



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.

The wording of this document has been adapted from "Mouchemore's Cottage, Albany - Conservation Plan" prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects and Robin Chinnery, Historian, for the Western Australian Museum, Albany, in December 2003, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.4.2 Fishing and whaling
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 305 Fishing and other maritime industry
- 306 Domestic activities

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is a fine example of a pair of timber-framed buildings constructed using a variety of materials and construction and cladding techniques, rendered in the Victorian Georgian and Federation Bungalow styles. (Criterion 1.1)

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is part of an historic precinct including the Residency Museum, Police Barracks and Gaol, the *Amity* reconstruction and a number of relocated buildings in a green setting with a small number of mature tuart trees, which forms a significant vista from Princess Royal Harbour and the western land approaches along the foreshore. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Since the 1850s, *Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany* has had an almost uninterrupted ownership by persons closely associated with the important maritime history of the Albany region, initially through whaling activities, then the water police, and, from 1905 and into the twenty-first

century, the fishing industry at Albany under the Mouchemore family. (Criterion 2.1)

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is the only surviving residence of what was a group of nineteenth century residences built to the west of Parade Street, Albany, in the nineteenth century. (Criterion 2.1)

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany was built to house whalers in the nineteenth century during the period in which shore-based whaling was a significant regional industry and as Albany grew and developed as the main port for Western Australia, before the construction of Fremantle Harbour. (Criterion 2.2)

From 1905 to 2001, *Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany* was owned by the Mouchemore family, important participants in the Albany fishing community from the 1890s, and the net shed continues to be used by the family in 2005 for sorting and drying nets. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany, by reason of its location, sequence of construction from the mid nineteenth century and continuity of use, has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the development of Albany and the region, nineteenth century shore whaling and the fishing industry on the south coast, especially by means of archaeological investigation of the site. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is valued by the Albany and wider community as a representation of Albany's nineteenth century history, as evidenced by its inclusion in the Municipal Heritage Inventory of the City of Albany, its purchase by the City, and the interest and involvement in the place of the Western Australian Museum. (Criterion 4.1)

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany, in its prominent position in Parade Street by the present day *Amity* replica, contributes to the community's sense of place as a visible reminder of the maritime history of Albany. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is rare as an extant timber residence constructed in the first three decades of European settlement in the State, and as a nineteenth century timber frame 'wattle and daub' or 'lath and plaster' cottage in good condition. (Criterion 5.1)

The use of salvaged ships timbers in parts of the construction and the interior ship's doors are rare features for an extant nineteenth century building. (Criterion 5.1)

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is rare as a residence associated with nineteenth century whalers and, from 1905 to the end of the twentieth century, fishing families, and provides evidence of the way of life of shore based whaling and fishing families from the 1850s to the present, a way of life that is now uncommon. The *Mouchemore's* fishing vessel, *Wildflower*, remains in the water close to the place and is believed to be the oldest operating licensed fishing boat in Western Australia, having been in use since 1889. (Criteria 5.1 & 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is representative of a timber-framed cottage, clad in a variety of materials that reveal a variety of construction techniques in the Victorian Georgian and Federation Bungalow styles. (Criterion 6.2)

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany provides evidence of the existence and way of life of fishing families between 1905 to the present. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The immediate setting of the cottage, simplified through time, remains in good order, although plantings on the eastern side are overgrown and unkempt.

The elements of the cottage have been maintained regularly and building defects are confined to local issues that can be addressed. The structural condition of the roofs has not been ascertained, but there is no serious deflection to suggest that any serious structural problems exist.

Similarly, the net shed remains in use and has been regularly maintained and is in relatively good repair.

Overall, *Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany* is in fair to good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany has ceased to be used for its intended purpose, but all the means for occupation remain in place. Its original use and its subsequent adaptive use through time are readily discernible. Its integrity is considered high. The net shed continues to be used for storage related to the fishing industry, but is no longer exclusively used as a net shed.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany has been altered in many ways, and expanded to suit changing needs. Most of the original elements remain in place, or substantial fragments of them remain. The cumulative changes are as important to the overall heritage value of the place as the original elements, as they tell a story about the use and progressive

improvement of the place. Overall, the place has a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Supporting evidence has been taken from “Mouchemore’s Cottage, Albany - Conservation Plan” prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects and Robin Chinnery, Historian, for the Western Australian Museum, Albany, in December 2003.

Key sections used: Documentary Evidence pp.1-60; Physical Evidence pp. 61-120; Comparative Analysis of the Place pp.125-127.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to “Mouchemore’s Cottage, Albany - Conservation Plan” prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects and Robin Chinnery, Historian, for the Western Australian Museum, Albany, in December 2003.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to “Mouchemore’s Cottage, Albany - Conservation Plan” prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects and Robin Chinnery, Historian, for the Western Australian Museum, Albany, in December 2003.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information, refer to “Mouchemore’s Cottage, Albany - Conservation Plan” prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects and Robin Chinnery, Historian, for the Western Australian Museum, Albany, in December 2003.

The HCWA database identifies only four other extant timber residences constructed prior to 1860, all of which are Registered places:

P00344 *Leschenault Homestead*, Bunbury, including both a c.1846 wattle and daub cottage covered with weatherboards and the main single-storey weatherboard-clad adobe building, erected c.1854-70, with encircling verandahs and a shingle roof covered with corrugated iron;

P01188 *Church of St Nicholas*, Australind (1840), a single-storey weatherboard cottage with corrugated iron roof;

P02830 *Wansbrough House*, York, which includes a c.1859 weatherboard cottage together with the main c.1860s brick homestead; and,

P04536 *Alverstoke*, Brunswick Junction, a pastoral property established from 1840 that includes slab-walled worker’s and single-men’s cottages.

A further nine residences constructed predominantly of timber are noted in the database as having been constructed between 1860 and 1889, two of which are Registered [P00043 *Albany Pilot Station* (constructed 1889) and P3478 *Slab Cottage Group, Quindalup* (1860)]. Six of these nine were constructed in the 1880s. From 1890 there is a steep increase in the number of extant timber residences listed in the database.

A comprehensive search of the database for places with the historic theme 'fishing and other maritime industries' is not possible, as it is not a compulsory data field. Aside from *Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany*, 68 other places are listed with this theme, the majority of which are associated with whaling or pearling. Only 14 are nineteenth century places, of which three include residences. These are: P2911 *Male Family Residence, Broome*, constructed 1889, which is still owned by the Male family; P3239 *Cossack Town Site Precinct*, an 1870s port associated with the pearling industry; and, P3444 *Old Onslow Townsite*, the archaeological remains of a port dating from the 1880s. All three are associated with the pearling industry of the Northwest, and are Registered places.

Eighteen Registered places are listed with the historic theme 'fishing and other maritime industries', of which 5 are residences. Eight of the places are located in Broome and associated with pearling. Three are in Albany and are the remains of whaling stations, and one is a sealers oven (also near Albany). Two are shipping offices in Fremantle's West End. Onslow and Cossack, mentioned above, are town sites associated with pearling. P3402 *Bunbury Timber Jetty*, constructed from 1864, is in ongoing use for recreational fishing. P0109 *Albany Fish Ponds* was constructed in 1870 and used for pisciculture.

Of the 21 places in the database with the historic theme 'fishing and other maritime industries' which are not identified with pearling or whaling, and are not natural features, ten are jetties or wharfs and five are canneries or processing plants. The other six are: P5844 *Cacker Ally, Jurien*, the site of a former fishermen's camp; P14398 *Parry's Beach Settlement, Denmark*; P6790 *Ivan Smith's Farm – Site, Kumminin*; and three Registered places already discussed, being shipping offices and fish ponds. It is not clear what Ivan Smith's Farm's link to fishing is, as it is in the significantly landlocked inland Shire of Merredin. Eleven of these 21 places date from after World War Two, and a further four have no date identified.

Keyword searches of the database also identify a small number of fish shops, and, in Dongara, a Fishermen's Hall. Settlements on the Houtman Abrolhos Islands are built, owned and used by professional rock lobster fishing families. These are predominantly post-World War Two constructions.

Mouchemore's Cottage and Net Shed, Albany is rare as an extant timber residence constructed in the first three decades of European settlement in the State. It is rare as a residence associated with nineteenth century whalers and as a structure of any kind associated with the fishing industry prior to World War Two.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

"Mouchemore's Cottage, Albany - Conservation Plan" prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects and Robin Chinnery, Historian, for the Western Australian Museum, Albany, in December 2003.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH
