

JOSEPH CHESTER'S COTTAGE, PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Joseph Chester's Cottage
Other names	Residence, 238 Beaufort St
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	16174
State Heritage Register:	
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 01 Apr 1999

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	238 Beaufort St
Locality	Perth
Survey	LOT: 900 D/P: 301680
Vol/folio	166/164
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	<p>Considerable Very important to the heritage of the locality. High degree of integrity/authenticity.</p>
Management category	<p>Category 2 Conservation of the place is highly desirable. Any alterations or extensions should reinforce the significance of the place.</p>
Statement of significance	<p>The place has aesthetic value as a demonstration of a rare Victorian Georgian cottage in central Perth with original detail intact.</p> <p>The addition to the rear in 1929 is a rare simple expression of a multi storey dwelling house.</p> <p>The place has historic value for its association with the establishment and development of the area north or central Perth in the late 19th century by working families.</p> <p>The place has historic value for its association with Joseph Chester who was a radical figure of the period for promoting the role of working men in the Mechanics Institute.</p> <p>The addition constructed in 1929 has historic value as a demonstration of the type of accommodation available for single people in the Inter War period.</p> <p>The place has social value for its continued presence in the streetscape since the 19th century and contributes to the community sense of place.</p> <p>This place demonstrates the type of accommodation available for single working people in the 20th century.</p>

PLACE USE

Original use	Residential: Single Storey Residence
Current use	Residential: Multistorey residence
Other use	Commercial: Hotel

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Construction date	1884; 1929
Walls	Painted Brick
Roof	Corrugated metal sheeting Timber Shingle
Architectural Style	Victorian Georgian
Physical description	<p>A single storey brick and iron house to which a two storey addition was added to the rear circa 1929. This wide fronted house is symmetrically ordered with symmetrical chimneys protruding from the ridge of the large hipped roof.</p> <p>Wooden shingle roof is thought to still exist underneath the iron roof. The front façade has a wide verandah covered with a low pitched skillion, punctuated with a gabled central porch set on paired posts.</p> <p>The verandah has a rendered balustrade, which was a common detail when the house was set very close to the street boundary.</p>
Condition	Good
Integrity	High
Authenticity	High

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Joseph Chester's Cottage is one of the oldest places remaining in the Town of Vincent. It appears on the 1884 City of Perth Rate Books, the earliest surviving rate records for the city. It is recorded as being owned and occupied by Joseph Chester.

Chester was born in England in 1807 and migrated to WA in 1848 with his second wife, Susannah and two of his five children. Chester was an upholsterer and cabinet maker who was active in the Swan River Mechanics' Institute, established in 1851. He was a radical of his time who believed that working men should be able to decide the course of their own lives and not be subject to the control of the gentry. He wanted the lectures at the Mechanics' Institute to be delivered by the working men themselves, on topics of their own choosing, and not by gentlemen who spoke on poetry, British liberty, and ecclesiastical architecture.

Chester ran a discussion group, choosing subjects which were often critical of British politics and society. The gentry did their best to close these down, as they considered them to be divisive and to impede the growth of harmony and brotherly love. They eventually succeeded so that, by 1875, the Mechanic's Institute had become a literary and entertainment society for the elite. At that time, more books were borrowed by the gentry women of Perth than by the working men for whom the Institute had been founded.

During the mid-1860s, Joseph Chester spent some time as a publican in Guildford before returning to Perth. In 1867, he was advertising his workshop in Hay Street. As well as upholstery and cabinet making, he also offered his services to hang wallpaper, make Venetian blinds and re-silk pianofortes. Joseph Chester died in 1886.

From 1885, the Cottage had a number of owners and occupants, including investor James Graves, who sold off the remaining vacant portion of Lot W104. Alexander Forrest, in his capacity as a financial agent and provider of mortgages, owned the property on two brief occasions when the current owner could not meet the mortgage repayments.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

From 1895 to 1904, the Cottage was owned by Mrs Elizabeth Thompson, and then by Phillip Keane until 1924, before it was finally purchased in 1929 by contractor James Collins. Collins added a two-storey addition to the rear of the cottage, comprising thirty-seven rooms, five bathrooms and a laundry at an estimated cost of £4500.

The rear verandahs of the extension were later enclosed with weatherboard to create three more rooms. Two rooms in the two-storey extension have been altered for use as kitchens. Joseph Chester's Cottage and extension has been occupied as a boarding house since 1929.

Aerial photographs from the mid 20th to early 21st century indicate that the roofing was replaced around 2004 but had sustained no visible exterior changes up until that point. The photographs also show the addition of two structures at the back of the block in 2007-2008. The subject place has visibly changed little since then.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Historic theme	Peopling WA: Demographic development	
	Cultural Life: Domestic Life Social Services: Education	
Associations	Joseph Chester and family	Owners and occupiers
Sources	Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006 Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024. The West Australian, 16 March 1929, p. 8.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS

