



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)

- 3.16.1 Dealing with hazards and disasters
- 4.2 Supplying urban services
- 8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 111 Depression & boom
- 404 Community services & utilities

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Guildford Fire Station is a fine example of a single appliance station designed in the Inter-War Functionalist style. (Criterion 1.1)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters demonstrates the practice of providing a fire station and family residential quarters on the same site, and is a rare surviving example. (Criterion 2.1)

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters was built in 1934, as Western Australia recovered from the Great Depression. It was among the first fire stations built in a period of intense building of fire stations, with 18 built by the Fire Brigade Board between 1934 and 1938 throughout the State. (Criterion 2.2)

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters was designed by architect K. C. Duncan, designer of the majority of fire stations built in Western Australia between 1930 and 1960, who was an office bearer and life member of the Volunteer Fire Brigades' Association. (Criterion 2.3)

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is one of the earliest examples of the standard plan single bay fire station designed by K. C. Duncan in 1932, which was widely used throughout Western Australia in the Inter-War and post World War Two periods. (Criterion 2.4)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

* 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.

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is highly valued by present and past members of the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade and their families, by the community of Guildford and the district, and by the wider community of the City of Swan as evidenced by its inclusion in the Municipal Heritage Inventory, for social and cultural reasons. (Criterion 4.1)

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters contributes to the community's sense of place as the town's fire station and quarters since 1934, as a distinctive building in Meadow Street, and as part of a group of public buildings developed and owned by the Municipality of Guildford (now the City of Swan). (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is one of three single bay fire stations of similar design and construction, built between 1934 and 1938, that continue in operation for their original purpose. Others still exist but have either passed out of service, are used for storage and other activities, have a new use, or have been demolished. (Criterion 5.1)

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is the only fire station and quarters built for and owned by a local government authority in Western Australia after 1924, at a time when the Fire Brigades Board had re-affirmed its resolve not to operate volunteer fire brigades in the metropolitan area. (Criterion 5.2)

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is believed to be the only fire station occupied and operated by a volunteer fire brigade in this State that also includes a family residential quarters on the same site. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is a good representative example of a fire station and quarters constructed during a time of rapid development of the fire service in the State and is part of a suite of stations completed to standard plans prepared by architect K. C. Duncan. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Guildford Fire Station remains close to its original state and is well maintained by the volunteers. Past management practices have resulted in the replacement of material in a sympathetic manner, together with the removal of some detail. Overall the station remains in good condition.

The quarters receive basic maintenance and there is a good deal of superficial internal damage caused by damp, together with some more serious damage to plasterboard ceilings in wet areas. Past management practices have not caused any substantial impact on the fabric.

Overall the place remains in fair condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters remain in use for their intended purpose and continue to be used in a similar manner as that envisaged at the time of the construction of both elements. There are no conflicting uses and the existing

values can be sustained indefinitely with the existing uses and appropriate maintenance. The integrity of the place remains high.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters have undergone periodic maintenance and minor change. Items such as the station floor have been completely replaced and the doors to the front of the station are replacements from another station. Kitchen and bathroom fittings to the station and quarters are replacements. These changes are minor so that in an overall sense the place retains a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade & Quarters comprises a single brick, render and tile storey single appliance station building in the Inter-War Functionalist style, together with single storey brick, render and tile quarters in the Inter-War California Bungalow style, constructed in brick, render and tile, and other minor structures such as metal sheds, fences and an out door water closet. It was completed in December 1934 to a design by architect K. C. Duncan.

In March 1827, Captain Stirling explored the Swan River including the area which was later named Guildford, after his home place in England. He noted the fertile soils of the Upper Swan. In June 1829, he returned to establish the Swan River Colony.¹

In late September 1829, Captain Stirling and Surveyor General Roe travelled to the head of the Swan River above Guildford with a group of European settlers to whom permission had been given to select land. These were the first rural grants in the Colony.² In the same year, the town of Guildford was laid out, and, by late 1829, vast tracts of land had been selected in the Guildford-Swan area, and some of the European settlers had moved to their selections.³ Sutherland's plan for the Site of Guildford (1829) shows four reserves, all designated as 'King's Meadow'.⁴

In 1830, the first Guildford Town Lots were sold. In part, the town was opened up to provide for discharged servants of the early European settlers, following completion of their service. They were to be granted lots of four to five acres, with the intention that they assist each other in a co-operative settlement. From 1830, boats regularly plied the Swan River to the coast from Guildford, which developed as an inland port.⁵

¹ Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A History of the Swan District of Western Australia* (University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1987), pp. 31-32.

² *ibid.*, p. 33 p. 38; and Hasluck, Paul 'Guildford and the Swan' in *Early Days* (RWAHS Vol. 1 Pt. 2, 1928) pp. 1-2; Battye, J. S. *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia* (The Cyclopaedia Company, Perth, 1912-13) Vol. pp. 96-97.

³ *ibid.*, Bourke, Michael J., *ibid.* p. 52; and Paget, T. 'Early Days in Guildford. Agricultural Development 1829-1850' Typescript (1949) Battye Library, p. 2.

⁴ H. C. Sutherland, Site of Guildford, 1829, in Gibbons, L. *Guildford 1829-1929: A Century of Progress* (The Imperial Printing Company, Perth, 1929).

⁵ Paget, T. *ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

The earliest European dwellings were either tents that the settlers had brought to the Colony, or simple buildings constructed of locally available materials, often of timber with thatch roofs. The fire risk was high, and fires were not uncommon in the towns and agricultural areas, as evidenced by the destruction of W. L. Brockman's first house at *Herne Hill* in 1830.⁶ The danger of fire remained an ever-present concern for both urban and rural settlers. In 1848, the Commissariat Department purchased the first fire engine to be brought to the Colony, but its effectiveness and its fate are unknown.⁷

In 1850, convict transportation to the Swan River Colony commenced. The Pensioner Guards responsible for the convicts provided the first ready labour force in the Colony from which a fire brigade might be established, and a fire engine was imported for their use in 1862.⁸ In 1885, the first volunteer fire brigade in Western Australia was formed at Fremantle; and in Perth, the first formal unit was formed under the Perth City Council, which operated from under the Perth Town Hall.⁹ However, it was not until the gold boom period of the 1890s, when population increased dramatically and tent towns sprang up in urban areas and on the goldfields, with their heightened risk of fire, that numerous additional fire brigades were established. In late 1895, the destruction of many shops and residences by a major fire at Coolgardie, led to the formation of a volunteer fire brigade. Similar brigades were formed also at Cue, Brown Hill (later re-established as North Kalgoorlie) and Esperance.¹⁰

Most volunteer fire brigades operated from municipal buildings or sites in return for their voluntary efforts. From 1895, the Government provided some financial assistance to volunteer fire brigades for the purchase of fire engines at Fremantle (1895) and Perth (1897), the only brigade that included two permanent members in addition to volunteers, and thereafter at Bunbury, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Albany, Geraldton and Boulder.¹¹

In 1898, the Western Australian Fire Brigades' Association was formed. Although members of the Association were from Perth Brigade, there was also strong representation from both the Murchison and Eastern goldfields.¹²

In 1898, the Fire Brigades Act was passed, which established a Board, nominated by the contributors, namely the Government, fire-underwriters, and municipalities, the latter having the choice as to whether they availed themselves of the provisions of the Act, to control and maintain fire fighting services within Perth.¹³ In 1899, a site was reserved at the corner of Irwin and

6 Johnston, Ruth W. L. *Brockman: A Portrait* (Darelle Publications, Nedlands, 1982) p. 5. Note: Whilst this house was of timber, his next house was of bricks, brought up the river by barge.

7 *Perth Gazette* 16 September 1848, cited in Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth* (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979) p. 63.

8 Battye, J. S. *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia* (The Cyclopaedia Company, Perth, 1912-13) Vol. 2, p. 405.

9 *A Centenary of Service: Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia 1899-1999* (Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia, Perth, 1999) p. 6.

10 Wood, Kenneth A. *Ready, Aye Ready: A History of the Volunteer Fire Brigade Movement in Western Australia*, Wills, Moira (Ed.) (The Western Australian Volunteer Fire Brigades' Association, (Inc.) and the League of Champion Firemen, Perth, 1989) p. 58 and p. 83.

11 Battye, J. S. op. cit., pp. 405-406.

12 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' Prepared by the Department of Contract and Management Services for the Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia, August 1997.

13 Battye, J. S. op. cit., p. 406.

Murray Streets, Perth, for the purpose of a fire station, for which Architects Cavanagh and Cavanagh drew plans. Known as the No. 1 Fire Station, it was officially opened in July 1903.¹⁴

By 1904, when the Western Australian Fire Brigades' Association drew up a constitution, there were 23 brigades affiliated with it.¹⁵ In 1906, concerns were raised in Parliament as to the number of brigades registered with the Fire Brigade Board, as only two were registered, Perth and Fremantle (registered in 1905). In 1907, a proposed Act for the Constitution of District Fire Brigade Boards was debated, but it was discharged from the Legislative Council.¹⁶

In the decade 1898 and 1908, an additional ten volunteer fire brigades were established, including those at North Fremantle, East Fremantle, Cottesloe, Bayswater, Claremont, Subiaco and Leederville. It is believed that the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade was first formed c. 1898, but was disbanded for some periods.¹⁷ In 1908, following a proposal from the Fire Brigades' Board, the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade was officially formed. The Government provided £150 for the purchase of equipment, uniforms and general costs of establishing the Brigade, which was to be accommodated at the Drill Hall. On 25 March, the Brigade held its first practice. In June, the official opening was held, and the Council granted £10 for the purchase of gymnasium equipment and £5 towards the costs of the ceremony.¹⁸ In 1909, Ferguson was appointed captain and he served in this position to 1934.¹⁹

On 15 December 1905, an Order in Council vested Reserve 9932, being Guildford Lot 200 (the future site of *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters* and vested in trust for the purpose of Electric Light Station), was vested in the Mayor and Councillors of the Municipality of Guildford, with the power to lease the whole or any part of the Reserve for any term not exceeding 21 years from the commencement of the lease.²⁰

In December 1909, the District Fire Brigades Act was passed, making it compulsory for fire brigades to register with the Board and for all local authorities to accept the provisions of the Act and to contribute to the costs of the Board.²¹ By this Act, the Board was empowered to procure property and also to authorise the sale or exchange of existing properties for fire brigade purposes.²² In 1910, ten new brigades were established under the Board's control, and it took over numerous existing fire brigades, and set about replacing or up-grading the properties as required in the pre World War One period.²³

In 1910, the Guildford Council was granted possession of the old convict built Commissariat Buildings (sometimes referred to as the old Drill Hall) at Guildford, near the Council buildings, which were then formally claimed by the Fire Brigades' Board. The Council refused to surrender the building, and

14 Fire Brigade Board Annual Reports, 1899-1901.

15 Wood, Kenneth A. op. cit., p. 52.

16 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 19.

17 Wood, Kenneth A. op. cit., pp. 36-37.

18 *The Story of Guildford* Compiled by the Town Clerk, to commemorate the Commonwealth Jubilee, 1951, (Municipality of Guildford, 1952) pp. 24-25.

19 Minute Books, Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, 6 May 1934.

20 *Government Gazette* 15 December 1905, pp. 3688-3689, and p. 3695.

21 Batty, J. S. op. cit., p. 406.

22 District Fire Brigades Act, 1909, Section 28.

23 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 24.

instead offered the Board a lease on it. The Board declined the offer on the contention that it would be required for only five years, until a new fire station was built. However, this did not eventuate, and the former Commissariat continued to accommodate the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade until late 1934.²⁴

In the pre-World War One period, most members of the State's fire brigades were volunteers. A smaller number were permanent staff, and there were also a number of auxiliary staff, officers who were called upon for assistance when required, being paid according to the fires they attended rather than a regular wage. There was increasing concern regarding the conditions for volunteers, in particular the allowance paid to the auxiliaries, and the disbanding of volunteer fire brigades.²⁵ In 1912, a meeting between the Board and the Western Australian Fire Brigades' Association agreed it was essential that permanent firemen be employed in the metropolitan area, but not in country areas outside of Midland Junction. In 1915, the Board concluded that in general it was preferable to employ permanent and auxiliary staff at a station rather than a mix of permanent and volunteer staff, which was not always harmonious. However, the manpower shortage during World War One did not enable this policy to be fully implemented until the post war period.²⁶

In the period 1910-17 42 new fire stations were opened by the Fire Brigades Board, the majority in the pre-War period. Although standard designs for fire stations were first contemplated at this period, they were not until the Inter-War period. In many instances, initial sketches were prepared by the Chief Officer, and the station was built by the brigade, or alternatively under the supervision of a local architect. The Board also utilised the services of some architects for more than one station over a number of years. A notable example was J. L. Ochiltree, who designed fire stations at Claremont (1914), Bunbury (1915), McCourt Street, Leederville (1926), and Collie (1929).²⁷

In 1923, the Board renewed its resolution that volunteer fire brigades would not operate in the metropolitan area, and subsequently the volunteer fire brigades at Leederville, East Fremantle and Subiaco disbanded. However, Guildford, West Guildford and Queens Park continued.²⁸ No new volunteer fire brigades were founded after this time and in due course Guildford remained and continues to remain the only volunteer fire brigade in the metropolitan area.

In 1923, Architect K. C. Duncan offered his services to the Board. In 1925, it was suggested that his services be engaged in preparing plans for fire stations. From 1926, he and Ochiltree were commissioned by the Board along with some local architects in country areas who designed stations in their localities. George Lavater, for example, who drew plans for Wagin and Katanning.²⁹ In the Inter-War period, Duncan served as a volunteer fireman. He held various positions in the Volunteer Fire Brigades' Association, and

²⁴ *The Story of Guildford* op. cit., p. 25; and Gibbons, L. *Guildford 1829-1929, A Century of Progress* (The Imperial Printing Company Limited for the Municipality of Guildford, 1929) p. 15 and p. 33.

²⁵ Wood, Kenneth A. op. cit., p. 37.

²⁶ 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., pp. 27-28.

²⁷ Fire Rescue Heritage Database, cited in 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 25.

²⁸ Western Australian Fire Brigades Board Annual Report 1923, p. 3; Wood, Kenneth A. op. cit., p. 60; and *A Centenary of Service ...* op. cit., p. 14.

²⁹ 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 25.

was made a life member in 1937. He served on the Executive Committee (1924-42), and he was also Secretary of the Association (1937-41).³⁰

During the Great Depression, building activity was curtailed in Western Australia as elsewhere, and no new fire stations were built between 1929 and 1933. As the State began to recover, the Fire Brigades' Board entered a period of intense building activity. In the period 1934-38, 18 new stations were built, most of which were designed by K. C. Duncan, who had developed a standard plan for country fire stations in 1932.³¹

In 1933, K. C. Duncan drew plans for a single bay fire station to be built on the Municipality of Guildford's reserve at Meadow Street.³² Meadow Street, named for the King's Meadow, was already largely developed on the western side between James Street and Helena Street by this period. Nearby were the Town Hall and Municipal Offices, at the north-eastern corner of Meadow Street and James Street. When the Fire Brigades' Board was unable to provide funding in the immediate future, the Municipality agreed to build the station, to be leased to the brigade.³³ This was most unusual as by the 1930s the majority of new fire stations were built and owned by the Board.

In 1934, *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters* was built by A. H. Kingsbury at a cost of £1,450. It was a single bay fire station, of brick construction with a terracotta tile roof, with a partly rendered partly face brick facade with a central raised parapet.³⁴ The Quarters were of brick construction, with timber floors, and with a terracotta tile roof. The water closets were built back-to-back, housed in a single brick building with a timber door opening to the north and south respectively. The place was officially opened by the Hon. W. H. Kitson, M. L. A., on 7 December 1934, as commemorated by a plaque on the front facade.³⁵ An 'impromptu social' was held at the place that night to celebrate the opening.³⁶ The place was rented to the Fire Brigades' Board at £87 per annum. The steel tower at the rear of the station is believed to have been erected by the Fire Brigade Board in 1934.³⁷

In June 1936, it was agreed that the interior walls of the place be painted and also the kitchen walls, which was duly implemented.³⁸ In 1936, a photograph of the Brigade shows the place as constructed, with timber bi-fold doors at the front entry. The entry court to the station is graveled, and there is an open timber fence extending from the south side of the station. A photograph of the interior shows the walls after they had been painted, whilst the timber picture rails and ceiling struts were left in a natural timber finish.³⁹

A Sewerage Plan dated March 1939 shows *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters*, of brick construction. A path leads from the front boundary to the front entry to the present quarters on the south side, and there is a room of timber

30 Wood, Kenneth A. *Ready, Aye, Ready* op. cit., pp. 109-112.

31 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., pp. 37-38.

32 'Guildford Fire Station and House' in 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 2.

33 Grant Barker, Secretary, Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, January 2003.

34 'Guildford Fire Station and House' in 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 2.

35 Commemorative plaque at the place.

36 Minute Books, Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, 3 December 1934.

37 'Guildford Fire Station and House' op. cit.

38 Minute Books, Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, 14 June 1936.

39 Collection Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, on display at *Guildford Fire Station*.

construction at the south-east. To the rear of the *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters* is the brick closet, and close by, to the south-east again, a substantial timber building, to the south of which is a long trough, adjoining the side fence. Between the rear of the station and the trough there is a square surfaced area, where the tower is located in 2003. The lot to the south of the place is still vacant at this period.⁴⁰

Following discussions of a proposal to divide the State into zones for the purpose of regulating fire brigade activities, a system of zoning was introduced from late 1952, with Guildford becoming part of the Central Zone.⁴¹ In the mid 1950s, the interior of the station was painted, including the picture rails and ceiling battens.⁴² In the mid 1960s, when the original bi-fold front doors to *Guildford Fire Station* required replacement, timber doors from the station at Osborne Park were utilised as replacements.⁴³

On 8 December 1967, Reserve 9932 was vested in the Shire of Swan-Guildford for the purpose of Municipal Depot. The area of the Reserve was reduced to one rood 11 perches, its present size.⁴⁴

Volunteer fire brigades also continued to operate at Midland Junction (1931-68), Bassendean (formerly West Guildford), and Canning Districts (formerly Queens Park), which was converted to a permanent station in 1971. Bassendean became a dual permanent/volunteer fire station in c. 1973, leaving Guildford as the only volunteer fire brigade in operation in the metropolitan area.⁴⁵

In 1994, the place was included in the National Trust's 'Significant Buildings of the 1930s in Western Australia'.⁴⁶ It was considered that the place was significant and worthy of preservation.⁴⁷

In 1995, the place was included in the City of Swan's Municipal Heritage Inventory, with the recommendation that it be afforded a high level of protection.⁴⁸

In 1997, the Guildford Association acknowledged the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade's service to the community with a plaque at the place.⁴⁹

In 1997, *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters* was included in 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory', and it was considered to be eligible for entry into the State Register of Heritage Places as 'a good example of the design and use of single bay stations with brick facades and central

40 Metropolitan Sewerage Municipality of Guildford, SROWA Cons. 4156 Item 3094, March 1939.

41 Wood, Kenneth A. op. cit., p. 124.

42 Comparison of interior photos dated 1954 and 1957. Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade Collection.

43 Grant Barker, Secretary, Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 30 January 2003.

44 *Government Gazette* 8 December 1967, p. 3374, and pp. 3384-3385.

45 Wood, Kenneth A. op. cit., pp. 60-63.

46 Geneve, Yvonne 'Significant Buildings of the 1930s in Western Australia' December 1994, for National Trust of Australia (WA), as part of the National Estate Grants Programme.

47 [Yvonne Geneve, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 21 February 2003.](#)

48 [Shire of Swan Municipal Heritage Inventory, adopted 10 July 1995.](#)

49 Mr. & Mrs. Burns, referral for the State Register of Heritage Places, 1997. [Note: In early 2003, the plaque has been temporarily removed.](#)

raised parapets, dating from the accelerated building campaign of the 1930s.⁵⁰

In the same year, the place was nominated for inclusion in the State Register. The nomination noted that the place 'is believed to be the only Western Australian Fire Brigade Volunteer's (sic) Station and Quarters existing together', and 'the only local government owned fire fighting facility in Western Australia.'⁵¹

In recent years, the City of Swan has provided some funds for urgent minor maintenance. Very little has changed at the quarters and the changes to service rooms are minor. Similarly changes to make the enclosed verandah into a gymnasium were also minor. To date no documentation has been found in relation to these minor changes. Concerns have been expressed regarding the future of the place in the absence of regular repairs and maintenance, and consequent on-going problems with water damage to ceilings at the quarters for example; and also in view of the likelihood of the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade being incorporated with the Bassendean Fire Station, a permanently manned station that also includes volunteers.⁵²

In mid 2002, the timber floor at the fire station was replaced with a new timber floor after the original stumped floor gave way. However, the bearers for the new floor were too widely spaced, and the job had to be re-done, with the bearers more closely positioned to carry the weight of the fire engine.⁵³

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters has continued in the ownership of the local government authority to the present, leased to the Fire Brigades' Board (later Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia). It has continued to operate as a fire station and quarters without interruption for the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade through the remainder of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.⁵⁴ Several families have strong associations with the place, including the Beales, Neilson and Barker families, who have served in the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade through the generations. The Brigade has figured prominently in the community through its ongoing fire fighting role, and also through its significant achievements in both local and national competitions. A considerable collection of memorabilia at the place demonstrates these achievements, the continuity of the Brigade, and its social significance to the community.⁵⁵

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is the only such place in the ownership of a local government authority. The Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade is the only wholly volunteer fire brigade still in operation in the metropolitan area in the twenty-first century. Its members and the local community are proud of its continuing history. They value *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters*, support the retention of the buildings, and also their continuing use for their original purpose. Nonetheless, it is recognised that it is unlikely that the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade will continue to operate from the place in the longer

50 'Guildford Fire Station and House' op. cit., p. 3.

51 Nomination form, 1997, HCWA File Place no. 08806.

52 Heritage Grants Application from Grant Burns 1997; and Anthony Dean, Captain, and Grant Barker, Secretary, Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, conversation with Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, site visit, 30 January 2003

53 Anthony Dean and Grant Barker, *ibid*.

54 Information from officers of Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, and Rob Styrk, City of Swan, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, January 2003.

55 *ibid*; Heritage Grants Application; and Nomination form, 1997.

term as it is proposed that at some future date this Brigade's operations will be brought more directly under Bassendean. They hope that when this eventuates the place will be conserved, and, if possible, converted to a museum illustrating the history of the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade, and with continued involvement of its members.⁵⁶

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters comprises a single storey brick, render and tile single appliance station building in the Inter-War Functionalist style, constructed in completed in 1934 and associated exercise tower, together with a single storey in brick, render and tile quarters in the Inter-War California Bungalow style, and other minor structures.

Guildford Fire Station & Quarters is set within a suburban context, in a wide mainly residential street, irregularly spaced street trees and a broad grass verge. The land on which the features are located rises away from the street towards the rear of the lot to the east. The buildings on the site comprise a station building near the front boundary to the south of the lot, with a steel lattice frame exercise tower to the rear, a single storey quarters building to the north of the station, with a freestanding pair of water closets to the rear, three metal framed and clad storage sheds along the rear boundary of the property, Supersix profile and chainlink fences, and a rotary clothes hoist. A timber weatherboard shed indicated on the 1939 sewerage plan has been removed. There is a wide bitumen paved drive serving the station and quarters, as well as a bitumen-paved area around the station and to its rear.

Plantings include Lilly Pilly (*Acmena smithii*) in the front garden, a Eucalypt in the rear garden and a Cape Lilac (*Melia azedarach*) near the rear fence, together with Agapanthus (*Agapanthus africanus*) and Morning Glory creeper (*Ipomoea acuminat*).

Fire Station

The fire station building is a single storey brick construction single appliance building and integral quarters, decorated externally with cement render, and it has a Wunderlich Marseilles pattern tiled roof. The facade is rendered in a low-key interpretation of the Inter-War Functionalist style.⁵⁷ The remaining elevations are utilitarian in their rendering.

The front elevation is dominated by the station entrance, with its pair of part glazed timber framed and boarded doors relocated from the Osborne Park Station. The entrance is framed by a pair of plain stepped rendered pilasters, capped by a simple stepped pediment. There is a raised panel in the pediment framed by a bollection moulding and the panel contains the words FIRE STATION in bas-relief. A bronze plaque is fixed to the southern pilaster to commemorate the official opening of the station. The remainder of the front elevation is simply treated with stretcher bond cut and struck jointed brickwork, topped with a soldier course near the top of the wall under a plain rendered frieze. Wide lined eaves with ogee gutters extend over the walls either side of the entrance bay. The roof is clad with Marseilles pattern tiles with ram's horn pattern finials.

⁵⁶ Nomination form op. cit.; Anthony Dean and Grant Barker *ibid*.

⁵⁷ 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.184-187.

The remaining elevations are simply rendered in stretcher bond cut and struck brickwork, topped with a soldier course near the top of the wall under a plain rendered frieze. The walls are variously punctuated with pairs of six pane casement windows or part glazed doors. The wide eaves continue along both sides of the station and terminate at a skillion roof that extends over the kitchen and bathroom sections of the quarters to the rear.

The plan is made up of two main parts, the largest being the fire appliance bay and the remaining space being occupied by the former quarters comprising two rooms, together with a kitchen and bathroom at the rear of the building.

The appliance room has a new timber floor of 5" jarrah boards with a small section of concrete flooring in front of the main doors, a quad skirting, plastered walls, with an incised dado and a plasterboard and cover strip ceiling with a simple moulded cornice. There is a replacement set of doors to the front of the building (see above) and a five-panel door between the appliance bay and quarters. There are picture rails of several types, helmet rails and pegs, a variety of cabinets with trophy displays, and numerous photographs of the volunteers mounted on the walls.

There is a passage leading off the appliance bay to give access to the quarters rooms. On the north side of the passage there is a small store and a bathroom and on the south a larger room that serves as an office. The corridor terminates at the kitchen. The rooms are treated in a similar fashion with 3" timber boards, some covered with carpet, quad skirtings, plastered walls, plasterboard and cover strip ceilings. Wet area rooms have glass faced cement render lower walls and incised dados, and living room areas have picture rails. The kitchen retains a cooker hearth and breast and the bathroom its shower.

There is some cracking, paintwork needs attention, and some of the five panel doors are missing, but otherwise the interior is in good condition. The main doors to the appliance bay are in a fragile condition. There is some mortar loss in exterior brickwork, but the exterior is generally in good condition.

Exercise Tower

The exercise tower is constructed in galvanized steel lattice frame construction with a number of platform stages and a hand operated winch. It is set on a concrete pad within the bitumen paving to the rear of the building. It is well maintained and in good condition.

Quarters

The quarters building is a single storey brick construction two bedroom dwelling, decorated externally with cement render and has a Marseilles pattern tiled roof. The facade is rendered in an interpretation of the Inter-War California Bungalow style.⁵⁸ The remaining elevations carry through the style, albeit in simplified form.

The front elevation is asymmetrically arranged in the manner that is typical of the style, with a dominant gabled bay with a wide eaves overhang, and a hipped roof verandah attached to the recessed bay of the house. The treatments of the elevation are simple with limestone foundation walls and a dado of cut and struck jointed brickwork, rendered sills and the upper walls from sill level rendered also. Windows are generally six pane casement sashes

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp.206-209.

in pairs or banks of three. The gables are have wide verges lined with birdboards and the faces of the gables are rendered in panels divided by timber strips. Other features include a sunhood over the front window. The former verandah on the south side of the house has been filled in with asbestos cement sheeting and louvres to form a sleep-out that currently functions as a gym. The side verandah does not appear on the 1939 sewerage plan and must be a later addition. The roofscape comprises two flues and a Marseilles pattern autumn blend tile cladding with matching hips and ridges, together with ball top finials. The front verandah has a timber floor, a brick balustrade wall, rendered piers and pairs of Tuscan columns supporting the verandah edge beam. The overall effect is of a very restrained interpretation of the style.

The plan is arranged around the centrally located front doors and corridor. There is a living room, kitchen and laundry on the north side of the house, and a main bedroom, bathroom and second bedroom to the south and east of the corridor. In addition there is a sleep out that is set behind the main bedroom and to the south of the bathroom a second bedroom.

The interiors generally have timber floors with chamfered skirtings, plastered walls, picture rails, plasterboard and cover strip ceilings, with simple moulded coved cornices, five panel doors and casement windows. The hall has a fretwork grille at the point of entry to the corridor. The fireplace is the focal point of the living room and although a large physical presence, is simply detailed with face brickwork and a simple mantle. The kitchen has retained its range hearth and breast, but is now fitted with an upright cooker. All kitchen fittings are of a type that was commonly used in the 1970s. The laundry has a concrete floor, unlined soffit, copper flue, but the copper has been removed. The bathroom has a bath and basin that are of recent origin. The floors to the bathroom are concrete finished in vinyl.

The sleep-out is simply the verandah lined out with fibrous cement sheeting. The masonry walls to the house and the windows that open on to the sleep-out have been painted over and the timber floor carpeted over.

Generally the external features are well maintained and are in fair to good condition. The interior seems to suffer from a good deal of condensation, particularly in the bathroom. This has lead to the deterioration of plasterboard ceilings and mould growth on upper walls. There is some cracking in walls and the interior is generally in fair condition.

There is some cracking, paintwork needs attention, and some of the five panel doors are missing, but otherwise the interior is in fair to good condition. There is some mortar loss in exterior brickwork, but the exterior is generally in good condition.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

In the period 1900 to 1910, the first purpose built fire stations were constructed. No. 1 Fire Station (Place no. 2051), at the corner of Irwin and Murray Streets, Perth, officially opened in July 1903, was designed by architects Cavanagh and Cavanagh.⁵⁹ In 1904, a large purpose built masonry fire station was built by the Boulder Municipal Council (Place no. 181), around the same period in which a timber station was built at Leederville (Place no. 08878).⁶⁰ In 1908, a new purpose built fire station was built at Phillimore

⁵⁹ Fire Brigade Board Annual Reports, 1899-1901.

⁶⁰ 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 20.

Street, Fremantle (RHP Place no. 982) , known as No. 2 Station, also to a design by Cavanagh and Cavanagh.⁶¹

The *Districts Fire Brigades Act, 1909*, ushered in a seven year period of rapid development, (1910-17), during which 42 new stations were built, of which, so far as is known, only four were substantial, purpose built, masonry buildings. In the post-World War One period, 12 new stations were built between 1920 and 1929, of which at least seven were substantial, architect designed buildings. From the World War One period to the mid 1920s, Architect J. L. Ochiltree was generally referred to as the Fire Brigades' Board's Architect. From 1926, Architect K. C. Duncan also designed a number of fire stations for the Board.⁶²

Between 1929 and 1933, no new fire stations were built due to the effects of the Great Depression. In 1932, the Board once more began to look ahead, and planning commenced for fire stations at Goomalling (Place no 14515) and Cue (Place no. 146500). The remainder of the inter-war period saw intense building activity by the Board, when 18 new stations were built, 15 of them in country areas. The majority of the stations were built to designs by K. C. Duncan, who had developed a standard plan for country stations in 1932. *Guildford Fire Station & Quarters* (1934) was the first of five similar single bay fire stations. The other stations were North Kalgoorlie (1935) (Place no. 750-3), Tammin (1935) (Place no. 2549), Busselton (1936) (Place no. 403) and Meekatharra (1936) (Place no. 14598). All were characterised by a partly rendered partly face brick facade and a central raised parapet, of simple rendered design with a low triangular cap. Simple rendered pilasters with slightly chamfered edges flanked the appliance doors below the parapet. Decorative detailing included the rectangular name plate on the parapet and a plain rendered cornice band. *Guildford Fire Station* and Busselton were the most substantial of these stations, with brick walls on all sides and tiled roofs, whilst the other three had a face brick facade returning along the side walls to accommodate a single window, with timber framed walls clad with asbestos or corrugated iron. Roofs were of similar materials.⁶³

During World War Two, only two new stations were built, and the Board did not renew its building programme until after the lifting of war time restrictions in the early 1950s. In the post-World War Two period, Duncan, and subsequently Duncan, Stephen & Mercer, were responsible for the design of numerous new fire stations in which the basic design for facilities and layout remained much as in the Inter-War period, although there were some modifications with regard to the decorative details.⁶⁴

In 1990, two of the five single bay fire stations built in the 1934-38 period, at Busselton and Meekatharra were replaced by new stations, though the original buildings remain. In 1996-97, the stations at Tammin, North Kalgoorlie and Guildford were extant, and continuing in use for their original purpose.⁶⁵ None of these is combined with quarters and none is on the Register of Heritage Places.

61 Fire Brigade Board Annual Report, 1908.

62 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 26.

63 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., pp. 37-38.

64 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' op. cit., p. 38.

65 'Thematic History of Fire Brigades in Western Australia' Prepared by Department of Contract and Management Services, Western Australia, August 1996, p. 45; and 'Guildford Fire Station and House' op. cit., p. 3.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'Guildford Fire Station and House' in 'Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia Heritage Inventory' Prepared by the Department of Contract and Management Services for the Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia, August 1997

13.5 KEY REFERENCES

13.6 FURTHER RESEARCH
