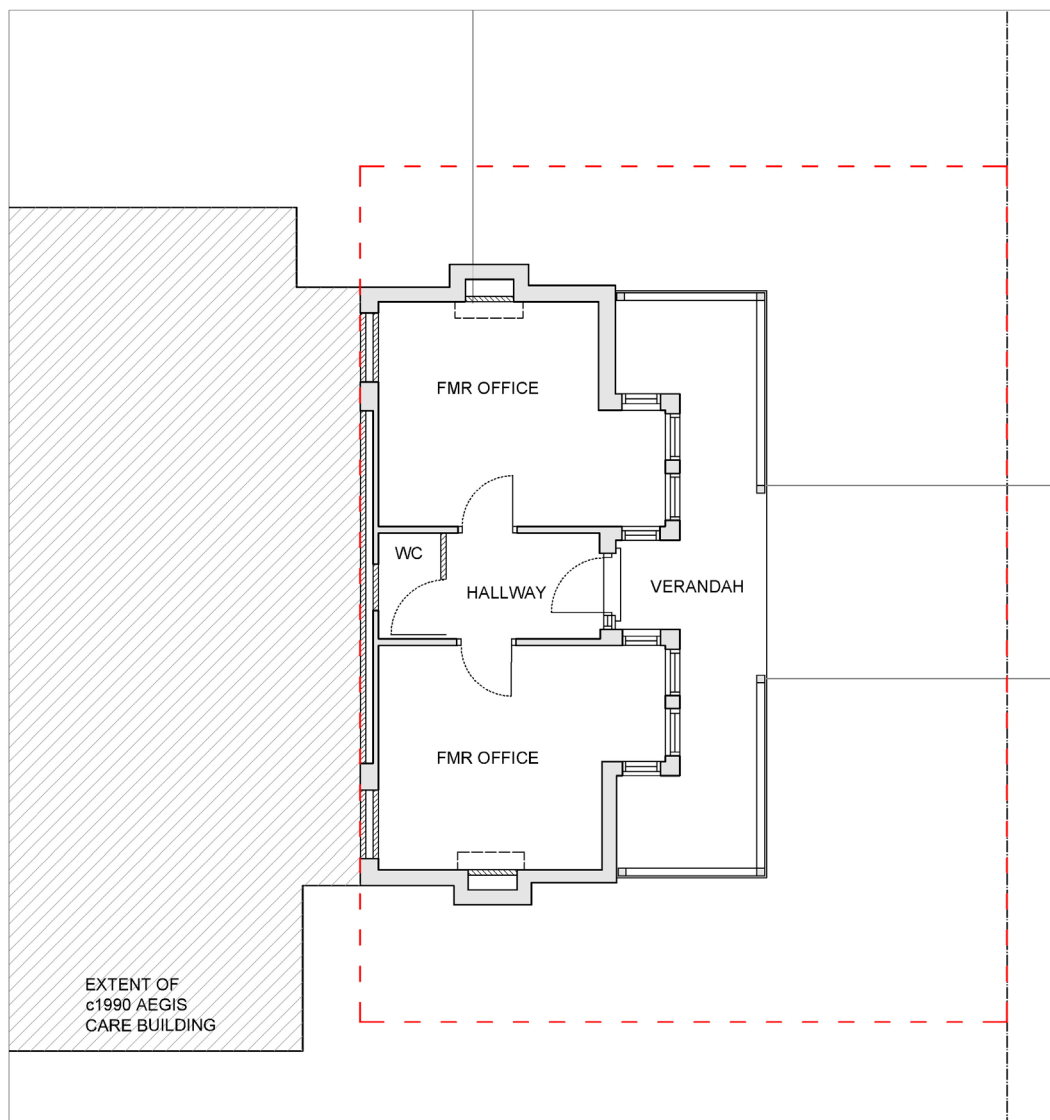
10. THE PLACE



Figure 1: Façade of *Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth* (1920). The central gable features the red-painted lettering 'Silver Chain Nursing League' above decorative timber brackets and either side of a central louvred window with triangular pediment. (2024).

Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth is a single storey brick and tile building with elements of Federation Queen Anne. It is the earliest extant building of the former Silver Chain cottage homes complex, established at this location in 1916² to accommodate elderly patients, with this building likely serving as the main entrance.

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- 1 The documentation for this place was prepared by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, with amendments and/or additions by the Heritage Council.
- 2 The cottage homes complex was established by Silver Chain in 1916 using an existing c.1903 building. The extant structure was constructed in 1920.



SILVER CHAIN - FLOOR PLAN

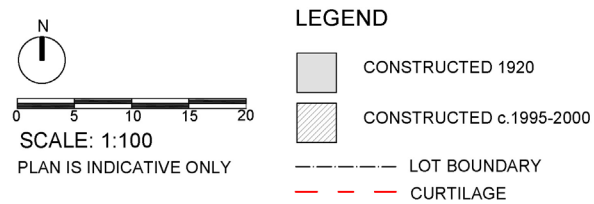


Figure 2: Site and floor plan of *Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth*.

11. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The Silver Chain Nursing League³ (Silver Chain) originated as a club run by Muriel Chase through the children's column in the *Western Mail* newspaper, under the pseudonym Aunt Mary.⁴ Children from across the state subscribed annually for one shilling with the funds used to aid other children in need. Silver Chain officially launched on 3 June 1905. The name represented the shillings contributed by its subscribers, who were called the 'links'. From this charitable beginning, the organisation shifted its focus to nursing, launching a campaign with Dr Gertrude Mead⁵ to bring a district nursing scheme to WA.⁶

In 1907 the first district nurse, Sister Copley, was employed by Silver Chain to provide healthcare to children and mothers in central Perth.⁷ Sister Copley was followed by Nurse Cherry (Frances Drew) in 1908, who later became the nursing superintendent.⁸ In 1910, the organisation employed a maternity nurse. Another district nurse was added in Fremantle in 1913.⁹ By 1919, Silver Chain had district nurses based in Fremantle, Leederville, North Perth, Cottesloe, and its original base in Perth. Silver Chain nurses did not charge for their services.¹⁰ Silver Chain's secretarial office was based in the basement of the West Australian Chambers on St George's Terrace, Perth at this time which was owned by the West Australian Newspapers.¹¹

The organisation considered opening a residential facility for expectant mothers in 1913. However, the residential concept did not come to fruition until 1916, and by then the focus had shifted to elderly patients (both single and married couples) who required fulltime care and could no longer live independently.¹² While some residential facilities were available for elderly people, such as the Home of Peace in Subiaco,¹³ this was often full. The first cottage home, chosen by Dr Mead, was

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- ³ The organisation has also been referred to as 'Silver Chain Nursing Association', 'Silver Chain League', 'Silver Chain District Nursing', 'Silver Chain District Nursing Association', and 'Silver Chain District Nursing League'.
- ⁴ Jean Chetkovich and Deborah Gate, *A Chain of Care – A History of the Silver Chain Nursing Association, 1905-2005*, The University of Notre Dame Australia Press, pp.10-13.
- ⁵ Dr Mead was the third woman doctor to register in WA. 'Gertrude Ella Mead (1867-1919)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Accessed March 2025, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mead-gertrude-ella-7544>
- ⁶ *A Chain of Care*, pp. 14-19
- ⁷ 'Our Silver Chain. A piece of good news. District nurse appointed', *Western Mail*, 20 July 1907, p. 38, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37811149>; 'the Silver Chain District Nurse', *Western Mail*, 3 August 1907, p. 42, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37813398>
- ⁸ *A Chain of Care*, pp. 24-29, 36.
- ⁹ *A Chain of Care*, pp. 48, 62; 'News and Notes', *The West Australian*, 22 February 1910, p. 5, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/26250071>; 'Silver Chain District Nurse for Fremantle', *The West Australian*, 30 December 1913, p. 1, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/26893966>.
- ¹⁰ 'Varied Aspects of the Silver Chain', *Western Mail*, 5 June 1924, p.40, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37625733>
- ¹¹ Silver Chain book, p.65-66.
- ¹² 'A Christmas Letter', *Western Mail*, 24 December 1915, p.41, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37595899>; Silver Chain book, p. 67-68.
- ¹³ First known as the Home of Peace for the Dying and Incurable, built in Subiaco in 1902. The place is still the location of a private care facility, Brightwater, though the original buildings were demolished in 2000 and replaced with the existing complex; City of Subiaco Local Heritage Listing, P4640 Home of Peace, <https://inherit.dplh.wa.gov.au/public/inventory/details/5adbdcb3-3999-4624-97a4-580fd9b9d19c>; 'Our History', *Brightwater*, Accessed March 2024, <https://brightwatergroup.com/about-us/our-history>

a leased c.1903 building on Wright Street, Highgate.¹⁴ This building is no longer extant.

In 1919, the Government granted Silver Chain additional land on the corner of Wright and Lincoln Streets, Highgate which allowed for an expansion of the existing complex.¹⁵ Five new buildings were officially opened in October 1920 as the first cottage homes built for aged people in WA.¹⁶ The central cottage was named after Dr Mead, in recognition of her contribution to the organisation.¹⁷ This may have been the current extant building, which is all that remains of this first phase of development. Designed by architect A.B. Rieusset, the complex was described as:

.....a group of five separate buildings with spacious verandahs back and front, back verandahs really forming one continuous promenade, and a convenient means of communication between the matron's residence and the other cottages. Of these latter there are four each of two rooms.¹⁸

By 1924, Silver Chain was managing the cottage homes, district nursing services (including nursing in conjunction with the Children's Hospital), a baby clinic held in the North Perth town hall, and the Bush Nursing Society.¹⁹ The latter was established in 1921 to provide health care in regional areas using funds donated from the British Red Cross. Their first maternity hostel opened in Wyalkatchem the following year under this initiative.²⁰

The cottage homes complex further expanded in the 1920s with new wings opened in August 1925 and July 1926.²¹ Nurse Cherry was later employed as the resident nurse to support the increase in patients, and she remained with Silver Chain until her death in 1941.²² A wing was dedicated to Nurse Cherry in 1946.²³

Despite financial struggles in the early 1930s,²⁴ the complex continued to expand in this decade. Additional land was purchased to build another wing in 1937.

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- 14 The place is now located in Highgate, though early reference to the complex name the suburbs Victoria Park and North Perth. 'Aunt Mary's Letter', *Western Mail*, 28 July 1916, p. 41, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37438184/3497849>; 'Our Silver Chain Cottage Home', *Western Mail*, 4 August 1916, p. 41, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37435031>; *A Chain of Care*, pp. 68-69.
- 15 'Good News', *Western Mail*, 20 June 1919, p. 36, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37612926>
- 16 'Social Notes', *The West Australian*, 28 September 1920, p. 8, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/27787430>; *A Chain of Care*, p. 70.
- 17 'Silver Chain Cottage Homes', *Western Mail*, 7 October 1920, p. 27, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37471423>
- 18 'Silver Chain Cottage Homes – A fine achievement', *Western Mail*, 26 August 1920, p.22, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37469613>. A photograph of the cottage homes in 1928 is available in the news article 'In the Cause of Humanity', *The West Australian*, 17 January 1928, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/32084541>
- 19 'Varied Aspects of the Silver Chain Work', *Western Mail*, 17 April 1924, p.37, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37627630>
- 20 *A Chain of Care*, pp. 81-82. This maternity hospital is the State Registered place P2527 *Lady Novar Hostel* (fmr).
- 21 'Silver Chain Cottage New Wing Opened', *Call*, 7 August 1925, p.2, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/211316743>; 'Silver Chain Cottage Home New Wings Opened', *Sunday Times*, 4 July 1926, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/58244697>
- 22 'Late Nurse Cherry', *The West Australian*, 8 July 1941, p. 6, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/47151507>; *Silver Chain book*, pp. 77-78, 34.
- 23 'Silver Chain Memorials Unveiled', *The West Australian*, 4 November 1946, p. 11, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/46181887>.
- 24 'Woman's Interests – The Silver Chain', *The West Australian*, 19 June 1931, p.4, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/32527961>.

Named after Muriel Chase, this accommodated four more residents. Various alterations were also undertaken to the existing buildings including new bathrooms and kitchens, and the former dining room was converted into a social area for residents.²⁵

The 1940s appear to be when the cottage homes complex became the Silver Chain headquarters, as most metropolitan district nurses were stationed there during the day. By 1944, there were 40 residents, many married couples. Silver Chain had also amalgamated with the Bush Nursing Society by this time.²⁶ Wartime shortages meant there was little development of the cottage homes complex during this period, though a new dining room and two additional cottages were built in 1945. The complex also received donations of food, flowers, gifts to residents, entertainment, and assistance with raising funds.²⁷

Another home was added to the complex in 1952 which accommodated 6 additional residents and staff. By 1954, the complex accommodated 38 residents and was always full. Staff included a matron, nursing assistants, a senior relieving nurse, cook, maids, a handy man, and gardener. Another cottage funded by the Claremont Myola Club was built the following year, which increased patient numbers to 40.²⁸

A 1955 sewerage plan shows the layout of the cottage home complex at that time. The current extant building likely served as the entrance building to the wider complex, with two separate cottage homes flanking both sides. A larger, central building was connected via an extension of the rear gable roof. The building was also connected to the adjacent cottage homes through rear verandahs that were continuations of the roofs.²⁹

In 1955, new Commonwealth legislation allowed Silver Chain to claim a subsidy of 50% off its costs in constructing accommodation. This resulted in additional expansion to the complex in 1956-57, with resident numbers rising to 50, and the provision of a new room for domestic and nursing staff.³⁰ The Silver Chain headquarters and administrative team moved into a new building within the cottage homes complex.³¹ Prior to this subsidy, Silver Chain relied heavily on donations. Provisions were left in wills for Silver Chain in some cases, including from cottage homes residents who had passed away.³²

The organisation further developed in the 1960s and 1970s, establishing their home help program in 1961 to provide domestic assistance, and they began providing additional education for their nurses.³³ Two hospitals were established, one in Claremont (The Alfred Carson Hospital [1945] named after Silver Chain's

25 'New Silver Chain Cottage Tribute to Late Mrs Muriel Chase', *The West Australian*,

26 'Silver Chain Service – Helping the Sick and Aged', *The West Australian*, 3 October 1944, p. 2, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/44980295>.

27 *A Chain of Care*, pp. 113-116.

28 *A Chain of Care*, pp. 116-117

29 Metropolitan Sewerage City of Perth map, 1955, available at State Records Office Retro Maps, SROWA_series634_cons4156_item0102.

30 *A Chain of Care*, p. 117.

31 *A Chain of Care*, p. 140.

32 *A Chain of Care*, p. 115

33 *A Chain of Care*, p. 111.

first president) and the other in Hilton (1974, in collaboration with Fremantle Hospital).³⁴

The existing buildings at the Wright Street complex were deemed no longer adequate following this increase in activities, and in 1978 it was decided to demolish the majority of the buildings within the complex. The current extant building was retained, with the rear verandah, but the building it was connected to was demolished and replaced with a carpark.³⁵ New facilities were built adjoining Lincoln Street and opened in December 1981. In 1985, Silver Chain relocated its headquarters to a new location on Sundercombe Street, Osborne Park, but the Wright Street complex was still in use.³⁶

The complex saw further development in the 1990s, with a new wing built adjoining the extant 1920 building and a portion of the southern wing demolished by 2000.³⁷ Silver Chain occupied the complex until 2009, when it was purchased by Aegis Aged Care.³⁸ The wider lot is Aegis Lincoln Park and offers accommodation for 46 residents.³⁹ The 1920 building is currently (2025) vacant. Silverchain remains active and provides in home aged care services throughout Australia.⁴⁰

12. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Siting

The building is located on the eastern edge of Lot 101 near the corner of Wright and Lincoln Streets. The lot initially contained the more extensive Wright Street cottage homes complex, which has largely been demolished. The extant 1920 building now forms part of the Aegis Lincoln Park aged care facility, though it is not in use. The wider site has been redeveloped several times with the 1920 building the earliest extant structure from the cottage homes complex. The surrounding buildings date from the 1950s, 1980s, and 1995-2000 and are not included in the curtilage for the place.



Figure 3: Buildings to the rear of the place and

³⁴ *A Chain of Care*, pp. 100, 180

³⁵ Historic Aerial Imagery, 1983, Accessed via Landgate.

³⁶ *A Chain of Care*, pp. 180-186.

³⁷ Historic Aerial Imagery, 1995 and 2000.

³⁸ Certificate of Title, Lot 101 on Diagram 69483, Volume 1731 Folio 241.

³⁹ The street address for Aegis Lincoln Park is 21 Wright Street, Highgate, though the Certificate of Title is 19 Wright Street. 'Aegis Lincoln Park' *Aegis Aged Care Group*, Accessed March 2025, <https://aegiscare.com.au/locations/aegis-lincoln-park>

⁴⁰ 'An unbroken chain of care', *Silverchain*, Accessed March 2025, <https://silverchain.org.au/about-us/pioneering-health-care-at-home/the-evolution-of-silverchain>

adjacent carpark. The buildings in this image range from 1981 to 1995-2000 (2024).

Figure 4: Wing located south-west of the 1920 Silver Chain building. These were constructed c.1956-57 (2024).

Exterior

The place consists of a small single storey symmetrical brick building, one room in depth with double bay window frontage and central door. The roof is a combination of gabled and hipped terracotta Marseille tiles with end finials. A large central gable faces the street, with smaller gables on each side. To each side of the building there is a centrally located chimney, which extends above roof line. A front verandah, the full width of the façade, faces the street and sits under a continuation of the tiled roof. A central red brick pathway (c.1990s) leads to the front verandah, which is flanked by garden beds.

The façade features elements characteristic of Federation Queen Anne style. The roof overhangs the gable wall, which has been roughcast rendered. The chimneys have also been roughcast rendered with a decorative vertical strip of contrasting brickwork and a single terracotta 'pot' on top.

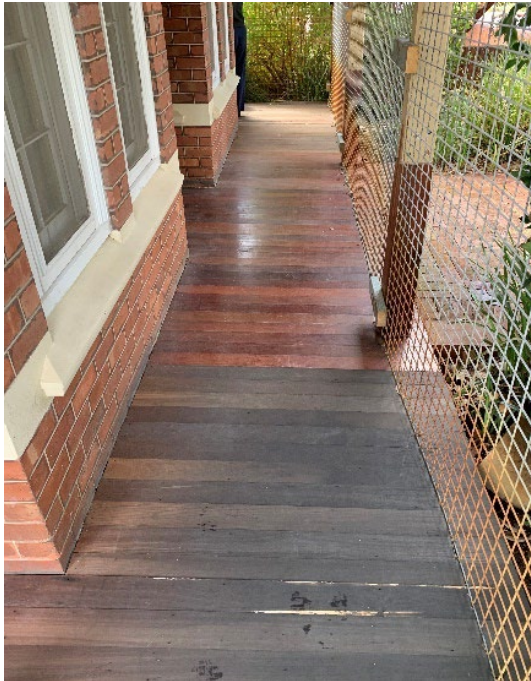


Figure 5: The verandah is framed in jarrah with four large jarrah tapered posts. Jarrah floorboards are original, but portions have been replaced over time (2024).



Figure 6: The roof is exposed rafter with simple curved timber frets (2024).



Figure 7: The brick walls to the front and side facades are tuckpointed and feature three rendered bands at sill, mid-window, and window head level, now painted (2024).



Figure 8: The bay windows consist of two double hung sliding sash windows facing the street, with smaller double hung sliding sash windows to each side of the bay window projection (2024).



Figure 9: Detail to front door and right bay windows, with sliding sash window. The door is surrounded by hammered glass windows from mid door height and above (2024).

This building was likely the entrance building for the wider complex, with separate cottage homes flanking both sides, all connected via rear timber framed verandahs (demolished 1981). A larger, central rear building (c.1995-2000) abuts the 1920 building. Another building (c.1920s-1950s; demolished 1981) was previously

connected to the 1920 building via an extension of the rear gable roof. There are no physical remains of the former connecting building or rear verandah.



Figure 3: The left building was constructed between 1995-2000 and abuts the 1920 building. There is no internal access between the buildings (2024).



Figure 4: After the (c. 1920s-1950s) rear building was demolished in 1981, the gable roof was 'cut' and remnants of the connecting verandahs were retained. The rear verandah was then removed during construction of the current abutting building between 1995-2000. Board and batten panelling was installed to conceal the removal of the connecting buildings and verandahs.

Interior

The interior comprises a short central hallway, with a room opening on either side. Each room is broadly symmetrical with a central bay window and a fireplace to the far side wall (the surrounds have been removed). The southern room has a sink and cabinetry. The floors are carpet and vinyl on top of timber, with c.1990s ceilings and cornices. The following internal elements are considered original:

- Run moulding on walls in entrance and both rooms.
- Jarrah door frames and window frames (internal and external).
- Sliding sash windows.
- Pictures rails in both rooms.



Figure 12: Internal view of front door with surrounding hammered glass windows. The jarrah door frame is likely original, though the door is c.1950s. The floor in this entrance is covered with vinyl (2024).



Figure 5: Southern room. Note picture rails and run moulding on walls. The hallway leads to a contemporary toilet (2024).



Figure 14: Detail of door and frame in southern room. The jarrah door frame is likely original, though the door is c.1950s (2024).



Figure 15: Internal detail of bay window, southern room (2024).



Figure 6: Northern room. Note wall run moulding to left of this image (2024).



Figure 7: Double hung sliding sash windows on side projection of bay window. The frames and windows are likely original (2024).



Figure 8: Northern room fireplace. The fireplace surrounds have been removed (2024).

At the terminus of the original hallway is a small bathroom with a toilet and sink. It is likely this doorway originally provided access to the now demolished rear verandah. The toilet fit out is not original.



Figure 9: Toilet fitout (c.1995-2000) which was built in the hallway which likely lead to the former rear verandah (2024).



Figure 20: Though the toilet fit out was built in c.1995-2000, the wall running moulding and picture rails features are consistent with the other rooms, indicating existing hallway walls were used to construct this room. A slight inconsistency in the rear wall run moulding suggests portions of this wall were infilled. A new doorway was also built (2024).

Condition

The building overall is in good to fair condition. Portions of the timber verandah and support posts have been sympathetically repaired due to vandalism and termite damage. The exterior appears to have been well maintained through refreshing of painted finishes and damaged elements. Minor loss of mortar and areas of rising damp are evident on the southern façade. Internal ceilings and walls have areas of minor cracking, mostly at high level.



Figure 21: There have been sympathetic repairs to the timber posts at ground level. Security fencing has been installed inside the verandah to prevent unauthorised access (2024).

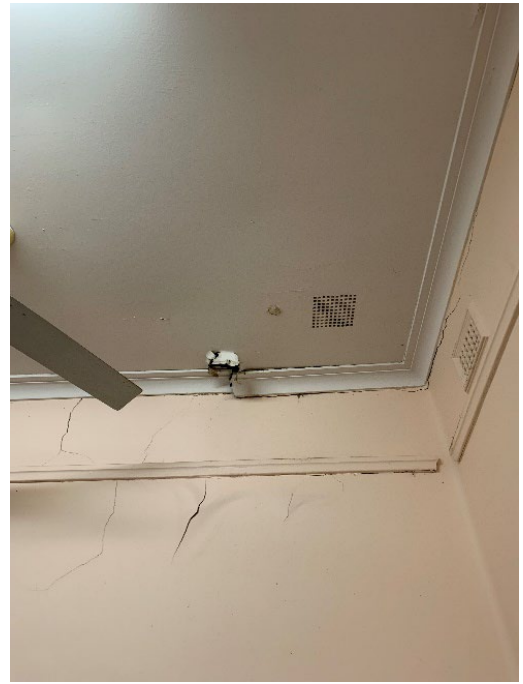


Figure 22: Cracked ceiling and walls, southern room, due to subsidence (2024).

13. COMPARATIVE INFORMATION/THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Thematic Analysis

There is one thematic history relevant to the consideration of this place:

- Thematic History of Western Australia⁴¹ (WA Thematic).

The use of this place, as part of Silver Chain's aged care residential complex, reflects the following State themes in the WA Thematic:

Services – Health – the following key events and phases are relevant to Silver Chain, and the provision of nursing services in WA:

- 1893 - Methodist Sisters of the People established to provide WA's first relief nursing service (free, non-sectarian, with trained nurses), in response to goldfields typhoid crisis; served to 1900.
- 1897 - formal nurse training begins at Colonial Hospital; establishes system of apprenticeship training including compulsory living in for trainee nurses.
- 1905 - Silver Chain begins as a children's club through the Western Mail, linking city and country children, especially those sick or neglected.
- 1907 - First Silver Chain district nurse begins rounds by bicycle in Perth.
- 1914 - Red Cross established in WA, immediately following outbreak of WWI; coordinates nurses and medical supplies for troops, also convalescent homes for returned soldiers.

⁴¹

'A Thematic History of Western Australia' (incl. Framework Spreadsheet & Narratives). Prepared for the Heritage Council of WA by Clare Menck, Historian, June 2018.

- 1916 - First Silver Chain cottage home for the aged opens (Highgate), reflecting the organisation's shift from children's to aged health care.
- 1939 - Red Cross mobilises to supply nurses and medical equipment to support military efforts.
- 1944 - Bush Nursing Society amalgamates with Silver Chain; hostels gradually closed and replaced with nursing posts or district nursing.
- 1949 - Alexandra Home for Women (later Ngala) becomes first mothercraft nurse training centre.
- 1961 - Silver Chain begins home-nursing services.
- 1974 - WAIT introduces nursing course, resulting in Enrolled Nurses (apprenticeship system) and Registered Nurses (tertiary trained); WA the first State to implement tertiary nursing degrees.

Cultural Life – Recreation/Organised Leisure/Entertainment – the following key event applies to the establishment of Silver Chain:

- 1903 - Muriel Chase begins 25-year career as a journalist, writing for the West Australian as 'Adrienne' and the Western Mail as 'Aunt Mary'; influential voice for social reform, especially women's issues.

Social Services – the following key events and phases are relevant for the place's use as an aged care residential facility:

- 1909 - Commonwealth Old Age pension introduced (for men over 65; excludes Aboriginal persons); former Fremantle asylum becomes Women's Home, with occupants transferred from Perth poor house.
- 1910 - Commonwealth Invalid pension introduced; both pensions extended to non-Aboriginal women over 60; all pensions means tested.
- 1942 - Widows' pension introduced (not age related); Fremantle Old Women's Home closed; residents moved to Woodbridge Home, Guildford.

The following State themes, and key events and phases are relevant to women's stories:

Services – Health

- 1913 - Rotunda Women's Hospital in Victoria Park opens (first hospital dedicated exclusively to care of women, with maternity focus)
- 1916 - King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women opens.

Cultural Life – Domestic Life

- 1906-1911 - government policy focus on healthy children in supportive family environments results in many initiatives to benefit children. Increasing women's movement also emphasises improvements for domestic sphere, especially for children.

Social Services

- 1891: House of Mercy (non-denominational charity for single mothers opens in Perth. This is the precursor to Alexandra Home for Women (from 1916)/Ngala (from 1956).

- 1894: Karrakatta Club formed; one of the first women's clubs in Australia (now the oldest continuing); significant in lobbying for women's suffrage, also more generally encouraging women into public affairs.

Governing – Government & Politics

- 1899: Women's suffrage granted (white women), six years after New Zealand was first country in the world and second Australian state after South Australia (1895); women first vote in 1900 Federation referendum.
- 1920: Women obtain the right to stand for election in WA parliament.

Economy – Workers & Working

- 1909: Women's Service Guild formed (Perth), campaigning for equal pay and opening of all professions to women.
- 1934: WA Public Service adopts regulations requiring women to resign when they marry (retained to 1967).

Comparative Analysis

The place is the earliest and only extant building from the first phase of development of Silver Chain's Wright Street cottage homes complex. Though this building was constructed in the 1920s, the cottage homes initiative began at this location in 1916 providing residential facilities for elderly patients requiring fulltime care. Along with the cottage homes, the organisation had facilities throughout WA including bushing nursing posts, hospitals, and district nursing facilities.

There are two places associated with Silver Chain included in the State Register of Heritage Places:

- P2727 *Lady Novar Hostel (fmr), Wyalkatchem* (RHP) (1922) – a single-storey Federation Bungalow style residence constructed as the first rest home by the Bush Nursing Society (established with Silver Chain) in WA for expectant mothers. The place was the longest running hostel in the state and was used as the model for four other hostels.
- P5299 *Lady Champion Hostel (fmr), Busselton* (RHP) (1926) – a single-storey brick Inter-war Californian Bungalow residence which was another hostel established by the Bush Nursing Society for expectant mothers.

The following places in the Historic Heritage database also have associations with Silver Chain. These have not been reviewed by the Heritage Council:

- P5328 Silver Chain Administration Offices, West Busselton (Heritage List) (c.1900) – a former residence built in the Federation Italianate style. It was later used as the maternity hospital office and in 2025 is used as the Silverchain Busselton Service Centre.
- P5767 Mingenew Hospital (Original), Mingenew (Local Heritage Survey) (c.1936) – original hospital first established by the Country Women's Association. In 1953 it was divided in two; one side for the Infant Health Sisters and the other for Silver Chain. It was used as a district nursing post until 1977 when new premises were built adjacent.

Silver Chain established two hospitals which also provided accommodation. Neither have been recognised on local heritage lists, nor have they been reviewed by the Heritage Council:

- Alfred Carson Hospital, Claremont (1945) – established for elderly patients who could not live independently or at the Wright Street cottage homes. The place is now the location of Aegis Alfred Carson.
- Hilton Hospital (1974) – established in collaboration with the Fremantle Hospital, also known as John Mercer Lodge. The original hospital was demolished and redeveloped (1995-2000) and is now Aegis Hilton Park.

There are 62 places on the State Register that are associated with hospitals, asylums, and housing or quarters for health purposes. The following places are most comparable for providing residential facilities associated with women and/or aged care:

- P596 *Lady Lawley Cottage, Cottesloe* (RHP) (1903; 1915; 1924) – a limestone cottage used in the development of institutional care for young and disabled people. Built specifically for this purpose in 1903, it was also used as a convalescent home for female personnel from the Australian Women's Land Army and the Merchant Navy during WWII.
- P603 *Wearne Hostel, Cottesloe* (RHP) (1897, 1901, 1905, 1909) – a group of buildings used for the provision of medical facilities to women before the construction of King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women.
- P875 *Museum and Arts Centre, Fremantle* (RHP) (from 1861) – originally known as the 'Asylum for the Criminally Insane', this place was used for the treatment of mental health and women (c. 1865). Between 1905 to 1942, the site was used as an Old Women's Home.
- P1035 *Hillcrest, North Fremantle* (RHP) (1901, 1922, 1934, 1958, 1978) – used as a maternity hospital and home from 1922, and since 1978 has formed part of an aged care facility.
- P2176 *Edward Millen Home (fmr), East Victoria Park* (RHP) (1912; 1921-22; 1936; 1968; 1983) – first established as a maternity hospital in 1912 by midwife Elizabeth Baillie, the place has been used for a variety of health-related purposes.
- P2231 *Catherine McAuley Centre, Wembley* (RHP) (c.1858 – 1990s) – managed by the Sisters of Mercy from 1876 predominantly as an orphanage and women's hostel. Since 1971, the place has functioned as the Catherine McAuley Family Centre and provides residential, aged care, child day care, and family and youth support services.
- P3374 *Sunset Hospital, Dalkeith* (RHP) (1904-06 onward) – a complex of buildings that represents one of the largest early 20th century public health facilities in WA. It is an important illustration of a state financed institution in providing services to the indigent poor, the elderly, and the infirm.
- P9201 *Success Hill Lodge, Bassendean* (RHP) (1896; c.1970s; 1980s) – associated with various branches of health care, it was first established as a hospital in 1903. Between 1918 to 1947, the place was associated with

the Salvation Army as part of their social welfare program, specifically the care of aged men (and to a lesser extent women).

In addition to the above, the following State Registered places are associated with Nursing Associations or Leagues. All are linked to military service:

- P499 *Quarantine Station (fmr), Woodman Point* (RHP) (1886; 1923+) – associated with the Australian Army Nursing Service who volunteered at the place in 1918/19 to treat patients with the Spanish Influenza.
- P2665 *Nurses Memorial Centre, West Perth* (RHP) (1899; 1910) – for a time, this was the office building for the Royal Australian Nursing Federation.
- P13516 *2/1 Australian General Hospital (ruins), Merredin* (RHP) (1942-44; 1948+) – built as a mobile hospital for the Australian Army, it is associated with the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) and the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS).

Women's stories

Silver Chain is an organisation that was primarily pioneered by, and employed, women. Many of the health-related places mentioned above also share a strong association with women's stories, most notably:

- P596 *Lady Lawley Cottage, Cottesloe*
- P603 *Wearne Hostel, Cottesloe*
- P875 *Museum and Arts Centre, Fremantle*
- P1035 *Hillcrest, North Fremantle*
- P2176 *Edward Millen Home (fmr), East Victoria Park*
- P2665 *Nurse Memorial Centre, West Perth*
- P13516 *2.1 Australian General Hospital (ruins), Merredin*

In addition, the following State Registered places are also reflective of women's stories and healthcare in WA:

- P792 *Woodside Hospital, East Fremantle* (RHP) (1897, 1904) – a former townhouse that was converted into a public maternity hospital in the 1950s.
- P2438 *King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, Subiaco* (RHP) (from 1897) – the State's first public maternity hospital. Since opening in 1916 it has developed to provide healthcare for women and newborns.
- P3314 *Old Hospital Complex, Margaret River* (RHP) (1924-1990) – close association with the provision of health services to women who pioneered the development of the south-west in the 1920s.
- P9173 *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr), Subiaco* (RHP) (1922, 1941, 1937) – former private maternity hospital constructed for, owned, and operated by women, and which employed substantial numbers of women. It provided medical services specifically for women from 1936 to 1981.
- P11375 *Manjimup Infant Health Centre (fmr)* (RHP) (1946) – this place provided healthcare for women and children of the Manjimup district until

2000. It was designed by Nancy Allen, the first woman to pass the examination of the Architects Board of WA in 1932.

The following State Registered places more generally address women's stories in WA:

- P115 *Ellensbrook, Gracetown* (RHP) (from 1857) – demonstrates the crucial role women played in enabling settlement of the State and is a good representative example of the isolated lives of women in the southwest, their dedication to home and family and the often difficult circumstances.
- P3847 *Edith Cowan's House & Skinner Gallery, Perth* (RHP) (1896, 1958) – a former residence of Edith Cowan, the first woman member of an Australian parliament.
- P3925 *Harvest House, West Perth* (RHP) (1892) – headquarters of the Women's Services Guild of WA from 1956 to 1982, a prominent and active women's organisation concerned with education, health, social justice and equal employment opportunity issues.
- P7166 *Bunbury Women's Club* (RHP) (1853, 1910) – a rare example of a women's club that has been continuously owned and managed by the same club from 1955. Illustrates the significant contribution made by women to life in regional areas.
- P10411 *Paxwold Girl Guides Camp, Lesmurdie* (RHP) (1957, 1960, 1964, 1970, 1984) – WA's campsite and training centre for the Girl Guide Association from 1953 to 2004 which was important in providing an avenue for young women to develop the confidence and leadership skills necessary to take up a greater involvement in public and work life.

Comparative Conclusions

Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth is not rare for its association with accommodation for health purposes and nursing services. There are several State Registered places which served these functions including two established by the Bush Nursing Society. However, *Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth* is unique as the earliest extant structure from Silver Chain's cottage home complex, and the earliest building constructed by Silver Chain to service its nursing activities. The place is also notable for its long-term provision of aged care facilities, built specifically for this purpose.

The place is also not rare as a place which tells the story of women in Western Australia. However, it is notable as a place representing an organisation pioneered by and primarily employing women, and organisation which has an enduring legacy today which continues to demonstrate the essential contribution of women to the health and care sector in Western Australia.

14. FURTHER RESEARCH

APPENDIX 1 - ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This section identifies the cultural heritage values of the place. Values that make a strong contribution to the place's cultural heritage significance are also included in the Statement of Cultural Heritage Significance above. In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council has had regard to the factors in section 38 of the *Heritage Act 2018* (see **Appendix 2**). Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

It is considered that the place warrants inclusion in the State Register against the following factors relevant to cultural heritage significance:

(A) Historic Value - evolution or pattern WA history

The place is closely linked to Silver Chain, a private organisation established in WA in 1905 to support less fortunate families, providing nursing services from 1907. It is one of the earliest structures built for Silver Chain's cottage homes complex, established at this location in 1916 to accommodate elderly patients who could no longer live independently.

Representing an organisation which was primarily pioneered by, and employing substantial numbers of women, the place is an important reminder of the contribution of women to the health and care system in Western Australia.

(B) Rarity

Built in 1920, this is the earliest structure remaining from the Silver Chain Wright Street cottage homes complex. It was the first structure purpose-built by Silver Chain, and was the only building retained from this first phase of development prior to a major site redevelopment in 1981.

Silver Chain Nursing League Building, Perth was one of the first purpose-built residential facilities for elderly people in WA.

(C) Scientific Value

Factor not relevant to this place.

(D) Representativeness

The place represents the type of facilities provided by Silver Chain and demonstrates the rise and growth of an organisation primarily pioneered by women from its early beginnings in child health and maternity nursing, to its expansion into aged care.

The place demonstrates the beginnings, and later growth of private aged care facilities in WA.

(E) Social or Spiritual Value

The place is highly valued by the WA community for its strong association with the work of Silver Chain. From its charitable beginnings, Silver Chain provided a range of nursing services and facilities throughout the state from 1907 and in 2025 remains a prominent organisation throughout Australia.

(F)⁴² Aesthetic Value

The place is a good, intact example of a single-storey building with elements of the Federation Queen Anne style (aesthetic value).

(G) Historic Value - person, group or organisation

The place is directly associated with the nursing services provided by Silver Chain Nursing Association.

The place is associated with a number of notable women who were involved in the establishment and growth of the organisation, and the development of the cottage homes include Muriel Chase, Dr Gertrude Mead, and Frances Drew (Nurse Cherry).

(H) Scientific Value - creative or technical achievement

Factor not relevant to this place.

(I) Any other characteristic it may have that in the opinion of the Council is relevant to the assessment of cultural heritage significance.

Factor not relevant to this place.

⁴² 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.

APPENDIX 2 – FACTORS S.38 HERITAGE ACT 2018

In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council must have regard to the factors in section 38 of the *Heritage Act 2018*. These factors, and their equivalent values are listed below. Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

- (A) Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history - Historic Value**
- (B) Importance in demonstrating rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Western Australia's heritage – Rarity Value**
- (C) Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Western Australia's history – Scientific Value**
- (D) Its importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places - Representativeness**
- (E) Any strong or special meaning it may have for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations – Social or Spiritual Value**
- (F) Its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community – Aesthetic Value**
- (G) Any special association it may have with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in Western Australia's history - Historic Value**
- (H) Its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement – Aesthetic/Scientific Value**