



**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)**

- 2.4.4 Migrating through organised colonisation
- 2.5 Promoting Settlement on the land through selection an group settlement,
- 4.5 Making towns to serve rural Australia
- 8.6 Worshipping
- 9 Marking the phases of life

#### **HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)**

- 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees
- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 107 Settlements
- 111 Depression and boom
- 406 Religion
- 602 Early settlers

#### **11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\***

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* contains good examples of church furniture, including an altar table, font, pews, and pedestal. The place also has the potential through archaeological excavation to reveal characteristics of earlier structures. (Criterion 1.1)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* has value as a landmark in the town of Australind due to its continuity of form since the 1840s, and function since 1850.

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Its garden setting and popularity as a tourist destination have contributed to its landmark qualities. (Criterion 1.3)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is significant for its contribution to the aesthetic values of the setting of the townscape of Australind. Together with the adjacent properties of Upton House and Henton Cottage, the properties collectively form a significant precinct. (Criterion 1.4)

#### **11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is valued as an illustration of the earliest European settlement in Australind and the surrounding district. (Criterion 2.1)

The place is associated with an attempt by a private company, the Western Australian Company to establish an agricultural settlement that was separate to government programmes and incentives. It is also associated with Edmund Wakefield whose principles guided the broad outline of the venture and personally Wakefield also invested financially in the project. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is closely associated with several families who were significant in the establishment of Australind and the wider Shire of Harvey. Prominent among these are the extended family of Marshall Waller Clifton, Chief Commissioner for the Western Australian Company who instigated the settlement at Australind. In the 20th century the family were intimately involved in the management of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind*. The place is also associated with John Allnutt who instigated the establishment of the Congregation Church in the former residence and was its first lay reader. Of significance also is the association with William and Sarah Narroway who lived in the building when it was a dwelling from 1844 to 1850. (Criterion 2.3)

#### **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

There is potential for the place to reveal information on techniques of building in the 1840s in Western Australia. The original building is substantially intact and the methods of construction would be relatively easy to study given the simple form of the building. (Criterion 3.1)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* has value for its potential as an archaeological site. The grounds around and under the place may reveal evidence of its former use as a dwelling. There is potential for archaeological evidence to be found in the adjacent garden. (Criterion 3.1)

#### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is valued by the community of Australind and the surrounding district because of its associations with the Congregational church from 1850 to 1914 and with the Anglican Church from 1914 to the present (2008). (Criterion 4.1)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is valued for its role in bringing the scattered community together for social events. During the 19th and early 20th century *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was one of the few venues in the Australind town and district for community gatherings. (Criterion 4.1)

The place is associated with those early colonists who settled in Australind in the 1840s. Although modified, the simple construction, size and finish of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* indicates the type of housing available to the first settlers. William and Sarah Narroway were the longest occupants of the place in its

residential form and gave their name to the cottage prior to its use as a church. (Criterion 4.1)

The place contributes significantly to the community's sense of place because of its continuity of form since c.1844 and its continuity of function since 1850. (Criterion 4.2)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is valued by the community at Australind and the Shire of Harvey as shown by its inclusion in the Shire of Harvey municipal inventory and the level of concern over the recent damage to the place following the car collision in 2007. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1. RARITY**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a rare example of the type of dwelling erected by Western Australian colonists following their arrival in Australind. (Criterion 5.1)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a rare example of a colonist's first cottage which has retained its original form rather than becoming part of later extensions. (Criterion 5.2)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a representative example of the type of timber structure erected by early colonial settlers in Western Australia. The form was well represented in British villages and the use of timber represents the early settlers' response of constructing their dwellings from readily available materials. (Criterion 6.1)

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* demonstrates the type of dwelling built for early colonists in the early years of the settlement of Western Australia. Although changed internally since its original construction it still illustrates the scale of accommodation available for the early settlers. (Criterion 6.2)

The conversion of the place to a church in 1850 demonstrates the practice of reusing buildings, which was common in regional areas. The continued use of the place for that function until the present demonstrates the significant role of the local church in the community at Australind. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is in good condition with the recent repairs to the front façade undertaken with regard to the heritage fabric. The place is regularly and well maintained. It has changed little since its conversion to a church in 1850 with some of the original furniture still in use.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* has a high degree of integrity although it is no longer a dwelling, as was its original intent. The original intention is still readily apparent externally as it retains the form of a small cottage. Internally the place has been modified for its current use as a church through the removal of a dividing wall and the addition of movable items. The interior is largely unaffected by its change of function to a church and this use has now a strong association with the place and is compatible with the former use.

## **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* has a high degree of authenticity as the majority of the original fabric is intact. The roof cladding is not original but the corrugated roofing material has been in evidence since at least 1919. The wall structure and external cladding are mostly original and internally the finishes are probably not original but have been in situ since the early 20th century.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Ian Hocking architect of Hocking Planning & Architecture and historian Prue Griffin, in March 2008, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a single-storey, timber and iron building in the Old Colonial Georgian style, set in a landscaped garden. It was constructed c.1844 as a modest cottage for Australind settlers in the 1840s. The building was converted to a Congregational Church in 1850 and dedicated as an Anglican Church in 1915.

Prior to European settlement, the Australind region was occupied by the Wardani [Wardandi] Indigenous peoples.<sup>1</sup> Following establishment of the Swan River colony in 1829 small groups set out to explore the agricultural potential of the surrounding districts. A group led by Governor Stirling first explored the area now known as Australind in March 1830. Their impressions of the agricultural prospects of the Leschenault Inlet were so favourable that Stirling was persuaded to take up a grant of 100,000 acres. The other major land grant following that expedition was a grant of 103,000 acres to absentee landholder Colonel Peter Latour.<sup>2</sup>

Few improvements, if any, were undertaken on the land in the first ten years and in 1839/40 Latour's entire estate and half of Stirling's grant were purchased by a group of investors in England named the 'Western Australian Company'.<sup>3</sup> This group, inspired by the principles of colonisation promoted by Edward Gibbon Wakefield (who was also a financial investor in the Australind scheme),<sup>4</sup> aimed to facilitate a scheme of land development for English migrants separate from the government programs and incentives. A prospectus was prepared and widely distributed. The name 'Austral-Ind' was adopted to promote the scheme amongst investors and colonists from India.<sup>5</sup>

The company appointed former Admiralty public servant, Marshall Waller Clifton (1787-1861) to oversee the establishment of the settlement.<sup>6</sup> Clifton was also related by marriage to Wakefield.<sup>7</sup> Clifton, his large family, and the first group of colonists arrived at Port Leschenault in March 1841 aboard the *Parkfield*.<sup>8</sup> In April 1842, a second group of colonists arrived via the *Diadem* and in December 1842 a third group on the *Trusty*. The *Trusty* returned with the final group of colonists in May 1844. The colonists consisted of 'settlers' who had purchased

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1 Murray, Judith and Lyon, Kent, *Conservation Plan for Henton Cottage, Australind*, draft report July 2007.

2 Staples, A.C., *They Made Their Destiny: History of Settlement of the Shire of Harvey 1829-1929* Shire of Harvey, 1979, Chapter 5. See also HCWA Register of Heritage Places, place number 1189, *Henton Cottage* for a summary of the settlement of the Australind district.

3 Staples, op. cit., p. 67.

4 Staples, op. cit., p. 67.

5 Staples, op. cit., p. 68.

6 Barnes, Phyllis *Marlston Hill and All That P.* Barnes Bunbury, 2001, p. 18.

7 Staples, A.C. *Marshall Waller Clifton* Australian Dictionary of Biography, online edition [www.adb.online.anu.au](http://www.adb.online.anu.au) accessed April 2008.

8 Staples, op. cit., pp. 70-72.

land and 'labourers' dependent on the settlers. Both groups immigrated with dependent families.<sup>9</sup>

By early 1843, it was apparent that the settlement was failing. The ultimate collapse of the settlement was due to number of reasons including; the lack of capital to support development as well as dependants, the number of landowners who had remained in England and the general economic depression in the Swan River colony.<sup>10</sup> In January 1843, 76 of the total arrivals of 441 had already left Australind to seek a better future elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

The Western Australian Company's operations in England were also in decline. In early 1843, Clifton's wage was cut in half and by June of that year his position was abolished. Clifton remained in Australind with his family of thirteen.<sup>12</sup> By April 1844, the population of the settlement was approximately 125 with 77 living in the townsite.<sup>13</sup>

The parcel of land that is now the site of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was created in 1841 as one of the Australind Town lots created by the Western Australian Company.<sup>14</sup> The owner, as shown in the Land Order documentation, was George Robert Teede (1811-67) who selected the land in August 1841 while still living in London.<sup>15</sup> Teede was a Congregationalist who worked as a bookseller and stationer in England and was, at various times, a schoolmaster, clerk of courts, postmaster and gaoler.<sup>16</sup> Together with his wife Mildred Mary (née Bird) and son George, he arrived at Australind in April 1842 on the *Diadem*.

The exact date of construction of the building now known as *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* has proved difficult to confirm. Originally a two-roomed residence, it may have been built for the Teedes in 1842/43. In any case, the Teede family, like many of the first settlers, did not stay long in Australind, probably being among the many Australind colonists who left during 1843 when the population shrank dramatically.<sup>17</sup> Transfer of the land was signed in January 1844,<sup>18</sup> and a report of the settlement prepared by Marshall Clifton in April of that year does not show Teede as a resident.

The new owner was William Pearce Clifton,<sup>19</sup> one of the fifteen children of Marshall Waller Clifton and Elinor (née Bell). William had arrived, aged 25, with his family in 1841 aboard the *Parkfield*, and, in 1844, he married Annette

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9 Staples, op. cit., pp. 75-77.

10 Staples, op. cit., pp. 75-77.

11 Staples, op. cit., p. 75.

12 Staples, op. cit., pp. 75, 78-80.

13 Staples, op. cit., p. 78.

14 The large parcel of land that included the townsite of Australind was known as Wellington Location 1 and a title for that land was created in 1844. The individual owners of the lots was overseen by the Western Australian Company and not recorded by the Department of Lands and Surveys. A search of the Landgate records reveals that the current title is preceded by this large landholding, Wellington Location 1. It is possible that further research will reveal information on land ownership. However the information on the Town Land Order covers the period from 1841 to 1850 when the place became a church and it continues in that function.

15 Town Land Order No. 62 Western Australian Company Settlement of Australind.

16 Erickson, Rica (comp) *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians pre-1829-1888*, Vol 4, UWA Press, 1988, p. 3026. MN1162 Acc 3468A. Battye library has some biographical information relating to George Teede but little relating to his Australind experiences.

17 Staples, op. cit., p. 77.

18 Town Land Order No. 62 Western Australian Company Settlement of Australind.

19 Town Land Order No. 62 Western Australian Company Settlement of Australind.

Josephine Gaudin. In 1846 was appointed the agent for claims to the Western Australian Company, and was a significant landholder and pastoralist in the region, holding office as a Justice of the Peace and Resident Magistrate for Bunbury. He married for a second time in 1874, to Amy Symmons, and together they had three children.<sup>20</sup>

Prior to the construction of his home, *Leschenault Homestead*, William Pearce occupied 'Upton House' within the Australind townsite. Although he owned the land now occupied by *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* from 1844, it is unlikely he ever lived on the site.<sup>21</sup> A. C. Staples suggests that the timber cottage was either constructed by or occupied by new arrival William Narrowway in 1844.<sup>22</sup>

William Narrowway (1791-1871) arrived in Australind in May 1844 on the *Trusty* with his wife Sarah (1790-1872).<sup>23</sup> The couple remained in Australind and William worked as a labourer for local landowners. *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was known as 'Narrowway's Cottage' because of this association.

Limited materials, equipment and expertise hampered building construction prior to 1850 in the Swan River colony and associated settlements. Design of buildings was informed by the Georgian and Regency styles and domestic architecture was influenced by the knowledge of vernacular rural buildings in Britain modified to suit the local conditions and materials. The general form of buildings of this period is described as:

External wall faces were flat with few, if any, breaks or offsets. Walls were frequently plastered externally, conforming to the adopted style, this practice probably being necessary to protect the brickwork.

Façade treatment on the whole was fairly formal, in conformity with Georgian and Regency prototypes, with regularly spaced windows. The restriction in glass sizes of the time produced the familiar square panes and glazing bars peculiar to double sashed windows. Floor plans were simple and roofs equally straightforward, with unbroken pitched hipped roofs, thatched or shingled.<sup>24</sup>

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is consistent with the above description with its simple form and use of local materials. It is probable that the original roofing material was shingle as this was used at two comparable buildings in Australind, *Henton Cottage* and *Upton House*. Physical evidence indicates that the lapped timber boards on the roof are original and it is not known if the original wall construction was timber as is currently in evidence.

William Narrowway had a close association with local landowner John Allnutt (1799-1861) who had arrived on the same ship as the Narrowways, with his wife,

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20 Erickson, *Bicentennial Dictionary*, Vol 1, pp. 572-74.

21 William Pearce Clifton built a cottage in 1846 south of Australind on the Old Coast Road, Bunbury. This building now known as *Leschenault Homestead* was originally constructed of wattle and daub with a shingle roof. See HCWA Register of Heritage Places place number 00344; Staples, op. cit., p. 103. Note: the date given in HCWA documentation is 1843 but Staples convincingly shows *Leschenault Homestead* was built 1846.

22 Staples, op. cit., p. 96. Narrowway is also recorded as James Narrowway. However as the Town Land Order document refers to William, so this name will be used in the documentation.

23 Erickson, *Bicentennial Dictionary*, Vol 3, p. 2295. Also refer to the online index for WA births deaths and marriage prior to 1896. [www.justice.wa.gov.au](http://www.justice.wa.gov.au) accessed April 2008.

24 Hocking Planning & Architecture in association with Fiona Bush, *Influences on Architectural Styles and Building Materials in the South West and Great Southern Regions of Western Australia from the Commencement of European Settlement to WW2*, June 1995, pp. 24-25.

Anne, nee Saunders in May 1844.<sup>25</sup> Narroway worked for Allnutt and the two families lived in close proximity as Allnutt owned and occupied the adjacent Henton Cottage from 1845.<sup>26</sup>

In 1850, *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was formally transferred to William Narroway by William Pearce Clifton.<sup>27</sup> It was in this year that the building was converted to use as a church for the Congregational community in Australind and its surrounds. William and Sarah Narroway were living away from the townsite whilst William worked as a shepherd for Allnutt on one of his farming properties on the Collie River.<sup>28</sup>

John Allnutt was the key figure in the establishment of the congregational church at Australind. He organised the removal of the dividing wall in the building and installed a pulpit and four pews. The jarrah seats were apparently constructed by local craftsmen with the available tools, 'the saw, hammer and adze'.<sup>29</sup> Allnutt was also the lay reader and for the opening of the Church on 12 September 1850 he prepared a hymn.<sup>30</sup>

Allnutt continued to hold services in the Chapel until his death in 1861. He was succeeded by Reverend Andrew Buchanan in 1866.<sup>31</sup> Buchanan and his family were based in Bunbury and Buchanan would walk the six miles to preach and conduct Sunday school. Interestingly, Andrew Buchanan was married to Catherine Ann Teede who was one of the daughters of the original owner of the land on which *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is located.<sup>32</sup> Buchanan shared services in the Chapel with the Anglican Rector of Picton, The Reverend Archdeacon Wollaston.<sup>33</sup>

Following the construction of a new Congregational Church in Bunbury and the improvements in transport, many people preferred to travel to Bunbury and Congregational services declined at Australind.<sup>34</sup>

In 1893, an official opening for the South West Railway was held in Australind and it was noted at the time that there were no people living in the townsite and very few in the district.<sup>35</sup>

Some sources note that *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was used as a school in the late 19th and early 20th centuries although this has not been confirmed.<sup>36</sup>

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25 Erickson, *Bicentennial Dictionary*, Vol 1, p. 33. Erickson notes (*Bicentennial Dictionary*, Vol 3, p. 2295) that William Narroway accompanied John Allnutt to the Blackwood region in the 1860s. Staples also comments that Narroway regularly worked for Allnutt.

26 Staples, op. cit., p. 96.

27 Town Land Order No. 62 Western Australian Company Settlement of Australind. 24 May 1850.

28 Staples, op. cit., p. 107.

29 Smith, M.E. 'St. Nicholas Anglican church (The Little Church) Australind' unpublished document held by the Bunbury Historical Society. Unpaginated.

30 The hymn consists of nine verses and the original document written by John Allnutt is held in the Battye library, see MN371, 1924A-1926A.

31 Sanders, Theodore *Bunbury Some Early History* Roebuck book, 1975, p. 68.

32 Biographical information relating to the descendents of George Robert Teede and Mildred Mary Bird, 3468A, MN1162, Battye Library.

33 Erickson, *Bicentennial Dictionary*, Vol 1, p. 573.

34 Sanders, Theodore *Bunbury Some Early History* Roebuck book, 1975, p. 68.

35 Clifton, Algernon F. 'Early Days of Australind' unpublished document held by City of Bunbury Local History Collection, c.1929, unpaginated.

A certificate of title for *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was created in July 1915 and it shows the owner of the Church as the Augustine Congregational Church Bunbury Incorporated.<sup>37</sup> The creation of a title was probably as a result of the use of the place as an Anglican Church. The daughter of the Rev Buchanan recalls that the Church changed hands on 14 August 1914.<sup>38</sup>

On 23 December 1915, the Church was dedicated by Bishop Frederick Goldsmith for use as an Anglican church. A formal transfer of the property to the current owners, the Diocesan Trustees of Bunbury Incorporated, occurred in 1945 as noted in the current Certificate of Title.<sup>39</sup>

The Rev John Frewer (1883-1974), the Anglican Rector for South Bunbury was instrumental in the acquisition of the Church for the Diocese of Bunbury.<sup>40</sup> The Church was named St Nicholas after the church in Skirbeck, Lincolnshire, England where Rev Frewer served his curacy. In 1929, after serving in several south west parishes, Rev Frewer achieved the position of Bishop of the north west and relocated to Broome. He actively engaged with the Anglican and broader community and travelled widely throughout his diocese until his retirement in 1965.<sup>41</sup>

The modifications in 1915 were not significant although it was noted that the interior of the Church was painted and an altar was erected. The pulpit and pews were retained.<sup>42</sup> The reference to internal painting could imply a new coat of protective sealant on the timber boards. The construction and finish of the interior of the Church prior to this date has not been determined.

The Clifton family who were living at the nearby *Upton House* were involved in the establishment and ongoing management of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind*. Miss Laura Clifton (1880-1959) was responsible for the linen, flowers and played the organ during services. After services it was a regular occurrence for the parishioners to gather at *Upton House* for refreshments.<sup>43</sup> In 1915, Robert Cecil Clifton donated the font and reading desk which he constructed and decorated with simple hand carving. His son, Edmund Clifton later donated a lamp stand, also carved by Robert Cecil Clifton. The hand beaten brassware candle holders and the bowl in the font were made by local artist and craftsman, Mr Holdsworth sometime prior to 1966.<sup>44</sup>

The organ in *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was donated by Robert Cecil Clifton and is an example of an 'Estey' organ, a type of reed organ built in

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36 Shire of Harvey, Municipal Inventory, Place number 10, and Sanders, op. cit. See also Smith, Maidee W 'Schooling at Australind' extract from p. 6 held by Bunbury Historical Society which states that in 1897 the building was offered to the Education Department for £8 by Rev Buchanan.

37 Certificate of Title 621/96, Landgate, 23 July 1915.

38 Sloan, Blanche (daughter of Rev Buchanan) 'Australind Church' held by Bunbury Historical Society.

39 Certificate of Title 621/96, Landgate, 14 October 1945.

40 Smith, M.E. 'St. Nicholas Anglican church (The Little Church) Australind' unpublished document held by Bunbury Historical Society. A short History of the Church of St Nicholas of Australind, unpublished document held by Bunbury Historical Society. Theodora Sanders writes that Rev Frewer paid £40 for freehold title to the church building. The Certificate of Title does not confirm this as the building was owned by the Augustine Congregational Church of Bunbury until 1945.

41 Boyce, Peter 'Rev John Frewer (1883-1974)', *Australian Biographical Dictionary* online [www.adb.online.anu.edu.au](http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au) accessed 7 April 2008.

42 Sanders, Theodore *Bunbury Some Early History* Roebuck book, 1975, p. 68.

43 Sanders, Theodore *Bunbury Some Early History* Roebuck book, 1975, p. 68.

44 Smith, M.E. 'St. Nicholas Anglican church (The Little Church) Australind' unpublished document held by Bunbury Historical Society.

Brattleboro, Vermont.<sup>45</sup> Robert Cecil Clifton was a grandson of Marshall Waller Clifton and achieved the position of Under Secretary for Lands between 1891 and 1918. He was a keen musician and craftsman and also manufactured organs for several churches.<sup>46</sup>

Since 1915, *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* has continued to be used by the Australind Anglican community with little change to the structure. Photographs of the Church from the 1920s and 1930s indicate that the external form of the building has not changed significantly since that time. The lower two thirds of the windows facing Paris Road appear to have been painted white since at least c.1919 and the corrugated iron roof and post and rail fence were in evidence at this time. Only one photograph (c.1919) of the interior of the Church was found and it indicates that the internal wall finish and the detail of the altar have not significantly changed.<sup>47</sup>

In the first half of the 20th century the Anglican community in the district regularly attended *Church of St Nicholas, Australind*. The small size of the Church gave it a feeling of intimacy as described by one former parishioner.

Being small, the pews were always full, the Clergy had barely room to move about, and it always gave the effect of really being a well filled Church, a feeling not felt in a large Church. ... The entrance opened right onto the road. Peppermint trees grew around the Church and the windows looked across the grassy fields towards the Estuary. Not many travelled along the road in the old days so it was nice and quiet. The quietness gave a feeling reverence and made one feel it was Sunday, a day of rest. There was always something very hallowed about St Nicholas.<sup>48</sup>

In 1946, it was noted that *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was surrounded by tall trees of tuart and peppermint.<sup>49</sup> Photographs from the 1930s confirm that the trees surrounding the building were abundant and were evident in much of the surrounding area. The number of trees has been dramatically thinned since that time.

A photograph of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* in 1959 shows that the roof was red corrugated iron and the windows were still painted.<sup>50</sup> A photograph in 1968 shows that the roof cladding had been replaced with zinc plated corrugated steel. The front door had also been painted a light colour.<sup>51</sup>

In 1965, *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was included within the parish of St Elizabeth, Carey Park. At the time of the establishment of the new parish a Ladies Guild was established at the Church. One of its first tasks was to raise funds to replace the floor in the building as the floor had deteriorated to such an extent that large gaps were evident between the boards. A new red carpet was laid down the aisle and nave, and new drapes were installed around the altar.<sup>52</sup> It is recalled that at that time, 20 of Australind's 50 families were Anglicans. Shortly after the formation of the Guild, a shed was built by community members

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45 The Estey organ was manufactured between 1849 and the 1950s and was transported around the globe. It is possible to identify individual organs from their serial numbers. [www.esteyorgan.com](http://www.esteyorgan.com)

46 Erickson, *Bicentennial Dictionary*, Vol 1, p. 573.

47 See Battye library photographic collection, 5794B/14, 5794B/13, 7317B, 3583B, BA131/8, 4842P, 816B/B953, 3741B/2. These photographs range from c.1919 to the 1930s.

48 Sanders, Theodore *Bunbury Some Early History* Roebuck book, 1975, p. 68.

49 Clarke, GE *Early History of Bunbury* The Colortype Press Ltd, 1946, p. 63.

50 Australian Heritage Council photograph EA015196-14583. Online edition [www.pictureaustralian.org](http://www.pictureaustralian.org)

51 Victorian State Library Photograph AN017209, Online edition [www.pictureaustralian.org](http://www.pictureaustralian.org)

52 *South Western Times* 5 Nov 1974, no page number, collection of the Bunbury Historical Society.

on the site where the current shire offices are located. The shed provided a venue for community groups to meet. Later alterations to *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* included the installation of electric light and the addition of a water system. Repairs to the roof were a constantly undertaken as the roof was in poor condition at that time.<sup>53</sup>

Within the interior of the Church are a number of inscribed plaques erected in memory of individuals and families who had an association with the building, either as a church or residence. Prominent among these memorials are those to the Clifton family.

One visitor to the Church in 1973 was inspired to write some celebratory verse. A copy of this poem is on display on the upper east wall:

I know the bushland birds sing sweetest  
Around the tiny church at Australind  
It has stood for six score years or more.  
Over the creek – just around the bend.  
The breeze whispered through the branches.  
As I quietly stepped inside  
To find a peaceful – silent welcome;  
Loving hands had worked with pride.  
  
Fresh flowers and treasures to greet me;  
As I roamed that Sunday afternoon  
No congregation knelt in prayer –  
Yet I know there should be soon,  
O, could I have lingered there  
To share GOD with them at seven,  
But time had come to travel on,  
And just ask to be forgiven.

Margaret Rawling

*Composed following her visit to the Church of St Nicholas, Australind in January 1973.*

In 1987, the Carey Park old church was transported to Australind to serve as the church for the Australind community. *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was kept as a tourist attraction and as a venue for individual services.<sup>54</sup>

In 1990, the Church celebrated its 150th anniversary with a special service by Reverend Ernest Scrivens, a former reverend at the Church. Present at the service were four founding members of the Ladies Guild: Maddie Smith, Joan Triplett, Amy Holmes and Rosemary Mazza.

In 1993, the parish of Australind was created and in 1994 a new rectory and a new worship centre was built.<sup>55</sup> It was also speculated at this time that the facilities adjacent to *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* would be extended. Gayle Donaldson-Stiff was the trainee pastor at the Church in the early 1990s and was very active in promoting the church in the community.<sup>56</sup> She prepared a document outlining the steps the parish had taken to increase facilities and services to attract new members to the church. She noted in 1996 that the population of the area doubled between 1991 and 1995 due to housing

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53 *South Western Times* 28 June 1990, no page number, collection of the Bunbury Historical Society.

54 Donaldson-Stiff, Gayle, *The Mustard Seed the Story of St Nicholas' Australind; the Experience of planting and growing a church with few resources and great enthusiasm*, The Anglican Education Centre, Adelaide, 1996, p. v

55 Shire of Harvey Municipal Inventory, Site 10, Shire of Harvey. Donaldson-Stiff, op. cit., p. v.

56 *The Leschenault Reporter* 31 March 1993, p. 6.

developments and increased employment opportunities in the area and recorded that the congregation in the mid 1980s was fifteen and by 1993 was 28 and increased to 100 by 1995.

A feature of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* had been a Register Book that recorded visitors to the place. This book had to be removed from the premises due to the threat of vandalism and theft.<sup>57</sup> The place is frequently referred to in promotional material as the 'smallest' or 'littlest' church in Western Australia but it has not been possible to verify this statement.<sup>58</sup>

In 2007, the façade of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* facing Paris Street was significantly damaged when a car crashed into the building. Some delays were experienced in the repairs to the building in sourcing the appropriate materials and techniques. Repairs have subsequently been completed to the satisfaction of the Heritage Council of WA's regional heritage advisor.<sup>59</sup>

In 2008 *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* continues to function as a venue for weddings, baptisms and funerals and is open on request for visitors. The Church is locked to prevent recurrences of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Regular church services are no longer held in *Church of St Nicholas, Australind*.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a timber structure 3.6 metres wide by 8.2 metres long, set on an east-west axis, with its southern face hard to the boundary of the Paris Road reserve.

Around *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* the grounds have been extensively modified. On the Paris Road side of the Church the footpath has been widened to abut the southern face of the Church. Only the kerb to the carriageway forms any form of barrier control should a vehicle lose control as occurred during 2007. On the opposite side of Paris Road is the timber framed and clad Henton's Cottage.

To the west of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a Memorial Hall, which now functions as an Opportunity Shop. The Memorial Hall is separated from the Church by a small coppice of trees, a post and rail fence and a timber ramp leading from Paris Road to the side door of the Memorial Hall.

To the north and east of the Church is a churchyard enclosed by a post and rail fence. The churchyard is entered from the west through a rose archway, along a path leading from the Narthex of the present Church. In the south-west corner of the churchyard is the memorial garden consisting of rose plantings and memorial markers. The rest of the churchyard is grassed and a mature tree is located in the north-west corner, screening the Manse, to the north, from view. Within the memorial garden adjacent to the south western corner of the Church is a pole for the power connection connecting to the meter box, which is mounted on the western wall.

Although the internal structure of the Church wall was not visible, the external horizontal jarrah weatherboard cladding and the internal jarrah planked and battened horizontal wall linings require the wall structure to have vertical studwork. This form of construction is consistent with contemporary structures of

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<sup>57</sup> *South Western Times* 5 November 1974, unpaginated, held by the Bunbury Historical Society.

<sup>58</sup> Postcards available at the church refer to it as 'The Littlest Church in Western Australia'.

<sup>59</sup> Advice from Annette Green, Regional Heritage Advisor for the south west.

the time in the vicinity, such as Henton Cottage, opposite, and St Mark's Anglican Church, Wollaston.

The existing weatherboards have been oiled black and the window sashes, door frames and doors, are painted white. The door to Paris Road opens directly onto the footpath without a step or threshold, whereas the door opening to the churchyard has a concrete threshold set one step below the timber sill of the door.

There is a door and one window on the north side opening to the churchyard, a highlight window set under the eaves on the east side, a central door and two windows opening to Paris Road on the south and no openings to the west wall, towards the Memorial Hall.

The hipped roof is relatively steep with 60° hips rising to timber crosses at the apex, although the western cross has lost its cross spar. The roof is clad with unpainted galvanised corrugated iron, with rolled hips and ridge. There are no roof gutters and the comparatively narrow eaves are unlined.

The only external evidence of the 2007 damage, when a vehicle collided with the Church, is the colour differential on the new jarrah weatherboards, which are being progressively aged to match the earlier weatherboards.

Internally *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* was in some disarray when inspected, due to the progressive ageing of the new internal planking and battening requiring the carpet to be lifted and the pews to be stacked together as close to the northern wall as possible.

The ceiling of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is lapped jarrah weatherboard lining over exposed jarrah rafters, and the north and south walls are prevented from bowing outwards with jarrah ties spanning the Church. Intrusive fluorescent battens are mounted on the sides of the roof ties. The north-east hip has become detached from the dropped walls at the corner.

The internal wall linings are of horizontal jarrah planks between 15" and 16" (300 to 330 mm) in width with jarrah cover battens over the joints.

When the north wall was damaged during 2007 there was a delay in repairing the north wall due to the need to locate mature jarrah trees of sufficient girth to mill planks of matching size. Internally walls and roof have been oiled, possibly with linseed oil, to maintain and darken the timber colour, rather than being stained black as externally.

The floor has been carpeted and overlays a replacement floor constructed on medium density external grade particle board with timber surrounds. Presumably the stumps were reset under the replacement floor as it is comparatively flat and does not display the settlement to the western and eastern ends displayed in the external walling.

There is no evidence of an internal wall having been removed as suggested by the documentary evidence.

A number of plaques and other artefacts have been attached to the walls of the Church. On the east wall, above the organ/harmonium is a white marble shield engraved as follows:

A Tribute in tender memory to  
MARSHALL WALLER CLIFTON  
Of Wokalup

Died Sept 20<sup>th</sup> 1904 aged 55 years  
AND HIS WIFE LOUISA  
Died May 27<sup>th</sup> 1927 aged 77 years  
By Their Children.

On the north wall of the Church, east of the door to the churchyard is a brass plaque inscribed as follows:

To the Glory of God [Coat of Arms] and in Memory of  
MARSHALL WALLER CLIFTON FRS  
Born 1787 Died 1861  
Leader of the Band of Pioneers who  
in connection with the Western Australian Company  
Landed at Australind March 18<sup>th</sup> 1841  
And of Elinor His wife  
Born 1792 Died 1866  
Who bravely shared with her Husband  
The Trials and Difficulties of those Early Days  
Designed and engraved at Wilson's Engraving Works 25 King Street Perth

Mounted below the brass plaque is a framed paper carrying:

The crest and coat of arms of the noble family of  
Clifton of Nottingham England – 1066 and of Australind Western Australia 1841

A brass plaque in the western side of the door to the churchyard says:

In Loving memory of  
Private Albert Piggott  
Late AIF  
Fell in France 3-9-1916  
While fighting for his Country  
Aged 19 years  
"He lives with us in Memory Still"  
Erected by his parents.

On the cupboard mounted on the upper southern wall, west of the door to Paris Road, is the following dedicatory brass plate:

Erected Centenary Year 1929  
This Cabinet contains  
Roll of Descendents  
By Whom the Tablet was Erected

At the western end of *Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a chancel raised one step above the floor of the nave. The chancel is carpeted, matching the blue carpet of the nave. On either side of the step, further delineating chancel and nave, are two clear finished communion rails, consisting of a square timber post and square top rail attached to the walls.

The timber altar cross carries a brass plate inscribed:

Cross from St Wilbur's Collie Church  
Donated by Ellen Bennett 1975

The cross is mounted on the timber altar table, which has a plain linen cover overlain with a pale cream embroidered altar facing cloth, with a white lace cloth over the cover and overlay. The cross is flanked by a candlestick and two small glass vases. The altar is surrounded on three sides by an altar screen of pale gold cloth set within an open and painted screen frame.

To the north of the altar is a freestanding font, a hemispherical brass dish held between the tops of the cruciform sectioned timber font base, carved in a gothic revival style. On the wall is mounted a plain timber donation box and behind it a

timber shelf carries a figured brass vase. A short history of the Church hand lettered on white drawing paper has been fixed to the wall, removed from its frame.

To the south of the altar is a flamboyant and freestanding cruciform clear finished timber pedestal with gothic styled pinnacles holding the aumbrey light aloft. Beside it is a simple clear finished timber stool.

The pews are also rudely and simply detailed, consisting of two timber frames supporting a flat board seat and narrow backing board. The pews are complemented with padded kneelers.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Together with *Church of St Nicholas* (1844), *Henton Cottage* (1842) and *Upton House* (1844) form Australind Precinct Number 1, which represents the original Australind townsite. A prominent landmark, *Upton House* is a two-storey brick residence, demonstrating a sophisticated use of Georgian symmetry and simplicity and which has a long and close association with the Clifton family. *Henton Cottage*, a single-storey jarrah weatherboard and shingle roof building in the Old Colonial Georgian style, was built as a hotel by early Australind settlers, the Williams family.

Thirty-eight places constructed in the 1840s are entered in the State Register of Heritage Places. Of these, five are churches and a further fourteen are residential buildings.

Only one of these churches is comparable in terms of construction materials. *St Mark's Anglican Church, Wollaston* (1842) is a weatherboard building, with a gutterless roof clad with timber shingles, lined with untreated boards carried on exposed steep pitched rafters, with the crossing tied diagonally with forged steel rods. Improvisations of oiled calico painted with simulated diamond panes have been replaced with windows. However it is a larger and more complicated building than *Church of St Nicholas*.

There are three residences listed in this group of timber construction. Two of these have an association with the Clifton family, they are: *Leschenault Homestead, Bunbury* (1846) constructed of wattle and daub and clad with weatherboards and *Alverstoke, Harvey* which is a brick house and kitchen with stud-walled caretakers cottage and slab walled worker's cottage. The other place is *Sandilands, Busselton* (1840) which is also of wattle and daub and clad in weatherboard.

*Church of St Nicholas, Australind* is a rare, early colonial building which has retained its original built form and is one of the oldest such buildings in Western Australia.

### 13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

There is potential for archaeological evidence to be discovered in the grounds adjacent to *Church of St Nicholas, Australind*. The establishment of the building in the 1840s as part of the initial European settlement of the region and the continuity of occupancy of the site since then indicates that it could be a rich source of archaeological material. Oral histories indicate that a saw pit was

located near the place indicating that evidence of other activities may be found on the site.

There are extensive private archives of the Congregational Church held in the Battye Library (MN257). Research of these records which date from 1866 may reveal further information about the transfer of the property to the Anglican Diocese of Bunbury in 1914.

Transcripts of the journals and letterbooks of Marshall Waller Clifton may reveal further information in relation to the date of construction of *Church of St Nicholas*.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> However, research by Mrs Fiona Bush (correspondence to HCWA, 16 June 2008, 24 June 2008) in Clifton's correspondence, shows that the greatest number of colonists arrived in 1842 and as did the Teede family. The available evidence suggests a construction date of 1842-43, but has failed to identify a definite date of construction for *Church of St Nicholas* in Clifton's papers. Clifton's account of the buildings in Australind (January 1843) was not replicated. Although he wrote to the Company in July 1843 and commented that temporary habitations had been construction on all the rural allotments, he did not mention the town allotments.