



**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)

- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 6.3 Training people for the workplace
- 6.4 Building a system of higher education
- 6.5 Educating people in remote areas
- 9.2.3 Being teenagers

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 402 Education & science
- 405 Sport, recreation & entertainment

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The well proportioned and considered detailing of the Donnybrook stone portico, the strong rhythm of the semicircular arches, the striking contrast of the red brick and stucco, the sculptural quality of the recessed banding to the brick work make *Bunbury Senior High School* a fine, substantial and solidly constructed example of the Inter-War Arts and Crafts style as applied to a large government educational building. (Criterion 1.1)

The sense of order, proportion and symmetry, and distinctive detailing make *Bunbury Senior High School* a very good example of the creative design work of Public Works Department architect C. R. Ross. (Criterion 1.2)

Located in a prominent location on the brow of a hill next to the Indian Ocean, *Bunbury Senior High School*, together with its Norfolk Island Pines, is a landmark on the outskirts of the Bunbury central area. The setting of the place, which affords elevated 270-degree water views, is particularly fine for a high school and is unrivalled in Western Australia. (Criterion 1.3)

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\* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

*Bunbury Senior High School* is one of the more substantial of a number of culturally significant buildings that contribute to the heritage precinct of the City of Bunbury central area. (Criterion 1.4)

## **11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Bunbury Senior High School* was the second of three purpose-designed high schools in regional centres of Western Australia in the interwar period. It demonstrates the initial and ongoing development of facilities for secondary education in regional areas in the post-World War I period, and the evolution of educational practices and school design towards specialised buildings for individual subject areas. (Criterion 2.1)

The erection of *Bunbury Senior High School* in 1922-23, when Soldier Settlement and Group Settlement Schemes were bringing an influx of migrants to the South West, recognised Bunbury's growing role as a regional centre, which has been confirmed by ongoing development of the complex of school buildings through the 20th century and into the early 2000s. (Criterion 2.2)

*Bunbury Senior High School* is associated with architect Clarence Rose Ross, who was responsible for the design of many notable public buildings for the State and Commonwealth, during his service with the Public Works Department of Western Australia under Principal Architect W. B. Hardwick, prior to becoming the first Supervising Architect for the Commonwealth Works Department in Western Australia, 1925-38. (Criterion 2.3)

*Bunbury Senior High School* is a fine example of the design work of architect C. R. Ross and its construction by well known builders Totterdell Bros. (Criteria 2.3 & 2.4)

## **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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## **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Bunbury Senior High School* is highly valued by the community of Bunbury, the wider community of the South West and the community of its past students, for providing a regional secondary education facility in Bunbury since it opened in 1923, and for its contribution to the education of a number of Western Australians who have achieved outstanding success in their respective fields, including Lt. General John Sanderson. The community also values the place for aesthetic reasons particularly for the fine design qualities of the buildings erected 1923-40, and the magnificent siting of the school. (Criterion 4.1)

*Bunbury Senior High School* contributes to the community's sense of place having become an educational tradition for many families at Bunbury and in the region over 85 years, and as a notable landmark overlooking the town and ocean. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

*Bunbury Senior High School* is one of the oldest surviving government secondary schools and one of three similar school buildings constructed in the three most important regional centres of Western Australia in the post-World War I period, the others being at Northam and Albany. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Bunbury Senior High School* demonstrates the high standard of design and workmanship devoted to new regional high schools in the post-World War I period. *Bunbury Senior High School* illustrates the ability of the PWD to procure solidly constructed buildings that were designed to last and that reflect the value given to extending secondary education to regional areas. (Criterion 6.1)

*Bunbury Senior High School* demonstrates the practice of designing schools in a linear form with classrooms accessed from a verandah. This practice has been replaced by clustering teaching areas in blocks built around a central core, with verandahs providing access to the blocks, as illustrated by the later additions to the school. (Criterion 6.1)

*Bunbury Senior High School* demonstrates the development of secondary education in Western Australia in the post-World War I period and the commitment of the State government to provide a high standard of facility for secondary education in important regional towns. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Bunbury Senior High School* is in very good condition. The building was solidly constructed with high quality materials and workmanship and has been well maintained on a regular basis since its initial construction.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*Bunbury Senior High School* is still used for its original and intended purpose of regional high school. Most of the spaces are still used for their original and intended purpose. There have been some changes of use to a small number of areas of the original buildings (1923-40), and substantial additions in the post-World War II period, most which are separate blocks connected by walkways. Overall *Bunbury Senior High School* displays a high degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

A high proportion of the fabric of *Bunbury Senior High School* is in its original state and most of the layout and room volumes have been little altered. Elements that have been altered include the windows on the south face, which have been altered to aluminium, and new acoustic tile ceilings have been installed under the original ceilings. While there have been substantial additions in the post-World War II period, and the Library has been modified by the removal of some walls, the structure and layout of the significant buildings of 1923, 1930 and 1940 is easy to discern. Overall *Bunbury Senior High School* displays a high degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Robin Chinnery, Historian, and Lynne Farrow, Architect, in November 2008, with amendments and/or additions by SHO staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Bunbury Senior High School* is a two storey red face brick building in the Inter-War Arts and Crafts style, with rough cast stucco panelling, a hipped terracotta tiled roof and a short tower, comprising original teaching and administration wing (1923), library and classroom additions (1930, 1940), all in a landscaped setting.<sup>1</sup> PWD architect C. R. Ross designed the teaching and administration wing, which was built by Totterdell Bros. Since the 1950s, seven new brick buildings have been erected at the school, and a new school library building has been completed (2012) across the road in Haig Crescent.

In 1836, Lt Henry St Pierre Bunbury, with an Aboriginal guide named Monay, explored an overland route from Pinjarra to Port Leschenault en route to the Vasse. Governor Stirling, who had sailed to the Vasse, rendezvoused with Bunbury at Port Leschenault on 21 December 1836, and selected the site for a township named Bunbury in his honour. In 1838, the first European settlers arrived at Bunbury. In 1841, the townsite of Bunbury was surveyed, laid out and gazetted. In the early 1840s, Mrs Clifton organised a small private school at Australind, which ceased with the exodus of settlers from there in late 1843. At the request of local settlers, government support it had received was transferred to Bunbury to enable them to establish a school that was initially accommodated under the verandah of the military quarters when it opened in 1844. That year a small building was erected to serve as a temporary building for a Church of England church and a school, which was replaced by a permanent similarly dual purpose building in 1857. By 1864, the school had been transferred to the Commissariat building in Arthur Street. In November 1886, a new government school for boys was completed at the corner of Stephen and Arthur Streets, and later other school buildings were erected nearby to provide for girls and infants.<sup>2</sup>

In 1896-1903, Cyril Jackson, the first Inspector General of Education in Western Australia instituted far reaching reforms to education including introducing compulsory, free, education, and establishing teacher training in this State. In 1907, his successor, Cecil Andrews, introduced a system to establish central schools at selected government primary schools at which higher level classes were offered to enable students to study to Junior Certificate level. By 1909, six such schools were operating in Perth and two in the Eastern Goldfields. In 1911, when the first government high school was established it was named Perth Modern School as it offered a modern secondary education rather than a traditional classical education. Tertiary

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<sup>1</sup> Apperly, et al, *A Pictorial Guide*, pp. 158-61.

<sup>2</sup> Barker, Anthony J., and Laurie, Maxine *Excellent Connections: A History of Bunbury, Western Australia, 1836-1990* City of Bunbury, 1992, pp. 5, 9, 32-33, 39-40, 89, 132; Tredwell, Rev. J. J. *The Cathedral Church of Saint Boniface, Bunbury, WA*, p. 2; and Bartlett, Joan *Journey: A History of the Anglican Diocese of Western Australia 1904-2004* Anglican Diocese of Bunbury, The Printery, Albany, 2004, pp. 26-30.

education commenced in the same year with the opening of the University of Western Australia. In 1914, Eastern Goldfields High School was completed as the first regional high school, which was justified by the combined population of Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie and Boulder. At other regional centres there was insufficient population to justify erection of high school buildings so instead a system similar to that of the central schools was established at Northam, Geraldton, Albany and Bunbury in 1917-18.<sup>3</sup>

In 1917, a new Infants School was built at Bunbury. In 1918-22, the earlier Infants School at the north-east corner of Arthur and Stirling Streets was utilised to accommodate a high school in the interim period until a new purpose designed and built high school was completed.<sup>4</sup> The decision to build a high school at Bunbury recognised its growing role as a regional centre for the South West. The site selected for the proposed new high school was at the apex of a hill to the south-west of the town centre, overlooking the town and with views to the ocean on three sides. In July 1920, tenders were called for earthworks for the new Bunbury High School, the name by which the place would be known for many years, and the contract was awarded to W. J. Templeton at a cost of £2,296.<sup>5</sup>

On 18 February 1921, Reserve 17661, comprising Lot 371, three acres one rood 27 perches in area, for the purpose of School Site - High School, was gazetted.<sup>6</sup>

In 1921, Bunbury High School was designed by architect C. R. Ross, of the Architectural Department of the Public Works Department (PWD), under Principal Architect W. B. Hardwick.<sup>7</sup> Clarence Rose Ross (b. Dundee, Scotland, 1874, d. Bellevue, Western Australia, 1949) had a distinguished career with State and Commonwealth Public Works Departments and was responsible for the design of numerous notable public buildings in this State. After completing his articles in Scotland, he practised for eight years at Long Eton, England, during which time he designed a large theatre, a Carnegie public library (won in a competition), several lace factories, blocks of shops and offices. In 1908, he and his family migrated to Western Australia, where he joined the Public Works Department in 1909. 'Scotty' Ross, as he was known to his architectural peers, 'became the chief designer of a long list of public works' including Perth Modern School (1909), the State's first secondary school, the Government Stores and Public Health Department, Perth, and Woorooloo Sanatorium. In the early 1920s, he designed the first regional secondary schools at Northam, Bunbury, and Albany, and the first purpose built buildings at the University of Western Australia, the Biology and Zoology block of buildings, completed in 1925.<sup>8</sup> Following his appointment as the first Supervising Architect for the Commonwealth Works Department in Western Australia, C. R. Ross supervised the erection of all Commonwealth

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<sup>3</sup> Gregory, Jenny and Smith, Lisa *A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia* Centre for Western Australian History, University of Western Australia, 1995, pp. 19-22.

<sup>4</sup> *Government Gazette* p. 1188, p. 1393, p. 1884 and p. 2045

<sup>5</sup> *Government Gazette* 9 July and 20 August 1920, p. 1278 and p. 1387 respectively.

<sup>6</sup> *Government Gazette* 18 February 1921, p. 260.

<sup>7</sup> *Government Gazette* 23 December 1921, p. 2649.

<sup>8</sup> Obituary in *The Architect* June 1949, p. 21.

buildings in the State through to his retirement in 1938, including the Commonwealth Bank in Forrest Place.<sup>9</sup>

The block plan for Bunbury High School shows the pentagonal shaped site adjoining the Roman Catholic cemetery and south-west of the townsite. The site plan shows the rectangular school building with a centrally placed portico defining the main entrance accessed via a circular drive. Directly behind the main building and parallel to it is the gymnasium building, which was to serve as a hall also. Close by the gymnasium is the girls' shelter shed while the boys' shelter shed is to the east. Siting the buildings at the apex of the hill necessitated extensive site works including reducing levels and establishing banks in the school grounds. The ground floor comprised the administrative centre, four classrooms, and two cloakrooms, one for boys and one for girls at either side of the corridor leading through to the covered way to the 60 ft x 30 ft gymnasium at the rear. There is a corner fireplace and a teaching platform in each classroom, which open from the verandah, as do the cloakrooms. The toilets for girls and boys are at opposite ends of the building. Stairs at each end of the verandah of the main building lead to the first floor balcony that opens to two classrooms, a lecture room with a graded floor, two laboratories with two fireproof stores between them, and a teacher's room. There are teaching platforms in the lecture theatre and classrooms, rectangular fireplaces in the laboratories and lecture theatre, and a corner fireplace in each classroom. A notable feature is the tower for water storage, which was necessary to store water as an emergency in case of fire because the pressure from the existing reservoir was insufficient. Plans for the elevations and roof show roof lanterns and ventilators that are shown in early photographs, but are not extant in 2008.<sup>10</sup> The gymnasium, which was to function also as a hall, was shown parallel to the main building; however, later photographs and plans show it at a 45 degree angle.<sup>11</sup>

In December 1921, following completion of the site works, tenders were called for erection of Bunbury High School, and the contract was awarded in January 1922 to well known builders Totterdell Bros., of Perth, at a cost of £15,189.<sup>12</sup> On 24 February, the Minister for Education, Hal Colebatch MLC, laid the foundation stone for the new high school.<sup>13</sup> In August, Totterdell Bros. won the contract for the fittings for the High School at a cost of £561.<sup>14</sup> In October, tenders were called for the erection of caretaker's quarters at Bunbury High School and the contract was awarded to A. Woolhouse at a

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<sup>9</sup>       ibid.

<sup>10</sup>       Bunbury High School, PWDWA 21584, drawn by C.R.R. (Clarence Rose Ross), signed W. B. Hardwicjk, Principal Architect, 8 June 1921, SROWA Cons. 1667, on microfiche; photo of Bunbury High School, 1923, in 'Bunbury Senior High School, 1923-1993, 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary', Bunbury Senior High School, Bunbury, 1993, p. 3; and site visit, Robin Chinnery and Lynne Farrow, 17 Sept. 2008.

<sup>11</sup>       Bunbury High School, PWDWA 21584, *ibid*; Annual Report, Public Works Department and Trading Concerns, 1922, in *Votes and Proceedings*, 1923, Vol. 2, p. 23; Bunbury High School, 1930s, Bunbury Historical Society P97.61; and Brian Delfs Architect, Bunbury Senior High School Additions, Feb. 1985, in Bunbury Senior High School, SROWA Cons. 6095 Item 3038.

<sup>12</sup>       *Government Gazette* 23 December 1921, p. 2649 and 13 January 1922, p. 53.

<sup>13</sup>       Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Lynne Farrow, 17 Sept. 2008.

<sup>14</sup>       *Government Gazette* 28 July and 25 August 1922, p. 1407 and p. 1550 respectively.

cost of £856 in November.<sup>15</sup> Caretaker's quarters were included in the development of high schools through into the post-World War II period, but were later phased out.<sup>16</sup> The fate of the caretaker's quarters at Bunbury High School has not been ascertained.

On 9 February 1923, the Premier, Sir James Mitchell KCMG, officially opened Bunbury High School, which was designed to accommodate 240 students.<sup>17</sup> A 1923 photograph shows the distinctive front facade of Bunbury High School and the prominent water tower,<sup>18</sup> a notable feature distinguishing it from Northam High School (1921) and Albany High School (1925), which were on similar lines. In 1923, the Annual Report for the Education Department noted Bunbury High School's 'fine' site and 'magnificent view', and reported shifting sand was causing some problems 'but tree planting and grass growing' were 'rapidly improving the situation'.<sup>19</sup> No records have been located of the species of trees planted, which may have included some mature Norfolk Island pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), a Cotton palm (*Washingtonia filifera*), and a She-oak that survive in 2008.<sup>20</sup>

In 1923, Bunbury High School opened with 10 teachers and an enrolment of 166 students. In this year, a school orchestra was established, and a new metal-working room was built.<sup>21</sup> The first headmaster was F. Sherlock (1923-32), who was succeeded by A. Irvine (1933-43), F. Bradshaw (1944-48), R. A. Fowler (1949-52), F. Johnson (1953-62), G. Griffiths (1963-64), Mr. Martin (1965), H. Bennett (1966-81), J. Sobkowiak (1982-83), D. Rourke (1984-87), and others through to 2008, when Mr C. Pettit was appointed principal of *Bunbury Senior High School*. The first Mistress at the school was Miss Chrystabel (Ghostie) Stephens (1923-40), who taught art and science and decided the design of the girls' uniform.<sup>22</sup> Her portrait is prominent in the entry foyer to the school.<sup>23</sup>

In the early 1920s, the Soldier Settlement and Group Settlement Schemes brought increased population to the South West. In 1924, an additional 80 students enrolled at Bunbury High School, and daily attendance rose to 230. A 30 ft high mast was erected to support a single wired aerial.<sup>24</sup> In 1925, the first school bazaar (fête) was held at the High School. Mr A. Henn bequeathed his book collection to the High School, which provided a further incentive for the addition of a library wing.<sup>25</sup> In April 1929, tenders were called for the erection of a new wing to include a library and two classrooms.

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15 *Government Gazette* 27 October 1922; and *WA Mining, Building and Engineering Journal* 29 November 1922, p. 7.

16 *Northam Senior High School*, RHP 01883, Assessment Document, pp. 10, 15.

17 Annual Reports, Public Works Department and Trading Concerns, 1921-22 and 1922-23, in *Votes and Proceedings* 1923, and 1923-24 respectively.

18 Photo of Bunbury High School, 1923, in 'Bunbury Senior High School, 1923-1993', op. cit.

19 Annual Report for Education Department, 1923, in *Votes and Proceedings* 1924, Vol. 1, p. 6.

20 Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Lynne Farrow, 17 Sept. 2008.

21 *ibid*; *Government Gazette* p. 489 and p. 695 respectively; and 'Bunbury Senior High School, 1923-1993,' op. cit., and p. 17.

22 'Bunbury Senior High School, 1923-1993' op. cit., p. 5; and Municipal Inventory, City of Bunbury.

23 Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Lynne Farrow, 17 Sept. 2008.

24 'Bunbury Senior High School, 1923-1993, *ibid*.

25 *ibid*.

In May, the contract was awarded to W. T. Clark at a cost of £3,193, and the additions were completed in 1930.<sup>26</sup> A photograph showing the eastern and northern elevations of Bunbury High School includes part of the new library wing, and part of the gymnasium building to the rear of the main building.<sup>27</sup>

In 1931, Mary Clementina Hostel was built in Clarke Street for the Sisters of the Order of St Elizabeth of Hungary to provide boarding accommodation for girls from country areas attending Bunbury High School. It was named after Mary Clementina Benthall, an elderly spinster in England, whose donation of £1,500 enabled its erection. During a visit to the High School in 1927, the Sisters and the school principal had discussed the need for a hostel, and it was an area designated for their service on their return to Western Australia to work among the women at the Group Settlements in 1928. Lady Campion, wife of Governor Sir William Campion, gave 'unfailing support' to the Order and was a strong advocate for erection of the hostel, which he officially opened in her stead in May 1931, after she left to return to England.<sup>28</sup> In the period before the State government began providing hostel accommodation for regional high schools, Mary Clementina Hostel was an important facility, which enabled many country girls to attend Bunbury High School during the 21 years it operated.<sup>29</sup>

In 1933, the first Bunbury High School prefects' dance was held, and school dances became regular social events in the mid-1930s.<sup>30</sup> In 1934, a new septic tank and water supply etc. were installed at the High School.<sup>31</sup> In the mid-1930s, as Western Australia recovered from the Great Depression, enrolment numbers at Bunbury High School increased to a record 293 in 1937, necessitating appointment of an additional five teachers. In 1938, there were 341 students enrolled, resulting in considerable congestion as accommodation was fully stretched.<sup>32</sup> About half the students came from outside Bunbury, travelling into school each day or boarding at Bunbury during the school week, including those who boarded at Mary Clementina Hostel.<sup>33</sup> Tony Hall, who was a student at the school 1938-41, recollected it was 'F' shaped at this period, with the large hall/gymnasium to the rear of the main building, the manual training building to one side, and the oval was 'a sand patch' with a concrete cricket pitch.<sup>34</sup>

In 1940, tenders were called for additions of brick construction with a tile roof, comprising two classrooms and a teachers' room at the ground floor, and two classrooms and a study at the first floor, and additional verandah and balcony

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid; and *Government Gazette* 5 April and 10 May 1929, p. 921 and p. 1158 respectively.

<sup>27</sup> Bunbury High School, 1930s, Bunbury Historical Society P97.61.

<sup>28</sup> Bignell, Merle *Little Grey Sparrows Of the Anglican Diocese of Bunbury, Western Australia* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1992, pp. 27, 31, 39-40, 52, 59, 61-79; and Bartlett, Joan, op. cit., pp. 108-109.

<sup>29</sup> Bignell, Merle, ibid, pp. pp. 79-89, 93, 103, 109-137. Mary Clementina Hostel pre-dated Adamson House, the hostel opened by the Country Women's Association (CWA) at Northam in 1938, to provide boarding accommodation for girls attending Northam High School. (*Northam Senior High School*, RHP 01883, Assessment Document, p. 6.)

<sup>30</sup> 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> *Government Gazette* 1934, p. 838 and p. 1045.

<sup>32</sup> 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Barker, Anthony J. and Laurie, Maxine, op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>34</sup> Tony Hall, recollections, 1991, archives in library at Bunbury Senior High School.



space. Well known Bunbury builders J. G. Hough & Son completed the additions at a cost of £4,485.<sup>35</sup>

In August 1940, technical education classes commenced at Bunbury High School as part of a program offered at technical schools to assist RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) reservists in the period between enlistment and call up for duty. Teachers taught most of the sixteen evening classes, which included English, maths, mechanical drawing, woodwork and metalwork, commercial work, dress cutting and cookery to the 287 students enrolled.<sup>36</sup> By this period, there was recognition of the benefits of the extension of secondary school education to regional areas, as evidenced in the Annual Report of the Education Department, which noted the five 'full' (i.e. five year) high schools had proven 'a great boon to the country child in giving him an education which will lead him if need be to the university'.<sup>37</sup>

In 1943, a short in the School's electrical wiring started a fire, which was extinguished without extensive damage. In early 1944, a 21st birthday celebration at Bunbury High School was well attended by past students. Fund raising activities at the school enabled a donation of over £150 to the Red Cross. Numerous ex-students served in the Armed Forces during World War II,<sup>38</sup> and a timber Honour Board with gold painted lettering at *Bunbury Senior High School* records the names of those who died in the war.<sup>39</sup>

In 1947, the tile roof to Bunbury High School was replaced.<sup>40</sup> An inter-communication system was installed, the school oval was levelled and three hockey teams (two for boys and one for girls) were formed.<sup>41</sup>

In 1948, the Goldfields Fresh Air League Hostel was converted to a hostel to accommodate boys attending Bunbury High School.<sup>42</sup> In the early 1950s, the government decided to establish modern State hostels for high school students living away from home and Mary Clementina Hostel was closed, and Heath House in Haig Crescent was converted to serve as a hostel for girls. Later new hostels were established to provide more modern accommodation for country students attending *Bunbury Senior High School*.<sup>43</sup>

In 1950, on the first day of the school year, 531 students enrolled at Bunbury High School, which over-extended the facilities and staff. In the early 1950s, enrolment numbers continued to increase, which necessitated the use of

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<sup>35</sup> *Government Gazette* 1940, p. 1399; Building Permit for Additions to Bunbury High School, Building Records, City of Bunbury, 26 February 1940; and Annual Report PWD, 1940-41, p. 27, and Annual Report Education Department, 1940, p. 27, in *Votes and Proceedings* 1941-42, Vol. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Annual Report Education Department, 1940, *ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Lynne Farrow, 17 Sept. 2008.

<sup>40</sup> *Government Gazette* 1947, p. 440 and p. 1472.

<sup>41</sup> Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> *Government Gazette* 1948, p. 691. For information about the Fresh Air League Hostel in the preceding period refer to Barker, Anthony and Laurie, Maxine, *op. cit.*, pp. 182, 215-16, 229, 233.

<sup>43</sup> *Government Gazette* 1948, p. 691; Bignell, Merle, *op. cit.*, p. 137; Bunbury High School Hostel for ... SROWA Cons. 6200 Items 31389, 33311, Cons. 5957 Item 1949/F0986; and Bunbury Senior High School Hostel for Girls and Boys, SROWA Cons. 6477 Item 1982/F0126. Note: Re Fresh Air League Hostel in preceding period see Barker and Laurie, *op. cit.*, pp. 182, 215-16, 229, 233.

cloakrooms as classrooms in 1952, until a pre-fabricated building was erected near the hall/gymnasium early in the third term.<sup>44</sup>

In 1955, paths, driveways and parade grounds at Bunbury High School were bituminised; the oval was renewed; and work began on two tennis courts, thanks to fund raising by the Parents and Citizens' Association.<sup>45</sup> In 1957-59, shortage of accommodation saw the hall/gymnasium, library, annexe and cloakrooms utilised as classrooms for the ever-increasing student enrolment, which reached 900 in 1959. Some relief was provided by completion of a new wing at the beginning of 1960, which included classrooms and laboratories for chemistry, physics and biology, classrooms for art, a home science centre, associated storerooms, and a toilet block. However, there was still insufficient accommodation and some classes continued to be held under staircases and outdoors.<sup>46</sup> Around 1960, a photograph of *Bunbury Senior High School* shows the main buildings, and a garden bed with a young palm at the centre and a surrounding hedge to the fore of the entrance.<sup>47</sup>

Post-World War II immigration and the so-called 'Baby Boom' resulted in a considerable increase in Australia's population. In 1963 enrolment at Bunbury High School reached 1000 students, with 45 teachers, and the name of the school was changed to *Bunbury Senior High School* in 1964. That year, a proposal for a second high school to be built in the Hay Park area was welcomed as it could relieve the continuing pressure on accommodation at *Bunbury Senior High School*, where demountable classrooms were erected around the oval and at the other side of Haig Crescent. In 1965, an annexe was established at South Bunbury, prior to erection of Newton Moore High School in the late 1960s. The opening of the new school resulted in a considerable reduction in enrolment at *Bunbury Senior High School*, although it continued to be favoured by many Bunbury people.<sup>48</sup> A number of people educated at *Bunbury Senior High School* have been outstanding in their respective fields including science, medicine, politics, business, community service, and the armed services.<sup>49</sup> Lt-General John M. Sanderson, Governor of Western Australia, 2000-05, completed his secondary education at Bunbury High School in 1957, and graduated from the Royal Military College Duntroon in 1961. His distinguished military career was recognised by the awards of Member of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 1985, Officer of the Order (AO) in 1991, and Companion of the Order (AC) in 1994.<sup>50</sup>

In the late 1960s, the classrooms at *Bunbury Senior High School* retained their teaching platforms and open fireplaces. Subsequently most of the

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44 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 8.

45 *ibid.*

46 *ibid.*, p. 9.

47 High School, Bunbury, c. 1960, Bunbury Historical Society P96.40.

48 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., pp. 9-12; and Val Mutton, teacher at Bunbury Senior High School, where she was a student in the late 1960s, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 17 Sept. 2008

49 Brochure for Bunbury Senior High School.

50 'Biographical Details of His Excellency Lieutenant General John M Sanderson, AC, Governor of Western Australia' [www.govhouse.wa.gov.au/biomilitaryhistory](http://www.govhouse.wa.gov.au/biomilitaryhistory); and Taylor, Alister (ed.) *Australian Roll of Honour National Honours & Awards 1975-1996* Alister Taylor, Sydney, 1997, p. 851.

platforms have been removed, fireplaces have been sealed except in the principal's office, and acoustic ceilings have been installed.<sup>51</sup>

In March 1968, a site plan for earthworks at *Bunbury Senior High School* shows the amphitheatre north of the entrance road from Haig Crescent, the caretaker's house, proposed new boundaries to the oval and the site for the new change-rooms beside the oval, and the tennis courts. A floor plan shows the layout of the change-rooms building, which was duly built.<sup>52</sup> In 1970, architect Colin Mort of Bunbury was commissioned to prepare plans for a new science block at *Bunbury Senior High School*, which was part of Commonwealth Government programme to provide schools throughout Australia with modern facilities for science education.<sup>53</sup> In November 1971, Colin Mort prepared plans for extensions to the library that show a partial plan of the existing library and adjacent classroom, and proposed alterations and additions to enlarge the library and provide specialised areas. The site plan shows part of the existing building and the proposed extension and also shows a number of mature trees to the west, including two large pines, an 'old' tea-tree, and a group of ten tea-trees.<sup>54</sup>

In 1971, to enable extension of Road 13710 the area of Reserve 17661 (the High School Site) was reduced by 2.7 perches to three acres one rood 24.3 perches. In 1978, the Reserve 17661 was amended to comprise Lot 599 and the area was increased to 4.17 ha, which was later increased to 4.19 ha.<sup>55</sup>

In 1973, *Bunbury Senior High School* celebrated its 50th anniversary.<sup>56</sup>

In 1974, Hill and Parkinson Architects, of Subiaco, prepared plans for a single storey medical centre of brick construction, which was duly erected near the hall/gymnasium building.<sup>57</sup>

In 1982, Oldfield Knott Architects prepared plans for alterations and additions to *Bunbury Senior High School* at a cost of \$1 million. The site plan shows the locations of the new classrooms additions and the existing classrooms to be altered, including extensions to the staff room. Work commenced in 1983, and was completed in 1985. The project included a new wing at the west comprising a music room and art centre at the lower ground floor, and a

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51 Val Mutton, op. cit.

52 Bunbury Senior High School, plans for earthworks, and new changerooms, SROWA Cons. 5094 Item 3038, March 1968; and Bunbury Senior High School-Additions, SROWA Cons. 6781 Item 1967/1114.

53 Bunbury Senior High School- Science Block, SROWA Cons. 1568 Item 1970/0381 and Item 1970/0396; and Bunbury Senior High School Buildings & Works, 1970-73, SROWA Cons. 1612 Item 1970/0326

54 Colin Mort, Working drawings of extensions to library at Bunbury Senior High School, Nov. 1971, in Bunbury Senior High School, SROWA Cons. 5094 Item 3038.

55 *Government Gazette* 12 March 1971, 20 January 1978, and 10 November 2006.

56 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 13.

57 Hill and Parkinson Architects, Bunbury HS, Medical Centre, Dec. 1974, Bunbury Senior High School, SROWA Cons. 5094 Item 3038; Bunbury Senior High School Buildings & Works, SROWA Cons. 2533 Item 1974/0150; and Bunbury Senior High School New Classrooms & Alterations Site & Location Plan, Dec. 1982, SROWA Cons. 5094 Item 3038.

drama room, four classrooms, English staff room, and storerooms at the upper ground floor.<sup>58</sup>

In 1985, plans were prepared by Brian Delfs Architect, of Bunbury, for a new hall and gymnasium building by the oval, and a pre-vocation centre (industrial workshop) at the south-east corner of the school site, which were built in 1985-86. A manual arts staff room was added to the existing building.<sup>59</sup>

In 1989, computer laboratories were installed at *Bunbury Senior High School*, and were in use in 1990. The opening of Australind Senior High School reduced the enrolment at *Bunbury Senior High School*. In 1991, facilities at *Bunbury Senior High School* were updated to accommodate the forthcoming Pathways courses, and courses in Hospitality and Technology were introduced in 1992. Three *Bunbury Senior High School* students reached the finals in Dupont's National Schools' Cooking Challenge in that year.<sup>60</sup>

In September 1991, *Bunbury Senior High School* was included in the Municipal Inventory for the City of Bunbury, which recommended it be considered for entry in the Register of Heritage Places.<sup>61</sup>

In 1993, the original hall/gymnasium building at *Bunbury Senior High School* was demolished 'to make way for much needed student services' accommodated in two demountable buildings that were intended to be temporary, but remain in situ in 2008.<sup>62</sup> Celebrations for the 70th anniversary of *Bunbury Senior High School* included an open day, which was well attended. At the State Rock Eisteddfod, *Bunbury Senior High School* won the Best New School, Most Entertaining, and Best Soundtrack, and reached the grand final of the national competition.<sup>63</sup>

In the 1990s, proposals to build a new senior high school at Bunbury and to sell the site of *Bunbury Senior High School* for an estimated \$26 million drew vigorous protest from the community, who highly value it for social, historic and aesthetic reasons, and wished it to continue to serve its intended purpose into the future. The proposals were not implemented.<sup>64</sup>

On 13 December 2000, the first Certificate of Title was issued for Lot 599, which recorded its status as a Reserve Under Management Order, which contained the 'conditions to be observed, with power to lease for any term not exceeding 21 years subject to the consent of the Minister for Lands', the Primary Interest Holder being the Minister for Education.<sup>65</sup>

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58 Oldfield Knott Architects, *Bunbury Senior High School New Classrooms, and New Classrooms and Alterations*, Dec. 1982, SROWA Cons. 5094 Item 3038; *Bunbury Senior High School Buildings & Works*, SROWA Cons. 5957 Item 1985/F0063; and 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 14.

59 Brian Delfs Architect, *Bunbury Senior High School Additions*, Feb. 1985, in *Bunbury Senior High School*, SROWA Cons. 6095 Item 3038; and 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 14.

60 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', *ibid.*

61 Municipal Inventory for City of Bunbury, Adopted 4 Sept., 1991.

62 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', op. cit., p. 15; and Bunbury Senior High School teacher Val Mutton, conversation with Robin Chinnery, site visit, 17 Sept. 2008.

63 'Bunbury Senior High School 1923-1993', *ibid.*

64 Val Mutton, op. cit.

65 Record of Qualified Certificate of Crown Land Title Vol. LR3090 Fol. 134.

In the late 20th century, and early 2000s, there have been changes in use of some classrooms at *Bunbury Senior High School*. In the early 2000s, further development at *Bunbury Senior High School* includes a new Design and Technology building near the workshop. In September 2008, a new library building designed by Hassell Architects was nearing completion on a site at the other side of Haig Crescent, and planning is under way for the transfer of the library and alternative uses for the area vacated. The community of Bunbury and the school community itself take pride in the history of *Bunbury Senior High School*, and value the photographs, honour boards and artefacts displayed in the entrance area. These include a ship's bell inscribed *Cincalee* 1872, Dundee, which long serving former headmaster H. Bennett (1966-81) has donated back to the school, where it is rung to mark special occasions. *Bunbury Senior High School* continues in use as a senior high school with an enrolment of 960 students in Term 4, 2008.<sup>66</sup>

In 2011 the works carried out by Hassel Architects were completed.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Bunbury Senior High School*, comprising original teaching and administration wing (1923), library and classroom addition (1930) and classroom addition (1940) is a two storey red face brick building with rough cast stucco panelling, a hipped terracotta tiled roof and a short tower. The original teaching and administration wing was designed by C. R. Ross of the Public Works Department under Principal Architect W. B. Hardwick in the Inter-War Arts and Crafts style and was completed by Totterdell Bros. in 1922-23.<sup>67</sup> The additional wings were constructed in the same style as the original building.

*Bunbury Senior High School* is located at Lot 599, Haig Crescent, Bunbury, adjacent to the south-west edge of the Bunbury CBD with the west boundary adjacent to the road reserve that fronts onto the Indian Ocean. The original school building and early additions were constructed on the apex of a hill. This elevated position affords 270 degree water views of Koombana Bay and the Port of Bunbury to the north and east and the Indian Ocean to the west.

The site is over 4 ha in size and is bounded by Haig Crescent to the east and south, Russell Esplanade and the Indian Ocean to the west, and residential development to the north. The vehicular entrance to the school is on the eastern corner, and is flanked by four tall mature Norfolk Island pines. An amphitheatre has been constructed into the north facing slope of the hill to the west of this entrance. The driveway leads around a circular planter bed to a bituminised car park in the front courtyard.

A number of teaching blocks have been added to the site since 1940. A two storey 'U' shaped classroom wing was added to the east in 1960 in a similar scale, form and materials and on the same level as the original building, and forms a courtyard to the south-east of the original building. A single storey medical centre and staff toilet was constructed at the rear of the reception office (originally the girls' cloakroom) on a 45 degree angle in about 1975, and a transportable classroom building has been located in the centre of the

<sup>66</sup> Craige Pettit, Principal Bunbury Senior High School, conversation with Robin Chinnery, site visit, 17 Sept. 2008.

<sup>67</sup> Apperly, et al, *A Pictorial Guide*, pp. 158-61.

courtyard. At the west (open) end of the courtyard, a large mature Sheoak is a particular feature.

An English block was constructed to the west in 1985. This is a two storey building, with its upper level at the same level as the ground floor of the original structure, and the art and music facility located in the lower (ground floor) level of this building. Two buildings on the south-east corner of the site, where the hill drops down to the coast, the workshops and design and technology building, are single storey buildings approximately three metres lower than the main school. A gymnasium, performing arts and change rooms are at a lower level again, at the same level as the oval, which is located on the south-west corner of the site. A new modern glass and steel Library building is situated on the east side of Haig Crescent.

The front (north) façade of the school is in the form of an E, with the original 1923 structure forming the spine to the south, and a short wing containing the entrance projecting from the centre. The west wing containing the 1929 library forms the top chord, and the shorter 1940 east wing the lower chord.

The dominating feature of this façade is the central front portico, which is constructed of honey coloured Donnybrook stone. The portico is flanked by recessed banded piers which support the brackets of a curved stone hood. The words 'HIGH SCHOOL' are carved in bas-relief below the hood and above the keystone of the flat arch. A flat face brick pediment over the hood rises to the stone sill of the central first floor windows.

The front doors are a pair of twelve pane glazed timber doors, with a lower panel of timber, multi lighted highlight and side lights, and are set at the rear of the portico. On either side of the portico is a pair of twelve light double hung timber sash windows, which are set into red faced stretcher bond brickwork, where every fifth course is indented to match the stone piers, and terminating in one and a half rows of soldier courses which wrap around the wing above the window heads. Beneath each of the pairs of windows is a pale grey granite foundation stone.

The upper part of the administration wing is clad with rough cast stucco with a soldier course of face bricks at the sill height of the first floor windows. The windows at the first floor consist of a central triple pane window over the portico flanked by a double hung timber sash window.

In the building plane behind, a colonnade on either side of the entrance wing is formed by three semicircular red brick arches, with panels of rough cast stucco above. The arches are supported on substantial brick piers, which are banded below the springer to match the administration wing. The piers continue up in plain stretcher bond to the first floor balustrade. Each pier then supports four 100 x 100 timber posts which support the first floor verandah beam.

On the far (south) side of the wide colonnade, is the north wall of the classrooms. Each classroom has one wide glazed timber door and either one or two double hung timber sash windows.

The hipped roof has wide eaves with exposed rafters and a number of stuccoed chimneys are extant.

A water tower on the east corner of the original structure is rendered with rough cast stucco with a brick sill and piers supporting the roof. A chimneybreast projects forward on the north facade.

The west wing has a colonnade of five arches on its east façade, the detailing of which matches that of the original structure. The colonnade terminates in a projecting two storey portico at the north end, which has recessed banded brick work rising to the height of the spring height of the arches of the colonnade, and rough cast stucco over. An arch at ground floor level has a square head while at the first floor there is a pair of narrow Romanesque arches, which are repeated on the north wall of the portico. A single storey addition to the library was constructed against the west wall of the west wing in the early 1970s.

The east wing is a mirror of the west wing, with identical detailing and portico, but is shorter, with only two arches to the colonnade. The north wall of this wing has a single central double hung timber sash window at ground floor level, which is repeated at first floor level where it is flanked by narrower double hung timber sash windows. The face brickwork and stucco details return around the east face of this wing, where there are a series of double hung timber sash windows on both levels with a tall window corresponding to the stair.

The rear (south) wall of the original structure has a red brick base up to approximately 1200 mm above floor level, with rough cast stucco above. Fenestration consists of a series of vertically proportioned windows with soldier course lintels placed symmetrically. The original timber sashes have been replaced with aluminium. A soldier course of red bricks runs along the façade at the sill level of the first floor windows.

The internal layout of the original building consists of an entrance hall (which is no longer used) flanked by the headmaster's office to the left (east), and the deputy's office and store to the right (west).

Behind the offices is a wide corridor that presently functions as a foyer with double doors at each end (east and west) that open on to the verandahs. The entrance hall continues on the south side of the corridor as a narrow passage leading to the rear of the school. To the west of this passage is the present school office (formerly the girls' cloak room) and to the east, staff offices in what was formerly the boys' cloakroom.

On either side of the administration wing, the verandah opens onto two medium sized (7.3 m x 6.7 m) classrooms to the south. On the west side of the classrooms is the girls toilet, which has been extended from its original size, and on the east side, the former boys' toilet has been converted to a store.

The original staircases at either end of the verandah that led to the first floor have been removed to allow the verandahs to return north. Another stair has been introduced adjacent to the girls' toilet. The west verandah turns north to the library wing of 1930, with the original library taking the space of two classrooms and a librarians' room to the north the space of one classroom. The east verandah turns north along the east wing, which contains one large

classroom. Beyond the classroom is a stair to the first floor with a small teaching room at the north end of the wing.

The first floor layout is similar to the ground floor, with classrooms, staff and store areas opening off a 3 m wide verandah. A large classroom is located over the school office, corridor and staff offices of the ground floor and a teaching area over the Principal's and deputy's office.

In general the original timber floors are extant although now covered with vinyl or carpet. The walls are the original hard wall plaster. The doors are timber with glazed upper panels and highlights and generally appear original. The double hung timber sash windows on the verandah walls also appear original. Altered elements include the fireplaces, which have been blocked up although the chimney breasts remain. The principal's office is the only room to retain the original fireplace, which is surrounded by a band of soldier course red bricks, with a painted timber mantle shelf supported by five brackets. New acoustic tiled ceiling fabric has been installed beneath the original ceiling. The window sashes on the south wall been altered to sliding aluminium although the openings retain their original form. On the upper levels, some of the classrooms retain the original teaching platform.

On the ground floor, the verandah floor is constructed of concrete. In areas the verandah ceiling consists of the painted exposed joists and underside of the first floor floorboards. In other areas a lower ceiling has been introduced. On the first floor, the verandah floors are constructed of jarrah boards. The raking soffit of the verandah roof has been lined with timber boards.

Most of the original rooms retain their original form. The classrooms are generally 6.7 m deep and vary in length, with the ground floor classrooms generally 7.3 m. The Library has been modified with the removal of some walls to create one large open space. A large portion of the west wall has been removed to open the area out to the extension of 1970.

The condition of *Bunbury Senior High School* is generally good. The building has been well maintained.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There are 81 secondary schools on the SHO database, of which 22 are located in regional areas. Seventeen secondary schools have been entered in the Register of Heritage Places including *Perth Modern School*, the first government secondary school in the State, and four secondary schools built in the interwar period. They are *Northam Senior High School* (1921), in the Inter-War Arts & Crafts style; *Perth Girls School* (1936), designed in the Inter-War Stripped Classical style; *Catholic Agricultural College Bindoon* (1937), designed in the Inter-War Free Classical style; and *Kent Street Senior High School* (1939), also in the Inter-war Free Classical style.

*Perth Modern School* was the only government high school erected until the 1920s, when three were constructed in regional areas to offer secondary level government education outside the Metropolitan region. The first was *Northam Senior High School* (1921), which was followed by *Bunbury Senior High School* in 1923, and *Albany Senior High School* in 1925. The substantial size, aesthetic quality and functional complexity of these high



schools distinguished them from other government school buildings erected in the period.

Designed by C. R. Ross of the architectural division of the PWD, under Principal Architect W. B. Hardwick, all three were large, symmetrical, two-storey, linear schools constructed in face brick with roughcast rendered panels and with a hipped tiled roof. At Northam the classrooms open from a rear verandah, and at Bunbury and Albany the classrooms open off a front colonnade on either side of a central administration wing. The original main building at each of the three high schools school provided an administrative area, classrooms and cloakrooms at the ground floor, and a lecture theatre, two laboratories, and two classrooms at the first floor. Bunbury and Albany were almost identical in form and detailing: each has a short central projecting administration and entrance wing containing the front portico with Romanesque arches to the colonnades on either side. The portico at Bunbury is constructed of Donnybrook stone, where the portico at Albany is constructed of brick. Only Bunbury has a water tower. Both Albany and Bunbury are constructed on prominent sites, Bunbury at the top of a hill and Albany on the lower flanks of Mt. Clarence.

All three of these high schools included a timber framed hall/gymnasium building similar to that built at *Perth Modern School* in 1911, with Bunbury's being built to the rear of the main school building. The hall/gymnasium buildings at Bunbury and Albany have been demolished. In the 1920s, each of the three high schools included a caretaker's quarters. Since the original construction extensive additions have been made to all three schools. The early additions to each of them comprised wings similar in style to the initial building, while post-World War II additions have included numerous separate buildings on each school site, often purpose designed for specific uses including science and maths buildings.

In conclusion, *Bunbury Senior High School* is the third oldest surviving government high school and is one of three high schools (all extant in 2008) constructed in the 1920s, in each of the three most important regional centres of the period. All three are substantial in size and detailing and are fine examples of the design work of architect Clarence Rose Ross during his service with the Public Works Department of Western Australia. *Bunbury Senior High School*, with its distinctive Donnybrook stone entrance portico and water tower and unrivalled location, is the finest of the three, and one of the finest schools in the State.

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

No key references.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

Further research may locate additional plans for some of the additions and alterations to *Bunbury Senior High School*, and may ascertain the fate of the caretaker's quarters.