



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.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The Anglican Church is a fine example of a 1930s church, executed in the Inter-War Romanesque style. The concrete and tile building displays Spanish Mission details which contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the place. The Post War Memorial Hall has little aesthetic value. (Criterion 1.1)

The Anglican Church displays considerable technical achievement and skill in the fine execution of the building, using reinforced concrete. This is of particular value as the use of reinforced concrete for building construction was not common at the time the Church was built. (Criterion 1.2)

Being a distinctive and prominent building, the Anglican Church makes a positive contribution to the streetscape. (Criterion 1.3)

Due to its elevated location and imposing size, the Anglican Church is a prominent landmark within Victoria Park. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall is representative of the growth and expansion of Victoria Park, particularly in the years following World War I. As more people settled in Victoria Park the local Anglican congregation swelled until the small Church of Transfiguration became unsuitable both in size and location. (Criterion 2.1)

St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall is representative of churches and chapels built by the Church of England in Perth in the 1930s. The place is also associated with the Church of England's establishment of a parish on the southern side of the Swan River in 1895. (Criterion 2.2)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The Anglican Church has scientific value due to its reinforced concrete construction. The use of this material for a local parish church is unusual for this era. (Criterion 3.3)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall is highly valued by the Anglican community of Victoria Park and the Anglican Indonesian community of the Perth Metropolitan Area for its role in their spiritual, cultural and social life. (Criterion 4.1)

St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall strongly contributes to the community's sense of place through its role as the site for baptisms, confirmations and weddings and as a venue for recreational, social and cultural activities. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The Anglican Church is constructed from reinforced concrete, which was unusual for its time. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The Anglican Church is representative of churches and chapels built by the Church of England in the 1930s. Others include St Margaret's, Nedlands (1937); St Columbas, South Perth (1936); St Patrick's, Mt Lawley (1936); Perth College Chapel; St George's College Chapel; and the tower of Christ Church, Claremont (1938). (Criterion 6.1)

St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall are representative of the strong commitment of both the local community and the Church of England to spirituality at a time of economic crisis. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Both *St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall* are in good condition and are regularly maintained.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Having continuously been used as a church since its construction, the Anglican Church has a high degree of integrity. The Memorial Hall also has a moderate degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Additions were made to the sanctuary and vestry of the Anglican Church c. 1953. Repairs were made to this same area in 1992 after a fire damaged the sanctuary and Clergy Vestry. Although there have been some minor alterations in the layout of the sanctuary due to changes in the Anglican liturgy, these modifications have only affected the arrangement of movable objects. These alterations have not compromised the original fabric of the place and the Anglican Church demonstrates a high degree of authenticity.

A new porch was added to the front of the Memorial Hall in 1963. The building has a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by the following students of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, Curtin University, Kim Boalch, Langley Smith, Perrie Gordon, Jennifer Smith, Christina Bineveski, and Natalie Scahill, under the direction of Andrea Witcomb, and edited by Fiona Bush. The physical evidence was prepared by Fiona Bush. Additional research has been compiled by HCWA staff.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The Anglican Church was constructed in 1935 in the Inter War Romanesque style for the Anglican community of Victoria Park. The Church replaced an earlier building which had been built in Harvey Street in 1895/6. The Memorial Hall was built in 1954 to provide additional accommodation of social activities.

Victoria Park lies to the east of Perth city, separated from it by the Swan River. Victoria Park was the largest portion of a land grant of 972 acres made to John Butler in 1831¹. In 1887, the land was subdivided and building development commenced. Initially, the development of Victoria Park was hindered by inadequate transport links to Fremantle and over the river to Perth.

The causeway was first built in 1843 but during the 1860s it was reconditioned and raised following a serious flooding of the Swan River.² Prior to 1887, development in Victoria Park centred around coach stops along Albany Road (now the Albany Highway).

At this stage Victoria Park was part of Canning District, which stretched from Belmont to the Canning Bridge. During the 1890s, when the locality was subdivided into suburban allotments and advertised for sale it was known as 'the Victoria Park Estate'. It is thought that the suburb was named after Queen Victoria.³

At the time of the subdivision, Western Australia was in the grip of 'gold fever' which provided the struggling Colony with new immigrants and greater economic resources. In this climate of economic growth, the land offered for sale in the Victoria Park Estate sold quickly. In 1886, there were only 20 residences in the district. By 1897 Victoria Park had been declared a Municipality and the following year the population had reached 1,197.⁴ Victoria Park's rapid development in the 1890s meant that it soon became a centre of civic, cultural and community activity. The increasing number of people settling in the area led to demands for facilities and services. The Victoria Park State School was opened in 1894, the Broken Hill Hotel was built in 1899 and the Victoria Park Town Hall was constructed in 1899. Early industries included soap making, brick making and furniture

¹ Mundy, Peter. *History of Victoria Park*, Grayland Teachers' College, 1958, p. 4.

² Gallop, G. Series on: *Know Your Suburb - Victoria Park* September 1992.

³ Mundy, op. cit., p. 4.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 12.

making. Market gardening, timber cutting and pig farming added to the distinctive rural flavour of early Victoria Park⁵.

Victoria Park's continuing growth was closely associated with the start of the Great Western Railway in 1893 and the opening of the tram service across the Causeway in 1905. The population grew from 1,500 people in 1906 to 5,000 by 1917. In 1917, the Municipality of Victoria Park was amalgamated with the City of Perth, giving the suburb greater access to money for roads and services⁶. As land was cheap and the suburb was easily accessible from the city, Victoria Park soon gained the reputation for being a 'working man's district'. Residential development continued during the inter-war years, particularly as one of the major suburban shopping centres.⁷

Victoria Park's first Anglican Church, and the first Anglican Church constructed south of the river, was located in Harvey Street.⁸ The foundation stone for the Church of Transfiguration was laid on 19 December 1895 and the building was completed in August 1896. The weatherboard Church was designed by Mr J. Talbot Hobbs and built at a cost of £300 on land donated by Mr J. W. Hackett, MLC.⁹

The construction of an Anglican church in the new suburbs and settlements was a common theme in the development of Western Australia. The Anglican Church has strong associations with the State's initial settlement, with the majority of the early colonists belonging to the Anglican faith. Many of these families held prominent and influential positions within colonial society and were active in establishing church buildings for services as settlement of the colony expanded and consolidated. The first Anglican church services in Western Australia were held in 1829, soon after the arrival of the *Parmelia*. The first Anglican church in Western Australia, constructed of rushes, was built by the end of 1829 in time for Christmas services. Anglican churches were established in new suburbs and districts as they were settled, for example, early churches were built in the Swan and Avon districts, as well as Albany and Busselton. In many cases, services were held in private homes or the local court house until a church could be built. Later on, as settlements were established following the construction of railway lines, Anglican churches were often one of the first buildings in the town.¹⁰

⁵ Gallop, op. cit.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *Inquirer*, 20 December 1895.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Williams, A. E., *West Anglican Way: The Growth of the Anglican Church in Western Australia – the first years 1829-1929*, Province of Western Australia of the Anglican Church of Australia, Perth, 1989.

St Peter's Anglican Church

In February 1922, the Parish of Victoria Park purchased 2 and a half blocks along Albany Highway and 6 blocks in Leonard Street for £1,061 (Lots 630 - 632). In the same year, the Church of Transfiguration was relocated to Lot 631 Leonard Street for £300.¹¹ It would appear that the Parish purchased the land in Leonard Street with a view to constructing a new church on the most elevated block, as a Building Fund was established soon after the purchase of this land and numerous fund-raising events were held to raise monies for the Fund.¹²

By 1928, plans for a new church were presented to the Diocesan Trustees for approval. Costs were estimated to be £3,000 and had the capacity to seat 300 people. In August 1928, the Diocesan Trustees offered the Parish furniture from St John's Church in Melbourne Street, Perth. The furniture, which consisted of doors, pews, windows, cedar pulpit and lectern, was collected in September of that year.¹³ However, plans for the new church lapsed and it was not until 1933 that the Vestry Minutes record that plans were again submitted to the Diocesan Trustees. The plans were drawn up by architects, Mr. George Herbert Parry and Mr. M. Clifton, for a building estimated to cost £4,500. These new plans were refused by the Diocese, due to the Parish's financial position.¹⁴

In 1934, a 'Special Public Meeting' was held to acquire local financial support. The outcome was favourable with numerous guarantors and, together with a £3,000 loan from the Diocesan office, money was found to complete the new Church.¹⁵ That these funds were secured during the Depression indicates the strong commitment of both the local community and Church of England to spirituality as a time of economic crisis.

In 1935, Vestry members approached the Archbishop to gain consent in dedicating the new church 'St. Peter's'.¹⁶ It is not known why the Parish wished to change the name of the church, however permission was given and on 3 March 1935, the foundation stone was laid on Lot 630.¹⁷

The original plans for the building show a two storey building designed in Inter-War Romanesque style with very thick walls to the nave area and a stud wall at the western end (the sanctuary). Unfortunately, these plans do not indicate construction materials, although the thickness of the nave walls suggests reinforced concrete walls. The stud wall at the western end suggests that extensions were planned to this area at a later date.

The Anglican Church was consecrated by Archbishop Dr Le Fanu, on Sunday 23 June 1935 as recalled in *The West Australian* on Monday 24 June;

The service commenced with the formation of a procession including representatives of Parish troops of scouts, the choir, the churchwardens (Messers C T Banfield and H A Shaw), the Diocesan Registrar (Mr J O Fisher) and visiting clergy. The

¹¹ Notes written by Mr Shaw, January 1946.

¹² Callard, Maureen and Murray-Feist, Tony. *St Peter's Victoria Park 1935-1995*. (n.d) p. 1.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁴ Minutes of Vestry Meeting, 7 February 1933, p. 111.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, 8 November 1934, p165.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 2 January 1935, p. 181.

¹⁷ Callard and Murray-Feist, .op. cit., p. 4.

Archbishop, in cope and mitre, who had followed the procession to the main doors, was greeted at the entrance.

At the words "Let the consecration proceed", the procession reformed and, singing hymns, made a circuit of the church returning again to the main door. The Archbishop knocked three times and the doors were thrown open to the procession, which entered the building followed by the congregation. Then began the special service of consecration.¹⁸

When the Anglican Church was completed the exterior concrete was left unpainted. Four panels of stained glass, which came from St John's Church, were incorporated into the new Church.¹⁹

On the completion of the new Church, the Church of Transfiguration was used as the Parish Hall. As this building was later moved to make way for the Memorial Hall, it seems likely that in 1935 this structure occupied the site currently occupied by the Memorial Hall.

In 1935, the Church of Transfiguration began to use the new Memorial Hall.

During the 1950s, Vestry decided to complete the sanctuary's western wall and an appeal was launched to raise the necessary funds. As the work did not greatly enlarge the sanctuary, it is unclear as to why this wall was left unfinished as the savings made would seem to be fairly minimal. The completion does not seem to be linked to liturgical changes as these did not occur until the 1970s.

A fire in 1992 caused structural damage to the Vestry, sections of the storeroom, flower room and smoke damage to the main altar. The estimated cost for repairs was \$15,000 and took over six weeks to complete.²⁰

Plans for a new parish hall were drawn up by Marshall Clifton and Leach, Architects, in August 1953. The firm of H. Dawkins was commissioned to build the Hall at a cost of £9,237, on the western side of the Anglican Church. Work commenced in December 1953.²¹

The Memorial Hall was dismantled to make way for the new parish hall. The Memorial Hall was relocated behind the Rectory to serve as a Club Room.²² The Parish continued to expand and a new hall, the Jubilee Hall, was constructed on the eastern side of the Church in November 1960.²³ In 1962, Marshall Clifton added a new porch to the front of the Memorial Hall. By 1968, the building which had originally been the Church of Transfiguration had become so dilapidated that it was demolished for \$160.²⁴

Social Use

The site of the Anglican Church has always been a focal point for both worship and the expression of a sense of community. The community

¹⁸ *The West Australian*, 24 June 1935.

¹⁹ Callard and Murray-Feist., op. cit., p. 13.

²⁰ Minutes of the Vestry, 15 December 1992.

²¹ *ibid.*, 2 October 1953.

²² Callard and Murray-Feist., op. cit., p. 10.

²³ Minutes of the Vestry, 13 September 1960, p. 54.

²⁴ *ibid.*, 10 December 1968.

contributed with donations of time and money, to the building of the Anglican Church, the Memorial Hall, (including the new entrance and foyer) and the Jubilee Hall.²⁵ Since their inception, the Anglican Church and the Memorial Hall have served a vast array of community groups. Some of these include: the Mother's Union (three etched windows in the Baptistry were dedicated to this Union in 1951), the Church Guild, the Fellowship of Marriage, a Branch of the Australian Board of Missions,²⁶ St Peter's Scout Troop, the Girl Guides, St Peter's Youth; together with the Choir, Sunday School teachers and servers and the Girls' Friendly Society.²⁷

These activities complement the Church's function as a place for weddings, baptisms and confirmations. During the post-war period, the Anglican Church was known as 'the' place to be married south of the River²⁸. During 1951, for example, 220 weddings and 312 baptisms were performed.²⁹ Services were kept short and punctual for there were as many as seven weddings on the same day³⁰.

Jan Patton, who was married at the Anglican Church in 1963, remembers the groom being one hour late. Consequently their party had to be rescheduled behind another wedding held that day.³¹ Jan chose to be married there because it was her local church. Although not a regular church-goer, she had attended Sunday School and was Confirmed there. She also attended some dances at the Memorial Hall and Church Bazaars.³²

The Church continues, with a slightly diminished congregation, to serve the local community as well as parishioners who have moved to other suburbs. In 1996, the Anglican Church also became the home of the "Perth Indonesian Church". Pastor Johanne Bandi holds bi-lingual services for 70-80 parishioners with increased attendance during the Christmas and Easter periods.³³ Pastor Bandi has performed ten Baptisms and will perform marriage services when he is licensed.³⁴

The Memorial Hall is still used for dances, children's dramas and is the home of the Metal Detector's Club, the Ladies Masonic Lodge and the Victoria Park Rotarians.

The current Rector, Reverend Tony Murray-Feist, was inducted on 23 June 1993³⁵ and two years later to the day, the Anglican Church celebrated its 60th Anniversary on 23 June 1995.³⁶ The Anglican Church stands as a tribute to the rectors and parishioners who have served and assisted the

²⁵; Callard and Murray-Feist., op. cit., pp. 3-11.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 10-18.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ Jan Patton, conversation with Kim Boalch, 16 April 1998.

³² *ibid.*

³³ Pastor Johanne Bandi. conversation by Kim Boalch, 14 April 1998.

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ Minutes of the Vestry, 15 June 1993.

³⁶ Callard and Murray-Feist., op. cit., p. 14.

Parish through the years and who affectionately refer to the place as the 'white church on the hill'.³⁷

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The Anglican Church is a two storey structure constructed from reinforced concrete (which is painted white), with a clay tile gable roof. Stylistically, the building is best described as Inter-War Romanesque³⁸ with Spanish Mission influences. The building, which is located on high ground and has commanding views of the surrounding suburb of Victoria Park, is a large structure which dominates the surrounding buildings. The site contains three buildings, the Anglican Church (1935), the Memorial Hall (1953) and the Jubilee Hall (1960).

St Peter's Anglican Church

The strong, structural massing of the Anglican Church is fully expressed in the front elevation which features a gable roofed portico, approached by a small flight of steps. Above the portico opening, is a small arcade of four round arches supported on double columns. The gable parapet above is decorated with machicolation motifs³⁹. Enclosed arcades flank the portico and feature triple arched windows with etched glass. Barley sugar columns with vine capitals are used in the central portico arcading and between the arcade windows. The height of the main gable facade is given prominence by the use of piers. A horizontal stringline provides the illusion of a pediment, surmounted by a Celtic cross with a round window below. Machicolation motifs decorate the areas beneath the gable and stringline. Rising above the portico, and below the stringline, is a small arcade between a pair of piers.

The strong vertical massing can also be seen in the side elevations which are divided into six structural bays by piers. The height of the upper storey is emphasised by long, round arched windows, one per bay. Machicolation motifs decorate the area beneath the eaves line. The lower storey projects beyond the line of the upper section and each bay has an arcade with four round headed windows. Barley sugar columns are used on the two outer windows while the two centre windows are separated by a plain pier. Machicolation motifs also decorate the area below the eaves line. The orange roof tiles above this section help break up the white mass of the of the concrete.

The Vestry is located on the southern side of the building and has similar decorative features as that described above, although the windows in this section are square headed. The c. 1950s extension extends to the western end of the sanctuary and has no embellishments.

The western elevation contains the sanctuary which is slightly lower in height than the nave. The western end of the nave has a central round

³⁷ ibid., p. 5.

³⁸ Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P.A. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*. Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

³⁹ In Apperly, et al., machicolation is described as 'Originally a projecting parapet on a castle wall or tower having openings in the floor between projecting corbels through which missiles and liquids could be discharged upon a besieging enemy below.' See p. 280.

window and the apex of the sanctuary roof is located just below this feature. The c. 1950s extension to the sanctuary uses similar materials, with no embellishments and is covered with a skillion roof. The western end of the nave is surmounted by cross.

The interior of the church has painted cement walls, marked out to resemble ashlar masonry and presents as a lofty open space terminated by a wooden truss roof. The metal framed hopper windows are generally glazed with ripple glass. There are some windows which contained etched glass and stained glass. The etched glass panels are located in the vestibules either side of the porch. Those on the northern side were dedicated to the Mother's Union. The stained glass windows, on the north and south sides nearest the altar, originally came from St John's Church, Perth. Stained glass panels located in bay 1 (northern side) are more recent. The timber floor is covered with carpet. Original fixtures includes all joinery, light fittings, pews, lectern and other religious paraphernalia. The altar replaces an earlier one which was destroyed by fire in 1992.

Originally, baptisms were performed in the northern vestibule, however this is now used as a crèche and the original stone baptismal font has been placed outside and is used as a bird bath. Baptisms now take place in the sanctuary end of the church. The liturgical service is now conducted from the area which was once set aside for the choir and the choir stalls have been removed. The floor for the choir and sanctuary is stepped higher than that of the nave. The altar is currently set close to the front of the sanctuary (see Appendix 1).

A preliminary survey of churches built during the 1930s revealed only 14 that had been constructed using concrete. However, the majority were constructed with concrete blocks, rather than the reinforced concrete which is found at the Anglican Church.

St Peter's Memorial Hall

The Memorial Hall is a double storey brick building with a gable roof covered by clay tiles. The building is simple in design with no distinguishing features except for the eastern elevation which uses a central band of recessed brick panels as a decorative feature. The 1962 extension tends to obscure this feature. The main entrance to the hall is on the northern side of the building and is approached via a small ramp. The entrance lobby features a pair of tuscan columns in front of double timber doors.

The interior has timber panelling to a height of 2.4m with painted masonry above. Steel framed windows run down both sides of the building, above the timber panelling. Other features include: plasterboard ceiling with central ventilation panel, timber floor, a stage at the western end and amenities such as kitchen, toilets and dressing rooms.

A bell is located atop a timber post at the front of *St Peter's Anglican Church and Memorial Hall*.

Jubilee Hall

The Jubilee Hall is located on the northern side of the Church and abuts the building at the fifth bay where a walkway permits direct access to the church.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The Anglican Church was one of a number of churches and chapels built by the Church of England in the 1930s. Others include St Margaret's, Nedlands (1937); St Columbas, South Perth (1936); St Patrick's, Mt Lawley (1936); Perth College Chapel; St George's College Chapel; and, the tower of Christ Church, Claremont (1938).

13.4 REFERENCES

Callard, Maureen and Murray-Feist, Tony *St Peter's Victoria Park: 1935-1995*, n.d.

St Peter's Anglican Church, Minutes of the Vestry, various.

Written notes by Mr Shaw, January 1946

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
