



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.18 Marketing and retailing
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 308 Commercial and service industries

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Park Buildings is a good example of a commercial building constructed in the Federation Free style. (Criterion 1.1)

Park Buildings is a major element of the Hannan Street streetscape which, spanning four blocks, is the most extensive, intact and significant commercial street representing the 1880s and 1890s goldrushes in Western Australia. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The construction of *Park Buildings* was a result of the successful exploitation of the Eastern Goldfields and the continuing development of Kalgoorlie as the major administrative and commercial centre of the goldfields in the late 1890s and the early 1900s. (Criterion 2.1)

Park Buildings, combining commercial premises and a boarding house, represents the development of the goldfields where men on their own significantly outnumbered families in the early years. (Criterion 2.2)

Park Buildings is representative of the third phase of construction on Hannan Street between about 1898 and 1908, when the timber and iron buildings were replaced with brick structures. (Criterion 2.2)

Park Buildings is associated with photographer John Joseph Dwyer, who designed the upper floor photographic studio in the Park Building, and whose work provides the most significant documentation of life in Kalgoorlie and the Goldfields from 1900 to 1917. (Criterion 2.3)

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

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Park Buildings is a characteristic element of the Hannan Street streetscape which is the most extensive, intact and significant commercial street representing the 1880s and 1890s goldrushes in Western Australia and as such is valued by the Western Australian community. Spanning four blocks, the Hannan Street precinct identified by the National Trust, and listed on the Register of the National Estate, as a significant turn of the century goldfields' town streetscape which extends over three street blocks and comprises one and two storey buildings of various styles of the period. (Criterion 4.1)

Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie, including *Park Buildings*, contributes to the local and wider community's sense of place as a substantial reminder of the 1880s and 1890s goldrushes in Western Australia. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Park Buildings is a typical commercial building in the Hannan Street streetscape. The shopfronts at *Park Buildings* are typical of those located at Hannan and Burt Streets, with a display window, recessed entrance, and features such as timber and glass panel doors and rendered dado masonry. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Park Buildings is in fair condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Park Building is a commercial building with a residential function on the upper floor. Windsor House is a backpackers hostel. Both places have retained a moderate degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Park Building has retained some original fabric in the vacant shop on the left next to the Palace Hotel, in the barber shop, and in the ceiling of the shop on the right. Upstairs, the staircase has been retained while the remainder of the place is a recent fitout. The place has a low to moderate degree of authenticity. Similarly, Windsor House has a low to moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Laura Gray, Heritage Consultant.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Park Buildings, comprising the Park Building (1904), a two-storey, brick and iron structure constructed in a simple Federation Free Classical style as commercial premises fronting Hannan Street, and Windsor House (1904), a two-storey brick building constructed as a boarding house and situated behind the Park Building.¹ In 1999, the upper floor of the Park Building is occupied as a residence by the manager of the Palace Hotel, while the lower floor continues to be used as commercial premises, although only partly occupied. Windsor House is occupied as a backpacker's hostel.

In June 1893, Paddy Hannan and his partners discovered alluvial gold thirty miles (48 kms) north-east of Coolgardie. A camp, known as Hannan's Find, quickly developed at the site, with bough huts and hessian and canvas structures erected along the edge of the track from Coolgardie. Many of these structures housed businesses to serve the prospectors who flocked to the area. Later that year, George Brookman and Sid Pearce located gold reefs three miles south of Hannan's Find, at what was to become Boulder. On 4 September 1894, Hannan's Find was declared the townsite of Kalgoorlie. The track from Coolgardie became the main street and was named Hannan Street.²

With the establishment of the townsite, the second phase of building along Hannan Street began. This was facilitated by the arrival of the Eastern Goldfields railway line in September 1896, which made the transport of more substantial building materials much easier. The original structures were replaced with timber-framed buildings clad in galvanised iron, and usually lined internally with hessian or canvas. The early buildings presented a very real fire hazard, and there were a number of fires in Hannan Street over the ensuing years. Between 1898 and 1908, substantial brick buildings replaced the timber and iron and hessian structures in the town centre, although many timber and iron residences remained in the town.³

Lot 39 on Hannan Street, on which *Park Buildings* is situated, was purchased at the second land auction in Kalgoorlie, on 25 October 1894, by mine managers Charles Henry De Rose and William Gordon Brookman.⁴ They paid £170 for the land which had no improvements on it at time of purchase.⁵ In 1901, titles were issued to each of them for one undivided moiety in Lot 39.⁶ The titles record a lease of one third of the land to Mrs Margaret Thomas for a period of three years and seven months from 6 December 1898.⁷ Margaret Thomas operated a restaurant on the site housed, most probably, in a corrugated iron building.⁸

¹ Apperly, R., Irving, R. and Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1989, pp. 104-107.

² Webb, M. & A. *Golden Destiny: The Centenary History of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Eastern Goldfields of WA*, (2 vols), Hocking & Co and St George Books, Perth, 1995, p. 91; King, Norma, *The Voice of the Goldfields: 100 years of the 'Kalgoorlie Miner'*, p. 15; Kalgoorlie-Boulder Tourist Centre, *Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie 'Our Golden Heritage': a heritage walk along Hannan Street*, June 1995, pp. 2-4.

³ Webb, M. & A. *op cit*, pp. 430-432, 540.

⁴ Certificate of Title Vol. 68 Fol. 28, 21 March 1895.

⁵ Webb, M. & A. *op cit*, pp. 419-421.

⁶ Certificates of Title Vol. 221 Fols. 20 & 21, 21 May 1901.

⁷ Certificate of Titles Vol. 68 Fol. 28, 6 December 1898.

⁸ *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1899.

In 1903, Lot 39 was purchased by mine owner, Joseph Vincent Kearney.⁹ At that time, the restaurant was known as Maison Doree, and Sol Saunders, auctioneer, also occupied the site, which was situated between the Palace Hotel and the Exchange Buildings. Kearney employed builders W. & J. Park to construct *Park Buildings* on Lot 39. The buildings are supposed to have been named for Kearney's fiancée (rather than for the builders).¹⁰ On the front of the site the Park Building, a two storey commercial premise, was constructed. On the ground floor, left hand side, between the first shop space and the entrance to the upper floor, a wide, tiled passageway led through to the two-storey boarding house at the back. The boarding house could also be accessed from the right-of-way at the rear.¹¹

Early occupants of *Park Buildings* included the London Art Tailoring Co., Bannerman Bros tobacconists and barbers, who boasted a 'wall-to-wall mirror and four fine lavatory basins with nickel fittings', a restaurant, two barristers and solicitors, and photographer J. J. Dwyer.¹² A section of the upper floor was specifically designed by Dwyer for use as his photographic studio. It had a glazed section in the roof and a glazed wall to allow daylight for indoor work, and dressing rooms where patrons could change into their costumes.¹³

John Joseph Dwyer was born in 1869, at Gaffney's Creek, a mining town in Victoria. He worked as a blacksmith at the Mount Bischoff tin mines in Tasmania and became a hobby photographer at the age of twenty-one. In 1896, he joined the rush to the West Australian goldfields as a prospector and, in 1899, he became the special photographer for Coolgardie's *Goldfields Courier* newspaper. The following year he moved to Kalgoorlie where he set up his own studio at 146 Hannan Street, next door to the McKenzie Building and directly opposite the *Park Buildings* site. When *Park Buildings* was completed he moved across the street to his new studio at 145 Hannan Street and his new place of residence in the boarding house at the back.¹⁴

As well as portraits and weddings, Dwyer was commissioned by mining companies to record their mine's progress, by photographing the installation of new machinery, and the visits of VIPs, etc. His work also appeared regularly in Kalgoorlie's weekly newspaper, the *Western Argus*. At the height of his practice, Dwyer employed fourteen assistants, mostly women who were involved in 'touching up' photos by hand. This was common practice, as it was necessary (then as now) to provide as flattering a photograph of a client as possible. From 1915 to 1917, Dwyer served on the Municipal Council. He was also a director of the Kalgoorlie Brewing and Ice Company. In 1917 he moved to Perth, and travelled overseas. He died in 1928. A collection of his photographs has been published under the title *In Old Kalgoorlie*.¹⁵

⁹ Certificate of Title Vol. 275 Fol. 25, 28 May 1903.

¹⁰ *Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie 'Our Golden Heritage'*, op cit, pp. 18-19.

¹¹ Map of Kalgoorlie townsite. See supporting material.

¹² *Wise's Post Office Directory, 1905; Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie 'Our Golden Heritage'* op cit, pp. 18-19.

¹³ Pascoe, Robert & Thomson, Frances, *In Old Kalgoorlie*, WA Museum, 1989, pp. 5-7, photographs of Dwyer's studio, p. 10 & Batty 3920B/104 & 3920B/105. *In Old Kalgoorlie* is a collection of John Dwyer's photographs. See supporting material

¹⁴ Pascoe, R. & Thomson, F. op cit; *Wise's Post Office Directories, 1900-1905*.

¹⁵ Pascoe, R. & Thomson, F. op cit.

John Dwyer had a large neon sign above the left hand side of the Park Building advertising 'Dwyer's Studio'.¹⁶ During his occupancy, *Park Buildings* changed ownership when, in 1909, Michael O'Reilly, who owned a men's outfitters at 88 Hannan Street, purchased the place.¹⁷

For the first ten years or so, tenancies in the Park Building remained relatively constant. The restaurant changed hands and Bartlett & Co, clothiers, moved into the building, but the rest of the original tenants remained, indicative of the flourishing and stable Kalgoorlie economy.¹⁸ In 1917, Dwyer's photographic studio was taken over by Thomas F. Mackay, who had previously worked at Rembrandt Studios in Boulder.

By 1920, the boarding house was listed in *Wise's Post Office Directories* as Hannan's Chambers. That year it was occupied by Mrs M. Miller's dining rooms, Miss N. Reid's lodging house, and a confectioner and tearooms. By 1930, H. A. Skepper had taken over Bannerman Bros tobacconist and hairdresser shop. Two dressmakers, an accountant, a music teacher and J. M. Butcher, the butcher, had moved into the Park Building, which was still also occupied by Keith Burton, solicitor, and Thomas Mackay, photographer. The boarding house in Hannan's Chambers was being run by Mrs Darcy.¹⁹

The owner of *Park Buildings*, Michael O'Reilly, died in 1932, and title passed to the control of Patrick Joseph Russell, hatter and outfitter, of 189 Hannan Street.²⁰ By 1941, the dressmakers, accountant and music teacher had moved out of the Park Building, and Perpetual Trustees & Agency Co. had moved in. A grocery store, the Australian Flag Store, occupied the space that had previously been used by the restaurant. The boarding house was now called Windsor Chambers and at least one of the Park Building tenants, Keith Burton, the solicitor, appears to have been living there at this time.²¹ In 1945, Thomas Mackay vacated the photographic studio and it was taken over by Fremantle photographer, Stuart Gore. John Dwyer's original photographic equipment is supposed to have still been there at that time.²²

Ownership of *Park Buildings* changed hands in 1949, when Patrick Russell vested his estate in Mary Margaret Lefebvre, of Victoria.²³ Tenancies had changed a little by this year also. The solicitors had been replaced by a dentist and a dancing academy. Mrs J. Hayes ran the 'lodging house'.²⁴

The photographic studio in the Park Building was occupied by E. Morgan from 1948 to 1962.²⁵ The studio closed in the latter year and the space was put to other uses. In 1979, title to *Park Buildings* transferred to Mary Lefbvre's three sons. The building changed hands twice again before being purchased in 1996, by Kalgoorlie companies Palace Securities (9/10) and Insofaras Pty Ltd (1/10).²⁶

16 Photograph, 1915, *Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie 'Our Golden Heritage'* op cit, p. 16.

17 Certificate of Title 275 Fol. 25, 5 February 1909.

18 Pascoe, R. & Thomson, F. op cit.

19 *Wise's Post Office Directories*, 1930-1935.

20 Certificate of Title 275 Fol. 25, 19 January 1932; *Wise's Post Office Directories*, 1930s.

21 *Wise's Post Office Directories*, 1941/42.

22 *Wise's Post Office Directories*, 1930s & 1940s; Pascoe, R. & Thomson, F. op cit.

23 Certificate of Title 275 Fol. 25, 9 March 1949.

24 *Wise's Post Office Directories*, 1949.

25 Pascoe, R. & Thomson, F. op cit; *Wise's Post Office Directories*

26 Certificate of Title Vol. 1528 Fol. 792, 26 March 1979, 4 June 1985, 20 September 1996 & 31 October 1996.

Park Buildings have not been well maintained in recent years, and there have been a number of changes to the fabric. A staircase, which gave direct access to the photographic studio on the upper floor of the Park Building, appears to have been removed. Photographs show that it was of the same design as the staircase in Windsor House. It is not clear from the physical evidence exactly where this staircase was situated, but it may have led up from the shop space at the back of the Park Building, which opens off the right hand side of the corridor leading from Hannan Street to Windsor House. The glass fronted display cases which line the right hand side of the corridor would have displayed the photographer's work. The corridor has been divided along its length, providing a private passage to the shop space in question. Whether this alteration was done before or after the photographic studio closed in 1962 is not clear.²⁷

Other changes have resulted in the removal of the roof and wall glazing in the photographic studio. This room is now the living room of the upper floor residence occupied by the manager of the Palace Hotel. The Hannan Street facade appears to be largely unaltered.²⁸ In 1999, Windsor House is occupied as a backpacker's hostel and has undergone some alterations to the ground floor rooms.²⁹

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Park Buildings is located at the north-east end of central Hannan Street in Kalgoorlie, immediately next to the Palace Hotel. The complex comprises the Park Building, made up of four ground floor tenancies and a separate residence upstairs, and Windsor House, a detached backpackers hostel at the rear of the Park Building.

The Park Building displays some characteristics of the Federation Free Classical style.³⁰ The street frontage is double height with a series of double classical column pilasters at equal distances across the front, forming four bays. The two outermost bays have a pediment detailed into the otherwise plain parapet. A set of two vertical orientated double hung sash windows feature central within each bay. A skillion verandah extends to the kerbside along the front of the shops at ground floor level.

At the ground floor level, the shop on the left is vacant. It has the original shop frontage, with double doors, shop front glazing and transom windows with sign writing still in place. There are only a few remaining original tessellated tiles in the entry. The interior of the shop has had recent repairs to the wall adjoining the Palace Hotel. The original pressed metal ceiling is in place.

The next tenancy is entered via a timber framed glass door, opening into a corridor which leads to Windsor House at the rear. Immediately next to that door, is a zincalume roller door which opens into a similar corridor with the barber shop at the rear. An aluminium framed glazed wall separates the two corridors, over the original tessellated tiled floor. The floor tiling and the wall finishes indicate that these two corridors were originally one. On the right hand side of the corridor are a series of original timber framed glass display boards.

²⁷ Physical evidence & photographs of John Dwyer's studio and reception area, Pascoe, R. & Thomson, F. p. 10 & Battye 3920B/104 & 3920B/105. See supporting material.

²⁸ Photographs, 1905 & 1970s. See supporting material.

²⁹ *West Australian Country Telephone Directory, Central and Eastern Division*, 1998.

³⁰ Apperly, R. op cit, pp. 104-107.

Central at the ground floor level on the frontage, is the double entry doors to the residence upstairs, marked with the number '143'. The panelled doors are recessed, and accessed by a set of five steps. Above the double doors the original arched fanlight is in place. The next tenancy on the right is Kalgoorlie Diamonds, and the shop is a total refit. The last shop is the Hot Spot burger bar. The shop is also a total refit although it has retained the pressed metal ceiling. There is a brick lean-to along the south west boundary at the rear of the place. It demonstrates the same brick detailing as Windsor House adjacent to it.

The central staircase which accesses the upstairs residential unit forms a 'T' and the left side accesses two front bedrooms on the left (front), a store room ahead, and a short corridor to the bathroom and kitchen on the right. The kitchen and bathroom are new fitouts. The kitchen, at the rear, opens onto a rear deck that is also accessed from the adjacent living room which is as wide as the remainder of the site. The living room shows no evidence of original material. The ceiling is gyprock, the windows and doors along the rear are recent timber framed installations. MDF skirtings, architraves and other detailing have been installed.

To the right of the central staircase, at the 'T', the hallway accesses three rooms across the frontage. They were not available for inspection. The one front room that was available shows a fireplace with the original mantelpiece in place.

Windsor House is located behind the Park Building. The building runs along the length of the site, and the central 'front' entry door is at the rear of the Park Building, accessed by the corridor through from Hannan Street.

Windsor House is a two-storey brick building with a corrugated iron roof. The exterior of the place is face brick laid in an English bond, with a small section near the front door that has been painted. The window openings are at regular intervals along each side of the building, with the ground and first floor windows in vertical alignment. The 'front' door and window above each have curved canvas canopies and the window has louvered timber shutters on each side. A lean-to verandah and garage with a first floor deck have been added at the rear of the building, adjoining the right of way.

The entry door opens into a corridor which terminates with a door at the other end. On the right side, immediately inside the door, is the return staircase with the original newel post and balustrades intact. A cupboard has been built in under the stairs, and a counter aligns with the corridor. On the left side of the corridor on the ground floor, there are a series of rooms with matching rooms on the right side. Only two rooms still have the original four panel doors, the remainder have flush panel doors. All the fanlights are in place, but are either painted out or covered. The corridor has a gyprock ceiling. On the left hand side, a wall has been removed between rooms 1 and 2, and similarly a dining room has been formed by removing walls between rooms 4, 5, 6 and quarry tiles have been laid on the floor. A kitchen addition is at the rear of room 6. The rooms run along the corridor, with toilet facilities at the end, and a laundry under the rear lean to verandah clad with hardiplank.

The ground floor layout is repeated on the first floor. There is minimal evidence of original fabric throughout the interior, with walls removed and floors concreted. The kitchen on the ground floor has been refurbished. On both floors, doors have been replaced, gyprock ceilings installed, bathrooms refurbished, and some windows replaced with aluminium framed windows.

Original windows are timber framed double hung sashes with soldier course brick headers. All the ground floor windows have steel mesh fixed to the exterior.

The rear of the building faces the right of way and a cement block garage with zincalume roller door faces directly onto the right of way.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The combination of commercial and residential function in *Park Buildings* was a common feature of the period. The Semaphore Chambers in Hannan Street Kalgoorlie also has a continuing residential function, and has recently been refurbished, emphasising its residential usage. The commercial and residential premises at 151-165 Beaufort Street, Northbridge is still partly occupied as residential, although the building is in only fair condition.

13.4 REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
