



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*

The external facades of *Raffles Hotel* indicate that the building is a significant example of the Inter-War Functionalist style. (Criterion 1.1)

The 1937 extension and remodelling of the former Canning Bridge Hotel revealed an innovative and creative approach to the development of the site. For example, the design of the interior courtyard garden between the two wings of the building, the exterior *biergarten* which took advantage of the river views, and the conversion of the former verandahs into modern loggias. (Criterion 1.2)

Raffles Hotel, with its distinctive 1930s facade, is a well-known Perth landmark. It is situated on a promontory of land and visible from the Canning and Swan Rivers, the Kwinana Freeway and the Canning Bridge approach into the City of Melville. (Criterion 1.3)

The scale and proportions of *Raffles Hotel* are in sympathy with existing developments in the area and the site generally. (Criterion 1.3)

Raffles Hotel together with the former Applecross District Hall and the Canning Bridge, creates a significant cultural environment. *Raffles Hotel* and the Hall provide visual evidence of the stylistic changes that occurred in inter-war building design during the second half of the 1930s, while the nearby bridge features as a significant landscape element. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

The evolution of the building from the Canning Bridge Hotel (1896) is an example of building practice during the post-depression years when existing structures, particularly commercial buildings, were modernised and extended for contemporary use. (Criterion 2.1)

Raffles Hotel together with the Applecross District Hall, the Canning Bridge and Canning Highway are indicators of the history and development of the Melville district. (Criterion 2.2)

* 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*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989. Note: Although Apperly et al use the term 'Inter-War Functionalist style', some professionals would describe this place as 'Art Deco Streamline Moderne.'

Raffles Hotel has a continuous history as a licensed premise since 1896 and possibly earlier. It provided refreshment, accommodation, entertainment and a place for meetings and special events organised by the community. (Criterion 2.2)

Raffles Hotel is a major work by Perth architect W. G. Bennett who made a significant contribution to the architectural history of this State. Other significant works by Bennett include the Plaza Theatre and Arcade in central Perth (1936-7), the Kalgoorlie Olympic Pool (1938), the Chalet at Araluen and other structures (1937), and the Beaucott Buildings (c.1937) in Beaufort Street. (Criterion 2.3)

The exterior and interior design and detailing of *Raffles Hotel* was highly regarded in its day for its excellence. Contemporary accounts provide valuable insights about current fashion trends and lifestyle patterns during the late 1930s. (Criterion 2.4)

The creation of a European style *biergarten* was an innovative addition, and believed to be the first of its kind in Western Australia, or even Australia. The inspiration behind the *biergarten* and its design is not known, however the design of a *biergarten* for the Highway Hotel (1940, now *The Coronado*) in Claremont suggests a possible trend for such areas within modern hotels in Perth. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Raffles Hotel continues to have high social value in the community as a place for recreation and entertainment. (Criterion 4.1)

Raffles Hotel is valued by various groups within the community such as the Art Deco Society of WA; the Melville Historical Society; the Melville Ratepayers Association and the Friends of the Swan River. (Criterion 4.1)

The prominence of the hotel on its site and its use by generations of Western Australians has contributed to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Raffles Hotel is one of the last remaining hotels representing the Inter-War Functionalist style in the metropolitan area. The other examples, by Marshall Clifton and Reginald Summerhayes, include the Swanbourne Hotel (1940), The Civic (1940) in Inglewood, and *The Coronado* (fmr Highway Hotel, 1940) in Claremont. However; these buildings reveal a slightly different design aesthetic within the Inter-War Functionalist style with the massing of horizontal and vertical forms reminiscent of European examples, such as those by the Dutch architect, Willem Dudok. Other surviving examples of 1930s hotels, either newly constructed or extensively remodelled older buildings, are stylistically different; for example the Captain Stirling Hotel (Inter-War Mediterranean) and the *Criterion Hotel* (Inter-War Free Classical). (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Raffles Hotel is an example of the Inter-War Functionalist style as applied to a commercial building. (Criterion 6.1)

Raffles Hotel is a representative example of a hotel designed to take advantage of the local climate. (Criterion 6.2)

The building represents a typical example of the post-depression practice of remodelling and modernising existing commercial buildings. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Raffles Hotel is in sound condition. However; there has been an indifferent approach to the architectural character of the place with many unsympathetic alterations and additions taking place over the years. While these changes have considerably affected the aesthetic values of the interior, and to a lesser extent the exterior facades of the 1937 Hotel, the historic and social values remain intact.

2.4 INTEGRITY

Raffles Hotel continues to be used as a licensed premise, and has functioned as a hotel since at least 1896. Therefore; in terms of integrity in relation to the original intention of the place, and its ongoing use as a hotel, *Raffles Hotel* retains a high degree of integrity.

The architectural integrity of *Raffles Hotel* has been compromised by the removal of most of the 1930s interior furnishings, alterations such as the enclosure of the loggias, and various additions to the exterior. These changes have reduced its aesthetic value.

The aesthetic value of *Raffles Hotel* in relation to its site and landmark qualities has moderate integrity.

The remnants of the former Canning Bridge Hotel have low integrity, but are sufficient to indicate the historic evolution of the place.

The external facades of the 1937 *Raffles Hotel* have the ability to be restored.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The external envelope of *Raffles Hotel* is largely intact, and the structures of the 1896 hotel are visible within this envelope. The earlier 1896 hotel largely determined the form of the 1937 building and this aspect of the history of the Hotel remains evident.

A substantial amount of the original fabric of the exterior facades of *Raffles Hotel* remains intact, despite the enclosure of the loggias and more recent additions.

The interior design of the 1937 ground and first floor Lounges has lost authenticity through the removal of original furnishings and unsympathetic treatments. Some original elements remain such as the fireplace, the maple and wrought iron staircase and some pillars in the Main Lounge. The enclosed *biergarten* within the acute angle of the hotel wings remains.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Dr Robyn Taylor, Historian, based on earlier research undertaken for an upgraded assessment for the National Trust of Australia (WA), and further research. The physical evidence has been compiled by Ron Bodycoat, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Raffles Hotel (1937) is located on the western side of the Canning Bridge in Applecross, a suburb of the City of Melville. The building has a waterfront location on a promontory of land which extends into the Canning River. It is bounded by Canning Beach Road to the west, the Canning Highway to the south, and what appears to be an extension of Canning Beach Road which runs between the hotel site and the river along its northern and eastern boundaries. Facing the south-west corner of the hotel is Kintail Road which intersects with Canning Beach Road near its junction with Canning Highway. Because of historical and stylistic factors, the former *Applecross District Hall* (1934) which is located at this junction is seen as a significant element in the general *Raffles Hotel* locality.¹

The history of *Raffles Hotel* dates back to the Canning Bridge Hotel (1896), and possibly to an earlier structure, but to date this has not been established with certainty through documentary research. The site of the hotel has been significant in terms of its location on the southern route from Fremantle to Perth via the Causeway, and its proximity to the successive bridges that have been built across this narrow section of the river.² The building of these bridges and the hotel appear, in some respects, to share a common history. The crossing was once known as 'Hell's Gate' because of its difficulty,³ and before the 1850s, travellers and itinerant workers had to make the crossing by punt. The need for a bridge to take traffic from the eastern districts to the Port of Fremantle was realised in September 1849 'when a contract was let to Solomon Cook to build a timber bridge across the river.'⁴ This was completed in January the following year and a toll system introduced. Apparently in that same year, on the 4th May 1850, a liquor licence was granted to a Samuel Duffield the owner of the 'Bridge Inn' of Canning. However; the exact location of this Inn has not been established and it cannot be assumed to be near the Canning Bridge, although the presence of an Inn would be highly feasible in this locality before the building of the Canning Bridge Hotel in 1896. In their history of Melville, Cooper and MacDonald write:

Since the days of the short-lived Leyson Arms Tavern at Bull's Creek in the 1830s, there were several unsuccessful attempts to establish a public house near the river on Canning Road. By 1900, however, the Canning Bridge Hotel, on the site of the present-day Raffles, had become a permanent landmark. It was a single storey structure, with a high gabled roof. Beside it stood a pavilion, with a dance hall on the upper floor and refreshment rooms below.⁵

The hotel provided a venue for many social and sporting groups such as the W.A. Hunt Club. One 'old time memory' recorded in Malcolm Uren's history of Melville, mentions how the hotel 'was at its busiest on Hunt Club days...' and that, 'The hotel stables were located where the hall now stands.'⁶

¹ National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, June 1995; and Upgraded Assessment, January 1998. This observation is also made by the Art Deco Society of WA in its various documents about the *Raffles Hotel*.

² After the first bridge opened in 1850, replacement bridges were built in 1867, 1890-1 (or 1896 according to a history of the district by Malcolm Uren), 1908 and 1937.

³ Cooper, W.S. and McDonald, G., *A City for all Seasons. The Story of Melville*, City of Melville, WA, 1989, p. 51.

⁴ Uren, Malcolm, *The City of Melville from bushland to expanding metropolis*, p.55.

⁵ Cooper and McDonald, op. cit., p.155.

⁶ Uren, op. cit., p.60.

(Presumably the *Applecross District Hall*.) The hotel was also used by the East Fremantle District Road Board for its first council meeting on 22 March, 1901.⁷

Accounts of the area around the Canning Bridge Hotel, during the early decades of this century, describe it as an isolated place. 'The only roads - they were little better than cleared tracks topped with shell - were Kintail, Ardross and Duncraig Roads. They ended suddenly in the bush. Canning Road was of limestone and was very rough to travel.'⁸ The district was also described as 'a children's paradise. There was swimming, boating, fishing, crabbing, prawning and rambles in the bush. Life was free and easy.'⁹ The rural holiday ambience of the place was one of its main attractions for day trippers who made the journey from Perth by ferry. Apart from the hotel, there were other places for refreshments such as at Coffee Point and the Canning Bridge Tea Rooms. During the late 1920s, the Canning Road was 'rehabilitated' and the Canning Bridge Hotel came under new management. The place was advertised as 'a thoroughly up-to-date residential hotel and popular holiday resort', which was accessible by bus or ferry.¹⁰

Following the depression, a growing sense of optimism for the future of the Melville district resulted in a number of civic improvements, including the decision to build the *Applecross District Hall* (now called the 'Tivoli'), on the eastern end of Kintail Road. The proximity of this site to the hotel was objected to at the time by the local Parents and Citizens Association.¹¹ The distinctive modern design for this Hall prompted the comment in the *Fremantle Districts Sentinel* that it would be 'a fine landmark, and a great advertisement for the Applecross district in particular and the Melville district in general.'¹² Three years later, in 1937, the Canning Bridge Hotel underwent extensive remodelling and was renamed *Raffles Hotel*, the name redolent of the famous 'Raffles' in Singapore. The modern facade, and in particular the nature and placement of the forward extension of the hotel, appears to reveal a conscious effort on the part of the architect to respect the importance of the District Hall to the community and its streetscape value. While work was in progress on the Hotel, the Canning Road was upgraded and renamed Canning Highway in 1937, and a new Canning Bridge was constructed alongside the older one. This was completed in 1938.

The successful tender for the Hotel's modern face-lift was submitted by Perth architect W. G. Bennett. Bennett, had been a partner of the firm Eales, Cohen & Bennett which was responsible for the *Applecross District Hall*. He left the firm in 1935.¹³ Although there is only three years difference between these two buildings, together they represent the stylistic shifts which occurred in Western Australian buildings between the mid to late 1930s.

Raffles Hotel reveals the new design aesthetic, then in vogue, of streamlined functional forms with an emphasis on 'horizontal lines, admirably suited to the site'.¹⁴ Its design took good advantage of the riverside location. 'The main feature is the large curved loggias, on both floors, provided on the river

7 *ibid.*, p.22.

8 *ibid.*, p.59.

9 *ibid.*, p.58.

10 Cooper and McDonald, *op. cit.*, p.155.

11 *ibid.*, p.197.

12 *ibid.*, p.197.

13 *Building and Construction Journal*, 28 June, 1935.

14 *Turner's Annual*, 1937, p.62.

frontage. From there, extensive views of the Swan and Canning Rivers are available.¹⁵

The new Hotel was officially opened on December 10th, 1937. A report in *The West Australian* the following day described the event and the Hotel's special features:

In the presence of 200 guests the Chief Secretary (Mr. W. H. Kitson) declared open the Hotel Raffles at Canning Bridge last night. The hotel which was reconstructed recently at a cost of nearly £10,000 is one of the most artistic and attractive hotels in the metropolitan area. A feature is a biergarten, which is believed to be the first of its kind in Australia.

Mr Kitson said the premises would add greatly to the popularity of the Swan River and Canning Bridge. The surroundings generally were so delightful that it was difficult when in the hotel or biergarten to imagine that one was so near to Perth and the Swan and Canning Rivers. He congratulated the proprietors (Messrs. J. P. Monaghan and M. A. McDonnell) and the owner (Mr. J. A. Coleman) on the high standard of the establishment.¹⁶

The *bier garten* and the hotel's fittings were also described in the weekly trade journal *Building and Construction*. In this publication the *biergarten* was referred to as 'Perth's first biergarten' and that, 'In design and in faithfulness of execution and fitments, it is claimed to be an exact reproduction of the traditional German Biergarten.'¹⁷ The garden was situated on the northern boundary of the Hotel.

It is enclosed on the southern side by the hotel building, and on its other sides by shade houses and aviaries. It consists of a large grassed area dotted with about 50 shade trees, including such varieties as the umbrella, plane, poplar, Kurragong, and such like. In the centre of the area is an ornamental dovecote and aviary. Nearby is a sundial. A number of rustic tables are placed at intervals over the area... From the Garten a rustic, arched gateway leads to the eastern side of the hotel.¹⁸

What would appear to be a curious mixing of styles and ambiances such as the rustic nature of the German *biergarten* and the stream-lined modernity of the hotel design is continued in the interior where 'a novel feature of the main lounge is an ingle fireplace', whereas the 'whole design is intended to provide a tropical hotel in a metropolitan setting.' Undoubtedly this was designing for the realities of the local climate with its seasonal changes. The Main Lounge was 38 feet long (11.5 metres) and 36 feet wide (11.5 metres), and the Tropical Lounge which featured a polished timber dance floor was 58 feet long (17 metres) and 26 feet wide (7.5 metres). The two lounges were separated by folding glass doors. Listed as outstanding features of the Tropical Lounge were its 'specially designed' cane furnishings, large palms and pot plants, while the basic colours of the lounge were green, Chinese red, cream and black. Large glass doors led from the Tropical Lounge to 'an enclosed garden surrounded by a pergola.'¹⁹ Another special feature was the wall ventilators which covered loud speakers for a combined radio and gramophone system.

The Saloon and Public Bars of the original Canning Bridge Hotel were increased in size, and finished with new textured walls, plaster ceilings, flush

15 *Turner's Annual*, 1937, p.62.

16 *The West Australian*, 11 December, 1937, p.25b.

17 *Building and Construction Journal*, 31 December, 1937, p.4.

18 *ibid.*

19 *Building and Construction Journal*, 31 December, 1937, p.5. Today, there is an enclosed garden with pergolas off the main lounge area.

panelled walnut bar counters, with chromium edging and footrails, and chromium wall fittings and mirrors. The Dining Room, also situated in the original Canning Bridge Hotel, was redecorated with textured walls and a decorative plaster ceiling, and featured a new 14 feet long (4.2 metres) plate glass picture window, which overlooked the *biergarten* and river. A staircase, with wrought iron balustrade and polished maple handrail led up to the new first floor, accommodating bedrooms, bathrooms, private lounge and two loggias.

The exterior of the Hotel was described as 'rendered in cream cement, with sunk rustication emphasising the horizontal lines on the main building.'²⁰ The pitched roof over the first storey section was covered in colour-blend tiles, while green painted circular steps led to the entrances of the Hotel from the Canning Highway frontage.

Raffles Hotel soon became a popular place for social entertainment, hosting the 'Night in June' Ball and other society events.²¹

The post-depression growth of the surrounding districts could well have been a factor in the extensive remodelling and extension of *Raffles Hotel*. For example an advertisement placed in the *Daily News* has a drawing of 'Raffles' and the caption 'We welcome - Australia's most beautiful college to our district'.²² Calling itself 'The Garden Hotel of the State', it makes reference to the fact that it is within a few minutes of Aquinas College (across the bridge at Salter Point), and Santa Maria Ladies' College in Attadale which was also constructed during 1937. Hotels such as *Raffles Hotel* would have provided a convenient place to stay for parents of country students boarding at these colleges, and other visitors coming to Perth. *Raffles Hotel* was a fashionable hotel for entertaining, as promoted in its advertisement, and being on the river, an ideal place for enjoying water sports and Perth's sunny Mediterranean climate.

During the mid-late 1930s the architect William Bennett was responsible for the renovation of a number of existing late nineteenth and early twentieth century hotels and the building of new hotels in the modern styles fashionable at the time. In the Perth region, these included the remodelling of the interior of the *Savoy Hotel*, the Esplanade Hotel (demolished), and the Bohemia Hotel (demolished) in Murray Street which was given a restrained Art Deco street facade. The Ocean Beach Hotel, Cottesloe (now completely remodelled) had been renovated and altered by Bennett in 1936, while the Scarborough Beach Hotel (demolished) was newly built in 1938.²³ Amongst his country hotels, the Sawyers Valley Hotel, rebuilt in 1937, has a distinctive and unusual Art Deco facade²⁴ featuring an ornate cluster of centrally placed vertical elements rising up and through its pitched roof. Another building which shows stylistic similarities with *Raffles Hotel* is Motor House (1936-37) which still stands on an 'island' in Milligan Street, Perth. Bennett worked on this building in association with the firm Powell, Cameron and Chisholm.

20 *ibid.*

21 *Turner's, Annual*, June 1938, p.30.

22 *Daily News*, 19 February, 1938, p.9.

23 *Building and Construction Journal*, 29 January, 1937.

24 Photographic evidence of the former facade of the Ocean Beach Hotel, and the Scarborough Beach Hotel, was not available at the time of writing this report.

Bennett, who achieved a number of 'firsts' in his qualifications as an architectural student during the 1920s,²⁵ had a substantial presence on the local and regional domestic and commercial, and civic building scene of the 1930s. The C. S. Dyer house (1938) on the Esplanade, South Perth, was one of Bennett's more notable domestic buildings. This two-storey house is a fine example of the Inter-War Functional style, and in common with the *Raffles Hotel*, it was designed to take advantage of the views over the Swan River.²⁶

Bennett was not the only architect designing hotels in Western Australia at this time. Architects Marshall Clifton and Reginald Summerhayes, working in association, designed the Swanbourne Hotel, The Civic in Inglewood, and the *Coronado Hotel* (fmr Highway Hotel) in Claremont, all completed in 1940. The three buildings reveal particular variations within the Inter-War Functionalist style. This can be attributed to the design preferences of the architects, and the fact they were designed at the very end of the decade. The design of these hotels, with their more pronounced emphasis on the massing of horizontal and vertical forms, reflect the increasing influence of European examples such as the work of French architect Le Corbusier, the German Bauhaus and Dutch cubism. The work of Dutch architect, Willem Dudok, and in particular his *City Hall* (1928-32) in Hilversum, Holland, is often cited as a influence on inter-war building in Australia and overseas. Locally, his influence has been referred to in the design of the *Coronado Hotel*.²⁷ However, all three hotels were built along essentially traditional lines, with pitched tiled roofs partially hidden behind a modern parapet wall. A flat roof was one of the hallmarks of modernity. Other surviving examples of 1930s hotels in Perth are stylistically different. For example the Captain Stirling Hotel (Inter-War Mediterranean) in Claremont and the *Criterion Hotel* (Inter-War Free Classical) in the city.

As indicated above, *Raffles Hotel* was one of the many hotels constructed, or reconstructed, in Perth during the years following the world depression. During the later half of the 1930s, the modern aesthetic in architecture and design, and the modern lifestyle of dining and dancing at clubs and hotels,²⁸ was gaining broad international popularity via the mediums of the Hollywood movie, illustrated magazines and the press. Mediums which were gaining in sophistication through the advances in modern technology. In Western Australia, the local trade journal, *Building and Construction*, carried regular articles about the Modern Movement in Europe, Great Britain and America. It also featured the work of local architects and their achievements. Many travelled interstate and overseas to explore the latest design solutions for their work.²⁹ The emphasis was on progress, the latest technologies, and a general sense of optimism for the future which was reflected in the styles adopted for their buildings.

²⁵ According to research by the Art Deco Society of WA, Bennett was the first West Australian to hold the positions of President of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, and President of the Royal Australian Planning Institute.

²⁶ The house was designed to take advantage of the river views with large windows and two 'sun baking decks' on the first floor level. The home was featured in the November 1938 issue of the national magazine *Decoration and Glass*.

²⁷ The increase in car ownership also made such entertainments accessible to more people, particularly in the evenings.

²⁸ See doctoral thesis by Robyn Taylor, 'An investigation into the nature of modernism and modernity during the 1930s in Perth, Western Australia, through the study of specific buildings and related art and design forms', University of Western Australia, 1993.

²⁹ For example, Molyneux, I.. *Looking Around Perth*, p.61.

In 1959, 'a motel-like extension' was made to the rear of *Raffles Hotel*, comprising a double-storey building of twenty rooms.³⁰ According to the local press, this new development met public demand, where 'motels offer service to the family man'.³¹ Other changes to the Hotel were made in c.1985 when apparently a fire caused damage to the first floor which required a new metal deck roof to replace the former pitched tiled roof.³²

In 1998, *Raffles Hotel* continues to be a well-known and popular place for patrons. According to a design submission for the redevelopment of the hotel site, the hotel 'premises are licensed to cater for approximately 1510 people... On average the Hotel attracts approximately 1000 people on a Saturday or Sunday during normal operating hours. On some occasions this figure can be exceeded.'³³ This design proposal, which requires the demolition of *Raffles Hotel*, has met with strong opposition from community groups such as the Art Deco Society of WA, the Melville Conservation Society, the Melville Historical Society, the Melville Ratepayers Association and the Friends of the Swan River. There is extensive documentation covering the campaign to 'save the Raffles', with letters of support from national and overseas architects and supporters for the retention of Art Deco buildings.³⁴

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Raffles Hotel, a complex of buildings dating from 1896 to the present day, is located off Canning Highway in Applecross at the western end of the Canning Bridge.

This Heritage Assessment applies to the Hotel and does not include the Motel section of the complex.

The site is on the western riverbank at the junction of the Canning and Swan Rivers and adjoining the north side of Canning Highway at the junction of a number of local roads.

The Hotel, with its distinctive 1930s facade, reminiscent of a ship's bridge, is a well-known riverside feature. Situated as it is in a prominent position near the Canning Bridge, the place is a distinctive landmark in the area. The narrow neck of the River at this point and the Hotel's proximity to the foreshore, serve to enhance its prominence and aesthetics. The Hotel is clearly visible from both Canning Highway and Kwinana Freeway, as well as from the river itself.

The present Hotel, which comprises the fabric of the 1896 Canning Bridge Hotel and the 1937 remodelling, is set back from the Canning Highway to provide on-site car parking on the southern and eastern sides of the building.

The Hotel consists of the following elements: the surviving fabric of the main part of the 1896 Canning Bridge Hotel; the remodelling which took place in 1937; the recent additions of the River Lounge (The Raffle) on the site of the

³⁰ *The West Australian*, 26 September, 1959, p.15a.

³¹ *The Melville News*, February 1960, p.1.

³² 'Raffles Hotel Assessment of Authenticity and Integrity', Kevin Palassis Architects, for the Heritage Council of WA, 1995 and revised 1996, p.3.

³³ Traffic Report section in the *City of Melville Design Submission for Redevelopment of Raffles Hotel*, prepared by Davenport Campbell, August, 1995.

³⁴ This documentation is held by the Melville Historical Society and the Art Deco Society of WA Inc.)

former *bier garten* c.1985; and, the drive-in Bottle Shop attached at the western end of the building.

Physical evidence reveals that the 1896 Canning Bridge Hotel was constructed as a single-storied building of brick construction with high-pitched roofs clad in corrugated iron sheeting and prominent chimneys. This Hotel building comprises two wings set at an acute angle. The northern wing contains the Kitchen and Dining Room in the original locations; the Lounges and main entrance have survived in their original positions in the southern wing. There is physical evidence on site to show that the former verandahs to both wings have been absorbed into the modified building of 1937 and later.

The 1937 remodelling retained the general form of the former Hotel, adding an upper storey above the south east corner section and half of the southern wing. The original pitched roof forms survive beyond this addition. The roof over the upper floor is a metal deck skillion construction.

The remodelling provided a curved corner treatment facing onto the carpark and the river, Loggias at both levels and architectural details in the style of the late 1930s. The external walls of the additions, rendered and incorporating horizontal lines of sunk rustication, have been painted at a later stage. Parapets to the southern and eastern elevations mask the roof forms behind. Stepped decorative elements with a vertical fin are centrally located on the parapet walls above the main entrance in the south wall and the entrance to the bars in the eastern wall. The word 'HOTEL' in raised lettering features on either side of the fins. The name 'RAFFLES' features in Art Deco typeface on the wall above the entrances.

Internally, the southern wing now presents as one large space used as a Lounge and incorporating the floor area of the 1896 Hotel and the verandahs on both faces. There is a series of columns and beams in place of the former walls. The fireplace at the western end of the wing survives but in the style of the remodelling of 1937.

The two-storied section of the building houses on the ground floor the main entrance from the carpark on the south, an office and entry Lounge and the staircase to the upper floor, introduced in the 1937 remodelling and stylistically of that period. The bars, which now incorporate the former Loggias, are located on the curved corner of the building above cellars which are accessible from the eastern carpark. The upper floor provides a large single Lounge space with bar, and incorporates the former Loggias of the upper level. Over the section of the southern wing, the upper floor comprises a series of rooms now used as the Manager's Flat, incorporating an adaptation of the Bedrooms added in the 1937 modifications.

The single storied northern wing retains the layout of the 1896 Kitchen and Dining Room with the eastern verandah absorbed into the recent addition of the Raffles Nightclub and the western verandah reconstructed as a flat metal-deck roof on steel framing.

Recent major alterations c. 1985 have provided a single-storied addition, the River Lounge in place of the *beirgarten* on the river side, a drive-in Bottle Shop attached to the western end, external canopies to the enclosed Loggias and an attached canopy outside the main entrance. Illuminated signage has been added at roof level above the parapet line and other signage has been applied to the face of the building overlooking the carpark. The interior spaces have been transformed by the removal of walls, alterations to former openings, upgrading of Toilets, Kitchens, Bars and the Office area and a series of redecorations which now result in an unco-ordinated internal presentation.

Of the 1937 decorative treatment, only the two staircases, one fireplace, and some detailing on the 'capitals' of a number of pillars, remain to suggest that style in the presentation of the interior spaces.

An accumulation of exposed services and pipework is apparent at the exterior of the building in rear areas and on the roofs.

It is important to note that the form of the building as it appears today has been determined by the retention of the former Canning Bridge Hotel of 1896 behind the remodelled facade.

13.3 REFERENCES

National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment Exposition, June 1995.

National Trust of Australia (WA) Upgraded Assessment, March 1998 compiled by the Art Deco Committee of the National Trust (WA).

Kevin Palassis Architects, 'Assessment of Authenticity and Integrity, Raffles Hotel, for the Heritage Council of Western Australia, January 1996.

Files and documents provided by the Art Deco Society of WA (Inc).

Health Department Plan Set No.5112 (Raffles Hotel) held by the State Archives.

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

It would be highly desirable to locate the original plans of both the Canning Bridge Hotel and any alterations to that building, and the architect's 1937 plans for the *Raffles Hotel*, in order to gain a better understanding of the evolution of the hotel and its site. The plans may also indicate the location of the cellars and whether the current cellars date back to the 1896 building.

Further research about the site of the *Raffles Hotel* and whether an inn or rest house existed there prior to the Canning Bridge Hotel.

Evidence suggests that the large parking areas surrounding the present hotel may well conform to that which existed with the 1896 hotel, and that such spaces were necessary for the movement of horses and drays and other conveyances bringing goods to the Port of Fremantle. Further research would need to be undertaken to establish the historic use of this space.

Further research would need to be undertaken to determine the history of the mature palm trees in the vicinity of the hotel, and whether these were part of the 1937 planting scheme.

Archaeological excavations ought to be made at the *Raffles Hotel* site to reveal information about earlier human occupation of the area.

It would be useful to establish the development of *biertgartens* in Western Australia, and Australia, to determine whether the *biertgarten* at the *Raffles Hotel* was unique for its time, and the possible sources for its inspiration and design.