



## 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                      Worshipping
- 8.10.2                Creating visual arts

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

- 406                    Religion

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The Church is a fine example of the Inter-War Gothic style. (Criterion 1.1)

The Statue of Christ is a fine example of a monument using stylised representation. (Criterion 1.1)

The Church is innovative as an early use of reinforced concrete construction in Western Australia. (Criterion 1.2)

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* is a landmark as a distinctive church building and tall monument located in a prominent position, clearly visible from many vantage points around Perth. (Criterion 1.3)

Although executed in disparate architectural styles, the former Hall, with its domestic scale and Inter-War Functionalist detailing, complements the design of the Church, and, together with the Statue of Christ, forms a cohesive group that contributes to the streetscape. (Criteria 1.3 & 1.4)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from R. Apperly, R. Irving, and P. Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1989.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from J. Ramsay, *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, AGPS, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to O. Richards, *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

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

The Church was constructed in 1931 to serve the Anglican parish that had been worshipping on a separate site in South Perth from 1899, and has continued to serve as the worship centre for this parish to the present. (Criterion 2.1)

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* was built as an outcome of the population expansion of the City of South Perth, and the subsequent growth of the Anglican Church in the area during the twentieth century. (Criterion 2.2)

The Church was designed by well-known Perth architect, George Herbert Parry, with additions and completion overseen by William T. Leighton, in accordance with Parry's original concept. (Criterion 2.3)

The Statue of Christ was designed by well-known Western Australian architect and town-planner, Bruce Tomlinson, who was a member of the South Perth Anglican parish. The structural engineer of the statue was Peter Bruechle, an engineer held in high professional regard in Western Australia. Local resident Sydney Lovelock provided the inspiration and the funds to build the statue. (Criterion 2.3)

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

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* Statue of Christ demonstrates an innovative engineering approach by Peter Bruechle to the design and construction of a large-scale sculptural/religious element in the landscape. (Criterion 3.3)

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

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* has been an important focus of Anglican religious life in South Perth since the 1930s, as a social amenity, for the celebration of the Anglican Eucharist, and for being the site of important family milestones such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. (Criterion 4.1)

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex*, and particularly the Statue of Christ, contributes to the sense of place of the people of South Perth, and the wider metropolitan area, as a prominent landmark. (Criterion 4.2)

The Garden of Remembrance, has high value to relatives and friends of those memorialised there, and contributes to the cultural heritage significance of the place as a whole.

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

The Hall is a rare, though modest, example of an Inter-War Functionalist style hall in the Perth metropolitan area. (Criterion 5.1)

The Statue of Christ is a unique example of monumental religious sculpture, distinguished by its height, prominence and symbolic sculptural style. (Criterion 5.1)

The Church is rare as a church constructed of reinforced concrete in the 1930s, and was reported in 1931 to be the first use of this construction method for a church in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.2)

## **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The former Hall of *St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* is representative of the Inter-War Functionalist style of architecture. (Criterion 6.1)

## **12.3 CONDITION**

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* is in a fair to good condition. There is evidence of some local deterioration, and ongoing maintenance to the place, although this does not appear to be systematic or comprehensive. In particular, the Church has a number of cracks and rust is evident externally. There are some damaged and missing glazing panes.

## **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* has a moderate to high level of integrity. The Church continues to be used for its original purpose. The former Hall has been modified for residential use and no longer functions as a church hall.

## **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* has a moderate to high level of authenticity. The Church has had minor internal modifications and additions over the years, however terminology for the function of different sections of the Church has changed.

The original Church had the altar in the eastern end of the building, in the section, which is now the front of the nave. The 1958 completion of the Church included relocating the altar to the raised terrazzo section at the far eastern end of the Church. During the late 1980s, a new altar was introduced, located in the raised wood floored area. These changes over the years have led to changes in the configurations of chancel and sanctuary, resulting in the current configuration. Screens around the baptistery at the rear of the Church have been moved.

The porch, which was constructed in 1950, has been removed, and a new entry constructed, as part of the development of a new Parish Hall Complex. The former Hall has been modified to provide two residential units. Further modifications include new front porches and garages to the rear. The Statue of Christ remains as originally constructed.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment by Wayne Moredoundt, Historian, and Palassis Architects, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex*, comprising an Inter-War Gothic style reinforced concrete Church (1931, 1950, 1958), a former Hall in the Inter-War Functionalist style (1936, 1956, 1993), Statue of Christ (1970), the Garden of Remembrance (1980), the Parish Hall Complex (1993) and St Mary's Close (1993), is located on the corner of Karoo Street and Ridge Street, South Perth.

The growth of South Perth was slow until the 1880s, by which time communication with Perth city had improved, with the introduction of ferry services and construction of bridges across the Swan and Canning Rivers. The discovery of gold in Western Australia from 1885 led to an increase in the population of Perth, with land facing Perth Water progressively sub-divided between 1886 and 1904. It was during this period that much of the infrastructure of South Perth was developed.<sup>1</sup> After the mid-1890s, a speculative element entered into the sale of South Perth suburban land. Some of the larger sections were bought for the purpose of quick sub-division and sale to take advantage of rising prosperity and the prospect of improved ferry services, or a rail link, to Perth. In 1892, the South Perth Roads Board District was formed, and, in 1902, the suburb became a municipality. By the turn of the century there were four jetties at South Perth, the Zoological Gardens had opened (in 1898), and a school and postal facilities were established.<sup>2</sup>

The first Anglican Church in South Perth was St Mary's, a wooden building consecrated on 5 February 1899, on the corner of Onslow Street and Suburban Road (now Mill Point Road).<sup>3</sup> Some parishioners were unhappy, however, with the church's location, as it was a long and difficult walk for those living on Mill Point or close to Canning Road (now Canning Highway). Plans were made to acquire two blocks, one near Coode Street and the other near Mends Street, to move the church to one location, and build a mission hall on the other. Towards the end of October 1901, Anglican Bishop Riley dedicated the Holy Trinity Mission Hall in Douglas Avenue, South Perth. At the end of the same year, Bishop Riley returned to rededicate an enlarged St Mary's Anglican Church, with a new sanctuary, on its new site in Labouchere Road, South Perth.<sup>4</sup>

Around 1919, the Holy Trinity Mission Hall was removed from its Douglas Avenue site and re-erected in the space behind St Mary's Anglican Church in Labouchere Road. The Hall was now used for a Sunday School and a meeting place for the Ladies' Guild and other groups.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cecil Florey, *Peninsula City: A Social History of South Perth, Western Australia*, City of South Perth, 1995, pp. 40-72.

<sup>2</sup> F.K. Crowley, *The History of South Perth*, Rigby, Perth, 1962, pp. 42-54.

<sup>3</sup> Gary James Martin, *By Water and the Word: A Centennial History of the Parish of Saint Mary the Virgin, South Perth*, Perth, 1998, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *West Australian*, 21 October 1901; Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 14-15.

On 25 April 1929, a large group of Parishioners attended a meeting at St Mary's to discuss a proposal to build a new Anglican church. Not long afterwards, the Rector of St Mary's, John Bell, arranged the purchase of an acre of land on the corner of Karoo and Ridge Streets, on a prominent hill in South Perth. However, this site was unpopular with many parishioners, as they considered that the climb to the top of the hill was too physically demanding. Nonetheless, the plan to establish a church on the Karoo Street site was endorsed by the new Archbishop of Perth, Henry Le Fanu.<sup>6</sup> In December 1930, planning for the new church, to be constructed of reinforced concrete, commenced, under the direction of the architect, George Herbert Parry.<sup>7</sup>

Parry (1882-1947) was born in Perth, the son of Anglican Bishop Parry. He was educated in Perth and later, in England. He worked in London as an architect where he was articled to Sir Merwyn Macartney, editor of *Architectural Review* from 1906-1920 before returning to Perth in 1907. He was employed in the Public Works Department for a short time before joining the Perth partnership of architects Cavanagh and Cavanagh which later became Cavanagh, Cavanagh and Parry. In 1911, Parry started his own practice. He had a particular interest in ecclesiastic work probably stemming from his family background, as well as his involvement with Cavanagh and Cavanagh, who also specialized in ecclesiastic work and subsequently designed many churches in Western Australia. Marshall Clifton joined Parry in his practice in 1929, and again from 1933 to 1937. Parry was also the architect for St Peter's Anglican Church, Victoria Park, built in 1935.<sup>8</sup>

Although reinforced concrete was a relatively cheap form of construction, the Parish only had sufficient funds to proceed with an initial section of the building. In March 1931, A.T. Brine and Sons' tender of £2,333 was accepted for constructing the nave, a temporary sanctuary, two vestries, a porch to a height of 16 feet, and an elaborately detailed west end. Part of the expense was to be met by selling the Parish land on Labouchere Road, the previous location of the original St Mary's Anglican Church.<sup>9</sup>

The foundation stone for the new church was laid on 3 May 1931 by the Governor of Western Australia, Sir William Campion, in the presence of Archbishop Le Fanu and Rector Bell.<sup>10</sup> Seven months later, the church was consecrated over the two days of 7 and 8 November 1931, before a large crowd of 400 people in the church and 200 to 300 outside, who listened to proceedings over loudspeakers.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, during the Rector's sermon at Evensong, he collapsed and was taken to hospital, apparently suffering from stress.<sup>12</sup>

The new building was described in the *West Australian Church News*:

The church ... has cost up to date £3,000 for the building, and for the land 1,300 pounds. It would take about £5,000 more to complete the building. A layout has been agreed to provide for the completion of the church, the erection of a hall and

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<sup>6</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>7</sup> *West Australian*, 14 August 1931.

<sup>8</sup> HCWA Assessment Documentation for *The Chapel of the Guardian Angel*, Queens Park, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>10</sup> *West Australian*, 4 May 1931; Foundation Stone of the Church.

<sup>11</sup> *West Australian*, 9 November 1931.

<sup>12</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 18-19.

rectory, and the provision of tennis courts and a school if necessary ... the church has been built almost entirely of West Australian materials, and is the first of its kind in the State, being constructed almost entirely of reinforced concrete, with the exception of the roof covering. The imposing outline of the building shows what beautiful work can be done with reinforced concrete. Constructed in any other material, the cost of the building would have been prohibitive, but we believe that this church will be the first of many of this class of construction ... Though the church is at present incomplete, the general arrangement of the original church plan, which provided for lofty proportions with an imposing entrance, with pointed arches over the windows and doors, and conventional Gothic treatment, including a western tower over the entrance, has been retained. The frieze externally is decorated with a device suggested by the linen pattern. Arches of reinforced concrete span the nave, which is 30 feet wide and 30 feet in height. The roof, of iron, has wood between the concrete beams or arches, and is lined by gypsum slabs with plastered surfaces designed in relief on each of the large panels. The floor is of concrete, coloured red, and the surface of the aisle is paved in three colours of cement.

All the ornaments and mouldings are of Gothic treatment, and the quadruple lights of the mullioned windows are of pressed cement as are also the traceried heads ... when the windows are glazed with stained glass memorial windows, in rich colours, the effect will be to subdue the light. Much colour decoration is also required on the wall panels and mouldings before the design can be considered complete ...

On either side of the entrance are carved the arms of the Diocese of Canterbury and Perth, and heraldic shields, high up on the west wall, can also be coloured with appropriate coats of arms. The forecourt and approaching steps and platform had been postponed for the present. The sanctuary is only temporary, and is constructed of wood, lined with gypsum slabs. The nave which is 56 feet long, is only half the length of the completed building, which now ends where the future transepts will begin.<sup>13</sup>

The church was provided with mostly new furniture and fittings, with only the organ, bell, and a brass memorial plaque, brought from the earlier church. The bell and organ were installed in a loft over the west door, reached by a ladder. Members of the congregation were encouraged to sponsor the pews, with a metal plaque to be attached to the seating to indicate their donation. A font was donated by St George's Cathedral, while a painting of 'The Madonna of the Sunset'- to hang above the altar- was painted by local artist, Florence Graham.<sup>14</sup>

The Parish Building Committee had wanted to resite the old parish hall, which was the former St Mary's Anglican Church from Labouchere Road beside the new church, but the South Perth Roads Board refused permission, after they had received a large number of objections from ratepayers. The old wooden church building was then sold dismantled to the Parish of Three Springs for 110 pounds. The reassembled building was dedicated there on 30 April 1932, as the Church of St James.<sup>15</sup>

A number of difficulties beset the new St Mary's Anglican Church. The building's roof leaked, cracks appeared in the walls, and the acoustics of the interior proved problematic. In addition, the Parish was experiencing serious financial difficulties, which the Parish Ladies' Guild tried to ameliorate through a series of fund-raising

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<sup>13</sup> *West Australian Church News*, 1 December 1931, cited in Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 20-21; *West Australian*, 27 August 1931.

<sup>14</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 21-22.

events.<sup>16</sup> In 1935, the church committee began planning for a parish hall and a rectory and, on 30 September 1936, the foundation stone for the Parish Hall was laid by (retired) Canon P.U. Henn. The completed Hall and Rectory were dedicated by the Archbishop on 5 November 1936.<sup>17</sup>

Construction was by W. Ralph and Son, with the project supervised by local parishioner and builder, E.W. Grigg, there being insufficient funds to engage an architect.<sup>18</sup> It is likely that the St Mary's Hall was, in fact, designed by William G. Bennett,<sup>19</sup> then working with the architectural firm of Eales, Cohen and Bennett.<sup>20</sup> Certainly the styling of St Mary's Hall would seem to indicate the involvement of a professional designer, especially when compared to the Rectory, built at the same time. Where the latter building is in a vernacular style, of no great distinction, the Hall is designed with some flair, suggesting professional involvement.<sup>21</sup>

From 1939, and the commencement of War, the congregation of St Mary's Anglican Church was caught up in the turmoil of world events. On 26 May 1940, in response to a plea for an 'Empire Day of Prayer for Peace' from King George VI, over 900 people attended two services held at St Mary's. When the War in the Pacific commenced, the Parish Hall was blacked out, and all evening services in the Church were instead held in the afternoon. Furthermore, Roads Board workers dug trenches on the vacant land beside the Parish Hall, as a refuge for the congregation in the event of an air raid.<sup>22</sup>

On the occasion of the Victory in the Pacific celebrations in August 1945, the Rector of St Mary's proposed that the chancel and the sanctuary of the Church should be completed as a memorial to those who had died in war. However, he did not pursue the matter further until 1950, when an appeal was launched to first clear the Church's debt.<sup>23</sup> In 1950, a new porch was built on the Church. The materials for construction came from a dismantled brick and tile shed donated by the owners of a property next door to the Rectory. The building work was carried out by parishioners working under the supervision of architect William T. Leighton, who lived nearby on Ridge Street, to a design in accordance with Parry's original concept. This addition was dedicated by the Archbishop of 30 May 1950.<sup>24</sup>

The existing fabric of the Church also required attention. An architect's report in 1951 advised that at least 400 pounds was required for remediation work on the exterior of the building. This work commenced in 1952 under the supervision of Leighton. In 1955, extensions to the Parish Hall were commenced. For a cost of

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<sup>16</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 24.

<sup>17</sup> Information recorded on Foundation Stone on Church.

<sup>18</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>19</sup> For information on W.G. Bennett and W.T. Leighton, see HCWA Assessment Documentation for the Cygnet Theatre, Como (#2404), and the Regal Theatre, Subiaco (#2454).

<sup>20</sup> This is the view put by Yvonne Geneve, of the Art Deco Society of Western Australia, in an article, 'Art Deco on High', *Trust News*, Vol. 201, July 1998, pp. 14-15. While Martin in, *By Water and the Word*, (pp. 26-27) disagrees with Geneve's proposition, the latter would seem to be most consistent with the existing evidence.

<sup>21</sup> See Figure 5.2 in Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 26, 'The New Rectory, 1937'.

<sup>22</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 31-33.

<sup>23</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 35.

<sup>24</sup> Information from stone plaque on the Church wall; Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 37.

2,625 pounds, builder, Tom Lees erected the addition, and furniture, fittings and landscaping were provided. The extended Parish Hall was dedicated and renamed the Henn Memorial Hall by the Archbishop on 21 March 1956.<sup>25</sup>

Later in 1956, plans for the completion of the Church were made. In December of that year, sketch plans for the extensions to the Church prepared by William Leighton for architects, Hobbs, Winning and Leighton, of which he was a partner, were placed on display at St Mary's.<sup>26</sup> In September 1957, the winning tender of £16,550, from T.W. Lees and Sons, was accepted and work commenced. On 3 November 1957, 400 people gathered for the laying of the foundation stone by the Governor of Western Australia, Sir Charles Gairdner.<sup>27</sup>

On 13 July 1958, Assistant Bishop of Perth, Rev R.E. Freeth, consecrated and opened the additions. On 9 November 1958, Robert Moline, Archbishop of Perth, dedicated a War Memorial Chapel in the north transept. Flanking the Chapel Altar were two stained glass windows, one of St Mary and the other of St Mark. Later in the year, a third window, depicting St Francis, was installed.<sup>28</sup> Already on the north wall was a window depicting St Cecilia, the Patron Saint of Music. This window, designed and crafted by artist Arthur Clarke, was donated in 1937 by the Simpson family in memory of Muriel Simpson.<sup>29</sup> On 20 April 1963, a new Hall was opened for St Mary's Anglican Church. It was constructed by Tom Lees and Sons for a cost of 3,500 pounds.<sup>30</sup>

In December 1966, the stained glass windows in the Memorial Chapel were completed with the installation of a window depicting St Alban. On 26 December of the following year, the two-sectioned east window of St Mary's was installed. The window-'Holy Spirit-Fire Opal'- was made and installed by Gowers and Brown at a cost of \$1,360. Its fitting required the removal of an acoustic panel that had hung above the altar. Windows above the font depicting the baptism of Jesus were dedicated on St Mathew's Day, 1969. Further along the wall in the pulpit bay, four windows depicting St Andrew and St Peter were completed in December 1969.<sup>31</sup>

In May 1968, a proposal was put forward by Stanley Lovelock, a retired farmer living nearby, that he would bequeath \$20,000 to St Mary's Anglican Church to build, during his lifetime, a monumental statue of Christ in the Church grounds. Apparently, Lovelock had been inspired by the statue of Christ overlooking and blessing Rio de Janeiro and wanted something similar for Perth. Parishioner Bruce Tomlinson, an architect and town-planner, was brought in to advise on the practicality of the project. Tomlinson designed a structure built of three slender columns of reinforced concrete, 300 feet high, and surmounted by a symbolic, rather than a figurative representation of Christ.<sup>32</sup>

After objections to the idea by some of the leading parishioners, Lovelock threatened to donate the proposed statue to the Roman Catholic Church of St

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<sup>25</sup> Information from stone plaque on the Hall; Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 37.

<sup>26</sup> *West Australian*, 20 March 1957.

<sup>27</sup> *West Australian*, 4 November 1957.

<sup>28</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>29</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>31</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>32</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, p. 52.



Columba, nearby on Forrest Street, South Perth.<sup>33</sup> Following an extremely close vote on the matter by the Vestry of St Mary's Anglican Church, it was decided that Tomlinson would make a scale model of the proposal and to let the parishioners, as a whole, decide. After South Perth City Council gave its approval in advance, the congregation voted strongly in support of the proposal. After Tomlinson more accurately costed the idea, the height of the proposed structure was reduced by half. While technical difficulties delayed construction at first, on 8 March 1970, Archbishop Sambell blessed the completed Statue of Christ. Three days later, the sixteen-foot high Statue of Christ, weighing four tons, was lifted by crane to the top of the 107-foot tower.<sup>34</sup>

In November 1971, an appeal was started to raise \$10,000 to renovate the concrete fabric of the Church. Sections of concrete on the exterior walls had fallen away, because of rust encrustation on the steel reinforcing rods. The appeal produced, however, a feeble response from the congregation. A series of fund-raising events produced \$73.99, \$101.46, \$37.35 and \$18.55. Nonetheless, contractors started restoration work in November 1971. The walls were blasted with water to remove flaking surfaces and then work was carried out restoring, bonding, and replastering the surfaces, and finally, painting with a special compound of cement and silica sand. The cost of this work was \$6, 485.<sup>35</sup>

In spite of the restoration work carried out in 1971, the fabric of the Church continued to deteriorate. The concrete around the columns was crumbling, the roof leaked, and the ceiling was in danger of collapsing. A Maintenance Fund was started and, in 1974, a new ceiling with improved acoustic qualities was installed. While the scaffolding was still in place, it was decided to repaint the interior of the Church. Improvements were also made to the nearby Rectory.<sup>36</sup>

In 1979, money was donated to the Church to build a Garden of Remembrance, as a place for the ashes of cremated parishioners. On 12 October of the following year, a garden was dedicated on the southern side of the Church. Around this time, another stained glass window the 'Crucifixion' was installed in the north wall of the Church. In November 1981, over 500 people attended a special service to commemorate the Church's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In November of the following year, \$25,000 was spent on renovating and painting the outside of the Church.<sup>37</sup>

In 1984, after the arrival of a new Rector, the interior of the Church was rearranged to achieve a less cluttered appearance. In 1985, members of the Vestry became reconciled to the idea that *St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* would require a large ongoing expenditure for maintenance work. In 1989, as part of the changes in service and the influence of a new Rector the Sanctuary of St Mary's was rearranged by bringing forward the altar, and removing the communion rails. In 1991, as part of a plan to raise funds for more ministerial accommodation at St Mary's, Anglican Homes Incorporated and its architects,

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33 Apparently, some of the more iconoclastic members of the Anglican congregation of South Perth objected to the literal representativeness of the early design proposals. The Catholics of South Perth, in common with their South American co-religionists, had no such problem. From a conversation with Bruce Tomlinson, 10 September 2003.

34 *Daily News*, 12 March 1970; Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 52-53.

35 Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 53-54.

36 Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 58-59.

37 Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 60-61.

Architekton, outlined a proposal to demolish all the buildings on the site except for the Church, and replace them with 15 aged persons' houses. In return, the Parish would receive a new hall and office facilities and two clergy houses. The parishioners who voted on the proposal gave their approval, on the condition that the memorial garden would not be touched and that the foundation stones from the halls would be retained.<sup>38</sup>

South Perth City Council thought the proposal problematic, however, and called for public submissions on the planned development. Local residents objected to the higher density of housing envisaged by the plans, and the Art Deco Society (WA) and the Heritage Council (WA) wanted the 1936 Hall retained. In June 1992, the original scheme was modified to ensure the design of the accommodation units harmonized with the Inter-War Functionalist style of the Hall, and the South Perth City Council approved the redevelopment. Work commenced in February 1993, with the demolition of some of the existing structures. Building was completed at the end of 1993, with the clergy houses occupied in October, and the new Parish Hall complex and housing- known as St Mary's Close blessed by the Archbishop on 28 November 1993. At the end of 1997, the Church was completely rewired, and in the following year, repainted in a colour scheme using shades of green, devised by designer, Ron Facius.<sup>39</sup>

Presently (2006), *St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* continues to be in use as an ecclesiastical centre for the South Perth Anglican Parish.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* comprises a Church, concrete with a tile and asbestos roof (1931, 1950, 1958), Hall, rendered brick and tile (1936, 1956, 1993), a Statue of Christ, concrete (1970), the Garden of Remembrance (1980), a Parish Hall Complex, brick and tile (1993) and residential units of St Mary's Close, brick and tile (1993).

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* sits in a prominent location on the rise of the highest hill in South Perth. It is located on the corner of Ridge Street, which runs along the ridge line in a north south direction, and Karoo Street, which slopes steeply towards the Swan River to the west. This area of South Perth is predominantly residential with one-storey residences dating from the early to mid-twentieth century. Demolition of much of this early building stock is evident throughout the area, with many of these dwellings being replaced by two storey single and multi-dwellings, constructed over the last decade. The South Perth Primary School (1898) is located nearby on the corner of Karoo and Forest Streets.

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* is located on part of a large lot. The Church, which runs in an east west direction, is located on the corner of Karoo and Ridge Streets. The Statue of Christ is located adjacent to the Church in Karoo Street. The former Hall is located adjacent to the Church in Ridge Street and forms part of the St Mary's Close, a single storey residential development for aged persons. A new rendered brick and tile two storeys, Parish Hall Complex has been constructed to the west of the Church.

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<sup>38</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>39</sup> Martin, *By Water and the Word*, pp. 67-69. Art Deco Society of Western Australia's file on St Mary's Anglican Church and Hall.

The prominence of the Church is enhanced by the simple landscape treatment to the corner of Karoo and Ridge Streets. A grassed area abuts the Church, a rose garden is located centrally to the eastern façade in Ridge Street. Trees obscure the recent Parish Hall Complex on Karoo Street. A driveway is located between the Church and the former Hall, which leads to a small parking area and roundabout at the western end. A free-standing portico has been constructed between the Church and Parish Hall Complex. The Garden of Remembrance, comprising native and exotic shrubs is located adjacent to the south façade of the Church.

The Church is entered from the western end, from either the access road or from Karoo Street, through an entry foyer that forms part of the upper floor Parish Hall Complex. The lower floor of the Parish Hall Complex sits below the floor level of the Church.

The Church is a reinforced concrete building constructed in the Inter-War Gothic style.<sup>40</sup> The strongly vertically mullioned windows featuring traceried heads ornamented with simplified foils, and the moulded pinnacles topping visually dominant buttresses are Gothic-inspired elements. The external concrete is painted white and features strong vertical emphasis and parapeted walls, which are stepped to the east, west and transept elevations. The friezes and mouldings to the external walls run between the strongly vertical piers, which mark the bays to the nave, and add emphasis to the east, west and transept elevations. A Celtic cross sits above the eastern elevation.

The Church displays the basilica plan form, with a nave approximately nine metres wide and twenty metres long. The area currently known as the sanctuary, surrounding the newer altar on the raised wooden floor, dates from the 1958 completion. Transepts are expressed in the external form of the Church, however are not internally expressed. Within this part of the Church, there are two levels. The northern space at this point houses the War Memorial Chapel to the ground floor and the timber choir stalls to the upper floor. The southern space houses vestries for the priest, warden and choir.

The nave, which contains five bays, is approximately seventeen metres high, with deep concrete beams to the surbased arches spanning the width. An acoustic ceiling has been fitted between the arches. The walls are painted in a green and cream paint scheme, which emphasizes the decorative elements. Moulding to the pilasters features upturned light fittings. A dado line runs the length of the walls to the nave. Diagonal vents covered with decorative pressed cement covers are located to the centre of the dado in each bay. The timber pews have been constructed in a simplified moderne style.

The windows to the nave are situated in the top third of the walls. They are stained glass to the north elevation and rippled obscure glazing to the south. Stained glass windows are also located in the centre of the sanctuary wall and in the northern transept.

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<sup>40</sup> Note: the place is listed in Apperly et. al. as an example of Post-War Ecclesiastical style, but on the basis of the characteristics listed and the construction date of the Church (1931) this was recognized to be incorrect. One of the authors (Irving) of the text was consulted to correctly identify the correct style of the church. (email correspondence received 24 March 2006).  
R. Apperly, R. Irving, and P. Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1989. p.212.

The concrete floor is coloured red to the nave and green to the upper floors of the 1958 completion. The centre aisle of the nave is coloured granolithic, currently covered with carpet. The sanctuary floor, which is raised two steps above the nave floor, and the lower floor levels of the two-level spaces are timber floorboards, with carpet to the northern space. Timber staircases lead to the upper floors of this area, which feature curved balconies overlooking the sanctuary. The original altar is still located in the far eastern end of the Church, which rises above the section with wooden floor, by steps with a terrazzo finish. The more recent altar sits on the wooden floor below, closer to the nave.

The baptistery is located on the northern side of the western end of the nave. It has a timber parquet floor and a substantial baptismal font. There are alcoves to either side of the double entry doors. These doors and alcoves have arched heads. A metal spiral staircase is located in the southern alcove behind ornate metal screens. It leads to the former organ loft and the western tower. Another ornate metal screen had been placed on the southern wall as a backdrop to the information brochures.

There are numerous memorial plaques affixed to the Church walls and the pews. The stained glass windows have also been installed as memorials. Polycarbonate panels have been fitted externally to the stained glass of the sanctuary and northern transept-like part.

The Statue of Christ comprises an impressive concrete tower with three piers in two sections, which rise over thirty metres in height. A symbolic three dimensional concrete cross, representing 'Christ in blessing', sits atop the tower. The Statue of Christ is visible from both the approaches to the Church and from further away.

The former Hall is a single storey brick and tile building. It houses two residential units and presents a domestic scale with hipped roof form. Of note is the projecting rendered bay to the front elevation, which demonstrates elements of the Inter-War Functionalist style. This style is commonly referred to as 'streamline moderne'. The tiled hip roof is concealed by a parapet with the words 'St Maris Hall' inscribed in stylised lettering to the pediment. The three vertical window elements are balanced by horizontal banding to the curved returns. The banding has been painted green. Similar curved elements form the entry porches to the two units. The former Hall was not accessed internally. The other residential units forming part of the St Mary's Close development have been designed in a manner sympathetic to the former Hall. They are single storey brick buildings with tiled, hipped roofs.

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* is in a fair to good condition. While there is evidence of some local deterioration and ongoing maintenance to the place, this does not appear to be systematic or comprehensive. In particular, the Church has a number of cracks, and rust is evident externally. There are some damaged and missing glazing panes.

*St Mary's Anglican Church Complex* has a moderate to high level of authenticity. The Church has had minor internal modifications and additions over the years, however terminology for the function of different sections of the Church has changed.

The original Church had the altar in the eastern end of the building, in the section which is now the front of the nave. The 1958 completion of the Church included

relocating the altar to the raised terrazzo section at the far eastern end of the Church. During the late 1980s, a new altar was introduced, located in the raised wood floored area. These changes over the years have led to changes in the configurations of chancel and sanctuary, resulting in the current configuration. Screens around the baptistery at the rear of the Church have been moved.

The porch, which was constructed in 1950, has been removed, and a new entry constructed, as part of the development of a new Parish Hall Complex. The former Hall has been modified to provide two residential units. Further modifications include new front porches and garages to the rear. The Statue of Christ remains as originally constructed.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

#### Church

The Church was designed by George Herbert Parry (in 1931) with the completion by William T. Leighton of Hobbs, Winning and Leighton (1950, 1958) in accordance with Parry's original concept.

George Herbert Parry designed a number of buildings in Western Australia, including churches and chapels. The HCWA database shows nine churches or chapels attributed, at least in part, to Parry, four of which are entered in the State Register of Heritage Places (P01161 *Saint Catherine's Anglican Church*, Greenough; P01685 *Saint Cuthbert's Anglican Church*, Darlington; P02225 *St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall*, Victoria Park; and P04607 *The Chapel of the Guardian Angel*, Queens Park) and one of which is entered in the Register as part of a group (P01262 St Swinthuns' Church, registered as part of P16819 *Lesmurdie Group*.)

As with the church at *St Mary's Anglican Church Complex*, *St Peter's Anglican Church*, Victoria Park (1935) is also constructed of reinforced concrete and is considered rare for the use of this then innovative construction technique in the 1930s. *St Peter's Anglican Church* is an Inter-war Romanesque style church in good condition, with high integrity and authenticity.

*The Chapel of the Guardian Angel*, Queens Park (1937) was designed by Parry, with Marshall Clifton, and is an Inter-war Old English style brick church in fair to good condition, with high integrity and authenticity.

*St Catherine's Anglican Church*, Greenough (1914), in the Federation Gothic style, is built of random rubble limestone with red brick quoining to openings and corners above the buttresses, and has a corrugated iron gabled roof.

St Swinthun's Church, Lesmurdie (1909) is a single-storey Federation Gothic style church, constructed of local stone with brick quoining, and is registered as part of P16819 *Lesmurdie Group*.

*St Cuthbert's Anglican Church* in Darlington (1925) is the only other building on the HCWA database attributed to Parry which is in the Inter-War Gothic style. It is a single storey auditory plan church, constructed of brick and granite, with a tile roof.

In addition to St Cuthbert's Anglican Church there are eight other churches in the Inter-War Gothic style on the Register of Heritage Places: P1904 St Mary's in Ara Coeli Church, Northampton; P01943 St John's Lutheran Church, Northbridge; P02158 The New Church (fmr) East Perth; P02196 St Mary's Catholic Church,

Leederville; P02430 Chapel of St Michael and All Angels; P03266 St Joseph's Church and Presbytery, Subiaco; P03630 Beagle Bay Mission Church, Dampier; P08709 Aranmore Catholic College, Leederville.

It has been noted that St Mary's Anglican Church displays influences of the Inter-War Art Deco style, although it is not the official style.

The Church completion and the design of the former Hall were by William Leighton of Hobbs, Winning and Leighton, with reference to original designs by Parry. The HCWA database shows seven registered places, designed at least in part, or modified by Leighton, and a further two by the firm Hobbs, Winning and Leighton. None of these are church buildings – five are cinemas or theatres, and the remainder include a Masonic Hall, a commercial building (Devon House), the Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal and the Artillery Barracks & Fremantle Harbour Signal Station.

Of the nine places designed by William Leighton of Hobbs, Winning and Leighton, six are constructed at least in part in the Inter-War Art Deco style. The competence of the Art Deco features of St Mary's Anglican Church is reflective of Leighton's experience as a well-known architect of Art Deco style cinemas during the inter-war period. They demonstrate his distinctive personal style, which blended decorative motifs with horizontal and vertical panelling. There is only one other Art Deco style church listed on the HCWA database - P11595 *The First Church of Christ Scientist*, Perth (1939), designed by Ochiltree and Hargrave. However, its appearance has more in common with a civic building than a church, and has few similarities to St Mary's Anglican Church.

The HCWA database does not show any other places with the Inter-War Gothic, and the Inter-War Art Deco styles appearing together.

The HCWA Database lists 12 churches built using concrete prior to 1940,<sup>41</sup> of which 5 are Registered and most (7) are of concrete block. The only reinforced concrete church identified in the HCWA database is the aforementioned P2225 *St Peter's Anglican Church, Victoria Park*, constructed in 1935.

The Anglican, Roman Catholic and Uniting Church Heritage Inventories identify no comparative buildings in the State.

The Church is rare for both its method of construction and for exhibiting strong Inter-War Art Deco features in a church building. It is also rare for the combination of Inter-war Gothic style, with Inter-War Art Deco features.

### **Former Hall**

The former Hall (1936) may have been designed by William G. Bennett, and was extended in 1956 by William Leighton.

The former Hall is an example of the Inter-War Functionalist style of architecture, also known as 'streamlined moderne'. The former Hall has not been directly attributable to any architect, however it was probably designed by W.G. Bennett, and may be compared with other works by this well-known practitioner. Bennett was the leading exponent of the Art Deco and Inter-War Functionalist styles of architecture in Western Australia during the 1930s. Buildings by Bennett, which

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<sup>41</sup> Note: it is not clear from the database record for some of these places whether concrete was used in the original building, associated monuments, or later Post-World War Two additions.

are listed on the State Register include, P1543 *Applecross District Hall*, P1544 *Raffles Hotel, Applecross*, P0154 *Beverley Town Hall*, P3511 *Lord Forrest Olympic Pool, Kalgoorlie*, P6185 *Beaucott Building, Mt Lawley* and buildings at P3277 *Auralen Botanic Park*. *Beverley Town Hall* is one of seven Inter-War Functionalist style halls listed on the HCWA database, and one of three entered in the State Register. It is a single-storey brick, render and corrugated iron building comprising offices, main hall, lesser hall and former picture garden, constructed in 1938, considered an exemplary design achievement for a rural Town Hall in the Inter-War Functionalist style.

The other two Registered Inter-War Functionalist style halls are P3832 *Memorial Hall, Mosman Park*, a two-storey brick hall constructed in 1912 with additions in 1939 designed by Kreitmayer & Rowe, and P3629 *Narambeen Civic Precinct*, a precinct including the 1940 Public Hall, a brick and tile building. P3832 *Memorial Hall, Mosman Park* is considered to be one of a dwindling number of Inter-War Functionalist styled buildings in the Perth metropolitan area. Having been converted into two residential units, the former St Mary's Anglican Church Hall has much lower integrity than these three examples, which continue in use as community halls.

The former Hall is rare as an Inter-War Functionalist style hall in the Perth metropolitan area, although it is not a particularly good example due to its low authenticity and integrity.

#### **Statue of Christ**

There are a number of representational or semi-representational statues listed on the HCWA Database, generally 'civic' in style. The only religious-themed statues on the Database are those at P3101 *Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon*. These comprise fourteen statues forming the Stations of the Cross (1949), the statue of Christ the King, the statue of the Holy Family (1949-50), and the life-size statue of Brother Paul Keaney (1962). It is difficult to compare these with the St Mary's Statue of Christ, as there is only limited information on the Bindoon statues in the HCWA Register Documentation. There are no other works by the architect, Bruce Tomlinson, listed on the HCWA Database.

The Statue of Christ is rare for its symbolic style, height and prominent location.

### **13. 4 KEY REFERENCES**

Gary James Martin, *By Water and the Word: A Centennial History of the Parish of Saint Mary the Virgin, South Perth*, Perth, 1998.

### **13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The designer of the former Hall, thought to be Bennett