



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church is unsophisticated in scale and construction but achieves a pleasing composition through the interesting arrangement of forms balanced by some low-key, decorative features. (Criterion 1.1)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The former Police Station and Courthouse, now *St Elizabeth's Anglican Church*, is a direct result of the construction of the Great Southern Railway and the subsequent European occupation of the Great Southern district of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.1)

The fabric of *St Elizabeth's Anglican Church* reflects change over time: movement of population, change in usage, and memorials to members of the congregation including those lost in war. (Criterion 2.1)

The original building was designed by architect George Temple Poole. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

St Elizabeth's Anglican Church is highly valued by the local community. Its existence is testimony to the effort the community was prepared to expend in order to obtain their own place of worship. (Criterion 4.1)

St Elizabeth's Anglican Church contributes to the community's sense of place. As the former Police Station and Courthouse, it is one of the oldest buildings in Broomehill. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The form of *Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church* has been strongly influenced by the previous function of the place. The transformation from a police station into a church makes *Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church* an uncommon structure. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

St Elizabeth's Anglican Church was purchased and renovated with funds raised by local efforts, and represents the country philosophy of community self-help. (Criterion 6.2)

Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church is representative of a process of adaptation involving a significant change in use. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

There is considerable deterioration to almost all sections of the building fabric, primarily caused by water infiltration. A detailed assessment of the building condition was made in 1993. It does not appear that any of problems outlined in the report, 'Assessment of Buildings and Recommendations of Work to be Done', by Ayton and Farrow have received attention. *Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church*, although currently in a sound condition, requires maintenance.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Although the form of *Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church* has been strongly influenced by the previous function of the place as a Police Station and Courthouse, little discernible evidence of its original purpose remains. Nevertheless, the place has a high degree of integrity as an adaptation to a church and continues to function in that role.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Modifications to transform the place from a police station into a church have been quite extensive. Internal walls and chimneys have been removed; new windows have been inserted; the verandah has been enclosed; a belfry has been added to the roof and a new fabric has been introduced to form a sanctuary extending from the east end of the building. Police cells to the north of the building are no longer extant. Despite these alterations, most of the fabric belongs to the original construction. *Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church* has moderate authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Ham-Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Katrina Chisholm, Graduate Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

St Elizabeth's Anglican Church, Broomehill, was established in 1953 in the former Broomehill Police Station and Courthouse. The Police Station and Courthouse was built in 1892, under the direction of Public Works Department architect, George Temple Poole.

Prior to the 1880s, the south-west of the state was sparsely populated by Europeans. Sandalwood cutters worked the forests, and a few settlers established themselves by selecting 16 - 20 acres of freehold land near permanent water, or taking up grazing leases of 1600 - 2000 acres.

A track developed between Perth and Albany, largely as a result of the sandalwood cutters carting their loads to the coast for export to China. The track became known as the Albany road. With the desire to attract more settlers to the area, the Western Australian Government decided to establish a rail link between Perth and Albany. The desired route was along the Albany road, but York, linked to Perth by the Eastern Railway in 1881, lobbied to be included on the rail link with Albany. The Government conceded, and extended the Eastern Railway from York to Beverley, while Anthony Hordern's West Australian Land Company Ltd constructed the line from Beverley to Albany. This section of line, opened in 1889, was known as the Great Southern Railway, and was built in exchange for land grants along the route.¹

The Government suspended its own land offers to allow Hordern's Company to sell its land grants to migrants, but the Company had difficulty attracting prospective settlers, and its freight charges were twice as high as charges on other lines. The Government grew impatient, and made land available with The Homestead Act, 1893, which granted settlers 160 acres and allowed them seven years to make improvements, and The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894, which provided long term loans to pay for the improvements.² In 1897, the Government purchased the Great Southern Railway, and all land grants, from the West Australian Land Company Ltd for £1,100,000.³

Broomehill was established as a railway station, 4 kms from the township of Etipup on the Albany road. Etipup reached its peak in the 1880s with a hotel, two general stores, three blacksmiths, and a church, which was also used as a school. The church was built in 1884, with the local residents contributing

¹ *Western Australian Government Gazette* 25 September 1884, p.491.

² *Statutes of Western Australia* Perth, Gov. Printer. The Homesteads Act, 1893, No.18 of 1893; The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894., No.21 of 1894.

³ *Yearbook of Western Australia* 1897, p.69.

materials and labour. Lady Brassey, whose family owned 'Goblup', a local property, donated £50 for the church vestry.⁴

With the opening of the Great Southern Railway Etipup began to decline. The Krakouer brothers relocated their general store business to Broomehill in 1890, and the hotel business followed. In 1892, the Police Station and Courthouse, with police residence, designed by George Temple Poole, was built by T. James for £796.⁵ In the same year, a school was opened in Broomehill and the school in the Etipup church closed.

The Police Station and Courthouse was extended in 1907, with the addition of a new office.⁶ This work was done under the direction of Public Works Department architect, Hillson Beasley. The addition was in keeping with the original building.

Church services continued to be held in the Etipup church until around 1920. Anglican services at Broomehill were held in the Broomehill Hall.⁷

In 1939, a fund was established to move the Etipup Church to Broomehill and rebuild it as a memorial to pioneers in the district. World War Two interrupted the plan, but it was re-established in 1948. Funds were raised through various stalls, a ball, and by cropping a paddock made available on 'Ulupna', a property owned by Mr Bert Patton. Labour and equipment for the planting and harvesting were donated by the residents of Broomehill. This paddock became known locally as the Church Paddock. Approximately £2,000 was raised for the church fund.⁸

In 1951, a new police station was opened. According to a Public Works Department plan, the old building was condemned, but Rector, C. G. Tiller, suggested to his congregation that, instead of rebuilding the Etipup church, they could purchase the old Police Station and Courthouse and convert it into a church.⁹ The purchase went ahead, with an offer of £450, and plans for the alterations were drawn up by Forbes and Fitzhardinge.¹⁰ The foundation stone of the new church was laid on 18 April 1953, by Mr and Mrs V. Greenslade, who were 'active church-people'.¹¹ *St Elizabeth's Anglican Church* was consecrated the 'Church of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary' on 25 July 1953. The altar was built with bricks from the old Etipup Church.¹²

A bell (originally a ship's bell, according to local history) was donated by Mrs Agnes Stewart, and dedicated to her late husband. At first, the bell was hung from a post at the front of the building but was later hung in the belfry. A plaque inside *St Elizabeth's Anglican Church* reads:

This bell was hung to the glory of God and to the memory of Walter Frederick Stewart.

⁴ Nelson, Lloyd *The Great Southern Expedition of 1835: a factual and closely researched account of the first exploration of the solid Great Southern Region of Western Australia, 150 years ago* Perth, L. Nelson, 1985, p.63.

⁵ *Western Australian Government Gazette* 13 October 1892, p.831.

⁶ Plan 13157, PWD WA, 26 April, 1907 (See Supporting Material).

⁷ *The Great Southern Herald* 28 April, 1909. p.2.

⁸ 'The history of the Anglican church in Etipup and Broomehill', HCWA File PD0306.

⁹ Plan 31337, PWD WA, 25 March 1948, Block plan. (See Supporting Material)

¹⁰ 'The history of the Anglican church in Etipup and Broomehill'. op. cit.

¹¹ 'Police Station Becomes a Church' *The Messenger*, June 1953, p.3.

¹² HCWA report, January 1993, p.5 (Information from Broomehill Museum).

The stained glass window at the back of the church was dedicated to Lieut. Frank Richardson, killed in action in New Guinea on 3 December 1943, aged 20. He was the brother of Mr Neal Richardson, of 'Jam Creek' Broomehill.

Regular services are no longer held in *St Elizabeth's Anglican Church*. Broomehill has been affected by the population decline in the area caused by the downgrading of services on the Great Southern Railway in the 1970s and 1980s. Broomehill also never grew as expected when nearby Katanning developed as the major centre for the district.

St Elizabeth's Anglican Church has had some maintenance and repairs carried out in recent years, but is in need of more work.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church, formerly the Broomehill Police Station and Courthouse, is located at the corner of Janitor and Devine streets, in Broomehill. The church is set back from the street verge and surrounded by predominantly residential buildings, although the building is adjacent to the present police station. An external WC, no longer in use, constructed in asbestos with a corrugated iron skillion roof, is the only other structure on the site, located immediately behind the north-west corner of the nave.

Designed as a Police Station and Courthouse by George Temple Poole and constructed in 1892, a process of adaptation transformed the building into a church in 1953. Constructed in brick with a corrugated iron pitched roof, the single-storey building has a domestic scale. The Latin Cross form is evident but the church lacks a strong, ecclesiastical image. The nave extends in an east west orientation with the old police quarters forming the transepts and vestry. New fabric was introduced at the eastern end to create the sanctuary which terminates in a gable end, accentuated with buttresses at the corners. A steeply inclined, pyramidal spire is located directly above the crossing of nave and transepts.

The overhanging eaves of the longitudinal, south elevation provide shelter for the congregational entry directly into the nave from two doors at either end of the verandah. The overhang is supported by timber posts and solid triangular brackets. This simple decorative feature in the bracketing is complemented by the slight widening in the end of the barge boards of the gable ends. External walls are rendered and constructed with a fourteen inch, low brick plinth which is continuous around the building except in the north-west corner. Above the plinth, the walls narrow to nine inches wide.

Windows are of conventional, timber framed construction in the vestry but within the central church area arched, metal framed windows with a central awning sash have been inserted into the walls. In the south transept the windows are arranged in a group of three with a larger central window. A stained glass window is situated in the west wall at the end of the nave. The panelled timber doors are likely to be original fabric.

Internally, finishes are simple with timber floors, plastered ceilings and walls and high timber skirtings. Wide, pointed arched openings have been formed in the walls separating the nave, transepts and sanctuary. The sanctuary is raised slightly above the main floor level of the church and has a terrazzo

finish. The altar also has a terrazzo finish although the documentary evidence suggests that it is constructed of bricks from the former Etipup Church. Interestingly, what appears to be a sample of wheat, in a glass tube has been cast into the southern, vertical panel of the altar. A plaque on the north wall of the nave, near the door to the vestry dedicates the bell to the 'Glory of God and to the Memory of Walter Frederick Stewart'.

The vestry is entered from doors in both the nave and the north transept. The central area of the vestry, defined by the remaining portions of the former external walls and a timber floor, is surrounded by the now enclosed verandah. This L-shaped verandah on the north and west sides of the building has a concrete floor and exposed timber roof construction. A bell rope hangs through a hatch in the ceiling of the vestry.

In 1907, an office was added to the western end of the Broomehill Police Station Quarters. The transformation into a church, in 1953, involved the removal of fireplaces and of some internal walls, as well as the introduction of some new fabric to form the vestry and to enclose the verandah. In the nave of the church it is possible to detect the location of these alterations in the inconsistencies in the flooring. New arched metal windows have been inserted into existing openings and the church spire has been added to the roof.

There is considerable damage to the building primarily caused by water infiltration. Both internal and external plasterwork are spalling, particularly up to window sill height. The metal window frames are rusting and the stained glass window frame is bowed. The north window to the vestry has a broken pane with a makeshift, taped repair. A significant vertical crack is apparent in the north wall at the abutment of the enclosed verandah. The building is suffering from a lack of maintenance but appears to be structurally sound. An assessment of *Saint Elizabeth's Anglican Church* was made in 1993 outlining building maintenance works required. Most of these are still current and it appears little has been done to rectify any of the problems mentioned.¹³ At that time, the corrugated iron roof was reported to be leaking although this was not evident at the time of inspection.

13.3 REFERENCES

Farrow, L. 'Assessment of Buildings & Recommendations of Work to be Done' Ayton and Farrow, Albany WA, July 1993.

¹³ Farrow, L. 'Assessment of Buildings & Recommendations of Work to be Done', July 1993. Ayton and Farrow, Albany, WA.