



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.4.3 Mining
- 4.3 Developing institutions
- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 6.5 Educating people in remote places

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 110 Resource exploitation & depletion
- 303 Mining (incl. mineral processing)
- 402 Education & science
- 404 Community services & utilities

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Old Primary School, Southern Cross contributes to the historic townscape and identity of the town of Southern Cross as a good example of a 1890s school influenced by the Federation Arts and Crafts style. (Criterion 1.1)

Old Primary School, Southern Cross typifies the scale, materials and design of Government buildings designed by the Government Architect George Temple Poole, in the 1890s. (Criterion 1.1)

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is an integral element within an original government precinct in which the Post Office and Residence, adjacent Courthouse and Registrar's office (fmr) also remain. (Criterion 1.4)

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

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. Parks, *Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

The construction of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* in 1895 as a substantial stone building, followed shortly after by extensions, is indicative of the rapid expansion and population growth of the Eastern Goldfields in the 1890s and the importance and support given to this development by the Government. (Criterion 2.1)

Southern Cross was one of the first towns to be established in the Eastern Goldfields following the discovery of gold in the Yilgarn district and as such played an important role in the early 1890s as a starting point for further explorations in the area and the establishment of new towns and mines. (Criterion 2.1)

The construction of the place symbolises the spirit of economic optimism generated by the rich gold finds in the Eastern Goldfields in this period, and the importance of the town as a regional centre. (Criterion 2.1)

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is significant in the pattern of the history of West Australian schools as a late example of the Hall and Gallery school type, built during a period when school design and teaching methods were undergoing change. (Criterion 2.1)

The changing fortunes of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross*, with the addition of classrooms, reflect the fortunes of the Eastern Goldfields in general and the town of Southern Cross in particular. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Old Primary School, Southern Cross, in the nature of usage of the building and deployment of staff, demonstrates adaptation for current teaching methods and resources. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is associated with Government Architect George Temple-Poole, who along with many other immigrant architects, brought an international influence to architecture in Western Australia and who was responsible for the standardised plan and design of many public buildings of the gold boom period, including the design of the original school building and later additions. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is highly valued by the local community for social, cultural and, particularly, educational associations since 1895.

Old Primary School, Southern Cross contributes to the local community's sense of place. The use of the place for classrooms and as a school library resource centre has maintained a tangible link with the past. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Old Primary School, Southern Cross was built of local stone quarried on site. (Criterion 5.1)

Old Primary School, Southern Cross was one of the last two schools built in the Hall and Gallery style in Western Australia and one of only three still in use as part of a school function. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is a representative example of a regional State school designed in the 1890s by the Government Architect of the day, George Temple Poole. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is in fair to good condition having been in continued educational use since construction. Regular maintenance has been applied to those areas in constant use whereas some environmental effects are evident on the exterior, particularly the rising damp damage and subsequent repairs to the stone walls.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Old Primary School, Southern Cross has retained a high degree of integrity retaining uses associated with education, within the school context. Some changes have taken place over the years, to facilitate ongoing uses but those changes are minimal in the context of the place, and the original school use is identifiable.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The remaining original fabric of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* is mostly intact. The original face stone has been partially repaired but still displays considerable damage. There have been some changes, most significantly the removal of the interior and rear walls of the original school building, and removal of the fireplace, in the additional schoolroom. *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* has retained a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Historians Irene Sauman, and Susan Hall, and Laura Gray, Heritage and Conservation Consultant, in April 2010, with amendments and/or additions by State Heritage Office staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is a single-storey stone building with brick quoining and a corrugated iron gable roof, showing influences of the Federation Arts and Crafts style, constructed in 1895 with additions in 1896. In 1977 the place was converted for use as the library for the Southern Cross High School and is known as the Forrester Resource Centre. Buildings added to the School site since 1962 include the Junior High School wing, administration building, science block, telecentre, workshops and sheds and covered assembly, within landscaped grounds. Other police buildings and the school quarters (1896) have been removed.¹

The miners' camp at Southern Cross grew into a provisioning centre and the starting point for further prospecting in the district. On 1 October 1888, the Yilgarn goldfield was declared. The townsite of Southern Cross was gazetted in May 1890, by which time some services had already been established.²

A police presence arrived in May 1889, in the form of Sergeant Bishop and Constables McCarthy, Chisholm, Sellinger and Williams with three horses. They built make-shift bush-sheds to house chaff and supplies but it took until October for a rudimentary but complete police station to be completed.³

In 1889 Miss Beatrice Clarke established the Clarke Private School for children of Mine Managers.⁴ In June 1890, Reverend William Carmichael, a Wesleyan minister, conducted private classes on Sundays for older children who could afford to pay. When a provisional government school opened in May 1891 Rev Carmichael was appointed head teacher and taught 23 children in the hessian-clad Wesleyan Hall, which was hired for purpose. His income included the daily fee paid by the students.⁵

The town of Southern Cross was declared a municipality on 16 February 1892. In that year, tenders were called for construction of police station, stables, court house, Registrar's office and post office.⁶ These buildings were sited on Reserve 1573, which had been set aside for public purposes and was bounded by Achernar, Antares, Altair and Canopus streets. It was one of three reserves established in the centre of town, each occupying a street block and comprising

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- 1 A well claimed to be on the site was not located nor does it appear on any plan of the existing school site.
 - 2 Harris, C. M., 'Water...Tragedy and Triumph on the Western Australian Goldfields', *Early Days*, Vol 3 Pt. 9, pp. 18-25; Uren, Malcolm, *Glint of Gold*, Melbourne, Robertson & Mullen, 1953, pp. 55-61.
 - 3 Pashley, A. R., *Policing our State: a history of Police Stations and police officers in Western Australia 1829-1945*, Perth, EDUCANT, 2000 pp. 453-454.
 - 4 Information provided by Education Department, 1 February 2010, 2 pages, in HCWA file P10022.
 - 5 Ridders, John, *Western Australian Schools 1830-1980*, Part two: Schools and Teachers 1872-1895, Perth, Ed. Dept, 1968, alphabetical listing.
 - 6 Public Works Department, *Annual Report*, 1892, pp. 21-26; Pashley, A.R., op cit, pp. 453-454.

some 5.15 acres.⁷ The police station was located in the centre of the Reserve site (Lot 4) fronting Antares Street. The post and telegraph office was on the corner of Altair and Achernar streets (Lot 754, Reserve 23247), and the court house and Registrar's quarters were on Antares Street (Lot 721 Reserve 14401).⁸

In 1893, school enrolments were 15 boys and 11 girls and concern was expressed about the number of children not attending because parents could not afford the daily fee.⁹ By mid-1894, enrolments had increased considerably with the completion of the railway line to Southern Cross and construction underway to Coolgardie.¹⁰ Southern Cross councillors Booth, Sheard and Cobham made a deputation to the Premier, Sir John Forrest for the establishment of a government school and allocation of land.¹¹

A state school is greatly needed in Southern Cross, 59 children on the rolls at the Wesleyan Church School for those who could afford to pay.¹²

A 1.28 acre site at the northern end of Reserve 1573 was agreed upon as suitable for a school but the construction of the building was delayed when no tenders were received.¹³ After a second tender call by the Public Works Department (PWD), John O'Connell was awarded the contract mid-1894 to build the school for a cost of £1,233.¹⁴

Not everyone agreed with the choice of site and O'Connell began laying the foundations for *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* on a reserve near the railway dam instead of on Reserve 1573. Dr Victor Black, the Yilgarn Warden, was suspected of deliberately marking out the school site on the alternative location, which he thought better suited to the purpose. His action was supported by the Minister of Education, who considered that the site on Reserve 1573 would soon be outgrown, but at a public meeting, Father Prendergast, the first Catholic priest appointed to Southern Cross, put forward the motion to build the school on Reserve 1573. He was in support of the parents who wanted the more central location and his motion was successfully carried.¹⁵

With the choice of site settled, O'Connell made use of the large quantity of stone on Reserve 1573 and employed a number of the town's people in the quarrying process.¹⁶ The completed building was officially handed over to the Education

⁷ Map of the Municipality of Southern Cross, 31 March 1901, map 28 accompanying 1901 census; Landgate Reserve detail, Reserve 1573, gazetted 29 May 1890.

⁸ PWD file 1392/62, Southern Cross School site plan, [1962] courtesy Building Management & Works (BMW).

⁹ Information provided by Education Department, 1 February 2010, op cit.

¹⁰ Gunzberg, A. & Austin, J., *Rails Through the Bush, Light Railway Research Society of Australia*, Melbourne, 1997, p. 206.

¹¹ Stevens, Lance, 'History of the Government School in Southern Cross', *Crosswords*, Vol. 9, Issue 32, 22 August 2002, pp. 28-29.

¹² Some wording of the deputation quoted in Stevens, Lance, *Yilgarn: the early years 1893-1890*, Lance Stevens, Southern Cross, 1998, p. 35.

¹³ Landgate Reserve detail, Reserve 3191, gazetted 3 January 1896 as school site.

¹⁴ Stevens, Lance, 'History of the Government School in Southern Cross', op cit.

¹⁵ Gray, Laura & Sauman, Irene, *Conservation Plan for St Mary's Church of Our Lady of Montserrat, Southern Cross*, 2008.

¹⁶ Stevens, Lance, 'History of the Government School in Southern Cross', op cit.

Department on 2 December 1895.¹⁷ The school was constructed as a late version of the Hall and Gallery type, the design of which allowed for halls to be used as large classrooms. This design reinforced the educational practices of the day, which stipulated that the schoolmaster taught in the large classroom (hall), while the assistant teachers taught in adjoining classrooms. This arrangement meant that the classrooms could only be entered through the hall, therefore allowing the schoolmaster to monitor both the students and the assistant teachers, and in effect oversee the running of the school.¹⁸ *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* initially consisted of two large rooms 30 feet by 22 feet, which were considered lofty and well ventilated.

By the late 1890s, the nature of teaching was also changing and with the introduction of Cyril Jackson's 'New Education' policies saw each class housed permanently in a classroom, and the hall space used for assemblies rather than teaching. These changes in educational approach eventually led to the Hall and Gallery type being replaced by the Central Hall type. The long side of the building faced Antares Street.

Lack of water was a problem on the goldfields and so all Government buildings were provided with tanks to collect roof runoff. The Southern Cross school had a standard square tank and an underground tank that held 10,000 gallons.¹⁹ The location of the underground tank is not marked on existing plans and there is no indication as to where it was sited.

Enrolments in January 1896 recorded 56 boys and 52 girls, although the actual attendance was only 52.²⁰ The town's population had increased during the construction of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* as the Northam-Southern Cross section of the Eastern Goldfield railway was completed on 1 July 1894 and work commenced immediately on extending the line to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie.²¹ In 1896 additions to *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* were built by contractor M. Barry for £1,188 12s 6d. The extension consisted of a classroom, a hat-room and verandah added at the rear and created an L-shaped building. It is the gabled end of this addition that forms the distinctive facade to Antares Street.²²

The school quarters were also constructed in 1896, in stone by H. Parker for a cost of £433 8s 7d and completed on 5 October. The quarters consisted of a single bedroom, a bathroom, kitchen, dining room, store and hall with full-width verandah facing north-west. In 1898, an extra bedroom was added.²³

¹⁷ Stevens, Lance, *Yilgarn: the early years 1893-1890*, op cit, p. 61.

¹⁸ Siew, Adelyn Mapping Schools; Exploring Spatial Histories of Government Primary Schools in Western Australia, Bentley, WA: Curtin University of Technology, 2004 p117.

¹⁹ PWD Plan 3592/4 - drawings 1, 4 & 5, Floor plan, elevations, window detail & square tank, 1894-95, courtesy BMW.

²⁰ Information provided by Education Department, 1 February 2010, op cit.

²¹ Gunzberg, A. & Austin, J., *Rails Through the Bush*, Light Railway Research Society of Australia, Melbourne, 1997, p. 206.

²² *The West Australian*, 'Southern Cross additions', 24 December 1896, p. 5; PWD Annual Report, 1896 In *Votes and Proceedings*, 1896-87 vol. 2, p. 1915; PWD Plan 4869/4 - drawings 1, 2 & 4, Southern Cross school additions, c.1896, courtesy BMW.

²³ PWD Plan 4869, Southern Cross School quarters - additions, 1898, courtesy BMW; *The West Australian*, Southern Cross school additions, 19 November, p. 6 & 24 December 1896, p. 5.

The police presence on Reserve 1573 was separated from the school grounds by a corrugated iron fence, with the police stables built in 1892 located midway along it.²⁴ In 1895, plans were drawn for constable quarters and Lockup. The quarters, of timber and iron construction contained four rooms with verandah all round and was located on Altair Street.²⁵

The Goldfield pipeline reached Southern Cross on 30 October 1902, providing reliable water at a much lower cost. The railway line and the pipeline encouraged more intensive agriculture along the route, which was further encouraged by the goldfields market. Agricultural railway lines were constructed, looping through the central wheatbelt and linking to the Eastern Goldfield line at Northam, Merredin and Southern Cross. Despite the generally declining gold production in the 1900s, Southern Cross continued to flourish with gold mines operating at Marvel Loch.²⁶

In 1902 two extra bedrooms were added to the school quarters and in September 1905 an additional classroom was completed at the rear of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* at a cost of £407 18 6. This was added to the original building creating an 'L' on the opposite side to the 1896 addition. Further modifications took place in 1908 with the conversion of the cloakrooms, on the western side, to a manual training room, and two storerooms were installed onto the southern end of the building.²⁷

On the Police reserve, a new station building was constructed in 1911, to the east of the existing station on Antares Street and the original police building became the sergeant's quarters.²⁸

In 1925, the manual training centre at *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* closed.²⁹ Despite the Commonwealth Government's gold bonus and the new gold discoveries made in the Yilgarn district, the Depression years of the late 1920s to early 1930s resulted in decreased school enrolments and in 1935 the Country Women's Association (CWA) was able to hire an empty classroom for meetings at a fee of 2s 6d.³⁰

Enrolments had fallen to a low of 80, but they were beginning to increase after the Second World War. The place had gone for many years without major maintenance or repairs and in 1947 an Inspector's report described 'a dismal

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- 24 PWD Plan 15750, Police buildings and site plan, 27 June 1911 & Plan 15984, 'Southern Cross Lockup additions', 12 October 1911, courtesy BMW.
 - 25 PWD, *Annual reports*, 1895, p. 6, 1896 p. 49 & 1897 p. 79; PWD plan, 3698 -drawing 1, cell doors January 1896 & 'Southern Cross police station repairs', 25 May 1906 (with floor plan of Lockup); Van Bremen, I. H., 'Appendix C3: Police Stations 1894-95.
 - 26 Glynn, Sean, *Government Policy and Agricultural Development: A study of the role of government in the development of the Western Australian wheat belt, 1900-1930*, UWA Press, 1975, pp. 34-36; Hunt, Lyall (ed), op cit; Stevens, Lance, op cit.
 - 27 PWD Plan 11908, classroom addition, 27 May 1905 & Plan 1578/08, Southern Cross school repairs & renovations & additions, c.1908, courtesy BMW.
 - 28 Colonial Secretary's Office general file, 'Southern Cross police Gaol – general file, 1921-1940', Police gaols at Busselton, Collie, Leonora, Southern Cross and Toodyay – closing of, 2 July 1929, SROWA, CONS 752, Item 1929/0739.
 - 29 Information provided by Education Department, 1 February 2010, op cit.
 - 30 Forrester, Erna L., *History of Southern Cross Branch of CWA, 1934-1971*, [Erna Forrester, 1971], p. 4.

picture of neglect in the maintenance of the school buildings'.³¹ The poor classroom lighting was criticised and the unhygienic and fly ridden toilet facilities were a constant source of complaint, especially with fears for poliomyelitis outbreaks. It took three more years before *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* was issued with the promised new shelter sheds, latrines and septic tanks.³²

In July 1951, local MLA L. F. Kelly accompanied Minister for Works, David Brand and the Architectural Supervisor, Mr. Solomon on an inspection of the school. The grounds were recognized as being well below the space required for the 100 students enrolled. Mr. Kelly proposed re-siting the school onto a larger and more satisfactory location.³³ This issue was to be debated for the next twenty years.

In 1952, appeals were made for a junior high school, but the Director General of Education stated this was not warranted in Southern Cross.³⁴ The baby boom was having an effect on enrolments with an increase to 136 students in 1955 and the manual training class had to be held in the old Road Board Hall. In January 1958, the verandah of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* was enclosed and the hat room converted for use as a manual training centre. In July 1959, the local health inspector registered the school enrolments as 95 girls and 70 boys, a total of 165 pupils in four classrooms. Criticism of the school's amenities continued into 1962. The lighting was listed as a problem at night for the migrant education classes and P & C meetings and for school socials held in the main hall.³⁵ The situation culminated with a letter to the Minister for Education from MLA L. F. Kelly suggesting that:

An alternative school site needs to be considered ... Failing an alternative site an urgent improvement to existing conditions might be brought about in land adjoining the school on the eastern side, now occupied by the police station and quarters, and even the Mines Department section could be acquired by the Education Department, thus more than doubling its present ground space.³⁶

Approval was given in October 1963 to build a new classroom wing at Southern Cross School and a directive was given that 'action to acquire land from the adjoining Police Reserve should proceed'.³⁷

In March 1964, a tentative plan was drawn for a new wing comprising classrooms and administration centre. The new wing was to be the Southern Cross Junior High while *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* was to continue to be used for primary school classes with the demolition of the classroom added in 1905, the installation of highlight windows and a new verandah. A successful request was put to the Commissioner of Police to excise a strip of land, 25 feet by 208 feet, from the adjoining police Reserve and include this in school Reserve 3191 to

³¹ Education Dept file, 'Southern Cross High School, 1950-1962', Health inspector's report, 16 December 1947, SROWA, CONS 1846, Item 1962/0335.

³² PWD Plan 1813-15, Southern Cross School & quarters, R & R, new shelter shed, new latrines & new septic tank system, 28 August 1948, courtesy BMW.

³³ PWD file, Southern Cross School and Quarters - additions', 16 August 1951, SROWA, CONS 689, Item 1950/2720.

³⁴ Education Dept file, 'Southern Cross District High School – Remaking a Junior High School, 1951-1964', 11 March 1952, SROWA, CONS 1653, Item 1951/0424.

³⁵ Education Dept file, 'Southern Cross Primary School - buildings & works 1958-1967', 7 July 1958 - 14 February 1962, SROWA, CONS 1612 Item 1958/1640.

³⁶ Education Dept file, Item 1958/1640, op cit, 19 July 1962.

³⁷ Education Dept file, Item 1958/1640, op cit, 1 October 1963.

accommodate the new school wing. A garage on the border of the police land, which had replaced, or been adapted from the stables, was relocated. The strip of land did not extend the full width of the Reserve site, but only as far as the yard of the Constable's quarters.³⁸

At the beginning of 1965 Southern Cross School was re-classified as a Class II Junior High School. The plans for the new wing included three classrooms, a multi-purpose room, manual training room, store rooms and staff offices. The larger of the two classrooms in the 1895 *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* was to be used as a library. Builders A. & M. Scaffidi of Joondanna were awarded the contract to build the school extension in brick with asbestos roofing for a cost of £66,154. The new wing was occupied at the beginning of the 1966 school year and the enrolment of 193 students that year comprised 138 primary and 55 secondary students. The building was officially opened on 23 September 1966, by the Minister for Education, E. H. M. Lewis.³⁹

Although the school had gained more classrooms, it was still in need of larger grounds. The push began again for the school to expand to the south, onto Police Reserve 1573. The Police Commissioner responded that, although the police buildings were very old, replacing them on a new site was not a consideration for at least three years.⁴⁰

In September 1966, the police presence was increased to a Sergeant and four Constables in preparation for the construction of the standard gauge railway line, which was estimated to bring 200 additional workers to the Southern Cross work camp, requiring an extra police officer to assist with security escorts for the mining companies.⁴¹

The Southern Cross Junior High School continued to grow and two classrooms were added in 1967-1970. They were located to the rear of *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* and accessed by a covered way. These classrooms were designed by architects Fenn, Van Mens and Maidment.⁴²

The Southern Cross Town Planning Scheme was gazetted on 13 December 1968 providing an opportunity to re-site the school, but the Education Department stated that there was no intention of re-building the school on a new site for at least three to four years. In February 1970, the Police Dept announced that a six-man police station with quarters was listed for Southern Cross, and a site on Canopus Street was chosen, which would be sufficient for the police station, traffic licensing and vehicle examination facility, and officer in-charge accommodation.⁴³

³⁸ Public Works Dept file, Southern Cross School and Quarters - additions, 20 October 1964, SROWA, CONS 689, Item 1950/2720; PWD plans, 'Proposed extension of school ground' 29 April 1964.

³⁹ PWD Plan, Southern Cross Junior High School: new wing, 16 August 1965. Education Dept file, Item 1958/1640, op cit, Minister of Education opening speech 23 September 1966.

⁴⁰ Public Works Dept file, 'Southern Cross School', SROWA, CONS 4846, Item 1962/1393.

⁴¹ Police Dept files, Establishment/ localities – Southern Cross police protection 1936-1978, 26 September 1966, SROWA, CONS 5882, Item 045 0307-12V1.

⁴² Fenn, Van Mens & Maidment Plans, New classroom block plan, October 1967 & September 1970, courtesy BMW.

⁴³ Public Works Dept file, 'Southern Cross School', SROWA, CONS 4846, Item 1962/1393.

The Education Department confirmed its intention to enlarge the grounds of Southern Cross School by taking the existing Police and Warden's Court land (Reserve 14401). The police buildings on the site were to be demolished. There was some disquiet at the possibility that the Warden's Court and post office might also be demolished to increase the size of the school grounds so the Southern Cross Historical Society, formed in 1971, successfully lobbied for their retention. Their building sites were reserved for the purpose of 'Preservation of Historic Buildings' and vested in the Shire of Yilgarn, while the remaining area of Reserve 14401 was included in the school grounds.⁴⁴

The new police complex was completed in 1975, and the police reserve (1573) and Warden's Court Reserve (14401) were cancelled. School Reserve 3191 was increased in size to 4.45 acres (1.8046ha).⁴⁵ The Constable occupying the police quarters on Altair Street did not want to relocate and was allowed to remain for a time.⁴⁶

During this period, plans were developed to convert *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* into a resource centre for the School. Howlett and Bailey were the architects responsible for remodelling the building by putting in a new main entrance doorway and changing the internal layout by removing most of the wall separating the two 1895 classrooms and creating an office in part of the 1896 addition.⁴⁷

The building was occupied in 1979 and in a student competition, the facility was named the 'Forrester Resource Centre' in honour of Erna Forrester. As Erna McCrea she had graduated as a teacher in 1927 and taught at Southern Cross from 1930 until her marriage to local farmer William Forrester in 1934. She later became very active in the Country Women's Association which promoted the concept of free lending libraries and was involved in the establishment of the Southern Cross library in 1948, at which time she was also a relief teacher at *Old Primary School, Southern Cross*, where her three children were enrolled. She was a foundation member of the Southern Cross Historical Society and was curator of the Yilgarn History Museum established in the former Warden's Court. She was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1982 in recognition of her service to the community. In the local district she was known as Grandma and was a font of historical knowledge. She died in 2004 aged 98.⁴⁸

In 1981, the constable's quarters were demolished, and a large classroom block, including a science room was constructed on the site in 1983.⁴⁹ A major building project in the late 1990s saw the construction of a telecentre, administration centre and covered assembly area. The School quarters, which had housed the

44 Public Works Dept file, Item 1962/1393, op cit.

45 Landgate Reserve detail, Reserves 1573, 14401 & 3191, 23 May 1975.

46 Public Works Dept file, Item 1962/1393, op cit.

47 Howlett & Bailey, Plan 746.20, Southern Cross District High School – new resource centre, December 1977, courtesy BMW.

48 Cornish, Patrick, *Western Australia in the 20th century*, FACP, Fremantle, 1999, pp. 76-81; Back, Linda, 'Vale Erna Forrester, 28th August 1906 - 13th October 2004', *Musing*, newsletter of Museums Australia WA Inc, Summer 2004.

49 PWD file, Item 1962/1393, op cit.

telecentre for some time, was removed. With each new building, some trees were removed and new plantings made.⁵⁰

Old Primary School, Southern Cross underwent some internal alterations in 1998 with partitioning installed in the smaller of the two 1895 rooms to create offices, with a concertina door in place of the opening that had been made between the two rooms in 1977.⁵¹

In 2012, Southern Cross District High School continues to function as an educational facility, with *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* occupied as the Forrester Resource Centre.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Old Primary School, Southern Cross, a single-storey stone building with brick quoining and a pre-painted steel sheet gable roof, shows influence of the Federation Arts and Crafts architectural style. Originally built as a two roomed stone and corrugated iron school in 1895, a classroom and office was added in 1896-1905.

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is located on the south corner of the street intersection of Antares and Canopus streets, with the dominant frontage along the north-east on Antares Street. It is integral within the current Southern Cross District High School campus, with the 1995 Administration Centre immediately to the south-east, also facing Antares Street, and the Telecentre located immediately to the south-west, facing Canopus Street. The remainder of the campus is bounded to the south-west by Altair Street. The entire school campus is fenced with metal-posted chain link fencing, with grassed setbacks, defined garden beds with shrubs and small trees, and paths.

The original 1895 building is the section that fronts Antares Street. It has a high pitched gable roof along the frontage, with a break pitch verandah that also returns along the south-east end, and back along the south-west side. The 'front' wall is symmetrical with three double hung windows balanced to each of the two rooms. The 1896-1905 addition is across the north-west end of the original building, in a rectangular footprint, forming an 'L' with the original building. The addition has the same gable roof that provides a feature gable detail to the Antares Street frontage. There is a verandah along the north-west that adjoins the south-west verandah.

Both stages of the building are constructed entirely of random granite stone that has been pointed. Window reveals are quoined with face brick with soldier headers and continuous concrete sills, except the feature front. The chimneys are tall square face brick with corbelled detailing and clay pots. The walls show considerable evidence of moisture damage along the lower edges and higher in some places particularly the south-east walls. The verandahs have concrete floors. The north-east verandah has the original square stop chamfered posts supported on small concrete pads. The valance is a simple timber arch spanning between the posts. The north-east verandah roof has regularly placed sections of boxed clear corrugated sheeting. The verandah soffit to all except the north-west

⁵⁰ PWD plans, Southern Cross School landscaping, File 2258/54, drawings L1 & L2, 4 & 9 May 1983. Includes lists of tree species.

⁵¹ Edgar Idle Wade architects, 'Library / resource centre', Plan A5.2, February 1998.

verandah is lined with sheets of flat fibrocement sheeting. Along the northwest side, the verandah has simple square posts with no other details, and the verandah soffit is lined with painted matchboard. The roofs are clad with long lengths of prepainted steel sheeting in a custom orb profile. The roof of the original 1895 building features two 'dormer' windows along each side. The dormers have low pitched skillion roofs over, with three glazed panels that have since been painted. The gutters throughout are non-original square profile and although a round galvanised downpipe is evident, they are predominantly pvc. On the 1896-1905 building, the 'front' elevation features a prominent apex detailed in timber and roughcast, supported by decorative timber brackets above a central circular decorative vent. The detail is very similar to the original 1895 gable end at the southeast, although not in a prominent position. Three double hung sash windows are symmetrical on the frontage. The 'classroom' wall features a set of four windows with a single concrete sill, and a door and window at the west end.

Access to the building is off the south-west verandah, at the west end for the majority of the building spaces, and at the south end for the smaller room. From the verandah, the west end entry leads directly into a small office space (children's library) and through to an expansive space (computer resource) that is the remainder of the 1896-1905 building that also adjoins the original 1895 building through a large opening.

The 1896-1905 class room is predominantly intact. The original 0.135 metre hardwood floors, hard plaster walls, and coved ceiling lined with painted matchboard remain insitu. The exposed timber rafters have a decorative connection detail that incorporates the tension rod across the room and lengthwise tie rods. All ceiling elements have been painted. The original 1895 classrooms also evidence original fabric, similarly with 0.135 metre hardwood boards, hard plaster walls, and the ceiling lined with matchboard and exposed rafters as for the 1896-1905 space. The wall between the two original rooms has been removed except for nib walls both sides, and 'fold-a-doors' provide the separation between the library in the larger space and Teachers' offices in the smaller space at the south-east end.

The small timber framed fibrocement clad verandah enclosure on the south-east end was inaccessible.

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is in fair to good condition having been in continuous use for educational purposes since its construction. The ongoing responses to educational requirements on the school campus has facilitated changes over time, but the impact on the original fabric has been minimal except for the removal of the walls between the original and addition and the wall between the rooms of the original building. Regular maintenance has been applied to those areas in constant use whereas some environmental effects are evident on the exterior, particularly the damage to the stone walls, exacerbated by the concrete verandas, paved paths and extensive grassed areas adjacent to the school building.

There is no physical evidence or local knowledge of the below ground water tank.

The original School Quarters located on the corner of Altair and Canopus streets within the school campus, has been demolished and sports courts occupy the site.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The *Education Department Heritage Survey* (2002) identifies several other schools built to the same Hall and Gallery design as *Old Primary School, Southern Cross*. These are York Primary School (1886), Beaconsfield Primary School (fmr) (1894), North Fremantle Primary School (fmr), *Roebourne Primary School (fmr) (1891)*, *Pinjarra Primary School (fmr) (1894)*, *Highgate Primary School (1895)*, *Subiaco Primary School (1897)*. The variation in styles currently attributed to these schools indicates the individuality of each place despite its basic school type, and also the changes that have been made to many of the buildings over the 100 or so years of their use.

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is a Hall and Gallery type school, which was built with the hall to be used as a large classroom. The design allowed extra rooms to be added around the hall as required; however, as halls in this design had windows rather than roof lights, building expansion impeded the lighting and ventilation of the hall. The nature of teaching was also changing in the late 1890s with the introduction of Cyril Jackson's 'New Education' policies where each class was housed permanently in a classroom, and the hall was used for assemblies rather than teaching. These changes in educational approach, together with the issues of light and ventilation, led to the Hall and Gallery type being replaced by the Central Hall type, which was used as an assembly rather than teaching area and had skylights to allow light and ventilation. Roof lights were sometimes added to Hall and Gallery type schools when additions reduced the window area. Plans show that *Old Primary School, Southern Cross* was designed with dormer windows in the Hall to address issues of future lighting and ventilation, indicating that architects were in the process of moving towards a new standard type. While these dormer windows still exist the glazing has been painted over, possibly for the use of the place as a library. Similar dormer windows in *Coolgardie Primary School* were removed during the last reroofing of the place. *Coolgardie*, built in 1897, was the last school built to the Hall and Gallery design.⁵²

P1031 *Beaconsfield Primary School (fmr)* was built in 1894. It is a brick building with a complex roof indicating a number of additions. It ceased to house the Beaconsfield school c.1980, when new school buildings were constructed on another site and currently houses the Fremantle-Peel Education District Office. A conservation plan was undertaken in 2005 and the place is in good condition. *Beaconsfield Primary School (fmr)* is entered on the Fremantle Municipal Inventory.

North Fremantle Primary School (fmr) is a limestone building, with the roof exhibiting 'four dominant gables'. The place was modified for use as a bail hostel in 1983, with some partitioning, false ceilings and fluorescent lighting. The stone facades have been painted. The layout demonstrates the more random additions

⁵² Kelsall Binet Architects, op cit, Federation Type 1; PWD Plans 04707, op cit; HCWA assessment documentation for P0579 Coolgardie Primary School.

typical of the Hall and Gallery school. The place is on the State Register and Fremantle Municipal Inventory.⁵³

P2341 *Roebourne Primary School & Quarters (fmr)* was built in 1891, in local stone. The school building has concrete floors. It originally had a roof lantern for ventilation (removed) and verandah roofs lower than the main roof (now under the main roof). The school building has a simple hipped roof, with a lower roofline than in other schools of the type in deference to the cyclonic conditions of the region. The roof lantern was unusual for this school design and appears to have also been a modification for the climate. Since the early 1970s, *Roebourne Primary School & Quarters (fmr)* has been in use as a community facility. The place is on the State Register, the Register of the National Estate, classified by the National Trust and entered on the Shire of Roebourne Municipal Inventory.

There are seven other school buildings surviving in the Yilgarn and Eastern Goldfields region at Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie-Boulder, of which. *Coolgardie Primary School*, Coolgardie (1897, 1900) is also a Hall and Gallery type.⁵⁴

Old Primary School, Southern Cross is a representative example of a Hall and Gallery type school in the Goldfields and in the State, and one of only three still in use as part of a school function. In 1895, it was one of the last two schools built in the State to this design.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

⁵³ HCWA database and heritage assessment documentation for P3135 *North Fremantle Primary School (fmr)*.

⁵⁴ HCWA database; Considine & Griffiths Architect Pty Ltd, op cit, pp. 78-80.