



HERITAGE
COUNCIL
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Interim Entry

1. **Data Base No.** 2043
2. **Name** *The Terraces* (1890s, 1900, 1909 & 1987)
3. **Description of elements included in this entry** *The Terraces*, and the land on which it stands, being Lot 1 in Stata Plan 24137, comprised in C/T 1965/248.
4. **Local Government Area** City of Perth
5. **Location** 63 Mount Street, Perth
6. **Owner** Megsalena Nominees P/L
7. **Statement of Significance of Place (Assessment in Detail)**

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The Terraces is a Federation Queen Anne bungalow, constructed in the late 1890s and 1900s as the home of explorer and pastoralist Mr. F.F.B. Wittenoom.¹ Frederick Francis Burdett (Frank) Wittenoom (1855-1939) was born at Gwambygine, near York, Western Australia.² He and his brother, Edward Charles, were educated at Bishop Hale's School. In 1874, after spending two years with the Western Australian Bank, he joined his brother who was jackerooing on Bowes Station and together they leased Yuin Station.³

The Wittenoom brothers explored and opened up the Murchison, east along the Roderick and Sandford Rivers, to Nookawarra. "Eventually they acquired over two million acres (809, 380 ha) in crown leases and set up Murgoo, Boolardy, Nookawarra, Mileura and Belele stations."⁴ In 1886, the brothers formed a stock and station agency at Geraldton and then added Day Dawn to their holdings.⁵ Frank Wittenoom was simultaneously involved with activities as diverse as saw milling, quarrying, stockbroking, the Boulder Progress Association and the Kalgoorlie Race Club.

¹ Apperly, R., (et al) *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the present* (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989) pp. 132-135.

² Ritchie, J., *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 12 (Melbourne University Press, Collingwood, 1990) p. 553.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

Frank Wittenoom was a sociable person; he was a member of the prestigious Weld Club, and enjoyed entertaining. He was also an avid car owner. His nephew, Bob Lefroy recounts, "My uncle was one of the early people to own a car in this state and I remember my father (his nephew Frank) telling me of a trip from Pindar, where the car was taken off the train, to Boolardy in 1910. He always had good cars: Napier, Talbot, Sunbeam, Buick, Austin, but he never drove himself, always having a permanent chauffeur to take him wherever he wanted to go, even to touring New Zealand and the Eastern states."⁶ Wittenoom's interest in cars explains the construction of a 'motor stables', designed by Hobbs, Smith and Forbes, at *The Terraces* in 1905.

The actual date of construction of the first part of *The Terraces* is unclear. However, PCC ratebooks indicate that, by 1900, Wittenoom was paying rates for his house on Lots 40/41 Mount Street. An architectural drawing of the same year indicates the doubling in size of the house with an addition designed by E. Dean Smith.⁷

Houses such as *The Terraces* held a particular place in Perth society. In the 1890s, farming and pastoral wealth provided a marked character to parts of the inner suburbs like southern East Perth and the high land of West Perth. These large houses were designed to reflect and symbolise their owner's eminent place in Westralian society.⁸

The Terraces was also part of the new architecture of the 1890s that occurred in a context of change, which saw between 1880 and 1910 the introduction to Western Australia of telephones, gas, lighting, electricity, reticulated water supply, sewerage, electric lifts, trains, trams, and the private motor car as well as, in building, a wide range of new building materials and construction techniques.⁹

Frank Wittenoom never married and upon his death in 1939, the house passed to his nephew (Sir) Edward Lefroy.¹⁰ Lefroy carried on the pastoral tradition initiated by Frank Wittenoom and used *The Terraces* as a town house. Although the house was rented out in later years, it remained in the Lefroy family until 1987. At this time the house was bought by British entrepreneur Lord McAlpine, who commissioned architects Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown to carry out major restoration work on the house.

Today, *The Terraces* continues to be used as a residence.

The place was classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in 1987. The place is listed as a place of historic interest in the 5th Schedule of Perth City Council's City Planning Scheme under Clause 46(1).

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

⁶ Jones, L.T., "A Case Study on Conservation Philosophy: The Terraces 63 Mount Street, Perth" (student report, Curtin University, c.1988) attached appendix on the history of the building, prepared by Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown

⁷ 'Proposed Alterations & Additions to Residence, Mount Street, for Frank Wittenoom Esq' (held at Perth City Council)

⁸ Stannage, C.T. *The People of Perth: A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City* (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979) p.186.

⁹ White, J. 'Building in Western Australia: 1881-1939' in Pitt Morison, M and White, J (eds) *Western Towns and Buildings* (UWA Press, Nedlands, 1979) p. 111.

¹⁰ Perth City Council rate books 1940. Entry shows the house sold to Edward Henry Bruce Lefroy, Peter Bruce Lefroy and Richard Bruce Lefroy. (south ward, 1940, 1/4)

The Terraces is a single storey domestic residence built in the late 1890s and early 1900s, as the residence of bachelor Mr. Frank Wittenoom. The 1900 additions in a simplified Federation Queen Anne style, incorporate the earlier, plainer building.

Located towards the top of Mt. Eliza, the house has commanding views across the Swan River. Entry is from Mount Street, via a sweeping driveway, the entrance being on the eastern side of the house. The land drops steeply below the rear balcony to Mounts Bay Road and the original river shoreline. The surrounding curtilage has been altered significantly over the years. The area originally occupied by *The Terraces* has changed; the land being sub-divided and the original residence now flanked by multi-storeyed apartments.

The Terraces is constructed of limestone and has a tiled roof (replacing earlier shingles), with red brick chimneys. The original six roomed house was enlarged in 1900, when architect, E.H. Dean Smith designed an addition of three large rooms plus vestibule to the northern face of the building. Two of these rooms were used as bedrooms and the third as a study. The different size of floorboards distinguish between the new and old sections of the building.

A motor enthusiast, Wittenoom had plans for a 'motor stables' drawn up in 1905 by Hobbs, Smith and Forbes.¹¹ In 1909, some significant internal alterations were made to the house. The original central passage was removed and the two front rooms enlarged. The original windows were replaced by french windows overlooking the Swan River. In addition a skylight was installed above the east-west passage. This work was also designed by Hobbs, Smith and Forbes.

The next major work on the house occurred in 1960, when a rear veranda was designed by Marshall Clifton, a well known and respected West Australian architect. Marshall Clifton also designed *Wittenoom Apartments* (c.1935), 65-67 Mount Street, on land in front of *The Terraces*.

In 1987, upon McAlpine's purchase of *The Terraces*, a major restoration program was undertaken by architects Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown. This work involved the addition of a room at the rear of the building which, although sympathetic, was designed to look like an addition. The extension was clad in weatherboard rather than limestone, and used a different window type to clearly differentiate between the addition and the original. Tessellated tiles were laid in patterns on the concrete veranda.

In addition, the garden was redesigned. The original terraces, of the house title, were situated on the site now occupied by the Wittenoom apartments. McAlpine purchased the adjacent block, demolished the house and a new garden was laid out. The new garden and limestone walling alters the axial orientation of the curtilage, and the garden now directly addresses the front door, whereas the original approach to the house indirectly from Mount Street.

Inside *The Terraces*, many of the original fittings have been retained including floorboards, old electrical conduits, the old telephone stand and the old electrical fuse box. The original telephone was removed, however the telephone board remains. A complete electrical rewiring was carried out. The desired accommodation required major work; including the conversion of one bedroom into a bathroom, and enlarging the original bathroom. In addition, imitation log fires

¹¹ See footnote 7.

were installed in the original fireplaces causing some damage to the fireplace surrounds.

At this time, a decision was made by the architects, in consultation with their engineers, not to remove the 1960s rear veranda, due to the discovery of a creep problem that would be exacerbated with the removal. To help ease this damp problem, gutters were applied to the rear of the veranda to direct water away from the problem area.

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

1. AESTHETIC VALUE

The Terraces demonstrate a high level of architectural design, being a fine example of a simplified Federation Queen Anne bungalow. (Criterion 1.2)

2. HISTORIC VALUE

The Terraces illustrates a land use and way of life associated with the wealthy, pastoral land holders in Western Australia at the turn-of-the-century. (Criterion 2.1)

The Terraces has a close association with two of Western Australia's prominent families: the Wittenooms and Lefroys. Both families were influential in developing Western Australian in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. (Criterion 2.3)

More recently the place has had a close association with The Lord McAlpine of West Green, an internationally prominent property entrepreneur with a significant interest in the conservation of built heritage. (Criterion 2.3)

3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

4. SOCIAL VALUE

5. RARITY

The Terraces, as an inner city residence, is a rare example of a Federation Queen Anne bungalow. This style of residence, many of which were designed by Hobbs, Smith and Forbes, were usually found in the wealthy western suburbs of Perth, such as Claremont and Peppermint Grove. (Criterion 5.2)

6. REPRESENTATIVENESS

The Terraces is representative of a wealthy gentleman's bungalow built in Perth at the turn-of-the-century. (Criterion 6.2)

CONDITION

The Terraces is in sound condition, following extensive restoration and maintenance work carried out since 1987.

INTEGRITY

The integrity of *The Terraces* is reasonable, although a number of alterations have occurred over the years. Early additions and alterations demonstrate the evolution of use of the place. If required, the fabric of the building could be returned to its original form.

AUTHENTICITY

The Terraces retains a reasonable degree of authenticity, retaining many original features illustrating the significance of the house. Although there was some internal changes in room use in 1987, structurally the fabric of the interior remains generally intact. The external fabric retains its essential appearance, maintaining the original design.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Terraces has cultural heritage significance for the following:

the house has a close association with Frank Wittenoom and the Lefroy family - people who contributed significantly to the development of Western Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and more recently with property entrepreneur Lord McAlpine;

it demonstrates the form and lifestyle of wealthy members of Western Australian society at the turn-of-the-century;

it is a rare example in the inner city of a Federation Queen Anne bungalow, a housing type more commonly found in the western suburbs of Perth; and,

the building demonstrates a high level of architectural design.

8. Register of Heritage Places

Interim Entry 16/12/1994

9. Conservation Order

10. Heritage Agreement

11. References

National Trust Assessment Exposition

Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet

Jones, L.T., "A Case Study on Conservation Philosophy: The Terraces, 63 Mount Street, Perth" (student report, Curtin University, c.1988)