



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION**

### **11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### **PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)**

- 3.24.1 Providing medical and dental services
- 7.5.5 Dispensing justice

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

- 403 Law & order
- 404 Community services and utilities

#### **11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\***

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, a single storey timber-framed residence with timber weatherboard, and fibro cement clad walls and a Colorbond roof in the Federation Bungalow style, is a good example of a simple timber residence in the style characteristic of bungalows adapted for tropical conditions built in the North-West of Western Australia. It has original timber joinery, some exposed weatherboards, together with single skin framed walls that combine to produce a fine and well-crafted building. (Criterion 1.1)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is a good example of rapid environmental response (rapidly warms during the day and cools in the evening) framed construction, with its outer exposed frame (though only the west wall remains in this state), tenoned and wedged joints, perimeter lattice shaded verandahs, and stack ventilation, it is technically well suited to tropical conditions. (Criterion 1.2)

#### **11.2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is significant for its construction and occupation in the pre World War One period because of its association with the provision of legal and medical services in the North-West of the State, the latter association having continued from the place's completion in 1907 to 2001. (Criterion 2.1)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* was purpose built in 1907, as quarters for the Resident Magistrate and Clerk of Courts, who was also the District

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

Medical Officer, at the beginning of a period of major development in which Port Hedland was developed as the main port for the Pilbara region. (Criterion 2.2)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* has played a significant role in the provision of medical and health services in Port Hedland and the Pilbara, both through its use for accommodation and consulting facilities for the District Medical Officer from 1907 to 1965, and thereafter as nurses' accommodation and for hospital staff; and because other medical facilities for the Port Hedland and the North-West, in particular the Australian Inland Mission and the Flying Doctor Service, were developed in its immediate vicinity, forming a precinct of medical and health services bounded by The Esplanade, McKay, Kingsmill, and Withnell streets. (Criterion 2.2)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is significant for its associations with Architect W. B. Hardwick, later Principal Architect, PWDWA; builder J. G. Braunsdorf; the two first Resident Magistrates and District Medical Officers appointed to Port Hedland, Drs. Burton and Browne; the Australian Inland Mission, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. (Criterion 2.3)

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

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

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is valued by the community of Port Hedland for social and cultural reasons for its significant part in the history of government provision of medical, health, and legal services in Port Hedland and the Pilbara. (Criterion 4.1)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* contributes to the community's sense of place as one of the earliest surviving buildings in the town, and also for its associations with particular Medical Officers who occupied the place (1907-65), and its integral part in the provision of medical and health services in the town. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is the only surviving pre World War One public building in Port Hedland, and possibly also the only surviving pre World War One timber framed residence in the town. The framed and internally clad construction method is a practice that is no longer employed. (Criterion 5.1)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is one of a declining number of once common places with combined residences and doctors' surgeries and provides clearly legible evidence of a combined doctor's residence with an attached surgery. (Criterion 5.2)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is representative of the Federation Bungalow style, adapted for tropical conditions and designed to provide a combined residence and doctor's surgery. (Criterion 6.1)

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* provides evidence of the once common practice of doctors' residences and surgeries in the same building. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is basically well maintained and presented. The fundamental structure and finishes are in fair to good condition, while the fences and grounds are in fair to poor condition.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is used by hospital staff who perform a variety of functions at the Port Hedland Regional Hospital, from trades, to drivers, and nursing staff. These uses are compatible and have a capacity to sustain the heritage values of the place. The integrity of the place is moderate to high.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

The core elements of the place remain intact. Some of the fabric has been replaced and some authentic fabric, such as the walling system, has been partly covered. Also, floors have been covered with carpet and vinyl, vents have been blocked, the lattice-work replaced, verandah floors replaced, and the building re-stumped. Notwithstanding all these modifications, the place retains a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Robin Chinnery Historian and Philip Griffiths, Architect, in October 2001, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is a single storey residence in the Federation Bungalow style. The timber-framed residence was built at Port Hedland in 1907, to provide a residence for the Resident Magistrate, who was also the Medical Officer.

In 1863, Captain Peter Hedland discovered and named the inlet Mangrove Harbour, by which name it was known for only a short period, becoming known as Port Hedland by 1865-66. In 1866, Charles Wedge, Resident Magistrate at Roebourne, reported on possible alternative townsites to Roebourne, which was considered to be at a disadvantage due to its distance from the harbour at Tsien Tsin (Cossack). His report regarding Port Hedland's suitability as an alternative town site was pessimistic, and nothing further eventuated at this period. In the early 1870s a port and hamlet was established on a tidal creek at Condon (gazetted as Shellborough, May 1872), serving the De Grey pastoral stations. In 1887, gold was discovered at Mallina, and following the declaration of the Pilbara goldfield in October 1888, the next decade saw Condon reach its peak in 1897-99.<sup>1</sup>

In 1891, Tom Traine, John Edward Wedge and Syd Hedley explored the area around Boodarie Creek and Port Hedland, finding two landings, and describing the harbour as 'pretty as well as safe.'<sup>2</sup> The Nullagine goldfields needed a closer port than Cossack, and they believed a good road could be made to the fields from Port Hedland. In September 1895, the District Surveyor at Cossack informed the Surveyor General that the leading townspeople in the district desired a survey of the small headland at Port Hedland in order to establish as town, and requested the Government build a much-needed jetty.<sup>3</sup>

In 1896, the town site of Port Hedland was surveyed by E. W. Geyer, who named the grid of streets after the pastoral pioneers including Richardson, Withnell, Wedge and McKay streets.<sup>4</sup> In October, the town site was gazetted, and on 23 October, five reserves were gazetted for the purpose of Public Utility, at Town Lots 17-18, 21-25, 54-56, 59-60, and 68- 69.<sup>5</sup>

In the period 1899-1901, as Port Hedland developed, Condon declined, and many of its residents re-located to the new town, including several storekeepers, and Tom Traine, who obtained the lease of the first jetty built at Port Hedland. A Progress Association was formed, and also a Roads Board. By 1900, the bustling harbour had become the focal point of the town of Port Hedland. In 1900-03, the Adelaide Steamship Company, the Union Bank, and Dalgety & Co. established their businesses in the town.<sup>6</sup> In 1901, a bungalow of mud brick construction was built at the corner of McKay and Richardson Streets, opposite

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<sup>1</sup> Hardie, Jenny *Nor-Westerns of the Pilbara Breed* (Shire of Port Hedland, 1981) pp. 9-19.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*; and *Government Gazette* 23 October 1896, p. 1832.

<sup>6</sup> Hardie, Jenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21, and pp. 83-99.

the future site of *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, the first occupant being Tom Traine.<sup>7</sup>

On 26 September 1902, Port Hedland Town Lots 76 and 77 were gazetted as Reserve 8402, with a total area of two roods and 18 perches, for the purpose of Public Buildings (Residency).<sup>8</sup> In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, residencies were built in many major towns, including Albany, York, Bunbury, and Geraldton, to accommodate the government appointed resident magistrate, who represented the government and was responsible for law and order in the town and district.

In September 1903, Dr. Dodwell Browne was appointed Stipendiary Magistrate for the Kimberley Goldfield East, and in October, District Medical Officer, based in Port Hedland, where he occupied his own house.<sup>9</sup> He was paid a small annual salary increment for also serving in the latter capacity.<sup>10</sup> In April 1900, Dr. Dodwell Browne had been appointed as Medical Officer and Quarantine Officer at Karridale in the South-West.<sup>11</sup> From February 1903 until his appointment to Port Hedland, he served as Medical Officer and Resident Magistrate at Roebourne, and he continued in this position also to early 1906.<sup>12</sup>

By 1905, Port Hedland had a population of 120. A visitor described the town as 'a dreary place', in which 'The houses or bungalows are miserable little shanties with no pretence of comfort about them.'<sup>13</sup> However, in early 1906, W. H. Barker as editor of the new newspaper, *The Hedland Advocate*, disagreed, drawing attention to the Esplanade Hotel (1904), built at a cost of around £5,000, and one of the few buildings of brick construction, as an example of the progress of the town.<sup>14</sup>

On 31 March 1905, the change of purpose of Reserve 3557, at Port Hedland Town Lots 54, 55 and 56, from Public Utility to school site was gazetted.<sup>15</sup> In 1906, a one room school was built in McKay Street at Reserve 3557 by J. Jacoby.<sup>16</sup> These lots front McKay Street, in proximity to the site selected for *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* in late 1906. (See below)

On 13 October 1905, the change of purpose of Reserve 3554, Port Hedland Town Lots 68-69, to Hospital in lieu of Water was gazetted.<sup>17</sup>

In March 1906, the first issue of *The Hedland Advocate* reported that the residents of Port Hedland were 'unanimous in their protests against the absence of a medical man' from the town since Dr. Browne had gone on furlough and no locum had been provided.<sup>18</sup> Later that month, it was reported that the decision had been reached to build a hospital in Port Hedland, the selected site being on The Esplanade at the western end of Wedge Street, which had been suggested by Dr. Browne as the most convenient location to enable boats coming in to the

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<sup>7</sup> O'Brien Planning Consultants 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' (October 1996) Charlie Bayman's House, Place 4, pp. 1-3.

<sup>8</sup> *Government Gazette*, 26 September 1902, p. 3906.

<sup>9</sup> Blue Book, 1903, pp. 14 and 42.

<sup>10</sup> Blue Book, 1903, pp. 14 and 42.

<sup>11</sup> Blue Book, 1901, p. 39.

<sup>12</sup> Blue Book, 1903, p. 15; and *The Hedland Advocate* 3 March 1906, p. 4

<sup>13</sup> Letter to *The Western Mail*, 1905, in Hardie, Jenny *ibid*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>14</sup> In Hardie, Jenny *ibid*, p. 100.

<sup>15</sup> *Government Gazette* 31 March 1905, p. 840.

<sup>16</sup> Hardie, Jenny *op. cit.*, p. 101; and PWD Contract Book 1905-07, SROWA Acc. 1124 AN 7 Item 6, p. 154.

<sup>17</sup> *Government Gazette* 13 October 1905, p. 3129.

<sup>18</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 3 and 31 March 1904, p. 4.

port with infectious or contagious diseases on board to land their patients without their having to be taken through the town. However, the editor considered this site unsuitable as it was not elevated as other hospital sites were (in keeping with current views regarding the desirable siting of hospital facilities), and also because of the site's close proximity to licensed premises. He suggested that a more suitable site would be the lot 'above the private residence of Dr. Browne', and it was advised that a public meeting was called to discuss the matter.<sup>19</sup>

On 6 April, the public meeting discussed the proposed hospital site and agreed to ask the authorities for an alternative site in a higher position, farther away from the main thoroughfare and the town's domestic water supply, at Town Lots 93 and 94 (at the corner of Hardie Street and The Esplanade). A motion was carried that the residents of the town 'emphatically protest against the action of the government' in transferring Dr. Browne without appointing a successor.<sup>20</sup>

In May, the Committee of the Port Hedland Progress Association requested the government to proceed with the erection of the Resident Magistrate's Quarters 'at once.'<sup>21</sup> In June 1906, a block plan was drawn for *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, then known as Port Hedland R. M. O.'s Qtrs. (i.e. Resident Magistrate's Quarters) to be built across Port Hedland Town Lots 82 and 83, at Reserve 8211, with frontage to The Esplanade and a side boundary to Withnell Street, Port Hedland Town Lots 76-83 being bounded by McKay, Kingsmill, and Withnell streets and The Esplanade. It is initialed W. B. H., i.e. William Burden Hardwick (later Principal Architect, 1917-27), as are all the plans drawn for the proposed quarters in 1906. This plan shows the proposed quarters as a single storey bungalow supported on piers. Steps lead to entries at the front, at the side to Withnell Street, and at the rear from the main building and also from the kitchen extension. The proposed building is surrounded on all sides by verandahs, with three water tanks to be located at the rear, and an earth closet at some distance from and aligned with the rear entry steps.<sup>22</sup>

In June 1906, tenders were called for building Port Hedland R. M. O.'s Qtrs., i.e. *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, described in the Government Gazette as Medical Officer's Quarters; and Dr. Burton wrote to the Local Board of Health accepting the position of Health Officer.<sup>23</sup>

On 13 July 1906, Reserve 3554, at Port Hedland Town Lots 68 and 69, for Hospital purposes was canceled, and Port Hedland Town Lots 81, 82 and 83 (at the corner of Withnell Street and The Esplanade) were gazetted for this purpose instead.<sup>24</sup> In August, it was reported that the lowest tender, from Messrs. Law and Atkins of Perth, for building the Medical Officer's Quarters had been accepted. However, at a cost of £1,300, this exceeded the £1,000 available for the building.<sup>25</sup>

In September 1906, the ground floor plan shows the proposed quarters, a Federation Bungalow style single storey residence of timber frame construction to be supported on concrete piers. It comprises living room, 15' x 22' 6", opening to two bedrooms, 15' x 12' and 15' x 10' respectively, and to the sitting room, 15'

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<sup>19</sup> ibid, 31 March 1906 p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> ibid, 14 April 1906, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> ibid, 26 May 1906, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> PWD 12597 Drawing No. 1, 25 June 1906, microfiche at SROWA. Note: Some of the 1906 drawings also bear a second initial, which is indecipherable. Hillson Beasley was Chief Architect in this period.

<sup>23</sup> *Government Gazette* 22 June 1906, p. 1962; and *The Hedland Advocate* 23 June 1906, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> *Government Gazette* 13 July 1906, p. 2144.

<sup>25</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 11 August 1906, p. 4, and 27 October 1906, p. 7.

x12', opening in turn to the surgery, 8' 6" x 15'. There is also a servant's bedroom, 8' 6" x 10', bathroom, 6' x 10', and verandah lobby in the main section. There are 8' wide verandahs on all sides, with an enclosed mosquito room at one end of the front verandah, with doors opening to the front and side verandahs, and a lobby opens from the living room to either side of the rear verandah and thence, with store and pantry opening at either side, to the kitchen at the rear. The surgery, servant's bedroom, and bathroom open to their adjoining verandahs, and steps lead to entries to the verandahs at the central front to the main entry, at the end of the front verandah to the surgery entry, to the rear verandah, and to the kitchen. All rooms other than the bathroom are shown with ceiling vents. As water supplies at Port Hedland were not good in this period, four 1,000 gallon tanks are shown at the rear to provide an adequate supply to the residence.<sup>26</sup>

It has not been possible to establish whether the original designs of any other residencies built in Western Australia incorporated a surgery as for *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*. The practice of building a doctor's residence with a separately accessible surgery was a common format, which persisted in Western Australia until the late twentieth century, when group practice became more common.

In the same month, a block plan shows the proposed quarters fronting McKay Street, to be built across Port Hedland Town Lots 59 and 60, Reserve 3558, with a stable and earth closet to be erected near the rear boundary.<sup>27</sup> In early October, new estimates were issued allowing £1,300 for building the place, and fresh tenders were called.<sup>28</sup>

In November 1906, a block plan was drawn for the quarters, to be built at Port Hedland Town Lot 76, Reserve 8402, with frontage to The Esplanade and a side boundary to McKay Street and this was the site upon which it was finally built. The block plan is very similar to the earlier plan with some modification to the plan for the verandahs and the addition of another water tank at the rear. It shows also a stable and an earth closet located to the south-east of the residence, and new fences to be erected at all four boundaries with double gates to McKay Street and a single gate to The Esplanade.<sup>29</sup> Later that month, plans were drawn for the detail of trellis work for the place. The ground plan attached at this date is the same as in September.<sup>30</sup>

In early January 1907, J. G. Braunsdorf was awarded the contract to build Port Hedland R. M. O.'s Qtrs. at a cost of £1,206. 2s. 10d.<sup>31</sup> In the period 1905-07, the only other major government contract undertaken by him was the building of the Laverton Post Office (1906).<sup>32</sup> Braunsdorf, of Pilbara Street, East Perth, completed the work on 12 July, at an exact cost of £1,193. 1s. 4d.<sup>33</sup> On completion, the current Resident Magistrate and Medical Officer, Dr. Burton, took up residence at the place. It continued to serve as the residence for the District Medical Officer until late 1965.<sup>34</sup> In the pre World War One period, the place was

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<sup>26</sup> PWD 12597 Drawing No. 2, 27 September 1906, microfiche at SROWA.

<sup>27</sup> PWD 12597 Drawing No. 1, 28 September 1906, microfiche at SROWA.

<sup>28</sup> *Government Gazette* 5 October 1906, p. 2292; and *The Hedland Advocate* op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> PWD 12597, 7 November 1906, microfiche at SROWA.

<sup>30</sup> PWD 12597, 17 November 1906, microfiche at SROWA.

<sup>31</sup> *Government Gazette* 11 January 1907, p. 115.

<sup>32</sup> PWD Contract Book 1905-07, SROWA Acc. 1124 AN 7 Item 6, pp. 7, 50, 110, 160, and 184.

<sup>33</sup> PWD Contract Book 1905-07, SROWA Acc. 1124 AN 7 Item 6, p. 311.

<sup>34</sup> National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment Medical Staff Quarters (fmr. DMO's House).

sometimes referred to simply as 'the residency', which was a common terminology for Resident Magistrates' residences in this period.<sup>35</sup>

The lack of hospital facilities in the town continued to be of great concern and also the difficulties faced by the multiple duties of the doctor, as evidenced by reports in *The Hedland Advocate*. For the most part women patients, in particular midwifery cases, were accommodated at Nurse Totouer's home, whilst men in need of bed care were usually accommodated at hotels, an arrangement which was considered altogether unsatisfactory.<sup>36</sup> In October 1907, Messrs. Garner and Lowe of the Perth Chamber of Commerce described the lack of a hospital at Port Hedland and the consequent accommodation of patients at the hotels and at Nurse Totouer's. They noted that Dr. Burton was 'a sort of Poo-Bah; he is Resident Magistrate, Clerk of Courts, and Medical Officer all in one and the result is very unsatisfactory to the public.'<sup>37</sup>

In November, the Progress Association was advised that the government was considering the erection of a hospital and asked whether the residents would be prepared to contribute towards its support.<sup>38</sup> A well attended public meeting pointed out that the residents of Port Hedland were not themselves in immediate need of a hospital, but it was required to provide for cases of infection or contagion arriving from inland or through the increasingly busy port and also consequent to the introduction of large numbers of men for the inland and for the proposed government works. It was 'more or less' unanimously agreed that the government should directly control the proposed hospital and bear the whole costs of its erection.<sup>39</sup> In 1908, *The Hedland Advocate* reported that the need for a hospital was urgent, and called for the immediate erection of an hospital in 1908.<sup>40</sup> However, no hospital was built at Port Hedland until 1915.

On 12 November 1908, a plan was drawn showing the trellis work at the quarters, and tenders were called later that month for enclosing the quarters with trellis.<sup>41</sup> In the same month it was reported that Dr. Burton was to sever his connection with Port Hedland, and subsequently, in December, it was announced that Dr. Dodwell Browne would succeed him.<sup>42</sup> On his return to Port Hedland in January 1908, Dr. Browne took up residence at the place.<sup>43</sup> He remained in service as District Medical Officer, Resident Magistrate, and Clerk of Courts for many years, residing at the place and conducting his surgery from the room designated for this use. He was remembered as 'a rotund Irishman', and regarded as 'a good physician.'<sup>44</sup>

The business of the port had continued to grow, and a new jetty was built, opening in May 1909, which was linked to the earlier jetty in 1911. These facilities continued to serve the port until the 1960s. In July 1911, the Marble Bar-Port Hedland railway was officially opened.<sup>45</sup> This made Port Hedland the principal port for the Pilbara goldfields and the distribution centre for the tinfield at

<sup>35</sup> Minute Book Port Hedland Roads Board, SROWA Acc. 1321 AN 301/1 Item 1, 13 July 1910, p. 120.

<sup>36</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 15 December 1906, pp. 2 and 4, and 26 October 1907, pp. 6-7.

<sup>37</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 12 October 1907, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 2 November 1907, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 9 November 1907, p. 3.

<sup>40</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 1908, in Hardie, Jenny op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>41</sup> PWD 12597, 12 November 1908, microfiche at SROWA; and *Government Gazette* 20 November 1908, p. 3186.

<sup>42</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 30 November 1907, p. 8, and 21 December 1907, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> *The Hedland Advocate* 11 January 1908, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> Hardie, Jenny op. cit., p. 118.

<sup>45</sup> Hardie, Jenny op. cit., pp. 101-105.



Wodgina. As it was also convenient for shipping stock to the south and to Singapore, the town developed considerably in the subsequent period, becoming the main ocean port for all the pastoral settlements along the De Grey River and its tributaries.<sup>46</sup>

In 1911, the Local Board of Health requested that a government subsidy of £100 be provided for a trained nurse to practise in Port Hedland.<sup>47</sup>

In April 1912, tenders were called for the erection of a wash-house at the place, which was duly built at a cost of £90.<sup>48</sup> The wash-house was located to the rear of the residence and aligned with the south-east corner.<sup>49</sup>

By 1913, with a population of about 350, in addition to the various public buildings, the town boasted four hotels, a branch of the Union Bank, and several stores.<sup>50</sup> With the exceptions of the Post Office (1910-12), the Esplanade Hotel, and several homesteads, the buildings were of timber and iron construction.<sup>51</sup>

The Presbyterian Church had been established in Port Hedland since 1909, In 1914, the Reverend John Flynn of the Australian Inland Mission paid a visit to the town, during which he attended a meeting of the townspeople, who recently obtained from the State Government the promise of an annual subsidy of £70 for a nursing home, and a guarantee of £30 per annum from the Port Hedland Roads Board. In 1915, with Flynn's influence, the first hospital at Port Hedland was built by the Australian Inland Mission. A low lattice fronted bungalow with 10 beds, mostly on the verandah, the nursing home was located in Richardson Street, in proximity to *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, overlooking the harbour. It continued to serve as the general hospital until the late 1930s, when infectious diseases had declined sufficiently far for the Lock Hospital (1919) to be converted to a general hospital.<sup>52</sup>

In the 1930s, a colour bar remained in force at the hospital (1915) regarding treatment of Aboriginal women for midwifery and other purposes. Consequently they obtained medical attention at the Lock Hospital, or alternatively, Dr. Davis, the resident Medical Officer (and also Resident Magistrate) treated them in his surgery at *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*. It was not until the re-development of the Lock Hospital as the town's general hospital and following the appointment of Dr. Vickers as Medical Officer, in 1939, that this colour bar was removed.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Crowley, F. K. *Australia's Western Third: A History of Western Australia from the first settlements to modern times* (Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1960) p. 180; and Battye, J. S. *The History of the North-West of Australia* (V. K. Jones & Co., Perth, 1915) p. 167.

<sup>47</sup> Minute Book Local Board of Health, Port Hedland, SROWA Acc. 1321 AN 301/1 Item 17, 4 December 1911, p. 51.

<sup>48</sup> *Government Gazette* 19 April 1912, p. 1535; and Noted on PWD 12597, Drawing No. 2, 27 September 1906 op. cit.

<sup>49</sup> PWD 31376 at PWD 12597, on microfiche at SROWA.

<sup>50</sup> Battye, J. S. *ibid*; and Battye, J. S. *The Cyclopedia of Western Australia* (The Cyclopedia Company, Perth, 1912-13) p. 1014.

<sup>51</sup> O'Brien Planning Consultants 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' (October 1996) Introduction, p. 9.

<sup>52</sup> Hardie, Jenny op. cit., pp. 119-127, Photographs 222 and 227, and p. 158. Note: The Lock Hospital was built on the outskirts of the town, to accommodate Aboriginal patients suffering from venereal diseases who were transferred from Dorre and Bernier Islands. (*ibid*, Photograph 222.) Of the original Lock Hospital, between Anderson, Mieklejohn, Taplin and Sutherland Streets, only the nursing home remains. (Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' op. cit., Place No. 13, pp. 1-2.)

<sup>53</sup> Hardie, Jenny op. cit., p. 159.

In 1935, the Flying Doctor Service was extended into Western Australia, with bases established at Port Hedland and Wyndham.<sup>54</sup> At Port Hedland, it was established at the lot adjoining *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*. A photograph (c. 1936) shows the two radio huts, which were the built at the first stage of the development for the Flying Doctor Service. Another photograph (1937) shows the radio huts and the foundations for the pilot's residence, which was built in front of the huts. The photographs show the iron roofed *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, supported on concrete piers, with six steps leading to the entry door, the verandahs enclosed with lattice, with sparse plantings of shrubs in the grounds.<sup>55</sup> From 1935, the place was closely linked with the Flying Doctor Service (later the Royal Flying Doctor Service) in the North-West. A replacement building built during the 1970s stands on the site presently, is privately owned, and is occupied as a residence.<sup>56</sup>

On 2 February 1937, the area of Reserve 21733, at Port Hedland Town Lots 81, 82 and 83, one of the sites proposed for the Medical Officer's Quarters in 1906, was reduced in area.<sup>57</sup> On 30 July 1937, this reserve, 3 roods 16 perches in area, was gazetted for the purpose of Public Hospital.<sup>58</sup> In November, tenders were called for extensive additions to the hospital at Port Hedland, and the contract was awarded to well known Port Hedland builder Charlie Bayman, at a cost of £3,850.<sup>59</sup> The building, at the corner of The Esplanade and Withnell Street, was located on the same street block as the Australian Inland Mission Hospital (1915) and *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*. These buildings and the adjoining buildings of the Flying Doctor Service comprised a significant precinct of medical facilities, serving not only Port Hedland but the whole of the Pilbara region.

In 1937, a plan was drawn for septic tank installation at *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*. The plan shows the main building has undergone no major changes since its construction in 1906. A path leads from the residence to the laundry (1912), and thence to a w.c., located at the site of the original earth closet, adjacent to the stables, which were extant at this date. A septic tank and dry well were to be installed to service the w.c. The double gates from McKay Street are shown as farther towards The Esplanade than on the 1906 plan, and there is a single gate from Kingsmill Street, as well as the original single gate from The Esplanade.<sup>60</sup>

In late 1965, the place ceased to be used as a residence for the District Medical Officer.<sup>61</sup> The reasons for the cessation of this use are not noted in the documents cited.

In 1966, plans were drawn for the ablution block at the place. The proposed works required removal and re-location of the window opening and sink in the kitchen, with a flush panel door cut into the existing window opening, to access a

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<sup>54</sup> Crowley, F. K. op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>55</sup> Photographs 228 and 229 in Hardie, Jenny op. cit.

<sup>56</sup> Site visit Philip Griffiths 31 October 2001.

<sup>57</sup> *Government Gazette* 2 February 1937, p. 310.

<sup>58</sup> *Government Gazette* 30 July 1937, p. 1233.

<sup>59</sup> *Government Gazette* 19 November 1937, p. 1985.

<sup>60</sup> PWD 31376 op. cit.; and PWD Contract Book, 1936-39, SROWA Acc. 1124 AN 7 Item 21, p. 204.

<sup>61</sup> National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment Medical Staff Quarters (fmr. DMO's House); and 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' op. cit., Place No. 14, p. 2.

new laundry, opening in turn to a shower and w.c., with an exit via steps from the laundry.<sup>62</sup>

Following renovation and conversion the place was occupied as nurses' quarters, and subsequently the place continued to accommodate hospital staff into the twenty-first century.<sup>63</sup> In 1971, the place was reported to be generally in sound condition structurally; however, some repairs were required, including the replacement of some guttering, fly screens to the verandahs, and some floors, and both the interior and the exterior were 'badly in need of painting'.<sup>64</sup>

In 1983, the place was assessed and classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA). The assessment stated that the place was 'only about 50 years old', having been built 'early in the 1930s'.<sup>65</sup> The place was described as consisting 'originally of five rooms and bathroom surrounded by verandahs', with the back verandah built on at a later date, and an extension beyond the verandah containing kitchen, laundry, pantry, bathroom and toilets.<sup>66</sup> The assessors noted the good quality of the joinery, and that the place had been well maintained.<sup>67</sup> Subsequently, the information in this assessment was included in the documentation for other registrations, namely the State Register, the Register of the National Estate, and the Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland, including reference to it being known as The Green House. It has since been painted cream. The place was included in the Port Hedland Heritage Trail, with an information plaque erected at the site.<sup>68</sup>

In 1983, the place was re-stumped and in the period between 1995 and 2001, the verandah decking and lattice was replaced, the place re-roofed and the interior and parts of the exterior repainted.<sup>69</sup>

In 1996, the place was included in the Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland. At that date, it was in very good condition.<sup>70</sup>

In 2001, the place remains occupied as a residence for several staff members of the Port Hedland Regional Hospital.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* is a single storey residence designed in the Federation Bungalow style adapted to tropical conditions. The timber framed residence and timber and fibro cement clad, corrugated iron roofed residence was built at Port Hedland in 1907, for the Resident Magistrate, who was also the Medical Officer.

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<sup>62</sup> PWD 38428, 1966, microfiche at PWD 12597, SROWA.

<sup>63</sup> National Trust of Australia (WA) op. cit.; and 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' op. cit.

<sup>64</sup> District Architect's report, in National Trust of Australia (WA) file, 13 May 1971.

<sup>65</sup> National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment Medical Staff Quarters (fmr. DMO's House). Note: The address was incorrectly recorded as 12 The Esplanade, and the Municipal Heritage Inventory records the place as Location 12 The Esplanade.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*; and 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' op. cit. Note: No references were given re the name *The Green House*, and neither the Tourist Association nor the Historical Association have any relevant records. (Telephone conversation and e-mail to Robin Chinnery, October 2001.

<sup>69</sup> Pers. com. at site visit by Philip Griffiths with Ian Auld, Facilities Manager, East Pilbara Health Service. 30 October 2001.

<sup>70</sup> 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town of Port Hedland' op. cit.

The place is located near the old town centre on Richardson Street, overlooking the harbour mouth, across to Finucane to the north. The immediate surrounds comprise mainly residential development on the south side of the street, and a cultivated landscape on the foreshore of the harbour to the north. The streets are bitumen paved and there are informal dirt footpaths, with largely uncultivated verges. There are few street trees generally.

The site is at 24 Richardson Street on Lot 76 Reserve 8402, and is bounded by Richardson, McKay, and Kingsmill streets. The land falls gently away from Richardson Street until the mid point of the site, when the fall becomes much sharper. The extant development is located on the northern half of the site, and the southern half is fenced off and has no surface evidence of development on it. Both laundry and stables were located on the rear part of the site, but there is no surface evidence of either structure at present. The only plantings in the verge are Oleanders (*Nerum oleander*) in McKay Street. The power poles are steel construction, made up with welded sections.

A galvanized steel tube and chainlink fence surrounds the site, with the quarters being set some 25'0" (7.6 metres) from the front boundary. The setting comprises a front garden of lawns and shrubs, side gardens laid out in a similar manner, a rear garden of metalled parking, with some lawns and shrub. The rear half of the site is untended. Plantings in the front garden include Hibiscus (*Hibiscus* spp.), Rain Trees, Oleander (*Nerum oleander*), Poinciana (*Delonix regia*), and Cotton Palm (*Washingtonia filifera*). Similar species occur along the McKay Street side of the house, as well as Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea* spp.). There is a concrete block barbecue near the street corner, but this is partly demolished and not serviceable. Several heavily pollarded Tamarisks (*Tamarix articulata*) are located in the vicinity of the barbecue. There is a clothesline in the rear garden, as well as patches of lawn and Rain Trees. There is a concrete footpath between the fence and the front steps, and some paving slabs along the McKay Street side of the house.

The residence is a striking feature in the streetscape, with its red zincalume hipped roof and lattice screens on the street frontages, providing deep shade to the accommodation. The residence is rendered in the Federation Bungalow style and has been modified to suit tropical conditions<sup>71</sup> The whole of the building is raised on concrete stumps, which are replacements for the original stumps. Two sides of the house, the north and west sides, have full-length verandahs, with reeded deck floors and modern timber lattice on stud framing. Modern timber steps lead up from the front path to the verandah. The house roof extends over the verandah to the outer edge. Although the place originally had gutters and rainwater tanks, these have been removed. Where walls are exposed outside the verandah, they are clad with flat fibro sheeting with cover battens. The north and west walls were constructed in single sided board lined stud work, and the west wall remains exposed in this format. The south and east walls were timber weatherboard lined, and the majority of this material has been replaced. There are sections of weatherboard remaining in Rooms 2, 7 and 4.

The front wall of the house is clad with fibro sheeting, which covers the original exposed framing, and there are five four pane double hung sashes across this elevation, with tongue and groove boarded shutters. The mosquito room at the north-western end of the verandah has been removed. There is a four-panel door at the main entry, with a security mesh flywire door on the outside.

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<sup>71</sup> Apperly, R., et al., op. cit., pp. 144-147.

The west wall has not been clad over and remains the original stud and wind braced construction, with the studwork exposed and the walls lined on the interior side with tongue and grooved boards. Where openings occur, the studs are nogged out and the window frames tenoned though and then wedged in place, with timber wedges. The original northern window in this wall has since been converted to a pair of doors. Part of the verandah soffit at the southern end is lined with flat fibro sheeting, which is remaining evidence of the sleepout that was once located in this position. At high level there are timber framed wall vents, and these have been blocked in, presumably to prevent dust ingress and to allow the air conditioning to function efficiently. There is a scar in the west wall where a wall mounted room air conditioner has been located and then removed.

On the eastern wall, the old surgery remains in place, but the external wall cladding has been replaced with fibro sheeting. The original surgery doorway remains in place, and there are two highlight windows in place of the single window shown on the original drawings, and these are covered with protective screens. The remainder of the elevation was a verandah, later converted to a sleepout, with fibro cladding and top hung awning windows. The rear section of this elevation was a later addition. All windows that are not located behind the protective verandah lattice have cyclone screen fitted over them.

The plan form was dictated by the requirements of a doctor's residence and a separate attached consulting room or surgery. There is a full width front verandah that opens directly into the living room (Room 1), opening to two bedrooms on the west (Rooms 2 and 4), and to the sitting room on the east (Room 3, now a bedroom), with the latter opening in turn to the surgery (Room 8, now a utility room). To the south of Room 3 is the former servant's bedroom (Room 5 now a vestibule) and the former bathroom (Room 6, now used as a store). A verandah lobby (Room 7) crosses what was an 8' (2.4m) wide verandahs on all sides, and connects the living rooms to utility rooms such as the pantry (Room 9), the former store (Room 12, now a bathroom) and the kitchen (Room 11). The remaining rooms were constructed at later dates and comprise the closed in verandah to the west of the verandah lobby, used as a bedroom (Room 18), the sleepout on the east verandah (Room 16), and lobby (Room 4), all of which were made by enclosing original verandahs. The bathroom and laundry (Rooms 13 and 14), are additions constructed in 1966, and have a form of construction that differs from the remainder of the house, with concrete floors, stud walls and fibro cement cladding internally and externally.

The original internal spaces (Rooms 1 to 11) share common characteristics with timber floors, generally covered with carpet or vinyl, tongue and grooved boarded walls with a chair rail and picture rail, wall vents mounted at high level, a timber ceiling with ceiling vents, which are all blocked in, four panel doors, and 4 pane double hung sash windows.

Rooms that were formed by enclosing verandahs characteristically left the original verandah wall intact so that one wall is generally weatherboard, with the remaining walls and soffits being fibro cement sheeting lined.

The later laundry and bathroom have coved granolithic floors, and all linings are fibro cement.

Light fittings are modern throughout. The pantry has original shelving and the kitchen and early stove hood, but otherwise fittings and fixtures are of comparatively recent origin.

The alterations include the removal of the mosquito room, the enclosure of parts of the verandahs to form additional rooms and the replacement of verandah

floors and enclosing lattice, together with the demolition of the outbuildings. Other alterations include the replacement of the roof sheeting, rewiring, painting and re-stumping. Some four-panel doors have been replaced with flush doors. Sweep fans and air conditioning have been added to most living spaces.

The place is generally well maintained so that it is fair to good condition throughout.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There are few buildings built in Port Hedland in the pre World War One period other than *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, which have survived the ravages of time and cyclones. This is due to the nature of construction, generally in timber and iron, and the severity of a number of cyclones, especially in 1939, when the town was nearly destroyed.

There are only two pre World War One buildings in Port Hedland included in the Municipal Heritage Inventory. At the corner of McKay and Richardson Streets, opposite *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*, is Charlie Bayman's House (1901). It is a Federation Bungalow style residence of mud brick construction, believed to be the only building of this construction in the town. It was first occupied by Port Hedland identity Tom Traine, who had the lease of the nearby jetty, and later by Charlie Bayman, a well-known builder responsible for many of the early buildings in the town. The second place is Dalgety Manager's House (1901-03). Some of the interior of the Esplanade Hotel dates from the original hotel (1904); however, the exterior and parts of the interior are of later construction, as the hotel was re-built following the cyclone of 1939.<sup>72</sup>

The form of *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* with its residence section and separately accessible surgery to accommodate a doctor and his practice was a common format that occurred in Western Australia from the late nineteenth century and persisted until the late twentieth century, when group practice became more common. There is a fine example of the genre at Yarloop in the civic precinct of the town, which takes the form of a substantial timber house in a prominent location with an attached surgery.<sup>73</sup> There is further example constructed in brick in Boulder, with a modest surgery attached to a substantial house.<sup>74</sup>

Residencies were built in most major regional centres and prominent citizens were usually appointed resident magistrates. These appointees were initially the representatives of government and the law in newly emerging regional centres, and to accommodate them, residencies were built in many towns such as York, Bunbury, Geraldton and the like. It has not been possible to establish whether the original design of any other residencies incorporated a surgery such as in the design of *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)*.

Other examples of the style of architecture may be found in a small number of locations in Broome, with McDaniel's Residence (Data base No 2910) being one of the finest and most complete examples. The planning of these residencies in Broome places differs from *District Medical Officer's Quarters (fmr.)* to the extent that rooms are arranged in single lines with verandah access to both sides of the rooms, and very few links between rooms, allowing uninterrupted cross ventilation to all rooms.

<sup>72</sup> O'Brien Planning Consultants 'Municipal Heritage Inventory...' op. cit.

<sup>73</sup> Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, 'Yarloop Conservation Plan' 1997. Timber framed and clad building in Barrington Knight Street, Yarloop. P. 115.

<sup>74</sup> House located on the corner of Brookman and Piesse streets, Boulder.

#### **13. 4 REFERENCES**

National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, 1983.

#### **13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH**