

MUSBURY TERRACE, PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Musbury Terrace
Other names	
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	8742
State Heritage Register:	
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	15-25 Ruth St
Locality	Perth
Survey	
Vol/folio	
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>This group of terrace houses has aesthetic value as a rare and intact example of the Federation Italianate style executed in rendered brick.</p> <p>The buildings are a landmark in the streetscape for its consistent form and presence since the late 19th century.</p> <p>The place reflects the expansion and development of residential buildings on the city fringes during the rapid population increase of the 1890's gold boom and the early years of the twentieth century.</p> <p>The place is representative as an example of terraces built for working families dating from the late 19th century.</p> <p>This place is valued by the community for the continuity of its presence in the streetscape which contributes to the community sense of place.</p>

PLACE USE

Original use	Residential: Conjoined residences
Current use	Residential: Conjoined residences
Other use	

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Construction date	1897;
Walls	Rendered Brick
Roof	Corrugated metal sheeting
Architectural Style	Federation Italianate
Physical description	A single storey terrace of six dwellings, each with its separate decorated parapet, set between pilasters. Each of the dwellings has a bullnose verandah, separated from the adjoining verandah with a brick dividing wall, profiled to the verandah and parapet and capped with ball finials. The parapet has a string course and is centrally divided. The facade, now painted, originally had horizontal stucco bands. Each terrace is one room plus passage in width. Small garden setbacks behind various fences.
Condition	Good
Integrity	High
Authenticity	High

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The area bounded by Brisbane, Lake, Bulwer and William Streets, and including Amy, Ruth and Edith Streets, was developed largely as workers' housing, with smaller blocks, smaller residences and a number of semi-detached and terrace dwellings. Ruth Street is the widest of these three parallel streets which all bear women's names. Ruth Street was originally named Mary Street but as there was more than one road with the same name in the area, it was changed to Ruth. A right-of way was constructed at the rear of Ruth Street which leads into Amy Street as per the original subdivision and later the eastern end of Ruth Street was re-aligned as was Edith to allow the through continuation of William Street.

The row of six terraces at Nos 15-25 Ruth Street was constructed in 1897 with No. 25 being a mirror image of the other five. They appeared on the MWSS & DD plans of 18 August 1897 (Sheet 7) but Ruth Street was not listed in Wise's Post Office Directories until 1898. That year Nos 15-25 were also listed for the first time.

City of Perth Rates Books indicate the group was owned and probably built by contractor Thomas Worsick Firth (1865-1925). Firth was born in Lancashire England and his mother was born in Longfield House in Musbury, a small town in Lancashire. This is likely to be the origin of the name of the terrace.

In 1898, the houses were occupied by Mrs John Linton (No. 15), Allan Ferrie (No. 19) Nathaniel Cuthbertson (No. 21) and Peter Miller, a carpenter (No. 25). Allan Ferrie was born in Scotland in 1856 and arrived in Australia in 1883, disembarking in Victoria. He was a cabinet maker and wood carver who moved to Perth to work for Smith & Co in Goderich Street, East Perth. He died in 1936.

In 1906, one of the terraces was offered for rent for 16 shillings - presumably per week. '*Four ROOMS, pantry, bath, connected with main drain, Musbury Terrace, Ruth-st.*'

In 1915, the houses were numbered 27-47 and the occupants were James Watts (No. 27), Charles Manuel (No. 33), Allan Ferrie (No. 37), Frederick C. Ashdown (No. 39), Nathaniel Cuthbertson (No. 41) and Sam Sethergosta (No. 47). In 1925 they were still numbered 27-47 and the residents were James Watts (No. 27), Mrs S. Manuel (No. 33), David Maeer (No. 37), Nathaniel Cuthbertson (No. 39), Chris Cuthbertson (No. 41) and Robert Liddle (No. 47).

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In 1925, Thomas Firth died but the property remained in the ownership of his executors and the Rates Books show that other Firth family members owned adjacent properties in Ruth Street.

The numbering of the terraces was the same in 1936 with some changes in occupancies but David Maeer was still at No. 37 and the Cuthbertsons in Nos 39 and 47.

In 1949, the last year of the Directories, the numbers had still not been changed back and Moris Borushek was in No. 27, Mrs K.A. Wood (No. 33), Mrs Eileen Klauss (No. 33), David Maer was still at No. 37 but the spelling of his name had changed, Nathaniel and Chris Cuthbertson were still at Nos 39 and 41 as was Cornis J. Ryan, who had been living at No. 47 since at least 1936. The City of Perth building licence cards indicated that H. Forbes applied for permission for brick and iron additions to No. 17 in 1957 and in 1969 J. Zenis applied to construct a laundry for Nos 15-25. Mr Whitehouse also applied for additions to the group dwelling in 1988.

According to City of Vincent records the owner/occupier of No. 19 was given permission in 2004 to operate a home-based office. This was Aura International, a multi-media production business. Australian Theatre Director, Raymond Omodei, lived next door to the subject places at No. 13 Ruth Street from 1990 to 2006. During that time the house was extensively renovated and it was put up for sale at between \$1m and \$1.2m in 2006. Actors such as Angela Punch and Amanda Muggleton, famous for the play 'Shirley Valentine', which was brought to Australia by Omodei, also practised there during his tenure.

Aerial photographs from the mid 20th century onwards indicate that the form and extent of the subject site has changed little since that time.

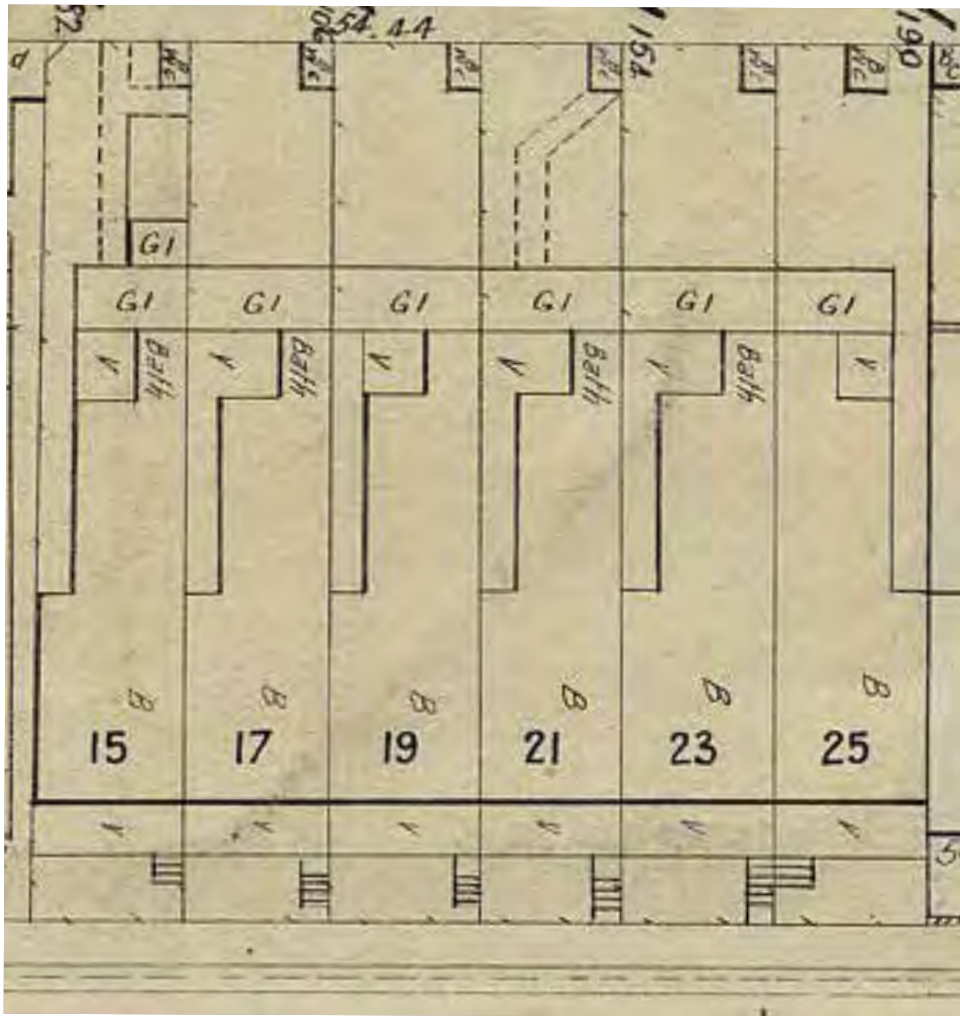
HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Historic theme	Peopling WA: Demographic Development Cultural Life: Domestic Life	
Associations	Thomas Warwick Firth Mrs John Linton Allan Ferrie Nathaniel Cuthberston Peter Miller	Owner and builder First occupant First occupant First occupant First occupant
Sources	Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006 Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024. The West Australian, 31 March 1906, p. 16.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGES



Musbury Terrace, Sewerage Plan 1953. Courtesy SROWA series 634 cons 4156 item 0092-0092A.