

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVENTORY

PLACE REFERENCE NO.: AC01

NAME: ATWELL HOUSE ARTS CENTRE

OTHER NAMES: Atwell Studio Gallery
Atwell's Dairy Farm (fmr.)

PIN NO. (Landgate): 11041978

LAND DESCRIPTION: Lot 14584, Plan 32882
Certificate of Title Volume LR-3129 Folio 108

LOCATION: 586 Canning Highway, Alfred Cove

CONSTRUCTION DATE: Atwell House – 1935
Studio Gallery – 1982

PLACE TYPE: House/Studio Gallery/Arts Centre

USE: Original Use: Farm House/Residence – W. D. Atwell
Current Use: Arts Centre

HERITAGE LISTINGS: - City of Melville – CPS 14 December 1999, MHI 19 December 1994, Place Ref. AC01.

ARCHITECT: Not identified.

BUILDER: Not identified.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Inter-War Bungalow style.

CONDITION: Sound.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Atwell House Arts Centre is a single-storey brick and tile former house constructed in 1935 in the then popular Inter-War Bungalow style. The house derives some of its character details from the California Bungalow style. The plan form is asymmetrical with the southwest front section projecting forward from the remainder of the street elevation. The roof is pitched high with a half-timbered gable to the projecting front bay and to the eastern elevation, and with louvred gable vents at ridge level facing east and west to the main roof. The roof is otherwise hipped and clad in Marseilles pattern terra cotta tiles of darker blend at gutters. Rafter ends are expressed at the eaves throughout.

The Atwell Studio Gallery is a single-storey red brick building, similar in architectural style to Atwell House. The roof is hipped, with gables north and south, clad in Marseilles pattern terra cotta tiles. Verandahs to the south, west and east have roofs continuous with the main roof. The south verandah, facing the street at Canning Highway, has precast columns on limestone piers as for Atwell House, but at a greater spacing. The eastern verandah has been enclosed to provide accommodation for offices accessed from the Gallery and a gift shop accessed from the south-east verandah.

HISTORICAL NOTES:**Atwell House**

Ownership of Lena Blacker's Alfred Cove property was transferred to Walter David Atwell on 15 June 1926.

Born in Fremantle in 1872, Walter David Atwell was the son of former convict turned prominent Fremantle landowner and businessman, Henry Atwell. Married to Edith Stewart in 1902, Walter Atwell's own career focussed around his passion for horses. Post Office Directory records indicate that Atwell operated a livery stable in Fremantle, mainly from a property off South Terrace, throughout the 1900s. He was also reportedly one of the first huntsmen of the Fremantle Hunt Club and, by c. 1912, was Master of the Hounds of the West Australian Hunt Club.

Although Walter Atwell was registered as the proprietor of the 22 acres of Swan Location 74 in 1926, there is some question as to the exact date when the Atwell family actually began to live at Alfred Cove. This appears to be associated with reports of an earlier timber house on the property in which

Soon after, the existing timber house was said to have been destroyed by fire and Atwell House was erected as its replacement in c. 1935. This estimated date of construction is taken from Post Office Directory records, which list Walter Atwell as the occupant in 1935. This is also supported by a 1942 valuation of the Atwell House property that describes the place as being approximately 15 years old.

Oral History Interviews with David (Walter Atwell's second son), his wife Connie and their daughter Dianne in 1998 provide a detailed description of the house, its furnishings and the lifestyle of the family. From the interviews, it is clear that Atwell House was designed to show the prominence of its owners, being a substantial brick and tile residence for the time with an elaborate verandah, bay windows and leadlight window and door features.



Studio Gallery

On 29 May 1982, Mayor of Melville, J. F. Howson Esq. OBE JP, officially opened the MCAA's Atwell Studio Gallery building. This was constructed for the purposes of providing a gallery space for the permanent display of the artwork created by Association members. The building was specifically designed to match the scale, style and materials of the adjacent Atwell House.

HISTORIC THEME/S (HCWA THEME/S):

- Australian Historic Themes: 4.1.2 Making suburbs
8.10.2 Creating visual arts
8.13 Living in cities and suburbs.
- HCWA Themes: 104 Land allocation and subdivision
407 Early settlers
602 Cultural activities.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Atwell House - Face brick walls, Marseilles pattern terracotta tiled roof covering;

Studio Gallery - red face brickwork, orange terracotta tiled roof, timber joinery, and masonry columns to verandahs.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Atwell House Arts Centre, a single-storey house constructed in 1935 for Walter David Atwell in the Inter-War Bungalow style and now in use as the Atwell Gallery for the Melville Community Arts Association, has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

the place is a representative example of a house constructed in the Inter-War Bungalow style popular in the 1930s;

the place is historically important as the residence for a dairy located on a formerly extensive property at Alfred Cove and built for the then owner in 1935, Walter David Atwell, a prominent member of the W.A. Hunt Club, horse breeder, dairyman and early local resident in the locality;

the place and the associated grounds are important environmentally as indicative of open pasture, surviving from the former use as a dairy farm, and for the adjoining estuarine wetland, part of the Swan River Estuary Marine Park, a site identified as important for trans-equatorial migratory waders and waterbirds;

the place is socially important for its use and occupancy since 1982 by the Melville Community Arts Association.

The Studio Gallery, adjacent on the eastern side of Atwell House, is a single-storey building similar in architectural style to Atwell House but constructed in 1982 and assessed to have little, if any, cultural heritage significance.

SIGNIFICANT ITEMS:

Atwell House - external form, pitched roof, and original materials and finishes.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Atwell House - Considerable cultural heritage significance
Studio Gallery - Little cultural heritage significance.

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY:

Atwell House - Category A
Studio Gallery - Category C

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CODE: State

MAIN SOURCES:

- 'Atwell House' Conservation Plan dated July 2009 prepared by Ronald Bodycoat AM.LFRAIA for the City of Melville – at Section 9 Bibliography;
- 'Atwell House' Heritage Assessment dated January 2007 prepared by Ronald Bodycoat AM.LFRAIA for the City of Melville – Clause 13.4 Key References.

ASSESSMENT DATE: 2012

ASSESSOR: Ronald Bodycoat AM.KSJ.LFRAIA

