

Later, as the migrants settled into their own homes, the façades and interiors were considerably altered as they renovated them in a manner reminiscent of their countries of origin.

Many of the alterations were made without reference to the building requirements. The Perth City Council tried to stop these illegal additions and also ordered the removal of many timber sheds and other outbuildings. Neither were they in favour of weatherboard houses. Some of these such as a two-roomed weatherboard dwelling in Carr Street attracted a health order, and another owner in Carr Street was refused permission for brick renovations as they would extend the life of his weatherboard residence.

Shortages of business premises also meant homes, stables and old sheds were converted for retail outlets, workshops and small factories. In Newcastle Street, in particular, businesses began to encroach on the residences and those who were left became increasingly uncomfortable as more and more businesses moved in and the area was deserted after hours and at weekends.

In the 1950s the Perth City Council decided to develop a soccer ground on vacant land in Lawley Street which had been part of Lake Henderson. As more land was required, the rear of some of the Cowle Street blocks was subsequently resumed and the Dorrien Gardens Reserve was established in the 1970s.

1973-2005

The construction of the Mitchell Freeway in the 1970s affected the area because the lower end of Charles Street became an on/off ramp for Freeway traffic. While the Freeway itself formed a physical barrier at the south-western end of the suburb, this new link gave West Perth residents easy access to the Narrows Bridge and the southern suburbs.

The subsequent construction of the Graham Farmer Freeway and tunnel in 2000 and its links with the Mitchell Freeway also led to the widening and upgrading of Loftus Street. Some of West Perth's homes and businesses were demolished to make way for this and access to and from Loftus for both Carr and Kingston streets was limited as a result.

The Town of Vincent was established in 1995 and West Perth came under its jurisdiction. This proved beneficial to the area as a smaller Local Government Authority has been able to devote more resources to its development and the services required.

There has been both a residential and commercial revival in the area in recent years as the cheaper land prices and its proximity to Perth and transport routes has attracted private home owners, developers and commercial enterprises. This has meant the area has

undergone considerable change, as this revival of inner city living has led to the opening up of battle axe blocks, and its increase in popularity amongst young people, families and developers has meant the renovation of older homes or their replacement with either new single residences, duplexes or groups of two-storey town houses. A large rise in commercial interest has also led to the alteration and renovation of older buildings and to the construction of modern purpose-built business premises.

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING IN THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Books

- Main, Andrew, *A History of Cowle Street, West Perth, Western Australia*.
Perth, 2002. Q994.11 MAI
Town of Vincent Municipal Heritage Inventory.

Vertical Files

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Chinese Market Gardens | Cowle Street |
| Graham Farmer Freeway | Lawley Street |
| Heritage Files | Loftus Street |
| Carr Street | Newcastle Street |
| Charles Street | Violet Street |
| Cleaver Street | |

Oral History Tapes and Manuscripts

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Reg Axford & Harold Mundy | OH0091 |
| Elsie Florance | OH0089 |
| Elza Hughes | OH0092 |
| Peg Macqueen | OH0104 |
| Norm Plummer | OH0093 |

Local Studies and History Collection

Town of Vincent Library
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SUBURB WEST PERTH



Greek Orthodox Church of Evangelismos
59 Carr Street

The suburb of West Perth is bounded by Loftus, Vincent, Fitzgerald and Bulwer streets.

HISTORY

Pre 1829

The first inhabitants were Aborigines (Nyungars) who were attracted to the wetland areas by the abundance of fresh water and food. The area now known as Dorrien Gardens (between Lawley Street and the rear of Cowle Street) was once part of Lake Henderson or Goongarulnyarreenup which was a source of fish, turtles, frogs, reeds, etc as well as fresh water.

1829-1870

Following European settlement the Aborigines were driven out of the metropolitan area by a combination of competition for the land and food sources, racial misunderstanding and white regulations.

During winter the area surrounding Dorrien Gardens flooded bringing hordes of mosquitoes which acted initially as a deterrent to the new settlers. However, with the extra demands placed on food supplies as a result of the arrival of convicts and their Pensioner Guards between 1850 and 1868, the European settlers looked for new areas to grow fruit and vegetables.

1871-1890

With continuing pressure on the food supplies, parts of Lake Henderson, including some of the Dorrien Gardens section, were drained in the early 1870s and Joseph Gallop purchased land on Cowle Street (No.54/Lot Y207) and grew vegetables on the lake bed. Gallop and his fellow market gardeners in Cowle Street were followed by Chinese gardeners from the 1890s.

The Municipal Institutions Act of 1871 established eight municipalities, including Perth – the western and northern boundaries of which were Loftus, Vincent and Walcott streets, thus placing the West Perth area within the City of Perth.

Access to Perth and its markets was a very important factor in the early years of the settlement, and Charles Street (leading onto the northern track) became an important road during the 1870s. While still just a sandy track, it did provide access on foot and by horse-drawn dray to Perth, and a few dairy farms and market gardens were also established alongside in West Perth.

There were approximately 50 buildings erected between Newcastle and Vincent streets between 1871 and 1890, and some of these

were in the West Perth section. Amongst these was Joseph Gallop's (1884), the first to be erected in Cowle Street where blocks had been for sale since 1870.

1891-1919

Suburban Perth spread northwards to Vincent Street and beyond due to the large increases in population and rising affluence as a result of the West Australian gold rushes. An increase in West Perth's population occurred after the subdivision of the No. 1 Leederville Estate. The lots in this subdivision (Location Ax) in the area south of Vincent Street and east of Oxford Street, including Carr Street, were half or full acre lots.

Smaller blocks were developed in the Bulwer/Florence Street area (20 in Florence Street) during this time and there were 10 houses in Cleaver Street by 1900. (One of these, No. 50, had a shop added to the front later on.) Harwood Place, with its terrace dwellings and semi-detached pairs, was part of a subdivision of worker housing at the end of the nineteenth century and several large blocks in Violet and Cowle streets were subdivided – one into as many as eight housing lots.

There were also several business premises erected in the area during this period, including several bakeries and a flour milling business in Cleaver Street. There was also at least one factory – the Herbert Stone Box Manufacturing Company, which was established in Fitzgerald Street just south of Lawley Street in 1896.

The Perth City Council took on responsibility for the streets in the 1890s. Some name changes were Leeder Street to Carr, and Cleaver Street was known as Smith Street from 1901 to 1904 before reverting to Cleaver again.

A tramway system was installed in Perth after 1897 and two of the routes passed through West Perth – one from Perth to the entrance of Hyde Park (passing along Charles Street) and a second along Bulwer to Vincent Street. An extension in 1900 from Loftus Street along Newcastle to Oxford Street and beyond added a third route, thus making the area extremely well served by trams. Nevertheless residents, especially in the southern part, tended to save the one penny fare and walk in and out of Perth. A positive side effect of the establishment of this network was that a good base was needed to lay the tramlines and so those roads involved were gravelled.

A school was needed to cater for the growing numbers of children and St John's Church of England Day School opened at 480 Newcastle Street, and then became the West Perth Public School in 1895. The Methodist Church established a Chapel in Charles Street in 1895 and a more substantial building was added in 1897.

St Paul's Anglican Church was also erected in Charles Street in 1897, and in the 1920s a new church building was constructed on the corner of Charles and Carr Street. Other facilities in the area were the Hyde Park Hotel (originally the Commonwealth Hotel), which was erected in 1898, and a few corner shops, including one with a residence attached on the corner of Carr and Fitzgerald streets.

1920-1946

During the Depression, which began in 1929, many West Perth residents were out of work and rent payments were difficult to meet. This led to evictions and constant shifting for some families. Others doubled up, sharing accommodation to offset costs and there was severe overcrowding. There was little development in the 1930s as a result of this downturn in the economy.

The noise from the water pumping station in Loftus Street was considered a deterrent to land sales around Loftus, Carr, Kingston and Newcastle streets. However, by 1920 there were 120 residences listed along the full length of Carr Street. The idea was also raised that the noxious odours from Tandy's Preserves and Pickle Factory on Newcastle Street were hindering development. In spite of this and the restrictions on building during World War II, a block of four flats, Mayfair, was erected in nearby Carr Street in 1940.

Motorised transport replaced horse-drawn vehicles during this period and buses were introduced on some of the routes. Changes were then required to streets such as Charles and Vincent to cope with through traffic. However, the buildings in Charles Street had been constructed too close to the roadway as no building line had been declared. This was rectified in 1941 and subsequent buildings, including some new shops, were set back 10 feet; and new residences on the eastern side were set back 30 feet. No widening was carried out however, as arguments arose between the Council and the Town Planning Commission. An alternative plan, and a cheaper option, was the widening of Loftus Street. This was done in 1926 and then in 1940 the northern end (London Street) was linked to Wanneroo Road.

1947-1972

Overcrowding was experienced in West Perth again in the post-World War II period due to a population boom and waves of immigrants and refugees from Europe. In one case a family of four was living in one room which had previously been a single bedroom. The pressure of numbers forced the division of residences into flats, and makeshift renovations were made such as balconies being enclosed and stairwells being turned into rooms.



PLACES OF INTEREST

TOWN OF VINCENT

1 Hyde Park Hotel 331-367 Bulwer Street (cnr of Fitzgerald Street)



A tall double-storey building erected in 1898 and known initially as the Commonwealth Hotel. It has operated continuously as a hotel since that time. Extensions, which became a live performance venue and home to the WA Jazz Club and Perth Jazz Society, were designed by architect Howlett & Bailey in the early 1970s. These extensions have been further adapted since then.

2 Greek Orthodox Church of Evangelismos

59 Carr Street (cnr of Charles Street)



This was erected sometime in the 1920s as St Paul's Anglican Church and No.125 Charles Street (next door) was purchased as the Presbytery. In March 1958 St Paul's and the Presbytery were purchased by the Greek Orthodox community. The church was then reconsecrated as the Greek Annunciation of Our Lady.

3 Ivy Park cnr Charles and Carr streets

Formerly part of the Carr Street Reserve and a vacant space, this area was transformed into a park with a children's playground and shaded seating for adults in 2003.

4 Methodist Church and Parish Hall 113 Charles Street



The timber Chapel on the south side constructed in 1890, followed by a large Gothic-style limestone church, was erected in 1896. The original weatherboard church was used as a parish hall and became a popular youth club until the 1960s when the building was purchased by TAFE.

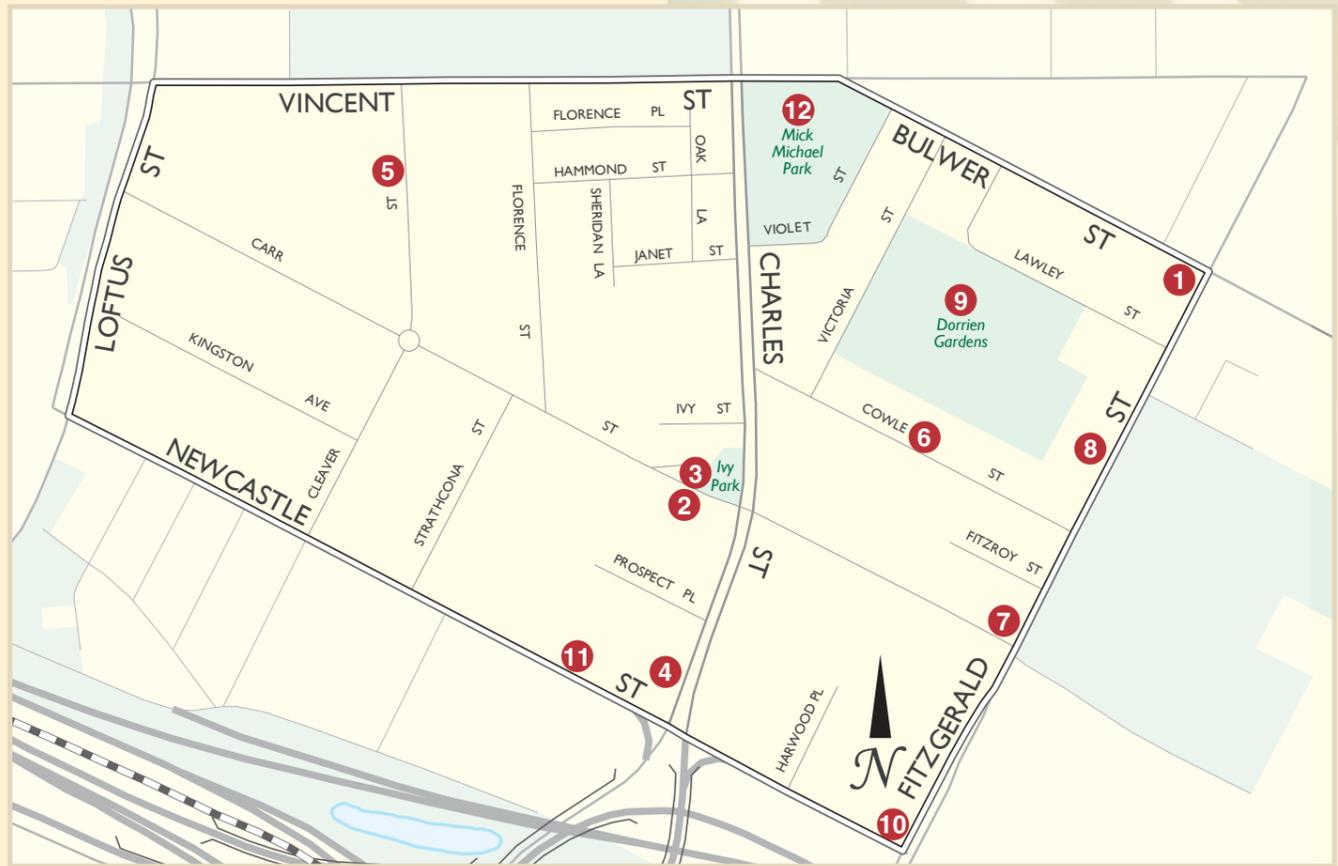
5 Florence Hummerston Lodge 67 Cleaver Street



Built between 1910 and 1914 in the Federation Queen Anne Style for John H Prowse, Manager of the United Insurance Company. The last occupant was Perth City Councillor Florence Hummerston, who left it to the community. It was officially opened as the Florence Hummerston Lodge in 1969 and provided accommodation for the frail and aged. Part of the building is currently used by Meals on Wheels.

6 Residence at 54 Cowle Street

Built c.1884 by Joseph Gallop (an early market gardener in the area who grew vegetables on the drained lake bed). It has a later addition at the front. AR Roworth operated a nursery at the rear of this and several other houses on the north side of Cowle Street until the land was resumed for the Dorrien Gardens Reserve in the 1970s.



7 Shop and residence

167-169 Fitzgerald Street (cnr of Carr Street)



This single-storey shop and attached residence were constructed in 1895 and have remained in continuous use until today. Over that period the shop has operated as a bakery, grocer and delicatessen and is currently a lunch bar and corner store.

8. WA Italian Club 217-225 Fitzgerald Street



Headquarters of the WA Italian Club, established as Casa d'Italia in 1934 in an upstairs room in Aberdeen Street. In the post World War II era the club boasted over 10,000 members. Today it has less than 2000 and its function rooms are available for hire by Italian and non-Italian members of the community.

9 Dorrien Gardens Lawley Street



Soccer ground and home to the Perth Soccer Club. Developed between the 1950s and 1974 by the Perth City Council on land which had originally been part of Lake Henderson, some of which had been developed in the 1870s for market gardening. In the 1950s AR Roworth operated a nursery at the rear of several blocks, and the Everitt family (also residents of the street) operated the Star tennis courts at the rear of their property. A portion of the reserve was leased to the Italian Club in 1975 for a bocce rink.

10 Purtell's Building

380-388 Newcastle Street (cnr Fitzgerald Street)



Constructed c.1890. A two-storey building with a bullnose verandah facing both Newcastle and Fitzgerald streets and shops on the lower level and residential areas above.

11 Newcastle Street Government School 480 Newcastle Street

Work on the current building began in 1895 and it was completed in 1897. St John's Church of England Day School (Assisted) opened on this site in 1890 and in 1895 it became West Perth Public School. In 1898 a new Infants' School was built on the north-west side and this operated until 1928. A Senior School and Junior Technical School were subsequently opened following alterations. It is currently used as a TAFE Extension College.



12 Royal Park (Mick Michael Park) cnr Vincent and Charles streets

In 1914 Perth's Town Clerk, WE Bold, was instrumental in having the Council purchase this area for a public park. A hall was erected and, after bowling greens were laid out, it became home to the Royal Park Bowling Club. It is currently included in the Vincent Greenway Plan, a proposed dual-purpose pathway along the Town of Vincent's chain of parks.



Town of Vincent is a TravelSmart town and encourages residents to walk, cycle or catch public transport for local trips.



It's how you get there that counts