



**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)

- 3.21 Entertaining for profit
- 3.26 Providing health services
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 5.4 Working in offices
- 7.6.1 Developing local government authorities
- 7.6.4 Dispensing justice
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen
- 8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements
- 9.1.2 Promoting mothers' and babies' health

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

- 104 Land allocation & subdivision
- 107 Settlements
- 111 Depression & boom
- 307 Intellectual activities, arts & crafts
- 401 Government & politics
- 404 Community services & utilities
- 405 Sport, recreation & entertainment
- 407 Cultural activities
- 501 World Wars & other wars

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* are fine examples of well resolved and aesthetically pleasing civic buildings designed in the Inter-War Free Classical style. The co-location of the buildings increases the overall aesthetic quality of the place. (Criterion 1.1)

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

*Corrigin Town Hall* is significant for its fine architectural design in the Inter-War Free Classical style by architect Percy W. Harrison. The influence of classical motifs in the finely executed elaborate decoration of the entrance, lobby and proscenium, together with the barrel vaulted ceiling of the hall are of particular note. (Criterion 1.2)

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)*, comprising a group of two adjacent civic buildings, both designed in the Inter-War Free Classical style, make a significant contribution to the Goyder Street streetscape. The elaborately designed classical façade of *Corrigin Town Hall* gives the building landmark status in the town centre. (Criterion 1.3)

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

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* reflects the significant growth and development of Corrigin and the Wheatbelt in the 1920s, with the expansion of the agricultural area under the Soldier Settlement Scheme. The development of a civic centre comprising the Road Board Office and the very substantial Town Hall, reflects the confidence and aspirations of the Corrigin Road Board and the community in the future of the town and district. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Renowned architect Percy W. Harrison designed both *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)*. They were built by well known builders M. Ellyard and Duncan Henry Braidwood, respectively. The Town Hall is a very fine and well executed example of Harrison's design work, and evidences his high degree of creative, design and artistic excellence. The building demonstrates the technical skill and achievement of both the architect and builder in the late 1920s. (Criteria 2.3 & 2.4)

The place is associated with Corrigin Road Board members, some of whom served into the 1940s, who decided to build *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)*, including James Adams (1923-41) is believed to have proposed the 'original idea' to build the Town Hall as part of Western Australia's centenary celebrations. (Criterion 2.3)

*Corrigin Town Hall* was one of the largest and most ornate town halls in Western Australia at its completion in 1929. (Criterion 2.4)

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

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

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* have comprised the civic centre of the town and district since the 1920s. The place has been the prime venue for social and cultural activities from 1929, and has a significant place in the collective memory of the local and wider community. As such it is highly valued for aesthetic, social, spiritual and cultural reasons, as evidenced also by its Classification by the National Trust (WA) and its inclusion in the Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* contribute to the community's sense of place as the civic centre of Corrigin and is a major landmark in the town. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

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### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* demonstrates the practice of co-locating civic buildings to form a civic centre in the town centre, which was common in the nineteenth century and until the late twentieth century and early 2000s, when many local government authorities built new administrative offices and recreational facilities at larger, less central sites. Both buildings are fine representative examples of the Inter-war Free Classical style and of Harrison's work. (Criteria 6.1 & 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Corrigin Town Hall* is in good condition. Roof sheeting, gutters and downpipes have been replaced with corrugated steel sheet and galvanised iron gutters and downpipes. Care should be taken to ensure that these materials do not come into contact as they are incompatible and a galvanic reaction resulting in rust may occur.

*Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* is in fair to good condition with some evidence of damp to the stone walls, possibly caused by sprinklers.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*Corrigin Town Hall* has high integrity and continues to be used for its original purpose. It is a centre for the local community. The additions of the universal access ramp at the front, kitchen additions at the rear of the building and changes to the men's and ladies toilets have not compromised the original intent of the building.

*Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* has moderate integrity. It is no longer used as a meeting place for the local council authority, but is still used by organisations providing services for the local community.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Corrigin Town Hall* has high authenticity. Minor alterations to the male and female toilets have seen the introduction of new fabric.

*Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* has moderate authenticity. The main changes to the original fabric are the introduction of stud walls dividing original rooms, and the construction of a small brick store at the back.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Robin Chinnery, Historian, and Rosemary Rosario, Architectural Heritage Consultant, of Heritage and Conservation Professionals, in 2011, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

In relation to Corrigin Town Hall, this document is based on Corrigin Town Hall Management Plan, prepared by Laura Gray, in association with Irene Sauman, for the Shire of Corrigin in 2002, with further research, amendments and/or additions by the above consultants, HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

The recommended registered area is the whole of Reserve 15629.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)*, comprises a former Road Board Office, built in 1923, and a Town Hall built in 1929. Both buildings were designed in the Inter-War Free Classical style by architect P. W. Harrison. The Road Board Office was built by D. H. Braidwood in 1923, to a similar earlier design to Beverley Roads Board Offices (fmr) (1909), designed by Harrison in the Federation Free Classical style. The Town Hall was originally built by M. Ellyard, and a kitchen addition was built in 1982.

From the early 1860s, pastoral leases were taken up in the Corrigin district and D. G. Lynch acquired 40 acres of freehold land around Corrigin Rock. In 1877, lithographic notes recorded Corrigin Well, which was recorded as Korigin Well in 1893.<sup>1</sup> In the early 1890s, a track from the Great Southern Railway at Broomehill passed through the Corrigin district en route to the Coolgardie goldfield. In the early 1900s, in the wake of the gold boom, a network of agricultural railways was constructed to encourage agricultural development, including east of the Great Southern Railway. In 1909, a spur line was constructed from Wickepin to Narrogin, which was extended in 1913-15, through Corrigin and Bruce Rock to link with Merredin on the Eastern Goldfields line and another line was constructed to link Corrigin to Brookton on the Great Southern line.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to the establishment of the *Municipal Institutions Act* in 1871, Government ordinances provided for the establishment of roads committees, where local people took responsibility for the construction and maintenance of roads in their district, with limited financial aid from the Government. The *Municipal Institutions Act* created eight new municipalities, including Perth and set up eighteen Roads Boards to construct and maintain roads in designated Districts in the rest of the State, allowing rural towns to take control of their own affairs. Roads Boards received their revenue from Government grants and vehicle license fees, which were imposed under the *Cart and Carriage Licensing Act, 1876*, meaning that those who used the roads contributed towards their maintenance.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Haig, Ross *Corrigin: Pioneering Days and Beyond* Shire of Corrigin, 1982, pp. 1-41.

<sup>2</sup> Glynn, S. *Government Policy and Agricultural Development: A study of the role of government in the development of the Western Australian Wheatbelt, 1900-1930* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1975; & Gunzberg, A. & Austin, J. *Rails Through the Bush* Light Railway Research Society of Western Australia, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 207-208.

<sup>3</sup> Register of Heritage Places – Assessment Documentation for P01227 Irwin Roads Board Office (fmr) 12/7/2002.

In 1902, a new *Roads Act* defined the power and the responsibilities of Roads Boards, whose duties included the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, wells, bores and tanks along the lines of roads, and the provision of drainage. They were also responsible for the planting and maintenance of trees and shrubs on roadsides and in public places. Roads Board revenue could be raised from licenses, registration, fines and penalties, rent of Board property or reserves under its control, and from general rates. Boards also received a regular annual grant from the Government.<sup>4</sup>

In the early 1900s, Greenhills Road Board and subsequently Dangin Road Board were responsible for the Corrigin district prior to formation of Kunjin Road Board in February 1913. They met in a one room, timber and iron Road Board building near Kunjin Well, as it had been anticipated Kunjin would be the junction of the railway, but Corrigin was selected instead.<sup>5</sup> On 14 November, the *Government Gazette* advised formation of the townsite of Dondakin on the Wickepin-Merredin railway line, and the first lots were offered for sale on 30 November. Following a petition from local residents, the name was changed to Korrigin, and subsequently Corrigin, as noted on the original plan of the townsite. This plan shows the centrally located Lots 70 and 71 in Goyder Street (named after the original owner of the land), which were gazetted on 28 August 1914, for the purpose of 'Shire Office and Yard', and the renaming of the Road District to Corrigin was gazetted on 8 September. Local farmers contributed to the labour and re-erection costs to remove the Road Board building in four sections from Kunjin to Lots 70 and 71.<sup>6</sup>

In the post-World War 1 period, the Soldier Settlement Scheme included areas of the Eastern Wheat Belt including Corrigin. Good harvests and high prices also encouraged agricultural expansion and there was considerable growth in Corrigin in the 1920s. Among the new buildings was the ANZAC Memorial Hall, built in 1920, which provided a much needed and well used facility for the district at this period. In 1921, a police station with a lock-up and quarters was completed, and the hospital, financed by a £ for £ government subsidy, was completed in 1924.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, on 30 September 1922, at a Special Meeting of Corrigin Road Board 'to go into the matter of suitable plans for building new offices' members agreed to obtain the plans for Beverley Road Boards Office building (1909) and a rough estimate of the cost for erection. On 7 November, the Road Board resolved 'that the new offices be erected of stone and brick and a similar design of the Beverley offices' and to contact architect P. W. Harrison to ascertain if he retained specifications for Beverley Road Board offices, which he had designed.<sup>8</sup> In April 1923, Harrison called tenders for erection of the Road Board Office and the contract was awarded to contractor D. H. Braidwood at a cost of £945.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Roads Acts, 1902 Statutes of Western Australia.

<sup>5</sup> *The Corrigin and District Jubilee Booklet* (no page nos.)

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*; *Government Gazette* 14 Nov. 1913, p. 596 & 28 August 1914, p. 3748; Changing Name of Kunjin Road Board to Corrigin Road Board, SROWA Cons. 4799 Item 1914/6107 Vol. 1; & Haig, Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-149.

<sup>7</sup> Haig, Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 45 & p. 49; & *The Corrigin and District Jubilee Booklet* *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> Road Board Minutes, Corrigin Road Board, 30 Sept., 7 Oct. & 4 Nov. 1922, held at Shire of Corrigin.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, March - May 1923; & *West Australian* 28 April & 5 May 1923. Note: Haig, Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 153 stated A. Rankin was the architect.

Architect Percy William Harrison (b. London, 1864, d. Perth, 1951) had completed his articles with Thomas Watts, in Melbourne, and then worked as chief draftsman at Watts & Son (1885-92). He became an associate of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects (RVIA) in 1891, and was a surveyor for the Metropolitan Waterworks Board (1892-93) before the opportunities of the Western Australian gold boom attracted him to Perth, where he entered into partnership with P. D. Wyburn. In 1896, Harrison became a sole practitioner, and a foundation member of the West Australian Institute of Architects (WAIA). In 1896-1900, his design work included St George's Church, Wagin, and St Andrew of the Apostle Church, Katanning, and he won design competitions for Municipal Offices, Bunbury, and the Presbyterian Manse, West Perth. He served as Honorary Architect for the Ministering Children's League Convalescent Hospital (present day Wearne Hostel) and the Victoria Institute for the Blind (present day Senses), and he was consulting architect to the Children's Hospital from 1911.<sup>10</sup>

Duncan Henry Braidwood (b. Victoria, 1856) had been a contractor in Victoria and South Australia, where he rose to become manager of Honey and Co., before entering into business on his own account in South Australia in the mid-1880s, chiefly constructing roads and bridges. In 1893, during the early gold boom period, he came to Western Australia and established a successful contracting business. His work included 'a fine warehouse for D. & W. Murray', in Perth, and 'splendid premises' comprising Post and Telegraph Office, Registrar's Office, Police Station and Quarters, and Warden's Court, at Coolgardie.<sup>11</sup>

On 15 October 1923, Coulsen Murphy, Chairman of Corrigin Road Board (1919-27), laid the marble foundation tablet and W. J. George, Minister for Works, officially opened Corrigin Road Board Offices, 'a substantial building of brick and stone with a very pretty cemented frontage', in the Free Classical style.<sup>12</sup> It comprised three rooms, public space, Secretary's office and Board Room, and served its intended purpose until new Shire Offices were built in 1963.<sup>13</sup> The original timber Road Board building was used as a store for most of these years.<sup>14</sup> Long serving Road Board Secretaries were Fred Rodda (1921-32), and Cyril Box (1935-61, then Shire Clerk 1961-78), who was commemorated in the naming of the Cyril Box Pavilion at the sporting complex in 1979.<sup>15</sup>

In early 1928, Corrigin Road Board decided to erect a Town Hall as part of Western Australia's centenary celebrations, for which its Chairman James Adams (Road Board member, 1923-41) was believed to have put forward the 'original idea for the place'.<sup>16</sup> Other Road Board members at this date were J. A. Knight

<sup>10</sup> Battye, J. S. *Cyclopedia of Western Australia* Cyclopedia Company, Perth, 1913, Fasc. Ed. Hesperian Press, Carlisle, Western Australia, 1985, Vol. 1, pp. 623-624; Considine and Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery 'Wearne Hostel, Cottesloe, Conservation Plan' Oct. 2000, p. 7, pp. 129-130; Annual Reports, Victoria Institute and Industrial School for the Blind, 1903-10; & *W. A. Mining, Building and Engineering Journal* 3 June 1911, p. 19; & Taylor, John, 'Percy William Harrison', at [www.architecture.com.au](http://www.architecture.com.au)

<sup>11</sup> Battye, J. S. *Cyclopedia of Western Australia* Cyclopedia Company, Perth, 1913, Fasc. Ed. Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 541.

<sup>12</sup> *Bruce Rock and Corrigin Guardian* 2 Nov. 1923; & foundation stone, site visit, Robin Chinnery, 19 August 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Haig, R., op. cit., pp. 153-159.

<sup>14</sup> *The Corrigin and District Jubilee Booklet* op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Haig, R., op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>16</sup> 'Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan' op. cit., p. 9.

(1922-42), W. S. Kirkwood (1915-30), A. R. McKenzie (1923-29), L. Larke (1924-45), C. A. Malcolm (1926-45), J. H. B. Lawton (1926-59), G. W. Seimons (1927-52) and J. Atkinson (1928-30).<sup>17</sup> Percy William Harrison, who had designed the Roads Board Offices, designed *Corrigin Town Hall* in the Inter-War Free Classical style<sup>18</sup>, incorporating a baluster at parapet level complementing the Road Board Office on the adjoining lot. In May, when tenders were called, it was reported the Town Hall would be 130 ft. x 55 ft., 'constructed of locally made bricks, reinforced with concrete', with fibrous plaster for the interior decoration.<sup>19</sup>

On 8 June 1928, a notice in the *Government Gazette* advised of the proposal to borrow £7,000 for 'the erection and furnishing of Road Board Hall in Corrigin', and approval of the loan was notified on 15 June.<sup>20</sup> Well known builder M. Ellyard was awarded the contract to erect the Town Hall at a cost of £5,374, and A. G. McIntosh was appointed foreman of works.<sup>21</sup> In August, bricklaying commenced and Ellyard hoped to complete the building before Christmas, but did not achieve it. In January 1929, work progressed well and in mid-February it was reported the Town Hall would be opened on a Wednesday in March. Fronting Goyder Street, it was 135 ft. deep (5 ft. longer than initially proposed) with concrete foundations, constructed of fine quality locally made bricks, with steel framed windows, and moulded fibrous plaster ceilings, and the front of the building was finished in cement. The large tiled entrance porch opened into a lounge (foyer) with ladies and gentlemen's cloakrooms at either side. The main hall, 50 ft. x 90 ft., was spanned by trussed steel domed principals and special attention was given to provision of good ventilation. The stage featured a 15 ft. high featured ornamental fibrous plaster proscenium. The kitchen to one side of the stage provided 'every convenience' if the stage was used as a supper room.<sup>22</sup>

On 20 March 1929, 'a very large assemblage of town and district representatives', visitors from 'Perth, Narrogin, Merredin, and more adjacent centres', including several Parliamentarians, attended the official opening of *Corrigin Town Hall*, the style of which was described as the 'Roman Classic, in the Ionic order'.<sup>23</sup> The *Corrigin Chronicle* reported the 'magnificent new Town Hall' was 'the finest structure of its kind outside Perth' and it was 'doubtful whether the metropolitan area can show a building more up-to-date and of similar capacity'.<sup>24</sup> The Road Board, and especially the Chairman, James Adams, were 'warmly commended for their enterprise, which has given the town a status and dignity not generally associated with centres of limited population'.<sup>25</sup> After Adams unveiled the marble tablet at the front of the building at 3 pm., the male guests attended a civic reception in the Board Room of the Road Board Offices, at which the Chairman of Merredin Road Board, Mr. Hunter, stated Corrigin Road Board

17        *ibid.*

18        Apperly, Richard, Irving, Robert, Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989, pp. 158-161.

19        *Building and Construction* 10 May 1921, p. 4 & p. 21.

20        *Government Gazette* 8 & 15 June 1928, pp. 1406-7 & p. 1451 respectively.

21        *Building and Construction* 7 June & 5 July 1928, p. 22 & p. 23 respectively; & *Corrigin Chronicle* 4 April 1929, p. 3.

22        *Corrigin Chronicle* 30 August & 6 Dec. 1928, 17 & 24 Jan., 7, 14, 21 & 28 Feb., & 4 April 1929

23        *Corrigin Chronicle* 4 April 1929, p. 3.

24        *ibid.*

25        *ibid.*

‘must have a great deal of audacity to erect a building like the Town Hall’.<sup>26</sup> His comment reflected the larger scale and greater cost of the place compared with the facilities at other towns in the region. Following the reception, C. P. Wansborough, MLA, declared the Town Hall officially open, and that evening more than 500 people attended a grand ball in the Hall, where St Patrick’s Ball was also held on 10 April. The *Corrigin Chronicle* ‘warmly commended’ Harrison for producing ‘a building which, for artistic conception and practical detail, leaves nothing to be desired’.<sup>27</sup> It was ‘one of the finest Town Halls outside Perth’, and a visitor from Perth remarked it ‘would improve the appearance of Hay-street, Perth, if placed in that situation.’<sup>28</sup>

In 1929, large increases in the rates levied by Corrigin Road Board led ratepayers who attributed it to the cost of construction of the Town Hall to protest at the annual Ratepayers’ Meeting in September, attended by 60 people, a record number. The Board stated the previous method of rating for the town had been ‘ridiculously low’ compared to rates paid by farmers and it had been changed to a fairer method.<sup>29</sup> There were also complaints about high rental fees for the Town Hall and some ratepayers said it should be the responsibility of a Hall Committee instead of the Road Board.<sup>30</sup> At the conclusion of the meeting, the Road Board Chairman acknowledged ‘there had been a little bit of friction, but next year no notice would be taken of the rates, as the added improvements to the town would more than compensate for the slight extra cost.’

*Corrigin Town Hall* was a catalyst for the formation of Corrigin Amateur Dramatic Society in July 1929, and provided an excellent and popular venue for theatre, repertory and concerts in the inter-war, World War II and post-war periods. In September 1929, a combined Show and Centenary Ball was held in *Corrigin Town Hall*, and the Show Ball became a popular annual event, with 300 to 500 people seated for supper. Other annual balls at the place included debutantes’ balls, and the RSL Wool Week Ball, in conjunction with the final of the Miss Corrigin competition, a sub-division of the Miss Westralia Quest. It was a larger venue than the Memorial Hall and was popular for film shows, exhibitions, dances and special occasions including wedding receptions and 21<sup>st</sup> birthday celebrations. Since 25 April 1930, the annual ANZAC Day service has been held at *Corrigin Town Hall*, and the Honour Boards are a significant feature in the entrance foyer.<sup>31</sup> As elsewhere the Town Hall provided a venue for political speeches and was a polling place for local, State and Commonwealth elections. Many community groups used *Corrigin Town Hall*, and the supper room often served as a lesser hall. In 1939, the Country Women’s Association (C.W.A.), with about 40 active members, met monthly in the rest rooms. The *Western Mail* reported residents were justifiably ‘most enthusiastic’ and ‘very proud’ of the

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<sup>26</sup> *ibid*; & *West Australian* 23 April 1929, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> *Corrigin Chronicle* *ibid*.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> *Corrigin Sun* 19 Sept. 1929, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> Haig, Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 46, pp.99-100; Conservation Management Plan, pp. 13-14; *West Australian* 29 April 1930, p. 3, 29 Dec. 1932, p. 6, 15 July 1937, p. 36, & 26 April 1949, p. 18; & *Western Mail* 30 Sept. 1954, p. 2.



Town Hall, 'a most imposing' and 'splendid building', which they drew to visitors' attention, and it was 'a decided asset to the district'.<sup>32</sup>

During World War II, *Corrigin Town Hall* continued to serve its intended purposes. Post-war welcome home dances/receptions for returning servicemen, especially the Victory Ball, were memorable events with large attendances, including on 13 April 1946, when 'the large building' was 'fully taxed' by about 550 people.<sup>33</sup> In 1947, Constable W. J. Smith was appointed Clerk of Local Courts and a room at the Town Hall was used as a court for local cases instead of people having to travel to Bruce Rock. Infant Health services were extended to Corrigin and an ante-room at the Town Hall served as a consulting room for the visiting Infant Health nurse until the Infant Health Clinic was built in 1950. In 1949, more than 330 children from the town and district attended the annual children's Christmas Tree at the Town Hall, organised by the Parents and Citizens' (P & C) Association and the C.W.A. In mid-1953, the Repertory Club staged its first three-act play and the Town Hall was filled to capacity.<sup>34</sup> It was also the venue for ratepayers' meetings and other public meetings including one at which a local branch of the Red Cross was formed in 1954<sup>35</sup>, and Corrigin Rose Society held its first spring and rose flower show at the Town Hall in November that year.<sup>36</sup> It continued to be well used for the various above-mentioned purposes and community groups used it for fund raising activities, including afternoon teas held by the Infant Health committee. The popular film shows that the Town Hall ceased when a drive-in theatre opened at Corrigin in the late 1960s.<sup>37</sup>

In 1963, the Shire of Corrigin celebrated its Jubilee Year, and 'the modern offices and library' were completed 'at the east end of Campbell Street', and the administration and the library were transferred from *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)*.<sup>38</sup> *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)*, which had 'served the district well' for 40 years, was used for some years to accommodate part of the collection of the local museum, and subsequently as consulting rooms for a medical practitioner, at which period it is believed a partitioning wall was installed.<sup>39</sup>

At some date alterations made to convert the ladies' cloakroom at *Corrigin Town Hall* to ladies' and men's toilets included filling in the original doorway and cutting into the original wall to provide separate entries to the gents' and ladies' toilets. Partition walls were installed in the former gents' cloakroom and an external doorway was made in the side wall for separate access to this meeting room, which was used to accommodate the second library in the district when a public subscription raised funds for a library.<sup>40</sup>

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32 *West Australian* 8 May 1936, p. 9 & 20 Sept. 1940, p. 17; & *Western Mail* 13 July 1939, p. 20.

33 Conservation Management Plan, pp. 13-14; & *West Australian* 18 April 1946, p. 12.

34 *West Australian* 22 April 1947, p. 5, 22 April & 16 Dec. 1949, p. 14 & p. 7 respectively, & 6 August 1953, p. 7; & *Jubilee of Corrigin and District* Shire of Corrigin, 1963 (no page nos.)

35 'Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan' pp. 13-14.

36 *Western Mail* 25 Nov. 1954, p. 47.

37 Conservation Management Plan, pp. 13-14; & W. R. Seimons, long term Shire Councillor, tel. conversations with Robin Chinnery, Jan. 2011.

38 *The Corrigin and District Jubilee Booklet* op. cit.; & Haig, R., op. cit., pp. 153-159.

39 W. R. Seimons, op. cit.; & Chris Baker, conversation with Robin Chinnery, site visit, 19 August 2010.

40 'Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan' op. cit., p. 15, noted the library was 'established in the meeting room adjacent to' the entry foyer, but did not document any alterations to the building.

In 1982, alterations and additions were undertaken to up-grade and renovate the kitchen at the Town Hall. In 1994, *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* were re-roofed, and the façades of both buildings were re-painted in 1995.<sup>41</sup>

On 4 September 1996, *Corrigin Town Hall* was Classified by the National Trust. In 1997, *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* were included in the Municipal Inventory for the Shire of Corrigin, which recommended the Town Hall be considered for Entry in the Register of Heritage Places and be afforded the highest level of protection.<sup>42</sup>

In the late 1990s-early 2000s, the floor of the Town Hall was marked out for use as a badminton court, which has continued in regular use for a badminton competition, and an ISP was installed in the bio-box at the Town Hall. The Shire of Corrigin received a grant from the Lotteries Commission's Heritage Program to assist with preparation of a Conservation Management Plan for the Town Hall, which was completed in June 2002. Gutters and downpipes, identified in the conservation plan as being in poor condition, were subsequently replaced.<sup>43</sup>

In the early 2000s, after being left vacant for some time, *Road Board Office (fmr)* was renovated, including installation of new ceilings and re-painting, when it was leased to the government funded Small Business Centre, who continue to occupy it in 2010-11.

*Corrigin Town Hall* continues in use as a venue for community organisations and events, including the annual Anzac Day ceremony.<sup>44</sup>

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* comprises a Town Hall, designed in the Inter-War Free Classical style, built in 1929, and extended with a kitchen addition in 1982, and a former Road Board Office in the Inter-War Free Classical style built in 1923. The buildings are located adjacent to each other on the eastern side of Goyder Street in the town centre of Corrigin, a small town located 225kms south-east of Perth.

The site, identified as Reserve 15629, 21 Goyder Street Corrigin, comprises two parallel lots, nos. 70 and 71, with a combined area of approximately 2,023m<sup>2</sup>. The site has a street frontage onto Goyder Street and a right of way along the eastern, rear, boundary. Both buildings are built with a zero setback from the front boundary and with narrow side setbacks. *Corrigin Town Hall* is on the northern side of the site and *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* is on the south. Between them a driveway and crossover provide access from Goyder Street to the carpark located behind *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)*. The driveway and carpark are sealed with stabilised gravel and there is a line of eucalyptus trees along the southern boundary. The area from the back of *Corrigin Town Hall* to the eastern boundary is enclosed by a fence comprising sections of corrugated fibrous cement along the boundary and metal panels on the southern side of the enclosure adjacent to the carpark. There is a low brick fence along the front

<sup>41</sup> Information from Annual Reports, Shire of Corrigin, per W. R. Seimons, op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> 'Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan' op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> 'Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan' op. cit., pp. 23-27; & site visit, Robin Chinnery & Rosemary Rosario, 19 August 2010.

<sup>44</sup> 'Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan' op. cit., p. 15; & site visit, Robin Chinnery & Rosemary Rosario, 19 August 2010.

boundary on the southern side of *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)*. There are no other site features.

### **Corrigin Town Hall**

*Corrigin Town Hall* is located on the northern side of the site and occupies almost the entire length of the lot. The building remains largely as constructed in 1929, with additions to the kitchen built in 1982, on the south-eastern corner. The construction of the addition has had no impact on the imposing front façade of the building that addresses Goyder Street. The primary elevation comprises a rendered symmetrically composed classical façade with a portico comprising four columns with Ionic capitals and a triangular pediment. Under the portico is a tessellated tiled floor, which is almost intact apart from a small area of damage in the centre between the columns. There are three steps up to the portico from the footpath; however, the symmetry of the steps has been interrupted by the construction of a ramp on the southern side to allow for universal access. The ramp has been introduced in a sympathetic manner and does not intrude on the overall presentation of the building. Behind the portico, the building is entered through two pairs of timber panelled doors separated by a wall on which a marble plaque commemorates the opening of the building on 20 March 1929, by the chairman of the Corrigin Road Board, J. Adam Esq. J.P.

Above the pediment, the façade has a richly decorated stepped attic motif in the centre of the parapet with the date '1929' in the centre. The parapets on either side are decorated with classical urns on the top of short columns with balustrade details on each side. The side wings of the façade have rusticated quoins to the corners and string courses at sill and head heights. Above the side windows are arched recesses featuring shell like decorations that reference the scroll detail of the Ionic capitals. The façade is rendered and painted in cream with beige relief and deep pink for detailing.

Behind the richly decorated façade, the remainder of the building is constructed of face brick with rendered concrete lintels above the windows and rendered reveals to the circular air vents along the side walls. The side elevations have engaged brick piers at regular intervals, as is typical of halls and public buildings of this era. The windows to the main auditorium are steel framed and comprise ten small glass panes arranged in two rows, giving an overall horizontal emphasis. Roof sheeting is corrugated galvanised steel and not original. Ogee gutters and round downpipes are recent unpainted galvanised iron. There are large vents in both the eastern and western walls at roof height.

The rear elevation has a gabled roof; two double hung sash windows on the southern side, two vents near the apex of the roof, a timber door accessed by a flight of steel framed steps and a series of openings with steel bars at ground level to ventilate the under-stage area. There is a second door to the stage area, also with steel framed steps, on the north elevation near the back of the building.

The 1982 kitchen addition on the south-eastern corner of the building is utilitarian in design and is constructed of face brick to match the original building. There is a concrete delivery ramp from the carpark.

The interior of the building comprises the entrance foyer, hall or main auditorium, stage and service areas. The foyer is entered from the portico through pairs of timber panelled doors. A row of highlight windows above the entrance lights the

interior space of the foyer. The eastern and northern internal walls feature arches around internal doors. The southern wall has been altered, and original arches are not extant. The foyer ceiling is coffered with a classical detailing. There are a number of honour boards around the foyer walls and a free standing timber panelled kiosk in the centre of the eastern wall. Entrance to the auditorium from the foyer is through pairs of glazed panelled doors in arched doorways with glass panes in the upper arched sections.

On the southern side of the foyer, former ladies' toilets have been altered to provide toilet facilities for both men and ladies. On the northern side, the former gentlemen's toilets have been altered to provide storage. Minor alterations have been carried out in this area.

The main hall or auditorium comprises an area approximately 14.2m wide and 27.5m long with a distinctive barrel vaulted ceiling clad with rectangular ribbed fibrous plaster panels incorporating air vents along each side. There is also a panel of vents on the western end of the hall. The internal walls are smooth plastered with regular bays along each side with a window in the upper section of each bay. There is a plaster dado at 1.3m above floor level around the walls. The floor is constructed of 100mm tongued and grooved floorboards and there is a timber quarter round skirting detail. Lighting comprises fluorescent tubes along each side of the ceiling and lights have also been installed around the walls.

The stage, located at the eastern end of the hall, features an elaborate and finely detailed fibrous plaster proscenium with a stylised leaf pattern referencing the classical motifs found elsewhere in the building. The stage floor is also tongued and grooved floorboards, and there is no ceiling. At the back of the stage, on the southern side, a door leads to an irregular shaped room used as a dressing room. This was originally the kitchen. Kitchen and servery areas are recent and utilitarian in design with stainless steel benches and fittings.

*Corrigin Town Hall* has high authenticity. The main alterations are the universal access ramp at the front, kitchen additions at the back and changes to the men's and ladies toilets. The building is in good condition. Care should be taken to ensure that corrugated steel roof sheeting does not come into contact with recent galvanised iron gutters and downpipes as these two materials are incompatible.

### **Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)**

*Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* is located adjacent and to *Corrigin Town Hall*. The building is constructed to the Goyder Street boundary with a setback of about 3m from the southern boundary. The building, constructed in 1923, is of a more modest domestic scale than the adjacent Town Hall but classical stucco detailing on the façade is reflected in the design of the later building. In particular the use of classical balustrade details to the parapets, arched window openings and rendered string courses give the two buildings, designed by the same architect, Percy W. Harrison, a unified appearance. The façade of *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* is not symmetrical with the entrance located on the northern side under a pediment with the words 'Corrigin Road Board Offices' in raised lettering. The entrance to the building has been altered and the original front door is not extant, although the original opening remains.

The design of *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* was influenced by the earlier *Beverley Road Board Offices (fmr)* built in 1909, and designed by the same

architect in the Federation Free Classical style. Consequently the detailing of the Corrigin building is reminiscent of the earlier Federation era, although the building dates from the Inter-War period.

*Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* is constructed of rock faced ashlar with brick quoins to corners and door and window openings. Original timber framed double hung sash windows remain extant in original openings. Doors are not original but door openings, frames and fanlights remain extant both externally and internally. The roof is hipped and has one prominent painted masonry chimney with rendered corbelling. The roof sheeting has been replaced with pre-painted corrugated steel sheet and original timber vents remains in the apex of the roof at the front and the back. A timber framed weatherboard clad shelter and a recent brick store are located at the back of the building under a skillion roof.

Internally the building retains original masonry walls and the original floor plan comprising the entry passage, front and rear offices remains. There are also more recent stud walls that divide the original spaces. Original door openings are extant and one original timber fireplace surround remains. Internal timber wall panelling to dado height is probably original.

The building has moderate authenticity, the main changes being the installation of stud walls to divide original rooms, loss of original doors, and the construction of a small store at the back with access from a recent door opening in the back wall, and recent finishes and fittings. The front door is not original. Original front windows are covered by metal security screens that detract from the visual presentation of the building.

The building is in fair to good condition with some evidence of damp to the stone walls, possibly caused by sprinklers.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

In the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, it was common practice for a town hall and road board office buildings, such as *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* to be co-located to form a civic group in the centre of town. The HCWA database lists more than such 20 places that include a town hall and a road board office.

In the 1920s, prior to the Great Depression, many local government authorities erected new Road Board Office and/or Town Halls or memorial halls, or made substantial additions to their existing buildings. In the Wheatbelt, a new Road Board Office of brick construction and a three storey clock tower were added to the timber and iron hall at Merredin in 1925, and at Bruce Rock two-storey offices were added to the front of the existing hall (1918) in 1928.<sup>45</sup>

*Corrigin Town Hall* and *Corrigin Road Board Office (fmr)* were more substantial than many Roads Board buildings and most Town Halls and other halls built in this period. Their completion within seven years (1923-29) was a very significant achievement by Corrigin Roads Board. *Corrigin Town Hall* was one of the largest and most ornate halls erected in the State in the Inter-War period.

Percy W. Harrison designed a number of Road Board Office and Town Halls, including Bridgetown Road Board Office (fmr) (1908) in the Federation Free

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Assessment documents *Merredin Town Hall (fmr)* (RHP 1576) & *Bruce Rock Shire Offices* (RHP 0323).

Classical style, (currently being assessed for the RHP), and in the same style, Beverley Road Board Office (1909). The decision by Corrigin Road Board to erect offices 'of stone and brick of a similar design to the Beverley offices,' and their commissioning of Harrison,<sup>46</sup> demonstrates their knowledge and appreciation of the Beverley building. It was uncommon for a similar design to be employed after an interval of 13 years and in a later design period, i.e. Inter-War Free Classical (c. 1915-c.1940). Harrison also designed Morawa Road Board Office (1930) in the Inter-War Free Classical style.<sup>47</sup> He was a prominent Freemason and designed a considerable number of Freemasons' Halls, including *Freemasons' Hall, Subiaco* in the Inter-War Free Classical style, which was completed in late 1929<sup>48</sup>, i.e. a few months after completion of *Corrigin Town Hall*, which was in the same style. Both halls are notable for their intact vaulted plaster ceilings, a rare feature in this State in the Inter-War period, which demonstrate a very high level of technical expertise in their design and execution. Both places are very fine examples of Harrison's design work.

#### Town Hall and Roads Board Buildings in the Inter-War Free Classical style

The following five registered places comprise Town Halls/Roads Boards Offices that are located in regional towns and are constructed in the Inter-War Free Classical style;

- 00654 *Cunderdin Hall* (1910-1956) –comprises an ornate hall with a symmetrical and richly decorated façade, featuring a central pediment motif over an arched entry, inset with raised scroll work.
- 01426 *Kulin Town Hall* (1928) - a single storey brick and iron building designed in the Inter-War Free Classical style, with decorative detailing to the entrance portico and interior hall ceiling.
- 01620 *Morawa Shire Office & Town Hall* (1930) - comprises a brick rendered and tile road board office building in the Inter War Free Classical style and a cement block, brick and rendered hall with a two storey frontage in Inter War Functionalist style.
- 02642 *Wagin Town Hall* (1928) - is a predominantly single storey brick building in the Inter-war Free Classical style, incorporating a municipal council office. It is an excellent and distinctive example of a rural town hall and municipal council office in the Inter-war Free Classical style.
- 01576 *Road Board Office (fmr), Merredin* (1925) – comprises a single storey building with a prominent 3-storey central clock tower.

Other comparable places on the HCWA database include;

- 0662 *Dalwallinu Town Hall* (1924) - originally the 1924 Roads Boards Offices, is a single storey brick structure. The rendered façade is symmetrical with a central recessed entry flanked by single windows each side central within bays delineated by the simple engaged

<sup>46</sup> Road Board Minutes, Corrigin Road Board, 30 Sept., 7 Oct. & 4 Nov. 1922, held at Shire of Corrigin.

<sup>47</sup> *W. A. Mining, Building and Engineering Journal* 4, 11 & 25 July 1908; & *Blackwood Times* 4 August 1908, & 1 Jan. 1909; *West Australian* 10 & 19 Oct. 1908, & 17 August 1929; & Assessment document *Morawa Shire Office & Town Hall* (RHP 1620).

<sup>48</sup> Assessment document *Freemasons' Hall, Subiaco* (RHP 2444).

pilasters. The parapet is stepped and detailed in moulded cornice lines with a more detailed bracketed cornice across the entire frontage.

- 01185 Harvey Shire Council Chambers & Town Hall (1914-1935) – comprises two large halls built from brick with corrugated iron roofs. The halls are joined through the Council Chambers Building, an L shaped hipped roof of terracotta tiles with an imposing façade designed in the Interwar Free Classical architectural style. The external walls of the chambers are cement rendered with grooved detailing at the corners. It has a decorative gable parapet.
- 02723 Wickepin Town Hall (1919) – comprises a single storey brick building with rendered features, and an iron, symmetrical frontage with central entry flanked by a set of 3 double hung windows each side.

Conclusion: *Corrigin Town Hall* was one of the largest and finest Town Halls in Western Australia when it was completed in 1929. *Corrigin Road Boards Office (fmr)* is also a fine example of the work of Percy W. Harrison in the Inter-war period. Together, *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Office (fmr)* comprise a highly significant group of civic buildings in a town centre in the West Australian Wheatbelt region that are of very high aesthetic value and architectural merit.

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

‘Corrigin Town Hall Conservation Management Plan’ Prepared for Shire of Corrigin by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Irene Sauman, Historian.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

Further research may reveal additional information about the place including the alterations made to the original ladies’ and gents’ cloakroom at *Corrigin Town Hall* and the alterations and additions to the kitchen.