

Area: Geraldton	Place Number: 6	Category: 1
Assessment Date: 30/10/1996	Last Revision Date: 19/06/2009	
HCWA Number: 1046	Asset ID: MCH126905	

PLACE DETAILS

Name:	Masonic Lodge
Other Names:	126 Augustus Street
Type of Place:	Hall
Address:	126 Augustus Street
Suburb:	Geraldton

LOCATION

Map Reference: 14.14	GPS Northing: 6814131.00	GPS Easting: 266349.000
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Photo Description:

1/08/2007

Rod Milne

The two storey Masonic Lodge.

SITE DETAILS

Lot No.:	Pt Lot 215	Assess No.:	11576
Reserv No.:		Vol/Fol:	1704/99
Dia/Plan:	222477		

USE OF PLACE

Original Use:	Masonic Lodge		
Current Use:	Masonic Lodge		
Ownership:	Geraldton Lodge Freemasons		
Public Access:	No	Occupied:	Occupied

DESCRIPTION

Walls:	Stone/Brick	Roof:	Asbestos
Condition:	Good	Integrity:	
Original fabric:	Stone section		
Modifications:	Brick upper floor addition to rear		

The two storey Masonic Lodge building is a fine example of the Federation Free Classical style. It is very typical of a style of building for Freemasons halls/temples built throughout the State in the early part of the century and through to the Second World War.

The front, two storey, elevation of the building, constructed of local stone, is the oldest. There are later additions extending to the rear, the latest of which are of brick construction to the first floor over an earlier stone ground floor. The front entry porch is also a later addition. The entry porch is single storey, with a typical Mason's Greek temple theme with rendered mouldings forming a frieze and triangular pediment supported on fluted Doric columns to form the entry portico. The original entry was from the side, and the opening is still visible in the side stone wall externally and internally in the plaster. The front, two storey, section has larger stone quoins at the corners and plain rendered mouldings around the windows. A thin horizontal band of stone expresses the floor level between the storeys. Some stonework at ground level is fretting due to damp/salt degradation and needs attention. The windows are four paned, with slightly arched heads on the ground floor either side of the entry.

The internal planning is typically a social hall on the ground floor and Masonic temple on the first floor. This arrangement is reflected in each stage of additions. The current form of the building uses the original ground floor as an entry foyer to give access to other parts of the

building. This entry hall has a timber stair leading to the first floor ceremonial spaces. The original wrought iron stair was removed and is believed to now be located in the Missions to Seamen building. The ceiling to the ground floor has also been replaced, or obscured, by a new suspended ceiling which is out of keeping with the age and style of the original ground floor hall. Beyond the entry hall, the ground floor, stone building has been extended back to provide a much larger social hall, amenities and kitchen facilities than the original. On the first floor the original temple is now an anti-chamber to the new temple which is built of brick over the larger, stone, social hall below that was built first as a single storey structure. Internal finishes to the temple are generally simple for the large space contained within. The blue painted, plastered walls are relieved by white rendered plaster columns forming a pilastered effect which culminates at a ceremonial portico, in the Greek temple style, at each end of the hall. The floor features the Mason's ceremonial, black and white chequered pattern. The original ceiling has been obscured by a new suspended ceiling which is out of keeping with the style and age of

the place.

HISTORY

Construction Date:	1892	Source:	A. C. Burns
Architect:	Unknown		
Builder:	Brother David Hepburn		

On 17 November, 1876 a meeting was convened by Bro. George Baston Sen., one of the pioneers of the town, to consider the steps necessary for the formation of a Masonic Lodge. The consecration of the Lodge took place on 18 October, 1877, it becoming Lodge No. 1683 on the register of the Grand Lodge of England. On 27 February, 1900 the Geraldton Lodge separated from the English Constitution and became Geraldton Lodge No. 3 of the W.A.C. - the third oldest in the state behind the Lodge of St. John (Perth) and Fremantle. (Bro. A.C. Burns, "Historical Review - Geraldton Lodge No. 3", 1977)

The first meeting of the Lodge took place on 25 October, 1877, just one week after the consecration. At first meetings were held in the upper storey of the warehouse known as Grays & Co. Henry Gray, one of the owners, was a member of the Lodge.

The second home of the Masonic Lodge was the Masonic Hall, also known as Central Hall, which no longer exists. The foundation of that building was laid on 9 November, 1878 by Wor. Bro. Timperly and this stone is now on display in the foyer of the present Masonic Lodge building. Constance Norris describes the first Masonic Hall as being "...next to the West Australian Bank, standing a long way back so that carriages could draw up in front. It had an imposing entrance with pillared porch and

steps,..." (Norris, C., "Memories of Champion Bay or Old Geraldton", Soroptimist International of Geraldton, p9) On 1 April, 1880 the Lodge was dedicated for Masonic purposes by the Rev. Bro. B.M. King. Although it carried the name of 'Masonic Hall', it was never owned by the Geraldton Lodge. Rather it was held on lease for 99 years at the rental of \$100 per annum. However, this proved to be too great an expense and the Lodge moved to a room made available at the Club Hotel. (Op Cit., Burns) When the financial difficulties of the Lodge were overcome it was decided that a new home was needed. Consequently in February, 1892 the present site was leased from Bro. Jose for a period of 25 years at a yearly rental of \$1. The original festive room on the Augustus Street site had an earthen floor. Seven years before the termination of the lease (1910), the property was purchased by the Lodge for the sum of \$600. Gradually improvements were made to the building, however over time the accommodation became cramped. In addition some members were concerned about the condition of the Temple, especially the wrought iron staircase which gave access to the upper storey. (Now believed to be located at the Mission to Seamen building). As a result a new Lodge room was constructed and opened in early 1921. On 24 June, 1934 the 'new' Lodge Temple, complete with additional upper storey and remodelling of the original section at a total cost of \$3,600, was opened. (Ibid.) Constance Norris indicates that the entry porch was a later addition to the building. (Op Cit, Norris, p86) On 10 November, 1927 Geraldton Lodge No. 3 celebrated its Golden anniversary and in 1977 its centenary.

HISTORIC THEMES

HCWA:	400 Social and civic activities 408 Institutions 404 Community services and utilities
AHC:	8.5 Forming associations 3.7.1 Establishing postal services 7.6.12 Conserving Australia's heritage

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Masonic Lodge in Geraldton has very high aesthetic, social and historic significance for Geraldton and the State. The imposing two storey building makes an important contribution to the built environment of the area. The place has considerable historic and social significance as the meeting place for the Geraldton Freemasons since 1892.

RECOMMENDATION:

Encouragement should be given to the owners of the building to protect its significance. A conservation plan may be useful in guiding future

maintenance and alterations. At an appropriate time in the future, alterations should include replacement of new ceilings back to the original or something more sympathetic, along with modification or removal of the steel security screen on the stairs.

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

Management Category:	1
Level of Significance:	EXCEPTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE: Essential to the heritage of the locality.
Management Recommendation:	Conservation of the place is considered essential. Any proposed change should not unduly impact on the significance of the place and be in accordance with either a Conservation Plan or Heritage Impact Statement.

OTHER LISTINGS

Heritage Council of WA - Register, 16/12/2003
National Trust of WA - Classified, 13/10/2003
Australian Heritage Commission - Register, 01/01/1970
Heritage Council of WA - Register, 01/01/1970

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Burns, A.C., "Historical Review - Geraldton Lodge No.3", 1977.
Norris, C., "Memories of Champion Bay".
Feilman & Associates, "Survey of Places of Historic and Landscape Significance in Geraldton", 1977.

OTHER PHOTOS



Photo Description:

30/10/1996

Suba, Callow & Grundy

The two storey Masonic Lodge.