

Area: Geraldton	Place Number: 271	Category: 5
Assessment Date: 01/01/1970	Last Revision Date: 30/11/2009	
HCWA Number: 13438	Asset ID: MCH127102	

PLACE DETAILS

Name:	Site of Roman Catholic Church
Other Names:	St Francis Xavier's Church
Type of Place:	Site
Address:	Marine Terrace (Lots 274 & 275)
Suburb:	Geraldton

LOCATION

Map Reference: 14.15	GPS Northing: 6815767.00	GPS Easting: 267129.000
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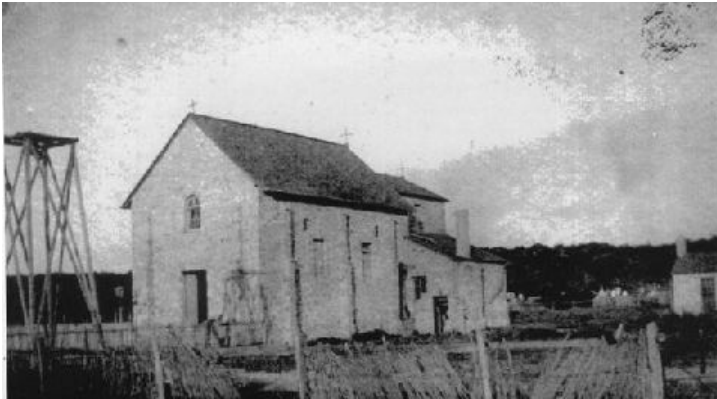


Photo Description:

Geraldton: A Photographic History
The original St Francis Xavier Church.

SITE DETAILS

Lot No.:	Lots 274 & 275		
Reserv No.:		Assess No.:	?
Dia/Plan:		Vol/Fol:	

USE OF PLACE

Original Use:	Church		
Current Use:	Site		
Ownership:			
Public Access:	No	Occupied:	Not Occupied

DESCRIPTION

Walls:	Not applicable	Roof:	Not applicable
Condition:	Good	Integrity:	
Original fabric:			
Modifications:			

The St. Francis Xavier Church was a stone building with a shingle roof. Its location was on the seashore opposite the present Northgate Shopping Centre. See Ruth Marchant James' book "Cork to Capricorn" p71 for a photograph.

HISTORY

Construction Date:	1869	Source:	Marchant James
Architect:	Father Lecaille		
Builder:	Unknown		

The foundation stone for the original St Francis Xavier's Church at Geraldton (Champion Bay) was laid on 6 February, 1869. Ruth Marchant James describes the building which was built by the Ven. Archdeacon A.J. Lecaille, who was responsible for the construction of a number of churches in the Victoria District: "The original St Francis Xavier's chapel was a plain building with strong stone walls. The first portion, which was completed in 1870, consisted only of the sanctuary with a sacristy on either side. One of these small rooms was used as a dwelling-place for the priest, the other to accommodate a school teacher who took classes in the church. The building, built close to the sea, was situated at the northern end of Marine Terrace on Geraldton town lots 274 and 275, and church-goers approached the church from the street. In the grounds a stone-chiselled well containing fresh water was sited conveniently close to

an outside kitchen and stable." (Marchant James, R., "Cork to Capricorn", Congregation of the Presentation Sisters, 1996, p71-72) Classes commenced in the church in 1871 and it is believed that the second stage of St Francis Xavier's Church was finished by March the following year.

In July 1900 the Government Railway Department publicly announced its intention to carry out improvements to the Geraldton railway yards. This decision resulted in the eventual loss of buildings owned by the Catholic Church, including the Star of the Sea Convent on the corner of Marine Terrace and Lewis Street. Although the original St Francis Xavier's Church was not demolished for some ten years after the land was resumed, the last service was held in May 1901. (Ibid., p152) The cornerstone of the original catholic church became the cornerstone of the current St Francis Xavier Cathedral. In the Cathedral a stained glass window commemorates Father Lecaille and the first St Francis Xavier Church. (Geraldton: A Photographic History", p.82)

HISTORIC THEMES

HCWA:	406 Religion
AHC:	8.6.4 Making places for worship

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The site has high historic significance as the location of the first Roman Catholic Church in Geraldton and for its association with Father Lecaille.

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

Management Category:	5
Level of Significance:	HISTORIC SITE: The site has historic significance for its previous use and its role in the historical development of the locality.
Management Recommendation:	Proposed development may need to have regard to possible archaeological evidence remaining on the site. Recognise and interpret the site if feasible. This may be achieved through a variety of methods including, but not limited to, signage, public art, paving treatment and landscaping as well as design treatment of any new development which reflects the former use of the site.

OTHER LISTINGS

No other listings

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

GLLSPC - Buildings (Churches).

Marchant James, R., "Cork to Capricorn", Congregation of the Presentation Sisters, 1996.

"Geraldton: A Photographic History", Geraldton Regional Library.

OTHER PHOTOS

No other photos