



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES CORRECTED – Assessment Documentation**

On 27 November 2021 the Heritage Council resolved to correct the name of Delaney Gallery to be Perth Trades Hall under s.53(2)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2018*.

### **11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council has had regard to the factors in the *Heritage Act 2018* and the indicators adopted on 14 June 2019.

#### **PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)**

- 5.2 Organising workers and work places
- 8.5 Forming associations

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

- 106 Workers

#### **11(a) Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history**

*Perth Trades Hall*, has historic value in being the first Trades Hall to be built in Perth, and the first one to be built in Australia without Government assistance. It was important as the headquarters of the state branch of the Australian Labor Party and the Trades and Labor Council from 1912 to 1985, and again from 2013 to present.

*Perth Trades Hall* was the first building in Australia for which the then Prime Minister, Right Hon. Andrew Fisher P.C. had laid a foundation stone.

#### **11(b) Importance in demonstrating rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Western Australia's heritage**

*Perth Trades Hall* was the first Trades Hall to be built in Perth, and the first one to be built in Australia without Government assistance.

#### **11(d) Its importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places;**

*Perth Trades Hall* is a good representative example of an office building designed in the Federation Romanesque style.

**11(e) Any strong or special meaning it may have for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations;**

*Perth Trades Hall* is closely associated with the growth and development of the Labor movement of Western Australia and of trade unionism.

*Perth Trades Hall* has been a venue for many important official events and functions for the Perth Trades Hall Association as well as for the broader community as a venue for dancing and boxing from 1912 and 1960s.

**11(f)<sup>1</sup> Its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community;**

*Perth Trades Hall* is a good example of a two storey masonry construction office building designed in the Federation Romanesque style, which makes a positive visual contribution to its context.

*Perth Trades Hall* is part of a group of significant places that includes the Western Australian Museum and former Art Gallery of Western Australia designed in the Federation Romanesque style, the former Swan Barracks and to the south the former Police Courts, now part of the Art Gallery of Western Australia. All of these buildings are places of considerable aesthetic value and fall within the Perth Cultural Centre and *Perth Trades Hall*, which stands outside the Cultural Centre on the opposite side of Beaufort Street, nevertheless contributes to the precinctual qualities of the area. Other places of aesthetic value include the United Friendly Societies and two other Federation period buildings. *Perth Trades Hall* makes a strong visual contribution to this significant context.

**11(g) Any special association it may have with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in Western Australia's history;**

*Perth Trades Hall* is significant for its association with Alexander McCallum, the first Council Secretary of the Perth Trades Hall Association and the first of three Trustees, who was an important figure in the labour movement in Western Australia and was instrumental in making the building of the *Perth Trades Hall* possible.

**12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**12.1 CONDITION**

An updated assessment of condition was not undertaken in 2020. In 2004, the condition was reported as:

Though there has been much change to the place, it retains many of its aesthetic qualities. The changes have involved a good deal of internal rearrangement in a small number of areas. The place appears to receive regular minimal maintenance. The remaining original fabric is generally in good condition and the overall presentation of the place suggests that it is in fair to good condition.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## **12.2 INTEGRITY**

This section explains the extent to which the fabric is in its original state. An updated assessment of integrity was not undertaken in 2020. In 2004, integrity was recorded as:

Since uses related to the labour movement ceased, the place has undergone numerous changes with the removal of one of the key staircases, changes to some spaces, changes to finishes and the entrance area. Underlying the numerous changes there is a good deal of original fabric. The ground and first floor remain the most intact levels of the building. Overall the place retains a moderate degree of integrity.

## **12.3 AUTHENTICITY**

This section explains the extent to which the original intention is evident, and the compatibility of current use. An updated assessment of authenticity was not undertaken in 2020. In 2004, authenticity was recorded as:

*Perth Trades Hall* was designed as an office building for the state executive of the Australian Labor Party, for the offices of a number of unions, and as the entrance to the temporary and later permanent Unity Hall/Theatre. The basic intent of the office accommodation remains intact, but the entrance functions are no longer apparent. The removal of the southern staircase further diminishes the legibility of the entrance building function. The present uses are compatible with the original intention and the building provides good quality office space. The present use has the capacity to sustain heritage values. The place retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Helen Burgess Historian and Philip Griffiths Architect in 2002, with amendments and/or additions by the Heritage Council and the Department.

Much of the supporting evidence has been taken from Ian Monk's history of the *Perth Trades Hall*, published in the Papers in Labour History journal, December 1999, which was primarily based on archival sources of the Australian Labor Party Metropolitan District Council.<sup>2</sup>

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Perth Trades Hall* (1912) was designed as an office building for the state executive of the Australian Labor Party. It comprises 3 levels, 2 storeys above ground level and one lower ground level, and was the first purpose-built headquarters for the then Metropolitan District Council of the Australian Labor Federation (MDC).

The Metropolitan District Council (formerly the Coastal Trades and Labor Council) was a council of the Australian Labor Federation. MDC represented the interests of its union member organisations in Perth, and had delegates from each union on the council, dealing with issues such as fundraising, Labor Day celebrations, provision of an appropriate headquarters (i.e. a Trades Hall), the ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the headquarters, and the conduct of strikes.<sup>3</sup>

The objectives of the Perth Trades Hall Association were '...to provide and keep a building with all necessary fixtures and fittings in which public and private discussions, lectures and addresses could be given 'by men interested in the various labour organizations in the State' and in which such organisations could hold their meetings. The Association could acquire, lease and sell real estate and could borrow or raise money on the security of the association's assets. Its affairs were governed by the rules and regulations of the Australian Labor Federation (ALF) and a meeting of the Metropolitan District Council was also deemed to be a meeting of the Trades Hall Association.<sup>4</sup>

Following the foundation of Perth on 12 August 1829, the townsite of Perth was laid out between Mount Eliza and Heirisson Island, facing the Swan River on the south, and with a chain of swamps and lagoons to the north. Arrowsmith's plan (1833) shows the first layout of Perth, with the main streets following the lie of the land between the Swan River and the wetlands to the north. The plan includes the future William Street, Northbridge, and Perth Town Lot N.<sup>5</sup> Assistant Surveyor Hillman's (1838) plan of Perth shows King William Street, to the south of Wellington Street, was named after the English King, but gradually it became known simply as William Street. Subsequently, Hutt Street, to the north of Wellington Street, was named after Governor John Hutt (1839-46).<sup>6</sup> This northern section was later renamed as part of William Street.

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<sup>2</sup> Monk, Ian, 'Perth's Trades Hall, 1912 to 1983', in Papers in Labor History, No. 22, December 1999 [ISSN 1030-6218], Perth Branch, Australian Society for the Study of Labor History, pp. 6-18.

<sup>3</sup> Monk, *ibid* p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Monk, *ibid* p.7 source Metropolitan Council correspondence file 29: 'and Regulations of the Perth Trades Hall', paragraph 4

<sup>5</sup> Pitt-Morrison, Margaret 'Builders and Buildings' in Stannage, C. T. (Ed.) A New History of Western Australia University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1981) pp. 514-515.

<sup>6</sup> Stannage, C. T. The People of Perth (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979) p. 39.

By the 1870s, the city centre of Perth was consolidated on the grid laid out in the early survey, and about 800 houses had been built.<sup>7</sup> The construction and opening of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to Perth and thence to Guildford (1881), resulted in a shift in focus from the river port to the areas in the vicinity of Perth Railway Station.<sup>8</sup> As a residential area, the area to the north of the city was considered less fashionable; however, its proximity to the city and the railway station encouraged investors and speculators to look to the future prospects for development. Through the 1880s and early 1890s, sub-division of the large lots increased and a mix of residential and commercial buildings were constructed in the areas nearest to the railway.<sup>9</sup>

From the early 1890s, the Western Australian Gold Boom resulted in a building boom in Perth, with considerable expansion of residential and commercial building in the areas to the north, east, and west of the city, with many more of the large Lots sub-divided in the period 1892-1900.

In December 1910, the MDC had secured the lease from the Presbyterian Church for the Shearer's Memorial Hall, and on 16 December 1910, the MDC met for the first time in the hall.<sup>10</sup> Previously the MDC had their headquarters in temporary buildings around the city since their establishment, including Green's Chambers in Hay Street and Brookman's Buildings.<sup>11</sup> Almost immediately after their first meeting, the MDC began negotiations with the Presbyterian Church to purchase Shearer's Memorial Hall for use as their headquarters, however the Church wished to sell off all the land (being Perth Town Lots W10 and Lot W11) and not just the hall.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1897 and 1904 Shearer's Memorial Hall had been used by the then newly founded Scotch College prior to the relocation of the college to their Claremont site. On 10 February 1911, the Perth Trades Hall Association (PTHA) was formally established, under the governance the ALF, and with the power to acquire, lease and sell real estate, borrow or raise money on the security of the association's assets.<sup>13</sup> On 18 May 1911, the PTHA was officially incorporated and its members - all male - were appointed '...by virtue of their election' to the MDC, and, in future, any meetings of the MDC were now considered meetings of the PTHA.<sup>14</sup>

At the time of its incorporation, the PTHA already had plans underway for a headquarters befitting such an association, which would contain offices, a hall for entertainment and a library, and which would provide a venue for meetings, public and private discussions, lectures and addresses. The supervisor of the works was to be Mr. E. P. Henshaw.<sup>15</sup>

According to the documentary evidence sourced, there was ongoing debate and discussion which surrounded the erection of a Trades Hall in Perth and,

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7 Campbell, Robin McK. in Pitt Morrison, Margaret, and White, John (Eds.) *Western Towns and Buildings* (University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979) p. 104.

8 Pitt-Morrison, Margaret op. cit., p. 532.

9 Seddon, George and Ravine, David A *City and its Setting: Images of Perth* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1986) p.149.

10 *ibid*, p. 6.

11 *West Australian*, 20/4/1912, p. 11.

12 Monk, *ibid*, p. 6.

13 *ibid*, p. 7.

14 *ibid*, p. 7.

15 *West Australian*, 9/8/1911, p. 6; & Monk, *ibid*, pp. 6-7.

compounded with the fact that the PTHA were unsuccessful in securing a Government grant to pay for the cost of erecting a hall - as was the case in other States and for the Trades Hall in Fremantle - it seemed as though a headquarters would never be established in Perth.<sup>16</sup> The only assistance that had been received was a piece of land about 15 years previously in Subiaco, but being unsuitable for the location of a Trades Hall, it was exchanged for one in Hay Street, West Perth, worth at the time £1000.<sup>17</sup> However, this was also considered an unsuitable location. It was not until Alex McCallum was appointed Council Secretary that the erection of the hall became a reality. McCallum, who was also amongst the first three trustees to be elected, '...who were authorised to transact the business of the association', drove the project with his business acumen, energy and enthusiasm and much credit has been attributed to him for the construction of the hall.<sup>18</sup>

As a way around the problem of having to purchase all of the land from the Presbyterian Church in order to secure Shearer's Memorial Hall, the PTHA arranged for the recently formed People's Printing and Publishing Company (which produced the Labor Daily newspaper), to purchase a part of the land, with finance provided by the Amalgamated Timber Union Workers (Coastal District).<sup>19</sup> This was a 40 foot wide strip '...with frontage on Beaufort Street, on the northern side of Shearer's Hall'.<sup>20</sup> The trustees of the PTHA would then purchase the rest.

On 4 August 1911, portion of Perth Town Lot W10, being originally Lot 1, was transferred from the Presbyterian Church to Alexander McCallum, James Alfred Dolan and James Richard Ives as trustees of the Perth Trades Hall.<sup>21</sup> On 14 August 1911, Perth Town Lots W10 and W11 being originally Lot 2, was transferred to the Amalgamated Timber Union of Workers (Coastal District).<sup>22</sup> With the land now secured, work could begin on the construction of a Trades Hall.

On 8 August 1911, the foundation stone for *Perth Trades Hall* was laid by the then Prime Minister and leader of the Australian Labor Party, the Right Hon. Andrew Fisher PC.<sup>23</sup> The Prime Minister was presented with a silver trowel to mark the occasion, which was significant for many reasons, being; the first time that a Prime Minister of the Commonwealth had laid the foundation stone of a Trades Hall as well as the first foundation stone which Fisher had laid as the Prime Minister, and also that this was the first Trades Hall erected in Australia without Government assistance.<sup>24</sup>

The ceremony, which lasted only a half-an-hour due to the time commitments of the Prime Minister, was attended by a large gathering of politicians and high-ranking government bureaucrats:

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<sup>16</sup> Monk, *ibid*, p. 6; West Australian, 9/8/1911, p. 6; West Australian, 20/4/1912, p. 11; & West Australian, 22/4/1912, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> West Australian, 22/4/1912, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> Monk, *ibid*, p. 7. The other inaugural trustees were James Richard Ives, blacksmith, and James Alfred Dolan, tailor.

<sup>19</sup> Certificate of Title, Vol. 495, Fol. 195, 14/8/1911. This title was eventually transferred to The People's Printing and Publishing Company on 5/5/1915.

<sup>20</sup> Monk, *ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Certificate of Title, Vol. 494, Fol. 180.

<sup>22</sup> Certificate of Title, Vol. 495, Fol. 195, 14/8/1911.

<sup>23</sup> Plaque on building.

<sup>24</sup> West Australian, 9/8/1911, p. 6.

On his arrival at the site of the new building, in the company of Senators Henderson, Lynch and De Largie, the secretary of the metropolitan council of the Australian Labor Federation (Mr A. McCallum) and others, the Prime Minister was greeted with lusty cheers by the crowd. Among the others who accepted invitations to be present at the gathering were the Attorney-General (Mr J. L. Nanson), the Minister for Lands and Agriculture (Mr J. Mitchell), the Leader of the State Parliamentary Labor Party (MR J. Scaddan), members of both Houses of Parliament, the president of the metropolitan district council of the Australia Labor Federation (Mr P. J. Mooney), the supervisor of the work of erecting the new Trades Hall building (Mr E. P. Henshaw), members of Labor organisations, and a large assemblage of unionists.<sup>25</sup>

On Saturday 20 April 1912, *Perth Trades Hall* was officially opened. The ceremony was conducted by the then Labor Premier, J. Scadden,<sup>26</sup> who had also been McCallum's predecessor. Scadden was presented with a gold key to commemorate the occasion. Other officials to attend the ceremony included: Mrs. Scadden; Mr. B. J. Stubbs (President, ALF Council; the Mayor of Perth and Mrs. T. G. A. Molloy; Mr. M. F. Troy (speaker); Mr. T Walker (Attorney General); Mr. W. D. Johnson (Minister for Works); Mr. P. Collier (Minister for Mines and Railways); and Senators De Largie and Needham. A letter from the Prime Minister was also read out at the ceremony, congratulating the PTHA on their efforts.<sup>27</sup>

The completed *Perth Trades Hall*, including land, cost £6300.<sup>28</sup> The building was constructed of face brick, and had three levels, one at lower ground (basement), and contained mostly offices for various union bodies and necessary amenities such as toilets and meeting rooms.<sup>29</sup>

By 1914, there were already plans underway for the construction of the large hall - known as Unity Hall<sup>30</sup> - to the rear of *Perth Trades Hall*. The Unity Hall is located outside of the registered curtilage of this place, however, information about its construction and use have been included in this assessment due to its historic and social importance in relation to *Perth Trades Hall*.

The new Unity Hall/Theatre building was to accommodate up to 2000 people, and additional meeting rooms at the back of *Perth Trades Hall*, which was estimated to bring the total cost of construction to approximately £13000. Although not designed yet, it was to be similar to the Queen's Hall, with Henshaw again selected to supervise the construction and the labour provided by the current day-labour system.<sup>31</sup> The plans indicate directions from the front section of *Perth Trades Hall*

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25      ibid, p. 6.

26      West Australian, 20/4/1912, p. 11.

27      West Australian, 22/4/1912, p. 8.

28      West Australian, 20/4/1912, p. 11; & West Australian, 22/4/1912, p. 8.

29      Trades Hall Plans', Battye Library Map Collection, 47/16/4.2, n.d; & Photograph 6722B 'Trades Hall, Perth, c1940', Battye Library Pictorial Collection. Although this photograph is dated c1940, it would appear that this date is incorrect as there is construction work occurring at the rear, which would be the 1923 extension. Also the building is not rendered and, although it does not show the area immediately south of the hall where the 1934 building was located, it is possible that the Trades Hall was rendered to blend with the 1934 building.

30      During construction, the new building was referred to as 'Unity Hall' but shortly after its completion became more widely known as 'Unity Theatre'. To that end this assessment refers to the place as Unity Hall/Theatre.

31      West Australian, 20/4/1912, p. 11; & West Australian, 22/4/1912, p. 8.

to the ballroom balcony from the first floor offices, and to the theatre from the ground floor offices.<sup>32</sup>

However, until such time as the Unity Hall/Theatre was erected, and for the occasion of the opening ceremony of the *Perth Trades Hall*, the PHTA continued to utilise the former Shearer's Memorial Hall, which had been relocated to the rear of *Perth Trades Hall* and sited where the Unity Hall/Theatre would later be constructed, (and at which time Shearer's Memorial Hall would be completely demolished).<sup>33</sup> By March 1914, the plans for the Unity Hall/Theatre were completed:

With 6000 pounds available, the building was to be extended 116 feet to the rear and would include the largest meeting hall in the city. Among its special features was a gallery unsupported by pillars of posts.<sup>34</sup>

Unfortunately the onset of the First World War put these plans on hold.

On 28 July 1922, portion of Perth Town Lot W10 and being Lot 1, originally transferred to McCallum, Doland and Ives in 1911, was vested in the Perth Trades Hall Incorporated.<sup>35</sup>

In 1922, the foundation stone was laid for the Unity Hall/Theatre.<sup>36</sup> On 30 May 1923 it was officially opened:

It was 153 feet long and 51 feet wide. The height to the ceiling was an impressive 35 feet. Entry from Beaufort Street took the visitor through the main hall where 14 union banners were displayed...the main entry led to a 'fine vestibule whence two flights of stairs give access to the balcony'. It could seat 400 people and was cantilevered so that the 900 people seated on the ground floor had uninterrupted views of the stage where 'the proscenium is plain but of great artistic taste'.<sup>37</sup>

As well as its role as providing space for the more official functions and events for the *Perth Trades Hall*, Unity Hall/Theatre was also to become an important venue for dances and boxing.<sup>38</sup> Following its conversion to offices, Unity Hall/Theatre was altered extensively, with the insertion of floors, walls, and modern office ceilings, lighting, partitions and the like. The building retains its original four perimeter walls, gambrel pattern roof, a number of timber windows, and the fire escape stairs to the southern side of the building. Its foundation stone has been retained also. Unity Hall/Theatre is located outside of the registered curtilage of this place, and was considered to have insufficient original fabric remained, in a recognisable form, for the building to warrant entry into the State Register of Heritage Places.

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32 'Trades Hall Plans', Battye Library Map Collection, 47/16/4.2, n.d.

33 West Australian, 22/4/1912, p. 8.

34 Monk, *ibid*, p. 8.

35 Certificate of Title, Vol. 494, Fol. 180.

36 Plaque on building.

37 Monk, *ibid*, p. 9.

38 Monk, *ibid*, p. 15.



During construction, the new building was referred to as 'Unity Hall' however shortly after its completion it became more widely known as 'Unity Theatre', particularly in advertisements.<sup>39</sup>

The *Perth Trades Hall* and Unity Hall/Theatre were now equipped to handle all the various needs required by such an establishment, being office space and staff support for an affordable cost for its occupants and, in particular, its role in arbitration and dispute resolution. Staff at the hall included the secretary, who took responsibility for the care and operations of the building, typists and caretakers.<sup>40</sup>

By 1930, the *Perth Trades Hall* and Unity Hall/Theatre was filled to capacity with occupants, and more space was required for extensions. The problem was solved when '...the whole of the Churchyard estate, with property in Beaufort, Roe and Stirling Streets, came onto the property market and was offered at auction'. Four lots on Beaufort Street next door to the south of *Perth Trades Hall* were purchased for £5000, three of which were occupied by small cottages, and the fourth a two-storeyed shop and dwelling.<sup>41</sup>

A photograph dated 1934, shows another new extension to *Perth Trades Hall* just after completion in December.<sup>42</sup> The plans of this new rendered brick three-storey addition shows rental premises – initially mostly shops but later converted into union offices - on the ground floor and first floor, with those on the ground floor being of slightly larger dimension. At ground floor level was a cantilevered verandah. On the third level were two self-contained flats for the caretakers, flanking the northern and southern ends and joined by a colonnaded verandah. Ladies and Gents toilets were at the northern and southern ends off the landing ramp at the rear of the building at ground floor level, and a carpark was indicated at the rear.<sup>43</sup> It is possible that the 1912 section of *Perth Trades Hall* that was originally face brickwork was rendered at this time to blend with the 1934 addition.<sup>44</sup> A 1953 sewerage plan including the area of *Perth Trades Hall* shows all the buildings that were completed by 1934, and also shows a small building (possibly a shed) south at the back of the 1934 building and an asbestos garage at the north-east end of the car park.<sup>45</sup>

Coming off the back of the Great Economic Depression, this substantial extension of 1934 to *Perth Trades Hall* was '...acclaimed as a welcome improvement to

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39 'The Unity Theatre At Perth Trades Hall', in *Westralian Worker*, 25 May 1923, p.9. Sourced from <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/148379304?searchTerm=Perth%20Trades%20Hall#> Accessed on 19 January 2021. 'Unity Theatre', in *Westralian Worker* 26 October 1923, p.11. Sourced from <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/148279690?searchTerm=%22unity%20hall%22%2C%20perth%20trades%20hall> Accessed on 19 January 2021.

The names 'Unity Theatre' and 'Unity Hall' appear to have been used interchangeable over time.

40 Monk, *ibid*, p. 9.

41 Monk, *ibid*, p. 12.

42 Photograph 4405B/2 'Trades Hall, after completion, 1934', Battye Library Pictorial Collection.

43 'Trades Hall Plans', Battye Library Map Collection, 47/16/4.1, n.d.; & Photograph 4405B/2 'Trades Hall, after completion, 1934', Battye Library Pictorial Collection.

44 Photograph 6722B 'Trades Hall, Perth, c1940', Battye Library Pictorial Collection. Although this photograph is dated c1940, it would appear that this date is incorrect as there is construction work occurring at the rear, which would be the 1923 extension. Also the building is not rendered and, although it does not show the area immediately south of the hall where the 1934 building was located, it is possible that the Trades Hall was rendered to blend with the 1934 building.

45 Plan: 'Metropolitan Sewerage, City of Perth', SROWA, Cons. 4156, Item 59 (July 1948, revised April 1953). This plan also shows the land immediately north of Delaney Gallery as vacant.

Beaufort Street and of great assistance to the much needed revival of the building industry'.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately, however, with the imminent onset of a Second World War, money was to become tight again, and over the next few years, the *Perth Trades Hall* and associated buildings 'received minimal maintenance'.<sup>47</sup>

In 1963, as a result of the declining relationship occurring between the industrial and political wings of the Australian Labor Party, the independent Trades and Labor Council (TLC) was formed, and held its inaugural meeting in the *Perth Trades Hall* on 22 January 1963. The TLC was committed to looking after industrial matters and became affiliated with the Australian union movement, while the ALP focused on political issues.<sup>48</sup>

In 1966, significant internal alterations and adaptations were carried out to Unity Hall/Theatre to the design of architect Marshall Clifton, to accommodate the changing and growing needs of the ALP and the demand for more office space:

...an entirely new concrete floor was built at the gallery level. The first floor was converted to several different sized rooms, while the new second floor was retained as a large meeting hall, with a new stage at the eastern end.<sup>49</sup>

In early 1973, the 1934 building was completely demolished to make way for the new multi-storey office building to be named Curtin House.<sup>50</sup>

By this time *Perth Trades Hall* was in need of extensive upgrading and modifications in order to meet the requirements of the TLC. In 1979 funding options for a proposed development of *Perth Trades Hall* with a new multi-storey office block were explored. The ALP proposed to sell Curtin House to raise the required funds.<sup>51</sup> This new multi-storey building was to be built on the north side of *Perth Trades Hall*, on land which the PTHA had acquired in 1946 and had been leasing to a car dealer since that time.<sup>52</sup>

In August 1980, the Perth Town Planning Board approved the subdivision of portion of Lot W10 and W11 being Lot 1.<sup>53</sup> In September 1980, Lot 1 was changed to Lot 21 and was still held in fee simple by the Perth Trades Hall Inc.<sup>54</sup>

On 13 March 1981, the foundation stone for the new building, named the 'Labor Centre' was officially laid by W. G. Hayden.<sup>55</sup> The original *Perth Trades Hall* and Unity Hall/Theatre were to be incorporated into this new building and therefore also referred to as the Labor Centre. A description of it at this time appeared on Strata Plan 8921:

A BRICK AND METAL ROOFED, THREE STOREY COMPLEX COMPRISING EIGHTEEN UNITS, KNOWN AS THE "LABOR CENTRE"

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46 Monk, *ibid*, p. 12.

47 Monk, *ibid*, p. 13.

48 Monk, *ibid*, p. 15.

49 Monk, *ibid*, pp. 15-16.

50 Monk, *ibid*, p. 16, see also Photograph 4326B/24/35, 'Trades Hall Beaufort St, 26/22/72; & Photograph 432B/33/23, 'Trades Hall, Beaufort St, 7/4/73, Battye Library Pictorial Collection.

51 Monk, *ibid*, p. 16.

52 Monk, *ibid*, p. 16.

53 Strata Plan 8921, Diagram 59807 & 2302, 26/8/1980.

54 Certificate of Title, Vol. 1575, Fol. 732, 16/9/1980.

55 Plaque on building.

SITUATED UPON PORTIONS OF PERTH LOTS W10 AND W11 AND BEING LOT 21 THE SUBJECT OF DIAGRAM 59807.<sup>56</sup>

In 1981, the TLC purchased two floors of the *Perth Trades Hall* under the strata title agreement, and the ALP retained the basement. However, the TLC was never satisfied with the hall because of ‘...the high proportion of unusable floor space, much of which was devoted to wide passageways and stairs or determined by the size of the rooms’.<sup>57</sup>

By 1982, the ALP had finally sold Curtin House to the State Superannuation Board, and then purchased the Court Hotel, the new Labor Centre was completed and alterations and modifications were made to the *Perth Trades Hall*:

...including double glazing the Beaufort Street windows and closing the wide, arched entries which had led, somewhat grandly, up flights of stair to Unity Hall.<sup>58</sup>

In 1985, despite the modifications made to the *Perth Trades Hall*, the TLC sold its strata title, containing two floors, to Delaney Art Gallery (of Claremont) and moved to newer, more appropriate premises in Brewer Street. Soon after, the ALP sold the basement section also to Delaney but kept the Unity Hall/Theatre and also the Labor Centre which, in 1999, was renamed the Beaufort Centre.<sup>59</sup>

During its time as Delaney Gallery the upper floors were used as gallery space for art and the basement used as office space. Since 1997 and up to 2002 the whole of the building had been used for office accommodation or has in part remained vacant. The ground floor has been used for offices and training rooms, while the basement and first floor have had little use. In 2002, when this assessment was prepared, the ground floor of *Perth Trades Hall* was occupied for training and training administration and the other floors are vacant.

In 2013, the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union of Workers (CFMEU WA) purchased *Perth Trades Hall*, and reinstated its original use as a Trades Hall. In 2021 it continues to be used as a Trades Hall.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

An updated assessment of the physical evidence was not undertaken in 2020. In 2002, the physical evidence of the place was recorded as:

*Perth Trades Hall* is a building comprising two storeys and a basement in masonry construction, with decorative stucco ornamentation and a render finish over brickwork designed in the Federation Romanesque style, constructed in 1912 for the Metropolitan District Council of the Australian Labor Federation (MDC), and supervised by E. P. Henshaw.

The subsequent abutting buildings, including Unity Hall/Theatre (1923), Curtin House (1973), the Labor Centre, later Beaufort Centre (1981) of four storeys constructed in concrete blocks are not within the registered curtilage for this place.

*Perth Trades Hall* is located on the east side of Beaufort Street, at its southern end. The Western Australian Museum and former Art Gallery of Western Australia is

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56 Strata Plan 8921.

57 Monk, *ibid*, p. 17.

58 Monk, *ibid*, p. 17.

59 Monk, *ibid*, p. 17.

located on the opposite side of the street and these buildings are designed in the Federation Romanesque style also. Further to the north lies the former Swan Barracks and to the south the former Police Courts, now part of the Art Gallery of Western Australia. All of these buildings are places of considerable aesthetic value and fall with the Perth Cultural Centre. All are registered places. The United Friendly Societies is located to the immediate north of the *Perth Trades Hall* and Labor Centre (1981), together with a two other Federation period buildings. Curtin House (1973) lies to the immediate south and is located on the site of the southern Extension of Trades Hall. *Perth Trades Hall* makes a strong visual contribution to the context.

Beaufort Street is a one way street at its southern end, with two carriageways taking traffic north, and parallel parking. Though there are street trees on the west side of the street, there are no trees on the east side of the street where the *Perth Trades Hall* is located. The footpaths are constructed in standard City of Perth concrete paving slabs, and the lighting comprises standard Main Roads out reach steel construction poles.

*Perth Trades Hall* is built up to the front street boundary, while the Beaufort Centre additions to the north and Curtin House to the south are set back from the front boundary, maintaining the visual prominence of *Perth Trades Hall*.

*Perth Trades Hall*, a building comprising two storeys and a basement in masonry construction with a stucco decorative treatments and a later render finish over the original face brickwork, designed in the Federation Romanesque style. The building front facade is divided into seven bays with three identical window bays symmetrically flanking the entrance bay in an AAABAAA rhythm. The entrance is given additional emphasis by its larger size, impressive entrance arch contained within a thrust bay and parapet top pediment. The building is not richly decorated, with stucco motifs in a sober rendering of its type and obeys the strict rules of the style in terms of symmetry and order.

The basement extends to just above ground level to allow natural daylight through highlight windows. The windows are let into a low rusticated rock faced base course. The lower level has three sets of arched windows with semicircular arches set above moulded impost, with keystones at the top of the arch that engage with a continuous string course. Timber window frames are set within the arches in a rhythm of three bays and the sashes have been replaced with aluminium framed double glazed windows. Rear windows are single pane double hung sashes. The upper floor windows receive a lighter treatment, with a simple stringcourse and label mould around each window. At this level the windows are divided into pairs with lattice pattern hopper light over them. These window sashes have been replaced with double glazed windows also. A continuous entablature terminates the top of the wall with a capped parapet wall that links across the whole facade, broken by the entrance bay pediment.

The entrance bay has a short flight stairs now covered in poor quality slate, and is flanked by two engaged pilaster bases with inset panels, one with the street number 71 inscribed in it. A commemorative stone laid by the then Prime Minister Rt. Hon Andrew Fisher P.C. is incorporated into the base on the right hand side. The flanking pilasters extend to the entablature over the door and have plain Tuscan pilaster heads. The two point arched entry is contained by the pilasters and entablature, and the arch makes use of a voussoir motif to give it visual emphasis. The words Delaney Gallery appear on the entablature in bas-relief and are a recent

addition. A twopoint arch is located over the entablature and this is broken in to three elements, with a decorative keystone extending from the arch of the pediment. While the pediment itself is quite plain, it contains a cartouche and leaf motif.

The details of the front facade have been repeated around parts of the north and south elevations to the building and these are decorative devices to break down the plain nature of the walls. All of the openings in the north and south elevations are blind. The original flank walls were stepped face brickwork so that the present parapet top line and all of the present finishes are part of the 1981 work.

*Perth Trades Hall* extended back to meet the former Shearer's Hall and then the later Unity Hall/Theatre. These links have been removed to create an open space between the *Perth Trades Hall* and the former Unity Hall/Theatre. The latter remains as a shell and has been converted to offices and is part of the Beaufort Centre. The rear elevation of the *Perth Trades Hall* has a small number of original window openings and these are all single pane double hung sashes. The remaining openings at the basement level are aluminium-framed window and door set combinations to provide access from the eastern courtyard to the building. The whole of this elevation has been rendered, obscuring the former connections to the Shearer's Hall and later Unity Hall/Theatre.

*Perth Trades Hall* is planned on three levels and although much of the planning remains as indicated in the documentary evidence, there has been a considerable amount of reorganisation of the means of circulation. There were once two staircases between ground and first floor, but the southern staircase has been removed.

The ground floor comprises a centrally located entry with axial corridors leading east towards what would have been the lobby to the hall beyond, and north and south to provide access to offices to its east and west. Though the documentary evidence indicates staircases to the northern and southern end of this corridor or hall, only the staircase to the northern end survives as previously noted. The basic room planning remains the same as is indicated in the documentary evidence, with the removal of one partition at the southwest corner to make two rooms into one large space and the penetration of the north-western wall to link two formerly separate rooms. Floor finishes are generally carpet finish over timber, except in the entrance where a very poor quality slate has been applied to the floor in recent times. There are richly profiled skirtings throughout, plain plastered walls and plain plasterboard ceilings associated with the 1981 re-fit throughout, except in the entrance lobby and hall. The entrance lobby, which has a pressed metal ceiling, and part of the hall which has cornices that are not original, but may date from the Inter-War period. The windows on the west face of the building are timber framed with aluminium double glazed inserts. There are blocked fireplaces in two rooms as indicated on the plans. The remaining stair is a well-designed timber stair with a wreathed handrail, substantial newels and turned balusters. A short flight of steps leads up to the lobby of the Unity Hall/Theatre level, but the opening to the hall has been blocked off and the links to it removed. The original doors in this section are four panelled, with decorative timber casements. The staircase to the basement that is indicated in the documentary evidence and set against the northern wall has been removed and the stairwell is currently an office. A wall removed between the two southern rooms has been replaced with an acoustic wall and folding door.

The first floor has a similar plan to the ground floor, but is divided up into a larger number of spaces. Most of the planning indicated on the documentary evidence remains intact, but spaces have been re-divided to provide some additional facilities. There are five offices arranged across the west or front of the building, and the planning of these spaces does not relate well to the fenestration. To achieve five offices, the partitions to the northern and southern offices were laid out in a dogleg pattern to avoid clashes with windows. Part of the large office in the south-east corner of the building has been divided off to produce male and female toilets. The corridor that linked this building with Unity Hall/Theatre balcony has been blocked off at both ends to provide a small kitchen and an air handling room and the connecting link between the two buildings removed. Two offices that previously occupied the north-east corner of the building have been combined to form a single space with a bar facility located in the north-west corner of the room, which has been formed by taking some space from the adjoining room. The finishes at this level are the same as those on the ground floor level, except that the doors are six panel format. The toilets have mosaic-tiled floors, glazed tile and splashbacks and modern toilet fittings.

The basement is accessible via the main stair that continues down to this level. This level was the accommodation for the state executive of the Australian Labor Party. It was essentially one large space that occupied almost half the floor plan at the front of the building, with amenities surrounding the space on three sides. The basic arrangement remains in place with the large state executive room remaining the major space. The perimeter spaces are contained within their original walls, but have all been re-arranged within this zone. Toilets are all located along the south wall with the remaining spaces converted into offices. Generally floors are carpeted concrete, though a large section of herringbone pattern parquet remains in the former state executive room. Walls are plastered and all ceilings appear to be replacement plasterboard. Two sets of stairs indicated on the original plans have been removed and the link between the state executive room and Unity Hall/Theatre has been removed and replaced by an open paved space.

The building has been subject to numerous changes including the removal of Shearer's Hall, construction of Unity Hall/Theatre, and the removal of links with Unity Hall/Theatre. Associated with the construction of Unity Hall/Theatre, the exterior was rendered. Later in 1982, the window sashes replaced with double glazing sashes, the north and south parapet walls increased in height at an unknown date, decorative plasterwork was added to the flank walls in a pattern that apes the front elevation, and the entrance doors and floor finishes changed. Internally there have been a large number of changes associated with the removal of the link to Unity Hall/Theatre. Severance of the link reduced the requirement for the number of staircases and gave rise to an opportunity to increase the floor space in the *Perth Trades Hall*. Two staircases were removed, the basement re-arranged, the ground floor accommodation area increased, first floor toilets, kitchen and plant room introduced. Ceilings were simplified and it is not known whether the original ceilings remain in place above the present ones. Air conditioning was introduced and lighting systems modernized and the building cabled for computer systems. There are still lighting systems in place from the time when the place was a gallery, but most spaces remain unoccupied, while the ground floor is fitted out for computer training. All of this material is removable.

Though much altered through time, the underlying fabric of *Perth Trades Hall* remains in good condition, with little evidence of any deterioration beyond some damp penetration through a section of roofing at the rear of the building.

Following the building being purchased by the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union of Workers (CFMEU WA) in 2013, the Delany Gallery signage has been removed, and the words PERTH TRADES HALL reinstated on the entablature.

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

An updated comparative information was not undertaken in 2020. In 2002, the comparative information of the place was:

Two other Trades Hall buildings are listed on the Heritage Council's database:

- P1325 Trades Hall (RHP) (1900), Kalgoorlie - a comparatively small building that is designed in a style that draws on gothic decorative devices.
- P864 former Trades Hall (1904), Fremantle (RHP as part of P25225 Fremantle West End).

*Perth Trades Hall* was and remains the largest and most ambitious of the Trades Hall buildings in Western Australia.

### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

Monk, Ian, 'Perth's Trades Hall, 1912 to 1983', in *Papers in Labour History*, No. 22, December 1999 [ISSN 1030-6218], Perth Branch, Australian Society for the Study of Labour History.

### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

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