



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)

- 8.6.4 Making places for worship

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 406 Religion

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is an excellent example of the Post-War Ecclesiastical style of architecture featuring an unorthodox plan form, impressive monumentality, simple and functional finishings and decorative stained glass windows. (Criterion 1.1)

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is a landmark as a substantial building with minimal surrounding landscaping, which is located on a major thoroughfare close to the city centre of Geraldton. (Criterion 1.3)

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton contributes to a cultural environment of major municipal buildings along Cathedral Avenue which includes the Roman Catholic St Francis Xavier Cathedral and civic centre of Geraldton. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton reflects the growth and development of the North West Diocese of the Anglican Church and of Geraldton, the largest town in the Diocese. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton features four stones from English cathedrals installed within the structure, namely, a stone from Lincoln Cathedral (1092), a piece of marble from the reredos of St Paul's

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

Cathedral, a stone from the 11th century Canterbury Cathedral and a carved stone from the 13th century Westminster Abbey. (Criterion 2.2)

The windows of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* were created by well-known West Australian stained-glass manufacturers, Gowers and Brown, who have been responsible for the decorative windows in many ecclesiastical buildings in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is associated with Bishop John Frewer, who served as Bishop of the North West, the largest Anglican Diocese in Australia, from 1929 to 1965 and encouraged the construction of twenty-six churches in the region as well as the Cathedral. (Criterion 2.3)

The use of concrete for the walls and asbestos clad steel-framed roof for *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* were a successful attempt to reduce maintenance caused by the harsh coastal conditions of the site. (Criterion 2.4)

The use of sandblasting to expose coloured quartz in the concrete walls of the *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, which produced an attractive and usual finish, was an innovation at that time.

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is highly valued by the Geraldton Parish community as the focus of the community's religious life, and is of particular value to Anglicans State-wide as the Cathedral of the North West Diocese where major religious events are celebrated. (Criterion 4.1)

As a major ecclesiastical building, *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* is a source of local identity and pride and provides a sense of place for the Geraldton and regional community. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is rare as an example of an ecclesiastical building of monumental scale constructed in the Post-War period in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is a well resolved expression of the functional, traditional and symbolic requirements of a major ecclesiastical building in the latter half of the twentieth century. (Criterion 6.1)

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is an excellent example of the radical strand of Post-War Ecclesiastical styled buildings which

responded to new ideas in liturgy, providing closer involvement between congregation and clergy through the use of unorthodox plan shapes and dynamic internal spaces. (Criteria 6.1 & 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is in good condition and well maintained. The principal fabric of the place, the concrete walls, were designed to have a maintenance-free finish in a harsh coastal environment which appears to have been accomplished

12.4 INTEGRITY

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton has high integrity. The place still functions as both parish church and diocesan cathedral and is sustainable in these functions.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton has high authenticity with only routine maintenance having been carried out to the cathedral structure, such as the replacement of carpet throughout the nave. Alterations and additions to the less significant Deanery and Parish Hall buildings have had little impact on the Cathedral.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by John Taylor Architect and Katrina Chisholm, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton comprises a brick and tile Deanery (1962), concrete and asbestos fibre-cement Cathedral (1964), and brick and tile Parish Hall (1973), constructed for the Anglican North West Diocese of Western Australia.

Many church services conducted in Western Australia in the formative years of European settlement, (1830-1860s), were conducted by the settlers in their own homes. The Swan River colony came under the Diocese of Adelaide at this time. In 1856, the See of Perth was created with Matthew Blagden Hale as its first Bishop. The Perth Anglican Diocese included the whole State. In 1900, a Bishopric Fund was established to finance the division of the state into manageable Bishoprics and Dioceses. In 1903, the Bunbury Diocese was created. Its responsibility included the North West of the state, which at that time was served by 2 priests, one deacon and two stipendiary readers. Geraldton was not included in the new Bunbury Diocese, but remained part of the Perth Diocese.¹

In 1910, the Bunbury Diocese was reduced in size with the establishment of the Diocese of the North West. The first Bishop of the North West, the Reverend Gerard Trower, was enthroned in St George's Church, Carnarvon on 4 July 1910. Bishop Trower resided in Broome, so that the little timber Church of the Annunciation, built in 1903 on the corner of Hamersley and Haas streets, Broome, was, by default, the pro-Cathedral of the North West Diocese.²

Bishop Trower envisaged building a Cathedral in Broome as a memorial to those who had lost their lives in the First World War. He raised money for the construction of a Cathedral and plans were drawn up by architects in Perth but the building did not eventuate³. Until 1929, areas south of Carnarvon were part of the Diocese of Perth, and the Murchison area was part of the Diocese of Kalgoorlie. In 1929, the Diocese of the North West was enlarged to increase its population base and took in Geraldton, Greenough, Mullewa, Northampton, Mt Magnet, Cue, Meekatharra, Wiluna and Sandstone districts.⁴

¹ Doncaster, Ted, *Spinifex Saints: The Diocese of North West Australia, 1910-1985*, 1985, pp. 3-9.

² 'The Anglican Church of the Annunciation', pamphlet obtained from the Church in Broome, 1999.

³ Details regarding this are not known at this time.

⁴ Downes, Joan, *The Cathedral Church of the Holy Cross, Geraldton, Western Australia*, Holy Cross Cathedral Chapter, Geraldton, 1986, p. ii; 'Souvenir Booklet to Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Guild of the Ascension, 7th November 1993', 14-pages, [1993].

As the largest town in the Diocese, Geraldton was the obvious choice as the site of a cathedral, a view shared in 1929 by Reverend K. B. Halley, the new Rector of Geraldton's Christ Church.⁵ The minutes of the Christ Church Vestry meeting held in February 1929 record that Rev Halley 'brought under the notice of the Vestry the need for selecting a prominent site for the future Cathedral, and stated it was our duty to posterity to see that a suitable site was obtained before the cost grew prohibitive', but a site was not obtained at this time.⁶

On 28 April 1929, the second Bishop of the North West, Reverend Canon John Frewer, was enthroned in the pro-Cathedral in Broome. Bishop Frewer occupied the Bishop's Palace at Broome and the town continued to be the headquarters of the North West Diocese.⁷ During Bishop Frewer's thirty-six year tenure of the bishopric, twenty-one churches were built throughout the Diocese.

In 1960, Geraldton was established as the seat of the Diocese of the North West and a Cathedral, accommodation for the Bishop, Dean, Cathedral Chapter and Diocesan Offices were required. In November 1960, Reverend L. R. Wilson was appointed Rector of Christ Church. He had previously been Provost of Kuching, Sarawak, and had overseen the construction of a cathedral there. Together, he and Bishop Frewer began to make plans for *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, although the overall concept has been attributed to Reverend Wilson.⁸

Fund raising for *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was carried out throughout the Diocese, and donations were received from other parts of Australia and overseas. The money raised by Bishop Trower years earlier was also added to the fund.⁹

Geraldton Town Lot 600 and part of Lot 597 on Cathedral Avenue were purchased in 1961 as the Cathedral site.¹⁰ Cathedral Ave had originally been known as Elwes Ave, its name being changed following construction of the Catholic St Francis Xavier's Cathedral (1916-1938) on the corner of Maitland Street.¹¹ A portion of Cathedral Avenue south of Carson Terrace was formerly known as Keane Street. The change of name of this southern extension in 1971 is likely to have been influenced by the completion of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*.¹² St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, an imposing design of eclectic styles including Romanesque, Baroque and Old Californian Missions, had dominated the Geraldton skyline for some time and influenced the monumental style of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*. According to Reverend Wilson:

5 Downes, Joan, op cit, p. ii; 'Souvenir Booklet', op cit.

6 Quoted in Downes, Joan, op cit, p. ii.

7 Doncaster, Ted, op cit.

8 Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 1.

9 Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 2-3; Bain, Mary Albertus, *A Life of Its Own: A social and economic history of the City of Geraldton and the Shire of Greenough 1846-1988*, City of Geraldton, 1996, p. 67.

10 Certificate of Title, Vol. 1250 Fol. 55, 14 July 1961.

11 Geraldton map, 1901; Geraldton Express 3 July 1918.

12 Government Gazette, 18 June 1971.

The building also had to dominate the landscape, the design had to be unusual, and not follow the Gothic style of English churches, yet have some symbolic meaning. It was to be built of local materials in a modern idiom, e.g. concrete, and it should symbolise as far as possible Australian characteristics such as ruggedness, spaciousness, boldness and strength. Within, there must be contrast.

I envisaged a star shaped building. As it would have no tower or spire, it must have a feature that 'Pointed'! A five pointed star had a scriptural meaning - the largest point represented the Light of the World, and the four other points showing that Christ, as revealed by the four evangelists must be proclaimed in the four corners of the worlds. This was a reminder that the Diocese of North West Australia is one of the two Missionary Dioceses of the Australian Church. The Entrance was to be as striking as possible to emphasize 'Invitation' and to be dominated by a Crucifix of Christ Regnant in Glory.¹³

The star shape is also referred to as the Morning Star. The architectural firm of Ean McDonald and Whitaker were engaged for the project. Ean McDonald and Edwin Whitaker practised architecture for about twenty years in the 1950s to 1970s. When the building industry went into depression in the early 1970s, many architects turned to other occupations. Ean McDonald, who served in the navy during World War Two, opened a sports clothing business and became a Master Mariner, navigating for Susie Maroney's record breaking swims across the Florida Strait and the Yucatan Channel, while Edwin Whitaker became a vigneron at Margaret River. Neither returned to the practise of architecture.¹⁴

Edwin Whitaker, who took on the responsibility for *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, envisaged the place as an interesting 'horizontal' building 'that could be looked down on from the various vantage look-out points' as well as being 'of bold, dynamic character from the near view'. He believed that 'fine and delicate tracery had no place in the North'.¹⁵ The concept for the design of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* resulted from a functional analysis of what went on in the place, with the result that it was based on the Greek amphitheatre, which featured the main performer in the centre and the audience on all sides. For the same reason, the baptismal font is in the centre with a space for congregating around it.¹⁶ Lot 600 was only 200 feet wide and had to accommodate *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, the Deanery and the Parish Hall.¹⁷ The design for *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was an elongated star-shape, 150-foot long with seating for 420 people. Because the parishes of the North West were thinly spread over a large area, the place was designed as much to serve as a parish church for the Geraldton Parish as to serve as a Cathedral.¹⁸

13 Quoted in Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 1.

14 Telephone conversation with Mr Ean McDonald by Irene Sauman, 13 June 2003.

15 Quoted in Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 2.

16 Telephone conversation with Mr Ean McDonald, op cit.

17 Certificate of Title, Vol. 1250 Fol. 55, 14 July 1961.

18 'The Cathedral of the Holy Cross - Geraldton', *The Architect*, Vol. 7, Issue 2, 1964, pp. 34-37; *West Australian*, 10 March 1962, p. 16.

The Deanery was the first part of the complex to be built¹⁹. It was a brick and tile residence completed in mid 1962. The Deanery was blessed by Bishop Frewer on 26 July 1962 and occupied by Reverend Wilson, as the first Dean of the Cathedral parish. Christ Church in Marine Terrace, which had been consecrated on 19 July 1873, was demolished in November 1962, together with the associated Geraldton Parish Hall and Rectory, and the land sold to raise funds for construction of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*. This created some problems for the accommodation of church services for the parish until *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was completed in 1964.²⁰

The contract for construction of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was awarded to the Geraldton Building Company, who tendered a total contract price of £81,000, including furniture. The Geraldton Building Company began as Crothers Brothers in 1939, with brothers Alfred and Preston Crothers, sons of contractor and builder John Crothers. The Crothers Brothers first major contract was the Geraldton High School. They also were responsible for building the Geraldton Regional Hospital. In 1945 the brothers, together with Alfred's nephew Albert (Bert) Pepperell, formed the Geraldton Building Company. Preston Crother's sons, Bert and Phillip, followed him into the Company. The Geraldton Building Company prospered in the post-war building boom, and grew into the GBC Group of Companies, which included other building and construction industries such as plumbing and brickworks, as well as air charter, engineering and maritime industries.²¹

Before construction began on *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, the adjoining Lot 601 became available and was purchased, providing a larger building area.²² As a result of this acquisition, the site of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was shifted slightly to the south. It has been stated that the 'long length of the "thin" building loses some meaning as a result' of this move, having been designed specifically for the original narrow site.²³

The black granite foundation stone was blessed by Bishop Frewer and laid by the Governor Sir Charles Gairdner on 22 July 1962, the Feast of St Mary Magdalene. Church dignitaries from throughout the State attended the occasion, including the Archbishop of Perth, the Most Reverend Dr R. W. H. Moline, who gave the sermon.²⁴

Construction of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* began in early 1963 and was completed in 1964. The walls were constructed of reinforced concrete, which was sand-blasted, inside and out, to expose the

¹⁹ The builder of the Deanery is not known.

²⁰ Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 2-3; Bain, Mary Albertus, *A Life of Its Own: A social and economic history of the City of Geraldton and the Shire of Greenough 1846-1988*, City of Geraldton, 1996, p. 67; 'The Cathedral of the Holy Cross - Geraldton', *The Architect*, op cit.

²¹ Smith, Keith R., *The Birth of a Legend: The history of Geraldton Building Company and the men and women who made it possible*, Geraldton Building Co Pty Ltd, 1994, pp. 47-52.

²² Certificate of Title, Vol. 1078 Fol. 697 31 January 1963.

²³ 'The Cathedral of the Holy Cross - Geraldton', *The Architect*, op cit.

²⁴ Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 2-3.

coloured quartz aggregate, giving the structure a rough textured finish in an 'earthy lavender' colour.²⁵ According to architect Ean McDonald, who contributed the technical aspects of the work, various experiments were carried out to obtain the right concrete mixture, the best timing for the sandblasting process and a method of preventing gaps between the aggregate that occurs at the bottom of a concrete pour, and which would show the joins in the structure. This latter problem was solved by pouring one to two inches of sand-only cement, or slurry, at the bottom of each fill, which then worked its way up to fill the gaps. Conical shaped plastic plugs, which were left in the concrete and were indistinguishable in the sand blasted finish, were used to hold the formwork instead of bolts.²⁶

An article on *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, which appeared in *Constructional Review*, the journal of the Cement and Concrete Association of Australia, provided more information on construction issues.

The structural form of the building resulted directly from a search for a system which would be maintenance free in the marine atmospheric conditions of the site, and yet within the capacity of the somewhat limited building facilities within Geraldton itself whilst proving economical... Reinforced concrete walling and an asbestos sheeted steel framed roof were finally selected although, in retrospect, the architects feel the precast concrete roofing system used in early sketches would not have unduly taxed the builders who demonstrated great skill throughout the project.

The supply of premixed concrete to the site was restricted by the availability of only one vehicle and this conditioned the design by limiting placings to a maximum of 40 cu. yds. This predetermined the location of long narrow "slit" windows in the nave and the form of the window reveals...

Linked with the structure was the problem of determining a suitable surface finish for the concrete. A simple off-form finish would not complement the large flat wall areas and budget restrictions precluded cladding. However good quality red and white quartz aggregates were available locally and could be stockpiled in sufficient quantity, and these, coupled with locally produced good sandblasting sands, led to the decision to sand blast all concrete walls externally and internally.²⁷

The result was a building whose 'external statement' was 'startlingly frank but rich in colour and texture', with an interior that was 'at once impressive yet possessing an intimacy in relationship between congregation and sanctuary which is compelling'.²⁸ Structural engineers for the building were Halpern and Glick and the acoustical consultant was W.J. Mahaffey.²⁹

The consecration of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was held on Sunday 8 March 1964 at the 9.30am service. About 800 people, including the Premier, attended the service. The Archbishop of Perth led the Procession followed by the Bishops of Kalgoorlie and Bunbury and all their

25 Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 3.

26 Telephone conversation with Mr Ean McDonald, op cit.

27 'Holy Cross Cathedral at Geraldton, W.A.' *Constructional Review*, No. 8, August 1964, pp. 10-13.

28 'Holy Cross Cathedral at Geraldton, W.A.' *Constructional Review*, op cit.

29 *The Architect*, op cit, p. 35.

attendants. At the appointed time, Bishop Frewer knocked three times on the West door and requested permission to enter. He was presented with the key and then moved with his Procession to the Sanctuary where the key was laid on the High Altar. The consecration of the building and its various elements and fittings followed.³⁰

The furnishings of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* were designed and constructed in Western Australia, with the exception of the designs for the windows and the altar frontals. Geraldton Building Company made most of the moveable furniture, but some of the chairs were made in Perth. These were copies of chairs in Coventry Cathedral. All the ornaments were donated as gifts or memorials. The figure of the Madonna and Child in the Lady Chapel was carved in Italy, from solid pine, and was a gift of Mrs Russell and her daughter Nancy, a headmistress of Koobelya, while the Chapel crucifix, also carved in Italy, was mounted on a cross of jarrah. The Processional Cross was a gift from the Cathedral of St Thomas, Kuching, where Dean Wilson was formerly Provost.³¹

The stained glass windows of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* were designed by Carl Edwards in London and manufactured by E. G. Gowers and A. S. Brown, stained glass artists of Greenmount.

The firm of E. G. Gowers and A. S. Brown was established in 1946. Edward (Ted) Gowers and Albert Brown came to Western Australia from England in 1954. They purchased a studio, 'Carraboya', in Greenmount in 1958 and despite the workshop being destroyed in a bush fire in 1994, and the death of Brown in 1996, the studio continues in operation. Apart from the Four Evangelist windows, the two Presentation windows and some window restoration work at St Francis Xavier Cathedral, the studio has designed and manufactured many windows throughout the state including those at St John of God Hospital, Subiaco; Scotch College Chapel, Swanbourne; St Boniface Cathedral, Bunbury and the Catherine McAuley Community Centre Chapel. Windows of the firm can often be identified through the use of a trademark 'Red Setter', a pet of the partnership which became an object of affection with patrons through accompanying Gowers and Brown on their travels.³²

The east window is based on Genesis Chapter 1, verses 2 and 3, where 'God said let there be light', and is particularly striking at sunrise. The seven windows on the north side portray the great saving events of the Church's year: Christmas, Epiphany, the Crucifixion, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity. The seven windows on the south side portray the ideas of believing, belonging and behaving in human lives. They depict: Abraham, Moses and Isaiah; Saint John the Baptist, Saint Stephen and Saint Paul; Saint Alban, Saint Augustine of Canterbury and Saint Boniface; the Spirit of Sacrifice; Thomas Cranmer, Richard Hooker and George Herbert; the Arms

³⁰ Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 4-6.

³¹ Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 4-6; Correspondence from Bishop John Frewer to Sister Mary Nicholas at Perth College, 10 October 1967.

³² John Taylor Architect, 'Investigation and Assessment of Stained Glass Windows at St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Geraldton, Western Australia', September 1999, p. 67.

of Canterbury, Bishop Broughton and Archdeacon Wollaston; and, Bishop Trower, Archdeacon Simpson and Bishop Frewer.³³

The windows were not all installed for the consecration of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*. The dedication of 'the new windows on the south side' was carried out by Bishop Frewer in October 1967.³⁴

Dean Wilson commissioned Mowbrays of London to submit a design incorporating the various forms of the cross throughout the centuries. The resulting design of fourteen crosses, with the central cross the Cross of Consecration, was applied to the golden frontal cloth used to cover the High Altar at the major festivals of the Church year. The Cross of Consecration is a cross within the circle of eternity.³⁵

The request for the design of crosses came about because of the controversy surrounding the choice of name for building. 'Cathedral of the Holy Cross' was one of two names submitted to Bishop Frewer by Dean Wilson and Reverend E. Doncaster, the stipulation being that they not choose a name already used for an Anglican Cathedral in Australia. 'Cathedral of the Holy Cross' was thought by many to be unusual, too Roman Catholic, or not Anglican. This disquiet would have been exacerbated by the fact that there was a Catholic Church within the Diocese, at Morawa, called the Church of the Holy Cross. Also, Dean Wilson preached a series of sermons on the centrality of the cross to the Christian faith to alleviate the misgivings of the faithful.³⁶

A feature of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* are the four stones from English cathedrals: a stone from Lincoln Cathedral (1092), where Bishop Frewer was ordained in 1909, is situated in the south west staircase to the Lady Chapel; a piece of marble from the reredos of St Paul's Cathedral, London, which was damaged during the bombing of London in World War Two, is installed in the north-west staircase; a stone from the 11th century Canterbury Cathedral, Mother Church of Anglican Communion, is on the north-west side of the Lady Chapel; and, a carved stone, from the 13th century Westminster Abbey and originally from the County of Sussex, is on the north east side of the Lady Chapel.³⁷

Some of the original fittings from the demolished Christ Church were placed in *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, including: the Altar and Lectern, located at the back of the building; the wood panelling in the Chapter Meeting room; and, the Memorial Tablets of members of Christ Church, which have been placed in the lobby.³⁸ Carpet was installed in the Nave of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* c. 1967, and was said to have 'very much improved' the acoustics. The carpet was blue in colour.

33 Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 10-16.

34 Correspondence from Bishop John Frewer, op cit.

35 Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 9; 'Ten Minute Tour of the Holy Cross Cathedral Geraldton', Cathedral Chapter, one-page handout.

36 Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 9.

37 Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 6-7.

38 Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 7.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Michael Ramsay, visited Geraldton on 1 April 1965, and delivered the sermon at the Evensong service at *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*. Bishop John Frewer resigned in 1965 after thirty-six years as Bishop of the North West and on 30 November that year, the Reverend Howell Witt, was enthroned as the third Bishop of the Diocese.³⁹ John Frewer was known as the 'flying Bishop' because of the miles he travelled throughout his huge Diocese. He died in 1974 and, at his request, his ashes were interred in the floor of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*, in front of the Bishop's Stall.⁴⁰

On 10 December 1972, Governor Sir Douglas Kendrew laid the foundation stone for the Parish Hall. The Hall was originally designed to be a miniature version of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* with the same star-shape, but it was constructed instead as a conventional brick and tile hall building.⁴¹

Later additions to the furnishings of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* include the replacement of the blue carpet with a green carpet in 1982. The Eucharist and Baptism pattern in the new carpet was designed by Ted Gowers of Gowers and Brown. The carpet was woven in Victoria. In 1984, an Allen digital organ was imported from America and installed in the place.⁴² There is a Garden of Remembrance for the interring of ashes, situated on the north side of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*. The garden is in the shape of the Cross of Consecration.⁴³

In 1997, the lots making up the site were amalgamated on one title as Lot 100 on Diagram 93542.⁴⁴

In 2003, *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* continues to serve the Geraldton Parish as its parish church and the North West Diocese as its Cathedral.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is a concrete and asbestos fibre-cement ecclesiastical building with an elongated star-shape plan form which was consecrated in 1964 and is representative of the Post-War Ecclesiastical style of architecture.⁴⁵ The place also comprises the Deanery (1962) and Parish Hall (1973), to the north and east of the cathedral, both of brick and tile construction and characteristic of the post-war period but displaying no classifiable style features; the Garden of Remembrance on

³⁹ Downes, Joan, op cit, pp. 7-8.

⁴⁰ Geraldton Regional Library, Local Studies Department, *Geraldton: 150 years, 150 Lives*, Geraldton Regional Library, 2001, pp. 68-69.

⁴¹ Physical evidence.

⁴² Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 7.

⁴³ Downes, Joan, op cit, p. 10.

⁴⁴ Certificate of Title, Vol. 2110 Fol. 288 & Register 100/D93542.

⁴⁵ Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989, pp. 212 & 213.

the north side; and a paved circular landscaped area defined by low brick walls and planting to the south of the cathedral.

The place is located on the north-east side of Cathedral Avenue, a major thoroughfare into the Geraldton city centre and address of many of the public buildings and facilities of the city including the Municipal buildings and Roman Catholic Cathedral. The prominent St Francis Xavier Cathedral, (1916-1938), the principal church of the Catholic Diocese of Geraldton, is located closer to the city centre, some three hundred metres to the north-west of *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*.

The site is flat and features minimal landscaping. Bitumenised carparking to the south of the cathedral abuts the building providing a stark environment for the shear, side walls of the nave. The street verge and areas to the north of the cathedral have a grass covering and some medium sized trees which create some interest in the foreground and moderate the brutalism of the rugged concrete. A bitumen road rings the cathedral giving access to the Deanery and Parish Hall at the back of the site before returning to Cathedral Avenue. Secondary access can be obtained from Askew Road through a predominantly residential area behind the place.

The unusual form of the cathedral is characteristic of the radical strand of Post-War Ecclesiastical architecture which responded to new ideas in liturgy, exploring unorthodox plan shapes with the intent of providing closer involvement between congregation and clergy. Many of these adopted a traditional pointed motif, often in the form of a bell tower or spire but the elongated star shaped plan at *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* was intended to provide the resolution between function, symbolism and tradition, albeit in a horizontal dimension.

The exterior structural walls of the cathedral are constructed of in situ, reinforced concrete with a sand-blasted finish supporting a high level fascia ring beam and steel framed roof. The low-pitched, skillion planes of the roof are clad with what appears to be fibre-cement, however, the great height from the ground and the broad fascia prevent a definitive identification of the roof cladding material by physical investigation. There has been no indication from documentary evidence that the asbestos fibre-cement used in the initial period of construction has been replaced.

Limitations of the construction method and supply of materials were factors having a bearing on the structure and resulting appearance of the cathedral. The availability of cement mixers determined the volume of premixed concrete which could be delivered to the site defining the placement and proportion of the full height, narrow windows which divide the concrete walls into structural modules. In addition, both faces of the external walls feature evenly spaced, parallel horizontal grooves identifying the construction method whereby the height of the concrete walls developed in six foot sections. The surface finish of the concrete was another important design consideration where the intention was to create an interesting and maintenance free façade across a large surface area. Sand-blasting to reveal white and red quartz aggregates produced the desired effect, being preferable to both an off-form finish or rendering and was used on both

external and internal surfaces. Further interest is created by the smooth finish and contrasting cream colour of the concrete ribs which border each window and project beyond the wall face. The window openings are narrow so that the ribs have the appearance of paired pilasters and contribute to the structural rigidity of the high walls. This concern for the resolution of function, appearance and technical considerations was heavily emphasised in the architectural course established at the Perth Technical College immediately after the war. Both project architect, Edwin Whitaker and his partner Ean McDonald were graduates and part of the early intake of students into the course.⁴⁶

The cathedral adopts the traditional ecclesiastic orientation with an entrance through the narthex at the west end of the building. The apex of the pointed star form has been truncated in this location to create an opening wide enough for the congregation to enter and exit under a cantilevering concrete canopy. Star motifs have been applied to the wide vertical face of the canopy which is located at first floor level and provides some shelter over the porch. A very simple and traditionally proportioned cross has been bracketed from the rendered wall surface directly above the canopy.

A choir loft is located immediately above the narthex with views onto the voluminous interior with its walls radiating from the focal point of the altar. Pews are arranged in rows along the length of the nave, parallel to the side walls with the font located towards the wider western end. The coffin shape of the terrazzo table topped font is an abstracted form from the traditional hexagon, retaining six sides and points and also responding to the elongated geometry of the church. The raised sanctuary with pulpits, lecterns and altar, at the eastern end of the nave has a similar abstracted geometry projecting into the congregational space to maximise the length of the communion rail. Free-standing concrete panels and suspended drapes behind the altar screen the flight of stairs to the mezzanine level of the Lady Chapel. The high level window at the back of this space, in the eastern most apex of the cathedral is a focus point for the congregation drawing attention upwards and beyond through the narrowing perspective as a symbol of eternity. The design of this Holy Spirit window and the other stained glass windows along the walls of the nave incorporate further symbolism in their geometric designs executed with vibrant and multi coloured glass in concrete tracery. 'The process of concreting glass and steam curing panels was developed in WA by the window manufacturers, Gowers and Brown'.⁴⁷ Gowers was also responsible for the design of the motif in the green carpet which covers the concrete floor of the nave of the cathedral. A small metal plaque in the floor to the south of the sanctuary indicates the location of Bishop Frewer's ashes.

The roof of the cathedral is constructed with scissor pattern rolled steel joists, (RSJs), which were fabricated in the steel workshop and site welded to a central spine beam. Internally this is reflected in the diamond shaped

⁴⁶ Pitt Morison M. & White, J. (eds.) *Western Towns and Buildings*, UWA Press, Nedlands, 1979, p. 140; telephone conversation between Katrina Chisholm and Mr Ean McDonald, 8 April 2003.

⁴⁷ *The Architect*, op cit, p. 36.

panels of the ceiling. A recess in the ceiling above the sanctuary has translucent panels allowing light to fall onto the altar at certain times.

The spaces in the eastern tip of the cathedral behind the sanctuary are occupied by the vestries and sacristy and have external access provision for the clergy and choir. A staircase leads to the Chapter Meeting Room above which is furnished with timber panelling from the former Christ Church, demolished in 1962. Memorial tablets from this church are also located in the lobby between the sanctuary and vestries. Further furnishings and fittings of this former church, and some from the great Anglican cathedrals of England, are now located throughout *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* supplementing the purpose designed furnishings including the holy table which incorporates stones and pearl shell taken from parishes throughout the diocese.

There has been very little alteration to *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton* since construction and the place has been well maintained. The Lady Chapel provides a more intimate worship space for small congregations but its location at mezzanine level has proved difficult to access for some elderly parishioners. Consequently, these services are now often held in the spaces to the north or south of the sanctuary.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There are 96 listings on the HCWA database for churches of all denominations constructed between 1960 and 1970. None of these are entered on the State Register. The 52 churches on the State Register cover the period 1840s to 1950s.

St Lawrence's Anglican Church (1957), Dalkeith, designed by Anthony Solarksi of F.G.B. Hawkins and Sands, is representative of the Post-War Ecclesiastical style, acknowledging traditional church form, but expressing contemporary values in the materials, finish and detailing.⁴⁸ This place is on the State Register.

Two churches of the 1960s that are examples of non-traditional church architecture are Wesley College Chapel, South Perth and Trinity College Chapel, East Perth. Wesley College Chapel is a multi-gabled circular structure with pre-cast concrete panels and a central spire. It was designed by Cameron, Chisholm & Nicol in 1959 and completed in 1961. Trinity College Chapel is an unadorned circular structure featuring narrow windows. It was designed by Edward Le B. Henderson & Thompson and built in 1962. Carl Edwards also designed the concrete and glass windows for Trinity College Chapel.⁴⁹

Construction of major church buildings such as cathedrals in the post-war period is uncommon as the provision of such facilities for a diocese was mostly accomplished, or at least begun, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Our Lady Queen of Peace Cathedral, Broome (1963) is another example of a cathedral constructed in the post-war period in a

⁴⁸ HCWA Assessment documentation Place 04576.

⁴⁹ *Building Ideas*, Vol. 3, No. 2, March 1966, pp. 20-21.

regional centre of Western Australia but is not of the same monumental scale as *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*.

Architects Ean McDonald and Whitaker practised in the 1950s to 1970s. Their work includes: Lords Building, Subiaco, a transport company warehouse now used as an indoor sports centre; various Sunnywest Dairies milk manufactories; Legacy House, South Perth, which incorporates the functions of gymnasium, dining hall, lecture hall and offices; *Hackett Hall* (Place 13619), a Post-War International style building in the Hackett estate at Floreat, which has a stage specifically designed for drama productions and continues to be used for that purpose; Mt Hawthorn Community Centre, which has scabble hammered concrete pillars, an earlier concrete finish that was created by use of a hammer drill; various aged persons homes for the Anglican church, such as at Mandurah; and various Government schools, including Mirrabooka Primary School. Ean McDonald designed *Blackboy Hill Commemoration Site* (Place 04479), which is classified by the National Trust and on the interim Register of the National Estate.⁵⁰

The other ecclesiastical work of the firm included several churches for the Anglican Church, among them Newdegate and Three Springs. Ed Whitaker considers that there is no comparison between the parish churches and *Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton*.⁵¹

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton is rare as an example of an ecclesiastical building of monumental scale constructed in the Post-War period in Western Australia, and the place is an excellent example of the radical strand of Post-War Ecclesiastical styled buildings which responded to new ideas in liturgy, providing closer involvement between congregation and clergy through the use of unorthodox plan shapes.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

Downes, Joan, *The Cathedral Church of the Holy Cross, Geraldton, Western Australia*, Holy Cross Cathedral Chapter, Geraldton, 1986.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Geraldton may be an early example of the use of sand-blasted concrete internationally but it has not been possible to substantiate this claim, made by architect Ean McDonald, within the research period.

⁵⁰ Telephone conversation with Mr Ean McDonald, op cit; HCWA database.

⁵¹ Telephone conversation with Mr Ed Whitaker by Irene Sauman, 17 June 2003.