



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**

OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 2.5 Promoting Settlement
- 3.8.5 Moving goods and people on land
- 3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways
- 3.18.1 Raising capital
- 3.23 Catering for tourists
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 8.4 Eating and drinking

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 202 Rail & light rail transport
- 507 Water, power, major transport routes

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is a good example of a Victorian era railway building in the Vernacular style, which has retained most of its original form and has been restored to its original condition. (Criterion 1.1)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is the only Midland Railway Company building that retains its original form. (Criterion 1.1)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is a significant component of the streetscape of Jones' Street. (Criterion 1.3)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters forms part of a heritage precinct, which includes *Gingin Hotel* (1902), *Granville Hotel* (1860), *St Luke's Anglican Church* (1860), *Mrs Jones' Cottage* (1859), and *Uniting Church* (1870). (Criterion 1.4)

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters illustrates the development of the Midland-Walkaway railway, reflecting its growth, the continuing development of Western Australia's railway network, and the important role of the railway system in the development of the region, and the State, in the late 19th and early to mid-20th century. (Criterion 2.1)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters was one of the first, and finest, stations built by the Midland Railway Company for their line from Midland Junction to Walkaway. (Criterion 2.2)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters was part of the development of the Midland-Walkaway Railway, which provided the essential transport system for pastoral and agricultural development in the region. (Criterion 2.2)

Midland Railway Company stations, including *Gingin Railway Station & Quarters*, are believed to be the first designs in Western Australia to include extensive platform verandahs. (Criterion 2.3)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is associated with Edward Keane one of the leading early railway builders in Western Australia and MLA for Geraldton, and with Friedrich Wilhelm Gustav Liebe, a prominent Western Australian builder, innovative farmer and developer. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters has the potential, through archaeological investigation, to yield information about the lives of late 19th century railway workers and provide further details about the functioning of the railway station complex. (Criteria 3.1 & 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is highly valued by the local community and the wider Western Australian Public, as demonstrated by requests for tours of the building by such groups as University of the Third Age, RAC Retired Officers Club, Westpac Retired Officers Club, Subiaco Walking Group, and Subiaco Senior Citizen Centre. (Criterion 4.1)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters was one of the locations used for filming the Australian movie *Shame* (1988). (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is unique as the only Midland Railway Company station that retains its original form. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is a good representative example of an intact Station building from the late 19th century. (Criterion 6.1)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters demonstrates the practice of providing accommodation for Stationmasters on the site of the railway station. (Criterion 6.2)

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters demonstrates the practice of constructing a hotel immediately opposite a railway station. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is in excellent condition. However, it is feared that its current abandoned state could lead to damage from white ants and general neglect.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters has a moderate degree of integrity. It is no longer used as a station. The Refreshment Rooms, Goods Shed, Crane and portion of the Platform have been removed. However, the main Station building is intact and its original use remains readily apparent.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Despite the loss of some associated fabric, and some restoration over the last twenty years, the Station building at *Gingin Railway Station & Quarters* has a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Eddie Marcus, in April 2009, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters (1892), a brick and rendered building in the style of an English station with attached stationmaster's quarters, was one of the first stations along the Midland Railway Line from Midland Junction to Walkaway.

European interest in the Gingin district began in the 1830s, when Edward Barrett-Lennard was granted 5,000 acres in the area. However, in 1836 he exchanged this grant for land at Beverley, noting the isolation of the area, the difficulty in getting men to work at a station there and because it was a 'favourite resort of the natives'.¹ George Fletcher Moore also encountered the Indigenous residents in 1834, and mapped the local names for geographical features of the area. Moore records that he attended a corroboree there, and it is known that corroborees were held around Gingin until 1889.²

The earliest surveyed block at Gingin was that of William Locke Brockman, consisting of 643 acres of grazing land, purchased on 29 November 1841. Brockman turned Ginginup Station into a productive farm by the late 1840s. At first, Ginginup was run as an outstation, but became a station in its own right in late 1846.³

Subsequently, a number of settlers moved into the district and a small farming community developed south of the 'Police Paddock', named for the land in a U-turn in the Gingin Brook that had been reserved for use by the police. The Police Paddock 'became a natural centre for the district'.⁴

In 1859, a bridge was built over the Brook, Saint Luke's Church was opened in 1860, and a school was established two years later. The population steadily increased, so that by 1867 petitions were sent to the government for a town to be declared. Another petition was sent in December 1868, which caused Surveyor General John Septimus Roe to send a surveyor, Henry A. Loftie, to the area. Loftie selected an area northwest of the Police Paddock, as most suitable for a town, despite local desire for the area directly around Police Paddock to be chosen.⁵

The new town, it was announced, was to be named 'Frogmore', which was greeted with derision by the locals. The name 'Granville' was quietly substituted, and despite local objections, Granville was duly proclaimed on 26 August 1869.

1 Udell, Hazel, *Gingin: 1830 to 1960* (Gingin Shire Council, 1979), pp. 2-5.

2 Udell, *Gingin*, pp. 5-7, 101.

3 Udell, *Gingin*, p. 27.

4 Udell, *Gingin*, p. 50.

5 Udell, *Gingin*, pp. 78-79.

The authorities persisted with the town of Granville for some time despite protests from settlers. Another petition was sent to the Governor in late 1869, requesting the authorities to change the site of the town to the Police Paddock, because the ground at Granville was too swampy and the place was too far from the present school, church and bridge. Finally, on 11 December 1871, Governor Weld proclaimed that 'whereas it is expedient to establish a new town in the Swan District, to be called the town of GINGIN... land situated in what is at present known as the Swan District, containing 268 acres, starting from the point where the South side of the Gingin Brook intersects the East side of the Perth to Gingin road'.⁶ The town was officially gazetted a day later on 12 December 1871.⁷

In July 1880 a group of Gingin residents signed a petition urging that the route of a proposed railway pass through Gingin and Bindoon on its way to Toodyay. The authorities rejected this route and negotiations began in 1883 to build a line between Midland Junction and Walkaway, with the Government providing a linking between Greenough and Geraldton. The contract for the Midland-Walkaway line was not signed until 1886, and in return for its construction, the Midland Railway was to be offered 12,000 acres for every mile completed.⁸

The agreement covered construction, maintenance and operation of the railway, and features of the contract included:

- A survey to be completed within one year;
- Construction to begin within two years;
- 100 miles of railway to be completed within four years;
- Not less than 50 miles of railway to be completed each subsequent year;
- Construction was to proceed simultaneously from north and south.⁹

Although the contractor, Edward Keane, made an immediate start, financial difficulties put a halt to the project by June 1887. Repeated fruitless attempts were made to raise money in London, and in 1889 the Legislature resolved that the contract would be rescinded in February 1890 if progress were not made. Finally, the Midland Railway Company was floated in London, but only after the newly responsible State Government backed the scheme.¹⁰

Later, Arthur Edward Cooper remembered his father's involvement in the project:

Mr Charles Cooper, CE (Civil Engineer) arrived at Albany in 1888 to construct the Midland Railway line under the contract of Mr Edward Keane. They built the line there as far as Upper Swan & were then held up by the building of the Upper Swan bridge over the river which took a considerable time. In 1890 Mr Cooper brought out the rest of the family consisting of his wife, maid & 2 daughters & 6

⁶ *Government Gazette*, 11 December 1871.

⁷ Udell, *Gingin*, pp. 79, 81.

⁸ *West Australian*, 10 April 1891, pp. 3-4.

⁹ Gunzburg, Adrian, *The Midland Railway Company Locomotives of Western Australia* (Melbourne: Light Railway Research Society of Australia, 1989), p. 7.

¹⁰ *West Australian*, 10 April 1891, pp. 3-4.

sons, when he got accommodation for them at Guildford as there were no houses in Midland.¹¹

The Midland Railway Company repeatedly experienced many delays and financial difficulties. When the line was opened as far as Gingin in 1891 it was five years since the original agreement had been signed, and only 40 miles of track had been completed.¹²

After these delays, the opening of the line to Gingin was an important event for the Midland Railway Company to stage-manage. In April 1891, many of the 150 guests assembled for the opening travelled up to Gingin on a special train leaving Perth at 10.20am. The journey from Perth, which had previously taken two days, took two hours.¹³ An archway of evergreens opposite the railway platform at Gingin welcomed guests. Henry Brockman made a speech at the opening ceremony in support of the district. Guests included the Governor, Sir William Robinson, and Lady Robinson.

Arthur Cooper relates a slightly different version of the event from that given in the newspapers of the day:

Eventually the line was opened to Gingin by Sir John Forrest. For this opening occasion a large Marquee was erected to hold the politicians & visitors to have a big spread but the navvies came down from their camps & mopped up all the liquor & food & when then opening party arrived there was nothing for them.¹⁴

Midland Railway Company named the new station at Gingin 'Deane' after Lady Robinson's second Christian name. It was objected that this would create confusion since: 'Passengers would have to book themselves and their parcels to Deane and their letters to Gingin'. As a consequence of such complaints, Lady Robinson declined to have the Station named after her.¹⁵

Writing to the *West Australian*, 'Settler' observed:

The Gingin district is now connected with our fair city by the Midland Railway. Gingin is one of the best watered districts in the colony. There are several ever running brooks with thousands of acres of the best garden and orchard land, also large swamps and lakes and the feed is abundant through our driest summers. From this district we may not expect much sandalwood or grain, but if an early train were to leave Gingin at 4 a.m. we could supply the city with hundreds of gallons of pure milk, fresh cream, fresh butter, fresh eggs, honey, fruit and vegetables. Gingin flows with milk and honey, and Perth would take her share if this early train were put on daily. When the line extends to the Victoria Plains then there will be a chance of more traffic in sandalwood and farm produce. Much of the best land is in the hands of Messrs. Brockman, Sadler, Dewar, Edwards and Jones, but all are open to deal with those who feel inclined to open a trade with Perth, Fremantle or Guildford.¹⁶

11 Cooper, Arthur Edward, 'Notes' (n.d., Battye Library ACC3160A)

12 'National Estate Study: Shire of Gingin', May 1978, p. 57; for more on the financial problems of the Company, see: G. Dornan, 'The Early History of the Midland Railway Company' (unpublished thesis, 1968); T. J. Bull, 'A History of the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia' (unpublished thesis, 1966); and, Neville Murphy, 'A History of the First 36 Years of the Midland Railway Company of WA, 1884-1920' (unpublished thesis, 1960).

13 'National Estate Study', p. 57.

14 Cooper, 'Notes'.

15 *West Australian*, 20 May 1891, p. 3; *West Australian*, 25 May 1891, p. 3.

16 *West Australian*, 14 April 1891, p. 3.

Financial difficulties continued to dog both Edward Keane and the Midland Railway Company. In June 1891, Keane, then MLA for Geraldton, invited Sir John Forrest and other politicians on a rail excursion to Gingin. This had the effect of obtaining further financial guarantees from the Government, thus making it easier to obtain private capital.¹⁷

In keeping with its role as a private company whose mission was to return a dividend to its shareholders, the Midland Railway Company produced very ordinary station buildings. The Company's buildings were constructed by Gustav Wilhelm Friedrich Liebe, a German builder (and an innovative farmer and developer) who was also responsible for a number of major buildings in Western Australia.¹⁸

The stations were mostly of timber and iron. Brick stations were built at Gingin and Watheroo, while Mingenew and Dongara received stone buildings. These all incorporated a Stationmaster's Residence, following the English model, with the exception of Three Springs where the residence was a separate building. All of these were provided with high-level platforms.¹⁹

Passenger comforts were catered for in the early decades by refreshment rooms or stalls at Gingin, Mogumber, Moora, Watheroo and Mingenew. In later years as buses replaced the slow mixed trains, these facilities were centred at Muchea, Watheroo, Mingenew and Walkaway, which were contracted to open for all passenger trains, day or night.²⁰

It has been noted about the Watheroo Refreshment Rooms that they were only licensed to sell alcohol for twenty minutes before the train arrived, for the duration of the time the train was in the station and for twenty minutes after.²¹

In February 1892, almost a year after the railway had reached Gingin, the line had been completed to the Moore River. Again an excursion train of politicians was brought up for the celebrations. When the train reached Gingin, the new railway station was celebrated:

[The] improvements that have been made during the year are worth seeing. The station which the Midland Company has built is a model of modern convenience. Compared with the Central Station, the balance is in favour of Gingin... The architecture is plain, but it is evident that comfort, and consequently convenience have been studied everywhere. A large galvanised railway shed is situated on the opposite side of the line... it is solid and commodious...²²

At first only two trains a week passed through Gingin and a horse-drawn mail coach continued to run from Guildford. As local people made more frequent use of the new rail service, the number of trains was increased and poultry, fruit, vegetables and firewood were sent to Perth.²³

17 Udell, *Gingin*, p. 149.

18 Tampke, Jürgen, *The Germans in Australia: The Story of the Continent's German Speaking Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), p. 99.

19 Gunzburg, *Midland Railway Company*, p. 50.

20 Higham, Geoffrey, *Marble Bar to Mandurah: A History of Passenger Rail Services in Western Australia* (Rail Heritage WA, 2007), p. 67.

21 http://www.moora.wa.gov.au/about_us/our_towns/watheroo/watheroo_history.html, accessed 25 May 2009.

22 *Western Mail*, 27 February 1892.

23 Udell, *Gingin*, p. 152.

The first stationmaster at Gingin was T. Francis, who was followed by Jack Thomas in 1898. The next man to be appointed was William Henry Joseph Horan in March 1901. With his wife Charlotte and his five children, he lived in the Stationmaster's Quarters at Gingin for many years. He took a leading part in town politics until his death in 1937 having served as Road Board Secretary for nearly twenty years.²⁴ Horan's daughter, Eileen, later recalled the Station:

It was a busy centre... numerous specials were drawn by small T class and P class engines, C class engines pulled longer trains and the services increased as did settlement further North. Under contract with the Government, a passenger train daily each way had to be run, they were mixed goods and passenger trains. The goods sheds (and large sheds were provided at Muchea, Gingin and Molliebeenie) used to be full of merchandise, while the ramp was laden with machinery, fencing wire, bales of wool and bags and bags of fertiliser.²⁵

In October 1892, 'A Medical Practitioner' complained that the Government Railways were deliberately trying to prevent passengers from using the private Midland Railway line, by refusing to run a connecting service between Guildford and Midland Junction on a weekend. This meant that day-trippers from Perth wishing to visit Gingin would be forced to walk two and a half miles between Guildford Station and Midland Junction. The letter praised Gingin as resembling an English country village, and noted that the Midland trains were far superior and more comfortable than the Government ones.²⁶

In 1901 many complaints were made to Parliament about 'the poor condition of the permanent way, the high incidence of hot boxes on passenger trains and associated delays, lack of toilet facilities on passenger trains and excessive speed at times to make up for late running'. In response to these complaints, in 1902 a Joint Parliamentary Select Committee reported that many jobs were being performed by unqualified staff and that station buildings were in poor condition.²⁷

James Vigers Aldrid Jones was the licensee of the Railway Refreshment Rooms at Gingin from at least 1916 to 1921.²⁸ Gingin continued to have Refreshment Rooms until 13 May 1932. Once it closed, the refreshments were moved to Muchea Station, situated between Gingin and Midland Junction.²⁹

After World War II, Midland Railway Company faced the need for rolling stock, which was in short supply, and 81 old wagons were borrowed from the WAGR. Traffic grew steadily in the 1950s with revenue based on wheat, livestock and supplies to the Midlands region. Almost all passenger services and a few goods services had been placed on road transport.³⁰

In 1962, it was estimated that £950,000 would be required for capital purposes, and to borrow this money would be almost impossible for the

24 Udell, *Gingin*, pp. 152-53.

25 quoted Udell, *Gingin*, p. 153.

26 *West Australian*, 27 October 1892, p. 3.

27 Gunzburg, *Midland Railway Company*, p. 35.

28 *The Moora Herald And Midland Districts Advocate*, 12 December 1916 & 17 December 1920.

29 http://wastations.i8.com/Gingin_Station.html, accessed 20 April 2009.

30 Gunzburg, *Midland Railway Company*, p. 47.

Company. The Company was consequently sold to WAGR for £1.25 million in late 1963.³¹

By the 30 March 1971, Westrail had removed Gingin Station from its books as a Staff Station and on 30 April the position of Stationmaster was withdrawn from Gingin Station.³²

In 1978 it was noted that the platform was deserted with swallows nesting above it. Regular passenger services had ceased, although popular excursions ran from Perth to Gingin in the summer. The Stationmaster's Residence was occupied by a WAGR employee who acted as a caretaker to the place. A daily goods train brought goods from Kewdale.³³

In the days of steam, water had to be pumped up the hill from Gingin Brook and it was stored in two water tanks, one at each end of the station. There were two so that when steam trains crossed at Gingin, both could be replenished simultaneously.³⁴

On 23 May 1985, the Station ceased being a place for passengers.

By 1985 the building was badly neglected and official notice was given by Gingin Shire Council that unless expressions of interest were received by 30 June 1985 for the useful retention of the building, it was to be demolished. On 1 July 1987, Gingin Railway Station building and environs were subleased by the Council for 21 years to Richard and Pauline Diggins. Richard and Pauline commenced restoring the building. Works included painting, reinstatement of internal fireplaces, reinstatement of decorative valence, reinstatement of a timber front verandah floor, step and posts, an extension to the platform, plumbing work, electrical work, landscaping, and other restoration and repair work. Part of the funding for this came from the Heritage Council of Western Australia's Incentive Programme in 1993/94.³⁵

In 2009 the original station still stands. The Station Buildings have been classified by the National Trust and placed on the Register of the National Estate. The only trains passing through the station are the occasional Hotham Valley tour train on it's way to Geraldton and coal trains from Collie to Geraldton.³⁶

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters, a brick and rendered building in the style of an English station with accompanying stationmaster's quarters, was one of the first stations along the Midland Railway Line from Midland Junction to Walkaway. The place is in a simplified version of the Victorian Georgian style. It was not possible to undertake an internal inspection during this assessment.

31 'National Estate Study', p. 57.

32 http://wastations.i8.com/Gingin_Station.html, accessed 20 April 2009.

33 'National Estate Study', p. 57.

34 http://wastations.i8.com/Gingin_Station.html, accessed 20 April 2009; Udell, *Gingin*, p. 154.

35 Colin Moore Architect, 'Restoration of the Iron Roof of the Gingin Railway Station', 23 September 1994, copy held by Heritage Council of Western Australia.

36 http://wastations.i8.com/Gingin_Station.html, accessed 20 April 2009.

Gingin is an agricultural town located 92 km north of Perth along the Brand Highway. *Gingin Railway Station & Quarters* is set opposite the Gingin Hotel on Jones Street. Landscaping is minimal, and a low wooden post and rope fence separates the place from the street.

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is 16-inch thick red brick construction with rendered brick quoins and reveal linings with splayed soldier course brick arches over. The bricks have been painted a fallow shade of brown.

The roof is galvanised corrugated iron with gable ends having gable post and beam support. The platform verandah is roofed with CGI with shaped vertical valance boards, and construction drawings indicated stop chamfered beams, rails and posts.

The Station building is T-shaped with the most substantial part of the building running parallel to the track. There are three windows to the left (east) of the entrance verandah, and a small wing to the right (west). The main entrance, off Jones Street, is approached via a set of wooden stairs to the front verandah. A plaque here notes a brief history of the place and quotes from the *Western Mail* article noted above in the Documentary Evidence. A shuttered window is on the north façade of the verandah, with a green painted four-panel wooden door and modern security screen leading off the west wall into the residence.

Passing through the doorway into an undercover area, there is a small ticket window to the right and a door marked 'Ladies Waiting Room' to the left.

The Station platform has red verandah posts, with all the windows covered with white shutters. There are two doors off the platform, one marked 'Station Master'.

At the west end of the building is a weatherboard and galvanised corrugated iron lean-to extension. Further to the west, along the platform, is a 1970s-80s small brick and tile toilet block.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Gustav Wilhelm Friedrich Liebe was born in Wittenberg, Saxony in 1862. He obtained a building diploma at the Vienna Technical School, and arrived in Adelaide in 1886. After a short spell working in South Australia and Victoria, he came to Perth in 1891. He constructed homes and a large number of public buildings, among which are: the Art Gallery, *His Majesty's Theatre*, Queen's Hall, Commercial Hotel, Dowerin (1908); and Commercial Hotel (fmr), Moora (1908).³⁷

The Midland Railway Company stations for which Liebe was responsible include:

- Watheroo Railway Station Precinct (1893): A very similar building to that at Gingin. Of red brick construction with rendered brick quoins, and a galvanised corrugated iron roof.
- Mingenew Railway Station (1894): Part of a stone and brick railway station, iron goods shed and a small signal shed remains. The extant

³⁷ Tampke, *The Germans in Australia*, p. 99.

older part of the station building, being on the eastern end, is of stone with brick quoins and shallow arched window openings, supported by hooped iron lintels.

- Coorow Station and Residence Site (1894): The original station was demolished in 1989 and replaced with a timber-framed and fibro rectangular structure.
- Dongara Railway Station (1894): Site only.

Liebe also constructed:

- *No. 1 Fire Station (fmr)* (1901): designed by Cavanagh & Cavanagh, this is a two-storey rock-faced limestone and tile-roofed corner building in the Federation Romanesque style. It has a diverse facade with arches, turrets and recessed colonnades, and exhibits both symmetry and a robust form in its rock-faced limestone walls and contrasting ornate rendered mouldings. The large semi-circular openings to the ground floor and arcade that extends across the first floor, flanked on either end by parapeted gable bays adorned with turrets, are particular features of note.

Gingin Railway Station & Quarters is a modest, functional railway building which is the most intact station building on the Midland Railway Company line, despite the loss of the refreshment rooms.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
