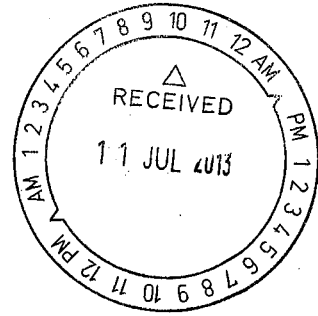


Mrs W Klein



5 July 2013

Ms Amanda Gillingham  
Committee's Research Officer  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs.  
Address:

Dear Chairman

## REF: Petition No 2 - Fire Station

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs.

### Introduction

I am a resident of Bassendean, having served as an Elected Member on Council for 23 years, 6 ½ of those as Mayor until 2009 and 14 years as President of the Bassendean senior citizens. I have got to know most of the residents as being passionate about the history of the Town. When many of them spoke to me very concerned about the news that the Bassendean Fire Station most likely would be sold upon completion of the new Station and the Brigade transferred to Forrestfield, I decided I needed to do something, in the hope we could stop this happening.

### History

Bassendean formed in 1901, celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year Centenary in 2001. It has historic treasures such as:

- **Pensioner Guard Cottage** build in 1850 owned restored and maintained by the Town of Bassendean.
- **Earls Ferry House** (now privately owned) was built in 1902 John Treggerthen Short Chief Traffic Officer Manager WA Government Railways (WAGR). In September 1988, ownership of Earlsferry House passed to the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons. The roof and upper floor were gutted by fire in 1989 and sold by tender.
- In 2009 it was bought by Martin Jaine and Jane Bowen and fully restored to its former glory and now operates as a Bed and Breakfast accommodation stay.
- **Swan District Football Club** has been part of Bassendean since 1932.
- **The Masonic Hall** in Wilson Street build in 1934 (Heritage listed) is repaired and restored forming part of a new development.
- **Rail Heritage WA**, the first rail preservation group formed in WA began as the Australian Railway Historical Society (WA INC) February 1959.
- **Daylesford House** build in 1920 for Cyril Jackson the State's first Director General of Education.
- **Padbury Building**, Old Perth Road built in 1918 that has housed a variety of retail businesses over the years.

## **About the Brigade**

The Bassendean Volunteer Fire Brigade has a proud record since its beginning in 1911 about the same time the Fire station was opened. By then, the first chairman of the Bassendean Road Board RA McDonald it has a membership of 60. Today a number of these members have from 40 to 50 years' service and are still active. The Brigade is always ready to assist and since 14th January this year had answered calls for a total of 638.8 hours, 3 of those were primary first calls and one a 1<sup>st</sup> alarm normally answered by career. This would have to be a considerable savings of tens of thousands of dollars. The brigade is also involved in training young people from 13 to 25 years to take part in Championships. This training is about discipline, speed and safety as well as social interaction and comradeship.

## **The Town**

Appreciating the Brigade is the primary consideration, there is I believe a case to be made for tourism should the Government see value in turning the Station into a museum to proudly display the considerable memorabilia collected over many years. Bassendean is the gateway to the Swan Valley. Many boats motor up the iconic Swan River and could visit Bassendean's historic interest I have spoken about earlier in this submission.

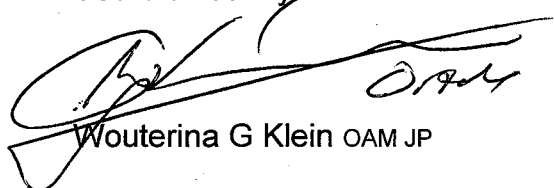
## **Suggestion for action**

There are many people in Bassendean who are passionate about our History, Flora and Fauna caring with physical energy in voluntary capacities for the preservation of all. It would be a very sad day should the station be sold, the memorabilia removed from Bassendean and the Brigade relocated. Gifting the property to the Towns people would be a gesture of tremendous generosity and show the appreciation the Barnet Government has for the preservation of the Towns History. The fire station in community ownership managed by an appropriate perpetual trust or like body will ensure its protection and perpetuity.

It is with all sincerity I present this submission and hope the information provided (inclusive of a brief printed look at Bassendean's History) is of assistance to the members of the Standing Committee in reaching a favourable outcome for the Bassendean Volunteer Fire and Rescue Brigade and the enjoyment of Town of Bassendean residents.

Please also find attached a previous petition containing over 1,000 signatures. Unfortunately this petition was not worded correctly and had to be withdrawn and redone. I wish to present these signatures to the Committee to express how passionate the Bassendean residents feel about the retention of the local fire station.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wouterina G Klein', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Wouterina G Klein OAM JP

*Celebrating 100 years of service to  
the community*



You are invited to celebrate the 100th year  
anniversary of the  
Bassendean Volunteer Fire and Rescue  
Service

Date: Saturday 18th June 2011

Where: Mulberry on Swan

From: 6pm for pre-dinner drinks  
6.30pm for sit down gala dinner

Dress: Formal attire

RSVP: Please advise of dietary  
requirements, guest name and  
attendance by Monday 30th May  
Mike Smith, 0427 749 403

NB: Please note that this invitation is  
not transferable

# Bassendean volunteers celebrate proud history

The iconic black and white dalmatian dog has an interesting connection with the Bassendean Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service (VFRS) which has been protecting the local community for a hundred years.

Back in the days when firefighters would rush to the scene of a fire with a large hose reel towed by horses, two dalmatians named *Sixpence* and *Ha'penny* would be hot on their heels.

They would run between the horse teams to scare away other dogs and keep watch to make sure no equipment was stolen. When the horses were at a scene for hours they also helped to keep them calm.

It is not surprising that a great bond developed between both the animals and firefighters from the West Guildford brigade, later known as Bassendean.

Since the brigade was established in January 1911 much has changed in Bassendean, but the strong commitment and loyalty of the volunteer firefighters remains the same.

The members recently marked their 100 year milestone with a celebratory dinner where they reminisced about the good times.

Chief Operations Officer Craig Hynes congratulated the Bassendean VFRS on their continuous professionalism and dedication across ten decades.

"It is incredible to think that hundreds of civic spirited volunteers have served the brigade and attended countless incidents over such a long period of time," Craig said.

"This centenary is a tremendous achievement and a credit to all those volunteers who have devoted their time, skill and energy to the brigade and community.

"Congratulations go to the volunteers and thanks to the many family members and friends whose support and encouragement is greatly appreciated."

Member for Swan Hills Frank Albans MLA, who was representing Premier



Colin Barnett, thanked brigade volunteers for their valuable contribution.

"Bassendean's volunteer firefighters, past and present, should be commended for their dedication to safeguarding the community over so many years," Mr Albans said.

"Volunteer brigades like Bassendean have a long and proud history, and are rightly held in high esteem by their communities.

"They are particularly rare in the Perth metropolitan area, so this milestone is a memorable and historic occasion."

Three Bassendean volunteer firefighters, who have each devoted more than 50 years of service to the brigade, received special mention at the celebration.

They were members Norm Stagoll, Bob Stoner and Roy Weatherburn. Norm and Roy shared stories of past incidents and championship competitions on the night, while Bob, who was in hospital, sent a note reminding guests that Bassendean remains the most successful volunteer brigade in Australia in terms of state level championship competition. In fact, the brigade again took out the mantle of State Champion Team at this year's annual Easter contest.

When formed, the West Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade consisted of 15



Bassendean VFRS member Brandon McKinlay, Captain Mike Smith and Chief Operations Officer Craig Hynes cut the centenary cake.

firefighters. If more hands were needed, two lads rode around on a bike or horse to rally crews to turn out to fire calls. They were also responsible for looking after the fire station animals.

The brigade's name changed to Bassendean Volunteer Fire Brigade in 1922 and 1934 saw it move to a new fire station in Parker Street.

Bassendean's 60 current members still operate from the same spot today, providing a welcome boost to fire and rescue services in the vicinity and further afield when needed.

The brigade has attended more than 30 incidents this year, including assisting at February's major bushfire at Red Hill and the Avon storms in January.

# History

## Formation and Foundation Members

The West Guildford Brigade (renamed Bassendean in 1922) was formed on January 31 1911 consisting of 15 Firemen and 2 call boys. The founding members were: R Ellis (Captain); J Trott (Secretary); V Howe (Foreman); H Best; R Goold; J Gray; D McKennon; B Bailey; G Till; W J Page; G Parker; B Burge; F Iverson; J Bull; H Till and call boys B Young and R Burge.

## Current Members

M Smith (Captain); I Radalj (Secretary); P Davey (Lieutenant); D Beechey; S Blake; D Clarke; J Cox; A Eleuteri; D Elwood; A English; P Forbes; B Gardiner; R Gardiner; S Garton; S Glindemann; J Hislop; R Irwin; S Kingston; S Lennert; B McKay; C McKinnon; A Middleton; G Miocevic; J Mullan; L Mullan; S Page; M Papalia; S Penders; B Power; W Power; R Stoner; A Waters; K Weatherburn; R Weatherburn.

## Fire Stations

In May 1912 the Brigade took over the former Road Board premises in Rosetta Street, and in 1919 the old Bayswater Fire Station hall was relocated to the same site. In 1934 a new fire station (the current station) was opened in Parker Street, with the old hall relocated to the new site. In the 1970 the station was extended to create accommodation for permanent staff, and the old hall again relocated, this time to a position behind the original engine room. The hall was demolished some years ago and a small gym for the permanent staff erected.

## Equipment

In 1911 the only Brigade equipment was a hose reel (similar to the reel now used by the Brigade in competitions). A later photo showed a pony trap carrying firemen and some equipment. In 1929 a Model T Ford (Motor 19) was allocated to the Brigade, and that was replaced in 1938 by a Dodge (Motor 47) which was in turn relaced in 1959 by a Bedford (Motor 92). Motor 92 remained in service for many years before being replaced by the current Mazda machine, and the Brigade also now has a light tanker.

## Fire Calls

Originally the Brigade was the primary fire fighting unit for the then fire district of Bassendean. The Brigade had a high average turn out of members to all calls from grass fires to



*Motor 92 1959 Bedford*

major building and bush fires. Major incidents included fires at a dry cleaning premises, a large fertiliser works, Royal Perth Hospital and a variety of house fires. From 1970 the Brigade has turned out in support of the permanent crews in Bassendean, and even more recently as a part of the greater mobilisation of resources in the strategies now adopted by the Board. Some years ago Brigade members formed part of a WA contingent of relief firemen airlifted to Sydney to fight the fires there. Lately the Brigade has turned out to major fires at Toodyay, Lake Clifton, Golden Bay, Muchea, Kalamunda-Roleystone and Henderson.



## 2009 State Champion Brigade

*Back L-R R Gardiner; S Garton; D Clarke; B Power; C McKinnon; D Lennert; R Irwin  
Front L-R R Stoner; A Page; C Teracar; P Davey; I Kiera (Mayor Town of Bassendean);  
B Jarratt (C/O Town of Bassendean); M Voth (Capt); R Weatherburn; W Power*

## Fire Hazard Reduction Work

When the suburb of Bassendean was less developed the Brigade conducted many burn-offs, combining fundraising with fire hazard reduction. The Brigade purchased a light tanker to use at burn offs, but was later issued one by the Fire Brigades Board. Over time tractors were purchased and replaced, together with a flat-top transport truck and a variety of implements (plough, rotary hoe, slasher and blade attachments). Every hazard removed was considered a potential fire callout averted. The ongoing development of the town has reduced the need for such services.

## Junior Fire Brigade

In 1971 Bassendean was one of the first brigades in Western Australia to establish a Junior competition team. The Juniors have had considerable success in competition, at times winning the Annual Junior Championships. A number of the Juniors, when attaining the age of 17 years, have continued to serve successfully in the Senior Brigade.

### Fundraising

Fundraising for fire prevention activities, social activities and competition equipment and travelling has always been important. Prior to the 1970s much fundraising was done by the "Ladies Committee" which had an almost permanent cake stall in the main street of Bassendean on Saturday mornings. Doreen Gardiner took a leading role in that activity. The men ran a major Christmas stocking raffle each year, and during cricket tests the Brigade raised funds by selling sealed test cricket cards. The Brigade ran bingo and enure nights, but these turned out to be more socially than financially rewarding. Delivering phone books and grape picking were also tried as ways of procuring funds. Fire break work was financially successful.

### Training Facilities

In the early days, Brigade members performed their drills on Rosetta Street in front of the Fire Station, and later in North Road. In 1934 the Bassendean Road Board, with the assistance of the Brigade, laid a single lane asphalt track alongside the railway line. In 1946 a double lane grass track was set out on the BIC, and many competitions were held on that track, the last in 1966. On the re-alignment of Perth Road in 1976 the Brigade's BIC facilities were closed and the Council laid a new track at the Ashfield Reserve. The Brigade, at its own expense, installed piping and a water tank and pump system, targets and timing cables. That track was recently resurfaced by the Council with a contribution from the Brigade. Local teams and visiting Victorian teams have used the track, and many major competitions for Seniors and Juniors have been held there.

### Fire fighting training

The first essential qualification demanded of the firemen at Bassendean was a St John Ambulance first aid certificate. Since the Fire Brigades Board expanded its training facilities many members have attended courses and now most are skilled in the use of the modern equipment, safety procedures and fire ground control. Older firemen will be comforted to know that water is still the most commonly used fire suppressant.



*1966 State Champion Brigade*

*Back: T. Barker; R. Killick; W. Paver; W. Ferguson; J. Bourne. Centre: D. Gardiner; W. Walsh; A. Bodger; A. Vankner (President Bassendean Shire); J. Harper; R. McDonald. Front: R. Stoner; I. Harper; T. Gardiner (Capt); W. C. Harris (Club Officer); R. Weatherburn; B. Warren.*



Welcome to our site.  
**Rail Heritage WA**



Photo Gallery

× Sales



Administration



Museums



Activities

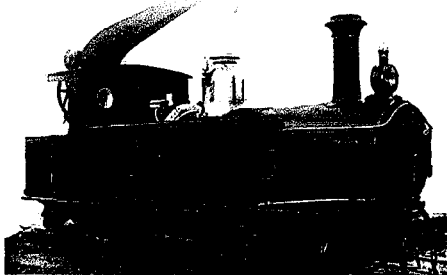


What's New



Information

Rail Heritage WA's vision is:  
To facilitate access for present and future generations to  
the history of railways in Western Australia



## Railfest 2013!

It's on again this year, on Sunday the 13th October.  
Flyer can be downloaded [here](#)!

## Vintage rolling stock available

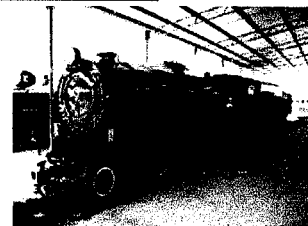
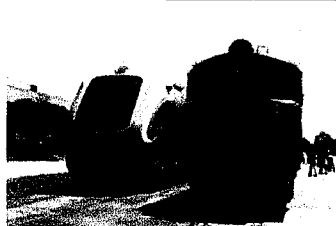
(Updated June 2013)  
Appropriate new homes are being sought for rollingstock  
- see [here](#).

**Rail Heritage WA was the first rail preservation group formed in WA.  
It began as the Australian Railway Historical Society (WA Div) when it was  
formed in February 1959.**

Today Rail Heritage WA:

- operates the Railway Museum in Bassendean
- carries out restoration of heritage equipment and vehicles
- has an extensive railway archives
- publishes and sells publications of railway-related material
- hires out its restored Federation Train carriages
- lobbies for the preservation of WA's rail heritage, such as the former Midland Workshops
- has members with interests in every aspect of railway operations and
- owns the Vintage Train at Boyanup Museum as part of its collection

It depends entirely on its volunteers to manage the organisation and its extensive activities.



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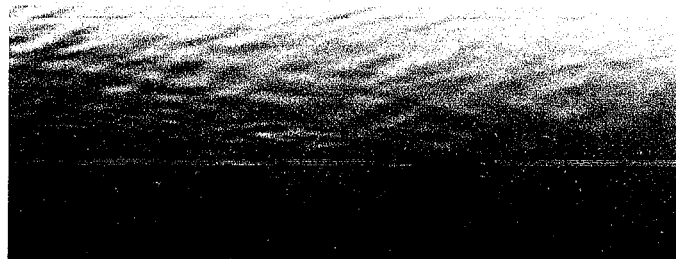
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## Places to visit

### The Rail Transport Museum



The Rail Transport Museum is a must-see for railway and history buffs. It offers tourists and visitors a superb collection of locomotives and railway historical memorabilia that charts the opening up of the western third of the continent. The collection is highly significant as it is the only one in Western Australia that aims to tell the story of all railways across the state. Other collections focus on one aspect or a region.

Every October the Rail Transport Museum hosts the annual Railfest which is a celebration of the State's rail heritage conducted by the Rail Heritage Society of WA.

The West Australian Model Railway Club is also based at the rear of the Rail Transport Museum and the entry fee for the Museum includes Model Railway Club displays. The club meets every Wednesday evening from 7:30 p.m. and visitors are always welcome. It has operated for over 50 years and these days it is not so much a matter of toys for the boys but a pastime for the adult enthusiast, keeping train lovers active and sociable. The club models Australian and American trains and visitors can view models of classic trains such as The Indian-Pacific, The Ghan and The Overlander.

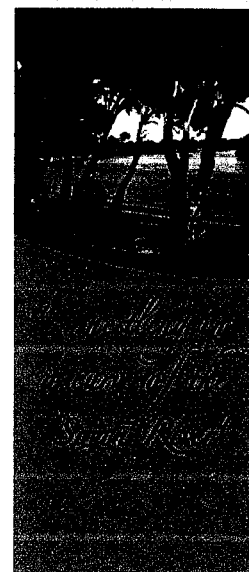
The Rail Transport Museum at Bassendean is operated by Rail Heritage WA, and further information, including entry fees and opening times, is available at their website >>>

Information on The West Australian Model Railway Club is available at their website >>>

### Walking Trails



Bassendean has some great 30 minute short walks for visitors and tourists. Take a walk through the heart of historic Bassendean village itself; or take a stroll through Eden Hill parklands; or the Ashfield Flats wetland sanctuary on the Swan River.



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## Historic Earlsferry House Bed & Breakfast and Self-Contained 2 bedroom Cottage

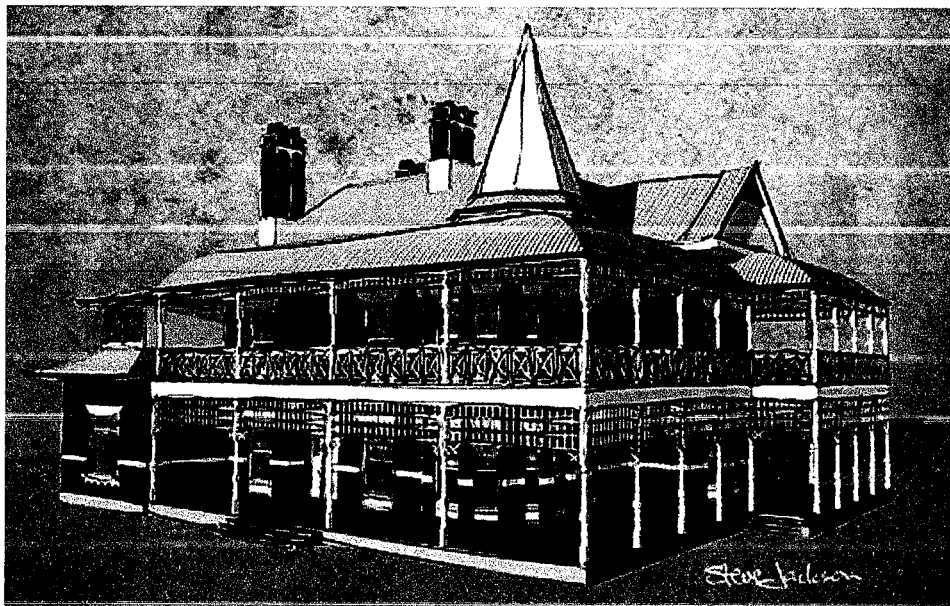
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### EARLSFERRY HOUSE - The Story

*This Property is Heritage Listed - information from the Australian Heritage Database*

#### HISTORY

Earlsferry, formerly known as Briarsleigh, was built for John Treggerthen Short in 1902. The site chosen for the house is part of the area known as Swan Location R, at what was originally known as West Guildford. (West Guildford is now part of the suburb of Bassendean). Swan Location R was purchased from the Colonial Administration in May 1830 by James and Jane Dodds. By 1897, Swan Location R had been subdivided into six plots by the intrusion of the railway line, Swan Road and Perth Street (now known as Guildford Road).



Drawing of Earlsferry House by Steve Jackson  
Fine Art Prints available for purchase at Earlsferry House

From 1897, Mary Thomson (nee Dodds) commenced selling the divided land. This was presumably in response to the rising value of land in Perth in the wake of the gold rush. Nurstead Avenue (now the address of the property) was named after Jane Dodds' home in England, Nursted Court. John Treggerthen Short purchased a plot of land south of the railway line on 13 November 1902. The plot was bounded to the south by Guildford Road, to the east by the Swan River and to the west by Swan Road which now forms part of Nurstead Avenue. There is no evidence to suggest that the site was developed prior to its sale in 1902 to Short, although it is possible that the land was cleared and used for grazing and some cultivation during the colonial period. At the time he purchased the property, Short was Chief Traffic Manager of the WA Government Railways (WAGR) and married with four children. His choice of location was a pertinent one in anticipation of the relocation of the Eastern Railway headquarters to Midland in 1904 and in an area favoured by a number of leading citizens who built large houses with a river frontage in Guildford.

Short commissioned a two storey red brick house, set back from the roads and railway and

facing the river. The architect and builder of the house are unknown, however Carter has suggested the house may have been built by Henry Duval who built Cyril Jackson's adjacent house. Early photographs show a fashionable, well designed house with decorated verandahs and sophisticated details and finishes. The house was surrounded by a substantial rose garden and complemented with orchard, stables, outhouses and tennis court. Short called it Briarsleigh.

Short combined his WAGR career with active participation in civic affairs. He was elected Chairman of the West Guildford Road Board in 1903 (the meetings being held in his newly built house) and was a Justice of the Peace for WA. By 1906-07 he had been appointed Commissioner of Railways, a position he held until his retirement in 1919 during which time the WAGR made a surplus of nearly one million pounds under his management.

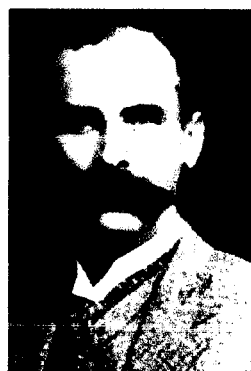
In July 1923, Briarsleigh was bought by Sir Edward Horne Wittenoom. Wittenoom was sixty-nine years of age and nearing the end of a distinguished career, having been Acting Premier of WA in 1897 and WA's Agent General in London. Sir Edward (he was knighted by Queen Victoria) held office on the board of many large companies and was influential in the State. He did not live in the house all the time and it seems likely that the house was let out for residential purposes from the late 1920s.

Following Wittenoom's death in 1936, control of the estate passed to the West Australian Trustee Executor and Agency Company Ltd, which managed the property until 1941. Three years later, in November 1944, the property was sold to Mrs Mildred Foster, who lived there with her husband (the manager of a dried fruit plant) and her daughter until 1946. It was during this period that the property was renamed Earlsferry.

On 4 April 1946, the property was purchased by Karl Edgar Drake-Brockman. In addition to his achievements as a Rhodes Scholar, Oxford law graduate, solicitor and judge, Drake-Brockman was an accomplished gardener who cultivated the gardens at Earlsferry including a '...sufficiently well developed (and reticulated) rose garden to sell the produce to a Perth Florist'. The Drake-Brockman ownership was the last occupancy in which the house remained in its original style, complete with orchard, tennis court and Edwardian colour scheme. In April 1950, an application by Drake-Brockman to the State Licensing Court to turn Earlsferry into a hotel was rejected and the property was sold to the Crown shortly thereafter.



Karl Edgar Drake - Brockman



Karl's parents: Frederick Slade and Grace Vernon Drake - Brockman

Under the ownership of the Crown, Earlsferry was converted to a home for mentally handicapped girls. At this time, Earlsferry underwent a number of changes that altered its original residential function. The conversion involved alterations to the building, including the addition of a laundry on the north-west side, removal of the outhouses and the construction of a cottage for the Matron in the area formerly occupied by the orchard. Security wire mesh fences were erected, a large tree and rose beds removed and the main driveway, off Nurstead Avenue, bituminised and kerbs installed.

In September 1988, ownership of Earlsferry passed to the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons. In April 1989, the roof and upper floor of the building were gutted by fire. The damage, estimated at \$1.25 million, was repaired (but not restored to its original state) and the property was sold by tender on 12 June 1990. A condition of sale was the granting of a restrictive covenant to the National Trust (WA). The covenant was placed on the title deeds to ensure that future work did not endanger the heritage value of the site. Subsequently, a proposal to subdivide the block was approved subject to a conservation plan being prepared and on condition that the subdivision does not detract from the heritage values of the site.

In April 2009, Martin Jaine and Jane Bowen purchased Earlsferry House. They started a restoration program, beginning with the commissioning of a new Conservation Plan. The Conservation Plan was created by Carrick & Wills Architects.

Following the completion of the Conservation Plan in May 2010, Martin and Jane had the guidelines they needed to manage the conservation and renovation of this important historic site. To date, they have carried out a number of renovations, including tuck pointing to external brickwork and the reinstating of wooden verandahs at ground floor level.

During 2010, Earlsferry House has been re-opened to the public as a Bed & Breakfast.

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## DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

Earlsferry is a two storey brick, iron and timber house in the Federation Queen Anne style. It is sited between the railway, the road and the river on a roughly triangular piece of land to the west of the main settlement of Guildford with views over the river landscape and beyond to the Guildford townscape. The site is atypical of the usual long rectangular blocks with narrow river frontages found in the Guildford area. The elevated site with its exposure to a major roadway (Guildford Road) and the railway line, ensures that the house and associated plantings of Washingtonia palms are a dominant townscape feature. Since 1902 the place has been reduced in size from 1.3ha to 0.961ha, predominantly through the resumption of land for road widening and public open space on the Swan River foreshore. The four palms and the group of mature trees now located in the road reserve appear to be the remnants of the development of the site by Short during the period 1902-23. Despite the reduction in the size of the land, the relationship between house, land and river remains substantially intact.

In 1946, Drake-Brockman increased the size of the rose gardens and added a utility area on the north-west side, comprising a drying area, windmill and tank stand, as well as a substantial orchard, of which numerous mature fruit trees and a number of almond trees remain. Earlsferry is built with tuck pointed Flemish bond brickwork, decorative wooden verandahs and a turreted corner facing the river frontage. The roof originally had rough cast gables with decorative iron finials at the roof line. Wide verandahs surrounded three sides of the house. Maids' quarters were provided at the rear of the building. Inside Earlsferry, the grandness and high level of architectural detailing in the rooms of the house clearly illustrate Short's concern with implementing the most fashionable design in his home.

The high quality and comparatively modern design of the house suggests it was designed by an architect, or at least that pattern books or similar design guides were used. The Art Nouveau stained glass (an early example in WA of this style) and the staircase with its closed heavily reeded stringer and reeding on the newel post, was the latest in design. So too was the tessellated tile work at the front door, for in many houses Victorian style encaustic tiles were still being laid as late as 1915.

The billiard room is particularly noteworthy with its fine ornately carved exposed ceiling members and its even quality of light offered from the lantern mounted on the ridge line of the roof. An Italianate influence can be seen in some elements such as the columns and

arches framing the balcony on the upper floor with cast iron columns supporting rather squat capitals of the composite order. Earlsferry remained substantially intact until the 1950s, when it was converted for institutional purposes. Most alterations were not in the main public areas but to the rear of the house in the vicinity of the kitchen or maids quarters. In the 1950s, a matron's cottage was constructed in the orchard. Externally, changes were to the west elevation with the addition of extra toilet facilities on the ground floor. An extension at the ground floor level for staff accommodation produced an awkward roof line which did not carry through the existing proportions of the doors and windows. A later extension to the first floor was more sympathetic, but had the effect of making the balcony appear truncated and altered the appearance of the building. Comparison of the elevations today, with early photographs, reveals changes to the detailing, including the removal of the Federation Queen Anne balustrade and replacement of much of the glass with perspex.

In 1989 Earlsferry was badly damaged by fire; the roof and upper storey of the building was gutted, five bedrooms and an office were destroyed. The ground floor was damaged by smoke and water but the main reception rooms remained substantially intact. The damage was repaired but no restoration work was carried out. Original roofing in the billiard room was retained. The roof in other areas was replaced in a form similar to the original but the original fine cast iron finials and ornately carved half timber with rough cast gables were replaced with more basic details. After the fire Earlsferry also suffered from vandalism occasioned by its being vacant. Thieves stole balustrades from the main staircase, a window from the upper floor bathroom, fire place surrounds and front door glass. Since 1990, the damaged areas are in the process of being conserved in accordance with Palassis Architects. While some of the original fabric is lost forever, insertion of other material is being matched as closely as possible to that of the original.

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Home Membership Pensioner Guard Cottage Local Studies Collection Links

## Opening Hours:

1:30pm - 4:50pm

Last Sunday

of each month.

Tel: (08) 9279 1715



## Pensioner Guard Cottage

Faithfully restored, this basic dwelling was erected, with others similar, to house a Pensioner Guard, his wife and children at a cost of £15 (roughly thirty dollars in our present currency).

At the urgent request of settlers desperate for help in all areas of Colonial expansion, the British Government acceded to their demand for convict labour.

To guard the felons, both on the journey out and later at the assigned tasks, a special force was formed from veterans of Britain's Peninsular Wars and later the Crimean and Boer engagements.

The men eligible for this special force were at the time pensioned off on halfpay. They were required to be strong, healthy and the possessors of good conduct discharges.

They were promised employment or military pay for a period of six months. This 'regular duty' scale of Army pay was:

- **Private:** 1/3d per day
- **Corporal:** 1/6d per day
- **Sergeant:** 1/10d per day

In addition, they were liable to serve in the defence of the Colony or in the preservation of the public peace if required, as well as seeking outside work where possible to augment their basic income.

In return, the Pensioners were given free passage for themselves, their wives and children, a cottage and a land grant which would become freehold after seven years occupancy and service in the Enrolled Force.

## THE FIRST TENANT

John LawDavies, a pensioner guard originally employed in the East India Company, was twenty-six years old when he arrived in Western Australia in the early 1850's. In November 1857, he was appointed caretaker of four cottages at Guildford and West Guildford (Bassendean).

Thus he and his wife Amelia and their



children to that time became the first tenants of No. 1, Surrey Street. Five more children were born there, and John died there in 1870. Looking now at the cramped conditions and primitive furnishings which were all Pensioners' wives could expect, one is poignantly reminded of the sacrifices these pioneer women made.

Enrolled Pensioners and their families, totalling some 2500 souls, remained in Western Australia on the cessation of transportation. Less than 2% of them had become, in any degree, a burden to the colonial finances over a period of eighteen years.



**HOPE SHEPPARD (1993)**