



**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)

- 4.2 Developing urban institutions
- 6.2 Establishing Schools
- 6.3 Training people for workplace skills
- 6.4 Building a system of higher education
- 8.5.3.1 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies

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

- 402 Education and science
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 406 Religion

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

Edmund Hall is a fine example of a late 19th century Victorian Georgian school hall, with simple and well-proportioned forms, featuring restrained ecclesiastical detailing and exceptional craftsmanship internally. (Criterion 1.2)

The Administration Building is significant for its asymmetrical primary facades, which feature a complex play of roof forms, scale, textures and materials, characteristics identifiable with the Federation Queen Anne Style. (Criterion 1.2)

The Classroom Block is significant for its imposing medieval-looking weathered ashlar limestone façades with battlement, horizontal bandings and stringcourses and vertical articulation of soaring wall buttresses capped with pinnacle and finial, which are characteristic of the Victorian Tudor style. (Criterion 1.2)

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

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

The buildings on Ellen Street have a distinctive landmark and streetscape quality. (Criterion 1.3)

## **11.2 HISTORIC VALUE**

*Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* is significant as an illustration of the development of educational institutions in Western Australia throughout the 19th, 20th and 21st century. As the site has been consistently used as a school, initially a primary school, then in conjunction with a high school and finally solely as a high school it demonstrates the growing complexity of schools. (Criterion 2.1)

*Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* contributes to an understanding of Fremantle's development from a small settlement in the late 19th century to a complex city in the early 21st century. (Criterion 2.2)

Since 1901, the place has been associated with the Christian Brothers who have provided educational services to many thousands of boys in Western Australia. The name of the place continues to recognise their association even though the teaching staff are no longer from the religious order. (Criterion 2.3)

The place is closely associated with the Roman Catholic Church who established St Patrick's Boys School on the site and which was crucial to the establishment of a high school on the site and the introduction of the Christian Brothers to Fremantle. (Criterion 2.3)

## **11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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## **11.4 SOCIAL VALUE**

The place is valued by the Catholic community and wider community of Fremantle because it was one of the first schools in the town which provided schooling to all boys, and which has continued that function since 1882. (Criterion 4.1)

The place contributes to the community's sense of place as a consequence of its streetscape value. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1 RARITY**

Edmund Hall is one of the few surviving examples of a late 19th century Victorian Georgian school hall with simple and well-proportioned forms, featuring restrained ecclesiastical detailing and exceptional craftsmanship. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* is representative of schools established in the late 19th century as single-storey buildings which have evolved to modern educational facilities with a wide range of facilities and services. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

Generally, all buildings on site are in good and sound structural condition. There is a regular maintenance program in place and the buildings have been maintained and well utilised.

However, there are ongoing structural issues and rising damp problems that need to be addressed in Edmund Hall. A cohesive plan, which looks into the necessary conservation works as well as site works to improve site draining and separation between external walls and bituminous areas is required. There are some falling damp issues in the west upper walls of the hall.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Christian Brother's College, Fremantle* retains a high degree of integrity in relation to the original intention of the place and the individual buildings. The site has been in continuous use as a school since its establishment in 1882. All buildings are still used for their intended purpose. The Classroom Block, though extensively adapted internally and on the south elevation, has been returned to its original intended use as a high school. The current use of the Administration Building as an administrative centre is appropriate and does not detract much from the original function of the house as the Brother's residence.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

Much of the original form of Edmund Hall is intact and discernible from the street. The original built fabric and form of the Administration Building is intact apart from the replacement two-storey verandah on the north and west elevations. Extensive refurbishment works have been carried out internally and on the south elevation of the Classroom Building. However, the original limestone façades remain intact with conservation and reconstruction works carried out in a sympathetic manner.

Overall, the authenticity of the individual buildings on site remains moderate to high.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Yen Nee Goh of Hocking Planning and Architecture and Prue Griffin, Historian, in July 2007, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The Christian Brothers College Fremantle comprises Edmund Hall (former St Patrick's Boys School 1882), Administration Building (former Brother's Residence 1901), and Classroom Block (former High School 1901).

Fremantle's development progressed slowly throughout the 19th century, limited by a lack of capital, labour and resources. Until the creation of Fremantle Harbour in the 1890s, Albany was the colony's major port, although convict labour from 1850 contributed to public works and services.

The Catholic school system in Western Australia expanded rapidly from 1871 to 1895. This resulted from increasing population and wealth following the discovery of gold, the end of the convict system, the provision of Government assistance under the *Elementary Education Act*, and the zeal of various religious orders.<sup>1</sup>

The pattern of establishing schools by the Catholic Church is part of a larger policy pursued by the Catholic Church under Bishops Gibney and Griver. The process followed was:

A parish would be created and a priest appointed. He would arrange, often in rented accommodation or his own presbytery, for classes to commence under the supervision of a lay teacher. A fund-raising campaign would be conducted by the parish priest and leading members of the local Catholic community, a loan arranged (usually through the National Bank of Australasia) and a new school constructed – often on land granted by the colony for church related purposes. Following inspection by the officer of the Central Board of Education, the school manager (usually the parish priest) would apply for 'assisted' status for his school. Providing enrolments were large enough (20 was the required number) and standards adequate, this was almost automatically granted, and government funding on a per capita basis followed. When the school was well established, and parish finances in reasonable order, the parish priest would usually approach the Bishop and seek his intervention with one or other of the religious orders for the establishment of a branch convent and undertaking to teach in the school.<sup>2</sup>

An example of this process can be seen in Fremantle with the provision of schooling at rented premises, within the Presbytery and then the construction of the school buildings. Catholic Education had been established in Fremantle in December 1847, when the Sisters of Mercy arrived to set up a Mission. Schooling was provided at various venues and early schools catered for both sexes with segregation occurring around 1867. Boys were generally taught by lay teachers and girls by the Sisters of St Joseph. The Roman Catholic Presbytery (now demolished) was the location of the boy's

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<sup>1</sup> Tannock, P.D., A history of Catholic Education in Western Australia, 1829-1929, with special reference to the teaching orders, M.Ed UWA, 1964, p. 138. Quoted in Palassis Architects, 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College Fremantle' for Silver Thomas Hanley, June 1996, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Tannock, op. cit., p. 139; quoted 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 10.

school until the construction of St Patrick's School on the site of *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle*.<sup>3</sup>

The site that is the location of *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* was granted to the Bishop of Perth, Right Reverend Martin Griver, in 1878.<sup>4</sup> The parcel of land consists of five lots, Fremantle town lots 468, 469, 470, 471 and 472. Prior to this grant the crown-owned land had been used as a quarry, and the varying site levels are evidence of this past use.<sup>5</sup> It is possible that stone from the quarry was used for the construction of the earliest built structures at *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle*.

The first building on the site, now known as Edmund Hall, was designed by Fenian convict architect, Joseph Nunan (born Joseph Denis Noonan in County Cork, Ireland in 1842).<sup>6</sup> He and his brother Frank were trained as carpenters by their father and together established a building contractor business. Nunan joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood, or the Fenian Brotherhood, and in 1867 he was identified as being with two other Fenians, one of whom had shot and wounded a constable. He fled to England but was arrested and sentenced to seven years penal servitude, arriving in Fremantle aboard the *Hougoumont* on 10 January 1868. Nunan was pardoned in May 1869 and chose to stay on in Western Australia to further his knowledge of architecture. Nunan and fellow Fenian builder Hugh Brophy gained a succession of successful contracts for the Catholic Church. These contracts included Walter Padbury's store and residence in Guildford, the Greenough Flats Police Station, the Sisters of Mercy Convent in Perth, and St Patrick's church in Northam. Nunan was reputedly involved in planning Perth Town Hall although this has not been confirmed.<sup>7</sup>

Nunan prepared the plans for St Patrick's Boys School. Bishop Martin Griver laid the foundation stone on 26 January 1882 at a public ceremony. As part of the ceremony a bottle was deposited beneath the foundation stone, containing copies of the *Morning Herald* and *The Record* together with a parchment scroll naming the Administrator of the colony and Fremantle members of the Legislative Assembly, and noting that the school was built in the fourth year of the pontificate of Leo XIII and the 48th year of Queen Victoria's reign.<sup>8</sup> During the ceremony, pledges were sought to meet the building costs, estimated to be £1450.<sup>9</sup>

The builder of St Patrick's Boys School was Mr Sloan and the contractor was Mr M. Wallis. The building was completed prior to the official opening on 14

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<sup>3</sup> Rev Br Keane, S.B. *The Christian Brothers Fremantle 1901-1976: seventy five years of Christian Brothers' Education in Fremantle* Vanguard Press, Perth, 1976, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Certificate of Title, 3/145, Landgate. Dated 15 May 1878.

<sup>5</sup> Certificates of Title, 3/145, 193/133 and 1062/638 Landgate.

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, Robyn 'Nunan, Joseph Denis (1842-1885)' in *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online Edition* from ADB, Supplementary Volume, Melbourne University Press, 2005, pp. 308-09. Nunan was the name used in his 1869 pardon and subsequent documents use this spelling.

<sup>7</sup> Taylor, op. cit. pp. 308-09.

<sup>8</sup> Keane, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> *The Record* 20 May 1976, p. 6. Quoted 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 12.

November 1883, the delay due to Bishop Griver being overseas for almost two years.<sup>10</sup>

The opening was attended by a number of civic and religious dignitaries, including the Very Rev. Fr. Gibney VG, Rev. Fr. O'Reilly, Messrs E. H Higham MLC, W. E. Marmion MLC, B. C. Wood Mayor of Fremantle, and Mr James Manning, Chairman of the district Board of Education.<sup>11</sup>

A description of the building at the time of the opening indicates the building has not substantially changed since construction:

Entering the building by the south entrance, which is a vestibule, having on its right a lavatory and on the left a cloak room, we come into the main apartment which is seventy five feet long, twenty eight feet wide, and eighteen feet from foot to top of wall.

The roof of this room is supported by three whole and four half principals, and is not ceiled, but above the rafters, a lining of jarrah sheeting has been laid to a pattern making a very pleasing effect which is heightened by the whole of the interior of the woodwork of the roof having been oiled or varnished.

A wainscoting four feet high runs around the walls and the room is well lighted and ventilated. Two classrooms twenty feet square are attached, and like the main room upon which they open are wainscotted with jarrah.

The main entrance faces the east and fronts upon Stirling Street. The building is supplied with abundance of excellent water from a covered well sunk in front, where water is driven by a force pump fixed in an underground chamber, into the lavatory. The porch abutting upon High Street bears the A.M.D.G.<sup>12</sup>

Attendance at the school during its first week was 30 pupils.<sup>13</sup> The students who attended the school were local Catholic boys under the management of a layman, Mr Otto de Grancy.<sup>14</sup>

As a result of the 1871 *Elementary Education Act*, Catholic Schools received Government assistance. With the advent of responsible Government in 1890 and a need to provide secular education, in 1895, the *Education Amendment Act* abolished further Government assistance to Catholic and other religious schools. The Premier, Sir John Forrest secured a compensation grant of £15,000 for the Roman Catholic Church, which was shared between the various Catholic schools. The Oblate Fathers at Fremantle expended their portion of the grant on a block of four houses in Ellen Street at a cost of £3,894, to serve as an endowment for the educational institutions of the town. This became the principal means for supporting the schools of the Sisters of St Joseph<sup>15</sup> and St Patrick's Boys School.<sup>16</sup>

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10 Keane, op. cit., p. 3. The difference in the roles of builder and contractor is not clear but it is assumed that Wallis was overall manager of the construction and Sloan was senior stonemason.

11 Keane, op. cit., p. 3.

12 Keane, op. cit., pp. 3-4. The source of this quote is not provided but it is likely to be a description from *The Record*. AMDG stands for Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam (For the greater Glory of God).

13 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College Fremantle', p. 12.

14 De Grancy took up a position at the Denmark Primary School in 1896.

15 The Sisters of St Joseph established a school in North Fremantle in 1889 and their convent was located immediately west of St Patrick's church in Adelaide Street.

16 Keane, op. cit., p. 4.

Apart from funding issues, a constant problem for the church was the lack of suitably qualified lay teachers for the boy's school. During the 1890s the boys at St Patrick's were taught by John Fitzgerald with the assistance of Sister Evangelist Smith.<sup>17</sup> From the late 1880s Bishop Gibney had attempted to secure the services of male teaching orders for Western Australian Catholic schools,<sup>18</sup> and in 1893 he asked the Provincial of the Irish Christian Brothers, Brother Ambrose Treacy, to establish the order in Perth and take over the running of the St Patrick's Boys School in Perth.<sup>19</sup> The Christian Brothers teaching order was established in Ireland in 1802 and spread throughout the globe.<sup>20</sup>

In 1894, the Christian Brothers established a school in Perth that was very popular and successful. The success of this project led to the establishment of a Christian Brothers school in Albany in 1898 and the agreement to take on St Patrick's in Fremantle in 1901.

One of the key factors in the decision to establish a Christian Brothers College in Fremantle was the lack of a high school. As *The Record* noted:

For a considerable time past the people of Fremantle have suffered from the absence of a modern high school. Most of the private schools were only for the use of girls, so that boys were either forced to attend public schools or journey to Perth to the high school and colleges there. The advent of the Christian Brothers to Fremantle and the establishment by them of a High School, which will be open to persons of any denomination, has supplied the want.<sup>21</sup>

In 1900, ownership of the five lots of land, which included the primary school, was altered so that it was shared between Bishop Gibney and the Christian Brothers.<sup>22</sup> The arrangements for the establishment of the college were finalised in 1901 and part of the agreement was to provide a suitable playground for the school. It was also agreed that the fees charged were not to exceed two shillings a week per pupil, and no one was to be refused admittance if unable to pay.<sup>23</sup>

The Oblate Fathers agreed to pay the Brothers a subsidy of £150 per year for fifteen years and then £100 per year in the ten years following.<sup>24</sup> Additional funding for building programmes was obtained through a combination of public fund raising, grants and loans. This financial and administrative independence remains a characteristic feature of most Christian Brothers institutions across the state, often being expressed architecturally by the scale and timing of building works.<sup>25</sup>

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17      *ibid.*

18      Gibney had sought to attract the Da La Salle Brothers from Sydney, see 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 10.

19      'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 10. This school was located in Irwin Street and was demolished in 1963. Its descendant is Trinity College, East Perth.

20      The Christian Brothers were founded by Edmund Rice and the first school was in Waterford Ireland. There is often confusion with the Brothers of the Christian Schools or the De la Salle Christian Brothers who briefly had a presence in Perth in the late 19th century.

21      *The Record*, 20 May 1976, p. 6; quoted 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 12.

22      Certificate of Title, 1933/133. Landgate, dated 23 May 1900.

23      Keane, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

24      *ibid.*

25      'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College Fremantle', pp. 12-13.

The Christian Brothers commenced at the school in 1901 with Brother Morgan as Superior. Architects, Henderson and Jefferis were commissioned to oversee the design and construction of the Brothers' Residence and the High School. The estimated cost of the total project was £5000.<sup>26</sup>

Architect Edgar Jerome Henderson was born in Melbourne, and practised in Victoria where he had designed Sale Cathedral (1885) and housing in Moonee Ponds and Essendon. By 1896, he had moved to Western Australia and was working on the Convent School, Highgate (1898) in partnership with Harry Jefferis. By 1904, he is listed in his own practice and was designing various commercial and residential buildings. Harry Jefferis is believed to have arrived in Western Australia from Adelaide where he was listed in 1895.<sup>27</sup>

A plan of the Brothers' Residence survives and it is framed and hung in the foyer of the former Brothers' Residence, which is now the administration block.<sup>28</sup> This plan shows the original design of the building consisted of an entrance hall, visitor's room, parlour, study, book room, kitchen, servery, refectory and servant's bedroom on the ground floor level and a chapel, bathroom and eight bedrooms on the upper level. A description of the building in 1901 indicates some changes had been made to the original plan. A hospital ward, an additional bedroom were added and the chapel was referred to as an oratory.<sup>29</sup> A contemporary description states:

This [Brothers' Residence] is a substantial brick building, with coigns and facings of local sandstone, while the woodwork is of polished jarrah and karri. It is surrounded by a spacious verandah, which overlooks Fremantle Park and the harbour and from which a view of the whole town may be obtained. Stained glass windows have been obtained.<sup>30</sup>

In 1900, the first stage of the High School was constructed to the west of the Residence. Plans of this building have not survived but contemporary photographs show the entrance was a Romanesque arch leading to a reception area and stairway leading up to an enclosed balcony on the first floor. Internally, the High School contained a single room on both floors.<sup>31</sup> In 1901, the building and its future development were described as follows:

The high school is a substantial building of two stories and contains two large rooms capable of accommodating with comfort 80 pupils. It is built of local limestone, and the woodwork is almost entirely jarrah, highly polished. At the present time only half the original building has been erected, but the Brothers hope that, with the great advancement which is at present being made at the port, they will shortly be able to complete the work.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to these major works, the original building for the primary school was divided into two rooms with the erection of a partition wall along the short

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<sup>26</sup> Keane, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> State Library of South Australia website, [www.slsa.sa.gov.au](http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au), The Manning Index of South Australian History. Accessed August 2007.

<sup>28</sup> The plan is water-coloured linen showing ground floor, first floor, front elevation and a section, dated 1900.

<sup>29</sup> *The Record*, 9 February 1901, p. 15, quoted 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> *The Record*, 9 February 1901, p. 15; quoted Keane, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> O'Donoghue, K.K. *Brother P.A. Treacy and the Christian Brothers in Australia and New Zealand*, Folding Press, Melbourne, 1983; quoted 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 21.

<sup>32</sup> *The Record*, 9 February 1901, p. 15 as quoted in Keane, op. cit., p. 5.



axis of the hall. Other, unspecified, minor improvements were made at this time.<sup>33</sup>

In the early 1900s Fremantle experienced significant growth. The completion of the harbour works made Fremantle the major port in the colony and resulted in a growth of infrastructure and population. For Fremantle's Catholic community a significant event was the opening of St Patrick's Church on Adelaide Street on 3 June 1900.

His Lordship Bishop Matthew Gibney opened the new High School on 3 February 1901. He concluded his remarks by expressing 'his gratitude to the Brothers for taking charge of the school and to thank the priests and people for the manner in which they had received the Brothers'.<sup>34</sup>

The Christian Brothers High School opened for students on 4 February 1901 with an attendance of 29, which by the end of the year had risen to 57. Numbers continued to grow over the next few years but the removal of the railway workshops to Midland and the opening of an Anglican School in High Street saw a decline in numbers.<sup>35</sup> As the only high school in Fremantle for some years it had a significant impact on the community. It also provided employment for some local residents as servants at the school, some of whom were housed on the site.

From 1901, the Christian Brothers undertook the provision of a playground and playing fields for the school. The site was levelled by arranging with contractors undertaking nearby road works to dump the fill on the site. This programme was completed in 1904, and the Brothers then embarked on a landscaping project of planting hedges and trees around the grounds.<sup>36</sup>

With an increase in enrolments, the internal layout of the High School was modified in 1917, when partitions were introduced to increase the number of classrooms from two to three.<sup>37</sup> At the same time a new room was added to the High School, which later became a science room and gymnasium. At that time there were 120 students at the High School and 250 at the primary school, which was still known as St Patrick's Boys School.

In 1939, the final stage of the High School was completed as planned in 1901. The new addition was opened by the Right Reverend Monsignor Fagan VG on 16 April 1939:

The new building consists of six class-rooms in two storeys, two of the rooms being divided by a folding partition so that they may be combined to form one large lecture room. At the rear of the rooms are a verandah and balcony connected by a reinforced concrete staircase. Externally the building is finished in rock-faced limestone with cement bands and ornamental features on the frontage. The roof is tiled. The external woodwork is in cream and green, and the wrought iron balustrades are finished in green. Improvements have been made to the older parts of the school. The total cost was £3830.<sup>38</sup>

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33 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 13.

34 *The Record*, 9 February 1901, p. 15 as quoted in Keane, op. cit., p. 6

35 Keane, op. cit., p. 7.

36 Keane, op. cit., p. 8.

37 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 21.

38 *The Record* 20 April 1939, p. 15.

The reports do not identify the architects but it is likely the original plans prepared by Henderson and Jefferis were used.

At the same time as the new wing of the High School was completed in 1939, the former St Patrick's Boys School building was converted to a multi-purpose hall by removing the existing partition and the erection of a stage. A photograph of the newly altered hall suggests the three windows on the west wing were probably covered over at this time.<sup>39</sup> It was named Edmund Hall in honour of the founder of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Rice.

A plan of the site prepared in 1954 shows Edmund Hall still had a verandah on the northern side, which has subsequently been enclosed. To the south of the High School was a timber building and on the Stirling Street frontage were two timber structures and a galvanised iron toilet block. The lawn areas were generally enclosed with stone walls and changes of level on the site are apparent from the number of steps.<sup>40</sup> Significant alterations were made to Edmund Hall in the 1950s to accommodate increasing student numbers, including enclosure of the southern verandah, removal of two internal walls in the northern wings, installation of timber and plaster partitions and adding a door in the western wing, partially cut through an existing window. A new stage was constructed, using original jarrah flooring on an elevated frame and a section of wall east of the stage had the jarrah wainscoting removed to expose the brickwork.<sup>41</sup>

The four houses on Ellen Street built to assist the finances of the Catholic schools in Fremantle were still apparent on the 1954 plan but were demolished prior to 1963 when the Marshall Wing was constructed. The Marshall Wing, named after the then CBC Principal, was opened in November 1963.

Designed by architects Summerhayes and Associates, in 1973 the school opened the 'White Building', which fulfilled the functions of a library and science laboratory.<sup>42</sup>

In 1978, Edmund Hall, the Brothers Residence and the former High School were classified by the Fremantle Society as 'purple'. This was the highest heritage classification given to buildings by the Society.<sup>43</sup> Photographs of the buildings at that time show they have changed little externally since that time.

In 1979, the Bill Hughes Practical Arts Centre was opened by former Federal Education Minister, Kim Beazley.<sup>44</sup> The new facility was built above an existing sports store and had a woodwork shop, craft room, seminar/film room, metalwork area and an undercroft.

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39 Photograph of the interior of the Edmund Hall after conversion in the Christian Brothers yearbook 1939, as shown in 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 16.

40 Metropolitan Water Supply and Drainage Department sheet 2046, drawn 1914 revised 1954, SROWA.

41 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 14.

42 Building plans of the New Wing, by Summerhayes and Associates, dated January 1971, City of Fremantle Building Department. The origin of the name 'White Building' has not been discovered.

43 Fremantle Local Studies Centre, Heritage file for Christian Brothers College.

44 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College', p. 27. The architects for this building have not been identified.

In 1981, the sister school, Our Lady of the Missions Convent closed down and *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* took on those girls who needed to complete their senior schooling. In the following year, CBC used the former convent building in Tuckfield Street as the venue for years 5 to 7.<sup>45</sup> The Classroom Block was altered in 1981 for use as an administration block (ground floor) with classrooms above. These alterations included a new entrance.<sup>46</sup>

In May 1983, the Science Block or 'Centenary Building' was officially opened as part of the centenary celebrations of the Christian Brothers in Fremantle. The two-storey building, designed by architects Michael Broderick and Partners,<sup>47</sup> replaced the former timber building in this position.

In 1996, it was announced that a major \$4 million redevelopment was to commence at *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle*. A range of new works and refurbishments were to be staged over three years. The principal reason for the redevelopment was the decision to consolidate the School's efforts in secondary teaching and phase out primary education.<sup>48</sup> Architects Silver Thomas Hanley prepared the designs for the future development of the site and a conservation plan was prepared by Palassis Architects to assist in the management of the heritage buildings on the site.<sup>49</sup> The proposed development consisted of:

- Conversion of the existing Brothers Residence to administration and staff building
- Conversion of existing ground floor administration block into classrooms and refurbishment of the first floor classrooms
- Refurbishment of change rooms on the ground floor of Marshall Wing
- Refurbishment of the first floor of the Hall building
- Refurbishment of the first floor of the science building
- Conversion of the classroom and offices on the first floor of the White Building such that the total floor is for library
- New covered link on the first floor of the White Building.<sup>50</sup>

In 1997, the refurbishment of the former Brothers Residence into an administration and staff centre was completed. Many internal features, such as the stained glass windows, stairwell, ceilings and fireplaces and door fittings were retained. It was noted at the time that the building had a cellar. Further alterations to the former Brothers Residence were made in 2000,

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<sup>45</sup> *The Fremantle Gazette* 10 February 1982, in 'Fremantle focus' section, no page number, Fremantle Local Studies Centre, file 370. The building in Tuckfield Street is no longer extant.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Broderick and Partners Architects Drawings, November 1981.

<sup>47</sup> Proposed Additions and Alterations to CBC Fremantle, dated November 1981, Matthew Broderick and Partners Architects, City of Fremantle building archives.

<sup>48</sup> *Melville – Fremantle Community* 23 July 1996, no page number. Cutting from the Fremantle Local Studies centre, file 370.

<sup>49</sup> 'Conservation Plan Christian Brothers College'.

<sup>50</sup> FCC Minutes 23 September 1996, Fremantle Local History Collection File 727.

when the former garage and an infill addition to the eastern elevation were removed.<sup>51</sup>

In 2000, a new physical education centre was opened,<sup>52</sup> and named the Bob Rosé Meyer Physical Education Centre in honour of his 33-year teaching career at Christian Brothers College. Tragically, Meyer was killed in an accident in 2002, just one month after retiring.<sup>53</sup>

A celebration of the School's centenary was held over a weeklong period in early 2001. The strength of the School in the community was demonstrated with events held throughout Fremantle. The 'Old Boys Association' was a strong force in the community at that time and actively worked in a fund raising programme to enable further building works.<sup>54</sup>

A change in the philosophy of the school occurred in 2001 when the first lay principal was appointed to the Christian Brothers College. David McFadden commenced his appointment in January 2002 after serving for 14 years at Aquinas College.<sup>55</sup>

In 2004, it was decided to remove the Christian Brothers from schools in Western Australia. This decision affected several educational institutions including CBC Fremantle, Aquinas, Trinity and the Notre Dame University. Ownership of the land was not affected but management, capital development, and planning was handed over to the schools.<sup>56</sup>

In 2004, a donation enabled the construction of a new seating area in the quadrangle and the establishment of grass where previously the area had been bituminised.<sup>57</sup>

In 2006, the local press noted that *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* was offering a new engineering studies course.<sup>58</sup> This item reflects the range of courses offered at the School since its inception. The school has responded to a changing community and over the years offered courses as varied as cooking, technology, computing and university entrance subjects as well as its core subjects and religious education.<sup>59</sup>

The School continues to offer secondary education to boys. The site is constantly being assessed for the school's future needs and developed in response to these changing needs. Future plans include the construction of a new building on the tennis courts located west of Edmund Hall.<sup>60</sup>

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* comprises of Edmund Hall (former St Patrick's Boys School 1882), Administration Building (former Brother's

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51 Site visit, 27 July 2007.

52 FCC Minutes 7 September 1998, Fremantle Local Studies Centre, file 727.

53 *Melville City Herald* Vol 13, no 48, November 2002, p. 8.

54 *The Record* 11 January 2001, pp. 8-9.

55 *Catholic Education Circular*, October 2001 Vol 7, p. 114.

56 *The Gazette* 20 July, 2004, no page number, Fremantle Local History file 370. Fremantle Library.

57 *Fremantle Gazette*, 8 June 2004, no pag., Fremantle Local History file 370. Fremantle Library.

58 *Fremantle Gazette*, 7 March 2006, no pag., Fremantle Local History file 370. Fremantle Library.

59 Variety of articles held by the Fremantle Local Studies Centre, file 370.

60 Information from Tony Pitoff, CBC staff member, during site visit with Yen Nee Goh, 27 July 2007.

Residence 1901), and Classroom Block (former High School 1901). The place is bounded by Ellen Street to the north, High Street to the south and Stirling Street to the east.

The immediate vicinity of the Christian Brothers College site predominantly comprises of single and two-storey turn-of-the-century and interwar houses. Some original residences along High Street across from the school site have been converted into office spaces.

The site's earlier and more prominent buildings are located along the perimeter. Buildings with frontages on Ellen Street have commanding views across the Fremantle Bowls Club and Fremantle Park and contribute to the streetscape, being distinctive local landmarks.

The site's open spaces are interspersed with well-kept lawns and garden beds. Each building is linked externally through a series of covered walkways and ramps. A limestone and tile roofed colonnade, a recent addition, surrounds the main grassed and paved quadrangle on three sides. Parking and vehicle access areas on the western portion of the site and to the north and west of Edmund Hall are bitumen paved.

Internally, all buildings have been refurbished and adapted to cater for the expansion of the school and the need to modernise existing facilities over the years. Buildings on site are generally well maintained and well utilised.

### ***Edmund Hall (former St Patrick's Boys School)***

#### ***Exterior***

Edmund Hall is a single-storey Victorian Georgian styled school hall which is simplistic in its form and plan with symmetrical facades and restrained ecclesiastical detailing. The hall is positioned on the south of the site at the top of a steep slope. The slope allows for an undercroft space, floor level partly below existing ground level, under the northern section. The hall overlooks the main grassed and paved quadrangle on the north and addresses High Street on the south.

Based on documentary evidence, it is conjectured that the hall was originally of exposed limestone walling with brick quoins and reveals. The masonry fabric was covered over with a thick layer of textured render. The original brick reveals and surrounds around openings have smooth render and scribed, suggestive of blockwork quoins. There is evidence of rising damp at the base of the wall causing the render to fret.

The southern elevation of the hall remains as originally designed, a symmetrical facade with a central parapeted gable, projecting out from the main hall. There is a Celtic cross at the apex of the gable. The façade also featured a series of equally spaced flat arched windows with label moulds and a door to the west of the gable. A marble tablet, replacing the original foundation stone in its original location, is seen in the west corner. Above the tablet, a brass plaque commemorates the laying of the marble tablet and a brief history of Edmund Hall.

The main entry into the hall is located on the east, at the top of a flight of steps. The east façade comprises of a small porch located centrally within the gable end of the main hall. A small masonry addition, set back from the

face of the porch has been constructed on the north east corner of the hall. There is a conspicuous and rather intrusive external light fitting attached to the trefoil window above the main entry doors.

On the north façade are a pair of parapeted gables on each end of the hall. Each gable wall features a centrally located trefoil opening and a pair of flat arched windows and label moulding. There have been several attempts to address the structural problem on the western gable by inserting steel rod reinforcements into the masonry to tie the facade back into the main structure. Vehicular movement, uneven settlement and the lack of adequate separation to minimise the transfer of surface run-offs between the bituminous paved areas and external walls around the western end of the building may well have contributed to the separation of the gable from the building as evident from a significant vertical crack along the west wall.

An addition with a skillion roof is incorporated between the two gables and is externally accessible by means of a steel staircase. The addition featured aluminium framed multi paned windows, made to match the original windows, which have now been replaced with timber-framed windows. Under the staircase is the entrance to the basement, which accommodates a small foyer leading into a practice room and disused toilets in the western section under the west bay and smaller music rooms to the east. A small section of wall on the west gable, immediately above the addition, is lined with asbestos panels.

The gables and skillion roofed addition have been re-roofed with corrugated galvanised steel roofing. The roof plumbing comprises ogee profiled gutters with spreaders and rectangular section downpipes.

#### *Interior*

The external form of the hall is reflected in its internal planning, comprising of a small square foyer within the porch, which leads into a large rectilinear hall with a bay defined by an arched opening on the south wall and openings into the north addition on the north wall. The foyer has thin brick tiles (to replicate original face brickwork) to dado height, plastered and painted walls. The corners of the wall around openings are rounded. Flooring is of tessellated tiles and the original matchboard double door (main entry) is still intact.

The main body of the hall and south bay are finished in a similar manner as the foyer, face brickwork to dado height, plastered walls and tongue and groove flooring throughout. Original multi-paned double hung sash windows are intact, mostly refurbished and fitted with block out blinds. Plasterboard ceiling, raked at the north and south edges and flat in the central portion following the shape of the roof structure, and plaster cornices have been added at some stage. The condition of the concealed original roof structure above is not known. There is a temporary tiered steel structure set up as a performance stage within the south bay.

Much of the original fabric is extant in the western end of the hall, which is regularly used for Thursday Mass. There is an intact section of the original roof structure, exceptionally crafted hammerbeam truss, rafters, ceiling boards and masonry corbels. The surviving original jarrah wainscotting, dado and coat rail is in reasonable condition. Featured central on the west wall are four stained glass windows with artwork depicting biblical and historical

associations of the school. The walls to the northwest corner immediately below the timber ceiling have been badly damaged and plaster has fretted away due to ingress of water from the roof. The vertical interface between the much lower plasterboard ceiling addition and the original roof structure is lined with asbestos panels and battens. Some panels have been badly damaged and vandalised.

Incorporated into the gabled bays and the north addition are two classrooms, separated by a stud wall with a row of timber framed high-level windows. The classrooms are carpeted, with suspended ceiling fans and suspended fluorescent light fixtures.

### ***Administration Building (former Brother's Residence)***

#### ***Exterior***

The two-storey Federation Queen Anne styled house was refurbished and converted to accommodate reception and central administrative offices for the school in 1997. The asymmetrical house is of face brickwork in Flemish bond with limestone quoins and reveals on the primary facades and plain brickwork on the rear facade.

The front (north) façade, addressing Ellen Street has a replacement two-storey verandah with square concrete columns and a balustrade. The verandah continues on to the west façade. To the east of the façade is a two-storey weathered ashlar limestone projecting bay with half timbered effect 'flying gable' supported on timber brackets. The projecting bay featured two crests, on the gable is a crest with the inscription 'AMDG'<sup>61</sup> and immediately below the gable, on the central face of the bay, is a five-pointed star crest, inscribed with the words 'Signum Fidei'.<sup>62</sup> The main entry door has a stained glass panel, stained glass sidelights and fanlights. Windows are typically timber framed, double hung sash windows with replacement glass.

Similar to the front façade, the west façade is asymmetrical, with the continuation of the north verandah terminating mid length of the building. Adjacent to the verandah is a two-storey face brickwork and limestone quoins projecting bay, half-timbered effect 'flying gable' supported on timber brackets and the side of the rear (south) verandah at the south end.

The east façade featured a half-timbered effect gable above a hip roof and timber verandah on the first floor. A previous garage and addition on the eastern curtilage, still extant during the 1997 refurbishment campaign, have been removed. A large area, where possible openings or structures keyed into the main building, has since been in-filled with face brickwork and rendered quoins.

The rear (south) facade of the Administration Building, unlike the primary frontages, has less detail, plain brickwork with rendered sills and brick arches over large openings. There is a full width original timber and lattice verandah on the first floor with an enclosed weatherboard section on the east end. The timber structure and decking is deemed to be unsound and have been closed off. The verandah is supported by six square timber posts on the ground

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<sup>61</sup> AMDG is an abbreviation of *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, 'for the greater glory of God'.

<sup>62</sup> Latin: 'A sign of faith'.

floor. There is also a two-storey skillion roofed brick addition on the eastern end.

The hip and gable roofs have been reclad with Marseilles pattern terracotta roof tiles and featured terracotta finials, terracotta ridge and several brick and render chimneys.

#### *Interior*

The original planning of the Administration Building is very much intact, apart from minor alterations on the ground floor reception and the removal of internal walls between rooms on the southern side. Both floors have a central passageway running the width of the building with rooms on both sides. Generally, internal finishes are of plastered and painted walls, flush finished plasterboard ceilings and carpet tiles over timber floorboards throughout. There is no visible evidence of cornices or dado on both levels. The original doors and double sash windows have been refurbished with replacement hardware and glazing. All original doors have a fanlight above, although some of the fanlights have been painted over.

On the ground floor, from the front verandah the main entrance leads into a small foyer with openings into the waiting room on the east, where an original fireplace and mantle is still intact and has been refurbished. To the west of the foyer is an office. Facing the foyer is the reception desk, which featured a plaster-moulded archway with a pair of timber doors with stained glass inserts and brass door handles. The reception desk, which was later added in 1997, divides the central passage into two sections.

The main staircase, composed of two flights with a landing at mid level, is located in the eastern section. The finely detailed staircase is of polished jarrah, well conserved and in sound condition. It has turned newel posts surmounted by a turned timber ball, balustrades of turned timber balusters, and an under stair storage space.

On the first floor, the former chapel at the top of the stairs has been refurbished into the Boardroom. Most of the original details including timber trusses, brackets, cornices, ceiling boards, are retained and refurbished. A small marble font is located outside the former chapel. All rooms on the first floor in the main building, the enclosed verandah and two bedrooms in the brick addition have been converted into staff offices with individual workstations, suspended fluorescent light fittings and carpet throughout. Small hand basins tucked into the corner of the former bedrooms are still evident within the brick addition. A former bedroom on the west verandah has been converted into a storage area.

#### ***Classroom Block (former High School; former Administration Building)***

The Classroom Block, a two-storey rectilinear building, has been progressively and considerably altered internally and on the south facade to suit the various uses which have been accommodated in the building over the years. The imposing original Victorian Tudor north and east facades have been retained and conserved in a sympathetic manner. The facades are of weathered ashlar limestone walling and horizontally articulated with rendered stringcourses, windowsills and bandings. It also featured corner limestone



wall buttresses with rendered copings. Original openings are square-headed with double sash multi-paned windows. The central bay on the north elevation has a short length of battlement parapet between twin wall buttresses, which are capped with a rendered pinnacle and finial. Both west and east elevations feature parapeted gables and a decorative cross at the apexes.

The south elevation has exposed brickwork details and features large, six-paned aluminium framed fixed windows with sliding panes on the bottom row. The west elevation has masonry substrate on original limestone foundations, rendered and scribed to imitate ashlar blockwork. The elevation has been painted in a series of alternating coloured bands to match stringcourses and rendered banding on the original facades. The roof has been replaced with Marseille roof tiles, similar to the Administration Building and colonnade in the main quadrangle.

Internally the building has been readapted with three classrooms on each level. The external steel verandah on the south continues to the first floor of the adjacent Marshall Wing. Finishes and fittings are generally replacement, suspended plasterboard ceilings with fluorescent lights and air-vents. Several condenser units are located on the west facade.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The Heritage Council database shows Joseph Nunan is associated with several places, two of which are on the State Register of Heritage Places:

- 02462 *Wesley Church and Manse (fmr)* Guildford (1883-92) is attributed to architect Henry Trigg and builder Joseph Nunan. It is a single-storey brick rendered church with an iron roof in the Victorian Academic style, and a single-storey brick and iron manse in the Victorian Georgian style.
- 02878 *St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall* (1887) York, is a complex of three buildings comprising; St Patrick's Church (1875) designed by Nunan, which is a double volume stone and slate building with a four level tower in the Victorian Academic Gothic style, the Presbytery (1877; 1894) and a church hall (1859).

Rev. Br. Keane describes Nunan as the architect of the Convent of Mercy (1871), part of 04327 Mercedes College Group. Nunan, together with another Fenian convict, Brophy, is recognised as the builder of this place although it is not clear if he was the architect as plans had been prepared prior to his involvement.<sup>63</sup>

Architects Edgar Henderson and Harry Jefferis are associated with several places on the Heritage Council database. Together they designed 13750 Nagle College and Stella Maris Convent, Geraldton (1902); 01487 *Peninsula Hotel (fmr), Boatsheds & Stingray Point* (1889); and 00487 *Congregational Hall & Congregational Church, Claremont*.

Individually the two men are associated with several other places. Henderson is the architect of 10197 Spearwood Presbytery (1912) and 15784 Two Shops & Residence located at 147-149 Beaufort Street Perth. It should be

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<sup>63</sup> HCWA Backlog Form for the Convent of Mercy, Goderich Street, Perth, 2002.

noted that Edgar Jerome Henderson's son, Edgar Le Blond Henderson, had a long association with the Roman Catholic Church and confusion can occur as the identity of the architect of some Catholic buildings.<sup>64</sup>

Harry Jefferis designed 02449 Shenton Park Hotel (1907) and 00654 *Cunderdin Hall* (1910), which is on the State Register of Heritage Places.

There are 21 buildings in the Victorian Tudor style comparable to Edmund Hall in the Heritage Council database. Of these, nine are associated with education and three continue as schools. Two of these are entered in the State Register of Heritage Places: 00482 *Claremont Teacher's College* (1902) and 00851 *Princess May Reserve* (1854). Another place still associated with education is 04327 Mercedes College Group, noted above, as Joseph Nunan was the possible architect of the convent building. Places no longer associated with education are: 00842 *Film and Television Institute Fremantle* (1854); 01881 Old Girls School (fmr), Northam (1878); 02119 *The Cloisters* (1858); and 02879 *Convent of Mercy and School*, York (1872). Of these, only the Old Girls School is not registered.

Many sites are associated with the Christian Brothers and education. Of these the following are entered in the State Register of Heritage Places: 01310 *Christian Brothers College (fmr)* Kalgoorlie which is still functioning as a school; 02130 *St Johns Pro-Cathedral* which had an educational use in its past; P2181 *Sacred Heart Catholic Group, Highgate*; 03101 *Catholic Agricultural College* Bindoon and 04579 *Castledare Boys Home (fmr)* only a small part of which now remains and is no longer used as a school.

In a broader context, there are 81 secondary schools on the HCWA database and of these thirteen were constructed between 1890 and 1910. Those that continued to be used as schools are; 02450 *Perth Modern School* (1910) included in the State Register of Heritage Places; 03497 Methodist Ladies College Centenary Building (1907); 02813 District High School, Southern Cross (1895); 04138 St Ildephonsus College (1909) and St Gertrude's College (1908) which are both part of the Benedictine Monastery precinct, New Norcia; 05916 Pingelly District High School (1895); 06051 Gnowangerup District High School (1908) and 07596 *Claremont Primary School* included on the state register and which formerly functioned as a secondary school.

The role of *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* in providing schooling since its construction is significant as many other schools have changed their function even if the buildings have remained. Those places that continue to provide educational services since their original construction include; 00330 *Paisley Centre, Bunbury* (1886); 01883 *Northam Senior High School* (1921); 02450 *Perth Modern School* (1910); 03101 *Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon* (1937) 03372 *Kent Street Senior High School, Victoria Park* (1939); 07596 *Claremont Primary School* (1893) and 15744 *John Curtin College of the Arts* (1943). All of these places are included on the State Register of Heritage Places.

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<sup>64</sup> Curiously Edgar Jerome Henderson is associated with 13658 Loreto Primary School & Convent which was built in 1931 some 3 years after his death. This may be a result of confusion over the names or he may have been responsible for an earlier building on the site.

Of the above places, *Perth Modern School* and *Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon*, are the most comparable.

The role of *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle* in the Fremantle and wider community is not unique, but is rare as a place which has continued as an educational facility for such a period of time. *Paisley Centre, Bunbury* is one of few institutions used as an educational facility for a period of time comparable to *Christian Brothers College, Fremantle*.

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

Conservation Plan, Christian Brothers College Fremantle, for Silver Thomas Hanley, June 1996 by Palassis Architects.

Australian Heritage Commission Datasheet place ID 10609.

National Trust Classification, 6 October 1980.

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

The place has a relatively high degree of archaeological potential, particularly in the vicinity of Edmund Hall and other early structures across the site. Further information about the place may be revealed through archaeological investigation.

Should further work be undertaken on Edmund Hall, the former Brother's House and the Administration Building it is suggested that paint scrapes be taken of any painted surfaces to determine original colour schemes or treatments.