



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*

Thomas Little Memorial Hall is noteworthy as a reflection of the European background and beliefs of an isolated Catholic group of early settlers. It is a direct translation of a well proportioned, Irish rural neo-Gothic building into an Australian setting, with little or no concession made to Western Australian climatic conditions. (Criterion 1.1)

Thomas Little Memorial Hall contains examples of finely crafted hand-made joinery, especially the lancet windows and sashes. It also displays considerable masonry skills using local wood-fired bricks. (Criterion 1.2)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Thomas Little Memorial Hall illustrates, and was a focal point in, the early development of a rural Catholic enclave in a predominantly Anglican colonial community and was the first Catholic church established outside the metropolitan area of the Swan River Colony. (Criterion 2.1)

Thomas Little Memorial Hall is significant for its association with Thomas Little, a local landowner who sponsored Irish Catholic settlement in the Dardanup area. Little provided the land and building materials for the establishment of the Church and monastery for his household, tenant farmers and local community and raised funds for its completion. (Criterion 2.3)

Thomas Little Memorial Hall is significant for its associations with the Irish, and later Italian, migrants who formed the Dardanup district Catholic community. The Church played an important role in their religious and social lives and in their adjustment to a new place. (Criterion 2.3)

Thomas Little Memorial Hall is also significant for its associations with the Benedictines from New Norcia, particularly Father Garrido, the parish's second priest and a great motivator in the community. (Criterion 2.3)

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

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Thomas Little Memorial Hall has technical significance and is a potential educational resource. It demonstrates the trades, skill and resourcefulness employed by the joiners, carpenters and bricklayers in a remote rural location using hand tools and local materials in the mid-1850s. (Criterion 3.1)

Thomas Little Memorial Hall demonstrates considerable brick-laying skills in the forming and placing of the buttress piers and in the detail of the arches. (Criterion 3.3)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Thomas Little Memorial Hall has been valued by the Catholic community at Dardanup for 140 years, filling a central role in the religious, educational and social life of the district. The community's willingness to maintain, restore and utilise the place over this period indicates the regard in which it is held. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Thomas Little Memorial Hall is rare in that it has no masonry equivalent in Western Australia. While the Anglican churches at Picton Junction and Australind are of similar proportion and sophistication, they were constructed of timber and do not reflect the masonry heritage of the Irish. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Thomas Little Memorial Hall is representative of the neo-Gothic style of architecture. It is one of the earliest rural manifestations of this style in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

The place is in a sound condition. Dampness and salt accumulation have damaged the face bricks and affected the internal plaster, while the external render is deteriorating. Some restumping is needed, and the floorboards do not appear to have been inspected.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The integrity of its underlying fabric is moderate.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The authenticity of the place is moderate.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Michael Broderick and Partners, Architects: 'Conservation Plan for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall formerly Church of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish of Dardanup' (prepared for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall Committee August 1996).

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence refer to Michael Broderick and Partners, Architects: 'Conservation Plan for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall formerly Church of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish of Dardanup' (prepared for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall Committee August 1996).

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence refer to Michael Broderick and Partners, Architects: 'Conservation Plan for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall formerly Church of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish of Dardanup' (prepared for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall Committee August 1996).

13.3 REFERENCES

Michael Broderick and Partners, Architects: 'Conservation Plan for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall formerly Church of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish of Dardanup' (prepared for the Thomas Little Memorial Hall Committee August 1996).

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH
