



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.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 8.6 Worshipping

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 404 Community services and utilities
- 406 Religion

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark is a good example of a church designed in the Federation Carpenter Gothic architectural style. (Criterion 1.2)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark is a landmark, with a simple form and steeply pitched roof, situated in a prominent position overlooking the town of Denmark. (Criterion 1.3)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark contributes positively to the picturesque setting of the historic town centre of Denmark. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark represents the association of the Methodist Church in Denmark from the late 1890s, and was the place of worship for the Methodist community for almost 60 years. (Criterion 2.1)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark was financed in the most part by donations and loans from local parishioners, highlighting community support for the construction of a church in Denmark. In particular, Alice Kingston encouraged the church to send a minister in 1914, and was a key motivator behind the drive to build *Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark*. (Criterion 2.1)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark, was established as part of the Methodist's 'Home Mission' programme, which involved taking the denomination to recently settled areas. (Criterion 2.2)

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark represents the ebb and flow of Methodism in Denmark, establishing its presence when the town was a timber company town and subsequently departing when the mills closed. The church was built to accommodate a growing congregation, resulting in part from the town's population growth following the Group Settlement Scheme, which revitalised the area. Merging with the Uniting Church in the 1970s, and further population growth to the area in the 1980s, necessitated the building of a new church and therefore the demise of *Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark*. (Criterion 2.2)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark was built by prominent community member, William Mawson, who undertook many Civic responsibilities, such as Albany Town Councilor, Mayor of Albany in 1910, Chief Ruler of the Rechabite Lodge, Treasurer of the Temperance Alliance, President of the Affiliated Associations of Agricultural Societies, Vice President and Life Member of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Chairman of the Albany Road Board in 1914 and Director of Wesfarmers for 11 years. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark has been valued by the Methodist community in Denmark as a social and religious centre for almost 60 years, through the associated activities held at the church during this time. (Criterion 4.1)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark continues its function of serving the community through its operation as a Australian Red Cross shop which sells affordable clothing and household items, and is a local focal point for the well-known community-based organisation (Criterion 4.1)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark is valued by the Denmark community (past and present) as evidenced by its inclusion in the local Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark, is representative of Federation Carpenter Gothic churches in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.1)

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark, is representative of the organisational structure of the Methodist Church as a body, which facilitated 'missionary' work in all populated areas of the State. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark is in fair to good condition, with the drainage of the site requiring some attention. The gradient of the site allows moisture to flow around and under the building from the rear to the front of the building. This is causing water damage to the floorboards. Also, the corrugated iron roofing, gutters and downpipes are rusting. The building requires repainting.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark has a moderate degree of integrity. The place was used as a church from construction in 1925 until 1982, when the new Uniting church was built on the South Coast Highway. In 1984 it was sold to the Australian Red Cross, who have used it as a retail store to the present.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark has had minor changes to the building since its construction. The floorboards, which were originally oiled, have been painted.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The wording of this document has been adapted from 'Conservation Plan: Denmark Red Cross Building (fmr Methodist Church Denmark)', prepared by David Heaver and Associates with Erickson and Taylor, 2004, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence see 'Conservation Plan: Denmark Red Cross Building (fmr Methodist Church Denmark)', pp. 61-79.

After the first gold rush subsided, attention turned to the possibility of wheat production in areas of Western Australia unsettled by Europeans. Encouragement and liberal support was given to settlers by the Government to take up blocks of land. Apart from established places – such as York, Toodyay, and Northam – the first large-scale settlement was on land adjacent to the Great Southern Railway.

When country towns sprang up along the railway line, the Methodist Church, with Beverley as its northern base, utilised its network known as the 'Home Mission' to evangelise in some of these towns. In particular, W. Mawson served Methodism through his work along the Great Southern line. Continued growth, however, meant that the Methodists had to restructure the 'Home Mission'.

At the Methodist State Conference of 1900, Greenough was separated from the Dongarra Circuit, and was given a form of independence called a 'Home Mission Station'. The wide-spreading circuits of Meckering, Kellerberrin, and Merredin, were detached from Northam by the 1903 Conference, and again worked as a Home Mission Station.

In 1902, the Methodist Conference asked Rev Thomas Allan to visit the Great Southern District and investigate a proposal to extend their work in that rapidly growing area. The result was that the 1903 Conference established the Great Southern Mission, embracing Pingelly, Wagin, Cuballing, Narrogin, Katanning, and other stations. Two pioneer missionaries were Rev John Weir and Rev Harley J. Morrell, who took up their residence at Katanning and Narrogin respectively.

At the 1904 Conference, a 'Home Missionary' was appointed to Pingelly and the Great Southern Mission divided into two divisions: South and North, with Beverley attached to the latter. In addition, permission was given to erect churches at Cuballing, Narrogin, Wagin, Katanning, Tambellup, and Brookton. This marked the beginning of a period of intense Methodist work in the Agricultural districts and, as new farming areas opened up eastwards, they followed the settlers.

Developments in the Eastern Wheat Belts also led to new Methodist circuits, extending through Dowerin, Wyalkatchem, Bencubbin, Bullfinch, and on to Southern Cross. By the 1920s, the policies of the Home Mission Committee has been so far-reaching that almost all areas of the State where Europeans had settled were allocated to an agent of the Methodist Church.

When the Group Settlements opened up, the Methodists already had a structure in place quickly allowing agents to be sent out to 'minister the gospel'. These included such districts as Manjimup, Pemberton, Denmark, and Bridgetown.¹

¹ Jenkins, Charles, *A Century of Methodism in Western Australia, 1830-1930* (Perth: Methodist Book Depot, 1930), pp. 34-36

Denmark was selected as the site of a new church, presumably as it had a prior Methodist Church (1898-1905) and, from 1922, fifteen Group Settlements commenced in the area.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence see 'Conservation Plan: Denmark Red Cross Building (fmr Methodist Church Denmark)', pp. 21-60.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There are 105 churches on the Heritage Council Register of Heritage Places, of which 10 are in the Federation Carpenter Gothic architectural style, all of which are constructed (at least in part) in timber. Built in 1925, *Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark* is a fairly late example of the style.

The other post-1920 Federation Carpenter Gothic churches on the Register are: 00436 *St John's Anglican Church*, Capel (1924), a single-storey timber church with a hipped corrugated iron roof, featuring a flèche, belltower, original light fittings and uniquely designed door hardware; and, 01794 *Narembeen Museum* (1928-29), a single-storey weatherboard and galvanised iron building, now used as a museum.

There are 95 churches in the HCWA Current Assessment Program, of which seven are designed in the Federation Carpenter Gothic architectural style. Of these, six were made of timber and, of these, five were purpose built churches. *St Matthews Anglican Church and Hall*, Kalgoorlie-Boulder (1906), appears to be comparable, being clad in horizontal weatherboard timber; however it has buttresses and it is older than *Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark*. *St John the Baptist Anglican Church*, Busselton (1935), is comparable, being a simple gable roofed, weatherboard and iron building with a small covered entrance porch. *Holy Trinity Church and Rectory*, Dundas (1898), is comparable as it is simple in form, displays no decorative elements and has a porch which is symmetrical. *St Paul's Anglican Church*, Serpentine-Jarrahdale (1897), has been relocated and therefore is not comparable. *St David's Church*, Collie (1910), is comparable in scale and form, it has not been painted and displays no decorative elements maintaining its simplistic form like *Methodist Church (fmr) Denmark*.

There are 16 Methodist/Wesleyan/Uniting Churches on the Register. Of these, three were, or are, Methodist churches. *Queens Methodist Church*, Kalgoorlie-Boulder (1904), displays more decorative treatments, is made from brick, displays a rendered parapet and is larger in scale than *Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark*. It is comparable as they are both simplistic churches, with a simple floor plan and entrance typical of Methodist Church architecture. *Charles Street Methodist Mission Chapel and Methodist Church*, Vincent (1880), is comparable to *Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark*, as it also displays a simple rectangular floor plan, with a simple roof line with modest features. It does display some decorative elements, unlike many other Methodist Churches, in the form of two turrets forming a symmetrical façade. It does display rendered bands that were common for Methodist Church architecture, however it is made of stone and brick, not timber. *Wesleyan Methodist Church (fmr)*, Greenough (1867), is not comparable as it is rustic, displaying no decorative elements.

It is not known how many churches were built as a result of population growth following the Group Settlement Scheme.

Methodist Church (fmr), Denmark, is representative of a Federation Carpenter Gothic church built in the early 1900s in Western Australia.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

Heaver, David, 2004. *Conservation Management Plan: Denmark Red Cross Building (fmr) Methodist Church Denmark*. Prepared for the Australian Red Cross.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH
