



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

*Tukurua* is a large intact home in its original setting. It addresses the corner of Marine Terrace and Rosendo Street and, although set back from the Terrace, has, because of its substantial size, a landmark quality in the area. (Criterion 1.3)

*Tukurua* comprises an important element in the streetscape and, as part of the wider Cottesloe precinct, an important element of the gracious old residential building stock for which the suburb is renowned. (Criterion 1.4)

#### 11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

*Tukurua* has a close association with the Hon. Septimus Burt, KC, the first Attorney General in the first responsible government in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

*Tukurua* has significance as an example of a grand beachside home, exhibiting in its design and scale the affluence which was enjoyed by wealthy Western Australian families in the 1890s. (Criterion 2.4)

#### 11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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#### 11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

*Tukurua* contributes to the community's sense of place by being representative of the gracious summer seaside residences, built by wealthy Western Australian families in Cottesloe, at the turn-of-the-century. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1 RARITY**

*Tukurua* is distinctive in representing a type of substantial, limestone seaside residence, set in large grounds, which was once common in the Cottesloe area, but is becoming increasingly scarce through redevelopment of sites. (Criterion 5.2)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Tukurua*, as a substantial recreational residence, is representative of the affluence of wealthy Western Australians in the 1890s. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

*Tukurua* is not in good condition. The timber work of the verandas, on all sides of the place, is in need of repair. The veranda on the western facade, particularly at the upper level, is falling away and has holes and evidence of termite damage as well as weather damage.

Part of the roof to the western facade has been replaced at some stage and the southern wing has recently been re-roofed. Elsewhere, the roof and the pressed metal of the western gable and the southern facade are rusting and the walls of the building show evidence of water damage. There is fretting of the brick quoins to the windows and doors, and exfoliation of the surface of the stone, particularly on the western facade which receives the full impact of the prevailing winds. In some areas - notably the corners - there has been sufficient erosion to the external surface of the walls to cause significant damp damage on the interior walls of the rooms. Despite repairs to the south-west corner of the residence, there is evidence of extensive water damage and the lath and plaster ceiling is substantially deteriorated. There is also evidence of water damage to the ground floor rooms on the western side.

The interior of the place is largely intact and capable of being restored, although urgent attention is needed to stabilise the stone and brickwork and prevent further damage from weather. The rooms on the ground floor of both the residence and the southern wing have most internal features intact and have been painted, as these areas have been occupied, but the first floor rooms have not been painted afresh for some time, although the features are intact.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Tukurua* has a high degree of integrity. Although here have been a number of rooms made with framed walls to create kitchen and bathroom spaces, these could be reversed, opening up the original rooms. The residence's two chimneys have been demolished to the roof line, although the flues are still intact and they could be reconstructed. The original intention of the place - a residence - is intact.

## 12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The fabric of *Tukurua* is little altered and most of the original fabric is still intact, if neglected. There is little intervention in the original fabric of the building which could not be reversed. *Tukurua* has a high degree of authenticity.

## 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The house at 7 Rosendo Street, Cottesloe (known as *Tukurua*) is a large two-storey residence set in extensive grounds. It was constructed, in 1896, as a summer beach residence for the Hon. Septimus Burt, KC, and his family.

Septimus Burt, son of the first Chief Justice of the Colony, Archibald Burt, was a prominent public figure in Western Australia in the late 19th century. A barrister in the law firm of Stone and Burt, and the first silk awarded in the Colony, he was also active in public life. Appointed Chairman of the Central Board of Education, in 1874, he was a Member of the Legislative Council from 1874 until 1890, when he became the MLA for Ashburton. In 1890, Burt accepted a portfolio in the Forrest Ministry, and became Attorney General in the first responsible government in Western Australia, a position he held from 1890 to 1897. He retired from politics in 1900.<sup>1</sup>

Burt's main residence was a substantial house, *Strawberry Hill*, in Adelaide Terrace, which had originally been owned by the Stone family but was purchased by Archibald Burt and extended by the prominent architect J. Talbot Hobbs to accommodate Septimus's large family of ten children ranging in ages from four to twenty-three years. Septimus also owned a riverside holiday home in what is now called Peppermint Grove, but which was then part of Cottesloe, from which the family cruised the Swan River in their own steam boat "Titu", one of only two in the colony.<sup>2</sup> In 1896, Burt commissioned a second holiday home from architect, R. T. McMasters, to be built in the newly fashionable, beach area of Cottesloe.<sup>3</sup>

Cottesloe was named by Governor Broome, in 1886. Although the Perth to Fremantle railway was opened in 1881, and provided an opportunity for the more permanent settlement of the area, the beach remained relatively unsettled with only six permanent residents living there in 1893.<sup>4</sup> In 1895, the Government granted £110 for improvements to the Perth to Fremantle Road, which passed through South Cottesloe, and a further £100 towards its maintenance, which made the beach area more accessible. It soon became the gathering point for the wealthy of Perth during the summer months, as the beach was sheltered from the south-west winds and was protected by the various reefs and islands off the coast.<sup>5</sup>

By the time Burt commissioned *Tukurua*, the population of the Cottesloe area was approaching 1500 permanent residents,<sup>6</sup> with an increasing number of prominent Perth people building substantial summer homes near the ocean.

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<sup>1</sup> Erickson, R. (ed) *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians* Vol. 1, (UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988)

<sup>2</sup> The other was the Governor's. Conversation with Simon Burt, 12 April 1994.

<sup>3</sup> The Summer Residence was referred to as the Beach Cottage by members of the family. Source: Conversation with Simon Burt, 12 April 1994.

<sup>4</sup> Moseley, F. A. quoted in Marchant James, R. *Heritage of Pines: A History of Cottesloe* (Town of Cottesloe, Cottesloe, 1977) p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Marchant James, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Clarke, M., *A History of Cottesloe* p.7.

By the turn of the century, residents in South Cottesloe included: the prominent architect, Mr. J. Talbot Hobbs; Mr. J. C. G. Foulkes, MLA (*The Summit*, cnr. Avonmore Terrace and Salvado Street); the General Manager of the Bank of Western Australia, Mr. H. D. Holmes (*Le Fanu*, 2 Salvado Street); the father of Mr. J. Campbell, the mining investor (*Belvedere*, 12 Rosendo Street); and the General Manager of the Perth Gas Company, Mr. F. Crowder, (*Abbeyfeale View*, cnr. Broome and Junction Streets).<sup>7</sup>

The contractors for *Tukurua* were Bunning Brothers and the house was completed by December 1896, although Bunning Brothers incurred a penalty of £35, presumably for finishing late.<sup>8</sup> In March 1897, further work was done to the building - this time by the architect, J. Talbot Hobbs, who was commissioned to arrange and supervise the installation of plumbing work and a new bathroom. In May 1901, Hobbs was again commissioned by Burt, this time to prepare plans and specifications for the erection of an additional storey to the house, for a cost of £340. In 1904, Hobbs was also responsible for supervising repairs and painting of the house.<sup>9</sup>

Septimus Burt died, in 1919, and the house continued to be used as a summer residence until his son, Archibald Burt, rented the house to a Mr and Mrs Cass, in 1933. Mrs Cass used the house as a boarding house. The venture was profitable and, in 1939, Mr and Mrs Cass purchased the property. Shortly afterward, during the Second World War, the house was used to house refugees from Singapore as part of the war effort. To accommodate the additional people, the house was divided into private apartments with framed walls and bathrooms and kitchens installed. After the war, the partitioning was not removed, but Mrs Cass did not take in further boarders. Upon her death, *Tukurua* passed to her daughter, Miss Dorothea Maude Cass, the current owner. A condition of inheritance was that Miss Cass did not marry and that the house was not altered in any way. This has ensured the retention of all the original features of the house - albeit in some disrepair. Miss Cass lived in the front part of the house, until 1993 when she was moved to a nursing home. The house is currently occupied by Mr Ted Smith, a friend of Miss Cass, who has lived in the rear of the house (styled "no. 9" Rosendo Street) for some time. The rest of the house is closed up and has recently been cleared of furniture preparatory to the possible sale of the property. Mr Smith has indicated a desire that the property be restored, should funding be available, and be used for some form of museum of the legal profession, given the place's close association with the Burt family.<sup>10</sup>

*Tukurua* was classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in March 1979 and entered into the Register of the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission in September 1982. The place is listed under Schedule 1 of the Town of Cottesloe Town Planning Scheme No. 2, and is afforded protection under the scheme.

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<sup>7</sup> Marchant James, pp. 21-22.

<sup>8</sup> State Archives of W.A., 2854A/3, Letterbooks of Septimus Burt, letter dated 23 December 1896 to R. F. McMaster.

<sup>9</sup> State Archives of W.A., 2708A, Ledgers of J. Talbot Hobbs, Vol. 3, pp. 144, 192, 280.

<sup>10</sup> Information in this paragraph from a conversation with Ted Smith, who is managing the property on behalf of the owner, 18 March 1994, 23 March 1994.

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Tukurua* is an handsome double storey residence sited on a gently sloping block on the corner of Rosendo Street and Marine Terrace. It is in close proximity to two extant residences of similar period: *Le Fanu* (c. 1895) and *Belvedere* (1897).

*Tukurua* comprises two joined buildings: the main building (residence), built of limestone over a large, low basement housed in the cavity created by the slope of the block, and a smaller building (southern wing) which is joined to the residence on the southern side but set back from the western facade of the residence by approximately six metres. Although the buildings have few distinct stylistic details, the size of the place is impressive, and the brick quoins to the openings contrast with the limestone walls to provide a pleasant patterning to the building. The two structures are visually unified by a double-storey timber veranda which extends across the western facades of the buildings but does not join the two areas at the setback.

On the western facade, the veranda has a gable to the north-west corner which forms an interesting and lively extension and provides decorative asymmetry to the northern facade. Across the northern facade, the veranda extends in a single storey and projects in a shallow porch over the main entrance. On the eastern facade of the residence it runs in a single story down to the adjoining southern wing at the rear. The windows of the residence on the upper storey of this facade have individual awnings with scalloped timber decoration.

The details of the veranda are simple, with turned timber balusters, and roof supports with simple decorative elements at the corners on the upper storey. At some time, the lower portion of the veranda has been filled in with asbestos sheeting, to a height of approximately one metre, and further enclosed, in some areas, to create makeshift rooms. In some places, there are paned windows although most of the window frames are badly weathered and the glass missing. Part of the setback space on the western facade has been built in with unsympathetic double-storey asbestos additions which contain bathrooms.

*Tukurua* is roofed with corrugated iron and features three gables, two of which face west with pressed metal at their termination; the other faces north and has simple timber decoration. At some time, the pressed metal in one of the western gables has been replaced with asbestos sheeting.

The southern wing has an entrance door on the eastern facade under the veranda roof. The end of the southern wing is clad with pressed metal to the upper storey and has a skillion extension with two toilets and laundry at the ground level. A timber weatherboard extension containing a bathroom is accommodated in a setback in the eastern facade.

The main entrance of *Tukurua* is reached by five steps, with a low step wall and elegant piers on either side. The entrance door is of stained glass and jarrah and opens to a north-south hall which has an archway, with decorative

stucco detail, half way along the hall. There are remnants of an original floral dado decoration which extends from the entrance to the stairwell. The floor is jarrah timber and the doors and frames are of unpainted timber with deep architraves. Opening from the hallway to the west are two very large reception rooms, the northern room having a bay window with a decorative arch and the southern, direct access to the veranda through french doors. Between these rooms is a short hall which gives additional access to the veranda while underneath runs a cellar - 10 by 5 metres in size - which is accessed externally. To the east of the hallway are three smaller rooms, the north-eastern room having direct access to the eastern veranda. This room has a fireplace with a jarrah mantle-piece. At some time, the south-eastern room has been modified with partitions to contain a bathroom and kitchen.

At the end of the hall is a dogleg staircase with turned timber newels and plain balusters. At the landing of the stair is an arch, later fitted with a door, through which access to the southern wing can be obtained. The top of the stair has a stained glass window with a semi-circular top.

The layout of the first floor of the residence is similar to that of the ground floor. Framed walls have been used to create a lobby area at the top of the stairs, dividing the stairwell from the northern part of the hallway. At the end of the hallway is a bathroom which is located above the downstairs entry vestibule. To the west are two large rooms: one of which has a bay window and decorative arch, and the other, direct access to the veranda. In this room framed walls of asbestos and timber have been used to create a kitchen by dividing the room. There is an asbestos and timber addition, outside the window area of this room in the setback, which houses a bathroom. Opening east from the hall are three smaller rooms with windows to the eastern facade.

Internal access to the southern wing can be obtained from the residence at two levels. From the ground floor, the southern wing is accessible at the southern termination of the entry corridor through a door to the west of the stairs which, if closed, makes the residence and the southern wing independent. This door leads into a small understairs room within the southern wing, which has a door to the west veranda and serves as a small entry vestibule. This accesses a large room, currently a sitting room, which is the width of the southern wing and has windows to the east and to the west. This room has a fireplace with a very wide hearth and chimney flue, which suggests it may have been the original kitchen, and is the only room in the place which still has an operational chimney as the chimneys to the other flues have been demolished to roof level at some time. At the rear of this room, a doorway leads to a small vestibule, created with framed walls, in part of what was originally a large room. There is a bedroom off this vestibule to the west, a kitchen to the south, and a backdoor to the east. A bathroom is contained in a timber skillion extension accessible from the kitchen and from an outside door adjacent to the backdoor. On the southern wall of the kitchen is a laundry and two toilets, access to which is from outside.

At the first floor, access to the southern wing from the residence is made through an archway at the dogleg of the staircase. This opens onto a narrow landing in the southern wing with a stair running down to an external door

on the eastern facade, and up to a short passage on the first floor. At the top of the stairs, there is a bathroom in a timber extension and, running south, a passage from which two bedrooms open to the west, the first of which has a fireplace. At the end of the corridor, a kitchen area has been made by partitioning an end room with framed walls.

### **13.3. REFERENCES**

National Trust Assessment Exposition  
Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet