



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)

- 4.1.2 Making suburbs
- 4.3 Developing urban institutions
- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sport
- 8.6 Worshipping
- 8.6.1 Worshipping together
- 8.6.2 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies
- 8.6.4 Making places for worship
- 8.7 Honouring achievement

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 402 Education and Science
- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment
- 406 Religion
- 407 Cultural activities
- 408 Institutions

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The Chapel is a bold and expressive example of the Late Twentieth Century Organic style applied to the design of a church. (Criterion 1.2)

The Administration Building is a substantial example of Inter War Gothic style architecture, featuring a landmark central tower, pinnacles, belvedere and parapeted gables to the skyline, arched three-storey verandahs, well

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

articulated vertical elements and white accents against red face brickwork. (Criterion 1.2)

The Administration Building, sited on a small rise overlooking the Memorial Oval, is a distinctive landmark visible from vantage points from across the Canning River. (Criterion 1.3)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College illustrates the expansion of the Christian Brothers' educational endeavours in Western Australia, being established from 1937 as an extension of the first Christian Brothers College in the State, on St George's Terrace, Perth, designed with reference to the earlier building, and retaining the cross salvaged from that building when the Perth school transferred to Trinity College, East Perth, in 1961. The Christian Brothers' were a significant contributor to education in the State, especially for Catholic boys. (Criterion 2.1)

The Administration Building, which initially housed all the school's functions including administration, teaching areas, student boarding facilities and accommodation for the Brothers, and is now primarily administration and classroom areas, demonstrates the evolution of the school from its origins as a Christian Brothers' boarding school. (Criterion 2.1)

The location of the school in expansive bushland on the banks of the Canning River, prior to the area becoming suburban, and the inclusion of generous playing fields and facilities for water sports, demonstrates the educational philosophy of the Christian Brothers, in which sporting activities and a non-urban environment were considered major contributors to appropriate character development for boys. (Criterion 2.1)

The Chapel was one of the first Catholic buildings constructed in Western Australia in response to the impact of liturgical changes arising from the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65, with its form and plan implementing the Council's theological emphases on inclusiveness in worship. (Criterion 2.2)

The Administration Building was designed by Michael Cavanagh of the prominent architectural firm Cavanagh & Cavanagh, who designed a considerable body of work for the Catholic Church in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Criterion 2.3)

The Chapel was designed by architectural firm Henderson and Thompson, who provided architectural services to the College through the 1960s and 1970s, and also designed the 1967 additions to the Administration Building. (Criterion 2.3)

The landscaping of the grounds in 1967 following the completion of the Chapel and additions of the Administration Building was undertaken by noted landscape architect, John Oldham. (Criterion 2.3)

The place is associated with many former students and staff who have gone on to become prominent members of the Western Australian community, including Olympic athlete Herb Elliott. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College is valued by current and former staff, students and their families for the education and religious guidance provided through the school, and particularly by the Christian Brothers, since the establishment of the place in 1937. (Criterion 4.1)

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College is valued by the community as one of the early establishments in the district, as demonstrated by the inclusion of the place on the City of South Perth Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The Chapel is a rare example of a building using red Mount Barker stone, as the stone had a limited distribution and is no longer quarried. (Criterion 5.1)

The Chapel is a rare example in Western Australia of a church building designed in the Late Twentieth Century Organic style. (Criterion 5.1)

The Administration Building is a rare example of architects Cavanagh and Cavanagh designing in the Inter War Gothic style. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The Chapel is an excellent representative of the Late Twentieth Century Organic style, featuring innovative use of traditional materials and a curved form and design to complement the natural setting. (Criterion 6.1)

The Administration Building is a fine representative example of the Inter War Gothic style, featuring a landmark central tower, pinnacles, belvedere and parapeted gables to the skyline, arched three-storey verandahs, well articulated vertical elements and white accents against red face brickwork. (Criterion 6.1)

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College is representative of the provision of metropolitan boarding schools for rural and regional students throughout the twentieth century. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Generally, *Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College* is in good and sound structural condition. The buildings have been maintained and well utilised. Cracks are evident in the on the west façade of the original section of the Administration Building and it has not been established if they are structural or surface. Falling damp and water ingress resulting in loss of mortar joints in large areas at high level are evident on the west façade of the original section of the Administration Building. Further attention and conservation work to remediate the situation is required.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College has been in continuous use as a school since its establishment in 1937. The two buildings assessed

retain a high degree of integrity in relation to the original intention of the buildings and are still used for their intended purposes.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The original external built fabric and form of the Administration Building is intact and with subsequent additions have been sympathetically integrated or reconstructed to echo the style of the original 1937 building. Internally, refurbishment works undertaken over the years are sympathetic to the style and period of the building. The Chapel is intact with very little changes to the original built fabric internally and externally. The Chapel remains as originally designed with all furnishings and copper fittings largely intact and preserved.

The authenticity of the Administration Building remains moderate to high and the authenticity of the Chapel is high.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Prue Griffin, Historian, with additional research conducted by Phillip Pascoe, on behalf of Hocking Planning & Architecture. The physical evidence was compiled by Hocking Planning & Architecture in October 2007. Amendments and/or additions have been made by Office of Heritage staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College comprises two buildings within a complex of buildings built for the Christian Brothers from 1937, for the purposes of a Catholic Boys' School. The Administration Building (1937-38; 1967) is a brick and tile building, which is predominantly three storeys, and a smaller portion is four-storey. The original building was designed by architects Cavanagh and Cavanagh in 1937-38 and added to in 1967 by architects Henderson and Thompson. The concrete, stone and sheet metal roofed Chapel (1966) was built to a design by architects Henderson and Thompson.

At the time of European settlement in 1829, a Nyoongar-speaking Indigenous population occupied the Beeliar region, an area from the south banks of the Swan River, including the Canning River, south to Mangles Bay. The Canning River retains significance for Indigenous Western Australians as a mythological site.¹

The Canning River frontage remained largely undeveloped at the beginning of the twentieth century. Around 1880, Samuel August Salter (after whom Salter Point was named) worked as a sawyer and timber contractor on the peninsula, the earliest recorded non-Indigenous activity in the area.² On the opposite side of Canning River early European settler Henry Bull was granted a large parcel of land in 1830. His name is the origin of Bull's Creek and the subsequent suburb Bullcreek. It is suggested that his name is also the origin of the name 'Mount Henry' although conclusive proof has not been found to support this claim.³

The Congregation of Christian Brothers was founded in Ireland by Br Edmund Ignatius Rice with the purpose of educating boys from poor families. The first Christian Brothers School opened in 1802. The Potato Famine of the 1840s led to a mass exodus of Irish Catholics around the world. In 1843, the first Christian Brothers school in Australia opened in Sydney.⁴

Western Australia's first Christian Brothers' College (CBC), Perth, was opened, on the corner of St. George's Terrace and Victoria Avenue, on 1

1 Department of Indigenous Affairs, Register of Aboriginal sites, site no. S02550.

2 Cecil C. Florey, *Peninsular city: a social history of the City of South Perth*, City of South Perth, 1995, p. 125-6.

3 Information from Landgate suggests that the name of Mt Henry was originally thought to be after Lieutenant John Henry of H.M.S. Challenger in June 1829. However the available evidence does not support this supposition and their office favours the alternate origin of Henry Bull.

4 http://www.edmundrice.org.au/Christian_Brothers/History/

February 1894, following an agreement between Bishop Matthew Gibney and Brother Treacy, Provincial of the Christian Brothers in Australia, to establish a boys' secondary school.⁵ Catholics, mainly of Irish descent, had been socially and economically marginalised in the colony since foundation in 1829. Gibney believed that access to education for the boys of poor Catholic families would empower Catholics to change their depressed living conditions.⁶ CBC Perth, sometimes known colloquially as 'the Terrace', served as an educational institution for boys of Catholic families until its closure in 1961.⁷

At the opening of CBC Perth, Br T. A. O'Brien outlined the educational philosophy of the Christian Brothers:

The ambition of the Brothers was to bring up the young as good Christians, good citizens, able to fill any position which may be assigned to them in after life, and to hold their own against all comers in this the fairest and in one sense the youngest of the Australian colonies.⁸

The Christian Brothers aimed to prepare students for success in the public examination system, leading to university education and subsequent employment, thereby elevating the socio-economic status of Catholics.⁹ The role of sport in Catholic education was central. The third Headmaster, Br Gregory Culligan (1909-11), commented:

We realise that our duty as one of the four largest Secondary Schools of WA is to supply a high standard of education in true Secondary School work, that is in the languages, mathematics, history and science, but at the same time we have always made it our ideal to produce a well built and healthy race of young Western Australians, alert and keen in all they undertake, imbued with a sense of public responsibilities and fired with a desire for the honour of public service, and this is effected more genuinely in our judgement by a high standard of school sports than any lectures on Civics.¹⁰

The Catholic population of Western Australia increased in the wake of the gold rushes of the 1890s. The Christian Brothers were active in establishing new schools and institutions in Western Australia. One of these was the Clontarf Orphanage opened in 1901 in the locality today named Waterford, near Manning.¹¹

By 1908, the need for expanded facilities, particularly for sports and boarders, prompted Brother Jerome Hennessy to argue for relocation of the Christian Brothers' College Perth away from the city centre.¹² In 1909 Br Nunan

5 Katharine Massam, *On High ground: images of one hundred years at Aquinas College, Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, 1998, p. 21-3, 29-30.

6 Kevin Paull, *Beyond dreams in stone: a history of the Christian Brothers' Colleges in Western Australia 1894-2000*, Trustees of the Christian Brothers in WA Inc., 2001, p. 19-21.

7 The buildings housing CBC Perth were demolished in 1961 and a new school, Trinity College, was established adjacent to the Gloucester Park trotting course in East Perth and opened in 1962.

8 Cited in *The Record*, 8 February 1894, cited in Paull, op. cit., p. 45.

9 Paull, op. cit., p. 47. It should be noted that the College has produced a number of Rhodes Scholars (correspondence Lavan Legal to HCWA, 24 July 2008).

10 Cited in Paull, op. cit., p. 79-80.

11 HCWA Register documentation P2401 *Clontarf*.

12 Massam, op. cit., p. 65-6.

purchased a 20-acre site, named Killarney, on Point Heathcote.¹³ The proposed move away from the city centre, while generally supported, was postponed for several decades due to World War I and the Great Depression, as well as an ongoing debate about the most appropriate site for a new college.¹⁴

The Catholic Rural Movement of the 1930s probably influenced the eventual decision to relocate the College. The movement romanticised the bush as a simpler alternative to the overpopulation, unemployment, and hedonism of the town.¹⁵ Potential sites considered for the new college included a parcel of land at Point Heathcote in Applecross and a parcel of land named Clune Park in Riverton, purchased in 1928. It was however the influence of Brother Paul Keaney at the nearby Clontarf Orphanage who instigated the purchase of land from the Manning family at Mount Henry for the new school site.

Negotiations had begun in 1935 for four lots, 4, 9, 5 and 18 of Canning Loc 37, comprising 165 acres (66.8 ha) around Mt. Henry on the Canning River.¹⁶ Archbishop Prendiville was reluctant about the choice of site, believing 'the property is not on the aristocratic side of the river'.¹⁷ However, Brother Paul Keaney was convinced by architect Michael Cavanagh, who argued: 'the locality and the high level of the ground and the fact that it is on the banks of the river all ensure, a first class Residential Suburb and a suitable environment for a first class college'.¹⁸ The lots were bought for £9925.¹⁹

Early in 1937 the work of clearing this ground was taken up vigorously, with boys from CBC Perth playing a major role.²⁰ The foundation stone for the original Aquinas College building was laid on 11 July 1937.²¹ The building was designed by architect Michael Cavanagh, of Cavanagh & Cavanagh.²²

Originally from Adelaide, Michael Francis Cavanagh (b.1875 d.1941) had established his architectural firm in Western Australia in 1895 and was joined by his brother James Charles Cavanagh in 1900. The brothers had trained in architecture in Adelaide and like many of their profession had moved to Western Australia to pursue the opportunities offered by the gold boom period of development. The firm had a long association with the Catholic Church, designing hospitals, schools and churches in the period from 1895 to the 1930s. The firm also undertook commercial work and were responsible for

13 The site was eventually sold to the State Government in 1926 for construction of a mental hospital. (Correspondence, Lavan Legal to HCWA, 24 July 2008)

14 Massam, op. cit., p. 71.

15 Paull, op. cit., p. 145-46.

16 Massam, op. cit., p. 122.

17 Cited in Massam, op. cit., p. 123.

18 Cited in Massam, op. cit., p. 123.

19 Massam, op. cit., p. 123. Certificates of Title 1049/788 and 695/151, Landgate show that the owners of lot 9 were Florence Augusta Hall and Lucius Charles Manning in 1936. The owner of Lot 18 was Eileen Agnes Manning, wife of Lucius Charles Manning.

20 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPt1.

21 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPt1.

22 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPt1.

the design of many banks, hotels and shops.²³ The Aquinas College project was in the later years of Michael Cavanagh's career and by that time he was a senior member of the profession in Perth, achieving the position of President of the Western Australian Institute of Architects.²⁴ The design of the original school building was seen to be more representative of his earlier designs as it was similar to the Christian Brothers institutions at Clontarf (1902) and most significantly draws inspiration from the former Christian Brothers College in Perth.

In April 1937, builders Snooks and Sons successfully tendered for the construction of the new college building at a cost of £21,350.²⁵

The name chosen for the new college was in recognition of St Thomas Aquinas, a great theologian of the Catholic Church after whom many institutions of learning are named. Historian Katherine Massam has noted that the design of the Aquinas College building invoked the CBC Perth building:

The tower was a central feature of the main building at Aquinas. It echoed the building in St. George's Terrace, but replaced the cross at the pinnacle with battlements, evoking a castle – a mix of Irish-cloister and Cambridge Tudor styles.²⁶

The Christian Brothers questioned the expense of the tower but Cavanagh persuaded them to support his design, with the promise that the tower would not be too expensive.²⁷ Other features of Cavanagh's design were readily supported as they reflected the Christian Brothers' educational philosophy.

The school buildings were not passive elements in the culture of the college but, rather, helped to structure the interactions within them. The buildings at Aquinas can be read as concrete metaphors for the values and beliefs of the community.

[...] [C]lassrooms and dormitories were made for large groups, and a sense of order and effective management was reinforced through neat arrangements of desks or beds in strict lines. Individuality, privacy and autonomy were secondary to being part of a team, sharing experiences and following directions.²⁸

The primary function of the new school at Mount Henry was to provide for the boarders from CBC Perth.²⁹ The first group of students, consisting of 160 boarders and 55 day boys,³⁰ moved to Aquinas College for the beginning of the school year in 1938. The role of boarding schools for people outside of the metropolitan area was significant in the early part of the twentieth century.

23 Obituary in *The Architect* Vol. 1 No. 9, June 1941, pp. 8-9; Battye, J.S. *Cyclopedia of Western Australia* The Cyclopeda Company, Perth, 1912-13, Facsimile Edition Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, Western Australia, 1985) Vol. 1, pp. 625-28, which provides a comprehensive report of the principals and their practice to 1912; and Morison, Margaret Pitt 'Immigrant Architects in Western Australia' Typescript, Battye Library.

24 Kelly, Ian Phillip 'The Development of Housing in Perth (1890-1915) Thesis for Master of Architecture UWA 1992, appendix.

25 Massam, op. cit., p. 123.

26 Massam, op. cit., pp. 138-39.

27 Massam, op. cit., p. 139.

28 Massam, op. cit., pp. 138-39.

29 CBC Perth Annual Report 1938.

30 Aquinas Annual report, 1962. There is some discrepancy on the numbers attending the school at first enrolment. Elsewhere the numbers are given as 173 students and these are only boarders.

CBC Perth drew its students from the pastoral and farming districts of Western Australia and overseas. The role of the school was promoted as being that of a second family with the dual focus of school life being study and organised sport.³¹

Historian Br Kevin Paull has noted that whereas the original CBC Perth reflected Bishop Gibney's desire to educate the children of poor Catholic families, Aquinas College gradually came to represent education for the elite. The Christian Brothers Order would split over the following decades into those teaching at Aquinas, a member of the prestigious Public Schools Association, and those favouring egalitarian Catholic education, working at orphanages and migrant schools.³²

The annual report prepared for CBC Perth included a report by the Headmaster Brother C. P. Foley on the establishment of Aquinas College.

The year under review has marked the beginning of a new period in the life of the college, for as you know, early this year the boarders were transferred to Aquinas College, Mt Henry and our college in the Terrace set out on its life as a Day College only.

The change has meant the realisation of wishes which the Brothers have entertained for many years, for they have long realised the necessity of removing the Boarders to a site where they would be free from the distractions of the city, and where more extensive grounds would enable them to make adequate provision for the sporting activities of their students. The site chosen is indeed an ideal one, and we wish the young Aquinas College a long life of success and development and trust that the traditions which grew so strong for more than forty years at the terrace will take root in the soul beside the Canning and strengthen and develop with the passing of the years.³³

It is clear that Aquinas College was originally to serve as an adjunct to CBC Perth but gradually the school formed its own identity. CBC Perth was closed in 1961 and a new college, 'Trinity', was established in East Perth. By that time Aquinas College had developed its own identity and traditions and was not closely linked to Trinity College although the two schools share the same origins. Aquinas College inherited from CBC Perth the College colours (red and black), the College crest, Honour Boards, and membership of the Public Schools Association.³⁴

Aquinas College was blessed by Archbishop Prendiville and officially opened by the State Governor Sir James Mitchell, on 27 February 1938.³⁵ The first Headmaster was Brother Foley who remained at Aquinas for only one year. His position then transferred to Brother W. V. Green in 1939.

When Aquinas College was first established, the school consisted of the portion which is south of the tower in the current Administration Building. This three-storey building accommodated the chapel, boarders, staff, classrooms and the associated services such as administration, bathrooms, kitchens and dining rooms. It was always intended that the Administration Building was to

31 Massam, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

32 Paull, *op. cit.*, p. 132-4.

33 CBC Perth Annual Report 1938, Headmasters Report. Copy held at Aquinas College.

34 Correspondence, Lavan Legal to HCWA, 24 July 2008.

35 Massam, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

be added to, as illustrations of the planned college in 1937 show the tower was central to a façade with the sides being a mirror image. This illustration also shows a future chapel of a traditional design in the approximate location of the present Chapel. It was not until the mid 1960s that the extensions to the Administration Building and the Chapel were completed.³⁶

The staging of construction of schools was, and continues to be, a common practice. Of direct comparison is the construction of CBC Fremantle in two stages around a central tower.³⁷

Aerial photographs of the Aquinas site in 1938 show that the grounds were quickly established to enable sporting activities, a feature of the school curriculum. The space available to the students at Aquinas was a vast improvement on the facilities at CBC Perth. This was apparent in the accommodation for the students and access to the outdoors.³⁸

In 1939, Perth held its first Eucharistic procession of Christ the King and this procession was held in the Aquinas College grounds.³⁹ The selection of Aquinas as the venue for this event was of significance in demonstrating the school and its grounds to the Catholic community.⁴⁰

At the onset of World War II, Headmaster Brother Green was able to prevent the College grounds being converted into an army depot.⁴¹ During the war years there was little expansion of the school facilities, and students were encouraged to take on training as army cadets.⁴²

Following the war, in 1946, the College purchased two large army huts, which were converted into temporary structures next to the Administration Building. The huts housed a dining hall for 200, a junior dormitory for 30, and a hospital block. The 'temporary' structures remained until the mid-1970s.⁴³

Although the surrounding area had largely been unsettled bushland in 1938, by the 1950s the development of Manning decreased the geographical isolation of Aquinas College. The provision of public transport services to the area enabled an increase in the number of day students, who eventually outnumbered boarders by the mid 1950s. During the post-war period, students at Aquinas were more likely to come from middle-class homes, rather than the working class children whom the Congregation of Christian Brothers had been founded to educate.⁴⁴ Education at Aquinas aimed to prepare boys from Catholic families for participation in social life, displaying

36 Massam, op. cit., p. 126.

37 The main classroom block at CBC Fremantle was built in 1901 and completed in 1939, see HCWA Assessment for Christian Brothers College, Fremantle (P898).

38 Massam, op. cit., p. 127.

39 Massam, op. cit., p. 118.

40 Massam, op. cit., p. 118.

41 Massam, op. cit., pp. 117-18.

42 Annual Reports for Aquinas College during the War years are filled with detail on the training of students in skills relating to future army service. The annual reports also detail the careers of former students in the services.

43 Massam, op. cit., pp. 140-41.

44 Massam, op. cit., pp. 135-36.

qualities of courtesy and good citizenship, based on the model of Jesus Christ as the ideal Christian gentleman.⁴⁵

Land in front of the Administration Building was dedicated as a Memorial Oval, opened on 11 November 1951, commemorating the loss of life during World War II.⁴⁶ The Brother Foley Scoreboard, located on the Memorial Oval, was named after the first Headmaster.

A grotto to Our Lady of Lourdes was erected in the grounds of Aquinas College during 1953.⁴⁷

A visitor to Aquinas College prompted the following comment in the School Report for 1953:

Earnest consideration should be given to a building programme. The school is far from being a complete educational establishment as far as buildings go. A chapel, a science block, an assembly hall, a library, a gymnasium are needed.⁴⁸

A small house for the College Chaplain was built during 1954, across the driveway from the Administration Building. The Chaplain had previously resided in rooms in the main wing of the Administration Building.⁴⁹

Named after Brother V. I. Murphy, Headmaster from 1951 to 1956, the first major classroom block, the Murphy Wing, opened in 1955.⁵⁰

Brother Walter Godfrey Hall became Headmaster in 1957, replacing Br V. I. Murphy, and served until 1962.⁵¹

At the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, former Aquinas student and school champion runner Herb Elliott won a gold medal.⁵² Sporting achievement was valued highly amongst members of the Aquinas community, and the success of Herb Elliott represented the efforts of many more, less celebrated, Aquinians whose time at the College resulted in success on the sporting field in local and interschool competitions. Participation in sport was valued more highly than winning, and following an address by Pope Pius XII in 1955, sport was seen as developing virtues such as loyalty, obedience, and self-renunciation.⁵³ Historian Br Kevin Paull has noted that, in an era of milk bars, hot rods, and emergent youth culture, Herb Elliott represented an older ideal of the young man committed to healthy outdoor sport, genuine sportsmanship, and decent citizenship.⁵⁴

The site of Christian Brothers' College, St. George's Terrace, was finally relinquished to the Perth City Council during 1961, and CBC Perth was demolished in 1965. The cross from the roof of CBC Perth was salvaged, and in 1968 erected at Aquinas College in a position overlooking the bay and

45 Massam, op. cit., pp. 143-44.

46 Massam, op. cit., p. 155.

47 Aquinas College Annual Report 1953.

48 School Report 1952. Christian Brothers Archives. Westcourt Cited in Massam, op. cit., p. 137.

49 Massam, op. cit., pp. 145-46.

50 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPT1.

51 Paull, op. cit., pp. 211-12.

52 Massam, op. cit., pp. 154, 170-72.

53 Massam, op. cit., pp. 168-70.

54 Paull, op. cit., pp. 176-79.

the rowing shed.⁵⁵ The erection of the cross at Aquinas was undertaken by the Old Aquinians' Association 'to perpetuate the historical link between Aquinas and the 'Terrace' and to serve as a tribute to the past students, Brothers and staff who established the College traditions during the period preceding the transfer to Mount Henry in 1938'.⁵⁶ The cross was subsequently relocated to a position at the entrance to the school alongside concrete pillars that identify significant years in the history of the school and the Christian Brothers.⁵⁷

A new Science Wing was completed and opened during 1962.⁵⁸ It was designed in consultation with science teaching staff, and built, in part, by groundsman Henry Naglazas.⁵⁹

Buildings for the Aquinas College Junior School were opened during 1963. The then Headmaster, Brother Woodruff, described the new buildings as, 'pleasing to the eye and skilfully furnished'.⁶⁰ Woodruff served as Headmaster from 1963 to 1968.⁶¹

The Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas was built in 1966 after some delay created by a lack of finances and the deliberate decision to wait for the outcomes of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). The purpose of the design of the future Chapel was stated in the Aquinas College Annual Report of 1965.

The Chapel has not been designed along traditional lines but has been fashioned for the people of our times in accord with recent liturgical development. It will be fresh and dynamic in its concept, functional in its design, with the stress on corporate worship. The stained glass windows and other art work are being designed to help create a beautiful setting for the performance of the liturgy and an atmosphere that will inspire a spirit of worship and devotion.⁶²

The completion of the building and its opening on 12 August 1966 was a significant event for the College. It was even described as 'the greatest day in the long history of the college'.⁶³ Bishop McKeon and Bishop Goody combined to bless the Chapel and celebrate the first mass. An account of the opening in the Annual Report by Headmaster Rev Br Woodruff, indicates the significance of the design and the impact of the spirit of change that followed the Second Vatican Council.

The whole ceremony was enhanced by the use of the vernacular, and for the first time the laity had the opportunity to appreciate the dignity and beauty of such a ritual. ... The delays [in building] were understandable, for only in March, 1965, did the instructions for the proper implementation of the Constitution on Sacred

55 Aquinas College Annual Report 1968.

56 Aquinas College Annual Report 1968.

57 Site visit by Prue Griffin and Yen Nee Goh, August 2007 and information from Peter Shaw, Aquinas College.

58 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPT1.

59 Massam, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

60 Massam, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

61 Paull, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-12.

62 Aquinas College Annual Report 1965.

63 Aquinas College Annual Report 1966.

Liturgy become effective, and only then did the planners feel confident of the trend taken by recent liturgical development.

It [the chapel] has been sited at the focal point of the campus. There is little that can be called traditional in a Chapel featuring externally a wall whose enveloping movement and strong-like character suggests strength and security to all who worship within, and whose upward sweep lifts our thoughts to heaven. Within thee is found an impressive setting for corporate worship – windows whose symbolism will deepen liturgical understanding, and whose light and colour have created an atmosphere emotionally satisfying, a nave and sanctuary whose intimacy stresses the communal nature of the worship, and a roughly hewn altar that emphasizes the drama of the sacrifice.

The spirit of the new liturgy is exemplified by the beaten copper crucifix depicting Christ in triumph, victorious over devil and sin as He intercedes on man's behalf with His own life, and raises in man the hope of a glorious resurrection. In the same medium, we have Our Lady whose tender and lasting concern for her children is powerfully portrayed in the flow of line and solicitous hands.⁶⁴

The Chapel was designed by architectural firm Henderson and Thompson. Special mention was made of the architects Edgar Thompson and George Henderson and associate architect Jim Thompson who oversaw the planning and detail of the building. The builder was Cyril Wildy, who had recently constructed the extensions to Parliament House, and the foreman of the project was Mr Warburton. The other contributors to the Chapel included: Paganin Brothers who built the wall and provided the marble for the sanctuary and the altar; Bill Broderick who provided the external finish of the wall; Ted Gowers and Albert Brown who designed and constructed the stained glass windows; art teacher Dan Mazotti who designed the Stations of the Cross; and Voitre Marek from Adelaide who designed and created the copper work (crucifix, statue of Our Lady, tabernacle and light pendants).⁶⁵

Historian Katharine Massam described the form of the new Chapel in contrast to the original chapel in the current Administration Building.

[T]he new chapel was quite different to the previous wood-panelled room. It was designed to express a different style of spirituality within institutional Catholicism, and new notions with that of how boys could best approach God. [...] As the 'heart' of the college, the chapel was both robust and inclusive. The bold triangular form and the sweeping feature wall were [...] innovative, unique, and appropriately 'masculine' in style.⁶⁶

Extensions to the Administration Building were opened during 1967.⁶⁷ The extension provided a new boarding wing and new space for administrative purposes.⁶⁸ The extension deliberately echoed the original building in its form so that it was visually a three-storey building. Internally the building had an additional floor. This was concealed by reducing the ceiling heights of the new floor and designing the external façade, including the windows, so that they did not represent the internal structure.

64 Aquinas College Annual Report 1966. Headmaster's Report

65 Aquinas College Annual Report 1966. Note that there are two spellings in this same reference for the artist who constructed the copper work, Voitre or Voyt Marek.

66 Massam, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

67 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPT1.

68 Massam, op. cit., p. 180.

The Headmaster described the additions in the Annual Report for 1967:

The completion of the main façade was well overdue and our thanks are expressed to Architect, Mr G. Thomson, and builder, Mr. C. Wildy, for a building that matches the original in splendid fashion without sacrificing the benefits of modern designing. The upper storey has been allocated to the senior students now quartered in individual cubicles. These cubicles and furnishings were designed and built by our own maintenance staff, known to us as merely Henry and Peter, ...⁶⁹

The additions were designed by architectural firm Henderson and Thompson who also designed the Chapel. This firm had a long association with the College, designing many additions and new buildings until the 1980s. It is interesting to note the variation in the design of the two buildings. The Administration Building rigidly echoes the original design of Cavanagh and Cavanagh whilst the Chapel is experimental in design and starkly contrasts with all other buildings on the site.

Edgar le Blond Henderson and George Pruett Thompson worked on many projects for the Catholic Church. For Edgar le Blond Henderson this was a continuation of an association his father, architect Edgar Jerome Henderson, had established in the early 20th century.

Following completion of additions to the Administration Building in 1967, the surrounds were landscaped from plans by John Oldham, which allowed for 'a picturesque main drive with entry near the intersection of Mt. Henry Road and Roebuck Drive'.⁷⁰

The 1960s were a time of change at Aquinas as the facilities were improved and extended. In addition to the Chapel and the extension of the Administration Building, new senior classrooms and a hockey pavilion were built in the late 1960s. The period was also characterised in Australian popular memory as one of youth and revolt. At Aquinas, staff had to engage with the movement for change. Although not readily apparent in the official records the school sought to maintain a balance between innovation and tradition.⁷¹ Massam speculates that the innovative architecture of the Chapel 'offered hope that Aquinas was reading the signs of the times, and not only responding to but creatively fostering a vibrant dialogue between faith and culture'.⁷²

Brother L. B. Hassam was Headmaster from 1969 to 1974.⁷³ The period of the 1960s and 1970s saw a resurgence of sporting achievement at Aquinas, following less distinguished post-war years. After winning the Public Schools Sporting Association athletics contest in 1965, Aquinas continued with 17 nearly consecutive victories in athletics (apart from 1972, when beaten by Trinity). Aquinas teams were also successful in rowing, cricket, football,

69 Aquinas College Annual Report 1967.

70 Ibid.

71 Massam, op. cit., p. 179.

72 Massam, op. cit., p. 184.

73 Paull, op. cit., pp. 211-12.

hockey and tennis, and the College acquired a reputation as a top sporting school.⁷⁴

A new boathouse, designed by Henderson & Thompson, and named after Brother N. N. Wilson, was completed in 1971 and opened a few days before the Head of the River rowing contest of that year. The old rowing shed 'succumbed to the forces of nature' not long afterward.⁷⁵

The headmastership of Brother L. B. Hassam (1969-74) was marked by changes at Aquinas, including greater freedom of choice for students, and decentralisation of authority within the school. During this period, Aquinas won twenty-nine premierships in Public Schools Association first grade sports, compared to nineteen in the preceding sixty years. When Hassam left for Ballarat, the Aquinas College Annual noted that the Headmaster's encouragement and presence at sporting events had greatly contributed to the remarkable success.⁷⁶ He was followed as Headmaster by Br D. F. Drake, from 1974 to 1978.⁷⁷

During 1975, the Redmond Oval, established at the foundation of Aquinas College in 1937-38, was reconfigured. At the southern end of the oval, the Redmond Library was constructed and opened in 1976.⁷⁸ The remaining portion of the oval became a rugby pitch and swimming pool.⁷⁹

The 'temporary' wooden buildings next to the original building, erected after World War II to enable expansion of the College, were finally removed in March 1976.⁸⁰

A new senior classroom block with twelve classrooms, manual arts building, art centre, and gymnasium were completed during the early to mid-1980s.⁸¹ The building programme, under Headmaster Br T. X. Hann (1979-86), was designed to allow a broader curriculum. Recession in the early 1980s had diminished the socio-economic opportunities for school leavers, and the Parents' Council (formed 1979) had asked for more options on the curriculum to prepare their sons for trades, rather than the traditional goal of university entrance.⁸²

In 1984, Hans Arkveld created a sculpture in worked brick at the new hall-gymnasium complex.⁸³

Four new boarding houses were constructed in 1986-87.⁸⁴ The Catholic Education Commission had requested Aquinas increase student intake,

74 Paull, op. cit., p. 215.

75 Aquinas College Annual Report 1971.

76 Aquinas College Annual Report 1974.

77 Paull, op. cit., pp. 211-12.

78 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPt1. Massam, op. cit., p. 180.

79 Massam, op. cit., pp. 207-09.

80 Massam, op. cit., p. 141.

81 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPt1.

82 Paull, op. cit., pp. 283-85.

83 Massam, op. cit., pp. 213-14.

84 City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory, place no. SPt1.

which led to the need for new facilities.⁸⁵ The boarding houses were named after: Bishop Matthew Gibney, who had invited the Christian Brothers to Western Australia in the 1890s; Alaric Pinder Boor, an Old Aquinian and Rhodes Scholar; former Headmaster Brother Michael Paul Nunan; and Brother Francis Paul Keaney, who had been instrumental in securing the Mount Henry site for Aquinas College.⁸⁶ In the same period a new store and laundry were constructed on the site.⁸⁷

The culture of Aquinas College changed with the increasing student numbers. Headmaster Br Hann (1979-86) had noted that with the increased student intake, it was 'increasingly difficult to provide team games for the less athletically able'. Without participation in sports, students became alienated. The increase in student numbers also decreased the sense of exclusivity of the College.⁸⁸ Moreover, the decline of the Christian Brothers Order led, from the 1970s onward, to an increasing proportion of lay staff, including the first lay deputy principal, Mr Rob Daniel. Headmaster Br Kevin J. Paull (1993-99) was succeeded by the first lay Headmaster, Mr Robert White.⁸⁹

Despite the changes, the Aquinas community valued continuity with the history of the College. A survey of parents in 1994 found that they wanted their sons to attend an Aquinas College which would be:

- a Catholic school for boys, embracing Catholic beliefs, practices and the Edmund Rice spirit of service to the underprivileged of society;
- a boarding school; and,
- a continuing member of the Public Schools' Association.⁹⁰

The 1990s saw Aquinas College increasingly appeal to overseas markets, with an increased intake of boarders from Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei. International students were encouraged to integrate through sport, and competitions in badminton, basketball, soccer, and volleyball were established.⁹¹ Aquinas continued its sporting success, winning the 1994 Public Schools Sporting Association (PSSA) athletics, rowing, and swimming contests (a feat only matched previously by CBC Perth in 1911, and Hale in 1925). Between 1994 and 2000, Aquinas College won a premiership in every sport offered by the PSSA.⁹²

In 1998, the Administration Building underwent refurbishment, designed by architects Peter Quinn and Associates.⁹³ This refurbishment predominantly involved new carpets and built in furnishings. The main entrance to the Administration Building was altered and repaved. Originally the entrance to

85 Paull, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-87.

86 Massam, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

87 City of South Perth archives, Building plan of new laundry and store by Bosich and Miller, architects and engineers, dated 27 October 1987.

88 Paull, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-87.

89 Paull, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

90 Paull, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-05.

91 Paull, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-03.

92 Paull, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

93 Plans held by Aquinas College.

the building was through the central arch in the tower however this has been modified over time such that access is now via the sides of the tower.

In recent years a new dining room has been built close to the riverfront by architects, John Flower and Associates.⁹⁴

As an educational institution, *Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College* has produced graduates who have gone on to achieve highly in many fields of life. A full review of the contributions of Old Aquinians to the community of Western Australia is beyond the scope of this heritage assessment. It should be noted that, as historian Katharine Massam discovered, the fragmentary nature of student registers at Aquinas makes difficult any biographical research into alumni of the College.⁹⁵

In 2007, *Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College* continues to be used for the purposes of denominational education. The buildings are well maintained through a program of maintenance and expansion.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College, nestled within 41.95 hectares of mature trees and virgin bushland, is part of an extensive school site bounded on the north by Roebuck Drive, Canning River on the south, Mount Henry Road and Kwinana Freeway on the west and Redmond Street on the east. The section of the site assessed for heritage significance comprises the Administration Building (1937; 1967; 1998) and the Chapel (1966). Both buildings are representative of the significant periods of change in the history of the school and the development of the Catholic religion in general. Other buildings at the school site that are not included in the assessment are Chaplain's Residence (1954), Murphy Humanities Wing (1956), McKenna Science Block (1962), Junior School (1963), Redmond Learning Centre (1976), Gymnasium (1980s), Mary Kerr Arts Centre (1980s), Perrott Mathematics & ICT Wing, Design & Technology Building, three boarding houses (1986-87), Hughes Dining Hall (2000), staff housing, a boatshed, playing fields and courts, sports pavilions and several maintenance buildings. Much of the second and third floors of the Administration Building could not be accessed during the site visit due to the operational requirements of the school at the time.

The Administration Building is sited on a small rise, at the end of the main bituminous paved drive from Mount Henry Road, with commanding views across the Memorial Oval towards Canning River on the west. The central tower and belvedere is a distinctive local landmark in its own right as the impressive white against red brickwork structure is visually distinct amongst the trees and bushland when viewed from vantage points from across the Canning River. The Administration Building is fringed with various bed plantings to the north and east and a geometric patterned brick paved forecourt (completed during the 1998 refurbishment) on the west frontage. To the north of the building is the Chapel, set within a grassed landscape,

⁹⁴ Information from Peter Shaw, Aquinas College and from site visit in July 2007 by Prue Griffin and Yen Nee Goh.

⁹⁵ Massam, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

interspersed with mature trees comprising of jacarandas and eucalyptus trees. There is a concrete footpath from the rear of the Administration Building to the ramped entrance of the Chapel.

Administration Building

Exterior

Originally designed by Cavanagh & Cavanagh, the existing face brick and tile Inter War Gothic style building was constructed in several stages. The tower and whole of the south wing was constructed in 1937 to accommodate the Brothers' residence, dormitories and classrooms. The north wing was later added to the north of the tower. This wing, anticipated in the original plans, was completed in 1967, designed by Henderson & Thompson to accommodate additional dormitories and administration. Deliberate efforts were made to design the north wing to echo the style, form and established materials of the original south wing, presenting visually, a three-storey façade, which cleverly conceal what is actually a four-storey building. Details and mouldings are highlighted in white against the red brickwork in garden bond though early photographs of the building indicated that all rendered details were not painted.

The prominent west façade of the Administration Building is elegantly composed, symmetrical and of high artistic merit. The facade features a landmark central tower and belvedere, which rises approximately a full storey above the rest of the building and defined on all corners by octagonal buttresses capped with crenellations. The parapets are similarly capped with crenellations on all four sides. The tower features large openings with rendered quoins, label moulds, decorative panels above openings and replacement aluminium framed windows on each floor level. At the base of the tower is a large archway and openings to the sides, with an intricate plaster embellishment with the words 'Aquinas College' incorporated into the design and openings on the sides. The arched opening was enclosed and side openings infilled with stained glass windows and doors in 1998.

Flanking the tower on both sides are three-storey arcaded verandahs and parapeted gables. The verandahs differ slightly in terms of scale and detailing on each level, visually emphasising the towering height of the building. On the ground and first floor levels, semi-circular arches supported on octagonal shafts and base are featured with paired Tuscan columns on rectangular pedestals on the second floor. It is evident that the existing vertical steel railings between the columns are replacements of recent origin, though it is not known when the original railings were removed. Based on documentary evidence, originally, the whole of the second floor was enclosed as a sleep out. The gables at the end of the north and south wings are almost identical in appearance, each features large centrally located opening with rendered quoins flanked by narrow openings on each floor level, octagonal corner buttresses capped with rendered pinnacles and finials, a small rectilinear opening and pediment and a decorative rendered finial at the apexes. The facades are horizontally articulated with rendered stringcourses between each floor. On the north gable, dark tinted spandrel panels concealing the additional floor slabs are evident upon closer inspection. All

original openings on the gables have been replaced with aluminium framed double hung windows and fanlights. The roofs are steeply pitched at about 50 degrees, covered with Marseilles pattern tiles with replacement gutters and rainwater downpipes.

The difference in floor levels between the two wings is discernible on the rear facade of the building. The façade is kept simple, with minimal embellishments and verandahs running the entire length of both wings, separated by a parapeted gable. The original brick columned three-storey verandahs on the south wing are still intact, with all levels accessible by means of a concrete and steel staircase. On the north wing is a four-storey verandah with square concrete columns and vertical steel railings and an enclosed face brickwork staircase. The south façade of the south wing is given very little emphasis, composed of regularly spaced double hung windows on all levels and parapeted gables. The whole of the area immediately to the south of the building is fenced and together with the rectilinear block, renamed Mary Kerr Arts Centre in 2001, was not inspected for this assessment.

An enclosed steel and glass structure housing a lift and staircase was added to the eastern end of the south wing as part of the 1998 refurbishment, connecting the Administration Building with the adjoining Murphy Wing.

Interior

The configuration of the original plan of the south wing, an entry lobby opening onto a central passage with rooms on both sides, is retained. The entry lobby and former entry porch were enclosed and sympathetically refurbished in 1998. The finely detailed main staircase is located centrally in the entry lobby. During the 2001 refurbishment campaign, solid jarrah panels with frieze cut-out were incorporated into its balustrades.

The ground and first floor levels in both wings are mainly for administration, whilst part of the first floor level in the south wing and the whole of the upper floors, accessed by the external verandahs and staircase to the rear of both wings, are used as classrooms and staffrooms. On the first floor, the north passage is ramped, to accommodate the change in level from the stair lobby. There is a marble commemorative plaque located at the top of the stairs, outside the Principal's office. Access to the second floor level is restricted and areas immediately around the stair lobby are partitioned to accommodate storage areas and a plant room. The main staircase is closed off at this level. It is not known if the belvedere is still accessible, though from observation at ground level, the staircase continues to the top level. The rest of the second and third floor levels, comprising mainly of classrooms, were not inspected.

Much of the existing internal finishes have been replaced or refurbished to a degree. Internal walls, especially in the north wing, have been removed to create larger rooms and areas accessible to the public. Generally, all walls are plastered and painted with plasterboard ceilings, cornices in the main areas, entry and stair lobbies, refurbished skirting boards and carpet over floorboards throughout. Most of the original doors and timber framed double sash windows have been refurbished or replaced. All associated hardware and light fittings are of recent origin.

Chapel

Exterior

The Chapel is a freestanding single-storey building constructed of local red stone (identified as Mount Barker stone), concrete and sheet metal roofing. Designed by prominent architectural firm Henderson & Thompson, the Chapel was completed in 1966 and displays characteristics of the Late Twentieth-Century Organic style. The Chapel is a bold and expressive building that exemplifies a modern approach to the design of a church and innovative use of established materials.

The Chapel has a triangulated form on plan, orientated along the east-west axis. It features an impressive sweeping curved wall of Mount Barker stone, on its west elevation. North and south walls comprise of a series of in situ concrete panels (chevron shaped on plan) and vertical, operable stained glass windows, gradually culminating to a semi circular corner on the east end, reminiscence of the apse in a traditional Roman basilica. This corner, with minimal articulation on its concrete wall plane apart from evenly placed fixed vertical stained glass windows, was given an appropriate prominence by a shallow dome surmounted in the centre by a tall crucifix. The two-tier sheet metal clad flat roof construction is concealed behind pre-cast concrete parapets, projecting well beyond the solid walls to form deep timber lined eaves. A freestanding belfry is located on the south-eastern corner of the Chapel.

The principal entrances into the Chapel are located on the west and south elevations. The west entrance is recessed, defined by a heavy cantilevered pre-cast concrete fascia between overlapping sections of a curved concrete wall and the massive red stone wall. On the southwest corner is a ramped entrance, set against the face of the red stone wall. Further to the east, on the south elevation, is a recessed entrance. Adjacent to the entrance is a short flight of steps leading to the sacristy. Each entrance is composed of double leaf doors of timber slats with stained glass inserts, flanked by large stained glass sidelights and fanlights with accentuated mullions. Openings around the Chapel consist primarily of highlight stained glass windows with accentuated mullions, positioned immediately below heavy fascias, reinforcing the sense of inclusion and fortification. A less ceremonious entrance on the north elevation into the sacristy is elevated from the ground and accessed by means of a short flight of steps.

Interior

Entrances at either end of the red stone wall under the gallery open onto a voluminous, light-filled interior of the Chapel. A flight of suspended timber stairs, adjacent to the west entrance, leads to the gallery, where the choir and a custom designed organ, set central against the red stone backdrop, are accommodated.

The nave is constructed with a slight slope towards the elevated marble floored Sanctuary and Altar. The original timber pews are arranged in a fan-like shape, echoing the triangular form of the Chapel as well as maintaining good acoustical and visual contact between the celebrant and congregation. This arrangement further strengthens and brings into focus the vertical

emphasis created by the encircling clerestory windows surmounted by a shallow dome above the Sanctuary. A shrine to Our Lady and font is featured within a full height niche on the north wall whilst the confessional area is accommodated within the space created by a colonnade and the south wall.

Light filters in through the highlight and clerestory stained glass windows, creating a play of coloured light against the dark timber lined interiors. Beaten copper cylindrical light pendants are suspended above the nave from the timber-lined ceiling. Other copper artefacts, designed and crafted specifically for the Chapel, include Stations of the Cross on the stone wall, crucifix, statue of Our Lady and tabernacles.

The sacristy, a semi circular passage-like room located behind the Sanctuary, was not accessible at the time of inspection.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

A comparative study of the buildings in the Heritage Council of WA (HCWA) database has been made using key points of reference. These have included the architects, the date and style of construction, the use of the buildings and significant groups associated with the place.

Administration Building

The works of architects Cavanagh and Cavanagh have been frequently identified and included in the HCWA database.⁹⁶ There are 55 places included on the database associated with the firm, of which seventeen are included on the State Register of Heritage Places. Of these seventeen, ten are places with an association with the Catholic Church; the remainder are commercial buildings.

These ten places associated with the church are: 02126 *Archbishops Palace*, Perth; 02401 *Clontarf*, Waterford; 00379 *Convent of Mercy Group (fmr)*, Bunbury; 02218 *Redemptorist Monastery and Church*, North Perth; 01332 *Reidy House*, Katanning (1929); 00573 *St Anthony's Convent of Mercy (fmr)*, Coolgardie; 01976 *St Brigid's Convent (fmr)*, Northbridge; 02030 *St Brigid's Group*, North Perth; 02124 *St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral*, Perth; and 00845 *St Patrick's Basilica and St Patrick's Presbytery*, Fremantle.

Of most direct comparison is Clontarf, an institution established by the Christian Brothers for the purpose of education. Michael Cavanagh designed the two-storey main building at Clontarf in the Victorian Romanesque style for the Christian Brothers in 1901. Although the Clontarf building was constructed of stone and Aquinas of brick, there are stylistic similarities between the two buildings. Also, as noted in the documentary evidence, it was the presence of Clontarf in the vicinity that prompted the selection of the site for the future school at Mount Henry.

Of the remaining places associated with the Catholic Church and Michael Cavanagh on the State Register there are several places that had an

⁹⁶ For more details on Michael Cavanagh, see Jane McKenzie, *Michael Cavanagh FRIBA, Western Australian Architect, 1860-1941: His life, his philosophies and his architecture* (Unpublished, Curtin University, 1992)

educational purpose as part of their function but not as their primary role. These include: *Convent of Mercy Group*, Bunbury which included a now demolished school; *Reidy House* which had a combined school and convent; *St Anthony's Convent of Mercy*, built as a convent school in 1901; and, *St Brigids Group*, in which the 1888 convent was designed by Michael Cavanagh but the school building was not.

Further investigation of the places associated with Cavanagh on the HCWA database shows that there are several places constructed in the period 1925 to 1940. These include: 01032 Church of Christ the King & Presbytery, Beaconsfield (1936); 01332 *Reidy House, Katanning* (1929) in the Inter War style which is on the State Register; 02179 Christian Brothers High School (fmr), Highgate (1935); 02801 Our Lady of Monserrat St Mary's Church; Southern Cross (1936) in the Inter War Art Deco Style; 03454 Rostrevor flats, East Perth (1937) in the Inter War Art Deco style; 11885 St Joseph's Preventorium (fmr), Kellerberrin (1929) in the Inter War free style; and 16527 Shorter & Partners, West Perth (1940) in the Inter War Stripped Classical style. Of the places above, none are described as Inter War Gothic, the style ascribed to the Administration Building at Aquinas. The Administration Building at Aquinas is the only example of the Inter War Gothic style by Cavanagh and Cavanagh which is found in the HCWA database. The style most frequently ascribed to Cavanagh and Cavanagh is Federation Gothic.

The HCWA database has 45 places described as Inter War Gothic. Only six of these places, including Aquinas Administration Building, are associated with educational use. The other five are: 01683 Sacred heart Church & School, Mundaring (1933); 02181 *Sacred Heart Convent and School, Highgate*, where the monastery was built in 1899 and was altered in the Inter War period by architects Henderson and Jefferis; 03237 St George's College, UWA (1929-68); 08709 *Aranmore Catholic College Group*, Leederville (1923-82) and included on the State Register; and 13658 Loreto Primary School and convent Nedlands (1931).

There are many sites associated with the Christian Brothers and education in the database of the Heritage Council. Of these the following are on 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; 02183 Sacred Heart Group, Highgate, not registered but contains 02181 *Sacred Heart Convent and School* which is registered; 03101 *Catholic Agricultural College* Bindoon, 02401 *Clontarf*, Waterford and 04579 *Castledare Boys Home (fmr)* only a small part of which now remains and that is no longer used as a school.

The role of *Administration Building and Chapel, Aquinas College* 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.

Chapel

The Chapel is one of only four places on the HCWA database described as being of the Late Twentieth Century Organic style. The others are 04803 Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, Como, built in 1958; 09849 Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church, Woodlands, built in 1970; and 13020 Holy Spirit Church and Presbytery, City Beach, built in 1973.

The heritage inventories of the Anglican, Catholic and Uniting churches include only one comparative example of a church in the Late Twentieth Century Organic style, being Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach (mentioned above). This place was designed by architects Forbes & Fitzhardinge. It features dramatic curved walls that echo the contours of the hill where the building is sited, and is constructed of brick and concrete. The place is included in the Heritage Council's assessment program. A small number of other churches in the denominational heritage inventories include other aspects of the Late Twentieth Century Organic style, such as the use of timber, rough-cut stone and glass to create buildings in harmony with their natural environment, highlight windows to maximise natural light, and non-traditional floor plans. However, Holy Spirit and Aquinas' Chapel are the only two examples to include dramatic curved walls as a feature of their design.⁹⁷

Architects Henderson and Thompson worked together on several projects for the Catholic Church. Five of these places are recorded in the HCWA database and three are on the State Register of Heritage Places. The places on the Register are:

- 04579 *Castledare Boys Home (fmr)* (1906-53). The buildings on this site are not similar to either of the two buildings assessed at Aquinas, although Henderson and Thompson appear to have had a similar long-term relationship as they did at Aquinas in which they provided architectural services to the institution.
- 01310 *Christian Brothers College (fmr) Kalgoorlie* (1900-06), had modifications to one of the main buildings by Henderson and Thompson in 1954. It is not similar to the Aquinas Chapel.
- 03317 *Mechanics Institute, Katanning* (1896, 1952), a Federation Free classical building.

The other two places associated with Henderson and Thompson, both in the Post War Ecclesiastical style, are 11116 Miling Catholic Church (1954), and 13107 Our Lady of Assumption Church, Koorda (1954).

Conclusion

The Administration Building is a good representative example of the Inter War Gothic style, and a rare example of this style by Cavanagh and Cavanagh.

⁹⁷ None of these three inventories includes school properties. Also, the Anglican and Catholic inventories include only the Archdiocese of Perth.

The building is most closely comparable to *Clontarf* in style, use and the location.

There are few examples of the Late Twentieth Century Organic architectural style on the HCWA database and none on the Register. Therefore it is hard to be certain of the number of this type of building in Western Australia and whether this is a good or representative example of the style. Nevertheless, given the available information, the Chapel is a good intact example of the style with little alteration since its construction, and is a rare example of a church building designed in this style.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

City of South Perth municipal heritage inventory place record form, LGA place no. SPT1.

Katharine Massam, *On High ground: images of one hundred years at Aquinas College, Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, 1998.

Kevin Paull, *Beyond dreams in stone: a history of the Christian Brothers' Colleges in Western Australia 1894-2000*, Trustees of the Christian Brothers in WA Inc., 2001.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

In the event of further development of the site it should be noted that there is potential for archaeological finds on the site. Possible evidence could relate to Aboriginal sites as the foreshore and areas of adjacent bushland are relatively undisturbed. There is also some possibility that evidence of early European settlement on the site may be discovered in the undeveloped bushland. Thirdly there is potential to discover archaeological evidence from buildings constructed by the school in the earlier years of its occupancy. For example the temporary army huts erected may have left some traces on the site.

The Aquinas College archives hold commemorative material for significant events such as the opening of the Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas, the dedication of the Memorial Oval, and the blessing of new facilities such as classrooms and laboratories.⁹⁸ The archives ought to be considered more thoroughly when a conservation plan is undertaken.

The City of South Perth retains building licences, including plans and specifications, for works carried out at the place from 1955 onward. Select plans have been examined for the purposes of this heritage assessment. Any subsequent heritage research should undertake a more detailed appraisal of the architectural records, including location, if possible, of original plans by Michael Cavanagh for the original building at Aquinas College. These plans were not found at the City of South Perth, Aquinas College, Battye Library or the State Reference Library.

⁹⁸ Massam, op. cit., p. 8.