HERITAGE COUNCIL
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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)
- 4.3   Developing institutions
- 8.6.1   Worshipping together
- 8.6.3   Founding Australian religious institutions
- 8.6.4   Making places for worship

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)
- 104   Land allocation and subdivision
- 406   Religion

11. 1   AESTHETIC VALUE*

St. John's Lutheran Church is a well-resolved design and a very fine example of an Inter-War Gothic style church. It uses the Gothic styling loosely, making good use of the local laterite stone from Darlington, its first use in Perth, featuring stucco decorative treatments and leadlighting. It has very fine interior modeled on Anglican parish church lines. (Criterion 1.1)

St. John's Lutheran Church is a fine creative example of the work of Richard Spanney (Spangenberg) and makes particularly good use of laterite, timber roof truss construction, and stained glass leadlights. (Criterion 1.2)

11. 2.   HISTORIC VALUE

St. John's Lutheran Church is significant as the first Lutheran church built in Perth, the only Lutheran church in Perth and one of only two Lutheran churches in use in Western Australia in the Inter-War period and through into the immediate post World War Two period. Since its dedication in June 1936, the place has served its intended purpose. (Criterion 2.1)

St. John's Lutheran Church was built in 1935-36, in the Inter-War period, during a period of considerable building activity during the economic recovery that followed the Great Depression. (Criterion 2.2)

Architect Richard Spanney (Spangenburg) designed St. John's Lutheran Church. The place was built during the pastorate of Rev. R. M. Graebner, who oversaw its construction. The laterite was from Hugo Fischer's property

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*   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.

at Darlington. The leadlights were produced by Barnett Bros. and the Gothic tracery by Tindale and Millers. Well-known craftsman, Priestner, was responsible for the wrought iron gates, currently not fixed in place, but in storage under the church. (Criterion 2.3)

St John's Lutheran Church has been associated with the German, and to a lesser extent Hungarian, communities within Perth since the beginning of the congregation in 1901, and was a target of anti-German sentiment during both World Wars. (Criterion 2.3)

St. John's Lutheran Church was the first building in Perth in which laterite was employed in this manner. It is one of two churches designed in the Inter-War Gothic style by Spanney that feature the use of laterite stone from Darlington. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

St. John's Lutheran Church is highly valued for religious and spiritual reasons by members of the Lutheran Church in Australia, for whom it has served as a church since 1936. It is also valued by the members of the wider community, in particular those who came to Australia as immigrants and refugees in the post World War Two period, and also in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, and by the German and Hungarian communities. The place is valued also by the wider community for social, cultural and aesthetic reasons, as evidenced by its inclusion in the City of Perth's Municipal Heritage Inventory and classification by the National Trust of Australia (WA). (Criterion 4.1)

St. John's Lutheran Church contributes to the community's sense of place as a well-known church on Aberdeen Street, Northbridge. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

St. John's Lutheran Church is one of two churches designed in the Inter-War Gothic style by Spanney that feature the use of laterite stone from Darlington, a material seldom used in the Perth Metropolitan area and therefore has a degree of rarity. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

St. John's Lutheran Church is a fine example of a modest scale church designed in the Inter-War Gothic style. (Criterion 6.1)

St. John's Lutheran Church is representative of the construction of centralised churches for minority church groups with small congregations, when the location of a church in Perth made services more readily accessible. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

St. John's Lutheran Church was upgraded in 1987 and is well maintained. Work to the choir and organ loft has altered the appearance of the place and added one further bay to the church, but this appears not to have impacted on the values and condition of the place. Overall the place is in good condition. The Church Centre was only constructed in 1987 and remains in good condition.

12. 4   INTEGRITY

St. John's Lutheran Church continues in use for its intended purpose. It is well used and all of its heritage values are likely to be sustained for the foreseeable future. *St. John's Lutheran Church* retains a high degree of integrity.

12. 5   AUTHENTICITY

St. John's Lutheran Church remained intact with few alterations until 1987, when the nave was extended by one bay to accommodate a children's room, choir and organ loft. Almost all ceilings were covered with timber boarding, covering the original plasterboard. The body of the church remained intact and elements of the northern wall were re-employed in the extended nave. Overall the place retains a high degree of moderate to 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

St. John's Lutheran Church is a church designed in the Inter-War Gothic style, and a church hall in an utilitarian contemporary style. The single storey building is constructed of random laid laterite from Darlington on the exterior faces, and 'bagged' bricks on the interior, with a roof of Wunderlich colour blend tiles. It was designed by Architect Richard Spanney (Spangenberg), and built by F. Hahn for the Lutheran church in 1936. The church was extended and a new church hall, offices and associated facilities, built in 1987.

Following the foundation of Perth on 12 August 1829, the townsite of Perth was laid out between Mount Eliza and Heirisson Island, facing the Swan River on the south, and with a chain of swamps and lagoons to the north. Arrowsmith's plan (1833) shows the first layout of Perth, with the main streets following the lie of the land between the Swan River and the wetlands to the north. The plan includes the future William Street, Northbridge, and Perth Town Lot N.[1]

By the 1870s, the city centre of Perth was consolidated on the grid laid out in the early survey, and about 800 houses had been built.[2] The construction and opening of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to Perth and thence to Guildford (1881), resulted in a shift in focus from the river port to the areas in the vicinity of Perth Railway Station.[3] As a residential area, the area to the north of the city was considered less fashionable; however, its proximity to the city and the railway station encouraged investors and speculators to look to the future prospects for development. Through the 1880s and early 1890s, sub-division of the large lots increased and a mix of residential and commercial buildings were constructed in the areas nearest to the railway.[4]

On 14 January 1887, William Joyce, of Perth, Issuer to the Central Board of Education, was registered as the sole proprietor of Perth Building Lots Y66

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[1]   Pitt-Morrison, Margaret 'Builders and Buildings' in Stannage, C. T. (Ed.) *A New History of Western Australia* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1981) pp. 514-515.

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

[3]   Pitt-Morrison, Margaret op. cit., p. 532.

[4]   Seddon, George and Ravine, David *A City and its Setting: Images of Perth* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1986) p.149.

and Y67. On 9 February, the transfers of the south-eastern portion of Lot Y67 to James William Joyce, Assistant Office Keeper, Colonial Secretary's Office, and of the south-western portion of Lot Y67 to Edward Garland Joyce, carpenter, were registered.[5]

In 1897, Sewerage plans show houses and other buildings on both the south-eastern and south-western portions of Perth Town Lot Y67. It is probable that some of the additional buildings were associated with the Joyce family's building operations. Houses are shown on most of the lots fronting the north side of Aberdeen Street between Beaufort and William Streets, including the south-eastern portion of Perth Town Lot Y68, and on the south side of Aberdeen Street between Limbo (later Museum) Street and William Street.[6]

In the late nineteenth century, a number of German Lutheran immigrants arrived in Western Australia. This accelerated during the Western Australian gold boom of the 1890s, when many immigrants arrived to swell the population. Many of those of German origin came from South Australia, where a considerable number of German immigrants had settled in the earlier period. The establishment of German shipping into the port of Fremantle encouraged immigration from Germany and also attracted more Germans to the town. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the German community in Western Australia was concentrated in Perth and Fremantle, with sizable groups also at the goldfields, and in the southern wheatbelt, in particular in the Katanning district, where a number of German farmers and farm workers settled, and where the first Lutheran church in Western Australia was built.[7]

The son of Pastor Strempel, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Australia, was among those who sought his fortune on the gold fields. Pastor Strempel visited his son in Western Australia, and on his return to South Australia, recommended that a Lutheran pastor be sent to Western Australia. However, it was not until 1901 that the call was given to Pastor Edwin Fischer, an Australian born graduate of the Missouri Synod (USA), who arrived in Perth on 19 April.[8]

In late April 1901, a small group of Lutherans assembled in the Mechanics' Institute in Hay Street, Perth, for the first services held by Pastor Fischer. As the group increased in number, a small congregation was formed, with the name of the Evangelical Lutheran St. John's Congregation. In 1902, they secured a lot of land at Fitzgerald Street. There they erected a building to serve as a church hall, a room for a Christian day school, and a dwelling for Pastor Fischer, which was dedicated in 1903. It continued to serve as a place of worship until a new church was built in 1936.[9]

Diagram 2147 shows Perth Town Lots Y68 and Y69, with Lot Y67 to the east and Lot Y70 to the west.[10] On 11 February 1905, James Joseph Green was registered as the sole proprietor of Perth Town Lots Y68 and Y69. On 9 March, a portion of Lot Y69 was transferred to Aubrey William Green, and

5   Certificates of Title Vol. XXI Fol. 73 and Vol. XXI Fol. 121. Note: the north-western and north-eastern portions of Lot Y67 were transferred also, to William Jolley Joyce, carpenter, and to Stephen Blackburn Joyce, carpenter, respectively. (ibid.)

6   Perth Sewerage PWDWA 5647 SROWA Cons. 1647, 1897, on microfiche 2 & 4.

7   Mennicken-Coley, Mary *The Germans in Western Australia* (Cross Print, , 1993); and *The West Australian* 13 September 2002, Liftout, p. 3.

8   Burger, Geoff *In Perth for good: St Johns Lutheran Church 1901-2001*, pp. 1-2.

9   *The West Australian* 8 June 1936, p. 19.

10   Diagram 2147, surveyed by L. Steffanoni, App. 982/04, passed 6 December 1904.

the balance remained in James Joseph's Green's ownership until his death in 1907, when it passed to his widow, Mary Elizabeth Green.[11]

In addition to his duties at Perth, Pastor Fischer ministered to the wider Lutheran community, visiting the goldfields, Albany, Katanning and Narrogin. Each Sunday, after morning services at Perth, Fischer and organist Helena Hufner would travel to Fremantle for the service there, where services were held initially in a theatre, then at the Masonic Hall, Oddfellows Hall, and then at the Rechabite Hall. Later, land was acquired and a church built at a total cost of £1,000. On 6 February 1910, the Chapel of St. Paul was dedicated. The Chapel was served from St. John's to 1930, when it was closed and sold.[12]

In 1910, Pastor Fischer departed for Victoria. The school was closed, and also a 'sort of orphanage' that Fischer and seven of his friends had established utilising the living quarters attached to the building.[13] Subsequently, the congregation were without a pastor for 20 months, then served by several pastors in succession on a caretaker basis, until Pastor Woy accepted the call in 1912. However, in 1914, due to his wife's ill health, they returned to the USA. In September 1914, Pastor Rudolf Martin Graebner was inducted into St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. He served as pastor for 52 years, and under him the church grew and developed. [14]

During World War One, people of German descent and other Europeans were required to register as enemy aliens and many were interned. There was considerable and widespread hostility and animosity towards members of this community. In Perth, the Lutheran church continued to serve the community; however, services in the German language were discontinued. Some members of the congregation moved away. At Kalgoorlie, the congregation disbanded in 1914; at Fremantle, the church was vandalised. Following the war, many detainees and their families were deported. In addition, some members of the congregation and their families left the State and in some instances, the country, to make a new life elsewhere. At Albany, where a church had been dedicated in 1913, the congregation collapsed and the church was sold in 1919. Overall, this period was 'devastating' for the Lutheran church in Western Australia, where the anti-German stigma weakened gradually in the 1920s, then reappeared later in World War Two.[15]

On 19 April 1916, James William Joyce died, and Probate of his Will was granted to the Executrix, his widow, Hannah Maria Joyce, who continued to own the south-eastern quarter of Perth Town Lot Y67 until late 1928, when it was purchased by The Evangelical Lutheran St. John's Church Incorporated.[16]

In 1918, following the death of Mary Elizabeth Green, her property at Perth Town Lots Y68 and Y69 was inherited by her son, Aubrey William Green, gentleman, of Havelock Street, Perth, the owner of the other portion of Lot Y69. He continued in ownership of the lots through to 1949.[17]

11   Certificates of Title Vol. 328 Fol. 160 and Vol. 340 Fol. 80.
12   Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 6.
13   Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 5 & 8.
14   Burger, Geoff ibid, pp. 8-10; and National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, July 1996, p. 3.
15   ibid, pp. 10-11.
16   Certificate of Title Vol. XXI Fol. 121.
17   Certificate of Title Vol. 340 Fol. 80.

In August 1922, the south-western quarter of Perth Town Lot Y67 was transferred from Edward Garland Joyce to Charles Gibbs, coach builder, and his wife, Emily Gibbs, both of 148 Beaufort Street, Perth, as joint tenants.[18]

In the 1920s, an influx of German immigrants swelled the Perth congregation, and reinforced the impression that St. John's was 'the German church'.[19] In the late 1920s, it became obvious to Pastor Graebner and the leaders of the congregation that the building in Fitzgerald Street was not longer adequate for their needs, and it was decided that it would be more advisable to secure a more central location on which 'a modern church might be erected.'[20] Architect Richard Spanney drew plans for the Rev. R. M. Graebner for a proposed Lutheran Church in the Inter-War Free Classical style, to be built at the corner of Museum and Aberdeen Streets, Perth.[21] However, these were not implemented.

Richard Spanney (formerly Spangenberg) had been born at Kapunda, in South Australia, where he served an apprenticeship as a carpenter, joiner and cabinet-maker. In 1906, he came to Western Australia, where he won a scholarship to the Technical School. In 1910, he was articled to Oldham & Cox, Architects. From 1913 to 1923, he continued his architectural studies in the United States of America, at the San Francisco Architectural Club, the California School of Arts and Crafts, the Boston Architectural Club, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Pennsylvania, where he was Gold Medallist, Senior Class (1920-21). He was also awarded second place in the New York State Public Library Competition. Having extensive experience in the USA, and having travelled widely in England and Europe, in 1923, he returned to Western Australia, where he set up in his own professional practice as a designer and architect.[22]

In the 1920s, Spanney was responsible for the design of a number of residences in Mount Lawley. A number of his clients in the period in which he was establishing his practice were also of German descent. It is likely that Spanney was a member of the Lutheran congregation, especially as he came from Kapunda, in the Lutheran heartland of South Australia.[23] In the 1920s, designs by Spanney included the East Perth Picture Theatre for the East Perth Progress Association at the corner of Wittenoom and Hill Streets, a shop (Hoile's Pharmacy) and residence at the corner of Merriwa Street and the Perth-Fremantle Road (later Stirling Highway), and Cecil Breckler's residence at Clothilde Street, Mount Lawley.[24]

18   Certificate of Title Vol. CLXVI Fol. 116.
19   Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 11.
20   *The West Australian* op. cit.
21   Correspondence (1928-29), Battye Library, Private Archives MN 117/1 Acc. 1184A, Item 1 (1923-45); and Apperly, Richard, Irving, Robert, and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1878 to the Present* (Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989) pp. 158-161. Note: In 1928-29, Spanney designed additions and a garage for Rev. Graebner's residence at Clothilde Street, Mount Lawley. (ibid.)
22   Extract, no details, in Art File Private Archives MN 117/2 Acc. 1184A, Item 5 (1923-45), Battye Library.
23   Correspondence in files held in Private Archives MN 117/1 Acc. 1184A, Item 1 (1923-45), op. cit. Note: The name change appears to have been made in autumn 1923, as letters from him in late March were signed Spangenberg, and those written in late April were signed Spanney. It was probably prompted by continuing antagonism shown to people with German names by some sections of the Western Australian community in the post World War One period.
24   ibid.

In 1928, 16 Aberdeen Street, the south-eastern quarter of Perth Town Lot Y67, 30 perches in area, was purchased by The Evangelical Lutheran St. John's Church Incorporated of 141 Fitzgerald Street, Perth, at a cost of £1,600, as the site for a church. On 19 December 1928, the transfer was registered. The existing building was let as a boarding house through to 1935, whilst funds were raised for building the proposed church.[25]

A building committee was established comprising Rev. Graebner, Hugo Fischer, C. Zeck, and P. Meyer. Fischer and his family began quarrying laterite at their property at Darlington, storing it ready for the time when building might begin. He was the brother of the first Lutheran pastor, and operated a well-known leather factory. Fischer Road in Darlington is named after him.[26]

In 1930, the Lutheran church at Fremantle was closed and sold for £1,000, and the proceeds of the sale were put toward the building of the proposed church in Perth.[27]

In 1934, Spanney again drew plans for a new Lutheran Church and an adjoining assembly hall, to be located on the site in Aberdeen Street, near the junction of Museum and Aberdeen Streets. The church design was for an Inter-War Gothic style church.[28] The nave was designed without side aisles, and intended to accommodate 200 worshippers. Features of the church were a chancel, sanctuary, organ chamber, font alcove, sacristy and 'an attractively detailed bell tower, with the main entrance at its base.'[29]

The design was more that of a traditional Anglican church than a German or Australian Lutheran church, as the alcove for the organ was located at the left front and the choir stalls at either side of the chancel, rather than at the rear of the church; and similarly the original kneelers in each pew, and the squat tower, were in the Anglican tradition. It is believed that Rev. Graebner was 'consciously establishing St John's legitimacy in Perth', through 'the Anglo Saxon design' of the church that was intended to convey 'a strong public statement that this is not a German church, St John's had a Gospel message for all the people of the city whatever their background and heritage.'[30] Graebner's introduction of the Anglican chant for the Lord's Prayer may also be seen in this context.[31]

Some members of the congregation were critical of the size of the proposed church, doubting that there would be a need to accommodate 200 people. There was also some opposition to the choice of laterite for building the church, as it was hard to work and had not been used previously for building in Perth. To demonstrate the use of the stone, a trial wall was built at Fitzgerald Street in mid 1935, by stonemason B. McAndrews.[32]

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[25] Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 13-14; and Certificate of Title Vol. XXI Fol. 121. Note: In 1935, 16 Aberdeen Street was occupied by Edith Langman, and had a capital value of £639 and an annual value of £47. (City of Perth Rate Books North Ward, 1935, p. 120.)

[26] ibid, p. 14; and *The West Australian* op. cit..

[27] Burger, Geoff ibid, p. 6.

[28] Perth Lutheran Church, Health Dept. Register of Public Buildings, SROWA Cons. 5093, File 110/35, Plan no. 489; and Apperly, Richard, Irving, Robert, and Reynolds, Peter op. cit., pp. 198-201.

[29] *The West Australian* op. cit.

[30] Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 14.

[31] ibid.

[32] ibid; and notes by Spanney in MN 117A Acc. 1184A, Box 2, 10 May 1935.

On 11 July 1935, a building licence was granted for the Evangelical Lutheran Church St. John's Building at Aberdeen Street, Perth Town Lot Y67, to be built by F. Hahn at a cost of £2,000.[33] To cover the building costs, in addition to funds already raised, some members of the congregation provided interest free loans, some of which were later re-paid, whilst others became donations.[34]

In 1936, the church was built at the proposed site by F. Hahn, contractor, at a cost of £2,200. Spanney supervised the building, and Rev. Graebner 'took a personal interest in every detail of construction.'[35] Notable amongst those who worked on it were master stonemasons McAndrew and Moir, Tindale and Millers, responsible for the Gothic tracery, and Barnett Bros., responsible for the leadlights, Priestner, responsible for the wrought iron gates, and P. O. Teske, for timber furnishings. Teske also presented a polished jarrah lectern to the church. Some of the materials utilised in the building were re-used from the earlier building in Fitzgerald Street, including timber roof trusses and timber bosses, and bricks that were re-used for the interior of the new church. The most notable feature of the new church was the use of 'brown-tinted stone of varied shades' for the exterior that was brought from Darlington where it had been stored by Hugo Fischer in anticipation of the construction of the church.[36] *The West Australian* reported that 'This kind of stone has never before been used in Perth in a similar manner.'[37] The marble foundation stone was inscribed 'To the Glory of God. St. John's Lutheran Church. A. D. 1936. Eph. 11.20.'[38]

The interior of the church was of 'bagged' plaster finish to the bricks. The place featured an exposed, plaster ceiling, timber bosses decorated with acanthus leaves, plaster cornices, and a timber floor. The timber altar and pulpit were brought from the earlier building in Fitzgerald Street to the new church, and also the hymn boards. Members of the congregation were given the opportunity to purchase a pew at the new church.[39]

On 1 June 1936, a valedictory service was held at the Lutheran church hall in Fitzgerald Street. The church at Aberdeen Street had been completed, but still required the pointing of the joints 'to enhance its beauty.'[40] On Saturday, 6 June, the Church Notices in *The West Australian* advised the dedication of St. John's Lutheran Church on Sunday at 10.30 o'clock, and evening service at 7.30. The newspaper also carried an advertisement for Wunderlich Tiles, featuring a photograph of 'The new Lutheran Church in Aberdeen-street, where a masterly and dignified design has been superlatively enhanced by the quiet beauty of *Wunderlich Terra Cotta Tiles*.'[41] The photograph shows the place with a low fence and iron gates.[42]

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[33] App. A857/35, Record of Building Licences, November 1932-April 1937, City of Perth, 11 July 1935, p. 107. Note: Burger, Geoff op. cit., stated the tender price was $4,284.

[34] Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 15.

[35] ibid; and *The West Australian* op. cit.

[36] Typewritten notes and accounts in MN 117A Acc. 1184A, Box 2, op. cit., 1936; and *The West Australian* op. cit.

[37] ibid.

[38] Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 28 October 2002.

[39] Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 15; and National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, July 1996, p. 3.

[40] *The West Australian* op. cit.

[41] *The West Australian* op. cit., p. 8.

[42] ibid.

On 7 June 1936, *St. John's Lutheran Church* was dedicated. The Service was preceded by a Scripture reading outside the building. Then the pastor, the Rev. R. M. Graebner, passed the key to the Rev. E. Fischer of Palmer, South Australia, who officially opened the doors. The clergy and the elders, bearing the sacred vessels, led the congregation into the church. All the seats were occupied and worshippers lined the walls on either side of the nave. Five clergy participated in the service, including the Rev. A. Lienert of Katanning and the Rev. W. Lehmann, home minister of the Lutheran Church in Western Australia. The Rev. E. Fischer performed the dedication ceremony, and the pastor's father, Dr. C. F. Graebner, principal of Concordia College, South Australia, preached the sermon. *The West Australian* reported that the lighting of the nave, chancel and sanctuary had been 'effectively arranged, giving a daylight effect without leaving traces of bare lights.'[43] The first organ at the church was placed at the rear rather than in the front alcove.[44]

Prior to the building of the new church hall, rooms in the house next door on the east, which was owned by the Temperance Union, were 'occasionally' used for St. John's Sunday School.[45]

Subsequently, the building at Fitzgerald Street was purchased by Hugo Fischer when no other buyers were forthcoming. He demolished it and donated much of the material for re-use in the building of a new church hall at the rear of *St. John's Lutheran Church*, and also utilised some of the materials in the building of flats on the Fitzgerald Street site. On completion of the new church hall, it was utilised for similar purposes to other such halls, including Sunday School, which Rev. Graebner instructed on Sunday afternoons.[46]

In 1939, the outbreak of World War Two brought a renewed period of hostility towards many people of German descent and restrictions as in World War One. In 1945, only 656 German born residents were listed in Western Australia. With large-scale immigration of non-British migrants, including numbers of Europeans displaced by the war, the number of German born residents increased to more than 5,000 by the mid 1950s, among them numerous Lutherans.[47] Significant numbers of the immigrants from Latvia, Estonia and Finland were also Lutheran. Pastor Graebner met each migrant ship, and visited migrants in the hostels and camps. In the post war period he and the church congregation played an important role in assisting migrants.[48]

On 29 July 1949, portion of Perth Town Lot Y69 and the whole of Perth Town Lot Y68, was transferred to The Colortype Press Pty. Ltd., of Hay Street, Perth.[49]

In the 1950s, a number of Lutheran Hungarian immigrants arrived in Australia, among them Pastor Peter Kemeny (b. Budapest, 1914, d. Perth, 1989). In 1950, he was called to be Pastor to the Hungarian Protestant congregation in Sydney, but after disembarking in Western Australia, he and his wife remained in Perth, where he worked in the Education Department. He was granted permission by Rev. Graebner to preach a number of

[43] *The West Australian* op. cit.
[44] Burger, Geoff op. cit.
[45] ibid.
[46] ibid; and Spanney Architect op. cit., Box 2, File 1934-36.
[47] Burger, Geoff ibid; and *The West Australian* 13 September 2002, Liftout, p. 3.
[48] ibid; and Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 19-22.
[49] Certificate of Title Vol. 340 Fol. 80.

sermons per annum at *St. John's Lutheran Church* in order that he could continue as an ordained pastor. For more than 30 years, Kemeny was involved in the church on a voluntary basis. He preached regularly, acted on occasion as caretaker pastor, and took over the German language ministry when Rev. Graebner retired in 1966. He is commemorated in a brass plaque on the east wall of the church, 'Faithful servant and pastor to the people of St. John's.'[50] The Hungarian Lutheran congregation worshipped at the church from 1956, as commemorated by the plaque beneath a leadlight window on the eastern side, 'Dedicated to the Glory of God, whom the Hungarian Ev - Ref. Congregation worshipped here since 1956.'[51]

In 1952, a one keyboard, five stop pipe organ was constructed by congregation member Paul Hufner in the organ alcove as per Spanney's design. The 98 pipes came from a Perth theatre organ. It was found that although the acoustics in the alcove 'were not ideal' the organ had 'a delightful tone.'[52]

In November 1954, a Sewerage plan shows the church as a brick(sic) building, with a front wall and gates to the path at the western side of the lot, that leads to the church entries at the western side, and through to the brick church hall, which has a path most of the way around it.[53] The area between the church and the hall was grassed at this period.[54]

In 1959, after the death of Charles Gibbs, his widow, Emily Gibbs became the sole proprietor of the south-western portion of Perth Town Lot Y67, which she continued to own until it was purchased by the Metropolitan Planning Authority in November 1961, under the acquisition programme for the proposed ring road around Perth.[55]

In the post-war period, Rev. Graebner and his son, Bob, church treasurer for 25 years, sought to resolve the difficulties presented by a bequest from Mr. Bartlow, who had died during the war. His property was bequeathed to relatives in Germany; however, in the event that they could not be located, his Estate was left to *St. John's Lutheran Church*, 'after Australia signed a peace treaty with Germany.'[56] This did not occur because Australia was part of the British Commonwealth, and it was some years before the matter was finally resolved in court in the church's favour. In the 1960s to 1980s, Bartlow's bequest formed a significant part of the resources that the congregation accumulated for the future.[57]

In 1966, Rev. Graebner retired, having served as pastor to St. John's for 52 years. He was succeeded by Pastor Maurice Jordan, formerly a missionary in New Guinea.[58] He was instrumental in the formation of the Western Australian District of the recently united Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA), and served as its first president. Prior to the 1960s, there had been two Lutheran churches in Australia, the Concordia of which St. John's was a member, and the Immanuel Synod. Rev. Graebner had feared that

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[50]   Geoff op. cit., pp. 22-23; and plaque at east wall, site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 28 October 2002.

[51]   Plaque at east wall, site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 28 October 2002.

[52]   Burger, Geoff op. cit.

[53]   Metropolitan Sewerage City of Perth SROWA Cons. 4156 Item 62, 22 November 1954.

[54]   Otto Walkemeyer in Burger, Geoff op. cit.

[55]   Certificate of Title Vol. CLXVI Fol. 116.

[56]   Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 23.

[57]   ibid, pp. 24-31.

[58]   ibid, pp. 9-10, and p. 25.

decentralisation and the establishment of congregations in the suburbs might fragment the St. Johns congregation and perhaps lead to the decline of St. John's, a real fear when attendance numbers were generally below 100 in the early 1960s. Under Pastor Jordan, the church began services in a rented hall in Bayswater, preaching places opened at Coolbellup and Rockingham, and Pastor Hayden Blaess was called to begin a congregation at Morley.[59]

In 1969, a photograph of the place shows it much as at the date of completion in 1936. The original stone wall and gates by Priestner were extant.[60]

On 28 September 1970, portion of Perth Town Lot Y69 and the whole of Perth Town Lot Y68, was transferred to the Metropolitan Planning Authority.[61]

In 1973, a photograph shows the place had undergone little if any change since its completion in 1936. The gates by Priestner were insitu, and a timber fence bounded the lot on the west side.[62]

In 1973, when Pastor Jordan accepted a call to Horsham, the pastor of the Latvian congregation, Laimons Musinskis, served as caretaker pastor until the arrival of Pastor Kevin Kuchel, the first pastor at the place from the Immanuel tradition. His ministry promoted and encouraged relationships, which was advanced by the establishment of home groups in many areas and his extensive visiting programme. St. John's continued to involve the various Lutheran ethnic communities in combined activities, a considerable challenge as national rivalries often still persisted. A manse was built in Richmond Street, Leederville, on land bequeathed by Bartlow.[63]

On 4 November 1974, *St. John's Lutheran Church* was recorded by National Trust of Australia (WA).[64]

The 1970s saw many families transfer from the city church to the newly established suburban congregations, which were thriving. Consequently, attendance at *St. John's Lutheran Church* declined, and its future viability was uncertain when Pastor Kuchel departed for South Australia in 1980. He was succeeded by Pastor James Pietsch, 'a parish pastor in the classic Lutheran mould', who served as President of the District, and whose 'persona fitted the role of bishop.'[65] With much work, home visiting, planning and training of leaders, the number attending home groups was considerably increased and also the number attending worship on Sundays. A vibrant youth ministry was developed also.[66]

In 1981, the place was included in *Looking Around Perth*, with particular mention made of the use of Darlington stone.[67]

For a number of years, the church had been involved in discussions with the Metropolitan Regional Planning Authority regarding the land on which the church hall was located, that was required for the proposed ring road. In 1986, agreement was reached whereby the church would be paid $70,000 and

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59   ibid, pp. 25-26.
60   Photograph (1969) in National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, July 1996.
61   Certificate of Title Vol. 340 Fol. 80.
62   Photograph by Frank Sharr, 6 March 1973, National Trust of Australia (WA).
63   Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 27-28.
64   National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, July 1996, p. 3.
65   Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 29-30.
66   ibid, pp. 30-34.
67   Molyneux, Ian *Looking Around Perth* (Wescolour Press, East Fremantle, 1981) p. 60.

a block of land to the west of the church transferred to the church.[68] During this period, in the course of 1985, Considine and Griffiths Architects were asked to examine the re-planning of the church to include a sanctuary at the north end of the church and a new hall on the land to the west. The plans were not implemented.[69]

On 2 December 1986, The Evangelical Lutheran Church St. John's Church Inc. was registered as the proprietor of portions of Perth Town Lots Y67, Y68 and Y69, as per Diagram 70165. The triangular shaped lot, with an area of 1235 square metres, fronts Aberdeen Street.[70]

It was proposed to build a new church hall with meeting rooms and office facilities, and also extensions to the church to provide a choir gallery and additional seating accommodation. Three architects were invited to submit designs, and that of Duncan, Stephen & Mercer, Architects was selected. The plans show the extensions to the church at the northern end, where the existing end wall leadlight window was to be removed and reinstated in the new end wall, with a new window at either side. The detailing of face stonework and piers etc. was to match that of the existing building, and roof tiles were to be hand selected to match the existing tiles. The hall and offices building was designed to fit the triangular shaped lot, to be readily accessible from the church and the street, with lobbies at the east and south.[71]

The Bartlow bequest and other funds accumulated in the post World War Two period amounted to $320,000, along with an additional $130,000 raised by an Appeals Committee led by Pastor Pietsch and chaired by Graeme Lienert, enabled the project to be implemented without the church entering into debt. In 1987, the new Church Hall was built to the west of the church. The extensions to the church provided an organ loft and choir gallery, and additional seating and a cry room at the lower level. Henceforward, the choir was able to take its place at the rear, as in a traditional Lutheran church. Two Italian stonemasons were employed for the stonework. Paul Hufner built a 'magnificent' organ, utilising 1,183 pipes he had accumulated since 1970, and also trumpets 150 years old from an English organ, 50 pipes built from jarrah to a German design, and a number of pipes built from a recycled table tennis table.[72]

In 1987, Pastor Pietsch departed for Geelong, and for eight months Peter Kemeny served as caretaker pastor, until the arrival of David Christian in 1988. The intervening period saw the congregation take a greater role in the organisation of the church, developing confidence that proved a good foundation for changes implemented in the 1990s, when evangelism took centre stage, under a programme launched in 1994, named Vision 2000. Len Vlahov, as chair from late 1990, played a key role until his death in 1997.[73]

From 1993, David Christian had served as district president of the LCA. In 1996, when the Western Australian presidency was increased to a half time

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[68]   Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 31.

[69]   Philip Griffiths, Considine and Griffiths Architects.

[70]   Certificates of Title Vol. CLXVI Fol. 116, Vol. 340 Fol. 80 and Vol. 1748 Fol. 730.

[71]   Plans, St. John's Lutheran Church, Perth, Duncan, Stephen & Mercer, Architects, July 1986.

[72]   Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 31-32; and National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, July 1996, p. 3.

[73]   Burger, Geoff op. cit., pp. 35-41.

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position, Geoff Burger was called to the position of senior pastor at *St. John's Lutheran Church* with David Christian as associate.[74]

Some time during the 1990s, the gates were removed and stored under the Church.[75]

On 9 September 1996, the place was classified by National Trust of Australia (WA).[76]

On 21 January 1997, the First Schedule on the Certificate of Title noted that the correct name of the proprietor of the place was St. John's Lutheran Church, Perth Incorporated.[77]

In 1997, Saturday evening services were introduced.[78]

In the 1990s, after the ring road proposal was dropped following the decision to build the Graham Farmer Freeway and implement the plan for the tunnel under Northbridge, negotiations were begun regarding re-development of the land in the vicinity of the church. The Northbridge Urban Renewal Study (1995) had proposed creation of an urban community park area at the west of the church that would have required demolition of the church hall. Although the church had agreed to the proposal provided it was adequately compensated, lack of funding saw the proposal revised, siting the park area to the west of the hall. However, the church was informed that the land to the rear of the church and hall 'would eventually be available for purchase.'[79] As there is a strong support in the congregation that additional land is required to enable the church and hall to be more functional through the provision of a church foyer, offices for pastors, an outdoor community area, and an attractive link between the church and the hall, discussions have continued towards this end.[80]

In 2001, the centenary of the Lutheran church in Perth was celebrated. Geoff Burger's booklet *In Perth for Good: St Johns Lutheran Church 1901-2001* recorded the history of the church and its role in the Western Australian community. In the same year, the place was included in the City of Perth's Municipal Heritage Inventory with a Category 1 classification.[81]

In 2002, *St. John's Lutheran Church* continues in use as a church, with most services in English, and a monthly service in German. Average attendance each weekend is c. 250-260. The church hall continues in use for its intended purpose. In similar spirit to the past, the church is extending assistance to refugees by making the hall available at no cost to the Coalition Assisting Refugees After Detention (CARAD) as a venue for English classes.[82]

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

St. John's Lutheran Church is a pair of buildings comprising a random coursed Darlington laterite and stucco wall construction and Marseilles tile pattern

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[74] ibid, p. 43.
[75] Geoff Burger, conversation with Robin Chinnery, October 2002.
[76] National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, July 1996.
[77] Certificate of Title Vol. 1748 Fol. 730.
[78] Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 41.
[79] ibid, p. 44.
[80] ibid, p. 45; and Geoff Burger, conversation with Robin Chinnery, October 2002.
[81] City of Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory, 2001.
[82] *The West Australian*, 13 September 2002, Liftout, p. 3; and Burger, Geoff op. cit., p. 53.

roofed church in the Inter-War Gothic style completed in 1936[83] and church centre, a face concrete block wall and Colorbond custom orb hall and offices completed in 1987 in an utilitarian contemporary style.

St. John's Lutheran Church is located on the north side of Aberdeen Street mid way between Beaufort and William streets. With the exception of a late nineteenth century house to the east, most of the historic buildings in the immediate area of the site have been demolished and the sites redeveloped from the 1970s to the present to create the campus of the Central TAFE. To the rear of the church, including the former church land and site of the original church hall, all land was cleared for the construction of the Northbridge Tunnel and has remained as a sealed car park since that period.

St. John's Lutheran Church is set some six metres back on its site and almost all redeveloped sites have buildings constructed up to their front boundaries. This development is sufficiently distant from *St. John's Lutheran Church* as to allow it to continue to maintain a strong visual presence in the streetscape. The church centre is set on the front boundary and has a strong visual presence also. However, the richness of the church allows it to remain the visually dominant element.

Aberdeen Street is a minor road, with a carriageway in each direction, parallel parking and concrete slab paved footpaths. There are intermittent street tree plantings of Queensland Box Trees (*Lephostemon conferta*) and there are timber pole mounted outreach streetlights.

St. John's Lutheran Church has a low random course laterite boundary wall, with a painted stucco coping, across the front of the church boundary. The forecourt is paved to an irregular plan in interlocking concrete paving blocks, with some timber bollards around parts of the perimeter to prevent vehicles driving on the northern section of the site that is a lawn. Gardens in front of the church include plantings of Cotoneaster, Conifers, Daisies, New Zealand Christmas Tree, Tacoma, Grevillea, Palms and Jacaranda. The latter has a circle of lightly framed timber seating around it.

The buildings on the site include the *St. John's Lutheran Church* (1936) and the St. John's Lutheran Church Centre (1987)

St. John's Lutheran Church

The church was developed on land previously occupied by a house and there may be archaeological material associated with the house.

St. John's Lutheran Church is an asymmetrically composed building with a dominant gable roof and curved apsidal sanctuary presenting to the street, and a flat roofed bell tower to the west of the nave at the junction of the chancel and sanctuary. The apse has a stucco lined niche with a Latin cross set in it. The styling is based on Inter-War Gothic style principles, with walls buttressed, flat arched openings, gables and stylized pressed cement tracery to stained glass leadlight windows. All walls are built of random coursed laterite (weathered granite and dolerite from the Darling Ranges), with granite accents, with stucco architraves, buttress copings and pressed cement tracery and bell tower louvres. The roofs are steeply pitched at about 50 degrees and covered with autumn blend Marseilles pattern tiles and ogee gutters bracketed off the walls on consoles. The ventilators indicated on the

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[83]   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, pp. 1989. 199-201.

architects drawing remain in place. The northern elevation is simply expressed with a gable end, with twin-stepped buttresses, a traceried and stained glass window sat low level and flanking lancet windows at high level. A large stucco rose and Latin cross decorate the gable at high level. Three condensers are set on the ground below the north window.

There are two entrances. The first is under a flat roofed bell tower at the southern end of the church that leads directly into the chancel and the second at the north leads into the rear of the nave. The north entrance porch is a simple gabled roof element, buttressed, and with a stucco barge, ogee gutters, a pair of plain doors into the nave, and a concrete floor. The nave has a gabled roof with the same stepped stucco barge as the porch. There is a small dedication plaque on the south face of the aspse. The nave is five bays long, with each bay articulated with stepped buttresses. Each bay contains lancet windows with pressed cement mullions, architraves, and sills, pressed cement tracery, stained glass leadlights, and hopper lights at the bottom of each panel. Seats have been set in each of the three west facing bays.

The bell tower is styled in the same manner as the nave, but has a crenellated parapet surround to a flat top roof, with a tall cross set atop the bell tower.

The church hall that was built to the north of the church was demolished for the Northbridge Tunnel project and, given the nature of the construction there is unlikely to be any archaeological evidence of the place.

The planning of the church is organized around a simple pattern of nave, chancel and sanctuary with a porch and sacristy to the western side. The 1987 addition involved the addition of one bay to the northern end of the nave to provide a children's or crying room, organ and choir loft.

The church interior is designed in the manner of an English parish church, with generous light interiors lit by stained glass leadlights and visual drama provided by elaborate hammer beam trusses. The original section of the church comprising nave and sanctuary has timber floors with a quad skirting, bag finished render walls, ashlar rendered arch over the sanctuary, plaster wall vents, an elaborate deep plaster cornice, and a timber lined soffit. There is a timber panelled altar screen, a modern altar table, and brass and timber construction altar rail. There are purpose designed choir seating and rails to either side of the chancel. The windows are all made up of stained glass leadlights, with awning light windows at the base of each lancet window. There is a timber panel construction pulpit to the west of the chancel. There are long timber construction pews in the nave, without kneeling rails. The ends of the pews are carved with decorative motifs and Latin crosses. There are carpet strips over the timber floors. Air conditioning, lighting and sound systems have been added to the nave. Doors within the church are lancet shaped and are panelled internally and half glazed into lobbies, while outer doors are modern steel construction designed to deter vandalism.

The addition was designed to harmonise with the existing building and stained glass windows originally in the north wall of the church were relocated to the new addition. It comprises a masonry construction and glazed crying room, dog-leg stair and stepped choir organ loft. The loft is all finished with timber, with timber construction seating and the organ that is detailed in the documentary evidence.

The building is in good condition and retains much of its authentic fabric. Timber boarding has been fitted over plaster ceilings that are indicated on the original drawings, so that now all of the ceiling have a tongue and groove boarded finish. Minor changes to the nave include the introduction of

modern services to improve comfort conditions in terms of heating and cooling and the installation of a public address system to make the services more readily audible.

Church Centre

The Church Centre is located to the west of the church. It is an irregular plan form and the building is constructed with concrete blocks laid stretcher bond, with a Colorbond custom orb roof and aluminium framed windows. The building is resolved in a contemporary idiom in a utilitarian manner that responds directly to the spatial requirements of the centre and the narrow site that was available to accommodate it.

The centre comprises a large hall at its western end, a main entry, with a meeting room to its east, then an office. A corridor links the main entrance lobby to the eastern entrance opposite the church. /North of the corridor there is a kitchen, meeting room and the toilets. The plan form is irregular.

The floors are concrete with either carpet, vinyl or tiles on them according to location and function. The walls are face blockwork and ceiling plasterboard. The joinery is aluminum framed, with timber doors.

The building is well used and well maintained.

13. 3   COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

St. John's Lutheran Church is one of only two churches in the City of Perth built of laterite stone from Darlington, the other being *The New Church* (1940) in Adelaide Terrace. Both churches were designed by Architect Richard Spanney in the Inter-War Gothic style. His design for *St. John's Lutheran Church* and the materials used in its implementation impressed the members of Perth Society of The New Church, and it was for this reason that they commissioned him to provide a design in the Inter-War Gothic style, using the same materials as those used in *St. John's Lutheran Church*.

St John's Lutheran Church is the first Lutheran church built in Perth, and one of only a small number of Lutheran churches in Western Australia. It differs from most Australian Lutheran churches, being of similar design to an English parish church and reflects the Anglican tradition, with the organ alcove at the front, and, prior to the extensions in 1987, the choir accommodated at either side of the chancel rather than at the rear of the church as per the Lutheran tradition. The tower also reflects the Anglican tradition, as did the original pew kneelers.

The site constraints at both *St. John's Lutheran Church* and *The New Church* were similar, with the nave oriented along the axis of a suburban residential lot.

13. 4   KEY REFERENCES

Burger, Geoff *In Perth for good: St Johns Lutheran Church 1901-2001*, prepared for the 100th anniversary of the congregation.

National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment Form, F. Bush, July 1996.

St. John's Lutheran Church in Private Archives MN 117 Acc. 1184A, Box 2.

13. 5   FURTHER RESEARCH