



## 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
- 8.6.7 Running missions to Australia's indigenous people

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

- 408 Institutions
- 406 Religion

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Camfield House*, with its two separately constructed wings, provides good examples of both the Victorian Rustic Gothic and Victorian Georgian styles. The steeply pitched gabled roofs, gabled fascias and timber finials create aesthetic skyline features, and together with the English bond brickwork and decorative timber gable ends give the place considerable aesthetic significance. (Criterion 1.1)

The place has some landmark quality situated on a slope of Mount Melville overlooking the city and set well back on a large, terraced site allowing uninterrupted views of the house from the north. (Criterion 1.3)

#### 11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

*Camfield House* and the Albany Native Institution were part of a wider attitude in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century toward instructing Aborigines in European civilization and integrating them into a European way of life where they could contribute to the 'better good' of the community as domestic servants and labourers. (Criterion 2.1)

*Camfield House* was constructed in 1858 to house the Native Institution at Albany and meet the perceived need for the housing and education of certain Aboriginal children in the town. (Criterion 2.2)

*Camfield House* and the Native Institution were a result of the desire of Reverend Arthur Wollaston and Anne Camfield to educate Aboriginal

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

children in European civilization and Christianity, which grew out of their Anglican missionary ideals. (Criterion 2.2)

*Camfield House* is closely associated with Resident Magistrate Henry Camfield and his wife Anne, who constructed the place in 1858 as schoolroom and accommodation for the Native Institution, after housing the Institute in their own home from 1852 until at least 1858. (Criterion 2.3)

### **11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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### **11.4 SOCIAL VALUE**

*Camfield House* is valued by the community for its associations as a home and school for Aboriginal children, its associations with Henry and Anne Camfield, and as an early building in the town of Albany. (Criterion 4.1)

*Camfield House* contributes to the local community's sense of place by its historical associations and its streetscape value as a substantial mid-nineteenth century building on a corner site. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1 RARITY**

*Camfield House* is one of a small group of places surviving from the early period of Albany's development. (Criterion 5.1)

The two distinct but adjoining forms at *Camfield House* illustrate the unusual combined residential and institutional functions of the place when constructed and occupied by the Camfields. (Criterion 5.2)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The establishment of a school and residence for native children at *Camfield House* demonstrates the perceived philanthropy of Albany residents in the later half of the nineteenth century. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

Although some of the fabric at *Camfield House* is deteriorated and detracts from the aesthetic qualities of the place, overall the building is in sound condition. There are some examples of poor and inconsistent construction detailing. Maintenance is carried out as needed and as funds become available but an overall program of management is required to retain the culturally significant values of the place.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Camfield House* has moderate integrity. While the place is no longer used as it was originally intended, the institutional function is discernible and the use as a residence is compatible and sustainable.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Camfield House* has moderate authenticity and is recognisable from an early photograph of the place. The recent collapse of the single-storey form between the original school and house, together with the introduction of the

verandah, porch, dormer window and some additional forms around the courtyard and inconsistent detailing and style characteristics have compromised the authenticity of the original fabric.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Katrina Chisholm, Architect.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Camfield House* is a brick and iron residence, constructed in 1858 as residence and attached schoolhouse for Albany Resident Magistrate Henry Camfield and his wife Anne. The place was occupied by the Albany Native Institution run by Anne Camfield from time of construction until 1871. From 1898 to 1905, *Camfield House* was occupied as a residence by the Christian Brothers. Between 1910 and 1923, alterations were carried out which resulted in the replacement of the shingle roof with iron, and the addition of a verandah to the single-storey section and a dormer window and bay window to the two-storey section. *Camfield House* was originally constructed in Victorian Rustic Gothic style, but the alterations resulted in the single-storey section being more representative of Victorian Georgian style.<sup>1</sup>

In 1827, in order to lay claim to the western half of Australia for Britain and prevent French claims on the area, a penal outpost of NSW, known as Frederick Town, was established at King George Sound. In 1831, the convicts and troops were evacuated, and land in the area made available to free settlers. The townsite was named Albany in January 1832. Albany developed as a trading and servicing post for whaling vessels, ships travelling from England via the Cape, and other vessels. Development of the hinterland was slow but by 1850, most of the suitable pastoral land had been taken up in large holdings.<sup>2</sup>

Henry Camfield arrived in Western Australia on the 12 October 1829, with his sister and his brother-in-law, William Henty, on the *Caroline*. Camfield was disappointed with his first grants but succeeded in getting Surveyor General J. S. Roe to exchange them. His new grant included the Burswood peninsula, previously reserved for Crown purposes. In 1840, Camfield married Anne Breeze. He had insufficient funds to fully develop his grant so obtained a government position as Collector of Colonial Revenue in 1842. In 1845, he was appointed Postmaster General, and in 1848 was appointed as Resident Magistrate at Albany.<sup>3</sup>

Anne Camfield had arrived in the Colony in August 1838, as governess to the family of Reverend William Mitchell, who settled in the Swan district.<sup>4</sup> She was an acquaintance of Mrs Fry, the prison reformer, and a correspondent of Florence Nightingale.<sup>5</sup> While she was recorded as a governess, the ultimate plan of her coming to the colony had been to assist Rev Mitchell in his missionary work. In Albany, Anne Camfield acquired Suburban Lot 36 on Serpentine Road, when the area was subdivided in 1852. The land appears to

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<sup>1</sup> Photograph, 1860s, from Albany Local Studies Collection; physical evidence.

<sup>2</sup> Garden, Donald S. *Albany: A Panorama of the Sound from 1827* Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, 1977, pp. 36-70.

<sup>3</sup> *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Hicks, Bonnie *Aspects of Old Albany*, B. Hicks, Albany, 1991, p. 62

have already had a two-storey house constructed on it, which she called *Annesfield*.<sup>6</sup>

In the same year that Henry Camfield took up the position of Resident Magistrate at Albany, Reverend John Ramsden Wollaston was appointed Albany's first Anglican clergyman. Rev Wollaston had arrived in Western Australia in 1841 and spent his early years in the Colony in the Bunbury district. Camfield and Wollaston became close friends. At Albany, Wollaston was concerned about the number of homeless Aboriginal children, some of them fathered by white settlers, and was encouraged by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to establish a home and school for them. He was offered a grant of some sixty acres at Middleton Beach for the establishment of a Native Institution, but no government funds were to be made available until he had at least six children in his care and a functioning institution.<sup>7</sup> Wollaston had no difficulty in collecting the required number of children, always obtaining the permission of the parent or a relative responsible for the child, but a building and someone to run it were another matter until Anne Camfield offered to take the children into her own home temporarily. Her motivation for this offer was no doubt prompted by her original plans of working as a missionary, and the fact that she and Henry had no children of their own.

Not finding it possible to procure for the present any stipendiary mistress or proper Asylum, I gladly avail myself of the charitable offer of Mrs Camfield, the Resident's lady, to receive the children into her own home and to superintend them, for one year, on condition that all expenses of assistants and necessary supplies, as well as a portion of House Rent, should be paid by me.<sup>8</sup>

Anne Camfield appears to have already had one Aboriginal child in her care before making her offer to Wollaston. Surveyor Philip Chauncy, in an appendix to R. Brough Smyth's *The Aborigines of Victoria* (1878), explains that the Albany Native Institution was originated when the natives went bush in June 1852, and left a three-and-a-half year old girl, Kojontpat, to wander alone around the settlement. Kojontpat would come to the Chauncy's gate for breakfast every morning, and the Chauncy's eventually mentioned this to Mrs Camfield, who was a neighbour. Anne Camfield took the child in and later obtained the permission of the mother to keep her.<sup>9</sup>

The children Wollaston had collected were taken into *Annesfield* in December 1852:

Commenced, indeed, 1st of last December [1852], but my hopes of success are very faint for I fear I shall not be adequately supported with the necessary funds and the authority of the Government. At this time I have 9 children under the temporary superintendence of Mrs Camfield and assistants... 3 half castes and 6 natives, amongst whom 2 are babes-in-arms.... Two responsible young women, Ellen Wells and Ellen Trimmer, at present assist Mrs

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<sup>6</sup> Land grant enrolment; Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, Bonnie Hicks, 1964, Chapter 7, pp. 1-2. *Annesfield* was damaged by fire c. 1906 and little of the original building remains.

<sup>7</sup> Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, pp. 1-2; 'An Early Diarist: The Rev. John Ramsden Wollaston, M.A.', *Early Days*, Vol. 4 Part 6, pp.82-85; Hasluck, Paul 'Annesfield: An Early School for Native Children', Prepared for the Western Australian Historical Society, Battye PR7592.

<sup>8</sup> Wollaston, Rev John Ramsden, *Albany Journals*, pp. 109.

<sup>9</sup> Hasluck, Paul, op cit; *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 August 1858, p. 3.

Camfield... the former long an intimate of Mrs Camfield's family and boarding with them.<sup>10</sup>

Once the institution was established, government funds were made available:

Having thus fulfilled the condition imposed by the Local Government I am now authorised to draw upon the Colonial Treasurer (from the Land Fund) for the current year only, to the amount of £100 for the care, clothing, maintenance and training of the native children ... and also £100 to be laid out in improving the Land Grant and in buildings.<sup>11</sup>

Wollaston began construction of a building on his land grant.

The middle portion of the house (as described in the plans submitted to His Excellency) is finished all but the flooring. I now propose, (with his Excellency's approval) to proceed with 2 wings, comprising apartments for the Master and Mistress and dormitory for the children... The quantity of ground enclosed and now under cultivation for the next years crop is about 2 acres. There are a few cwt of potatoes to be taken up immediately'.<sup>12</sup>

The Institution building was not occupied. Wollaston died in 1856, and Henry Camfield was responsible for selling off the land, building, and other items that had been acquired. The site, at Middleton Beach, was too far from the Camfield's home for them to make use of it.<sup>13</sup>

In 1855, Anne Camfield paid £21 for Albany Suburban Lot 46, which adjoined *Annesfield*. The land had an area of approximately 3.5 acres (1.4 ha).<sup>14</sup> The Camfields constructed *Camfield House* on the allotment. The place appears to have been built in two stages.

Within the last year a comfortable school-house has been erected, containing a dry airy school-room of 30 feet by 12, together with a kitchen and sleeping apartment to accommodate six or eight children, and also a snug little room for the assistant. The remainder of the children continue to occupy the rooms they originally did in the Resident's house... Mr [Camfield] built the school house...on his own grounds within 30 or 40 yards of his residence.<sup>15</sup>

It is not known how soon after this report that the remainder of *Camfield House* was constructed, but a photograph of the Native Institution, taken in the 1860s, shows *Camfield House* with the single-storey and two-storey sections that currently exist. The single-storey provided a residence, probably used as bedrooms for the inmates and resident staff. The polished timber panelling and the timber staircase in the two-storey section give a 'Victorian institution' atmosphere to this part of the building.<sup>16</sup>

The two properties were called *Annesfield* by the Camfields. The place was constructed because:

...it would have been impossible for Mrs [Camfield] to have continued the charge of them [the children] if they had been removed to the Middleton Bay school-house. The Government pay a rent for the house of 8 per cent. on the money expended in its erection.<sup>17</sup>

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10 Wollaston, Rev John Ramsden, *Albany Journals*, p. 165 & 207.

11 *ibid*, pp. 109.

12 *ibid*, pp. 207.

13 Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, p. 4, quoting Henry Camfield's letters.

14 Grant 1355, 12 June 1855.

15 *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 August 1858, p. 3.

16 Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, p. 63; photograph, 1860s; physical evidence.

17 *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 August 1858., p. 3.

It was reported in 1858, that:

The elder girls are taught all useful domestic works. They wash, and iron or mangle, all the clothes of the Institute. They bake, and cook, and scrub. At present they have not learnt to milk, but they can make butter, and there is little housework that they are not capable of doing. There are several young children in the school, and there have been some quite young infants, so that they have a knowledge, too, of nursery duties. The school routine extends not beyond, reading and writing, and a little arithmetic.

British government policy towards indigenous peoples in its colonies placed an emphasis on educating children in European ways<sup>18</sup>. All of Australia's mainland colonies codified this in the nineteenth century by legally formalising the removal, institutionalisation and apprenticing of Aboriginal children<sup>19</sup>. Aboriginal families were considered dangerous to the development of their children<sup>20</sup>, as expressed in 1842 by the Protector of Aborigines in South Australia:

Our chief hope is decidedly in the children; and the complete success as far as regards their education and civilisation would be before us, if it were possible to remove them from the influence of their parents.<sup>21</sup>

*The Inquirer*, in its Editorial of 18 August 1858, epitomised the attitude of the time toward the training of Aborigines in European life, when it stated:

[I]f but one of these unfortunates is brought within the pale of civilization and christianity [sic], labour and money will not have been vainly applied. But whether the results are encouraging or not, the duty of a christian [sic] community is plain. It is in fact one of those cases which allow of no exercise of discretion upon our parts.<sup>22</sup>

In 1861, Henry Camfield, having retired as Resident Magistrate the previous year, was appointed Superintendent of the Native Mission at an annual salary of £100. The following year, Anne was appointed Mistress of the Native Mission with a salary of £75 per year.<sup>23</sup> It was not unusual for a husband and wife to work together in this form of occupation, but considering that it was Anne Camfield who ran the Institution initially, with her husband's support, it is interesting that she was only appointed to the official position of Mistress after Henry was made Superintendent.

One of the problems faced by the Native Institution was what to do with the children when they reached mature age. The girls outnumbered the boys at the Institution: in 1858, there were thirteen girls and five boys resident. The boys were usually placed on outlying farms, and the girls were in demand by ticket-of-leave men and some free settlers, as educated wives. Writing in 1872, Mrs Edward Millett states:

Mrs. Camfield's chief difficulty is how to settle her girls in life, for when they grow up the inevitable question is "Whom are they to marry?" They cannot, after the training they had received, take a savage husband and though I believe two of her pupils married ticket-of-leave men, yet the prospects held

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18 Haebich, Anna, *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000*, p.69, quoting British Government Papers.

19 *ibid.*, p.148.

20 *ibid.*, p.155.

21 *ibid.*, p.144, quoting from Western Australian Aborigines Department Annual Report 1902.

22 *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, Editorial, 18 August 1858, p.2.

23 *Blue Books*, 1861, p. 112 & 1864, p. 111.

out by such alliances are a poor reward for adopting Christian habits and sorry inducements for retaining them.<sup>24</sup>

The Camfields liaised with the Moravian missions in the eastern colonies to give the girls opportunities to meet young men of similar background. According to Mrs Camfield, the other colonies had:

...Institutions for adult natives and half castes where they have farms. In the Moravian Missionary Stations they wanted wives for the converts and a teacher for their school. We have had girls here who were too old to remain in the school, and to send them to service was to send them to almost certain ruin, as we found in more than one case to our cost. The expense to us, personally, is very considerable, in fitting them out and sending them in the care of a matron, tho' the Government gave aid in the case of the last five going to the Missions and these also assist.<sup>25</sup>

Bishop Hale also explained why the older children were sent to the other colonies:

Natives, as human beings like ourselves require companionship. And natives, who in this colony, go forth as civilised and Christianised persons, to make their way for themselves, cannot find such companionship... I entreat, then, that no impediment may be thrown in the way of such removals... and that those children, as they grow out of their childhood, be left as free agents to dispose of themselves as they may desire, and as counsel and advice of myself or other friends may guide them.<sup>26</sup>

These statements display the paternalistic, we-know-what-is-best-for-you attitude that prevailed for so long in matters pertaining to Aborigines, and also the idea that it was necessary to isolate those who had been trained in European ways from those who had not, as prevention against all that training being undone to the extent of removing them from the State. Anne Camfield's comment - 'as we found in more than one case to our cost' - shows no consideration for the cost to the girls concerned, only for the effort expended on them gone to waste. There were other costs too. The institutionalised education of Aboriginal children trained them for subservient lives in the lower echelons of society, as domestic or rural workers.<sup>27</sup> Of one group of girls who were being taken to Gippsland to be married, two died of typhoid in Melbourne before even reaching their destination.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps the clearest indication of the prevailing attitudes can be seen in Anne Camfield's report on what appears to have been an experiment, where she and her husband adopted one Aboriginal boy.

The native children have all a great fondness for music and very quickly learn tunes. One little boy we adopted ourselves, so as to bring him up in a more refined way than is necessary or desirable for them generally (thereby to test his abilities as a native), gave evidence of a fine ear for music. He would listen to it untiringly and learnt to play the piano with facility and there is no

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<sup>24</sup> Millett, Mrs Edward, *An Australian Parsonage, or, The settler and the savage in Western Australia*, London, Edward Stanford, 1872, quoted in Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit., Chapter 7, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, p. 13.

<sup>26</sup> Bishop Matthew Hale, 1868, quoted in Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, pp. 12-13.

<sup>27</sup> Haebich, Anna, *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000*, op cit, p.155.

<sup>28</sup> Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, p. 13, quoting Anne Camfield's report in the 'WA Council Book, 1868'.

doubt, had he lived, he would have become a good performer. He died at the age of 10 years 2 month.<sup>29</sup>

One student who received considerable attention in later years was Elizabeth (Bessie) Flower. She was a sister of Kojontpat, the first Aboriginal child taken in by Anne Camfield. Bessie spoke French and played the harmonium. She was sent to the Victorian mission, Ramahyuck, in the Gippsland area, where she married a part-Aboriginal carpenter and worked as a teacher. An 1869 news release on the Ramahyuck mission reported that: 'the very accomplished native teacher Elizabeth Flower will soon take charge of the new boarding school'.<sup>30</sup>

In March 1871, the Camfields closed the Native Institution at Albany, owing to their advancing age and health problems. Henry was then 72 years old, and Anne was probably in her early sixties.<sup>31</sup> The children were transferred to Perth, where Bishop Hale built a house, called Hale House, near the corner of Spring and Mount streets on the Bishop's See site, to house and educate Aboriginal children.<sup>32</sup> The total number of children who passed through the Institution has not been ascertained, but by 1868, fifty-five children had been taken in. Of these, seventeen had died, a significant percentage. Eleven children were claimed to be 'hopelessly ill, when they came. Most had a family background of consumption'. Among those who died was Kojontpat.<sup>33</sup>

The Albany Native Institution was the longest operating educational establishment for Aboriginal children in the colony to this time. In Perth, attempts had been made to train Aboriginals for domestic service and farm labour and to introduce them to Christianity, but they were short lived, and of limited success by European expectations.<sup>34</sup> Many of the children who were inmates of the Albany Native Institution were orphaned or abandoned, or were handed over by their father following the death of their mother. There was a high mortality rate among the Aboriginal adults, as there was among the children, largely due to the introduction of diseases such as measles and influenza, and possibly to changes in diet.<sup>35</sup>

Following the closure of the Albany Native Institution, the Camfields sold the original *Annesfield* residence on Suburban Lot 36 and occupied *Camfield House*. *Annesfield* was purchased by Sir Alexander Thomas Cockburn-Campbell, who had succeeded Henry Camfield to the Resident Magistracy. The selling price was £1,000, and included a strip of land from Suburban Lot 46 as a permanent right-of-way.<sup>36</sup> The following year, in October 1872, Henry Camfield died.<sup>37</sup> Anne spent some time in Perth, but appears to have continued to reside in Albany for the most part. She is recorded as being resident in Albany in the 1880s, and of spending some time in Adelaide,

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<sup>29</sup> Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, p. 7, quoted from the 'WA Council Book' (no date given).

<sup>30</sup> Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Bishop Parry's letters, 1873, quoted in Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 9, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> HCWA assessment documentation, *Bishop's House, Perth*, database no. 2093.

<sup>33</sup> Anne Camfield's report on the work of the Institution in the 'WA Council Book, 1871', quoted by Bonnie Hicks, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7, p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> Stannage, C. T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia*, UWA Press, Perth, 1981, pp. 89-92.

<sup>35</sup> Hicks, Bonnie, *Henry and Anne Camfield*, op cit, Chapter 7.

<sup>36</sup> Deeds of Memorial, Book 7 No. 296, 4 March 1871; Certificate of Title Vol.166 Fol. 75.

<sup>37</sup> *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988.



although some records give her as having returned to England after Henry's death.<sup>38</sup>

In 1889, Anne Camfield sold *Camfield House* to Nathaniel William McKail, who occupied the place. The Camfields had raised a £250 mortgage on the property with the estate of John McKail, Nathaniel's father, in April 1872, which was still outstanding. Nathaniel paid £750.0.0 for *Camfield House*.<sup>39</sup> Nathaniel McKail was born in Albany. His father had come out to the Colony on the *Parmelia*, and had farmed, established the company of McKail & Co (later Drew, Robinson & Co), and held the position of MLC for Albany in 1870-71. Nathaniel inherited part of his father's properties, and farmed at Porongorup. He undertook some exploration work in the Colony, and worked in the National Bank in Victoria, where he married, returning to Western Australia in 1886. He established the property *Windy Hill* on the Kalgan River, and was a member of the Albany Road Board and Municipal Council.<sup>40</sup>

In 1896, *Camfield House* was purchased by Father Facundo Mateu, Catholic Parish Priest for Albany. The Christian Brothers had recently arrived in Western Australia to take over management of the boys' college in St George's Terrace and the Catholic boys' orphanage in Subiaco, and Father Mateu wanted them to establish a school for boys in Albany. In July 1897, Brother Treacy visited Albany from Perth, and later wrote to his superiors in Adelaide:

I stopped almost two full days in Albany so as to arrange fully... with Father Mateu, though the Bishop could give me a site in Albany. I have decided that it may be more to our advantage to pay £1227 for a house in the possession of the P.P.<sup>41</sup>

*Camfield House* was purchased from Father Mateu by the Christian Brothers.<sup>42</sup> Land survey plan 1034 was deposited, formalising the small change to the land area resulting from the 1871 sale of Lot 36, with right-of-way, to the Cockburn-Campbells.<sup>43</sup>

On 22 September 1898, Brother Treacy arrived from Perth in time to welcome three brothers from Ireland who were to take charge of the new Christian Brother's school. *Camfield House* had been unoccupied since purchased by Father Mateu, and wild cats, spiders and other noxious animals had taken up abode. The Christian Brothers School opened on 15 October 1898 in an old wooden building made available by the Sisters of St Joseph, near the Convent and Church in Aberdeen Street. Numbers were small, however, and Albany did not offer the prospect of growth in the short term. In 1905, the Christian Brothers closed their Albany school and moved to Kalgoorlie, which had a

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38 Deeds of Memorial dated 1881, 1884 and 1889 for various Albany lands give her as a resident; *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988, record her as having returned to England, but no date of departure is given, nor is a date of death.

39 Deeds of Memorial, Book 7 No. 666, 2 April 1872 & Book 10 No. 708, 13 April 1889; Albany Rate Books 1891-1896.

40 *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988; Battye J. S. *Cyclopedia of Western Australia*, Hussey & Gillingham, Adelaide, 1912, Vol. 2, pp. 850-851

41 Brown, Joan, *A History of the Christian Brothers in Albany*, by the Librarian, CBC, Albany, 1977, quoting a letter dated 19 July 1897.

42 Certificate of Title Vol. 166 Fol. 75, 29 August 1899.

43 DOLA Land survey plan 1034, 29 March 1899.

large and growing population. They did not reopen a school in Albany until the 1950s.<sup>44</sup>

In 1910, Albany merchant Charles Herman Neumann (Newman) purchased *Camfield House*.<sup>45</sup> Neumann is credited with naming the place *Camfield House*, to distinguish it from *Annesfield*.<sup>46</sup> He is also believed to be responsible for reroofing the building, with iron over the shingles, and creating a verandah along the length of the single-storey residence. The addition of the dormer window in the upper floor of the schoolhouse was most likely done at the same time as the roofing. The dating of the addition of the bay window in the lower floor is less obvious but possibly dates from the same period of renovation. These renovations certainly post-date the ownership of the Christian Brothers, and it is feasible that the next owner/occupier would have upgraded the place, finance permitting.<sup>47</sup>

In the 1920s, Suburban Lot 46 was subject to subdivision on Plan 4697, and the northeastern half was sold separately in 1923. In May 1925, *Camfield House*, on approximately 1.5 acres (6,165 sq metres) of land, was purchased by Rita Stephens Medcalf. She raised a mortgage of £1,000 with Charles Neumann at time of purchase.<sup>48</sup>

Rita Medcalf was the wife of surveyor Ferdinand George Medcalf. Ferdinand Medcalf was born in Sydney in 1889, and arrived in Western Australia with his parents around 1900. He was educated at Claremont, and Scotch College and articulated as a surveyor. He served in the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion in World War One, attaining the rank of Captain. After being wounded in France in 1916, he was invalided back to Australia. In 1917, he married Rita Fry and eventually established himself as a surveyor at Albany, although his work took him all over the State. He and his wife had three children, including Ian Medcalf, who was a solicitor and served as an MLC, and Margaret Medcalf, who was a State Archivist. The family lived in *Camfield House*.<sup>49</sup>

The *Camfield House* property was subject to further subdivision in 1952, when three lots, numbered 24-26, were created at the rear fronting Crossman Street.<sup>50</sup> The lots were sold and a new title issued for *Camfield House*, which was then situated on 3,415 square metres of land.<sup>51</sup>

Rita Medcalf died on 24 September 1964 and her husband, Ferdinand, and son, Ian, inherited the property. Ferdinand Medcalf was still living at *Camfield House* at the time of his wife's death. In 1969, Ferdinand Medcalf died and title passed solely to Ian. In 1973, current owner Ray Athol Stephens, business manager, acquired *Camfield House*.<sup>52</sup> The Stephens lived nearby, on Crossman Street, and *Camfield House* was rented out for a number of years until Ray's son, Ross Stephens, occupied the place with his family.

The physical evidence indicates other changes that have taken place, such as the removal of a room on the north east side of the two-storey section, which

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44 Brown, Joan, op cit, pp. 6-9.

45 Certificate of Title Vol. 166 Fol. 75, 4 October 1910.

46 McKail, Nathaniel, 'Recollections of Albany', Battye private archive collection, 1393A.

47 Brown, Joan, op cit, pp. 6-9.

48 Certificates of Title Vol. 166 Fol. 75, 21 November 1923; 28 May 1925 & Vol. 953 Fol. 123, 16 February 1927.

49 Battye Library, MN 1265.

50 Diagram 15905.

51 Certificates of Title, Vol. 953 Fol. 123 & Vol. 1147 Fol. 331, 29 April 1952.

52 Certificate of Title, Vol. 1147 Fol. 331, 31 August 1964; 18 February 1969 & 2 March 1973.

may have been the original kitchen mentioned in the 1858 *Inquirer* article on the Native Institution.<sup>53</sup>

In 2001, Ross Stephens and his family continue to occupy *Camfield House*. They are undertaking some ongoing interior restoration, but the exterior fabric is also in need of work.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Camfield House*, a residential building constructed in 1858, with a separate garage structure (date of construction unknown), comprises two distinct but attached forms of masonry wall construction and corrugated iron roofs.

The place is situated at the intersection of Serpentine Road and Crossman Street in a residential quarter of Albany, on the slope of Mt Melville overlooking the city. Both the house and garage are sited towards the Serpentine Road boundary with grassed terraces, some of which are retained with low stone walls, and little mature vegetation between the buildings and the neighbouring house to the northeast. A partially sealed driveway from Serpentine Road separates the house and garage and is linked to a second access driveway from Crossman Street at the bottom of the property. This bottom boundary appears physically undefined but a stepped corrugated cement fibre fence is located along the two street boundaries.

The house has an L-shaped plan form with the single-storey section, (the former house), parallel to Serpentine Road and the two-storey wing, (the former school), lying perpendicular and describing a brick paved courtyard within the L-shape. Both wings have steeply pitched gable roofs with a lower pitched roof extending over the verandah along the northeast elevation of the single-storey section of the house. Various other pitches have been used to cover some incongruous, single-storey forms abutting the northwest elevation. Crudely constructed awnings of corrugated metal with timber struts extend over external door openings in the southwest elevation. Square chimneys rise just above the ridge line but the gable fascias and timber finials of the two-storey section make more aesthetic skyline features. A bay window, a small entrance porch with its own pitched roof and a dormer window all project from the southeast elevation. The two-storey wing displays style characteristics of the Victorian Rustic Gothic period while the single storey wing is more representative of the Victorian Georgian style. The location of an earlier structure extending north from the former two-storey wing is discernible on the northeast elevation with the once internal paintwork, access doors, and silhouette of the roof line providing clear physical evidence.

Walls are constructed with English bond brickwork and display various surface finishes including face and painted brickwork, and both smooth and roughcast renders. Flat arched, soldier course lintels are evident over some windows, which are of timber construction and include pivot, casement and top hung opening systems. The glazing is typically divided into small panes with timber mullions, but diagonal leading has also been employed. It is understood that the corrugated iron roof covers an earlier shingle roof and some shingles are still evident internally, beneath the dormer window where the ceiling construction has deteriorated. The full extent of remaining shingles has not been determined. The verandah along the northeast elevation has a timber floor and square timber posts supporting the roof over and dividing the elevation into bays. A lattice screen skirt encloses the

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<sup>53</sup> *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 August 1858., p. 3; physical evidence.  
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foundation space with concrete steps leading down to the garden level. There is little evidence of the former timber balustrade and filigree fringe evident in photographs from the mid twentieth century.

There are a number of entry points located around the building, the most formal is located on the south-east elevation where concrete steps and landing outside the door are sheltered by a gable awning supported on low masonry walls and timber posts. The hall immediately inside has dark stained timber floor boards and joinery detailing in the staircase leading to the upper floor and fretwork frieze under the ceiling. A large room currently used for storage is located to the west of the hall while on the opposite side is the doorway which previously gave access to the recently damaged and demolished single-storey structure apparent externally. The large room has a bay window projecting to the southeast and semi-circular opening to the brick fireplace. The room has been richly decorated with dark timber framing exposed on the ceiling and walls. It is understood that some of the ceiling members have been boxed to increase their size for visual emphasis. Walls have been variously rendered, painted and wall papered. Part of the render has been removed revealing the light coloured, English bond brickwork wall. The sloping ceiling in the internal corner of the room is evidence of the staircase above.

The remaining ground floor rooms, (those of the single-storey structure), are at a slightly higher level than those in the two-storey wing and feature timber floorboards, plastered walls and ceilings. The kitchen has a sloping timber boarded ceiling under a lean-to roof, while dark stained timber battening has been applied to the ceilings in the living and bedrooms. In-built timber furniture, including cupboards, fireplace surrounds and window pelmets, is also apparent. A further two bedrooms and small attic with the dormer window are located upstairs. The timber boarded ceilings slope steeply along the side walls, reflecting the pitch of the gable roof over.

Comparison of the current building with an early photograph of the place shows the principle forms are still evident. The verandah addition and alterations in detailing express the different aesthetic of modified function and requirements of subsequent occupiers. The early photograph shows a series of windows at the second storey with the windowsills appearing to be at the current floor level. It is possible that these were blind windows designed to repeat the rhythm of the ground floor fenestration, but this cannot be determined from the quality of the photograph. This may be determined through future in-depth examination of the fabric.

*Camfield House* is mostly in sound condition although some fabric is in a deteriorated state and some unsound construction practices and poor workmanship are evident. The building is currently being lived in and maintained as funds become available.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

As an attached residence and schoolhouse, there is little with which to compare *Camfield House* in Western Australia. A similar building is extant in Stanley Village, Tasmania, although in that instance, the residence is the two-storey section, and the schoolhouse did not include bedrooms.<sup>54</sup> The only Aboriginal School that appears in the Heritage Council database is 'Noonan's' in Beverley. This is listed as a Victorian Georgian style building. Although

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<sup>54</sup> Australian Council of National Trusts, *Historic Places*, Melbourne, Adrian Savvas Publishing, 1993, p. 49.

the place is undated, it was probably established around the early 1900s when a number of separate Aboriginal schools came into existence because of white Australians refusing to allow Aboriginal children to attend school with white children.<sup>55</sup> Comparisons could be made with the institutions of the Catholic Church which were operating in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, in particular the orphanage run by the Sisters of Mercy in Perth, and the New Norcia Mission of the Benedictines, but the former took both white and black children, and the latter was involved with Aboriginal adults and not specifically aimed at children.<sup>56</sup>

*Camfield House* was originally constructed in Victorian Rustic Gothic style. There are only five Victorian Rustic Gothic style buildings listed on the Heritage Council database: House and Gallery, 31 Malcolm Street, Perth (1883); Former Fremantle Grammar School (1885); Crawshaw's House, 116 Broome Street, Highgate (1886), a modest residence; Northam Hotel (1887); and, Sherwood, King River, a cottage, undated. *Camfield House* was a fine example of the style according to an early photograph, but its appearance has been altered considerably with the addition of the verandah on the single storey residential section and the dormer and bow window on the two-storey section.

The addition of the verandah to the single storey residence has resulted in a representative Victorian Georgian style. In this form, it is similar to a number of homesteads in the State, such as *Old Blythewood*, Pinjarra (1845), *Enderslea*, Chittering (1853), and, *Sandiland*, Busselton (1840). It could also be compared to *Melville House*, Albany (1870s), which is currently under assessment.

#### 13.4 REFERENCES

Hasluck, Paul 'Annesfield: An Early School for Native Children', prepared for the Western Australian Historical Society, Battye PR7592.

#### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The 'WA Council Book', a publication that has not been identified to date, could reveal more details regarding the Institution. The reports on the place that appear in this work were written by Anne Camfield. Of particular interest would be any references to contact between the children and their natural families, where they still existed.

Further research may ascertain the exact date of alterations to the roof, and the addition of the verandah, and dormer and bay windows.

The site may have scientific value in terms of European, Aboriginal and Early Contact Period archaeology.

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<sup>55</sup> Stannage, C. T. (ed), op cit, pp.133-136; HCWA online database.

<sup>56</sup> Bourke, D. F. *The History of the Catholic Church in Western Australia*, Perth, 1979.