



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Removed Entry

The Minister for Heritage Directed that this Interim Entry in the State Register not be made permanent on 4 August 1999. Notice of this decision under the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 appeared in the Government Gazette on 3 September 1999.

1. **DATA BASE No.** 11737
2. **NAME** *Stirling Street Cottages* (circa 1889)
3. **LOCATION** 318-322 Stirling Street, Perth
4. **DESCRIPTION OF PLACE INCLUDED IN THIS ENTRY**
Lot 41 on Plan 32, being the whole of the land comprised in Certificate of Title Volume 1305 Folio 892.
5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA** Town of Vincent
6. **OWNER** The Parish of the Serbian Orthodox Church of " St. Sava" (Inc.)
7. **HERITAGE LISTINGS**
 - Register of Heritage Places: Interim Entry 04/ 08/ 1998
Interim Entry removed 03/ 09/ 1999
 - National Trust Classification: -----
 - Town Planning Scheme: -----
 - Municipal Inventory: -----
 - Register of the National Estate: -----
8. **CONSERVATION ORDER**
26 June 1998
Revoked 31 August 1999
9. **HERITAGE AGREEMENT**

10. **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**
Stirling Street Cottages, two single storey, simply detailed, Victorian Georgian brick and iron semi-detached houses, has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:
 - the place is one of very few surviving residential buildings from the pre gold boom period in the Highgate area of Perth, and as such contributes to the community's sense of place;
 - the place represents the pre-gold boom development of the Highgate area, which took place as residential building began to expand northwards from the city of Perth in the period following the construction of Perth Railway Station in 1880;
 - the simply detailed Victorian Georgian residential style of the place contributes to the historic residential character of the area;

the place is an example of a late 1880s, semi-detached four room residence, an uncommon form of rental accommodation in Western Australia at this time. It is an early example of this type of accommodation; and,

the place demonstrates, in the quality of its accommodation, the social and economic status of workers' accommodation.

The brick and iron outhouse (1965-1966) is intrusive, and has no significance.

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Stirling Street Cottages has aesthetic significance as a simply detailed example of the Victorian Georgian residential style of architecture. (Criterion 1.1)

Stirling Street Cottages contributes to the historic residential character of the area, and the broader cultural environment of the inner northern suburbs. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Stirling Street Cottages is representative of the pre-gold boom expansion of residential accommodation northwards from the city of Perth to the Highgate area in the late 1880s. The place is also representative of the property investments undertaken by many of Perth's more affluent citizens in the latter years of the nineteenth century. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is representative of an early form of workers' rental accommodation. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is significant for its associations with Robert Smith, saddler and Perth City Councillor, and his wife, Elizabeth, the owner of the place. *Stirling Street Cottages* was a component of the extensive property holdings the couple held in Perth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

Stirling Street Cottages is highly esteemed by some members of the community for its continuous history as purpose built rented accommodation in Perth. It is also highly valued by some members of the community as an extant

* 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.

example of residential housing that was constructed in the city in the pre-gold boom period. (Criterion 4.1)

As one of the very residential buildings surviving from the pre-gold boom period in the Highgate area, *Stirling Street Cottages* contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Stirling Street Cottages is an uncommon example of semi-detached four roomed cottages in the Victorian Georgian style in Western Australia, dating from the late 1880s. The place is an early example of this form and is one of a small number in the vicinity. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Stirling Street Cottages is representative of a well designed and simply detailed Victorian Georgian residence, purpose built as a rental property to house the working class and lower middle class. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

Stirling Street Cottages is in overall poor condition, notwithstanding the apparent sound condition of the structure. However, further structural assessment is required to determine the effects on the structure, if any, of the previous removal of the chimney and additional ceilings. The most apparent degradation has occurred through natural weathering processes and lack of regular maintenance, leaving the roofing, rain water goods, and most external timbers in a badly deteriorated condition. The application of the external render to the front elevation has compromised the Flemish bond brick work.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Continuously occupied as rental residence until June 1998, *Stirling Street Cottages* has a high level of integrity, and is capable of continued residential use.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The progressive alterations to *Stirling Street Cottages* have lowered its overall level of authenticity. *Stirling Street Cottages* has a moderate level of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Naomi Lawrance Architecture and Heritage.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Stirling Street Cottages comprises two single-storeyed, semi-detached, four room houses (circa 1889) in the simple Victorian Georgian style¹, with alterations and enclosure of part of the rear verandahs (1965-1966), and an outhouse (1965-1966). The brick and iron houses with timber floors were constructed for Elizabeth Smith circa 1889. The outhouse is a single storeyed building of brick and iron with concrete floor constructed for the Parish of the Serbian Orthodox Church of 'St. Sava' in 1965-1966. The houses are contained on Portion of Perth Lot 149, being Lot 41 on plan 32. Lot 41 is zoned R80 residential, under the Town of Vincent's Town Planning Scheme, and is currently subject to a Conservation Order, under the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990.²

Following the foundation of the town of Perth on 12 August 1829, the townsite was laid out between Mount Eliza and Heirisson Island, facing the Swan River to the south and with a chain of swamps and lagoons to the north. The area of land to the north of the original townsite had begun to be taken up from the 1840s for farmlets and market gardens when drainage of the wetlands made the fertile swamp land available for agriculture. By the 1870s, the city centre of Perth was consolidated on the grid lay out of Roe's survey, and there were some 800 houses accommodating about 4,600 people.³ In the next decade, there was expansion northwards towards the old land grants, and further development took place after the construction of Perth Railway Station in 1880.

On 11 February 1884, Tudor Hora, formerly of Perth, but by that date resident in Victoria, purchased Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148 and 149, an aggregate of 30 acres, which was vacant ground.⁴ Suburban Lot 149, a portion of which was later the site of *Stirling Street Cottages*, was ten acres in area, 'bounded on the South West by fourteen chains of Lincoln Street on the North West by seven chains fourteen links of Burt Street and on the North East and South East by Suburban Lots 148 and 140 measuring respectively fourteen chains and seven chains fourteen links'.⁵ Two days later, on 13 February 1884, the property was transferred to Thomas Rowe of Perth, Sub Inspector of Police.⁶ Nonetheless, City of Perth Rate Books for 1884 and 1885 recorded the owner of Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148 and 149, vacant ground, Burt Street, as Tudor Hora.⁷

Thomas Rowe sub-divided Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148, and 149, with the first seven portions transferred in April 1884, and an additional 23 portions sold before 8 November 1884, when Matthew Wallis of Perth, builder, purchased two roods and eighteen perches of vacant land, portions of Perth

¹ Apperly, Richard, Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989), p. 45.

² The Conservation Order was issued by the Minister for Heritage on 26 June 1998.

³ Campbell, Robin McK. In Pitt Morrison, Margaret and White, John (Eds.) *Western Towns and Buildings* (University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979), p. 104.

⁴ Certificate of Title Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148, and 149, 11 February 1884. Vol. XII Fol. 243.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*, 13 February 1884. Vol. XII Fol. 243.

⁷ City of Perth Rate Book, 1884, p. 10; and 1885, p. 11.

Suburban Lot 149, numbered 41 and 42 on the diagram, of which 41 would be the future site of *Stirling Street Cottages*, at the cost of £34.⁸ The remaining 12 portions of Rowe's Lots were sold by late December 1885.⁹

The new owners of the various portions of Lots 147, 148, and 149 included builders and contractors, general dealers, farmers, brewer William Mumme, licensed victuallers James Joseph Dearden, John Dearden and Alfred Dearden. A draftsman, a bank clerk, a law clerk, and his infant son, a post mistress and telegraphist, members of the Police force and a lock-up keeper from Perth Lock-up were also amongst the new owners. In addition, the chief steward of the *Otway*, coach builders and carriage makers, carpenters, and a carpenter's wife, a joiner, a tobacconist, a carter, a shoemaker, a blacksmith's apprentice, labourers, a labourer's wife, a laundress, a stonemason, a plasterer, and a compositor also purchased lots.¹⁰ A number of the former had purchased the property as an investment to be resold, others for development and resale, and others to develop the properties for subsequent lease to tenants. The majority of the latter purchased with the intention of building a cottage and realising home ownership.

An additional note in the Perth City Council Rate Book 1885 records that portions of some of the Lots had been sold to various persons; however, the present *Stirling Street Cottages*, portion of Perth Suburban Lot 149, was not among those noted at this date.¹¹ The discrepancies between the Rate Book records and the Certificate of Title continue for the period from 1884 to 1892. Throughout the period 1884 to 1891 the place was recorded as Burt Street (now William Street) as the lots extended to that street on the west. Lot 149 was Shearer Street from 1892 to 1917, when it became Stirling Street.

Matthew Wallis owned Lots 41 and 42 for about twelve months. Given the short period for which he owned the land, it would appear that Wallis had purchased the land as a speculative investment. On 24 October 1885, he sold Lot 42 to John Hooley, carpenter, of Perth for £25.¹² Lot 41, was sold to Michael Joseph Lynch, store assistant, of Perth, on 1 December 1885 for £35.¹³

Highgate Hill began to develop in the 1880s.¹⁴ Some parts were laid out 'in big blocks for big houses with big gardens' as in Palmerston Street, and some parts of Bulwer Street for the more affluent, generally middle-class of Perth or those aspiring to it, whilst other parts were laid out in smaller lots, affordable to workers.¹⁵ Some of the larger lots, such as those at Perth Suburban Lots

⁸ Certificate of Title Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148 and 149, 17 April - 8 November 1884, Vol. XII Fol. 243; and Certificate of Title portions of Perth Suburban Lot 149, 8 November 1884. Vol. XVI Fol. 16.

⁹ Certificate of Title Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148, and 149, 8 November 1884 - 21 December 1885. Vol. XII Fol. 243.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ City of Perth Rate Book, 1885, p. 11.

¹² *ibid.*, 24 October 1885; and Transfer of Land 502/ 1885, 24 October 1885. Vol. XIV Fol. 16.

¹³ *ibid.*, 1 December 1885.

¹⁴ Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth* (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979), p. 133.

¹⁵ Seddon, George and Ravine, David A *City and Its Setting: Images of Perth, Western Australia* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1986), p. 264. Robert Smith and his wife, Elizabeth, the owner of *Stirling Street Cottages* from March 1887, resided at 'Karalee', 214 Bulwer Street, which remained

147, 148 and 149, were later sub-divided, providing smaller residential lots as the demand for housing in close proximity to the city increased in the latter years of the nineteenth century and during the gold boom of the 1890s.

Residential building in the vicinity of *Stirling Street Cottages* began in 1885-1886, with two cottages erected at portions of Perth Suburban Lot 147, and a cottage and a house at portions of Perth Suburban Lot 148.¹⁶ They were owned and occupied respectively by August Cross, carpenter, William Baldock, carriage builder, John Jordan, dealer, and Robert Crawshaw, draughtsman.¹⁷ Edward Morley, laborer (sic), who had purchased a portion of Lot 148 in 1885, retained his property as vacant ground, as did Alfred Dearden, publican, who had purchased a portion of Lot 149 (per the additional note in the records for 1885), and who continued to own this vacant land through the period from 1885 to 1891-1892.¹⁸ The mix of owner/occupied homes and investment property was to characterise the history of the immediate area, as workers from Perth aspired to acquire their own home in proximity to their places of work, and astute businessmen recognised the opportunities to acquire property which could be developed as housing for workmen.

On 17 August 1886, Michael Joseph Lynch sold Lot 41, later the site of *Stirling Street Cottages*, to Sidney Utton, of Perth, Foreman at the Western Australian Manufacturing Company Limited, for £45.¹⁹ In common with Matthew Wallis and Michael Joseph Lynch, Sidney Utton owned the place for only a short period, selling it on 30 March 1887, for £73 to Elizabeth Smith, wife of Robert Smith, saddler of Barrack Street, Perth, 'for her sole and separate use and benefit'.²⁰ However, in the period 1887 to 1891, there was no record of Elizabeth Smith's ownership of Lot 41 in the Perth City Council Rate books. The place remained in the Smith family from 1887 to 1965, when it was sold to the Parish of the Serbian Orthodox Church of 'St. Sava' (Incorporated) of 31 Smith Street, Highgate.

Robert Smith, born 1856 in Scotland, was the son of James Smith, harness maker, with whom he served his apprenticeship.²¹ He immigrated to Victoria in 1876, and arrived in Western Australia in 1880 with his wife, Elizabeth.²² After working for five years for J. Summers, Smith established his own saddlery business in Barrack Street, Perth in 1885.²³ The business thrived, employing twenty men, and Smith assumed a public role with his election to Perth City Council in 1886.²⁴ In the late 1880s and 1890s, he and Elizabeth invested in a substantial amount of property, which was extensive and varied,

the Smith family home for many years. It is listed on the Municipal Inventory for the Town of Vincent.

¹⁶ City of Perth Rate Book, 1886, p. 12.

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Certificate of Title portions of Perth Suburban Lot 149, 17 August 1886. Vol. XIV Fol.16; and Transfer of Land 693/ 1886, Vol. XIV Fol. 16.

²⁰ *ibid.*, 30 March 1887. Vol. XIV Fol. 16; and Transfer of Land 196/ 1887, Vol. XIV Fol. 16.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

including the Ozone Hotel in Adelaide Terrace near the Causeway (demolished 1985) and Smith's Chambers (1901), the first three storey building erected in Barrack Street.²⁵ Their family home, 'Karalee' (circa 1900), was built at 214 Bulwer Street, and has been included in the Municipal Inventory for the Town of Vincent.²⁶

In 1888-1889, St. Alban's Anglican Church was constructed at the corner of Burt and Lincoln Streets, Highgate Hill.²⁷ Built to seat a congregation of 150, its founders foresaw a future expansion of the population of the district from 'a small isolated cluster of homes erected on an "estate" which an enterprising owner had subdivided into workmen's cottages, in the hollow at the east side of Beaufort Street.'²⁸ At that date, the area to the north of the 'little settlement' was virgin bush.²⁹

Stirling Street Cottages was constructed circa 1889 for Mrs. Elizabeth Smith. It comprised two, four room cottages, constructed of brick with timber floors, with timber verandahs at the front and rear, roofs of corrugated galvanised iron, and an earth closet at the rear of each backyard. It is probable that they were erected as rental accommodation, as they have been continuously occupied by tenants, other than in 1895-1896.³⁰

On 16 February 1889, Robert and Elizabeth Smith took out a mortgage on the place with The Present and Future Trustees of the Perth Benefit Building Investment and Loan Society (Permanent) 'to secure three shares of £100 each'.³¹ It is likely that *Stirling Street Cottages* was under construction or had been completed by this date. The mortgage was discharged four years later on 13 February 1893.³²

In 1890 and 1891, most of the lots in the immediate vicinity of *Stirling Street Cottages* remained undeveloped, with portions of Lot 149 recorded as owned by Alfred Dearden, Augustus Grundy, law clerk, August Kross, carpenter, and D. A. Lane, city collector, of which all were vacant land, with the exception of Kross, whose land had cottages.³³ A photograph of 1890 looking north from the Perth Town Hall shows St. Alban's Church and a small number of houses in its vicinity to the east, including those of Kross and *Stirling Street Cottages*.³⁴

²⁵ *ibid*; and Mrs. R. W. Eyres, their grand-daughter, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 3 July 1998. Smith's Chambers has been included on the Draft Municipal Inventory for the City of Perth, 1998.

²⁶ Hocking Planning and Architecture Pty Ltd, 'Town of Vincent Municipal Inventory', prepared for the Town of Vincent, 1997, pp. 89-90.

²⁷ 'The Early days of St. Alban's Church, Highgate Hill, W. A.', pp. 1-8. Battye Library PR 74.

²⁸ *ibid*, p. 6. This may have referred to the sub-division by Rowe.

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ Perth City Council Rate Books, from 1889. By 1893, Smith also had acquired property nearby in Burt Street (William Street). Perth City Council rate Book, 1893, Assessment no. 2916.

³¹ Certificate of Title portions of Perth Suburban Lot 149, 16 February 1889. Vol. XII Fol. 16.

³² *ibid*, 13 February 1893. Vol. XII Fol. 16.

³³ Perth City Council Rate Books, 1890, p. 32; 1891, p. 33. No. 4 Shearer Street later became 318 Stirling Street; No. 6 became No. 322 Stirling Street.

³⁴ Battye Library Collection, BA 691/ 2; and BL 2865B/ 6. An enlargement of the latter is hung at the Old Gaol, Museum of Western Australia. Photographic evidence from 1885, Battye Library

In 1892, the street was recorded as Shearer Street (Stirling Street) for the first time, and street numbers had been allocated to the lots. Mrs. R. Smith was recorded as the owner of Sub. Lot 148/ 149, Lot 41, cottages Nos. 4 and 6 Shearer Street, occupied by Robert H. Laing, clerk, and Walter Fitzpatrick, civil servant, who had taken the place as occupier of Robert Cameron, foreman, with each cottage having a net annual value of £20, and a capital value of £90.³⁵

The adjoining Lot 42, the cottage at 8 Shearer Street, also formerly owned by Matthew Wallis in 1884-1885, was owned by Thomas Morris, merchant, and occupied by Mrs. Gerloff.³⁶ Similarly, a number of the cottages in the vicinity were occupied by tenants, with some owner/ occupiers. Workers and tradesmen predominated amongst the occupiers' occupations, with a few civil servants and others, including an architect named Mueller at no. 20 Shearer Street.³⁷

In 1893, *Stirling Street Cottages* continued to be rented to tenants who remained in residence for relatively short periods. They were A. W. Martin, waiter, whose place as occupier was taken by A. Wright, saddler, at 4 Shearer Street; and John Ranes, laborer, whose place was taken by Pirrie, at 6 Shearer Street.³⁸ The annual value of the properties had dropped to £15 each, as Perth experienced a severe economic recession.³⁹ A. Wright and W. Martin were recorded in Wise's Post Office Directory for that year at Highgate Hill, and Jas. Ranes at Burt Street.⁴⁰

The area of Highgate Hill was still relatively undeveloped in 1893, and was the address for only thirteen individuals and the Working Men's Cash Store.⁴¹ The name of that business reflected the predominance of working class residents in the immediate vicinity, and the development of Highgate Hill as a predominantly working class suburb.

In July 1894, the Certificate of Title for Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148, and 149 was further partially cancelled with the transfer to 'The Mayor Councillors and Citizens of the City of Perth' of Broome Street and Shearer Street.⁴² It was totally cancelled in August 1894, with a similar transfer comprising of Harold Street and Smith Street.⁴³

The same tenants remained at *Stirling Street Cottages* in 1894; however, the net annual value of the cottages had diminished further to £13 each.⁴⁴

Collection 3460B/ 11, showed the area of Lot 149 as vacant ground. A later photograph of 1925, Batty Library Collection 3460B/ 20, evidenced the development of Highgate from 1890.

³⁵ Perth City Council Rate Book, 1892, p. 90.

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Perth City Council Rate Book, 1893, p. 47.

³⁹ *ibid.*; and Stannage, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

⁴⁰ Wise's Post Office Directory, 1893, pp. 51, 58 and 53.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴² Certificate of Title Perth Suburban Lots 147, 148, and 149, 3 July 1894. Vol. XII Fol. 243.

⁴³ *ibid.*, 9 August 1894.

⁴⁴ Perth City Council Rate Book, 1894, p. 56.

In 1895, drawings in the Field Surveyor's Notebook showed the two brick houses at *Stirling Street Cottages*, with verandahs at front and rear of each, a shared tank stand straddling the boundary between the two houses adjacent to their rear verandahs, adjoining earth closets at the eastern boundary of the lots, with a well and a timber weather board stable located in the rear yard of No. 6.⁴⁵ The earth closets continued to be used in the pre World War I period as sewerage and storm water drainage were not connected to the area until after 1913.⁴⁶

The annual values of *Stirling Street Cottages* remained the same in 1895 and 1896, before rising to £22 each in 1897, with a capital value of £450 each, reflecting the increased demand for accommodation in Perth in the wake of the gold boom.⁴⁷ The area of Highgate Hill saw a dramatic increase in population in this period.⁴⁸ In 1895 and 1896, 4 Shearer Street was occupied by Mrs. Balaam, laundress, with Mrs. R. Smith, the owner of the place, resident at 6 Shearer Street.⁴⁹ This appears to be the only period in which either of the houses was occupied by the owner.

In the summer of 1896-1897, the water system to Highgate Hill proved inadequate: 'We, that is the residents of Highgate Hill, have only had water twice during the last three weeks and then only for an hour or two at most ...'.⁵⁰ The well at *Stirling Street Cottages* and other wells in the neighbourhood provided water for those residents who did not have their own wells: 'There would be quite a famine in our neighbourhood, but for the existence of two or three wells, from which troops of women and girls can be seen daily carrying water.'⁵¹

By 1897, the occupiers had changed again, with 4 Shearer Street occupied again as in 1892 by R. H. Laing, clerk, and 6 Shearer Street occupied by Fred. Hubert Crews, forwarding agent.⁵²

A caveat was lodged on *Stirling Street Cottages* on 10 October 1898. In November 1898, and August 1899 the place was once again mortgaged.⁵³ The caveat was withdrawn and these mortgages discharged on 8 October 1904.⁵⁴

In 1900, tramways were extended to Subiaco, Victoria Park, and to Highgate Hill.⁵⁵ Trams provided a convenient, efficient, and economical means of

⁴⁵ Field Surveyor's Notebook, 1895. PRO Cons. 3464 WAS 84 Box 13 Item 2037 pp. 40-41.

⁴⁶ Plan Shewing Sewers and Stormwater Drains constructed and handed over to 30 June 1913. City and Suburbs of Perth. Map Collection Battye Library, 907C, 40/ 3.

⁴⁷ Perth City Council Rate Books, 1895, p. 63; 1896, p. 413; 1897, p. 542.

⁴⁸ 'The Early Days of St. Alban's, op. cit., p. 16.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Quotation, no source given, in Stannage, op. cit., p. 275.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² Perth City Council Rate Book 1897, p. 542.

⁵³ Certificate of Title portions of Perth Suburban Lot 149, 14 November 1898, 9 August 1899. Vol. XII Fol. 16.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, 8 October 1904. Vol. XII Fol. 16. This coincides with the period in which the Smith's built their home at 214 Bulwer Street (circa 1900), and Smith's Chambers (1901) in Barrack Street, Perth.

⁵⁵ Stannage, op, cit., p. 291.

transport to the city, and the demand for residential accommodation in areas serviced by them, such as Highgate, remained high throughout much of the first half of the twentieth century.

Home ownership was an aspiration of 'all classes of people in Perth in the 1890s and 1900s'. As Stannage (1979) recognised it was not as easily realised as popular opinion of the day indicated.⁵⁶ Circa 1900, home ownership in some suburbs including North Perth was around 50% to 60%, while North Perth and East Perth both had a high tenancy rate.⁵⁷ The cottages at 4 and 6 Shearer Street, still owned by Mrs. Smith, were representative of investment in residential property by citizens of Perth. These investors recognised the potential of providing for the accommodation needs of the 40% to 50% of the population who could not meet the economic demands of home ownership. Highgate was one of the areas of Perth which 'continued to house the Western Australian born' (i.e. most residents in this suburb had been born in this State) in a period when more than fifty percent of those resident in Perth and its suburbs had been in Western Australia for less than five years.⁵⁸ Highgate illustrated in microcosm the great range of housing in Perth in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the residential area in the vicinity of *Stirling Street Cottages* being mainly occupied by tradesmen, workers, and minor civil servants and their families.⁵⁹

Robert Smith drowned in the Swan River in December 1902.⁶⁰ His funeral at the East Perth Cemetery was 'numerously attended', and the pall bearers included the Mayor of Perth, Harry Brown.⁶¹

In 1917, Shearer Street became Stirling Street. No. 4 Shearer Street became 318 Stirling Street; No. 6 became 322 Stirling Street.

Elizabeth Smith continued in ownership of *Stirling Street Cottages* until her death on 22 January 1924.⁶² The place was transferred to her heirs, Margaret Kirkwood, Elizabeth Smith, Gilbert Donald William John Smith, and Isabella Mary Dunn Smith on 13 May 1924.⁶³ They and their heirs continued to own *Stirling Street Cottages* until it was sold to the Parish of the Serbian Orthodox Church of 'St. Sava' on 24 November 1965.⁶⁴ The place was leased to tenants throughout the period 1924 to 1965.

Documentary, oral, and physical evidence indicates that there were few changes made to *Stirling Street Cottages* in the twentieth century to 1965. By

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 247.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 247; and Seddon and Ravine, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

⁵⁸ Seddon and Ravine, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

⁵⁹ Analysis of Commonwealth Electoral Roll 1901, Voters at Beaufort Street, Perth; and of Legislative Assembly of Western Australia Electoral Roll 1904, Shearer Street, Perth.

⁶⁰ *The West Australian* 11 December 1902.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, 13 December 1902.

⁶² Certificate of Title Sub division 41 of portion of Perth Suburban Lot 149, 5 April 1924. Vol. XIV Fol. 16.

⁶³ *ibid.*, 13 May 1924. Vol. XIV Fol. 16; and Certificate of Title portion of Perth Suburban Lot 149, Lot 41, 13 May 1924. Vol. 858 Fol. 151.

⁶⁴ Certificate of Title portion of Perth Suburban Lot 149, Lot 41 on Plan 32, 24 November 1965. Vol. 1305 Fol. 892.

July 1955, piped water had been connected to the place, the tank stands had been removed, and the well and the stables were no longer extant.⁶⁵ Following the extension of sewerage and drainage to Stirling Street, the earth closets had been removed, and timber water closets, situated in closer proximity to the houses, erected to serve each dwelling.⁶⁶ The end sections of the rear verandahs of 318 and 322 Stirling Street had been enclosed at the south and north respectively, possibly to serve as bathrooms.⁶⁷ A small timber outhouse, possibly a laundry, had been erected close to the rear of 318. Paths led from the footpath along Stirling Street to the front verandah of each house, with an additional path beside half the length of the rear verandah of 318 from its south end to a level with the back door and thence to the outhouse.⁶⁸ Ceilings remained original lath and plaster in most rooms, other than the rear hall and the room at the south rear of 322, with the latter probably replaced in the 1920s.⁶⁹ Timber cupboards had been built in at either side of the fireplace in the south front room at 318, and a Metters New Improved Stove No. 1 was installed in the kitchen of 318.

The Parish of the Serbian Orthodox Church of 'St. Sava' (Incorporated) took out a mortgage on the place to secure £2,500 in November 1965, which was discharged on 9 June 1970.⁷⁰ The Parish purchased *Stirling Street Cottages* with the intention of demolishing it at a later date in order to construct a house at the site for their priest, Father Rados, and the Bishop of their Church.⁷¹ The property was ideally located for this purpose, as the Church of 'St. Sava' had been built on the Smith Street lot directly at the rear of *Stirling Street Cottages* in the c. 1954. This Church was the first Serbian Orthodox Church constructed in Australia, and it has been included in the Municipal Inventory of the Town of Vincent.⁷²

In November 1965, *Stirling Street Cottages* was declared unfit for human habitation by Perth City Council. The Parish did not have sufficient funds to implement their intention to demolish and build a new house in 1965, so over the next twelve months, the priest and the Church community worked voluntarily to restore the place to habitable condition.⁷³ Timber front and rear verandahs were replaced with concrete verandahs, on brick foundations at 318, timber posts to the verandahs were replaced, and concrete paths were constructed from the footpath.⁷⁴ The verandahs between the two houses were partitioned, and bathrooms constructed at the south end of each rear

⁶⁵ Metropolitan Sewerage Plan City of Perth, MWSS & DDWA 1522, Sheet No. 97, 27 July 1955, at PRO.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ Interview by Robin Chinnery, with Father Rados of 'St Sava' Serbian Orthodox Church, 13 July 1998.

⁷⁰ Certificate of Title portion of Perth Suburban Lot 149, Lot 41 on Plan 32, November 1965, and 9 June 1970. Vol. 1305 Fol. 892.

⁷¹ Father Rados with Robin Chinnery, *op. cit.*, 13 July 1998.

⁷² *ibid.*; Hocking Planning and Architecture, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-6.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

verandah, with the north end of 322 enclosed to provide an additional room.⁷⁵ Doors, door frames and fittings, and windows, frames and fittings were repaired or replaced as necessary, and fly wire doors and screens fitted.⁷⁶ The chimneys and fireplaces were removed from 322, and the skirting boards reinstated.⁷⁷ Electric stoves, and stainless steel sinks were installed in each kitchen, with hot water provided also to the bathrooms.⁷⁸ An outhouse with a concrete floor was constructed across the boundary between the two houses, so that each was provided with laundry and toilet facilities.⁷⁹ All walls were cement rendered and painted.⁸⁰ Galvanised corrugated iron roofing and guttering were replaced where necessary.⁸¹ Timber flooring was replaced where necessary, and linoleum and carpet laid over.⁸² Ceilings were replaced throughout, with the exception of those in the halls and the rear south room of 322.⁸³ The electrical wiring was replaced.⁸⁴ Fencing between the two rear yards was erected.⁸⁵ All materials were as cheaply purchased as possible, and much was obtained from salvage yards.⁸⁶

Once *Stirling Street Cottages* was habitable, the Parish rented it to tenants. It was tenanted from 1966 to late June 1998. Throughout that period the tenants have been Asian immigrants.⁸⁷

The place was mortgaged again on 19 July 1974. The mortgage was discharged on 20 April 1988.⁸⁸

In 1975, Father Rados' father-in-law constructed a low brick fence at the front boundary of each house.⁸⁹

Circa 1980, the Parish was unsuccessful in their endeavour to purchase the property at 324-326 Stirling Street, in order to build a retirement village for members of their community.⁹⁰ However, sometime later they were able to purchase 328-330 Stirling Street, which was re-developed in the early 1980s with the construction of the Serbian Orthodox Retirement Village.⁹¹ A footpath was laid beside the north boundary 322 from Stirling Street to

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ *ibid.*

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Certificate of Title portion of Perth Suburban Lot 149, Lot 41 on Plan 32, 19 July 1974, and 20 April 1988. Vol. 1305 Fol. 892.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ *ibid.*

provide the elderly parishioners resident at the Village with easy pedestrian access to the Church of 'St. Sava'. A fibro fence was constructed beside 322.⁹²

In the late 1980s, a fibro fence was constructed at the rear of *Stirling Street Cottages* to separate the back yards of the houses from the Church grounds to the east; however, it is not on the boundary between the two lots, which lies to the east, near the Sunday School building.⁹³

In 1998, the Serbian Orthodox Church had plans drawn for four two storey town houses to be built on the site of *Stirling Street Cottages*, which would realise their long held intention of providing accommodation there for the priest and Bishop, as well as other rental accommodation. Council officers of the Town of Vincent who maintained that *Stirling Street Cottages* had important cultural heritage value recommended that the applicant should be invited to submit an alternative proposal for the development which would allow retention of the houses.⁹⁴

On 22 May 1998, a Section 9 referral was made to the Heritage Council of Western Australia for the assessment of the cultural heritage significance of *Stirling Street Cottages*. The meeting of the Register Committee on 29 May 1998 considered the report on the place by the officers of the Town of Vincent and the report of an external inspection of the place by officers of HCWA.

After consideration of the matter by the Council of the Town of Vincent on 11 May 1998, and again on 25 May 1998, the application was reconsidered on 22 June 1998. Contrary to its officers' recommendation, the councillors approved the proposal by a narrow majority, with the condition that an archival documented record of the place be submitted to the Council prior to demolition.

Stirling Street Cottages was in the process of being vacated on 26 June 1998 to allow demolition, when it was made subject to a Conservation Order issued that day under the *Heritage Act of Western Australia 1990*. The Town of Vincent refused the application for a demolition licence pursuant to Section 374 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1960. In July 1998, place is unoccupied.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Stirling Street Cottages is sited less than two kilometres from the Central Business District of Perth, on a slightly elevated landform formerly known as Highgate Hill. The building is located on a single suburban lot being 1,239m² of land, on the east side of Stirling Street, approximately 40 metres north of Lincoln Street, and 150m south of Broome Street. The property consists of two semi-detached residences that are formally addressed as 318 and 322 Stirling Street, Perth. The site is bounded by Stirling Street to the west, with a fibro-cement fence to the north, south and east.

The surrounding built environment is characterised by a mixture of architectural styles and uses, including a corner shop, numerous semi-

⁹² ibid.

⁹³ ibid.

⁹⁴ Item 11.1.6, Ordinary Meeting of the Town of Vincent, 11 May 1998.

detached residences, single residences and two and three storey grouped dwellings. Only a few of the semi-detached residences are similar to *Stirling Street Cottages* in plan form.

Stirling Street Cottages is generally orientated along a north/ south axis, with its western frontage located within two metres of the Stirling Street lot boundary. The adjacent properties to the north and south contain two storey residential buildings, set well back from the lot boundary behind high brick walls. To the east of *Stirling Street Cottages* is 'St Sava', the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The front access to each of the residences is via a short concrete path leading directly from the Stirling Street footpath to the west verandah and front door. A low brick wall with a 'saw tooth' pattern screen defines the front (western) boundary and separates the lawned public verge from the front yards of *Stirling Street Cottages*. The eastern portion of the lot is halved along its east/ west axis, by a corrugated iron fence, forming two separate back yards. A fibro-cement fence encloses the perimeter of these yards, and defines the north and south boundary of the lot. A concrete paved path adjacent the north boundary fence of 322 Stirling Street, extends from Stirling Street to the property of St Sava. The rear fence is located approximately 20m east of the building, well within the eastern boundary of the lot.

Immediately adjacent to the rear (east) of *Stirling Street Cottages*, is a simply detailed brick and iron, cement rendered structure, containing a toilet and laundry facilities. The structure is positioned over the common central boundary, and its rectangular plan form is mirrored along an east/ west axis. The documentary evidence indicates the building was constructed c. 1965.⁹⁵ Survey field drawings also record a tank-stand, well, and outhouses to the rear of the property up until the 1950s⁹⁶; however, no physical evidence was found of these elements. Archaeological investigation is required to determine whether any sub-surface evidence survives.

Built c. 1889, *Stirling Street Cottages* is of the simple Victorian Georgian style of architecture, and reflects a simple form of workers' housing of the period.⁹⁷ Features of the Victorian Georgian style include a gentle sense of harmony, 'reasonable' proportion, and unsophisticated detailing, evident in the simple rectangular and prismatic shapes, the symmetrical facade, solid brick walling, timber framed roof and floor construction, separately articulated verandahs, sash windows with small and large panes, and simple chimneys.⁹⁸

Stirling Street Cottages comprises two, single storeyed, semi-detached brick dwellings, both square form in plan, and two rooms deep under a single hipped corrugated iron roof with small overhanging open eaves, and

⁹⁵ Interview by Robin Chinnery, with Father Rados, op. cit.

⁹⁶ Map Sheet No.7, taken from Field Surveyor's Notebook, 1895. PRO Cons. 3464 WAS 84 Box 13 Item 2037 pp.40-41.

⁹⁷ Battye Pictorial Collection; 5279A, c1890. St Alban's Church (completed 1889), and *Stirling Street Cottages* can be identified. A portico and bell tower, added to St Albans c. 1893, are not visible in the photograph.

⁹⁸ Apperly, et. al., op. cit., p.45.

separately articulated, skillion style timber framed verandahs. The two residences are distinguishable by their separate, symmetrically placed entrances and windows, and by the demarcation of the east and west verandahs and yards; there is no visible parapet wall. The roof line is punctuated along its southern eaves by two simply corbelled, red brick, Flemish bond, chimneys which are in poor condition. The roof is clad with red painted, short sheets of corrugated galvanised iron. Painted ogee profile gutters extend around both the primary and verandah roofs. All rainwater goods, fascias, scotias and barges show evidence of severe decay and require replacing. A cement rich render has been applied to all external brickwork; however, evidence of the former Flemish bond brickwork remains visible above the wall plate of the front verandah.

The simple timber framed and concrete verandahs extend along the length of the east and west facades, and the verandah roof is supported by rafters birds-mouthed over a deep fascia housed externally on 150x150mm stop chamfered posts. The portion of the verandah returns, between the top beam and edge rafter, is screened with vertical timber boarding. The posts and fascia are secured with square formed 20x20mm bolts and plates. Housings in the posts suggest they once supported rails, but the varying position of these marks makes this inconclusive.⁹⁹ Roof sheeting to the front verandahs is marked with the Lysaght Guinea stamp, originally imported to Australia from England in c1895, and then produced in Australia between 1921 and 1957 as a second rate quality 'custom orb'.¹⁰⁰ While it is possible the extant roof sheeting may date from as early as the mid 1890s, it is highly unlikely, given photographic evidence indicates the original iron roof was constructed c1889. On this basis, and given the socio-economic implications of the 'workers' status of the place, it probable that the roof was replaced some time after production commenced in Australia, or post 1921, when the material became cheaper and more accessible.

The front, or west elevation, features timber framed doors and double hung sash windows with two vertical frames per sash and 2" external sills, in fair condition. A fibro-cement partition has been erected, dividing the west verandah into two halves. The northern dwelling retains its original, timber framed, four panel front door with plain glass highlight, although modern steel hardware and a new external aluminium framed flywire door have been added. The front door to the southern dwelling has been replaced with a later style timber framed door incorporating three vertical lower panels, stippled glass top panel (c1920), plain glass fanlight, and brass knocker. The eastern verandah has been largely modified, including the construction of a rendered brick wall between the two dwellings, and the brick enclosure to the north and south to form bathrooms. The south verandah is enclosed by a crude timber framed and corrugated iron screen, a timber framed and fibrous-cement sleepout to the north. The northern portion of the verandah is defined along its length by a low brick wall, and the bathroom in the north east

⁹⁹ Interview by Robin Chinnery, with Father Rados, op. cit.

¹⁰⁰ BHP Archives; *Lysaght's Referee* 17th Edition (1938): pp.14, 15. *Lysaght Referee* 22nd Edition (1963): pp.3, 7.

corner. Windows to the east elevation are placed symmetrically about the back doors, and include timber framed double hung sash windows with six panes per sash, and pairs of casement windows. Backdoors are timber framed, four panel doors, with three pane highlights. The door to the south dwelling retains its original Victorian 'rimlock' hardware, as well as later brass handles and latches.¹⁰¹ There are no openings in the north and south elevations.

The internal layout of each semi-detached dwelling is mirrored about a central common wall, and comprises four rooms divided by a central hall, including a front bedroom and lounge to the west, and a second bedroom and kitchen to the east. The front entrance is located immediately under the verandah, to the west end of the hall. Rooms in both dwellings have simple brass or steel fittings. Common features include; solid brick internal walls, rendered and painted, in fair condition; fibrous plaster board ceilings with simple coved cornices and moulded rectangular grid ceiling vents in fair condition, and suspended light fittings; 160mm high timber skirtings, with simple ogee profile mouldings; 6" butt jointed timber boards in fair condition, covered by linoleum or carpet;¹⁰² and, internal, timber framed four panel doors with double 'ogee' profiled architrave surrounds, in fair condition. Door and window furniture is in fair condition, and some Victorian and early federation style fittings remain extant. These include patterned brass sash lifts, and fanlight and sash fasteners with rounded moulding details.¹⁰³ Power points and light switches are generally fixed to skirting boards and door architraves, and made of common poly-vinyl carbonate plastic or similar material. Iron vents of varying patterns associated with the Victorian and Federation periods are located throughout the dwellings, positioned over windows and external doors. The randomness of these elements suggests they were installed or replaced in a piece-meal fashion over a period of time.

The entry halls are 1.35m wide and divided by a plain, central arch. They continue in an easterly direction for 8.3m, before terminating at the rear door, beyond which is the partially enclosed rear verandah. The ceiling over the front section of the hall in the northern dwelling is fibrous plaster board with a stepped plaster cornice and exposed timber battens at approximately 1800mm centres. The ceiling to the rear portion of this hall is of similar construction, but incorporates ceiling battens at closer centres and a more decorative plaster cornice with ribbon motif. Of interest is the absence of any vents to the north hall, while the hall to southern dwelling has an Art Nouveau style vent over the front door, and an earlier floral patterned vent over the rear door. The lath and plaster ceiling and a small ceiling rose in the south hall are the only visible remnants of the original ceiling. Minor irregularities and imperfections in the plasterwork of the ceiling rose indicate

¹⁰¹ Evans I., *Restoring Old Houses; A guide to Authentic Restoration*. Macmillan, Melbourne, 1979, p.93.

¹⁰² It was not possible to determine the full extent and condition of the boards given the floor coverings; however, there was no apparent sagging or deformation.

¹⁰³ Evans, op. cit., pp.90-91.

it was formed in a traditional rubber mould, and probably dates to the Victorian or Edwardian era.¹⁰⁴

The front bedrooms, entered directly off the hall, are located back to back against the common wall, and have centrally placed double hung sash windows with two vertical panes per sash, set central to the western wall. They are identical in form and detail, except for the replacement of the original skirting in the front, north bedroom with 150mm high timber skirting with simple splayed profile moulding, the addition of a recent timber window pelmet, and the decorative iron vent with corner scroll located above the window. The front, south bedroom has the traditional ogee style skirting, a daisy patterned iron vent above the window, simple brass window hardware, and a modern hollow core door. An exposed electrical conduit is fixed to the north wall of this room.

Immediately across the hall from the front bedrooms are the lounge rooms. Both lounge rooms have centrally placed double hung sash windows with two vertical panes per sash, set central to the western wall, and are identical in form and finish, except for some fixtures. The lounge room in the southern dwelling contains the original fireplace, with simple timber mantle and brackets. The fireplace is now boarded over, and timber framed cupboards, have been inset between the fireplace and walls. The timber frame, panel and batten detailing suggest the cupboards date from the 1920s. An exposed electrical conduit is fixed to the north wall of this room.

At the east end of the halls are the kitchens and second bedrooms. The second bedrooms are located back to back against the common wall, and have centrally placed double hung sash windows set central to the eastern wall. The window to the second bedroom of the southern dwelling has a single pane per sash, while the northern bedroom window has six panes per sash and a decorative iron vent with corner scroll located above the window. Door detailing also differs; the southern bedroom retains the earlier ogee architrave profile and 'rimlock' hardware, while the northern bedroom has a simple rectangular section architrave with curved nosing detail. The ceiling in the northern second bedroom has a stepped plaster cornice that matches the front portion of the northern hall, and probably dates to the 1940s. An exposed electrical conduit is evident in the southern bedroom.

Immediately across the hall from the second bedrooms are the kitchens. Both kitchens have timber-framed windows set central to the eastern wall, with timber framed cupboards and a stainless steel sink fitted below. The northern kitchen window features a simple rectangular section architrave with curved nosing detail, and two casement sashes, while the southern kitchen has a double hung sash window with six panes per sash. The lower portion of the latter window has been altered, and the lintel re-positioned to accommodate the cupboard and sink.¹⁰⁵ The cornice in this room has also been cut to

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*, p.70.

¹⁰⁵ Father Rados states that the southern window was fitted c. 1965-6 by his father-in-law who, cut the bricks to provide the space for the window. Interview by Robin Chinnery, with Father Rados *op. cit.*

accommodate an iron vent with decorative butterfly pattern located over the kitchen window, indicating that the cornice is a later addition. There is no vent over the northern window, although a flat projecting concrete hood with flue opening is located in the north-east corner. This detail is unusual, and may have been associated with an earlier heating/ cooking system. A second fire place remains intact in the south kitchen, complete with simple timber mantle and brackets and fitted with a Metters Stove No. 1. A modern electric stove is located in the south-east corner.

At either end of the rear verandah are the bathrooms, accessed through timber framed ledge and brace doors with vertical panelling. The bathrooms are mirror images in plan form and detail, and contain an enamel bath and shower, and a sink and single sash casement window to the external walls. Architraves to both door and window frames are simple rectangular sections with curved nosing details. The ceilings are constructed of exposed timber battens and panels, with a single light fitting. Physical detailing suggests the bathrooms were added c1940, and certainly before c1955.¹⁰⁶

The timber framed and fibro-cement sleep-out, located adjacent to the second bedroom of the southern dwelling, is accessed through a timber framed, hollow core door. It is simply detailed, with a concrete floor and pair of casement windows, each identical in detail to the northern kitchen window.

Stirling Street Cottages has been subject to ongoing maintenance and minor alterations to fittings and finishes since the early part of the twentieth century. However, the major alterations include the replacement of most ceilings, removal of the two northern chimneys, the replacement of the timber boarded verandahs with concrete, the partial enclosure of the rear verandahs to create internal bathrooms and a sleepout, and the construction of a new brick laundry and external toilet to the east. The overall character of the place remains that of a rental property, and although some of its original internal finishes have been obscured, it has very high levels of integrity and moderate authenticity.

13.3 REFERENCES

No key references.

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

¹⁰⁶ Metropolitan Sewerage City of Perth, 27 July 1955. Battye Library Map Collection sheet No. 97, held at PRO MWSS & DDWA 1522.