

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Permanent Entry

Assessment Documentation

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.4.3 Mining
 - 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 110 Resource exploitation & depletion
- 112 Technology & technological change
- 303 Mining (incl. mineral processing)
- 306 Domestic activities
- 504 Depression & boom
- 606 Famous & infamous people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE^{*}

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is an outstanding example of a single storey stone, brick and iron roofed residence in the Federation Queen Anne style. (Criterion 1.2)

Peter Pan, Coolgardie contributes to the historical fabric and ambience of the townscape of Coolgardie, being one of the finest residences in the Goldfields. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Peter Pan, Coolgardie was built as an office for the New Austral mining company and residence for its manager in 1898, when Coolgardie was the

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

administrative and business centre of the Eastern Goldfields. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Peter Pan, Coolgardie was associated with mining organisation, the New Austral Company and its manager Dundas MLA Albert Thomas from 1898 to 1906 during Coolgardie's boom days, and later with the Western Mining Corp during the resurgence of gold mining in the post World War Two period. (Criteria 2.2 & 2.3)

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is indicative of the scale of activity and investment in Coolgardie at the time of its construction. (Criterion 2.2)

The continued occupation of *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* throughout the 20th and 21st centuries demonstrates the continued history of change in Coolgardie during this period. (Criterion 2.2)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is valued by the local community for its associations with the early gold booms days of the town, as evidenced by its inclusion in the Coolgardie Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

It is a popular belief in the local and wider community that *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* provided sanctuary for Italian Claudio Mattaboni, who was at the centre of the fight that sparked the Kalgoorlie Race Riots in January 1934. (Criterion 4.1)

Peter Pan, Coolgardie contributes to a sense of place for the local and wider community as one of the few substantial domestic buildings remaining in Coolgardie. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is one of a small number of substantial brick residences built in the Eastern Goldfields in the late 1890s. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is representative of the more substantial residences built for the mining elite on the goldfields in the late 1890s. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is in fair condition. There is considerable evidence of interventions, and some stone and mortar deterioration associated with rising damp, and external timber elements, particularly the verandah posts, are weathered.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Peter Pan, Coolgardie retains a high degree of integrity as a residence.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Peter Pan, Coolgardie retains a moderate to high degree of authenticity. It retains a significant degree of the original fabric with interventions predominantly in the kitchen, replacement ceilings in the living room and kitchen, and the additions of the rear enclosed patio, east side patio, and wet areas. However the most intrusive impact is the construction of concrete dado walls to the front wall and west side of the residence. The dado walls are to windowsill height; approximately 900.00mm from floor level, and are approximately 75mm metres in width, expanding to the entire triangular infill on truncated bay corners.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Irene Sauman, Historian and Laura Gray, Heritage and Conservation Consultant, in May 2008, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is a single-storey face brick and stone residence with a hipped corrugated iron roof, built in 1898 in Federation Queen Anne style, for the New Austral Mining Company. The place was later named after a racehorse, which was a Melbourne Cup Winner

Most of the early prospectors who rushed to the eastern gold finds in the early 1890s lived in tents or shelters constructed of corrugated iron that occupied any free space. There was considerable land speculation as goldfield town lots were auctioned. Mining agent James Hart Fawcett acquired Coolgardie Town Lots 414 and 415 in Forrest Street in March 1896. Six months later, title to both lots was transferred to Alfred Leon Simon of Coolgardie, who was recorded as a Doctor of Philosophy. Six months later still, Perth solicitors Stephen and George Parker acquired the land.¹

According to the Mining listing in the Trades section of the 1900 Post Office Directory, Parker and Parker were the legal firm representing the New Austral Co Ltd and the New Austral Gold Mine. Titles to Lots 414 and 415 were transferred to the New Austral Co in August 1899, so it seems likely that the land was purchased by the Company's solicitors on its behalf.²

The Company is first listed in Coolgardie in 1898, when New Austral Chambers is recorded in Forrest Street, occupied by mining engineers A. E. Thomas and R. M. Raymond, mining surveyor C. M. Yeomans, caretaker John Watson and the New Austral Co Ltd, with Thomas as manager. There are no street numbers given, but the location of the New Austral Chambers between Hunt and Lefroy streets puts the building in the same place in the street as *Peter Pan, Coolgardie.*³ This would explain the entry hall with its corner fireplace, indicating it may have been designed initially as the

¹ Certificates of Title, Vol. 77 Fol. 175 & Vol. 81 Fol. 104, 23 March 1896, 13 October 1896, 7 April 1897.

Wise's Post Office Directory, 1898-1900; Certificates of Title, Vol. 77 Fol 175 & Vol. 81 Fol. 104, 25 August 1899.

³ Wise's Post Office Directory, 1898-1900.

reception area for the Company's rooms. The fact that there was a caretaker listed also indicates that when first constructed the place was not occupied as a family residence, although the style of the place, and its location four streets from the main thoroughfare, suggests that this was its ultimate purpose.

It was not uncommon for a man intending to establish a business on the goldfields, or anywhere for that matter, to go out alone and have his family join him later when suitable accommodation had been obtained. A man could comfortably occupy a hotel room in the meantime.

From 1899, the Post Office Directory makes no mention of the New Austral Chambers, but has Albert Ernest Thomas as manager of the New Austral Company, resident at the address.⁴ It is likely that the entry hall continued to double as an office while the French doors that opened off each room onto the verandahs gave other occupants access to other parts of the house without using the hallway.

Albert Thomas was English-born and educated and had also worked professionally in South Africa. He was 24 when he came to Australia and in 1901, at the age of 29, he became the member for Dundas in the WA Legislative Assembly.⁵ His position as manager of a mining company and an MLA carried social obligations, as indicated by letters received by Mrs Thomas found tucked behind the bedroom mantelpiece by a later owner of the place during renovations. One letter, written on 13 October 1905 to Mrs Thomas by her son Ron, who was in England, concerns the choice of music and players for soirees in the Thomas home, with opinions on Mendelssohn and Ron's self-assessment as a fiddle player. Ron may have been a lad in his early teens who had been sent 'home' to England for his education. There was another letter from a former servant who had fallen on hard times, asking for $\pounds 5.^6$

Peter Pan, Coolgardie was not a large residence for the period, but due to high labour costs and the rough living conditions of most people in the region, it was a substantial undertaking. The place would have been impressive during these early years, as family remembrances of the next owner recalls stables with a hayloft on the western side of the residence and a tennis court on the east side.⁷

1906 is the last year that the New Austral Company is listed in the Post Office Directory, and title to *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* was transferred to timber merchant Samuel Rowe in that year. He occupied the place with his family. Samuel Rowe named the residence 'Leighton'. Mrs Kath Stewart, a daughter of Samuel Rowe who was born at Coolgardie in 1907, after her parents purchased *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* recalled the stables and hayloft at the back of the house. The older children used the loft for skating but she was discouraged by the 'spiflihater' that was up there, invented to keep her from

⁴ Wise's Post Office Directory, 1898-1906.

⁵ *Twentieth Century Impressions of Western Australia,* Facsimile of 1901 edition, Perth, Hesperian Press, 2000, p. 36.

⁶ Dolan, David, 'A House (and a horse) named Peter Pan, Church Hill, Coolgardie', www.heritage.gov.au/ourhouse/essay37.html.

⁷ Dolan, David, op cit.

climbing up and falling down the hay chute. The tennis court was adapted for croquet.⁸

Samuel Rowe was a builder who, in partnership with Bob Reid, had established a timber yard at Southern Cross and Coolgardie. The family did not stay in Coolgardie for long, however, and returned to Perth in 1911.⁹

It is recorded in the written history of the place that the land associated with *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* extended to the corner of Lefroy Street and that the stables and tennis court were lost when the block was subdivided, but this information does not fit with the Certificates of Title for Lots 413 and 416, as neither the New Austral Company nor Samuel Rowe owned these lots on either side of the residence. It is possible that the stables and tennis court, while largely on Lots 414 and 415, may have encroached slightly over the boundaries and had to be removed later, but this is purely conjecture, and it is not known at what time they were actually removed.¹⁰

In 1914, *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* was acquired by railway inspector Andrew Charles Boulter, who lived in the place with his wife Margaret. She acquired title to the place as the administrator of his estate following his death three years later. There is no record of her continuing to occupy the place and following her own death in 1935, title passed to Elizabeth Boulter of Bondi, New South Wales. Letters of administration for Andrew Boulter's estate were not issued until 1946.¹¹ It seems likely that *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* was rented out for at least some of the intervening years.

The recorded history of *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* has it that Ernie Scahill acquired the property in 1929. Ernie Scahill was a contractor in Coolgardie, in Bayley Street, from the 1920s through to the 1940s, and was later a pastoralist.¹² He is credited with naming the place after the racehorse Peter Pan when he won a considerable amount of money on it after it won the Melbourne Cup for the second time. Peter Pan had won the Cup in 1932, and had also won most of the other prestigious Victorian and New South Wales races in his career. He didn't run in the Cup field in 1933, having contracted a virus, and in 1934, with top jockey Darby Munro engaged to ride him, he carried a weight of 9st 10lb and drew an outside barrier on a heavy track. He was given little chance by the bookmakers and started at odds of 14/1, but went on to win. Peter Pan is honoured in the Australian Racing Hall of Fame.¹³

It is a popular belief in the local and wider community that Ernie Scahill hid barman Claudio Mattaboni in the cellar at *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* during the 1935 Kalgoorlie Race Riots, although there is no written evidence of this.

⁸ Dolan, David, op cit; Erickson, Rica, *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians,* Perth, UWA Press, 1988, p. 781.

⁹ Erickson, Rica, op cit.

¹⁰ Dolan, David, op cit; Certificates of Title, Lot 81 Fol. 103 (Lot 413), 1896 to 1934 & Vol. 77 Fol. 176 (Lot 416), 1896 to 1911.

¹¹ Certificate of Title, Vol. 504 Fol. 149, 25 November 1914, 14 December 1917, 5 June 1935; *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1920-1935.

¹² Wise's Post Office Directory, 1900-1940.

¹³ Dolan, David, op cit; www.horsedirectory.com.au/racinghistory/horse_profiles/a_z.html; Wikipedia entry for Peter Pan.

Mattaboni was accused of being responsible for the death of a man named Jordan in a pub brawl. His death at the hands of an Italian brought to the fore all the ill feeling among Australian miners against the migrants, whom they felt undercut them for jobs. The riot that followed saw a number of buildings destroyed by fire, particularly those associated with Italians and Yugoslavs.¹⁴ Mattaboni remained in hiding until the situation had calmed. He was tried for the death of Jordan and acquitted. Scahill did obtain title to *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* but not until 1946, which coincides with the issue of letters of administration for the estate of the previous owner. Scahill also purchased the property next door on Lot 413 in August 1934, so his association with the immediate area is well documented.¹⁵

After World War Two, there was a shortage of minerals and metals resulting in a resurgence in gold prices. This, together with modern extraction technologies that made it possible to treat ore that was previously uneconomical, sparked new activity in mining throughout the State. *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* was acquired by Western Mining in 1947, as the residence of a senior employee. The place moved through the ownership of two other Western Mining companies, New Coolgardie Gold Mines NL (1954) and Gold Mines of Kalgoorlie (Australia) Limited (1957). During the years 1947-1960, when it once again filled the role of mining employee residence, the place was well maintained and the gardens were rejuvenated.¹⁶

It was around this time that a heavy concrete dado was constructed across the south and west walls in an attempt to address the problem of movement, as the place had been built without foundations. In 1960, title was transferred to fitter George Stanley Fraser and in 1971 to retired engine driver Ernest Keith Harvey. Harvey shared the house with a succession of friends, one of whom recalled 'we had so much fun sitting in the kitchen shooting the rats off the stove'. The place was in decline and legal complications kept it empty for ten years after Harvey's death in 1977.¹⁷

In 1978, *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* was classified by the National Trust and entered on the Register of the National Estate.

In 1987, Shire Clerk William Francis (Bill) Moore and his wife Margaret Emily, a nurse, moved to Coolgardie and acquired *Peter Pan, Coolgardie*. When they moved in with their family at Christmas 1987, there was iron missing from the roof and serious water and termite damage. Vandals and squatters had left graffiti and lit fires in the house using floorboards and joinery, and ceilings had collapsed. Fireplaces, doors, and furniture had been stolen. The Moores set about restoring the place, including the dining room fireplace surround, which was found smashed in pieces in the backyard.

¹⁴ Webb, Martyn & Audrey, *Golden Destiny: The centenary history of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia*, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, 1993, pp. 655-674.

¹⁵ Dolan, David, op cit; Certificates of Title, Lot 81 Fol. 103 (Lot 413), 31 August 1934 & Vol. 504 Fol. 149 23 October 1946.

¹⁶ Certificate of Title, Vol. 504 Fol. 149,17 September 1947, 22 February 1954, 10 October 1957; Western Mining Corporation Ltd, *Annual Reports*, 1949-1960; Dolan, David, op cit.

¹⁷ Dolan, David, op cit; Certificate of Title, Vol. 1206 Fol. 814, 11 July 1960, 17 September 1971, 5 July 1977.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie was entered on the Coolgardie Municipal Inventory in 1995 with a Category 2 level recommendation for full assessment for consideration for entry in the State Register.

In 2008, *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* continues to be occupied as a residence by the Moore family, and is also home to orphaned animals in need of care.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is an 1898 single-storey face brick and stone residence with a hipped corrugated iron roof, showing some influence of Federation Queen Anne style.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is located on the south side of Forrest Street, in the town of Coolgardie, between Lefroy and Hunt streets, in the north-east section of town. The site comprises two suburban lots with the residence located central within the lots, and a right of way along the rear. Trees, shrubs, and various plantings throughout the entire site restrict views of the elevations of the place, however, there are no significant plantings. The site is level and there is generally red earth between plantings. The site is fenced with timber pickets across the majority of the front boundary, although the western end of the front has a 2.0 metre high prepainted steel fence and gates. Aligned with the central front entry of the residence is a concrete path from a timber arbour entry central on the front boundary.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie displays influences of the Federation Queen Anne style. Typical features are the roof dominant with gables, tall chimneys, verandahs on more than one side, bay windows and warm, usually red, face-brickwork, often tuck-pointed on the street facades. Regional variations include limestone walls and corrugated iron roofs, both of which are in evidence at *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* which has pointed face stone with brick quoining.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is a single storey random coursed stone residence with brick quoin construction with a hipped corrugated iron roof, a separate skillion verandah with hipped corners and a skillion roofed rear patio. The front features faceted bays flanking the central entry. The roof features metal gutter details, small vented gambrels and a number of tall chimneys detailed in painted face brickwork with corbelling.

The front façade features a central recessed entry flanked by faceted bays. The verandah across the front returns along both sides of the residence. The face stonewalls are local weathered granite stone in a pale cream colour. The stone is random coursed and pointed. The facetted bays, corners and openings are detailed in contrasting red brick quoining, also detailed with tuck-pointing. There are three header courses of corbelled brickwork around the cornice line. The window and door headers are detailed in vertical splayed bricks. The entire front wall and west sidewall have a concrete dado to window sill height. The dado is a formed concrete element approximately 75mm(3") thick against the wall, increasing significantly in a triangular infill across the bay protrusion each side of the main entry. The verandahs have skillion verandah roofs, hipped on the corners, separate from the main hipped roofs. The verandah has the original square timber posts. The verandah floor is predominantly the remnants of a concrete floor with a wide concrete

spoon drain parallel across the front. The windows are mostly the original timber framed double hung sashes. Original double hung windows remain on the bays, flanking the central facet with French doors. The windows are predominantly recessed from the exterior wall and timber framed flywire panels are in place aligned with the finished brick exterior wall.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is symmetrical across the front with a room each side of the central entry foyer which connects to the central corridor with two bedrooms on the left (east) and the public rooms (living and dining) on the right, with a small store and cellar access at the rear on the right, before the end of the corridor that opens into an expansive enclosed patio area. The kitchen is accessed from the patio, and connects back to the dining room through a doorway cut into the wall. A small extension behind the kitchen provides bathroom and laundry facilities. The patio form continues to the east side although it is not enclosed in that area.

The main front entry opens into a large foyer with the central corridor ahead, bedroom 1 on the left and living room on the right. The fover has the original Oregon floorboards, with some replacement boards c1990s, and lathe and plaster ceiling with a decorative centrepiece and cornice. There is a truncated fireplace with replacement fire surround and mantelpiece. Bedroom 1 features the front bay with French doors, a fireplace central on the west wall, and a battened lathe and plaster ceiling with a decorative cornice and rose. The original floors have been replaced. The bedroom has a connection through to the adjacent bathroom and evidence of another connection from the small anteroom that has been infilled with a bookcase. The bathroom is a contemporary fitout. There is also a highlight window between the anteroom and the hallway. The two other bedrooms along the east side have similar details. Bedroom 2 has original lathe and plaster ceilings, and original tongue and groove Oregon floorboards with French doors opening onto the verandah. Bedroom 3 has new floors, original lathe and plaster ceilings and also has French doors that open onto the verandah.

The living room on the right of the foyer is an expansive room with a front bay window and French doors, and fireplace central on the east wall. The floor has original stained tongue and groove boards, the ceiling is lined with timber look ply board and exposed rafters painted dark brown. An expansive framed opening connects the dining room that has a bay with French doors central on the east wall, a fireplace with the reinstated original marble mantelpiece on the north wall, and decorative pressed metal ceilings, cornice and rose. The dining room has original floors that have been stained and opens onto the central corridor and also has a connection through a small service room (pantry) to the kitchen. The pantry has painted (and stencilled) Oregon floorboards, shelving, and ceiling interventions. The kitchen has an extensive c.1950s fitout with ceramic tile splashbacks to the cupboards around three walls. The bottom kitchen cupboards were replaced c1980s. The walls have a rough plaster finish. The ceiling is the same as the living room with painted white rafters exposed, and both ceilings were replaced at the same time around the 1950s to the 1960s. The kitchen opens out onto the rear enclosed patio area. Adjacent to the kitchen door is the rear door into the central Immediately inside the corridor, on the west side is a small corridor. storeroom with a trapdoor access to the cellar below. The cellar is a small

area comprising the footprint of the store and pantry rooms above. The walls are rough random rubble that have been painted, the floor comprises stone slabs, and shelves have been fitted against the walls. Behind the kitchen (south), accessed off the covered patio, is a masonry (stretcher bond face brick) extension that comprises a contemporary bathroom and laundry. The common wall has an infilled space that once housed a wood stove and now forms shelving in the laundry.

Much of the interior fabric is original including Oregon floor boards, lathe and plaster ceilings, a pressed metal ceiling in the dining room, and French doors, and windows. Interventions include a replacement ceiling in the living room, and other interventions are evident in the bathroom and kitchen fitouts and the kitchen and pantry ceilings. The interior walls are hard plaster throughout except the kitchen. The 150mm (6") tongue and groove Oregon floorboards have mostly been retained and original skirtings and architraves and typical four panel interior doors and original hardware remain in situ. The front door has sidelights and fanlight details and although the original glazing has been replaced on the door, the sidelights still contain the original patterned glass. All the mantelpieces are recent installations except the marble mantelpiece and surround in the dining room that is the original that was salvaged and restored.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is in fair condition. There is evidence of interventions, and some stone and mortar deterioration associated with rising damp. External timber elements, particularly the verandah posts, are weathered.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The HCWA database identifies four single-storey stone residences in the Shire of Coolgardie, all of which were constructed in the 1890s. The other three have no architectural style noted and have not been identified for assessment.

Federation Queen Anne style was a popular residential style of the period. Of the 177 such places identified in the HCWA database, 43 were constructed in the 1890s or in 1900, of which 14 are on the Register and 13 of these are in the metropolitan area.¹⁸

The one stone residence constructed in a comparable style and time period is *St Davitt's*, Busselton built in 1896. St Davitt's was built for Frederick Cammilleri, who was a prospector who discovered the rich lode at Brown Hill on the Golden Mile. The place has undergone similar changes to that of *Peter Pan, Coolgardie* with the removal of early outbuildings and tennis court and additions to the rear in the later twentieth century. It is situated on a large suburban lot. Between 1959 and 1986, the place was occupied by members of the medical profession. It has had kitchen and bathroom renovations, and a 6ft high fence of limestone pillars with wrought iron inserts has been erected on the street boundary in recent years. In 2008 the place is occupied as a family residence.¹⁹

¹⁸ HCWA backlog form for Peter Pan.

¹⁹ Considine & Griffiths, *St Davitt's Busselton Conservation Plan*, February 2005.

Other Federation Queen Anne style residences in regional WA, which are on the State Register and are of slightly later construction, are *The Residency*, Northam (1909), *Curdnatta*, Northam (1911) and *Garryowen*, Albany (1908).

Another substantial single storeyed house, which demonstrates clearly the taste and style of an imposing Coolgardie residence of the early 1890s, is P00577 *House & trees (fmr Warden Finnerty's House)*. Constructed in 1895 in the Federation Bungalow style, of sandstone with brick quoins and generous verandahs, the place has louvred timber shutters to the windows, and elaborate joinery to gables, doors and windows.

There are five single-storey brick residences on the HCWA database in the Shire of Coolgardie, all of which were constructed in the 1890s or in 1900. There is no architectural style noted for these places, and none are on the Register, or in the current assessment program.

Peter Pan, Coolgardie is an outstanding example of a single storey stone, brick and iron-roofed residence in the Federation Queen Anne style, and is one of the finest residences in the Goldfields. It is the only residence described as Federation Queen Anne style on the Coolgardie Municipal Inventory.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Dolan, David, 'A House (and a horse) named Peter Pan, Church Hill, Coolgardie', www.heritage.gov.au/ourhouse/essay37.html.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
