



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Telyarup Homestead is fine example of the Federation Queen Anne style of architecture in a remote, rural location of southern Western Australia. (Criterion 1.1)

The homestead displays quality craftsmanship and detailing across a variety of trades. (Criterion 1.2)

Telyarup Homestead has a landmark quality. The imposing form is a prominent element in the landscape and clearly visible from the road. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Telyarup Homestead developed as a result of the construction of the Great Southern Railway and the subsequent European occupation of the Great Southern district of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.1)

Telyarup Homestead has value in its association with its original owner, Michael Corbett, and the lifestyle of a successful sheep breeder. (Criterion 2.3)

Telyarup Homestead is closely associated with local pastoral families, in particular the House family whose association with *Telyarup Homestead* has come 'full circle' with their current ownership of the property. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

Telyarup Homestead has been a landmark since 1911 and contributes to the Gnowangerup and district community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Telyarup Homestead is a fine example of a well appointed, early twentieth century rural homestead. The retention of associated farm structures in the vicinity of the homestead enhances the value of the place. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Telyarup Homestead is representative of the Federation Queen Anne Style of architecture applied to a domestic building in a rural setting. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Telyarup Homestead has been left unoccupied and neglected for long periods since construction. Consequently, much of the fabric is deteriorating. The recent programme of alterations and additions have returned the southern half of the house to a habitable condition, providing new facilities and upgrading internal finishes. The northern half of the house is in a poor condition but it is anticipated that similar renovations will occur in future years.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Telyarup Homestead has high integrity. The original function of the place as a farm residence has been restored after remaining unoccupied for a long period. While only half of the house is occupied at present, the intention to return these rooms to the former habitable state is viable and the function of the place is sustainable in the long term.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Since construction, there have been periods of significant additions and alterations to the place. The residence was increased in size, corner turrets were added and a chapel was formed within the building not long after the initial construction date. It is likely that the place was modified by successive owners but it has not been possible to fully document these changes through a lack of documentary evidence. Recently the place has been modified to suit a contemporary lifestyle. New fabric has been introduced and further alterations have been made to the existing fabric. Overall, *Telyarup Homestead* has moderate authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

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

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Telyarup Homestead, in the Shire of Gnowangerup, is a substantial farm homestead constructed in Federation Queen Anne Style.¹ It was built in 1910, for Michael (Mick) Corbett, and extended c.1918.

Prior to the 1880s, the south-west of the state was sparsely populated by Europeans. Sandalwood cutters worked the forests, and a few settlers established themselves by selecting 16 - 20 acres of freehold land near permanent water, or taking up grazing leases of 1600 - 2000 acres.

A track developed between Perth and Albany, largely as a result of the sandalwood cutters carting their loads to the coast for export to China. The track became known as the Albany road. With the desire to attract more

¹ Apperly, R., Irving, R. & Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Style and Terms from 1788 to the Present* Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1989, pp. 132-135.

settlers to the area, the Western Australian Government decided to establish a rail link between Perth and Albany. The desired route was along the Albany road, but York, linked to Perth by the Eastern Railway in 1881, lobbied to be included on the rail link with Albany. The Government conceded, and extended the Eastern Railway from York to Beverley, while Anthony Hordern's West Australian Land Company Ltd constructed the line from Beverley to Albany. This section of line, opened in 1889, was known as the Great Southern Railway, and was built in exchange for land grants along the route.²

The Government suspended its own land offers to allow Hordern's Company to sell its land grants to migrants, but the company had difficulty attracting prospective settlers, and its freight charges were twice as high as charges on other lines. The Government grew impatient, and made land available with The Homestead Act, 1893, which granted settlers 160 acres and allowed them seven years to make improvements, and The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894, which provided long term loans to pay for the improvements.³ In 1897, the Government purchased the Great Southern Railway, and all land grants, from the West Australian Land Company Ltd for £1,100,000.⁴

The Great Southern Railway passed 43 kms south east of Gnowangerup Springs, but a branch line was built from Tambellup to Gnowangerup, and in 1913, extended to Ongerup. The town of Gnowangerup was nicknamed 'the mushroom town' because of its amazing growth. 'Four years ago not a house in sight, now over 100 buildings including one hotel, two banks and half-a-dozen stores and shops.'⁵

During this period, holdings increased in size, and mixed farming, pastoral and arable, overtook wheat. Local wheat markets had been outstripped and overseas markets were slow and risky to develop. World markets for wool had always been open and prices certain, so it is not surprising local farmers concentrated on sheep.⁶

Michael Corbett was born in Western Australia in 1860, of Irish parents. He was a prosperous bachelor, and a Catholic. He owned 'Muccan', a pastoral property on the De Grey River. He bought the Telyarup property in 1906, primarily as a breeding property for stud sheep. 'In 1910, a fine brick homestead was erected, embracing nine rooms, and surrounded by a spacious verandah.'⁷ All the bricks are reported to have been made on the property and the timbers imported from England.

Prosperity made progress dramatic at *Telyarup Homestead*. It was regarded as a showpiece at the time.

We thought we were coming upon a small village when we entered the property of Mr Mick Corbett JP, known as *Telyarup Homestead*. It is a model farm, built on modern

² *Western Australian Government Gazette* 25 September 1884, p. 491.

³ *Statutes of Western Australia* Perth, Govt. Printer, The Homesteads Act, 1893, No. 18 of 1893; The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894., No. 21 of 1894.

⁴ *Yearbook of Western Australia* 1897, p.69.

⁵ Brewer, E. H. *My Motor through the Great Southern: a narrative covering the pilgrimage of Albanians through the Great Southern districts of Western Australia*, 3 Nov. 1913 to 12 Nov. 1913 No pub. details, p.9.

⁶ Marshall, K. 'Development of the Gnowangerup District' Thesis, Grayland Teachers College, 1979, p.16.

⁷ Battye, J. S. (ed) *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia* Hussey & Gillingham, Adelaide, for the Cyclopaedia Co, 1912-13, Vol. 2, p.205.

lines ... about 4000 acres, 1000 of which have been cleared. Under crop there are 550, and this year an increase of about 300 acres under cultivation over last year.⁸

Corbett was also involved in local public life. The inaugural Gnowangerup Agricultural Show was held in 1912 and he was the first President of the local Agricultural Society. Over the years he was also Chairman of the Road Board, Butter Factory and Hospital Board and involved with other public bodies.⁹

Corbett's brother, Patrick, was also involved in the management of *Telyarup Homestead*, looking after the property when Michael was away. On one trip, Michael Corbett was overseas for nine months to buy a *percheron* stallion for breeding. As well as his main interest in sheep farming, he also bred Jersey cattle and Berkshire pigs.¹⁰

In August 1916, Michael Corbett married Molly O'Gorman, bookkeeper at Perth's Palace Hotel.¹¹ According to one of his nephews, Arthur Corbett, in a letter to Merle Bignell, 11 September 1974,

Molly had the homestead and grounds added to. She was a devout Catholic and had the chapel built in. It would hold about 12 people and Father Reidy, then Parish Priest at Broomehill, would often come to say Mass...The *Telyarup Homestead* chapel was only used by the Corbett family. We boys [nephews] used to attend...Molly always had a cook and two maids. Mick had a chauffeur when the Buick first arrived.¹²

Telyarup Homestead was extended in size by about one third. What appears to have been the original back door became the entrance to the chapel.¹³ The stained glass windows were reported to have been blessed by the Pope before being brought to Western Australia.

Michael Corbett sold *Telyarup Homestead* to Harry Oliphant Timms in 1920, and the chapel fittings are reported to have been given to the Church. Corbett and his wife went to live in Mt Lawley; however, he returned to set the foundation stone of the Soldier's Memorial Hall. A plaque on the stone reads:

This stone was set by Michael Corbett Esq JP. 10th February, 1923. In memory of the men who fell in the Great War 1914-1919.

Michael Corbett died in London in November 1923.

H.O. Timms was married to the daughter of another local property owner, A.R. Richardson, who owned 'Strathaven'. Timms continued to develop his own merino stud at *Telyarup Homestead*. His daughter, Margaret, married Dudley House in *Telyarup Homestead* chapel in 1930, and began the House family's connection with the property.

The House family farmed at 'Privett' in the Gnowangerup district. Dr Frederick Maurice House came to Western Australia in 1891 and settled at Katanning. He purchased 'Privett' in 1906, with his brother M. R. (Monty) House. Dr House developed a sheep stud, but he didn't reside at 'Privett' himself, keeping up a medical practice, and other interests, such as Resident Magistrate at Wagin.

⁸ Brewer, E. H. op. cit., p.9.

⁹ Harris, D. 'The History of Gnowangerup' Thesis, Graylands Techers College, 1959, p.26.

¹⁰ *The Golden West* 1919-20, p.59-60.

¹¹ *The Gnowangerup Times* 21 August, 1916. p.2.

¹² Bignell, M. *The Fruit of the Country: A History of the Shire of Gnowangerup* Shire of Gnowangerup, 1977, p.221.

¹³ Photographs by Katrina Chisholm.

There was strong competition between Richardson, Timms and the House family over prizes for sheep and wool at the local and Royal shows. Despite depressed times, there were 860 merino rams sold from the district in 1931, 100 of them being from *Telyarup Homestead*.¹⁴

H.O. Timms sold *Telyarup Homestead* to William Smith in 1937, and the property passed out of the limelight.

Another pastoral family in the area were the Garnetts. Glen Garnett established a sheep stud at 'Glenroy' in 1943. He died in 1974, a few months before a 'Glenroy' ram sold for a record price of \$30,000 at the Katanning Stud Merino Sale. That year, his sons purchased *Telyarup Homestead*. Formerly a showpiece, the house was badly neglected, unpainted, minus woodwork details and with little sign of its landscaped gardens.

The Garnetts did not do anything about the house, but set up a field day and selling complex on the property and continued to develop the Glenroy Merino and Poll Merino Studs. In 1985, Neil Garnett, one of Glen's sons, purchased the world famous Collinsville Merino Stud in South Australia, and in 1988 he sold *Telyarup Homestead* to none other than Fred and Pauline House.¹⁵ Fred is the son of Margaret House, H. O. Timm's daughter.

Fred House had already established a Collinsville Stud at 'Barloo', begun in 1954. 'Barloo' bred rams had set record prices at Katanning. With the purchase of *Telyarup Homestead*, Fred House planned to use the field day and selling complex to show and sell rams, while the base stud flock remained at 'Barloo'.

Fred and Pauline House had a report prepared on *Telyarup Homestead* by architect Michael Green.¹⁶ Initial work was planned to prevent further deterioration of the building, with a long term plan to restore the house, and eventually to live in it.

Late in 1996, with approximately one third of the house restored, Richard House, son of Fred and Pauline, moved into *Telyarup Homestead* with his wife Cindy and their new baby.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Telyarup Homestead is a single-storey, brick and iron structure located on level ground on the south side of, and clearly visible from, the Broomehill Gnowangerup Road. A gatehouse is situated at the driveway entrance marking the formal entry to the homestead. There are several other buildings associated with farming activities in the vicinity of the house.

Telyarup Homestead is constructed in the Federation Queen Anne Style in tuck-pointed brickwork with a corrugated iron roof.¹⁷ Verandahs with a bull-nosed canopy and arched timber frieze wrap around the corners of the north elevation. The main roof is a complex series of hipped forms with a prominent gable in the north elevation. A timber finial and half timbered effect feature as ornamental elements within the gable. Four brick chimneys which have decorative moulding at the top, rise above the roof. Less conventional are the rendered, semicircular bow windows introduced after the initial period of construction. These elements define the two corners of

¹⁴ Bignell, M. op. cit., p.258.

¹⁵ 'More than just a good buy - a sentimental purchase' *Elder's Weekly* 24 November 1988, pp.24-27 (See Supporting Material).

¹⁶ Article, *The West Australian* HCWA file PD 3417.

¹⁷ Apperly, R. et al, op. cit., pp.132-135.

the north elevation, rising above the bullnosing of the verandah and merging with the main roof form. The crenellated rims introduce a curious eclecticism to the overall composition.

The brick is laid predominantly in stretcher bond although there are sections of garden wall bond on the north elevation. Rendered brickwork bands encircle the building at window sill and door head height and also form a frieze below the eaves, the soffits of which are lined with timber battens. Flat arch, brick lintels are located over window and door openings with the exception of openings in the west elevation. French doors have been inserted into the existing, rendered, semi-circular archway and a new window opening has been made immediately adjacent. Windows on the north and west elevations, not sheltered by the verandah, are protected by corrugated iron awnings supported on timber brackets. Doors and windows are of timber construction. The sash windows in each of the elevations display consistent proportions and the french doors opening onto the verandah have fanlights. The bow windows feature noteworthy detailing in the curved joinery.

A pitched, steel framed, glass roofed gallery forms the main entrance at present. This dates from the recent period of construction of alterations and additions completed in late 1996. The extent of the works has been limited to the southern half of the building only. It is anticipated that the northern half will be renovated at a future date.

The gallery divides the kitchen, utility rooms and meals area on the west from the bathroom, family room and sleeping spaces on the east. Interior finishes within this half of the house have been upgraded with new concrete and tiled floors in the bathroom, gallery and laundry. The existing timber floorboards have been polished and in the kitchen area it is possible to see where some of the boards have been replaced to match the existing. Walls and ceilings have been plastered and new skirtings have been installed. Alterations have been made to the planning with the removal of some walls and changes in the location of openings. There is no evidence of the former chapel which was located within the current family room.¹⁸ A cellar with an access hatch in the timber floor is located beneath the family room.

At the end of the gallery a timber door with leadlights and elaborately detailed joinery leads to the main hall and the five currently uninhabited rooms of the house. Similar joinery and leadlighting is used at the end of the hall in the front door to the north verandah. Detailing in the plaster work and joinery in this part of the house is elaborate, although in poor condition. Of special note are the ceiling roses and cornices; the leadlighting to the bow windows; intricately moulded door architraves and an unusually shaped mantelpiece around the fireplace in the lounge, complete with a built in clock.

As well as the internal planning alterations outlined, recent external works have included the removal of the verandah floor boards and replacement of damaged fascias, eaves lining boards and gutters to match the existing. The verandah flooring had not been replaced at the time of inspection. A weatherboard room extending from the south elevation, outside the current laundry, has been removed.

The north elevation shows no substantial change from the early photographs. It appears that the bow windows and turrets were completed before 1918.¹⁹ No original drawings or early photographs of the south elevation have been

¹⁸ Discussion between Katrina Chisholm and Michael Green, architect for the renovations and alterations at *Telyarup Homestead*, December 1996.

¹⁹ In the *Golden West* 1918-1919 there is a photograph of Telyarup with turrets.

located but it may be assumed that the substantial additions to *Telyarup Homestead*, after the marriage of Mick Corbett to Molly Gorman, were to the southern half of the house. Some of the current internal walls display characteristics consistent with external walling in the thickness of the brickwork, location of openings and rendered bands.²⁰

The square gatehouse, north of the house at the driveway entrance, is constructed of painted timber posts supporting a pyramidal, iron roof. Timber balustrades enclose one side of the structure. There are several buildings on the south side of the house. A second family home, built in brick with a corrugated iron roof is immediately adjacent to the main house. Beyond is a meat room built in low brick walls with timber posts supporting gabled, corrugated iron roofs. The upper portions of the walls allow ventilation through fly screens. The Stud Office is a corrugated iron clad structure and there are also two unoccupied quarters built in stone with iron roofs to the west of the driveway.

Telyarup Homestead has been neglected and unoccupied for long periods of this century. Consequently, much of the fabric in the northern half of the building is in poor condition. The southern half has recently been returned to a habitable state with the current occupants, a young family, moving in late in 1996.

13.3 REFERENCES

No key references.

²⁰ Photographs taken before and during recent construction work by Michael Green show rendered bands along the north wall of the meals area which is constructed in Garden bond brickwork. This wall has since been plastered.