



# 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\*

*Johnson's Complex* is located in a prominent position on Johnson Street, the road from the south into Guildford from Perth, and contributes considerably to the aesthetic qualities of the entry to the town. (Criterion 1.1)

*Johnson's Complex* is a fine example of a Federation Queen Anne residence, Victorian Georgian residence and Victorian Georgian stables in a cultivated landscape, featuring a number of fine mature trees. (Criterion 1.2)

*Johnson's Complex* is prominently located and has a landmark quality in the town of Guildford. (Criterion 1.3)

*Johnson's Complex* is an integral part of the streetscape and cultural environment of the historic town of Guildford. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Johnson's Complex* is important as an integral part of the historic fabric of Guildford, a place with a particularly high density of historic places which reflect the early to late nineteenth century development of the Swan River Colony. (Criterion 2.1)

*Johnson's Complex* is significant in the development of Guildford and the Swan district from the mid 1850s as the town and district developed during the extension of European settlement to the north and east, and through the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Criterion 2.2)

*Johnson's Complex* has close associations with George Johnson, of Johnson's mill, with his family, and in particular, his son, William George Johnson, Mayor of Guildford, and with 'Lew' Whiteman, owner of

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural styles 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.

brickworks at Midland. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

*Johnson's Complex* has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the cultural history of Western Australia as a research site, and teaching site. The mill site and remaining stables are of particular interest. The mill site also has the potential to yield further information through archaeological investigation. (Criterion 3.1)

### 11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

*Johnson's Complex* is highly valued by the community of Guildford and the Swan district, and also by the wider community of Western Australia for social, cultural, and aesthetic reasons pertaining to its place as the site of Johnson's mill, the home of the Johnson family, its role as a maternity hospital from 1930 to 1946, and its contribution to the aesthetic qualities of the historic town of Guildford. (Criterion 4.1)

*Johnson's Complex* contributes to the community's sense of place through its association with the Johnson family after whom Johnson Street was named, and as a well known landmark in the town. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1. RARITY**

The stables and remnant brick wall of the flour mill are rare and uncommon structures. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

Each of the structures on the site are fine representative examples of their type: a Victorian Georgian style brick and tile stables, remnant brick wall from the flour mill, a single storey Victorian Georgian style brick and zincalume cottage, and a single storey Federation Queen Anne style brick and tile residence. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

With the exception of the mill, which is only a fragment of the structure, all elements are in sufficiently good condition to clearly demonstrate all their heritage values. The mill wall is in poor condition, but all other structures are in fair to good condition. Replacement ceilings throughout the main house suggests that the original lath and plaster ceilings deteriorated beyond repair. Rendering of the lower wall of the cottage was undertaken in the mistaken belief that it would solve rising damp damage. Recent conservation works on much of the fabric has put the place in good order generally. The owners have undertaken many essential repairs. With the exception noted above, the place is in good condition.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

With the exception of the mill, all elements are clearly legible, and the use of each space is discernible. The current uses include a restaurant, gallery, and residential accommodation. Each has required some adaptation, but the uses are quite compatible. The integrity of the place is moderate.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

The stables and mill ruins have a high degree of authenticity. Works to the house reflect the original and subsequent concepts, through to the present day. The exterior of the house retains a high degree of authenticity, while the interior retains a moderate degree of authenticity. The cottage reflects a similar degree of authenticity to the house. The setting retains a generally authentic open concept, with some fine mature plantings, which appear to be quite early. Overall the place retains a moderate to high level 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

*Johnson's Complex* comprises stables (1855-56), remnant wall (1855-56), cottage (circa 1860) and separate water closet, bungalow (circa 1895), metal framed out buildings, and mature gardens. The stables is a two storey stables and loft of brick and tile in the Victorian Georgian style, constructed for George Johnson in 1855-56.<sup>1</sup> The remnant wall is the archaeological brick remains of the mill constructed for George Johnson in 1855-56. The cottage is a brick and zincalume single storey residence in the Victorian Georgian style, constructed circa 1860, with a separate brick and iron water closet of unknown later date of construction.<sup>2</sup> The bungalow is a single storey brick and tile residence in the Federation Queen Anne style, constructed for William George Johnson circa 1895.<sup>3</sup> The metal framed outbuildings were erected for 'Lew' Whiteman in the 1980s-1990s.

In 1830, the first Guildford Town Lots were sold.<sup>4</sup> In part, the town was opened up in an endeavour to make provision for discharged servants of the early European settlers following completion of their service. They were to be granted lots of four to five acres, with the intention that they should assist each other in a co-operative settlement.<sup>5</sup> The town boundaries were fixed in 1836.<sup>6</sup> In the same year, the first church was built at Guildford by Dr. Louis Grisham of the Colonial Church Society.<sup>7</sup>

The first flour mill in the Swan district was a horse driven mill at the property of Lieutenant Henry Bull.<sup>8</sup> It was managed by his servant, William Cruse, and ground grain also for neighbouring European settlers.<sup>9</sup>

As additional land was opened up to agriculture to the north and north-east, roads were opened from those areas to converge at Guildford. The town developed as a thriving inland port, with water traffic via the Swan River to and from Perth and Fremantle, and road traffic to the agricultural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Apperly, Richard, Irving, Robert, and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989, pp. 42-45.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 132-135.

<sup>4</sup> Paget, T, 'Early Days in Guildford. Agricultural Development 1829-1850', p. 2. Typescript in Battye Library.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A History of the Swan District Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, for the Swan Shire Council, 1987, pp. 60-62.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 62.

In 1840, the first Church of England was built in the square in Guildford.<sup>10</sup>

The construction of the Perth Causeway in the early 1840s was important to the development of Guildford as it provided overland communication to the town from Perth. In early 1844, the first steam flour mill at Guildford was built for Walkinsaw Cowan by E. Powell at Guildford Town Lot 5, and began operations in May 1844.<sup>11</sup> By June 1850, when the first sale of Guildford town allotments took place, the Guildford district was well settled, with land utilised for stock grazing, vine and fruit growing<sup>12</sup> The town itself was a 'neat little village'.<sup>13</sup> With the introduction of convicts in 1850, a hiring depot was established at Guildford.

On 20 August 1850, Dennis Desmond, Shoemaker, of Perth was granted Guildford Allotment No. 140, two acres in area, bounded on the north by James Street, on the west by Ellen Street (the present Johnson Street), on the east by Guildford Allotment No. 141, and on the south by Guildford Allotment No. 143, in return for an annual peppercorn rent.<sup>14</sup>

On 23 April 1855, an indenture was made between Dennis Desmond and his wife, Maria, and George Johnson, Gentleman, whereby one acre of Guildford Building Allotment No. 140 was transferred to Johnson for the consideration of £50.<sup>15</sup>

George Johnson had arrived at the Swan River Colony in February 1830, with a group of other Methodists per the *Tranby*, who settled at the Peninsula in the Maylands area, between Perth and Guildford.<sup>16</sup> A member of the first party to explore the Avon, Johnson obtained a grant of land in that district, where he established a flock of sheep.<sup>17</sup> He travelled to England in 1840, where he married, and remained for the next fourteen years, before returning to Western Australia in 1854.<sup>18</sup> He established his family at Guildford from 1855. He was a trustee of the Wesleyan Church at Guildford, and he oversaw the construction of the Wesley Chapel (1883) in James Street, located close to his mill and residence in Ellen Street (Johnson Street). He was active in public affairs in the town, assisting in the formation of the Town Trust, of which he became a member; the Municipal Council, with which he held office as Chairman (1869, 1870, and 1871), and Treasurer ; and he was a founder of the Guildford Mechanics'

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<sup>10</sup> Gibbons, L. *Guildford 1829-1929 : A Century of Progress*, Imperial Printing Company Ltd., Perth, for the Council of the Municipality of Guildford, Western Australia, 1929. See chapter on 'Old Guildford'.

<sup>11</sup> *Perth Gazette* 27 January 1844, 4, 11, and 25 May 1844; and *Inquirer* 13 March 1844, 3 April 1844, 8 May 1844, 22 May 1844.

<sup>12</sup> Wilson, J. Graham *Western Australia's Centenary 1829-1929: First Century's Progress with Antecedent Records 1527-1828* (The Historic Press, Perth, 1929) p. 17; and Crowley, F. K. *Australia's Western Third* (Macmillan and Company, London, 1960) p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Crowley, F. K. *Australia's Western Third*, Macmillan and Company, London, 1960 p. 80.

<sup>14</sup> Memorial 953, Guildford Allotment No. 140, 20 August 1850.

<sup>15</sup> Memorial 541, Guildford Allotment No. 140, 23 April 1855.

<sup>16</sup> Battye, J. S. *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia*, Facsimile Edition, Western Australia, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 96

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 572.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

Institute.<sup>19</sup> He died at Guildford on 23 August 1879.<sup>20</sup>

On 13 May 1855, George Johnson, Yeoman, raised £350 with an indenture of mortgage on 'the Southern half of Guildford Building Lot No. 140 and containing one acre more or less', along with some other properties at York and Perth to the Reverend Samuel Hardey, Wesleyan Methodist Minister.<sup>21</sup> Johnson raised an additional £400 by the same means, bringing his debt to Hardey to £750.<sup>22</sup> He built first a three horse mill for grinding grain at Guildford Building Allotment No. 140 in 1855-56; and by mid May 1857, he had obtained 'Steam Power for his Mill at Guildford'.<sup>23</sup> Nearby he built a two storey residence for his family.<sup>24</sup> It was demolished to make way for the present house at 34 Johnson Street in the 1890s.

The mill was in operation for more than two decades, and most of the district's grain was gristed there in that period.<sup>25</sup> The mill is no longer extant; however, a small section of brick walling located on the northern boundary of 34 Johnson Street is believed to be a remnant of the mill building. It is believed also that the stables at *Johnson's Complex* were associated with the mill constructed in 1855-56.

George Johnson repaid £150 of his debt by 21 December 1861, when the mortgage for the sum of £600 was assigned to Joseph Hardey in consideration of £200 paid to Reverend Samuel Hardey.<sup>26</sup> The mortgage was transferred to Joseph Hardey on 17 October 1863.<sup>27</sup>

A small, four room cottage of brick with a shingle roof was constructed on the lot to the south of Johnson's mill and house circa 1860, the current 32 Johnson Street.<sup>28</sup>

In late October 1867, James Atkinson, Saddler, advertised his business 'adjoining Johnson's Steam Mill in Guildford'.<sup>29</sup>

The Municipality of Guildford was declared in 1871, and the telegraph extended to the town in the same year.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Memorial of Indenture of Mortgage 259, 13 May 1857.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Perth Gazette* 15 May 1857; and *Inquirer* 20 May 1857. Some details of the mill machinery are included in these and later newspaper references to Johnson's mill.

<sup>24</sup> Information from Judy Hamersley, n. d., National Trust of Australia (W. A.) 32 and 34 Johnson Street, Guildford, File 37.

<sup>25</sup> Pelloe, E. 'The York Road' in *Early Days*, Journal of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society, Vol. 1 Pt. 6, p. 11.

<sup>26</sup> Memorial of Indenture of Mortgage 1168, 21 December 1861.

<sup>27</sup> Memorial of Indenture of Transfer of Mortgage, 1620, 17 October 1863.

<sup>28</sup> Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places, Shire of Swan, 10 July 1996. The date of construction and early history of the cottage have not been established by research to date. The National Trust records it as 1890s, per information from Judy Hamersley that the place was built by William George Johnson 'as a home for his parents'; however, his father had died in 1879, and physical evidence suggests that the cottage dates from an earlier period. In the 1940s, Mr. Devenish recalled the cottage from his childhood in Guildford, and that it was believed to be 'very old'. (Nan Kraut with Robin Chinnery 14 September 1998.)

<sup>29</sup> *Inquirer*, 9 October 1867.

<sup>30</sup> Gibbons, op. cit.

In December 1878, George Johnson advertised that he wished 'to retire from the millering business' and would receive tenders.<sup>31</sup> However, the mill was not sold; and on his death in August 1879, its management was taken over by his son, William George Johnson.<sup>32</sup>

William George Johnson had worked for a period at the flour mill with his father after leaving school, before joining the Government Service in the Imperial Convict Department in 1867.<sup>33</sup> He resigned from the Service with a pension in 1877, and joined the mercantile office of J. H. Monger for two years.<sup>34</sup> Following the death of his father, he returned to Guildford and took up residence at the two storey home built for his father circa 1855-56, taking over the management of his late father's mill, farming property, and vineyard.<sup>35</sup>

Like his father, William George Johnson took an active part in public affairs. He was elected a member of the Municipal Council in 1880, returned as Chairman in 1881, a position he held for the next three years.<sup>36</sup> In 1887, the dignity of Mayoralty was conferred on Guildford, and Walter Padbury, as Chairman of the Guildford Town Trust, became the first Mayor.<sup>37</sup> Johnson succeeded to the position in 1888, remaining Mayor until his retirement from the position in 1890. He was elected to the office again in the 1890s, serving as Mayor from 1893 to 1899, other than in 1894 and 1897, and again from 1907 to 1909.<sup>38</sup> He served as a Justice of the Peace, a Licensing Magistrate, a member of the Swan Roads Board, and its Chairman for some years, and President of the Guildford Mechanics' Institute.<sup>39</sup> His other positions in the Swan district included President of the Swan District Building Society from its inception in 1895, and Hon. Secretary of the Swan District Board of Education for thirty years.<sup>40</sup>

Construction of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to Perth and thence to Guildford commenced in June 1879, and opened for traffic in March 1881. In 1883, the West Guildford bridge was constructed, after Walter Padbury MLC was able to secure sufficient support in the Legislative Council for the project.

On 18 August 1885, following the death of Joseph Hardey, Jane Johnson, widow of George Johnson, and their son, William George Johnson, Executrix and Executor of George Johnson's estate, paid £120 to the Executors and Devisees in trust named in Joseph Hardey's Will to discharge the mortgage, which was re-conveyed to Septimus Burt.<sup>41</sup>

The extension of the Eastern Railway to York in 1885 reduced the

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<sup>31</sup> *Inquirer* 11 December 1878.

<sup>32</sup> Battye, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 572

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Gibbons, op. cit.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Battye, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 556, and p. 572..

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Memorial of Indenture of Reconveyance, IX/971, 18 August 1885.



importance of Guildford as an agricultural headquarters, as it made possible the direct transport of produce and goods between the farming areas and Perth and the coast.

William George Johnson resided at the family home at Guildford from 1879, and his mother, Jane Johnson, also continued to reside there.<sup>42</sup> In the mid 1890s, the two storey house (1855-56) was demolished to make way for the construction of a new single storey brick and iron residence on the site, to accommodate William George Johnson, his wife, Elizabeth Victoria (nee Hardey), and their children.<sup>43</sup> Jane Johnson moved to the four room cottage next door, which became known as 'Jane's Cottage' during her residence, and later as 'Johnson's Cottage'.

The section of Ellen Street south of the railway line and James Street, was renamed Johnson Street in the mid 1890s.<sup>44</sup> When William George and Elizabeth Victoria Johnson and their son and five daughters occupied 34 Johnson Street in the 1890s, the functions of the rooms were as follows: on the north from the hall were William George Johnson's office, the dining room, and two bedrooms; on the south from the hall were the drawing room, the main bedroom, with the nursery and a dressing room adjoining, a bedroom, and the bathroom; and across the rear of the house, from north to south, the scullery, kitchen, pantry, rear door, and the maid's room.<sup>45</sup>

On 10 January 1906, *Johnson's Complex* was transferred to William George Johnson, as sole surviving executor of the Will of George Johnson.<sup>46</sup> William George Johnson died on 17 August 1917 and Probate was granted to his widow, Elizabeth Vittoria Johnson, and Frank Bertram Tory, two of the Executors named in his Will.<sup>47</sup> The property remained in the Johnson family until 1925.<sup>48</sup> Mrs. Johnson continued to reside at the place following her husband's death.<sup>49</sup>

In 1925, 34 Johnson Street was unoccupied, and Jno. Evans resided at 32 Johnson Street<sup>50</sup>

On 11 September 1925, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140 was separated into two lots, with the sale of Lot 1 (34 Johnson Street) to Mabel Carter, who purchased the place in order to be in proximity to her daughter.<sup>51</sup> She

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<sup>42</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1894, and 1895-96 p. 121, and p. 99 respectively.

<sup>43</sup> Information from Judy Hamersley, n. d., National Trust of Australia (W. A.) 32 and 34 Johnson Street, Guildford, File 37. Note: In some primary sources the name appears as Vittoria.

<sup>44</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1894, p. 121; Plan of Guildford 1882 BL Map Collection 211C; and Townsite of Guildford, 1897 BL Map Collection 211C.

<sup>45</sup> W. G. Johnson's Floorplan - 1890. Courtesy of Marianne Parasuik.

<sup>46</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Vol. 358 Fol. 16, 10 January 1906.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, 17 August 1917.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, 21 November 1921.

<sup>49</sup> *Telephone Directory of Western Australia* 1919, p. 63.

<sup>50</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1925, p. 387.

<sup>51</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Vol. 358 Fol. 16, 11 September 1925 and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 1, Vol. 899 Fol. 138, 11 September 1925.

took up residence at 34 Johnson Street, and resided there until 1930-31.<sup>52</sup>

Mabel Carter could not abide the noise made by the parrot owned by the tenant at 32 Johnson Street; so when all else failed, she purchased Lot 2 of portion of Guildford Town Lot 140 (32 Johnson Street) on 15 August 1927, bringing Lots 1 and 2 together again under one ownership, and enabling her to be rid of the troublesome parrot and its owner.<sup>53</sup> Lot 2, 32 Johnson Street, was tenanted by Mrs. Linda Cowan, formerly of 29 Market Street, Guildford from the late 1920s and through the 1930s.<sup>54</sup> The two properties were mortgaged for much of the period of Mabel Carter's ownership.<sup>55</sup>

Mabel Carter vacated 34 Johnson Street in 1930-31, and leased the place to Nurse L. Wright, who opened a Maternity Home at the residence.<sup>56</sup> She named the Home 'Seaton Ross'.<sup>57</sup> The name was retained also by her successor, Nurse Anne Melsom, who leased 34 Johnson Street from 1938 to 1946.<sup>58</sup> She had operated 'Brent Hill' Maternity Hospital at Beechboro Road, Bayswater in the 1920s and 1930s prior to 1938.<sup>59</sup>

The Metropolitan Sewerage Plan for Guildford (1938) records the buildings on the two lots together with the outbuildings.<sup>60</sup>

Mabel Carter died on 6 August 1943, and on 9 September Probate of her Will and Codicil was granted to Perpetual Executors Trustees and Agency Company (W. A.) Limited.<sup>61</sup> On 8 February 1944, Lot 2 (32 Johnson Street) was transferred to Alfred James Whitaker Pate.<sup>62</sup> He and his family took up residence at the place in the same year and continued to reside there throughout the 1940s.<sup>63</sup> Nurse Melsom continued to operate 'Seaton Ross' Maternity Home at 34 Johnson Street until mid 1946, when the place was sold.

On 6 June 1946, Lot 1 (34 Johnson Street) was transferred to Hilda Kathleen Thomas, who took up residence at the place.<sup>64</sup> In the following year, the

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<sup>52</sup> Judy Hamersley with Robin Chinnery, 1 September 1998; and *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1925 to 1931.

<sup>53</sup> Judy Hamersley with Robin Chinnery, 1 September 1998; and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 2, 15 August 1927. Vol. 973 Fol. 21.

<sup>54</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1925 to 1940.

<sup>55</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 1, Vol. 899 Fol. 138; and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 2, Vol. 973 Fol. 21, 11 September 1925 to 15 December 1943.

<sup>56</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1930, and 1931; and Judy Hamersley with Robin Chinnery, 1 September 1998.

<sup>57</sup> *The West Australian Business Directory of Classified Trades and Professions* 1932-33, 1934-35, 1937 (Australian Directories Ltd., Perth, 1932 to 1937 ) p. 41, p. 38, and p. 39 respectively; and *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1937-1946.

<sup>58</sup> Legislative Assembly Electoral Roll 30 June 1938, and 21 February 1939; Telephone Directory of Western Australia, May 1938, p. 89; May 1940, p. 95; February 1946, p. 69.

<sup>59</sup> Telephone Directory of Western Australia, Editions from October 1927 to May 1938.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 2, Vol. 973 Fol. 21, 5 December 1943.

<sup>62</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 2, Vol. 973 Fol. 21, 8 February 1944.

<sup>63</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory*, Western Australia 1939-1940 to 1949.

<sup>64</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, Lot 1, Vol. 899 Fol. 138, 6 June 1946.

place was occupied by her, and her husband, N. W. Thomas, and there was a rear flat, occupied by Patricia Hall.<sup>65</sup> In 1949, it appears that the place was occupied only by the tenant, P. Hall.<sup>66</sup>

On 17 March 1954, 34 Johnson Street was transferred to Manton Lewis Cyril Whiteman, Company Director, and his mother, Elizabeth Margaret Whiteman, Widow, as joint tenants.<sup>67</sup> They had endeavoured to purchase 'Garden Hill' in the 1930s in order to have a larger residence in which to house their collections; however, it was sold to the Catholic Church, and so they had continued to seek a place for the purpose.<sup>68</sup> They took up residence at the place, and subsequently purchased the adjoining lot at 32 Johnston Street from Alfred Pate on 5 November 1957, bringing the two places under one ownership again, and providing a home for their collections.<sup>69</sup>

Following the death of his mother, Elizabeth Whiteman, on 22 April 1959, 'Lew' Whiteman became sole proprietor of *Johnson's Complex* on 9 January 1961.<sup>70</sup>

On 5 April 1976, the houses at 32 and 34 Johnson Street were recorded by the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), and on 6 April the stables and the remnant wall of the steam mill at the rear of 34 Johnson Street were classified by the Trust. The assessment for the latter was the basis for the registration of the place on the Register of the National Estate on 29 September 1981.

'Lew' Whiteman was an inveterate collector, and the place was adapted to house his growing collections as the years passed. The functions of each room were as follows: on the north from the hall were the Ivory Collection, the dining room, the Vatican Collection, the Safe Room in which a large miner's safe acquired by him was set into the fireplace and which displayed part of his Jewellery Collection housed in the room, and the stairs down to the cellar, with this access fitted by Whiteman; and on the south from the hall were his bedroom, the French Collection, the book Collection, the Aboriginal Collection and the Tapestry Collection; and across the rear of the house from north to south were 'Lew' Whiteman's office, the kitchen, store room, rear door, and bathroom.<sup>71</sup> The cellar was excavated and returned to use after problems with inundation circa 1968, and 'Lew' Whiteman had it fitted out in faux English pub style, subsequently entertaining his friends there.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory*, Western Australia 1947, p. 176; and Guildford Rate Book 1947-48.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, 1949, p. 184.

<sup>67</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot, Vol. 1095 Fol. 353, 17 March 1954..

<sup>68</sup> Judy Hamersley with Robin Chinnery, 1 September 1998.

<sup>69</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot 2, Vol. 1082 Fol. 146, 5 November 1957.

<sup>70</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot 1. Vol. 1095 Fol. 353; and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot 2. Vol. 1082 Fol. 146, 9 January 1961.

<sup>71</sup> Lew Whiteman's Floorplan. Courtesy of Marianne Parasuik.

<sup>72</sup> Marianne Parasuik with Robin Chinnery, 9 September 1998.

As his collections grew, 'Lew' Whiteman required extra space in which to display and store them. The cottage at 32 Johnson Street was utilised in this way, as were the stables, and metal outbuildings were purchased and erected at the rear of *Johnson's Complex* to provide additional storage. One of his purchases were wooden stairs which were fitted to the west side of the stables, leading to the loft, and which were removed and sold by the present owners due to safety concerns.<sup>73</sup>

'Lew' Whiteman died on 1 March 1994, and on 24 June 1997, the executors of his will, Timothy Charles Davey, Timothy Lloyd Whiteman, and Margaret Gregson Ace, were registered as the proprietors of the place.<sup>74</sup> The place had been offered unsuccessfully at auction in May, and negotiations continued with prospective buyers. In mid 1997, Helen Bird of the Swan Valley Boutique in Johnson Street actively lobbied for support from local businesses for her proposal to develop a fashion house, and gallery featuring local artists, and also a café serving Devonshire teas, with croquet on the lawn at *Johnson's Complex*, and lodged applications for the proposed change of usage and for the proposed development with the Shire of Swan on 2 July 1997.<sup>75</sup>

*Johnson's Complex* was transferred to Helen Sima Bird on 5 September 1997.<sup>76</sup>

On 10 September 1997, the Shire of Swan gave approval for 'Café and Tourism Uses' at 32 Johnson Street, and approval to commence development of Lots 1 & 2 Johnson Street for 'Fashion House, Café, Gallery & Tourism Office'.<sup>77</sup> Helen Bird applied to the Shire of Swan for approval to amalgamate Lots 1 and 2, 34 and 32 Johnson Street, on 18 September 1997, for 'Fashion House/ Café/ Tourism Uses.' During the short period of her ownership, most of the interior of the place was painted, and track lighting installed.<sup>78</sup>

On 14 January 1998 *Johnson's Complex* was transferred to Kevin James Alcock and Marianne Elizabeth Parasuik as joint tenants<sup>79</sup>.

On 25 February 1998, the Shire of Swan gave approval to commence

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<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot, Vol. 1095 Fol. 353; and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot 2, Vol. 1082 Fol. 146. 24 June 1997.

<sup>75</sup> Development Proposal for No (sic) 32 and 34 Johnson Street, Guildford, 27 June 1998; Secretary Swan Valley Tourist Council to CEO Shire of Swan, 22 July 1997; Approval to Commence Development 10 September 1997; Shire of Swan No. 34 Lot 1 Johnson Street, Guildford. File P 173030.

<sup>76</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot, Vol. 1095 Fol. 353; and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot 2, Vol. 1082 Fol. 146, 5 September 1997.

<sup>77</sup> Approval to Commence Development 10 September 1997; and noted on Approval to Commence Development, 25 February 1998. Shire of Swan No. 34 Lot 1 Johnson Street, Guildford. File P 173030.

<sup>78</sup> Marianne Parasuik site visit with Robin Chinnery, 9 September 1998.

<sup>79</sup> Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot, Vol. 1095 Fol. 353; and Certificate of Title, portion of Guildford Town Lot 140, part of Lot 2, Vol. 1082 Fol. 146, 14 January 1998.

development for a fine dining restaurant within the existing dwelling at 34 Johnson Street.<sup>80</sup> The development required minimal changes to the exterior of the buildings, whilst the interior required alterations to provide a commercial kitchen, ablutions and staff facilities. Alterations were made at 32 Johnson Street with the substantial rebuilding of the rear room under the lean-to section of the roof, and the linking of the two rooms to the north of the hall to provide display areas. The place is currently occupied by 'Whiteman's Atrium', retailing 'Quality Art and Craft'.<sup>81</sup> Currently at 34 Johnson Street, the original office, dining room, and drawing room of William George Johnson serve those functions; rooms to the south of the hall have been linked by removing walls both sides of the drawing room fireplace, and removal of the wall between the two eastern rooms of the three, to provide a reception room/dining room, in which the western fireplace is a replacement recycled piece fitted in 1998.<sup>82</sup> The restaurant, 'Whiteman's Abroad', opened for business in September 1998. The current owner resides at 32, and her daughter and son-in-law, Messrs. A. Broad, chefs at the restaurant, reside at 34 Johnson Street.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Johnson's Complex* is a complex consisting of a large single storey Federation Queen Anne style bungalow, a small Victorian Georgian cottage, a two storey Victorian Georgian stables<sup>83</sup>, archaeological remains of a mill, metal framed outbuildings, a free standing outdoor water closet, and mature gardens.

*Johnson's Complex* is located close to the Guildford town centre on the busy Johnson Street, which is a two way pair road. The verge is grassed between the road's concrete barrier kerb and the Shire's concrete slab pavement. There are three mature Queensland box trees (*Lephostemon conferta*) set in the verge lawns, which have been roughly pruned to provide clearance for the overhead power lines. The buildings in this group are generously set in open gardens. The fences to the front of the houses consist of a new open picket fence in front of 34, and a metal pool type fence in front of 32. A mixture of metal and fibrous cement Super Six profile fences surround the northern, eastern, and southern boundaries of the site. The house and gardens make up a striking and visually complex streetscape element in Johnson Street.

The grounds comprise swards of grass, bitumen paving, brick paving, and a mixture of mature and recent plantings. Mature plantings include a hedge of Plumbago (*Plumbago carpendensis*) and *Tecoma* along the northern edge of the western boundary, some Common or European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) on the northern boundary, together with Chinese pepper trees (*Schinus molle*), *Cotoneaster* sp., Lilly pilly (*Acmena smithii*), and slightly younger Coral trees (*Erythrina christi-galli*) in the north east corner. The

<sup>80</sup> Approval to Commence Development, 25 February 1998. Shire of Swan No. 34 Lot 1 Johnson Street, Guildford. File P 173030.

<sup>81</sup> Site visit Robin Chinnery, 9 September 1998.

<sup>82</sup> Marianne Parasuik site visit with Robin Chinnery, 9 September 1998

<sup>83</sup> Apperly, et. al., op. cit., pp 132-135 and pp. 42-45.

lawns have been removed in this area and replaced with brick paving, and 1998 plantings of gardenias and azaleas. There are several *prunus* trees and lemon trees in the lawn in the north garden. There is a large New Zealand Christmas tree (*Metrosideros excelsa*) to the rear of the house, and a similarly large Weeping fig tree (*Ficus sp.*), which almost envelopes an outdoor toilet behind the cottage at number 32. There are also several Loquat trees (*Eriobotrya japonica*) behind the cottage at number 32. There are several garden pieces made of coffee rock or laterite conglomerate in the shape of a basket, wishing well, and the like. A plumbago hedge was removed from the front of number 34 and relocated to the north west corner of the garden of number 34, and it is thriving in its new location. In its place there is a bed of standard Iceberg roses (*Rosa schneewittchen*) was planted recently.

The grounds contain several buildings. At number 34 Johnson Street there is a large single storey house, the remains of the mill on the northern boundary, the two storey stables in the north west corner of number 34 and a large and visually intrusive metal frame, metal clad shed. At number 32 the buildings include a simple single storey house, outdoor toilet enveloped by a large weeping fig, and another large metal framed and metal clad shed. There is a broad bitumen paved access road running along the northern side of the house, which provides access to the parking on the northern and eastern boundaries, together with paved access to the stables. The eastern and southern boundary fences are Super Six profile fibro cement.

The mill site has only a small section of brick walling showing above ground level, which is located on the northern boundary, just to the east of its mid point. The cottage at number 32 is set close to the Johnson Street boundary behind the metal framed boundary fence. The stables are located close to the boundary in the north east corner. The house at number 34 is set back in a generous amount of garden behind the replacement picket fencing.

The stables are simply laid out on two levels and consist of a hay loft, stable, and tack room. The style is a simple Victorian Georgian utilitarian building. The stable building is a gable roof structure, with walls of Sussex bond clay bricks, and a replacement Cordoba tile roof. There are half round eaves gutters and circular down pipes. The stable doors have a large rough hewn bush pole lintol, and the doors are replacement timber frames and boarded double doors. There is a similarly constructed single door to the tack room on the eastern side of the stables, and to the loft in the western gable wall. The tack room has a later brick paved floor, and the stables still have a gravel and sand floor. The internal walls are face brickwork in the same bond as the exterior. The first floor is made of timber joists spanning the full width of the stables with 8"x1" (200x25mm) boarding floors. There are some pegs left in the walls of the tack room. There is an access opening between the tack room and stables. There is little evidence of change, and some evidence of deterioration in the brickwork and timbers of this building; fretting brickwork and termite affected timbers.

To the south of the stables there is a large metal framed and metal clad shed, which is a visually dominant element in the rear garden of number 34.

The above ground evidence of the former mill consists of a section of walling of the north wall about 12'0" (3600mm) long. The wall is in poor condition and is exposed to deterioration, particularly from the northern side which is accessible to the adjoining site.

The cottage at number 32 is a simple elegantly proportioned four room Victorian Georgian<sup>84</sup> cottage with a front verandah, and a section to the rear or the east which is set beneath a low pitch roof. The rear of the cottage contains the work room and service rooms. The main section of the house under the hip roof section house has walls of polychromatic Flemish bond brickwork. Sections of the northern wall have a rendered dado which is a recently repaired element. The cottage has a replacement zincalume custom orb profile hipped roof and new colonial profile gutters. The verandah is supported on stop chamfered timber posts just over 4" square (100x100mm), with an original scalloped timber valance between posts, and replacement colonial profile gutters. The timber floor has been replaced with concrete. The windows are six pane double hung sashes, and the front door is a replacement 1930s glass panelled door. The front verandah has a replacement double curve roof. The rear verandah previously had a similar roof, however, this is now a shallow monopitch roof. The rooms have lime plastered walls, and 6" timber board floors which have been sanded and highly finished with a gloss varnish. The ceilings in the front four rooms, or principal rooms remain ripple iron with a timber cornice. Picture rails have been added to the walls. The principal rooms have fireplaces, with replacement surrounds. Rooms 1 and 3 are linked with a new opening, and shelving has been introduced into these rooms for display purposes. The kitchen retains its breast, though the lintol has been raised to a higher level than its original position during conservation works. The top of the breast narrows to the flue under the ceiling line which is an unusual feature; it is customary for the narrowing to occur within the roof void.

The principal rear room under the lean-to section of roof has been substantially rebuilt in the 1998 conservation works with new wandoo floors, French doors, new plasterboard soffit linings, and decorative features. This room overlooks the rear garden, which has been re-organised with brick paving and new plantings of fruit trees. The last rooms are the bathroom and laundry, both later additions, which exhibit features in a style which became common in the Inter-War years and persisted through to the late 1950s. The rooms have been interlinked and feature laundry fittings, the original bathroom terrazzo floor, shower, and bath hob.

Beyond the immediate rear garden is the brick construction water closet with a sprung corrugated iron roof. This element has remnants of trellis, and is almost completely concealed from view by the mature weeping fig,

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<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 42-45.

which has covered the building and trellis.

The cottage is in good order, is well maintained and is brightly and cheerfully decorated. It functions as both a gallery (rooms 1 and 3), living quarters for the owners (rooms 5-8), together with a workroom (room 9).

The house at number 34 is essentially what remains, having been adapted through, time and latterly, conserved, of a large, formerly 14 room, Federation Queen Anne style house.<sup>85</sup> An earlier two storey house was demolished to make way for the present house. No surface evidence of the earlier house remains. In the manner typical of its style, the house is asymmetrically planned, though it is organised around a central hall and corridor. It has wide verandahs to the western and northern sides, and has a group of five capacious rooms at the front of the house and rooms of a lesser order to the rear. It has a rear verandah, which has a modern pre-fabricated panel cool room set under the southern end of the verandah roof.

The house is built from clay bricks laid in Flemish bond and tuck pointed with a white joint. There is a stucco plinth together with stucco strings and sills. It has a clay tile roof with dragon's back ridge tiles. The roof has a hip and gable format. It is steeply pitched with a Kookaburra pattern finial over the entry gable. The front of the house has a thrust bay which is carried on a four pointed brick arch, behind which lies a bay window. The thrust bay captures the return verandah at its southern end. The verandah roof is carried on turned timber posts, which have replacement post bottoms set on top of a replacement concrete verandah. The entry to the verandah is highlighted by a delicately detailed timber gable. Between the verandah posts there is a cast iron lace frieze, which employs the urn as the organising visual element. The windows are single pane double hung sashes, and the front door is a solid raised panel pattern with half glazed stained glass sidelights. There are iron hit and miss grilles set at high level in the walls.

The interior retains many of its original features with overlays from each of its principal periods of development, including the present one. Many original features such as timber floors, windows, and door openings are original fabric, with items such as fire surrounds, doors, ceilings, lighting, and utility fittings in replacement materials. Many of the alterations and fittings have origins spread in time through the history of the house. Most of the interior doors are replacements.

The entrance hall (Room 1) has a tessellated tile floor, deep two part moulded skirtings, plastered walls, and an arched entry to the hall beyond. The doorways retain their original frames and architraves, but doors are replacements. The lath and plaster ceiling has been replaced with a fibrous plaster ceiling with a cast ceiling rose.

Room 2 functions as an office and has a carpeted timber floor with plaster walls, an original fireplace and surround, and a replacement fibrous plaster ceiling which is laid out in a panels with cover batten.

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<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 132-135



Room 3 now functions as a sitting room and is situated in the western thrust bay previously referred to in the exterior description. It retains its timber floor and joinery details, fireplace, and surround. Unlike most other rooms in the house, room 3 retains its lath and plaster ceiling. Valances added in the Whiteman period remain in place, and as part of the 1998 works, an arched opening has been made on either side of the fireplace on the eastern wall to link with the dining areas in rooms 4 and 5.

Rooms 4 and 5 have been linked as part of the 1998 works to form the principal seating area of the restaurant. Both rooms retain many of their original features such as timber floors and joinery. Both fireplaces remain and have gas log fires positioned in them. The mantle to room 4 has a later imitation antique mantle laid over the original mantle board. Both rooms have picture rails and cast plaster wall vents set at high level. Ceilings have been replaced in both rooms with fibrous plaster ceilings, room 4 with a single Moderne style ceiling rose, and room 5 with two small roses.

Room 6 is the largest room in the house, and has a generous bay window at the northern end reflecting the bay window in room 3. Room 6 also retains many of its original features including floors, openings, and joinery. However, the fireplace surround is a replacement, as is the ceiling. The ceiling is made of fibrous plaster with an oversized cast plaster ceiling rose in the centre of the room, and 4 medallions which feature horses heads in each of the four corner panels; this is one of the more peculiar features of the house.

Room 7 is retained as a bedroom and is modest in scale. It retains its original fabric with the exception of the ceiling, which is fibrous plaster, and the window in the north wall has been converted into a door employing components which were commonly used in the Inter-War period.

On the southern side of the corridor two earlier rooms have been joined together to provide a restaurant kitchen (Room 8). Some original features have been retained, but floors, ceilings, and walls have been treated with modern materials and finishes to meet with current health standards. The timber floors were removed to provide a tiled concrete kitchen floor to meet present health requirements. The original fireplace has been covered, and a window in the southern wall has been similarly treated, while one window has been left in its original state.

Room 9 is a bathroom which is rendered in the early post World War Two mode with terrazzo floors, a glazed shower screen, pink wall tiles and sanitary fittings, and a plasterboard ceiling.

Room 10, which was previously a living room, has been converted into a bar servery with all modern fittings. Original features have been retained, and a safe let into the fireplace on the west wall in Whiteman's time has been left in place.

The remaining rooms across the rear of the house have been adapted to provide male, female, and disabled toilets. Where possible original

features have been retained and new elements have been introduced to provide for the new facilities. For example, the fireplace in the area which is now the ladies toilets has been retained.

There is a small cellar under the new toilets in the north east corner of the house. This is fitted out in a faux English pub style with vinyl floor finishes, faux blackened oak beams and pub fittings. It has a concrete floor which has a tiled finish. Note that the cellar and its peculiar fitout date from Whiteman's period of ownership.

The whole of the place is in good order, and retains elements of its historic development from the time of its construction to the present day. Its domestic origins are clearly legible, as are elements of its history as a hospital, and later as a residence once more. On balance, the exterior is more true to its original concept than the interior.

The house now functions as a restaurant and quarters with support facilities fitted into the rear rooms.

### **13.3 REFERENCES**

National Trust Assessment Exposition April 1976.

Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet.

### **13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH**

Archaeological research should be undertaken at the site when the opportunity arises to research Johnson's mill.

Further research may reveal additional information and details about the mill and associated buildings, the first residence of the Johnson family at the site, the details of construction and history of the cottage, and of the construction of the residence at 34 Johnson Street.

Further research may ascertain whether the ticket of leave men employed by George Johnson from 1867 to 1875, worked at the place.