



# 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.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Norlup Homestead* is an elegant white Victorian Georgian rural homestead which has been modernised internally, significantly upgraded, and altered externally. The southern aspect of the original homestead had a lower storey. The alterations to the land contours have obscured this feature. (Criterion 1.1)

*Norlup Homestead* and its garden setting located above Gnowongerup Brook contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the landscape. (Criterion 1.3)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

It is significant as the homestead constructed for the first European settlers in the district, Commander and Mrs. Scott. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

It is highly valued by the community for its part in the history of European settlement of the district; for its aesthetic association with the surrounding area and in particular with Deadman Pool; and for its association with early education in the area. (Criterion 4.1)

It contributes to the community's sense of place, as evidenced in the nomenclature of the vicinity. (Criterion 4.2)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* North Ryde NSW, Angus & Robertson 1989.

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

The lower level to the southern aspect of the homestead was rare in Western Australia, but re-contouring has obscured this feature. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

It is significant in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a Victorian Georgian rural homestead, albeit that the works carried out over the last thirty years have impacted upon the original details of the place. (Criterion 6.1)

It is significant in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the way of life of rural families in the South-West over the period since its construction. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Norlup Homestead* and the associated gardens are in good condition and the place appears to be structurally sound. Work done by the present owner has ensured that the place will endure for some considerable time, although much of the work has resulted in interventions that impact on authenticity and loss of mid nineteenth century detailing. Maintenance of the place is of a high order.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

The essential domestic nature of the place has been retained, although in saving the place from destruction, the configuration has changed significantly. Its continued use as a working farm homestead ensures that its social and historic values are maintained. *Norlup Homestead* retains a moderate degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The geometry and envelope of *Norlup Homestead* are intact. Changes in the external ground levels, the obscuration of the cellar, alterations to room configurations, opening sizes and treatments to internal and external finishes have resulted in significant shifts away from the original concept. The place exhibits a moderate degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect, of Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd.

The land considered necessary for the conservation of heritage values of the place comprises the land contained by lot 65, down to the edge of Gnowongerup Brook.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Norlup Homestead* (circa 1872) comprises the homestead, an underground tank (1912-13), workers' accommodation (1912-13), and schoolroom (1915); the last two places are collectively known as the schoolhouse. The homestead is a single-storey house, of clay bricks with a corrugated Colorbond roof, constructed for Commander Scott by Joseph Smith circa 1872.<sup>1</sup> The underground tank was constructed of bricks and cement by C. E. Moore in 1912-13.<sup>2</sup> The schoolhouse is a timber and corrugated iron building constructed by C. E. Moore in 1912-13 and 1915.<sup>3</sup>

In 1839, John Hassell acquired a lease which included an area west of Scott Brook; his holdings were later extended as far as Winningup.<sup>4</sup> These leases were stocked with sheep brought to Albany from the Eastern colonies. These leases did not become permanent, and there was no European settlement in the area at this time. Subsequently Hassell transferred his pastoral activities to the south coastal area around Bremer Bay, and established a permanent home at Kendenup, near Mount Barker.<sup>5</sup>

In 1845, the Assistant Surveyor, Augustus Gregory, followed the Blackwood River for 171 kilometres from its upper reaches at the convergence of the Arthur and Beaufort Rivers. Approximately 16 kilometres north west of the present town of Boyup Brook he blazed a large tree with the date and his initials.<sup>6</sup>

In 1854, Commander Scott with his wife and family, arrived by ship at Albany with some stock, plants and equipment, to take up the lease he had selected of 12,000 acres beside Gnowongerup Brook.<sup>7</sup> He had selected his lease with care, for fresh water was essential for survival. The brook provided a ready supply of fresh water in winter, and fresh water pools remained in summer. The first name which was given to the property was 'Rutherglen', after the Scotts' home in Scotland.<sup>8</sup> The area was populated by Aborigines, who were friendly for the most part. After the Scotts had been there for a time and

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<sup>1</sup> Schorer, A. *A History of the Upper Blackwood* South West Printing & Publishing, Bunbury, 1968, p.20.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from G. W. D. Moore to L. Hester, 1975.

<sup>3</sup> Conversation/site visit by Robin Chinnery with L. and M. Hester, owners of *Norlup Homestead* Memo HCWA file 0229, 25 November 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Schorer, op. cit., p.9.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Boyup Brook Economic Profile* South West Development Authority and Shire of Boyup Brook, October, 1991, p.6.

<sup>7</sup> Schorer, op. cit., p.9.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p.17.

established some communication with the local inhabitants they questioned them about their name for the place. They were told 'Him Norlup Fella', which the Aborigines said meant 'shady place', referring to the shady trees which surrounded the fresh water pools. The property was renamed 'Norlup'.<sup>9</sup>

Little is known of the original homestead. It was sufficient to accommodate the family of twelve, Commander Scott, his wife, five boys and five girls, seven of whom were born after the family settled at Norlup. Rush lamps and home made candles provided lighting.<sup>10</sup>

With the cattle they had brought, the Scotts were the first to begin dairying in the Upper Blackwood district. They produced for their own needs, and took the surplus produce to Albany, as well as a small clip of wool from their sheep. With difficulty, some land was cleared to grow wheat to provide for their needs and those of their shepherds. In the early period, all the shepherds were Aborigines, who gradually began to congregate in the vicinity of the homestead as more of them were employed. They did not prove a very reliable source of labour, and in time some European shepherds were employed also. The wheat grain was ground using two large cylindrical granite stones of French origin, one revolving upon the other and turned by horsepower.<sup>11</sup> These stones had been brought to the Swan River Colony prior to 1840; however, the date at which they were brought to Norlup is not certain, although it is thought to be prior to 1870.<sup>12</sup>

During survey work in 1866, John Forrest recorded Deadman Pool as the name of the pool in Gnowergerup Brook between Nelson Locations 39 and 65.<sup>13</sup>

By 1870, many of the early difficulties had been overcome, and the Scotts began to make preparations to build a new, permanent homestead. The site selected was by the brook to ensure a good water supply. Clay bricks were made and burnt on the bank of the brook; jarrah was sawn on the property to provide the necessary timber.<sup>14</sup> By circa 1872, the Scotts were ready to commence building. The design of the house was similar to that of other early buildings on the 'Old Sounds Road'.<sup>15</sup>

*Norlup Homestead* was built by Joseph Smith of Bridgetown, at a cost of £250.<sup>16</sup> It was larger than the old homestead, and with stained glass doors, it was considered luxurious by comparison.<sup>17</sup> The original roof was of jarrah shingles.

Joseph Smith was born in Yorkshire, arriving in Bridgetown in the early 1860s. He was a carpenter and builder by trade, who had been employed on the construction of the Blackwood River Bridge at Bridgetown. He remained

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<sup>9</sup>       ibid.

<sup>10</sup>       ibid, p.19.

<sup>11</sup>       ibid, p.14.

<sup>12</sup>       ibid, p.15.

<sup>13</sup>       Forrest, John 'Field Book 1' 1866 p.103.

<sup>14</sup>       Schorer, A. op. cit., p.20.

<sup>15</sup>       ibid.

<sup>16</sup>       ibid.

<sup>17</sup>       ibid.

in the town, building a number of dwellings and other buildings there, including the Mechanics Institute. He was a foundation member of the Bridgetown Roads Board, on which he served for thirty years.<sup>18</sup>

After the deaths of Mrs Scott (1880) and Commander Scott (1883), their sons William and Jim carried on the property at Norlup. In 1888, Jim Scott and his wife left Norlup. On his own, without the large family who had assisted Commander Scott in the earlier years, William found it difficult to manage. He was faced with the problems of finding reliable shepherds, and the depredation of the stock by dingoes, along with mounting debts, and limited finances. In these circumstances, he sold the property in 1890.<sup>19</sup>

From 1890, *Norlup Homestead* was owned by C. E. Moore; he farmed the property for some years.<sup>20</sup> The greater part of the original lease was selected by new settlers in the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>21</sup> During this period the first permanent fences were erected on the property, by Mick Waters and Harry Larsen.<sup>22</sup> 'The big shed up on the hill and another one down past the big wattle tree' were constructed as Moore developed the property.<sup>23</sup>

In 1912-1913, C. E. Moore constructed an underground tank near the homestead. At this time two rooms of timber and iron were constructed near the rear of the homestead to accommodate the overseer and the permanent 'hands', the latter in the room nearest to the main house.<sup>24</sup>

In 1915, an assisted school was established at *Norlup Homestead*. Additions were made to the place, with a schoolroom added to the quarters at the rear (the entire building known thereafter as the schoolhouse), and a room (thereafter known as the teacher's room) added on the front verandah to accommodate the teacher. The first teacher was Connie Isobel Daley, and the second was Joan Ranson from Hamel.<sup>25</sup> The students were three of Moore's children, three from the Hack family of Kenninup, one from the Maslin family of Tottenup, and two from the Smith family of Lauderdale. The school closed in 1916, following the erection of the school at Kenninup.<sup>26</sup>

In 1921, *Norlup Homestead* was sold to G. J. Swiney.<sup>27</sup> In 1925, Leslie Percival Nix purchased the place.<sup>28</sup> He retained ownership until 1961, when the

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<sup>18</sup> Gaines, C. 'Bridgetown 100 Years of History' Typescript thesis, 1970, Battye Library, p.14.

<sup>19</sup> Schorer, A. op. cit., p.21.

<sup>20</sup> Rate Books Upper Blackwood Roads Board 1890-1921.

<sup>21</sup> Schorer, A. op. cit., p.23.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*, p.22.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from G. W. D. Moore to L. Hester, 1975.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>26</sup> Conversation/site visit by Robin Chinnery with L. and M. Hester, owners of *Norlup Homestead* Memo, HCWA file PD 0229, 25 November 1996.

<sup>27</sup> Rate Book Upper Blackwood Road Board 1921-1922.

<sup>28</sup> Rate Book Upper Blackwood Road Board 1925-1926.

property was sold to Lancelot William Hester of Bridgetown for £23,000.<sup>29</sup> *Norlup Homestead* has remained Hester's property.<sup>30</sup>

Buildings extant at the date of Hester's purchase in 1961, included a large shed on the hill behind the homestead, the building at the rear known as the schoolhouse, an underground water tank, and the brick and iron w.c.<sup>31</sup> The orchard behind the homestead was in a neglected condition. It included pear, apple, mulberry and fig trees, some of which were thought to have been planted by the Scotts, and others which were thought to have been planted by the Moores. The homestead and its garden were in poor condition. There were holes in a number of the walls and numerous floor boards were rotten. Hester took up residence in the homestead, but he had little time available for repairs or maintenance in his initial years at Norlup, as he was fully occupied with running the property. The homestead was flooded on one occasion when heavy rains caused a deluge of water to flow down from the hill behind it and into the place. However, much of the floodwater flowed through the timber floors into the cellars beneath, filling them with mud. The dampness resulting took further toll on the condition of the homestead. In the garden, the grape vines thought to be the original vines planted by the Scotts survived, as did the rose tree believed to have been grown by Mrs. Scott from a cutting brought on the ship to Albany in 1854.<sup>32</sup>

In the latter half of 1965, Hester began to consider renovation of the place, as he considered that improved living conditions were essential when he married in 1966. He consulted numerous people, including a number of local builders. The general opinion was that the place should be pulled down or left to fall down. However, one local builder, Sandy Chambers of Boyup Brook, who had some experience with old buildings in England before emigrating to Australia, was of the opinion that the place was reparable and that renovation was more economical than the alternative of constructing a new farmhouse. Hester proceeded to seek advice about the proposed work from the Historical Society in Perth, and secured a bank loan to enable work to commence in 1966.<sup>33</sup>

Various changes were made to the layout of the place during the renovation. The original kitchen and dining area, approximately 30 feet in length across the rear of the homestead, was converted into kitchen, pantry, bathroom, w.c., and laundry. The office became the dining room, with an asbestos lined ceiling to the roof. A section of the wall from this room was removed to create an arched entrance to the living room (formerly the main bedroom). All timber floors in the rear section of the homestead were removed and

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<sup>29</sup> Rate Books Upper Blackwood Road Board 1925-1964; conversation/site visit by Robin Chinnery with L. and M. Hester, owners of *Norlup Homestead* Memo HCWA file PD 0229, 25 November 1996.

<sup>30</sup> Rate Books Upper Blackwood Road Board and Shire of Boyup Brook 1964-1996.

<sup>31</sup> Conversation/site visit by Robin Chinnery with L. and M. Hester, owners of *Norlup Homestead* Memo, HCWA file PD 0229, 25 November 1996.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Conversation/site visit by Robin Chinnery with L. and M. Hester, owners of *Norlup Homestead* Memo, HCWA file PD 0229, 25 November 1996; letter from L. Hester to The Chairman, Building Committee, Historical Society, n. d. (Note: In the letter, Hester cites an initial estimate from Chambers of £500; however, in conversation Hester stated that the initial estimate was \$4,000, and that this was the amount borrowed at that time.).

replaced with concrete, overlaid with linoleum in the kitchen and pantry, and tiles in the wet areas. The 10" wide pit sawn boards were salvaged where possible for re-use in the front section of the building. The floor level was lowered in order to increase the height of the doorways. Windows were replaced. A four panel timber door to match the original doors as closely as possible was purchased and fitted between the kitchen and the entry hall. The original front door to the homestead was replaced.

The central main bedroom became the living room. The timber mantle and fireplace surround was replaced with stone, on which a timber plaque was mounted with the inscription '1872 Norlup - 1966'. The position of the double doors to the verandah and the window were reversed, with the original timber frames for each being re-used. The jarrah ceiling was retained. The timber floor was removed with the boards salvaged where possible. The floor level was lowered as in the rear section of the building, and the floor replaced using the jarrah boards salvaged from the original floors. The single doorway to the entry hall was replaced with two timber framed, glass panelled sliding doors. The original jarrah door to the bedroom/playroom was retained. The bedroom/playroom was renovated, with the fireplace closed off and a desk built in to the space. The original second bedroom became the main bedroom. The positions of the window and double doors were reversed as in the living room. The room was narrowed by the construction of a wall to provide a passage through to the other bedroom rather than the direct access of the past, and an entry was made from the new passage to the new bathroom, toilet and laundry area. The fireplaces in each of these bedrooms were also closed off, with bricks from the demolition of the outside w. c. used as fill. In the main bedroom, wardrobes were built in along the length of that wall. In the smaller bedroom a cupboard was built in to the fireplace. The floor of this room was replaced with a concrete floor. Original doors and their fittings were retained where possible, with brass plates later added as a finish to those in the formal areas of the home.

Opening off the verandah, the fourth bedroom (known as the teacher's room) was enlarged to have larger dimensions than the other bedroom at the opposite end of the front verandah. New bricks were used in its construction; they were slightly larger than the original bricks. The window installed in the renovation was larger than the previous window in order to provide more light. The fifth bedroom at the western end of the verandah was renovated to become the office. The timber boards on the front verandah were removed. The level of the verandah was dropped; a concrete floor was installed with tiles overlaid. Brick piers were built under the verandah posts, and a drain installed to prevent further drainage problems. The level of the ground at the front of the homestead was raised substantially, obscuring the cellar, the walls and steps of the original homestead.<sup>34</sup>

In the years following the renovation of the homestead efforts were made to renew the garden. The old vines and fruit trees were retained, and also the

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<sup>34</sup> Conversation/site visit by Robin Chinnery with L. and M. Hester, owners of *Norlup Homestead* Memo, HCWA file PD 0229, 25 November 1996.

rose tree. New plantings were made, including fruit trees, rose trees and various shrubs. A circular drive was graded.<sup>35</sup>

In 1981, a hard court tennis court was constructed to the south-west of the homestead garden.<sup>36</sup>

By 1987, it had become apparent that the corrugated iron roof would have to be replaced. In March 1988, removal of the old corrugated iron roof revealed that there had once been three layers of shingles beneath. Gary Chambers, son of Sandy Chambers, replaced the corrugated iron roof.<sup>37</sup>

An Open Day was held at the place in 1994.

In 1995, the underground tank was found to be in need of repair as leakage was causing damp problems. A new plastic liner was installed and the tank remains in use.<sup>38</sup>

The two French granite mill stones which Scotts used to grind their grain have remained in the front garden of *Norlup Homestead*. With the pair of mill stones at Cape Riche, they are said to be the only known surviving examples of such mill stones in Western Australia.<sup>39</sup>

*Norlup Homestead*, continues in use as the homestead of the owners of the property. The schoolhouse is currently used as extra accommodation on occasion and for storage. On 14 March 1992, the Country Women's Association placed a plaque on the exterior wall of the chimney recording the presence of the assisted school in 1915-1916.

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Norlup Homestead* is a single-storey clay brick and corrugated Colorbond clad roof homestead with an adjoining timber construction school house and sheds, set in a landscaped garden.

*Norlup Homestead* is set above Gnowongerup Brook on rising ground and is accessed from Norlup Road along the contour of the land via a track. The homestead is surrounded by a fence and lawns. The garden has a rich variety of native and exotic plants, trees and two early grapevines. The garden is entered from the north between two mature pear trees with a brick paved path leading to the rear door of the house. The fence line to the north has a garden bed in front of it, planted with a variety of annuals and perennials. To the east the garden contains the underground tank (cistern), camellias, grapevines, and fruit trees including peach, lemon, pear and loquat. The southern garden has been re-contoured as per the documentary evidence to eliminate the semi basement across the southern face of the building. The original stairs to the front verandah have been lost by the raising of the levels. The garden is planted with lawn down to a circular drive which has a centre bed filled with planting. To the south west there is a tennis court a mature conifer beyond it and the view to Deadman Pool beyond that again. To the

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<sup>35</sup>       ibid.

<sup>36</sup>       ibid.

<sup>37</sup>       ibid.

<sup>38</sup>       ibid.

<sup>39</sup>       Schorer, A. op. cit., p.15.



west there is an arbor covered in wisteria. The combination of the white house and lush garden setting is picturesque.

*Norlup Homestead* consists of three architectural components: the homestead, the schoolroom and the later roof construction which links the two and provides a garage.

*Norlup Homestead* is a single-storey Victorian Georgian style homestead.<sup>40</sup> It has white painted rendered walls over unburnt clay bricks laid in pug, a replacement Colorbond roof and a variety of timber framed casement windows and doors which are either original, modelled on the original or are new.

The fundamental plan form, though modified by the present owners, remains close to the original with modifications to the openings, the introduction of some partitions and the relocation of some walls. It is a three room plan under the main roof with verandah and enclosed verandah to the south and north sides respectively. Each end of the verandah is captured with rooms which extend through the plan from north to south. As a result of the level adjustment, the balustrade was no longer required. The remaining sections of balustrade were removed by the present owners, leaving scars in the posts. The verandah posts were repositioned adjacent to the original locations. All openings along this verandah's north wall have been modified. The north verandah, which has been filled in for a considerable time, possibly since the period of construction, is divided into rooms to provide dining room, kitchen, pantry, bathroom, toilet and laundry running from east to west. This arrangement reverses the original order of room uses along this section of the building and introduces new rooms. The soffits of all the verandah rooms have been lined with flat fibro sheeting.

The main rooms are organised around a central corridor with doors to the north and south. Openings on the east and west side of the corridor have been modified. The floors are of sawn jarrah. The principal room to the west of the corridor has a reed moulded timber ceiling which appears original and a fireplace on the west wall which is the original fireplace modified by the present owners. A door to the north of the fireplace is one of the few original four panel doors remaining. French doors have been introduced onto the south verandah and the main living room has a recycled door from another site leading into the corridor. The principal room to the east of the corridor has been divided in the length of its plan by a partition along the north wall to form a corridor. Fitted cupboards have been introduced and the fireplace and surround modified by the present owners.

Immediately to the north-east of the house, and linked to it by further enclosures, is the former school building and an attached garage. These two structures are made of timber frame and are clad in timber and fibro sheeting respectively, with a low pitched roof. The east end of the school building has a brick construction fire box and flue. The school has been divided to provide a small living and bedroom and a very small bathroom has been attached to

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<sup>40</sup> 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) pp.42-45.

the northern side. The garage extends to the north and around the west end of the school. The school building is almost subsumed by the surrounding shed and is best read from the east and the south.

Maintenance on all components is kept up to high standards.

The farm's working buildings were not included in this assessment.

### **13. 3 REFERENCES**

National Trust Assessment Exposition 8 March 1983.