

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)

- Making suburbs • 4.1.2
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- **Domestic activities** 306

11. 1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Ferniehurst is an excellent example of a single storey residence constructed in the inter-war period as a late use of the Federation Bungalow style built to a generously proportioned plan, with a wide entrance corridor, generous vestibule and four very fine and intact front rooms. The other original rooms are well proportioned, but are less finely detailed and have been modified in a variety of ways through time. (Criterion 1.1)

Ferniehurst is well designed and executed, with fine plaster detailing to arches, cornices, and ceiling roses, a variety of fireplaces and surrounds, and original faux bois internal joinery. The interior surfaces generally have been painted a small number of times so that the detailing retains its original sharp lines which contributes to its fine aesthetic qualities. The exterior surfaces have been maintained in original condition and retain their authentic visual gualities. (Criterion 1.2)

11.2. HISTORIC 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. For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA, unpublished report, 1997. 1

Ferniehurst, is a notable illustration of the style and standard of accommodation to which prominent members of the Fremantle merchant class aspired in the Federation and post World War One periods, when numerous members of this group established their residences in the Richmond Hill area of East Fremantle. (Criterion 2.1)

Ferniehurst is significant as one of the most prominent and substantial residences constructed in East Fremantle in the inter-war period, when there was a revival of building activity and further development in the Richmond Hill area of the town. (Criterion 2.2)

Ferniehurst was built as the family residence of Maud Alexandra Watson and her father Alexander Watson, who was a prominent Fremantle identity, director of Messrs. Emanuel Brothers, and also well known in the wider community as an excellent judge of stock, and through his articles in the Press. (Criterion 2.3)

Ferniehurst was the family home of Patrick 'Pat' Dearsley Kerr, well known proprietor of Shacks Motors and vintage car restorer, from 1944 to his death in 2002, who gave the place the name 'Ferniehurst'. It continues in the ownership of his son, Lance Douglas 'Doug' Kerr, managing director of Shacks. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Ferniehurst is valued by the community of East Fremantle for social and cultural reasons as evidenced by its inclusion in the Municipal Heritage Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

Ferniehurst contributes to the community's sense of place as a notable residence at one of the highest points in East Fremantle, near the corner of Parker Street and Woodhouse Road. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Large sections of the exterior and the majority of the front section of the interior of the house retain original and early finishes. Most houses of this type and period have been altered with numerous decorative overlays, so that *Ferniehurst* is one of a decreasing number of places in the metropolitan area that provide such authentic physical evidence. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Ferniehurst is a fine example of an inter-war period house designed as a late example of the Federation Bungalow style to a plan that is aligned to the form that was used for homesteads on pastoral leases. Though the plan is standard, the width of the hall and corridor makes it unusual as a metropolitan area house. (Criterion 6.1)

Ferniehurst

12.3 CONDITION

Ferniehurst has received adequate maintenance through time so that the original fabric is generally in good condition and has not been obscured by maintenance regimes. A current program to conserve, adapt, and extend the place to meet modern living requirements will see the use sustained and the fabric of the space conserved. Overall the place remains in good condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Ferniehurst was designed and built as a family home and has retained this function since its construction. It is being upgraded to meet present day living standards and expectations and to carry on serving its intended function. The integrity of the place remains high.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The front and south elevations are intact, with the original brickwork and stucco being in original condition. Surfaces that were not intended to be painted remain unpainted. The north elevation has undergone some recent modifications, but these are largely confined to the area of the dining room. The rear elevation has been altered on at least two occasions, with the latest changes being part of the 2003 works, with material change to the roofscape, rooms under the verandah roof, vestibule openings and stair. The front rooms, corridor, much of the vestibule, the majority of external elevations, and most of the roofscape have simply been maintained so that the authenticity of these elements remains very high. Indeed the front rooms have changed so little that they represent good reference evidence for the period. The rear rooms and elevation, roof space and the rear of the roofscape are being altered in a current building program and these changes mark the most significant alterations to the place since its original construction. Further, the grounds to the place as originally conceived have been progressively put on separate titles and excised from the place so that the present setting is modest by comparison to the original setting. Overall the place retains a moderate to very 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

Ferniehurst is a single storey residence designed as a late example of the Federation Bungalow style. It was built in c. 1925-1926, as the family home of Maud Alexandra Watson and her father Alexander Watson. A loft addition, alterations to the rear of the house and a new garage designed by Slavin Architects, were under construction by Gary Pilling Pty Ltd in 2003.

By 1832, the townsite of Fremantle had been laid out, and some building had commenced. In the next decade, as the towns of Perth and Fremantle were developed, four tracks were established leading from Fremantle, to Perth, to Canning Bridge, which was opened in 1843, to the Canning district and Kelmscott, and to the south to Peel. The Swan River Colony developed slowly through to the 1850s, when the introduction of transportation heralded a period of rapid development. A wide programme of public works was carried out with the use of convict labour, including roads and bridges, among them the Perth-Fremantle Road, and the Fremantle Bridge. The track to Canning Bridge became Canning Road, the future Canning Highway.

In 1879, construction of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to Perth commenced, and the line was opened for traffic in March 1881.¹

In the late 1880s and the 1890s, residential development began to spread from the town centre of Fremantle to the south, north and east along the road and railway arteries. Much of the area to the east of the Fremantle Bridge continued in use for vineyards, orchards, nurseries, and dairies in the 1890s. Subdivisions increased and then accelerated in the mid to late 1890s, with the West Australian Gold Boom. The area at the east of Fremantle to the north of Canning Road was named Richmond, and the area to the south was named Plympton. In the late 1890s, residential development in East Fremantle proceeded apace, and the population of Richmond and Plympton increased considerably.

In 1900-01, the *Western Australian Year Book* reported East Fremantle was 'rapidly increasing in size and importance', and was 'a favourite residential area for the businessmen of Fremantle; many fine residences are situated within its limits.'² By this period, one of the most well known residences in East Fremantle, *Knocknagow*, had been built at the crest of the hill in Preston Point Road, the present no. 24.³

¹ Crowley, F. K. *Australia's Western Third: A History of Western Australia from the first settlements to modern times* (Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1960) pp. 74-75.

² Western Australian Year Book 1900-01 (Government Printer, Perth, 1902) p. 171.

³ HCWA Place No. 0803.

On 18 March 1904, part of the future site of *Ferniehurst*, portions of Swan Location 217, Lots 1, 2 and 3 on plan 2356, a total area of two roods 28 perches, were transferred to Lewis Lindsay Bateman, salesman, who was employed in the well known family business, J. and W. Bateman, Merchants, of Fremantle.⁴ The plan shows the three lots bounded by View Street, Swan Location 218, Lots 11 and 12, and Lot 4.5 Bateman held the land as an investment until 23 March 1917, when it was transferred, along with Lots 4 and 5, to his nephews Harry Norman Higham and William John Ashburton Higham, as joint tenants.⁶ Like Bateman, the Highams were members of the Fremantle merchant class, and both families invested in real estate.

Ferniehurst was built in the post World War One period, probably in late 1925 to 1926, for Maud Alexandra Watson, (b. Fremantle, 1902), the younger daughter and only surviving child of Alexander and Mary Watson.⁷ It was built as the family residence for Maud and her widowed father. Alexander. However, it has not been possible to establish the precise year in which it was built as there are no extant Rate Books or complete records of building licence applications for the early period of the Town of East Fremantle through into the 1930s. A number of the Surveyors' Fieldbooks preceding the 1958 Sewerage Plan are no longer extant. Surviving Fieldbooks were researched to no avail, and no records have been found of the date at which water was connected to the place prior to World War Two.8

From June 1917, Electoral Rolls for the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia record Alexander Watson and his wife, Mary Elizabeth (nee Mawley), residing at the corner of Pier and View Streets, East Fremantle.9 View Street, gazetted in March 1904, was re-named Parker Street, in honour of the first Town Clerk of East Fremantle, Horace Parker, in January 1925.¹⁰ However, the name View Street continued in use in some records in the late 1920s, including Electoral Rolls, and Parker Street was not listed in Wise's Post Office Directory until the late 1920s.¹¹

Alexander Watson (b. St. Kilda, Victoria, 1866) ran away from home at the age of 13 after completing his education at Brighton Grammar School and

⁴ Certificate of Title Vol. 300 Fol. 58.

⁵ ibid.

⁶ ibid; and Certificate of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12.

⁷ Western Australian Pioneers Index; and Index to Births, 1896-1905, both on microfiche, Battye Library. Note: The Watsons' elder daughter, Ethel Mary (b. Fremantle, 1900) had died in 1914. (ibid; Alex Cox, grandson of Alexander Watson, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, 16 October 2003 and 4 August 2004; and Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004.

⁸ A search through the WA Mining, Building and Engineering Journal for January 1924 through to June 1927 did not reveal a tender notice or issue of building permit. Further searches in records held by Water Corporation have not located any additional information.

⁹ Electoral Roll Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, for North/East Fremantle, 1917.

¹⁰ Government Gazette 14 March 1902, p. 1064, and 30 January 1925, p. 129.

¹¹ Electoral Roll Legislative Assembly of Western Australia for North/East Fremantle, 1925 to 1929; and Wise's Post Office Directory 1925 to 1929. Ferniehurst

worked for a dairy before he worked in the pastoral industry.¹² In 1883, he moved to Queensland where be began overlanding stock, and later became a stock dealer. In 1895, he came to Western Australia, and, after a year on the goldfields, took up a position as a cattle buyer and representative in Wyndham, East Kimberley and Northern Territory for Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. He carried out exploration work for the company, on whose behalf he took up land at the head of the Pentecost and Chamberlain Rivers, and also took on the role of their stock-shipping representative at Wyndham. Subsequently, he accepted the position of manager of their Fremantle branch, and, in 1910, when the business was transferred to Messrs. Emanuel Brothers, Watson was appointed a director. He was well known in the wider community through the contribution of articles in the Press, as an 'excellent judge of stock', serving in this capacity at the Royal Show and shows in various agricultural centres, through his membership of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce and the Commercial Travellers' Club. He served on the council of the latter, and as a member of the Western Australian Turf Club, and a committee member (1916-29).¹³

Alexander Watson had been named after his uncle, Surgeon-General Alexander Watson (1826-1901), who had accompanied the Prince of Wales on his visit to Australia. As was the Irish tradition, the bachelor left his Estate to his namesake, who inherited a sum of money and artefacts, but a farm in Ireland was claimed by Irish relatives. His inheritance would enable Alexander Watson to build a new residence in Parker Street and to invest further in Western Australia, including the pastoral company, McIntosh, Fry and Mawley¹⁴ (c. 1912-25). It became McIntosh and Mawley and Company in 1925, and, in 1929,¹⁵ Evans, Mawley and Sims, a syndicate taking its name from his brother-in-law, George Mawley, Hubert Evans and Alfred John Sims, the company's accountant in Perth.¹⁶ Another member of the syndicate, Frederick Burton, was later associated with Ferniehurst. The company's stations included Ashburton Downs, Tamala, and Murchison House, and Noonkanbah (from 1922), and also an interest in Jubilee Downs.¹⁷ Alexander Watson was also Chairman of Directors for

¹² Bert Watson, nephew of Alexander Watson, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 16 October 2003. Note: An obituary in the West Australian, 18 February 1929, stated that Watson left home at 14 and that after a time in Queensland he moved to South Australia [article provided by Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004].

¹³ Battye, J. S. The Cyclopedia of Western Australia (The Cyclopedia Company, Perth, 1912-13, Facsimile Edition Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, Western Australia, 1985) Vol. 1, p. 668; and Tomlinson, Jenny Born Winners Born Losers A history of thoroughbred breeding and racing in Western Australia since 1833 (Reeve Books, Perth, 1990) pp. 415-418.

¹⁴ Alex Cox, grandson of Alexander Watson, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 16 October 2003; and Bert Watson, op. cit.

¹⁵ Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004. Note: The company later became Mawley and Sims (1947-69). (ibid).

¹⁶ Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004.

¹⁷ Alex Cox, grandson of Alexander Watson, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 16 October 2003; and Bert Watson, op cit. Ferniehurst

Nookawarra (Cue) and Obogama Pastoral Companies and was part owner of Myroodah Station.¹⁸

Jack Caesar, who lived in Pier Street as a child in the 1920s, recollects the residence in Pier Street, which the local children knew as Watson's place, as a large, secluded house on the hill, with a fence around the property. There was mostly bushland in the vicinity. *'Penshurst'* was the other major residence in the area. He believes that *Ferniehurst* (where his wife later played tennis) was built in the 1920s.¹⁹

In the inter-war period, there was a revival of building activity, which included further development in the Richmond Hill area of East Fremantle. In November 1925, the Mayor of East Fremantle reported that in the preceding year, 45 buildings had been approved in the town, 27 being new buildings and 18 being additions etc., and noted that 'a shortage of bricks was preventing the erection of residences of the more substantial type.'²⁰

On 23 December 1925, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were transferred to Maud Alexandra Watson, of Parker Street, East Fremantle.²¹ It has been believed that building commenced in 1926, of a new residence for Alexander Watson on Lots 2 and 3, with stables on Lots 4 and 5 to the south of the house, with completion in 1928.²² However, it appears more probable that the residence was completed in 1925-1926, as Maud's address was recorded as Parker Street on the Certificate of Title, and although East Fremantle Rate Books are not extant for this period, on 25 March 1926, Council Minutes record the Court of Appeal re Rates resolved that the rates for Miss Watson's house be reduced from £110 to £96, 'owing to an error.'²³ Alex Cox (b. 1929) believes the place was built for his grandfather, and then transferred to his mother to ensure it would not be subject to Probate duties on his death.²⁴ To the north of the house, on Lot 1, a tennis court was established.²⁵

Ferniehurst was a belated example of the move by numerous members of the Fremantle merchant class, of which Alexander Watson was a member, to build large fine residences on substantial lots in the Richmond and Richmond Hill area of East Fremantle, preferably on a prominent site to take advantage of river and/or ocean views and the refreshing sea breezes. Its design style also reflected aspects of Watson's earlier experience and designs of the Federation period, with verandahs on all four sides, similar to the substantial homesteads on pastoral properties in the north-west of Western Australia.

Ferniehurst is markedly similar in style and with regard to the quality of materials and workmanship, albeit on a more grand scale, to 27 Preston

¹⁸ Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004.

¹⁹ Jack Caesar, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 14 October 2003.

²⁰ Minute Books, Town of East Fremantle, November 1925, p. 259.

²¹ Certificate of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12.

²² Typescript information from D. Kerr.

²³ Minute Books, Town of East Fremantle, November 1925, p. 280.

²⁴ Alex Cox, op. cit.

²⁵ Typescript information from D. Kerr.

Point Road, which had been built by master builder John Bovell as his family residence in 1920. Both places have wide verandahs on all sides, the same chimney details, similar roof pitch, a Marseilles tile roof, and stucco string course. *Ferniehurst* has a wider formal front entrance than that at 27 Preston Point Road and coupled windows all around, a greater set back from the street, and had much larger surrounding grounds. The detailing of the interior at *Ferniehurst*, in particular ceilings etc. in the formal rooms and main bedroom, is finer than that at 27 Preston Point Road.²⁶ The close similarities between the two residences suggest the same designer was responsible for both, and that Bovell may have built *Ferniehurst* also. *Ferniehurst* reflects the social status of the Watson family in East Fremantle and Fremantle at this period. It was the first residence built in Parker Street²⁷, and one of the most prominent and substantial residences constructed in East Fremantle in the inter-war period.

Ferniehurst may have been designed by a relative of Maud Watson's future husband, Linwood Giliard Cox, as they knew each other for some years prior to their marriage in 1928. Linwood's father was architect Alfred Edward Cox, who was in practice as A. E. and A. B. Cox with Linwood's brother, Alfred Richard Baxter Cox.²⁸ In late 1924, the practice designed a villa residence in Claremont for Linwood²⁹, and later designed his family residence at 51 Birdwood Parade, Dalkeith.³⁰ Linwood's sister, Hilda Baxter Cox, was married to architect Colin Ednie-Brown, of Oldham, Boas and Ednie-Brown.³¹ Alexander Watson and A. E. Cox would have known each other for many years, as previous to his partnership with his son, A. E. Cox had practised with Oldham, as Oldham and Cox, whose work included the design of Emmanuel Buildings in Perth for the Emmanuel Brothers. He would also have known A. E. Cox's brother, Charles Baxter Cox, Chairman of the Western Australian Turf Club from 1908.³² Descendants Alex Cox and Tony Ednie-Brown have no knowledge as to whether any of the above architects may have designed *Ferniehurst*, and no plans of the place have been located in archival searches.33

Alexander Watson's grandson, Alex Cox, believes that his mother (Maud) and his grandfather took up residence at *Ferniehurst* upon its completion.³⁴ In 1928, the Commonwealth Roll recorded both Alexander and Maud Watson at Parker Street.³⁵ However, in the same year, State Electoral Rolls recorded Alexander Watson, manager, resident at the corner of Pier and

²⁶ Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths.

²⁷ Wise's Post Office Directory 1929 to 1932.

²⁸ Alex Cox op. cit.

²⁹ WA Mining, Building and Engineering Journal, 6 December 1924, p. 6.

³⁰ Alex Cox op. cit.

³¹ Alex Cox op. cit, 4 August 2004; and Tony Ednie-Brown, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

³² Battye, J. S. op. cit., vol. 1 p. 628, and Vol. 2, p. 387.

³³ Alex Cox, Tony Ednie-Brown and Bert Watson op. cit.; and Buchan Group, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

³⁴ Alex Cox, op. cit., 4 August 2004.

³⁵ Commonwealth Electoral Roll, 1928.

View Streets, East Fremantle.³⁶ This State Roll recorded Maud Alexandra Watson, spinster, as resident at 'Lumeah', Pier Street, East Fremantle.³⁷

On 31 October 1928, Maud Alexandra Watson married Linwood Giliard Cox, and her address continued to be Parker Street, East Fremantle.³⁸

In 1929, *Wise's Post Office Directory* listed Alexander Watson as the only entry for Parker Street, East Fremantle.³⁹ On 15 February 1929, Alexander Watson died at Sandringham in Victoria while on a convalescing holiday.⁴⁰ Following his death, Maud Cox had to sell *Ferniehurst* to pay the substantial death duties on his Estate, and she and her husband built their abovementioned home in Birdwood Parade.⁴¹

On 11 June 1929, the place was transferred to sisters Ellen Georgina McIntosh, spinster, and Annie Clara Burton, married woman, both of 13 Victoria Avenue, Claremont, as tenants in common, who mortgaged the place to Maud Alexandra Cox to secure the sum of $\pounds 2,250.^{42}$ The new owners, and Annie's husband, Frederick Richard Henry Burton, and their children, Ellie Ileen Burton (b. 1900) and Wilfred James Burton (b. 1908), took up residence at the place.⁴³ Frederick Burton was an engineer with pastoral interests in the Katanning district, who is believed to have been associated also with the well known stations Murchison House and Noonkanbah.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Alex Cox, op. cit., 16 October 2003, and 4 August 2004.

³⁶ Electoral Roll Legislative Assembly of Western Australia for North/East Fremantle, 1928.

³⁷ Electoral Roll Legislative Assembly of Western Australia for North/East Fremantle, 1928. This is the only documented reference to her residing at a place known as 'Lumeah'. It raises some curious questions, as the Caesars' residence in Pier Street was named 'Lumeah', where they resided from c.1919 to 1928, when they built a new residence nearby in Fraser Street. Alex Cox has no knowledge of his mother residing at 'Lumeah', and so far as he knows, both his mother and grandfather were residing at their new Parker Street residence at this date. The only residence by the name of 'Lumeah' on record at the Fremantle Local History collection was that of the Higham family in a different area (information from Fremantle Library Local History per telephone to Robin Chinnery, September 2003).

³⁸ Certificate of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12. Note: It has been believed that the place was bought by Annie's husband in c. 1934. (Typescript information from D. Kerr.)

³⁹ Wise's Post Office Directory 1929.

⁴⁰ Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004.

⁴² Certificate of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12.. Note: The brother of Annie Burton and Ellen McIntosh, James Gregory McIntosh, had been a business partner of Watson's in the firm McIntosh, Fry and Mawley from c1912 to 1925. (Information provided by Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004). No. 13 Victoria Avenue was in the vicinity of Linwood Cox's residence at the continuation of Victoria Avenue. (*Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1925 to 1929)..

⁴³ Wise's Post Office Directory 1930 to 1936; and Electoral Roll Legislative Assembly of Western Australia for North/East Fremantle, 1932.

⁴⁴ Typescript information from D. Kerr. Note: Noonkanbah was owned by Emanuel & Co. from 1885 to 1922, when it was sold to Mawley and Sims, of Perth. (Hawke, Stephen and Gallagher, Michael *Noonkanbah* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1989) pp. 41-42. The property at Katanning, which was later worked by Wilfred Burton, was called ëDunbarí, and the company with which Frederick Burton was associated in the management of pastoral stations was Dunbar Proprietary Limited. (David Gibson, cousin of Wilfred Burton, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 4 September 2003.)

In 1930, Alexander Watson and Frederick Burton were the only two listings for Parker Street in Wise's Post Office Directory.⁴⁵ In 1932, Ellie Burton was recorded as a clerk, and Wilfred was recorded as a labourer. The Burtons and their daughter Ellie continued to reside at the place, whilst Wilfred moved away for a period in the mid-1930s. From c. 1938, Wilfred resumed residence at the family home with his wife, Muriel, and he was recorded as a driller .46 Wilfred's cousins remember the place as a 'magnificent' residence, modeled on earlier homesteads such as those on large pastoral stations, and with beautiful gardens.⁴⁷ There was a wide entry hall, with bedrooms located to one side of and the large dining room and lounge room to the other side, with the kitchen to the rear. There was a cellar beneath the house, which was accessed from the rear verandah outside the kitchen. There were cyclone wire gates to the driveway, which led to the main entrance to the house, and a longer driveway, bordered by banks of Geraldton Wax plants, led to the stables at some distance to the south-west of the house. Geraldton Wax also grew prolifically in the paddock to the south. There was a tennis court at the north side of the house, and an orchard at the south. From its high position on the hill, one of the highest sites in East Fremantle, there were views from the verandahs on all sides, most notably to the Swan River and to the Indian Ocean. At this period, there were few other residences in the near vicinity.48

After Frederick Burton's death in 1937, Ellen McIntosh and Annie Burton remained at the place for a period until the early 1940s, when they moved back to 13 Victoria Avenue, Claremont.⁴⁹ In the late 1930s, Wilfred and Muriel Burton also resided there⁵⁰, and during this period their two children were born at the place.⁵¹

In August 1944, the place was purchased at a cost of £4,400 by Charles Patrick 'Pat' Dearsley Kerr, garage proprietor, of 174 Victoria Street, Mosman Park, who named it *Ferniehurst* after his family clan in Jedburgh, Scotland.⁵² Pat Kerr (b. Wellington Mill, 1915) was the son of Dr Charles Douglas Kerr and Lina Mary Margaret Kerr, and heir to the Kerrs of Abbotrule, direct descendants of the Kerrs of Ferniehurst. In 1917, Dr Kerr and his family moved to Meekatharrra. In 1918, after he purchased a medical practice in Fremantle, the family took up residence at Kelso House, South Terrace,

⁴⁵ Wise's Post Office Directory 1930 to 1936.

⁴⁶ Electoral Rolls Legislative Assembly of Western Australia for North/East Fremantle, 1932 to 1939.

⁴⁷ Peter and David Gibson, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, 2 and 4 September 2003 respectively.

⁴⁸ Wise's Post Office Directory 1930 to 1945; and Betty Barker, cousin of Wilfred Burton, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 4 September 2003.

⁴⁹ Wise's Post Office Directory 1941-42 to 1944-45 & Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004.

⁵⁰ Electoral Rolls Legislative Assembly of Western Australia for North/East Fremantle, 1936 to 1938.

⁵¹ Douglas Kerr, letter to Heritage Council, 23 April 2004.

⁵² Certificate of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12; and typescript information from D. Kerr. Note: It appears that Wise's Post Office Directory lagged behind the change of ownership, as Kerr was not recorded at the address until post World War Two. Ferniehurst 10

where they remained until Dr Kerr was appointed doctor at Fremantle Gaol, when the family moved to the gaol residence. Pat Kerr was educated at Girton College (1921), Alma Primary School (1922-24), Christchurch Grammar School (1924-28) and Guildford Grammar School (1928-31). After prospecting at Nannine for a period, he returned to Fremantle where he took up employment as a 'boner' at Watson Foods. Subsequently, he joined Shack Motors as a self-taught mechanic, and later entered into partnership with Andy Shack in 1934. From 1956, Pat Kerr was Managing Director of the company until his retirement in 1975, to concentrate on his interest in the restoration of vintage cars, which he had begun with the restoration of a 1903 Curved Dash Oldsmobile in 1960, registration plate EF 1 (East Fremantle 1). He owned and restored various vehicles, which were housed at Ferniehurst. A life member of the Western Australian Car Club, of which he was Patron for 33 years, Pat Kerr was 'instrumental' in the formation of the Veteran Car Club of W. A., serving as President and Chairman at various periods, and of which he was made a life member in recognition of his service.⁵³ In addition, he was a member of the Fremantle Rotary Club, serving as President, and being awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship for his services.54

In 1958, a Sewerage plan shows the place as no. 15 Parker Street, a large brick residence, with verandahs on all four sides, with steps leading down to ground level other than on the north side. To the north side of the house, there is a tennis court, which has retaining banks to the east and the south as far as the front verandah of the house. There are two water tanks at the rear of the house, and a well to the west of the house. A drive way leads from Parker Street, past the southern side of the house, to a gravel area at the west of the house, and a brick building adjacent to the western boundary of the lot, with a timber shed at its northern end, and a brick closet at the southern side. The area to the south of the driveway is vacant, other than a wall that extends southwards, from a point level with the rear of the house, to a point somewhat less than halfway to the southern boundary. To the south-west, there are substantial stables, of timber and galvanised iron construction, which adjoin a portion of the western boundary. The plan shows brick houses at nos. 5 and 7 Parker Street, to the south of no. 15.⁵⁵

In April 1963, the Town of East Fremantle granted approval for alterations and additions, designed by architect P. J. Grigg, comprising the construction of a brick laundry on the rear verandah and alterations to the bathroom fittings for connection to sewerage at an estimated cost of £1,200. The builder was R. Williams of South Fremantle. The work included demolition of the existing bath and shower and removal of the existing lavatory basin, timber, glazing frames and glazing for the extent of the new wall, and construction of a new concrete slab floor for the laundry. Aluminum sliding

⁵³ Typescript information from D. Kerr.

⁵⁴ ibid.

⁵⁵Metropolitan Sewerage Municipality of East Fremantle, SROWA Cons. 4156, 1958.Register of Heritage Places - Assessment Doc'nFerniehurst17/12/2004Ferniehurst

doors and windows were fitted in the new laundry, the internal wall was rendered, and a vanity, linen cupboard was built in.⁵⁶

On 10 March 1978, the previous Certificate of Title was canceled, and individual Certificates of Title were issued for Lots 1, 2 and 3. The residence of *Ferniehurst* was located on Lot 3, which was 936 square metres in area.⁵⁷

In 1979, the place was recorded by National Trust of Australia (WA), the assessment noting that 'All facades of this house are equally pleasing and it was obviously designed with a great attention to detail.'58

In 1995, *Ferniehurst* was included in the Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of East Fremantle, which was later adopted by the Town in November 1997.⁵⁹ No management category is given for places on the inventory.

In 2003, following the death of Pat Kerr, his son, Lance Douglas 'Doug' Kerr (b. 1945) is the owner of the place. Doug was educated at nearby Richmond School (1951-56) and Christchurch Grammar School (1957-62). After completing accounting studies, he did his National Service in 1967-69, and served in Vietnam in 1968-69. In 1969, Doug Kerr joined Shacks Holden, and he established Shacks Kwinana as Dealer Principal in 1972. In 1984, he moved to Fremantle as Managing Director of both operations. In 1984, and in 1994, he was awarded as 'Time Magazine Quality Dealer of the Year', for "outstanding performance as an Automobile Dealer and valued citizen of the community."⁶⁰ A skilled yachtsman, he was Australian National Cadet Dinghy Champion (1961), Australian National Soling Champion (1977), and a member of the America's Cup Crew (1977), from which he withdrew due to illness. He has been involved also in the restoration of veteran and vintage cars. In public life, he has been a member of Fremantle Chamber of Commerce since 1984, being immediate past President, a Rotarian, a member of the Fremantle Maritime Museum Board since 1998. and a member of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board since 2002.⁶¹

In 2002, the northern lot, Lot 1, previously the tennis court, was sold. In October, a planning application was submitted to the Town of East Fremantle for renovations and building an additional garage to *Ferniehurst* at an estimated cost of \$300,000, as per plans drawn by Slavin Architects Pty Ltd.⁶² In January 2003, revised plans were submitted and approved by Council in February. These plans show the family room with new bi-fold doors to match the existing double doors to the opening to the verandah, and a new doorway opening to the kitchen, which is to be refurbished, with the existing door and windows to the respective verandahs retained and

Kerr Alterations, 15 Parker St., East Fremantle, Peter Grigg Architect, Building envelope Parker St. No. 15, Lots 1, 2, 3, App. 17 April 1963, Approval no. 89, Town of East Fremantle.
Certificates of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12 and Vol. 1409 Fols. 52, 53 and 54.

⁵⁷ Certificates of Title Vol. 666 Fol. 12 and Vol. 1499 Fols. 52, 53 and 54.

⁵⁸ National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, April 1979. Note: This assessment mistakenly recorded the name of the place as 'Ferryhurst'.

⁵⁹ Municipal Heritage Inventory Town of East Fremantle, Adopted November 1995.

⁶⁰ Typescript information from D. Kerr

⁶¹ ibid.

⁶² Planning Application 211, Town of East Fremantle, 24 October 2002.

Register of Heritage Places - Assessment Doc'n Ferniehurst 17/12/2004

protected. The dining room is shown opening from the western end of the hallway, with the exit door to the rear verandah to be re-positioned centrally to the building. The third room on the left from the main entry was to be utilised for stairs to the loft addition. The bathroom and the laundry were to be refurbished. The existing northern wall of the laundry was to be demolished and a new glazed stud wall erected to the north, with the brick accretions at the southern side to be removed, the timber verandah posts to be re-constructed with framed in-fill and windows to match the existing joinery of the sleepout at the south-western corner of the building. A glazed void was to be inserted over the existing door and windows at the eastern side of the sleepout, the door from the western wall of the dining room was to be re-located to open from the sleepout to the south-side verandah, and new operable glass louvres to match the existing were to be fitted on the west. The plans included reconstruction of the steps from the rear verandah on a central line with the existing house, removal of the existing aluminum framed patio slider (1963) and widening of the opening for the re-located dining room doors and external steps. At the northern end of the rear verandah, the brick balustrade accretions (1963) were to be removed, and a timber handrail to match the existing re-instated.⁶³

In March 2003, some further revisions were made to the above plans, including the plan for the stairs. The existing roof tiles were to be salvaged from the demolished section of the existing roof and garage to be re-used for the new gable extension. The existing finials, ridge tiles and roof decoration were to be retained, the finial from the existing gablet was to be salvaged and re-used on the new gable roof, and the roof trim on the new roof over the new master bedroom was to match the existing gables.⁶⁴ The site plan of March 2003 shows the new garage at the rear to the north-west of the house, with the existing gravel driveway to be extended for the new garage. Three plane trees were required to be removed to make way for the new garage. A new shed was to be erected to the south of the new garage. The existing fibre-glass rain water tank and the tank stand by the rear verandah were to be removed and decommissioned. A new high chainlink fence was to be erected along the southern boundary from the street boundary to a point level with the north-western corner of the rear verandah, and thence there was to be erected a new limestone boundary wall to the western boundary of the lot. Other than where specified, existing garden beds, plants and trees were to be retained.65

In April 2003, a building licence was issued for a loft addition to the existing residence, to be undertaken by Gary Pilling Pty Ltd of Attadale, at an estimated cost of \$150,000.⁶⁶ In May 2003, drawings by Slavin Architects Pty Ltd show the existing plan of the house, with the wide main entry hall, opening to the various rooms as per the original design plan described

Ferniehurst

⁶³ New ground floor plan, Ferniehurst, 15 Parker St., East Fremantle, Slavin Architects, 10 January 2003.

⁶⁴ Plans Ferniehurst 15 Parker St., East Fremantle, Slavin Architects, March 2003.

⁶⁵ Site Plan Ferniehurst, 15 Parker St., East Fremantle, Slavin Architects, 24 March 2003.

⁶⁶ ibid; and Planning Application 211A, Building Licence no. 3413.

above, the 1963 laundry, and the enclosure of the adjoining end portion of the verandah as a sleepout, and the existing shed to the south-west.⁶⁷

In mid-2003, at the time of this assessment, the works being implemented included works in the grounds, including new limestone walls, the conversion of the existing bathroom and kitchen, a new stair, and the conversion of the loft into a bedroom, bathroom and walk in robe, and a new wire fence. On completion of the current works, the place was to be re-occupied as a single residence, as the family home of Doug Kerr and his wife.⁶⁸ Additional works included again providing a cellar beneath the house. During the necessary excavation, it was discovered that the original foundations, of limestone rubble and mortar, extend down to bedrock, about 10 ft. below ground level.⁶⁹

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Ferniehurst is a single storey residence designed as a late example of the Federation Bungalow style,⁷⁰ built in c. 1925-1926, as the family residence of Maud Alexandra Watson and her father Alexander Watson, with a loft addition, alterations to the rear section of the house, and new garage constructed in 2003, in an informal style garden setting.⁷¹

Ferniehurst is located in a part of East Fremantle that was developed from the last years of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century. In successive periods of the town's development further subdivision of land and redevelopment of previously developed sites occurred. Buildings from all of these periods are in the neighbourhood of *Ferniehurst*. The immediate context includes mostly housing and unit development spanning the late 1950s to the present. Parker Street, now the only street frontage to *Ferniehurst*, is characterized by a two way road, wide grass verges and irregular plantings of street trees, including Peppermints and Melaleucas.

Ferniehurst is set at about the centre of the remaining lot, with an old garage set to the rear of the lot, and a new garage with access off Woodhouse Street to the north. The front garden is fenced in with a limestone wall in random coursed rubble, and the new lot to the north (previously the tennis court) has been separated off with a similar wall. The front garden is laid out in an informal manner with a driveway to the southern side of the lot and front path leading off the drive to the front entrance steps. The drive continues along the south side of the house, where it passes another set of steps before rounding to the west and a large paved expanse to the rear of the house. There are garden beds along the southern boundary, between

⁶⁷ Measured Drawings Existing Plan and Existing Site Plan, Slavin Architects 1 May 2003.

⁶⁸ Doug Kerr, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, August-September 2003.

⁶⁹ Doug Kerr, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, 25 August 2004.

⁷⁰ 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.144-147.

⁷¹ Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997. pp. 100-102.

the driveway and path, and along the south side of the house. Plant material includes trees such as Coral Tree, Magnolia, Bottlebrush and Cumquat. Other plantings include Lavender, Agapanthus, Monsteria, Roses, Pelargonium, Japanese Jade, Victorian Ti Tree, Alyssum, Daisies, and Hibiscus.

The general external form of *Ferniehurst* comprises a concrete floor perimeter verandah, stop chamfered timber verandah posts with simple post brackets, a Marseilles pattern terracotta tiled gambrel roof with ram's horn finials, steps descending from the verandah on three sides, tall ashlar lined stucco chimneys with roughcast render tops and chimney pots. The rafters are notched for the gutters and the present gutters are colonial profile. The foundations are constructed in limestone and the walls in white tuck-pointed brickwork, with a continuous stucco string at sill level and another at window and door head level.

The front elevation is distinguished by the inclusion of a metal louver to the gablet and a gabled porch over the wide front entry steps. The front elevation is simply composed with a centrally located front door composed with two panels and four leadlights, with sidelights to both sides of the door and hoppers over them. Each side of the door, there is a set of three lights comprising a large central single pane double hung sashes, flanked with narrow windows of the same pattern, about one quarter of the width of the main window. The stucco sills extend out beyond the wall face, and applied dressings extend down the wall below the sill. The whole of the elevation is intact, decorative overlays are few, items that were not intended to be painted have been left unpainted, and the composition is an imposing one.

The side elevations employ similar devices to the front elevation, but here windows are simplified into single elements of double hung sashes, with French doors and hopper lights, and in the case of the north elevation, there is a new opening made by enlarging an existing one and inserting a wider door assembly.

The rear elevation follows similar lines to the other elevations, but due to the land form, this elevation rises higher above the ground. The original steps have been partly demolished and rebuilt to a much wider plan. Previous enclosures on the verandah have been removed and a new enclosure constructed in the same location. This is constructed in framed infill panels, with fixed and louvred lights along its length.

The original layout of the house comprised a central corridor and rooms arranged along either side, terminating in a rear vestibule. There have been minor changes to this plan as part of the current works to achieve a staircase to the new upper level, a new bathroom, and a link between the kitchen and dining room. The very generously proportioned corridor visually dominates the organization of the plan, while the rooms that lead off the corridor are large and well proportioned.

The hall (Room 1) sets the tone for the main rooms of the house. It has 5" timber board floors, 12" deep moulded skirtings, with five panel doors, complete with original door handles and push plates. Walls are plastered with picture rails, bird pattern wall vents, a dentilled cornice, lath and plaster

15

ceilings, two richly decorated ceiling roses, imposts and an architraved arch at the junction of the hall and vestibule. The same pattern is carried through to the vestibule (Room 8), though in the case of the vestibule, the doors onto the rear verandah have been widened to allow more light into the vestibule as part of the current works. All of the joinery has a faux bois finish.

The flanking rooms (Rooms 2 and 3) use the same language as the hall, including the bird pattern wall vents, cornices and ceiling roses, but both rooms have fireplaces with timber surrounds and mantles, tiled hearths, the window sets as noted in the description of the front elevation, with French doors onto the side verandahs.

Room 4 is a simplified version of the front rooms. The differences are minor. There is no cornice, the doors to the verandah have been modified and a door has been introduced between this room and the kitchen. Room 5 is the same as Room 4, without any modifications. All of these rooms appear to retain their original finishes, other than the walls that seem to have been over painted at least once. The result of this minute degree of change is that the finishes are authentic and the details, particularly the plaster details, remain sharp. The faux bois work to the joinery is in remarkably good condition and the door and window hardware and furniture is almost all authentic material. The two fireplaces are complete with fireboxes, tiled surrounds and hearths, with timber mantles.

Room 6 follows the same pattern, but the ceiling has been removed to allow the insertion of a new timber stair. Room 8 has been transformed into the new bathroom with a tiled concrete floor, rendered and tiled lower walls.

The kitchen (Room 9) is very plainly detailed, with plastered walls and a lath and plaster ceiling, without cornices picture rails or a ceiling rose. The corner fireplace has been modified, the range removed and the lintel height raised. There is a pair of double hung sashes onto the side verandah, a door and hopper light onto the rear verandah, and a new door leading into the dining room.

The sleep out and laundry on the back verandah are all new construction, using the existing structure of the house and verandah and new framed construction. The new construction simply replaces an earlier alteration in the same location.

The enormous roof space has been converted to a master bedroom, robe and ensuite bathroom. A new light steel floor structure carries the new floor and the rooms are formed with stud framing and plasterboard wall and ceiling claddings. The main light is drawn from the western section of the gambrel roof form via a new balcony, doors and windows.

The building is well maintained and the level of maintenance has been restrained so that little modification has taken place to the principal rooms of the place. The current alterations are the most substantial works to be undertaken since the house was completed. The works being implemented in 2003 included works in the grounds, including new limestone walls, the conversion of the existing bathroom and kitchen, a new stair, and the

conversion of the loft into a bedroom , bathroom and walk in robe, and a new wire fence. These works have left the front rooms intact.

At the rear of the lot there is a garage, with brick side walls, brick and random course limestone gable walls, a tiled roof, ledge and braced door, roller door and single pane double hung sash windows. It has a concrete floor, painted brick internal walls and a fibro cement lined soffit. The garage is indicated on the 1958 Sewer Plan, but would appear to have been reduced in length since that time by alterations to both ends of the structure.

In 2003, a new garage was under construction near the Woodhouse Street boundary.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

In the context of Richmond and Richmond Hill, East Fremantle, there are a number of extant residences that were built in the Federation period, i.e. 1890-1915, when much of this area of the town between Canning Highway and Preston Point Road was sub-divided and developed as a popular residential area. Among the most notable are *Penshurst* (RHP), *Knocknagow* (RHP), *Aldgate* (RHP), and *Woodlawn* (RHP).

Following World War One, there was expansion in the suburb and a revival of building activity. Many of the homes built were in the Inter-War California Bungalow style, though *Ferniehurst* was a late interpretation of the Federation Bungalow style. Most were less substantial residences. The only residence that is markedly similar to *Ferniehurst*, in regard to style, quality of materials and workmanship, and period of construction in the inter-war period is 27 Preston Point Road, built by builder John Bovell as his family residence in 1920. Both places have wide verandahs on all sides, similar chimney details, similar roof pitch, a Marseilles tile roof, and stucco string course. *Ferniehurst* has a wider formal front entrance than that of 27 Preston Point Road and coupled windows all around, a greater set back from the street, and had larger surrounding grounds. *Ferniehurst* is somewhat more grand than *27 Preston Point Road* with a much more generous plan form.

At the western corner of Canning Highway and Osborne Road, 1 Osborne Road, in the Arts and Crafts style, has a steeply pitched terra-cotta tile roof. This residence may have been built in the Inter-War period.

In the area of East Fremantle to the south of Canning Highway, Woodside Estate was sub-divided and developed from the World War One period through the early 1920s. In Dalgety Street, no. 15 has similar detail in the chimneys to those of *Ferniehurst* and 27 Preston Point Road; however, the roof is not similarly high pitched, there are not verandahs on all four sides, and the dwelling is less grand than either *Ferniehurst* or 27 Preston Point Road. At no. 54 Dalgety Street, 'Gambier' appears likely to have been built in the World War One period or thereabouts, but it lacks verandahs on all sides, does not have a steeply pitched roof, and has bay windows at the front. In Allen Street, no residences are as substantial or share the notable design characteristics of *Ferniehurst* and 27 Preston Point Road.

Both *Ferniehurst* and 27 Preston Point Road are distinguished from other residences built in the Richmond and Richmond Hill vicinity of East Fremantle in the World War One and immediate post-war period by their similar design characteristics, their substantial size, and the quality of materials and workmanship.

Both had few changes to the original fabric during the twentieth century, but have been subject to recent renovations and additions to include an upper level, taking further advantage of the view. Large sections of the exterior and the majority of the front section of the interior of the house retain original and early finishes. Most houses of this type and period have been altered with numerous decorative overlays. There are 9 residences in Federation Bungalow style on the Register in the metropolitan area. ⁷² *Lindsay Street Flour Mill & Bakery Complex* (996) notes that generally, all built structures have high authenticity.⁷³ *House, 26 King Street* (4645) has had ceilings replaced, a chimney removed, and has high authenticity. ⁷⁴ *Fothergill Street Precinct* (9241) residences have been subject to internal and external changes, and have moderate to high authenticity. ⁷⁵ANZAC Cottage, *Claremont* (8094) has had the eastern verandah infilled, two rooms joined, front door replaced, and has moderate to high authenticity.⁷⁶ Lady Lawley Cottage (596) has a moderate degree of authenticity.⁷⁷

Ferniehurst is one of a decreasing number of places in the metropolitan area that provide such authentic physical evidence.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment 'Ferryhurst' (*sic*) 15 Parker Street, April 1979

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research in the *W. A. Mining, Building and Engineering Journal* 1924 to June 1927 has not revealed any additional information about the place. Further extensive searches of tender notices in newspapers may reveal additional information about the original designer and builder of the place if tenders were called. In the absence of extant Rate Books, it has not been possible to establish the precise date of completion. Alex Cox, son of Maud Alexandra Cox (nee Watson) has no further information about the place and no early photographs of it are known to exist.

⁷² HCWA Database 12/11/2003

⁷³ HCWA Place No. 00996.

⁷⁴ HCWA Place No. 04645.

⁷⁵ HCWA Place No. 09241.

⁷⁶ HCWA Place No. 08094.

⁷⁷ HCWA Place No. 00596.