

COLMEL HOUSE, PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Colmel House
Other names	St Helen's Private Hospital Topsham Private Hospital
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	18053
State Heritage Register:	
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 12 Sep 2006)

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	241 Stirling St
Locality	Perth
Survey	LOT: 450 D/P: 301681
Vol/folio	1106/551
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	Considerable Very important to the heritage of the locality. High degree of integrity/authenticity.
Management category	Category 2 Conservation of the place is highly desirable. Any alterations or extensions should reinforce the significance of the place.
Statement of significance	<p>This place is a fine and intact example of the Federation Queen Anne style executed in brick and tile with an intact verandah which features timber detail.</p> <p>This prominent building is a landmark in the streetscape for its scale in contrast to the surrounding building stock.</p> <p>The place has historic value for its association with the provision of medical services to the people of Perth from the early 20th century.</p> <p>The place has historic value for its association with Dr Edward James Haynes who was a leader in his profession who made a contribution to the community through his role on the Perth City Council and other community groups.</p> <p>The remaining fabric and arrangement of the spaces in the building may provide information in relation to medical practice and processes in the early 20th century.</p> <p>The place has social value for its association with the provision of medical services to many members of the community in the 20th century, and it continues to be associated with health services.</p>

PLACE USE	
Original use	Residential: Two Storey Residence
Current use	Commercial: Offices
Other use	Health: Hospital

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
Construction date	c1902; 1904
Walls	Brick Limestone
Roof	Terracotta Tile Corrugated Sheet metal
Architectural Style	Federation Queen Anne

Physical description	<p>This two-storey former residence in the Federation Queen Anne style is a grand house, but rare within the Town of Vincent. The comparatively plain two storey bullnosed verandah is handsomely proportioned and returns from the front façade along the side façade.</p> <p>The verandah posts are chamfered with collars top and bottom, and the lower floor verandah has a decorative flat arch valance. Upstairs the balustrade consists of simple verticals set between handrail and bottom rail. An open tread timber staircase is in place on the side of the verandah. The verandah terminates against a protruding double storey bay at either end, gabled to the front façade and hipped to the side façade.</p> <p>The generous scale of the residence is given emphasis with the tall, hipped roof and French doors with fanlights above. Casement windows and doors have fanlights over, contributing to the generous proportions of the residence.</p>
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CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
Physical description	<p>The place is of brick construction set on a limestone plinth. Rendered bands run the perimeter of the residence at door head on both the ground and first floor. The projecting gabled bay on the front façade have additional rendered string courses at first floor sill and floor levels.</p> <p>Set back behind a fence of brick piers infilled with metal uprights, the majority of the lot is paving for parking.</p>
Condition	Good
Integrity	High
Authenticity	Moderate

HISTORICAL INFORMATION	
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Stirling Street was named after Sir James Stirling (1791-1865), founder of the Swan River Colony and Governor from 1828-1839. No. 241 Stirling Street did not appear on the PWD 1897 City of Perth & Suburbs sewerage plans (Sheet No. 8, 18.8.1897).

City of Perth Rates Books indicate that the land parcel was owned by law clerk Samuel John Rowe in the late 1890s. Rowe lived in a house with a garden at this time but the valuation of the property suggest it was not the grand home which subsequently occupied the lot.

In 1901, the property was transferred to Surgeon Edward James Ambrose Haynes. In September 1901, architect Henry Trigg called for tenders for a two storey brick residence in Hay Street for Dr E. J. Haynes who at that time lived at 125 Stirling Street Perth. By 1902, Haynes was living at his residence in Hay Street which also served as his medical rooms.

It is likely that Haynes engaged Henry Trigg to design this place which was initially designated as a private residence and occupied by Nurse Tehan although it may have been used as a hospital from its construction.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In 1903, architect Henry Prockter called for tenders for additions to a Private Hospital in Stirling Street Perth. It is proposed that this was the hospital owned by Dr Haynes as item in The Daily News in February 1904 indicates that the hospital had undergone additions.

A well-equipped private surgical hospital is, unfortunately, a necessary adjunct to any large city, and perth at the present time possesses such a one. "Topsham," at the north end of Stirling -street, now owned by Nurses Rose and Plover, formerly owned by Dr Haynes, has been recently considerably added to. Six specially designed and commodious rooms have just been completed, and of these an operating theatre, fitted with overhead fanlight, and all the latest appliances, and a sterilising room, leading out of same form the principal features. The latter is fitted with a novel hot-water apparatus, which gives an unlimited supply of boiling water in 1½ minutes. The hospital now has accommodation for 18 surgical cases. Nurse Plover, the matron, was one of the West Australian nurses who gave her services to the sick and wounded in the South African war.

The name 'Topsham Hospital' may originate with the town of the same name in Devon U.K.

Although this article implies that the hospital was owned by the nurses, the City of Perth Rates Books indicate that the owner was Dr Haynes until his death in 1910, and subsequently by his executors. Edward Haynes (1854-1910) was well regarded in his profession and spent a significant portion of his time teaching in his profession as well as serving on the Perth City Council.

I In 1910, it was listed as Topsham Private Hospital, with Miss M. Plover as matron and nurses D. Salmon, G.E. Conroy and E. Bochm in residence. Two nurses were boarding across the street at No. 252 at that time and there was a nurses' home at 194 Stirling Street, and another establishment, Ensor Hospital, at No. 216.

By 1915, No. 241 was known as St Helen's Private Hospital, and it was run by Nurse Armstrong. In 1919 the nurses were E. Scott and H.P. Rennix. By 1930 it was known as St Helen's Hospital and was owned and run by Christina and Lottie Fanning. In 1936 the hospital was listed still with the Fannings as the proprietors but 'trained nurses home' was also included. In 1947, the Fannings were still there.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

No Directory was published in 1948 but in 1949 No. 241 was just listed as 'W.H. & A.G. Kirby'. The City of Perth building licence cards indicated that Colonel Norris applied for a licence to erect an office at this address in 1979.

In 2002, No. 241 Stirling Street was a health facility known as Colmel House. Two houses on Brisbane Street (Nos. 79 and 81) operated as annexes of Colmel House.

By 2004, it was occupied by MR Business Advisers, which produced business development programmes tailored to their clients' needs and ran workshops there. Other tenants have included Melsom Robson, chartered accountants (established 1978), which became Jones Condon chartered accountants, MR Business Advisers and Colmel Properties. In 2024 the businesses residing in the subject place were Ever Nature – a health supplement shop – and two honey producers, Australian Natural Biotechnology Pty Ltd and Karibee Honey.

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

Historic theme	Social Services: Health Economy: Commerce Peopling WA: Demographic Development	
Associations	Dr Edward James Haynes Nurse Marian Plover Henry Prockter	Owner Matron Architect
Sources	Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006 Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024. The Daily News, 12 Feb 1904, p. 5. The West Australian, 23 September 1901, p. 8; 3 October 1903, p. 3.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGES

