



## 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.

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Helen Burgess, Historian, and Philip Griffiths, Architect, in January 2003, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.22 Lodging people
- 4.1.2 Making suburbs
- 8.5.2 Helping other people
- 8.6.2 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes
- 8.13 Living in cities and suburbs

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

- 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees
- 306 Domestic activities
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 406 Religion

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The original core elements of *Residence, 52 Mount Street*, comprising the front portions of the house, make up a fine example of a two-storey limestone and brick residence in the Federation Queen Anne style. (Criterion 1.1)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is one of a number of very fine houses designed by architect John Talbot Hobbs in the Federation Queen Anne style and is typical of his high level of artistic achievement applied to a residential building. (Criterion 1.2)

---

\* 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.

Modifications made to *Residence, 52 Mount Street* by Summerhayes and Associates in 1983, including the oratory and associated lobby, demonstrates innovative reuse and adaptation of spaces to meet the requirements of the Archbishop of Perth. (Criterion 1.2)

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

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* was among the first substantial residences to be built in Mount Street, at a time when it was recognised as one of the most prestigious addresses in the Colony. (Criterion 2.1)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is an aesthetically impressive and substantial residence built in 1892 during the gold boom years in Western Australia, when many people made their fortunes either directly or indirectly from gold, and built substantial residences to display their wealth and status. (Criterion 2.2)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* was used from the mid-1970s until c.1983 by agencies providing social services to disadvantaged individuals and groups, being the offices of both Anglican Health and Welfare Services (Inc), which later became Anglicare, and Perth Asian Community Centre, a support, resource and advocacy body for Asian migrants. (Criterion 2.2)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* has been owned and lived in by important individuals and their families in the history of Perth. These include Everard Firebrace Darlot, a successful pastoralist in Western Australia and the MLA for Murchison, and Ernest A Lee Steere, who was successful in agriculture and horseracing and was knighted in 1947, having served as Lord Mayor of Perth. (Criterion 2.3)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* has since 1986 been the residence provided for the serving Anglican Archbishop of Perth, a role that from 2000 to 2005 was held concurrently with the office of Anglican Primate of Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* was designed by prominent Perth architect and decorated war hero, Sir John Talbot Hobbs. (Criterion 2.3)

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

----

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

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is an aesthetically striking residence and is valued by the City of Perth and local residents as a reminder of the peak years in the development of Mount Street and in the City of Perth. (Criterion 4.1)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is valued by members of the Anglican Church as the residence provided for the Anglican Archbishop of Perth, a role that from 2000 to 2005 was held concurrently with the office of Anglican Primate of Australia, and as the setting for many of the Archbishop's statements on social justice at the national and state level. (Criterion 4.1)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* contributes to the community's sense of place with its striking architectural quality in an inner city location which was once a highly sought after area for the wealthy of Perth. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is rare as a surviving large residence in West Perth, and particularly in Mount Street, that dates from the era when gold-boom wealth was developing the locality as a prestigious residential area. Even with the modifications and adaptations that have occurred and, to a degree, because of them, it remains a significant private residence in a part of Perth where the few remaining substantial gold boom houses are now offices. (Criteria 5.1 & 5.2)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is representative of the type of residence built for the more affluent residents of Perth, in its architectural design and size. (Criterion 6.1)

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is a fine representative example of the design work of John Talbot Hobbs. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

Cumulative maintenance has resulted in some modifications to the finishes and presentation of rooms to the original sections of the house. The rear of the house that comprises the large addition made for the Lee Steere family has been subjected to a great deal of changes and upgrading of services and fabric such that much original work has been masked or altered. Most of the front of the house has been well maintained and conserved. Interiors have been well-maintained, with minor alterations to the principal rooms and more extensive alterations to secondary rooms.

The place would appear to receive regular maintenance and to be in generally good to very good condition.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* exhibits a high level of integrity as it remains a residence and there are no conflicting current uses. The construction of the oratory has simply added a further use to the place and in a way that's in keeping with its original austere design. The division of parts of the rear of the house into apartments has sustained the residential use. The identified cultural heritage values are sustainable in the indefinite long term with ongoing maintenance and conservation of the principal elements.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The whole of the setting has been altered and parts of the site have been excised from the original lot, reducing the size of the setting and removing some of its early elements and plantings.

There are some modifications to the finishes and presentation of rooms to the original sections of the house. The rear of the house that comprises the large addition made for the Lee Steere family has been subjected to a great deal of changes and upgrading of services and fabric such that much original work has been masked or altered and only the shell of this section retains a significant extent of authentic fabric.

The principal rooms of the original house remain intact, with minor alterations and recent decorative treatments. The secondary spaces to the rear of the house have been subject to much change. The authenticity of the front section of the house is high, while the rear portions are low to moderate and the setting is of low authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Helen Burgess, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* at 52 Mount Street, West Perth, being Lots 101 and 102 (formerly Perth Building Lot L46), comprises a two-storey residence constructed in 1892 for Everard Firebrace Darlot to a design by architect John Talbot Hobbs, subsequent improvements were made by the Lee Steere family from 1910 and the Anglican Church in 1984.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1891, the Title for Perth Building Lot L46 on Mount Street, West Perth, was totally transferred from Henry Strickland to Everard Firebrace Darlot.<sup>2</sup>

Everard Darlot was a successful pastoralist in Western Australia, taking up many stations around the State, particularly in the Mid-West. Darlot was born in Victoria in 1859, and came to Western Australia in 1878. In 1881, Darlot took up his first station in this State - Berringarra Station in the Murchison.<sup>3</sup> In 1885, Darlot married Harriet Mills. In addition to his pastoralist interests, Darlot also had political aspirations. In 1887, Darlot became a member of the Upper Gascoyne Road Board Between 1890 and 1894, Darlot was the Member for the Legislative Assembly for Murchison. In 1937, Darlot died in Perth and was buried at Karrakatta Cemetery.<sup>4</sup>

Circa 1892<sup>5</sup>, architect John Talbot Hobbs prepared plans for Darlot for a two-storey residence at 52 Mount Street, befitting his stature as a now successful pastoralist and politician. The residence was constructed of brick and limestone, and the plans show it as consisting of a Drawing Room, Morning Room, Smoking Room, Dining Room, and featuring a Piazza on the ground floor. The ground floor also contained a kitchen, scullery and store with a cellar underneath the kitchen, and toilet off the back porch. The first floor contained three bedrooms - the main with a dressing room - a nursery and a servant's bedroom nearest to the nursery, and a bathroom.<sup>6</sup> On the balustrade of the prominent jarrah staircase the initials of Darlot were engraved.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The architectural plans by J T Hobbs for 52 Mount Street are not dated, but the date given in the archival note for the CN83 series by Forbes and Fitzhardinge is c. 1896. Margaret Pitt Morison, *Immigrant Architects*, notes the construction date as 1897. The Post Office Directory 1893-94 notes that E. Darlot is a resident of Mount Street. No tender notice was located to confirm the date of construction in the sources checked [see Further Research]

<sup>2</sup> *Certificate of Title*, Vol. 26, Fol. 305, 18/9/1891.

<sup>3</sup> Black, David, and Bolton, Geoffrey, *Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia, Vol. 1, 1870-1930*, WA Parliament History Project, Perth, 1990, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> Black, David, and Bolton, Geoffrey, *Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia, Vol. 1, 1870-1930*, WA Parliament History Project, Perth, 1990, p. 58.

<sup>5</sup> See Footnote 1.

<sup>6</sup> 'Proposed Residence in Mount St, Perth, for Everard Darlot Esq, MLA', J Talbot Hobbs, Architect and Surveyor, Perth, in CN 83, Item 55/9/51 [series of architectural plans of public buildings and private residences in Perth, Fremantle and various country towns, deposited in

John Talbot Hobbs was a prominent Western Australian architect who designed many well-known and significant residential, commercial and public buildings in this State. Hobbs was born in Middlesex, United Kingdom, and in 1887 arrived in the Swan River Colony, first working as a carpenter then setting up an architectural practice in Perth. In 1904, the partnership of Hobbs Smith and Forbes was established with Hobbs as the senior partner. From 1909 to 1910 and again from 1911 to 1912 Hobbs was the President of the Western Australian Institute of Architects and also became the official architect to the Perth Diocesan Council.<sup>8</sup>

In the City of Perth Rates Book, West Ward, for 1891, the entry for Perth Building Lot L46 Mount Street shows Strickland's name crossed out and replaced with Darlot and vacant ground crossed out and changed to building and grounds, indicating that Darlot now owned and had commenced building his residence. In the 1892 Rates Book, West Ward, buildings and grounds has been crossed out and amended to house and grounds, indicating that the house is now complete.<sup>9</sup> In the *1893-1894 Postal Directory*, E. F. Darlot was listed for the first time as living in Mount Street, on the north side.<sup>10</sup> The residence at 52 Mount Street is shown on the 1897 sewerage plan.<sup>11</sup>

The choice of Mount Street was more than appropriate for Darlot to build his home, one of Perth's first to be considered a 'mansion'.<sup>12</sup> Mount Street, named so because it ascends Mount Eliza, was a desirable street to live in for the wealthy members of Perth society from its earliest residential development, especially by the 1890s when many were making their fortunes either directly or indirectly from gold. It was close to the main Central Business District of Perth and to King's Park (which was developed in the 1890s) and was considered

'...the best street in the town. It had a view - you could see the river from your verandah... The street got every breeze...And there was no dust, not even from the sandy dividing line along the street'.<sup>13</sup>

As well as the Darlots (and later the Lee Steeres) other well-known names to live in and build gracious and substantial residences in Mount Street

---

the Battye Library by Forbes and Fitzhardinge, Architects, 32 William Street, Perth, in May 1976]. In this same collection is a plan for proposed two-storey villa for H. S. Darlot, Everard Darlot's brother, in Mount Street [refer CN83, Item 55/10/59].

<sup>7</sup> *Sunday Times*, 12/12/1999, Home Supplement, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Kelly, Ian, 'Architectural Biography, 1890-1915: A brief biographical list of architects in Western Australia in the years 1890 to 1915', thesis presented for the degree of Master of Architecture, University of Western Australia, Department of Architecture, 1991; & Archival index note, MN 1460, State Records Office.

<sup>9</sup> City of Perth, Rate Books, West Ward, 1890-1893, held at State Records Office, Acc 3633.

<sup>10</sup> *Post Office Directory*, 1893-1894, p. 30. Darlot's brother H. S. Darlot was also residing in Mount Street at this time.

<sup>11</sup> SROWA, Cons. 1647, PWD 5647, Microfiche 2 (1897).

<sup>12</sup> *Sunday Times*, 12/12/1999, Home Supplement, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Best Street in Town' *Weekend Magazine*, [supplement to *Weekend News*], 22/11/1969, p. 21.

included the Knight, Forrest, Yeos, Dent, Hardwick, James, Peet, Shenton, Hassell, Wittenoom, and Lefroy families.<sup>14</sup>

In December 1910, Ernest Augustus and Bridget Yelverton Lee Steere purchased *Residence, 52 Mount Street*, with Lot L46 being transferred into the name of Bridget only.<sup>15</sup>

Bridget Yelverton Lee Steere, (born in 1884) was the youngest daughter of engineer C. Y. O'Connor, who brought his family to Western Australia in 1891 when he took up his position as Engineer-in-Chief at the invitation of John Forrest.<sup>16</sup> Mrs Lee Steere, later to become Lady Lee Steere, was well known in Perth society, her most noted role being the Commissioner of Girl Guides in Western Australia for about 17 years.<sup>17</sup> The Lee Steere family, into which Bridget married in December 1909, was a prominent Western Australian family having particular success in agriculture and horseracing. Ernest Augustus was the son of Augustus and Ellen Lee Steere. According to an article on the Lee Steere family, Ernest A. Lee Steere, made his money on hauling ore and goods and selling meat. He established a successful and substantial station near Meekatharra, named "Belele". Ernest A., who was to be knighted in 1947, had three dreams; '...to own valuable properties, to live in a fine city home, and to race some good horses'.<sup>18</sup> Purchasing *Residence, 52 Mount Street* fulfilled the second of those dreams.

A sketch of a stable and hay loft, located at the rear of *Residence, 52 Mount Street*, was included in an article in the *Weekend News* (1969) where the Lee Steere's kept '...a string of riding horses'. In this same article, Lady Lee Steere also recollects there being '...a place for...two motor cars', a tennis court in the backyard, and how the Lee Steere children used to play in the loft of their large family home.<sup>19</sup> The residence also had a 'greensward' of grass at the front, roses fringing the driveway and a high hedge separating it from the residence next-door.<sup>20</sup>

In an oral history of Ernest Henry Lee Steere, son of Ernest A. and Bridget, and who, like his father, was successful in the agricultural and horse-racing industries, and was also Lord Mayor of Perth, recalled the family home. In the interview (recorded in 1993) he described the two-storey residence, where he was born in 1912, as having a tiled entrance hall, a billiard room (which his father added after he purchased the house) and a lobby downstairs, then upstairs there were nine or ten bedrooms, two bathrooms

---

<sup>14</sup> 'The Best Street in Town' *Weekend Magazine*, [supplement to *Weekend News*], 22/11/1969, pp. 20-27; *Post Office Directory*, 1893-1897; & Rizzo and Associates Pty Ltd et. al., 'Mount Street Precinct: Built Form and Urban Design Study', prepared for City of Perth, October 1995, pp. 30-32.

<sup>15</sup> *Certificate of Title*, Vol. 478, Fol. 80, 22/12/1910.

<sup>16</sup> *Milady*, February 1949, p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Lee Steere, Ernest Henry, Oral History OH2533, February-March 1993, Tape 1 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History].

<sup>18</sup> 'The Lee Steeres', *Pioneering Families of WA*, in *Weekend News*, supplement, 28/1/1967, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> 'The Best Street in Town' *Weekend Magazine*, [supplement to *Weekend News*], 22/11/1969, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> 'The Best Street in Town' *Weekend Magazine*, [supplement to *Weekend News*], 22/11/1969, p. 26.

for the family and a bathroom off the back verandah for the staff. Outside, there was a croquet lawn, coach house with stalls at the back, as well as a sandy yard in which a milking cow was kept, and a circle driveway at the front of the house.<sup>21</sup>

By the 1920s, the Lee Steeres were drawn back to the country, returning to Toodyay where Ernest A. had grown up on his parents' property. They purchased a property called Hawthornden.<sup>22</sup> However, the Lee Steere's retained ownership of *Residence, 52 Mount Street* and rented it out.

In January 1960, the title for Lot L46 was transferred to Ernest Henry Lee Steere, of Toodyay,<sup>23</sup> and in the same year Lady Lee Steere was listed as residing at 5 Altona St, West Perth.<sup>24</sup>

Although he owned *Residence, 52 Mount Street*, Ernest H. and his wife Jessica never really desired to live in the city, preferring their property at Toodyay.<sup>25</sup> By 1965, *Residence, 52 Mount Street* became a private hotel, known as the Mount Private Hotel.<sup>26</sup> An advertisement in the 1965 WA Telephone Directory described the hotel as follows:

Mount Private Hotel for Homely Accommodation, Wall-to-Wall Carpets, Hot & Cold Water, Moderate Rates: A Motor Hotel with river views in a garden setting, ample free parking.<sup>27</sup>

In 1970, Lot 46 was transferred into the company name of Ernest Lee Steere Pty Ltd.<sup>28</sup>

In January 1975, *Residence, 52 Mount Street*, which was still operating as a private hotel, was purchased by the Anglican Church, with the title being transferred to the name of Church of England Hospitals (Inc.).<sup>29</sup> The Church paid approximately \$200,000 for the residence, made possible by the leasing of its Mount Hospital to the Government.<sup>30</sup>

According to Ernest H. Lee Steere, the reason for selling *Residence, 52 Mount Street*, which had been in his family home for over 60 years, had much to do with the what the house could offer them in the future:

Things were getting pretty tight, and it seemed sensible to sell it because it wasn't in a situation where you could make a bonanza from keeping it and redeveloping

<sup>21</sup> Lee Steere, Ernest Henry, Oral History OH2533, February-March 1993, Tape 3 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History]. Lee Steere also mentions that Darlot had a residence built above the coach house for his coach driver.

<sup>22</sup> 'The Lee Steeres', Pioneering Families of WA, in *Weekend News*, supplement, 28/1/1967, p. 9.  
<sup>23</sup> *Certificate of Title*, Vol. 478, Fol. 80, 14/1/1960.

<sup>24</sup> *WA Telephone Directory*, 1960 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History, Q384.6].

<sup>25</sup> Lee Steere, Ernest Henry, Oral History OH2533, February-March 1993, Tape 3 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History].

<sup>26</sup> *WA Telephone Directory*, 1965 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History, Q384.6]; & 'The Lee Steeres', Pioneering Families of WA, in *Weekend News*, supplement, 28/1/1967, p. 9; 'The Best Street in Town' *Weekend Magazine*, [supplement to *Weekend News*], 22/11/1969, p. 26

<sup>27</sup> *WA Telephone Directory*, 1965 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History, Q384.6]. The address for the hotel was given as both 52 Mount Street and 53 Malcolm Street, Perth.

<sup>28</sup> *Certificate of Title*, Vol. 478, Fol. 80, 29/1/1970.

<sup>29</sup> *Certificate of Title*, Vol. 1400, Fol. 310, 31/1/1975.

<sup>30</sup> *The West Australian*, 20/12/1974.



it because of height restrictions and all sorts of different things and so we sold it to the Anglican Church.<sup>31</sup>

In 1979, *Residence, 52 Mount Street* appeared for the last time in the WA Telephone Directory as the Mount Private Hotel and the Anglican Church converted the residence into a health and welfare centre, which had formerly operated from the Mount Hospital.<sup>32</sup>

From the mid-1970s, *Residence, 52 Mount Street* was the original operating base for Anglican Health and Welfare Services (Inc), which later became Anglicare. The organization was the Anglican Church's social services arm. It developed following a 1973 paper by Archbishop Geoffry Sambell, which outlined the imperative for the Church to be involved in social services, and the first director of the organisation, Roy Poole, was appointed in February 1974.<sup>33</sup>

The place was also used from 1977 until c.1982 by the Perth Asian Community Centre (PACC). PACC was supported by Anglican Health and Welfare Services (Inc), but operated independently of the Anglican Church. It was intended as a resource centre for Asian migrants, providing assistance in areas such as English competency, employment support and social services. In an era of strong public anti-Asian sentiment, PACC was an important voice initiating and supporting awareness-raising programs to combat racism, and also at times engage in legal advocacy for Asian clients discriminated against on the basis of race. The organisation became an incorporated body in its own right, separate from Anglican Health and Welfare Services (Inc), in October 1982, and by the early 1983 had relocated to premises nearby in Spring Street. As PACC developed, its welfare and crisis accommodation services expanded significantly, and in 2005 it operates from Northbridge with this focus.<sup>34</sup>

Summerhayes and Associates prepared plans of the house as existing in July 1980.<sup>35</sup> Geoffrey Summerhayes was one of Perth's most notable post-war architects.<sup>36</sup> The plans indicate the likely extent of the fabric that comprised the original house and the changes made during the Lee Steeres' period of ownership.

In 1982, Lot 46 was subdivided and Lots 101, 102 and 103 were created, with *Residence, 52 Mount Street* now being located on Lot 101 and 102.<sup>37</sup> In 1983, Lots 101 and 102 were transferred to Anglican Care Incorporated.<sup>38</sup>

In the 1983-4, significant works were carried out to *Residence, 52 Mount Street*. Sketch plans were prepared by Summerhayes and Associates for a

---

<sup>31</sup> Lee Steere, Ernest Henry, Oral History OH2533, February-March 1993, Tape 3 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History].

<sup>32</sup> *WA Telephone Directory*, 1979 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History, Q384.6]; & *The West Australian*, 20/12/1974.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.anglicarewa.com.au/AnglicareHistory.htm> (accessed 10 May 2005)

<sup>34</sup> 'The Voice: A Perth Asian Community Centre Publication', 1978 to 1983.

<sup>35</sup> Anglican Diocesan Office Archives, Summerhayes and Associates, Site Plan and Floor Plans as existing, job number 8018, July 1980.

<sup>36</sup> ~~Information provided by Ian Hocking in a letter to the Diocesan Secretary, 5/1/04.~~

<sup>37</sup> Survey Diagram 63706, 21/5/1982.

<sup>38</sup> *Certificates of Title*, Vol. 1642, Fol. 906 & Vol. 1642, Fol. 907, 29/4/1983.

number of options to change the place in the course of the period between February and April 1983.<sup>39</sup>

Summerhayes and Associates prepared working drawings in June 1983.<sup>40</sup> A deanery was built to house the resident pastor on the site of the tennis courts, and a timber and limestone oratory was added on to the front of the residence, taking its geometry from the original turret on the house. On the ground floor the kitchen was enlarged and modernised. The former side entry was enclosed to provide a new water closet and the rear of the house reorganised and the spaces significantly altered to provide a housekeeper's flat. A carport and gardener's store were constructed as freestanding elements to the rear of the house. The billiard room, added by Lee Steere, was completely reorganised to provide a reception area and kitchen for the new oratory.<sup>41</sup>

At first floor level, the front five rooms were retained relatively intact, while the rear rooms that were built in the Lee Steere period were modified to form a new self contained guests' suite, comprising a bedroom, bath and dressing rooms, living area and a small kitchen.<sup>42</sup>

Interior finishes were upgraded in many locations and decorative treatments were designed to heighten the visual drama of the principal spaces.<sup>43</sup>

To accommodate its new role, a new 12 bay underground car park was installed under the gardens at the front of the lot, alongside the oratory.<sup>44</sup> The garage was designed to accommodate the vehicles of the house staff, the Archbishops family, guests staying in the new apartments, and visitors.

In 1986, the Titles were transferred to the Perth Diocesan Trustees, and *Residence, 52 Mount Street* officially became the residence provided for the Anglican Archbishop of Perth.<sup>45</sup> The Archbishop at the time was Dr Peter Carnley, who had been appointed to the office in 1981. He lived at *Residence, 52 Mount Street* with his wife Ann and their family.

Ernest H. Lee Steere, in his oral history, praised the work of the Anglican Church in the alterations and additions it carried out to the *Residence, 52 Mount Street* Lee Steere comments that the house had been restored beautifully, the Church seeming to capture what was probably the original intent of Talbot Hobbs, and explained how the quality of the work carried out was in many ways a contrast to some of the additions made by his family as required to accommodate the growing family:

---

<sup>39</sup> Anglican Diocesan Office Archives, Summerhayes and Associates, Various Site Plans and Floor Plans, job number 8257, February to April 1983.

<sup>40</sup> Anglican Diocesan Office Archives, Summerhayes Way and Associates, Working Drawings Job Number 8257 A1-A18 dated June 1983.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Pers. comm. The Most Revd Dr. Peter Carnley AO, Archbishop of Perth site visit 22 January 2003.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, and *Sunday Times*, 12/12/1999, Home Supplement, pp. 7-8.

<sup>45</sup> *Certificate of Title*, Vol. 1715, Fol. 70, 29/12/1986.

Dad was fairly economically minded and he'd get a bit of addition done [sic.] but they were fairly straight forward sort of additions. Perhaps a bit of weatherboard or something like that...Nothing very grand.<sup>46</sup>

In 2000, Dr Peter Carnley was appointed Anglican Primate of Australia, the highest office of the Australian Anglican Church. He retired from in early 2005 from his roles as both Archbishop of Perth and Primate of Australia. In May 2005, *Residence, 52 Mount Street* was being prepared for the incoming Archbishop of Perth, Roger Herft, and his wife Cheryl.

In 2005, *Residence, 52 Mount Street* is still owned by the Perth Diocesan Trustees and still used as the residence of the Anglican Archbishop.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* comprises a two-storey limestone and brick residence with a galvanised corrugated iron roof, designed in the Federation Queen Anne style<sup>47</sup> constructed in 1892 for Everard Firebrace Darlot to a design by architect John Talbot Hobbs and subsequent improvements made by the Lee Steere family between 1910 and 1975, together with the additions and alterations made by the Anglican Church in 1983-4.

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is located at 52 Mount Street, West Perth, about half way up a steeply inclined section of the street. Once a suburban street of large single residences, Mount Street's built environment is completing a transformation into a high density residential urban environment. The place is one of the few remaining houses.

Mount Street runs in a roughly east west direction and rises steeply to the west, with commanding views of the City and across Perth Water. The road reserve is wide and accommodates a divided road with a generous median. There are interlocking concrete block footpaths, reproduction cast iron streetlights, together with lawns on the median and in narrow strips alongside footpaths. Street trees comprise Queensland Box Trees on the verges and Jacaranda on the dividing island.

*Residence, 52 Mount Street* is located on the north side of the street on land that rises away from the street towards the north and Malcolm Street, the street to which the original lot once extended.

The buildings comprising the place are contiguous and comprise the original house constructed for Darlot in 1892, additions constructed for the Lee Steere family in the period between 1910 and 1975, and finally the additions and alterations made to the house for the Anglican Church between 1983 and 1984.

The house is set well back from the street and very close to the original western boundary and new eastern boundary. The gardens are largely brick and concrete block paved with perimeter planting beds and a small number

<sup>46</sup> Lee Steere, Ernest Henry, Oral History OH2533, February-March 1993, Tape 3 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History].

<sup>47</sup> 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, pp. 132-135.

of island beds. The front garden contains plantings of Roses, Peppermint Trees, Chinese Elm, Ivy, Tyme, Rosemary, shrubs and ground covers, as well as planter tubs. These plantings relate to the 1983-4 works and take into account a twelve car underground carpark that was built in the front setback and built mostly below natural ground level. There is a bitumenised drive along the eastern boundary to give access to the rear of the place, as well as the subdivided lots to the rear. There is a courtyard to the rear and this area is partly walled and partly retained ground, with decorative trellis work and dense plantings, including a Lemon Tree, Jacaranda, Poplar, Fish Fern, Ivy, and Philodendron.

### **Darlot's Residence c.1892.**

The residence built for Darlot's in 1892 remains substantially intact. It comprises a two-storey limestone and brick residence with a galvanised corrugated iron roof, designed in the Federation Queen Anne style to a design by architect John Talbot Hobbs.

It has an irregular plan form with a distinctive octagonal plan alcove that rises to a pepper pot roof at the south east corner of the house and this strong feature is counter balanced by a tall gabled roof at the south west corner of the house, while a strongly articulated concrete balustraded verandah spans between the two vertical features and this is given additional visual weight by its arcaded ground floor. The materials provide distinct visual contrast between the elements, so that the accents such as the tower, piers, quoins and the like are tuck pointed red brick, infill walling is laid in random course limestone and decorated string course, imposts and arches, together with the swags to the tower are all rendered in stucco, presently painted white. While these original finishes have been conserved on the front elevation, a bag finish cement render has been used over the remaining facades of the Darlot Residence.

The front elevation comprises stucco plinth, brick piers, quoins, lintols and arches, random coursed limestone walls, stucco strings, sills, arches imposts and swags, and pressed cement balustrades. The main roof is covered with galvanised corrugated iron and the pepper pot covered with flat rolled seamed zinc, topped with an iron wind vane. Brick and stucco chimneys remain in place. The first floor verandah has turned timber post, post brackets and a match board lined soffit. Windows are sixteen pane top and single pane bottom sash double hung and French windows. The front door is panelled and has leadlights, with a leadlight fanlight and sidelight. The ground floor verandah has a tessellated tile floor.

The ground floor is arranged around a grand entrance and stair hall, with morning room to the west (now the study), drawing room to the east (present living room), dining room to the north (still the dining room), and the former kitchen, store and scullery to the north east (now combined to form a family room and kitchen). The former smoking room on the western boundary has been absorbed into a new reception room, the servants stair lies to the north of the hall, and the former eastern entry remains in place but is now enclosed to form a water closet. The original earth closet located outside the kitchen has been removed. The original east verandah has been removed and replaced with a more extensive and wider verandah.

The main hall features original tessellated tiled floors, deep moulded timber skirtings, run cornices, the original timber construction stair, with timber newels carved with Darlot's monogram, decorative arches, imposts and lath and plaster ceilings. Later additions include mirrors to the hall alcoves and lively wall paper to all walls. The remaining rooms have carpeted timber floors, moulded timber skirtings, plastered walls, picture rails, run cornices and lath and plaster ceilings. Fireplace, mantles, surrounds and hearths remain in principle rooms.

Only the east and west wall of the original smoking room remain. Of the original kitchen, store and scullery, only the containing walls remain, the fireplace and a window. A new set of French doors has been set in the east wall and the finishes replaced to produce a modern kitchen cum meals and family area.

The first floor of the Darlot period residence comprises the hall, four bedrooms, dressing room and a bathroom. The front bedrooms remain as planned, as does the dressing room to the main bedroom, with minor modifications. Bedroom 3 has been formed by removing a lath and plaster partition that divided the space into two bedrooms in the original plan. The bathroom on the east side of the house was once a common bathroom and has been converted into an ensuite for the main bedroom and the servant's stair remains intact. The stair hall is a grand space and the bedrooms generously planned. The rooms generally have four panel doors, plastered walls, run cornices and lath and plaster ceilings.

### **Lee Steere's Residence and Mount Private Hotel 1910-1975**

The evidence suggests that the main additions were carried out in the early period of the Lee Steere's ownership. All of these additions survive at least in part and comprise the addition of a billiard room to the south of the smoking room on the western boundary (currently part of the reception room, and kitchen associated with the oratory), then a two storey addition to the rear or north. Most of these rooms have been modified to form the current accommodation.

The additions follow the model of the original house in principle, though the detailing is not as elaborate.

On the ground floor, the additions to the south-west corner comprised a billiard room, a corridor to the smoking room and a bathroom area to the north. Of these elements, only the east wall of the smoking room and east and west walls of the billiard room remain and all finishes are replacement material designed in sympathy with the original finishes. The northern additions comprised a number of new rooms and an external toilet. The perimeter walls of these additions remain, together with some of the intervening walls, while some walls have been removed, and new walls added to provide a self contained housekeeper's quarters.

At first floor level, there were four additional bedrooms in the same extension, together with a bathroom and a much extended east verandah. The containing walls of this section remain, together with the lateral walls and the wide eastern verandah, while other walls have been removed and modified to form new self contained guest's accommodation. The western

recess between the original house and the Lee Steere period additions has been filled to form a common bathroom.

#### **Anglican Archbishop's House 1983-4**

The works completed in this stage resulted in the subdivision of the original lot at which time the tennis court and stables were removed. The principal new construction involved the construction of a concrete semi basement carpark within the front setback, an octagonal plan oratory and ancillary rooms in front of the old billiard room, within the front setback also, an extension to the smoking room to form an enlarged reception room on the western side of the house, a gardener's store to the north-east, and a carport. A new boundary fence was constructed along the street, to the eastern and northern boundaries. All of these features remain in place. As a result of this work also, the grounds were completely re-landscaped with the present treatments as previously described. Single storey verandahs were added to the north-west courtyard and these remain in place.

The works involved minor changes to the original house as previously noted and some significant changes to the elements constructed during the Lee Steeres' period of ownership, as noted in the relevant sections above. The changes to the interiors were carried out in a style akin to the style of the original house and are not readily apparent on first examination in some instances.

The whole of the place is well maintained and is well presented, with some minor instances of damp in a number of locations.

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

The whole of Mount Street was occupied by substantial residences from the end of the nineteenth century and for most of the twentieth century. In the Inter-War period some of the larger houses were divided and let as flats and the first blocks of purpose built flats began to appear at the expense of the large residences. During the 1960s and early 1970s a number of residences were removed and replaced by flat style development. By the 1980s a small number of blocks appeared with larger apartments and the process of replacement of residences with more intensive development accelerated through the 1990s, so that by 2003, only three of the early residences remain in place and are used as residences, and all other lots are occupied by high density development. West Perth, once a suburb of larger residences, has gradually become an area of high density residential development and office buildings, so that few of the residences of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century remain.

John Talbot Hobbs was a prominent Western Australian architect who designed many well-known and significant residential, commercial and public buildings in Western Australia. Hobbs designed many fine houses in Perth and its suburbs, many of which remain, including Barrett's House (now part of Scotch College and assessed for RHP), W.T. Loton's House *Dilhorn* in Bulwer Avenue, Perth (included in RHP), the Weld Club (included in RHP) and houses in Forrest, Leake, View and Irvine streets and the Esplanade in Peppermint Grove. All of these residence and residential type

buildings employed the language of Federation Queen Anne style architecture and were and remain highly regarded designs. *Anglican Archbishop's Residence* is a good example of his works, notwithstanding the changes that have been made to the place.

#### **13. 4 KEY REFERENCES**

Ernest Henry Lee Steere, Oral History OH2533, Tapes 1 & 3, February-March 1993 [held at J. S. Battye Library of WA History].

#### **13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

Plans from G. Summerhayes for the alterations and additions made to Lee Steere House in the 1980s not sourced.

No tender notice was found for the construction of the original residence - checked *West Australian* newspaper September 1891-July 1892.