abstract
The successful adaptive re-use of a heritage place requires a clear understanding of the values embodied in that place, along with respectful deliberations of proposed new works, to deliver sustainable outcomes without compromising heritage values.

The National Trust in WA has successfully completed a number of substantial adaptive re-use projects in recent years. Each has enabled a viable and appropriate new use that will have contributed to, rather than detracted from, the values of that place.

Five case studies will show how when a compatible new use is found, it enables the stories of the place to be appreciated by an audience not seeking a heritage experience yet appreciative of the values embodied in its authenticity.

For the Trust in Western Australia successful partnerships have presented a way forward for these significant but previously neglected places. As examples of best-practice adaptive re-use they have enabled much-needed conservation, and upgrades to meet contemporary standards, along with an income to provide for long term, ongoing management.
Introduction
The National Trust’s property portfolio comprises over eighty places, acquired since 1964, that are either owned, under management order, or in some cases leased. Some are open to the public (27%); some leased commercially (27%); some leased on a cost recovery basis to not for profit groups (18%); and the remainder are vacant in derelict or ruined states (27%).

Their geographical spread extends east of Esperance in the south, and north-east to Cue (about a 3,500km round trip). The combined natural, Aboriginal, and historic heritage values embodied in these places are representative of Western Australia’s place in the nation and in world history. Their conservation, interpretation and activation contribute to the well being of West Australians in the present and into the future.
Many of these National Trust managed places have been taken on with significant issues: curtilage has been drastically reduced; tenants are paying a peppercorn rent; there are serious conservation and safety issues as well as non-compliance with current standards.

The challenge is to sustainably manage this collection of places into the future whilst maintaining, and ideally enhancing, heritage values. In this paper I will outline five recently successful adaptive re-use projects that are leading this drive for sustainability and have contributed positively to a broader community appreciation of the intangible heritage values these places represent.

X 5 slides
Located at the eastern edge of the City of Perth, “57 Murray Street was built in 1912 for the Public Health and Medical Department as a centre for government bureaucracy, policy and innovation.

Health campaigns that tackled tuberculosis, polio and venereal disease were implemented from 57 Murray Street. As well, policies that led to the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families were enacted from offices in the building, including those of Chief Protector of Aborigines Auber Octavius Neville between 1922 and 1945.
The legacies of 57 Murray Street continue to have a deep impact on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities across Western Australia. The enormity of this history can, and should, not be ignored." (www.57murraystreet.com.au, NTWA 2015, Welcome to 57 Murray Street’, home page)

Located in an early government precinct at the east end of Perth, the city’s Law Courts were built to the south of 57 Murray St in 2008 on land that was part of the original site. The Trust took this highly significant property in 2010 along with a Treasury advance of $4.7 million to enable its conservation. Although in sound structural condition the building was under-utilised, and full services and compliance upgrades were needed along with internal and external conservation before a new use could be found.
A proposal for the place to be converted to a private club fell through and works proceeded without a known future use. Numerous proposals mostly required infill of the rear courtyard space, a significant element of the place, for a tower development to offset the costs of conservation.
With Curtin University’s CBD Business School nearby, the Trust successfully approached the university to enter into a long-term lease to use the place as a city campus for its new Law School providing “a hub for both formal and informal interactions between the staff, students and in-house legal professionals”. (http://business.curtin.edu.au/schools-and-departments/law/current-students/city-campus/, Curtin University 2016, 'City Campus')

The School of Law has worked toward the establishment of private practice barrister offices co-located in the premises. ‘Murray Chambers’ is due to open within the month. A legal clinic is also planned to be included as part of the facility to give students further opportunities to interact with the legal profession and the public. In addition, offices thought once to have belonged to A O Neville have been sub-let to the Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation and to the new Yokai Healing our spirit programs. (G Pickering, ‘Unlikely places of healing’, NTWA Trust News edition 03, August 2016 – October 2016, p8) Curtin has signed a 21 + 21 year lease at commercially negotiated terms.
Looking more like a church than a school, the Old Perth Boys' School was built in 1854 on the site of the colony's first mill in an area know as Byerbrup to local Noongars. It was Perth's first purpose built school. Colonial Secretary, and some-time architect, William Sanford, a member of the Cambridge Camden Society, hoped that its Gothic Revival style would instill religious values in its students.

Designed for 150 but reaching a capacity of 346, a surge in the student population during the state’s gold rush era forced the school to relocate to a larger building in 1896. The place was then used as the library for the adjacent Perth Technical College and remained part of the College until 1979 when Perth Tech became the WA Institute of Technology. In 1979 it was transferred to the National Trust becoming its headquarters for nine years before being leased as a café. In 1987, the former Perth Technical College, then renamed WAIT, became WA's third university and was named after former Prime Minister John Curtin.

Old Perth Boys’ School and the adjacent group including Perth Technical College and Newspaper House is a unique collection in the city’s CBD that ‘demonstrate the civic design aspirations of the periods from late Convict period through to the Depression’. (Register of Heritage Places Interim Entry #2112 Newspaper House Group and Perth Technical College, HCWA, 25/6/1993, p2)
In the twenty-first century the group forms the street front to a $500 million tower redevelopment to house new headquarters for BHP Billiton. Old Perth Boys’ School became a key entry statement to the new ‘Brookfield Place’ development; $960, 000 was received through a plot ratio transfer and was spent on external conservation works. With insufficient funds to complete internal works, the Trust spent a number of years seeking partners and an appropriate re-use for the place. Proposals included offices, a private art gallery, and a function centre. The strict parameters placed by the Trust to protect this significant place created limitations as well as opportunities for future tenants.
In 2014 the Vice Chancellor of Curtin University (formerly WAIT) saw an opportunity to strengthen their presence in the CBD and following a jointly designed and managed process between Curtin and the Trust, Old Perth Boys’ School has been conserved and adapted for a range of stakeholder engagement activities for the university, its location enabling increased links with industry, business and alumni.

One of the oldest buildings in the CBD has remained in public ownership and retained its historic links as a public education facility. A maintenance sinking fund has been established to be used during the lifetime of the 21 + 21 year lease.
At the turn of the twentieth century, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows raised funds to build this impressive orphanage in Cottesloe. Completed in 1905, the two storey federation building later became a convalescent home for returned servicemen; from 1947 to 1984 it was known as ‘Wanslea’, caring for the children of sick mothers and families in crisis; and from 1985 the place became the home of Cancer Support WA retaining the Wanslea name.
The management order for Wanslea was transferred to the National Trust in 2008. Initially funding a master plan, Lotterywest ultimately committed $6.5 million to Wanslea for extensive conservation, adaptation and new development to support an integrated Cancer Wellness Centre campus on the site. An additional $1.6 million was granted for internal furnishings.

The new campus brings together a range of separate cancer support groups under an umbrella management model. The project has been possible through a successful partnership between the National Trust of Western Australia, Lotterywest, BHP Billiton and the Brady Cancer Support Foundation.
Wanslea has a long history of social care. Firstly for orphaned children and later for injured returned soldiers and unwell mothers and children. This history of community support and care is now being continued as a cancer support centre; and the former army buildings have been adapted into classrooms for the adjacent primary school that has been co-located on the site since 1913.
In 2015, the project was recognised with the Margaret Pitt Morrison Award for Heritage at the WA Architecture Awards, the Gerry Gauntlett Award for conservation and adaptive reuse at the State Heritage Office awards, and received an honourable mention in the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. The Cancer Wellness Centre provides a continuing community benefit. It also now has a long term financially sustainable public use that will see it cared for long into the future.
The Wadjuk clan used the North Fremantle area as a summer camping place. By 1851 a convict depot had been established there, and the nearby Perth-Fremantle road and traffic bridge were constructed using convict labour in the 1860s. By 1886 the population was sufficient that a Government School was opened in a local hall.
Government architect George Temple Poole drew up plans for a new school in 1888, but it was not built until 1894. The design heralded a new era in education in Western Australia where boys and girls attended the same school, although they maintained separate entries. The population continued to increase and additions were built over several years.
Stories abound of the colourful life of North Fremantle Primary School. Not surprisingly sport was popular, particularly football. Calisthenics displays, concerts, performances by drum and fife bands, a school choir and much anticipated Fancy Dress Balls were all part of the annual calendar. John Tonkin, Education Minister in the 1940s and then Premier in the 1970s taught at North Fremantle primary from 1931-33 but the school’s most famous attendant was Bon Scott whose first public performance was a recorder duet in a school concert during the time he was at North Fremantle (1957-58).
Over time the place fell into disrepair and its position between a busy main road and an upgraded railway line made it an unsuitable location for a school. A new North Fremantle Primary School opened nearby in 1967. In the mid 1970s the old school was converted to a halfway house for men released from prison and in 1983 the name changed to Stirling House when it became the first bail hostel in Australia.
Children came back to the place from 2008 - 2011 when the Clontarf Aboriginal College took over Stirling House as one of its accommodation hostels however by 2011 the place was vacant and requiring considerable service upgrades along with a $0.5 million asbestos roof replacement.

Fortuitously, a successful local early learning business responded to the Trust’s advertisements to lease the place and it is now home to North Fremantle School of Early Learning, a perfect ‘compatible reuse’ of this significant site that continues to have a vital place in the North Fremantle community.

The Schools of Early Learning are designed to be both aesthetically pleasing and educationally supportive. Their physical environments are warm, inviting, and open to change, decorated with muted and peaceful colours, and provide easy access to outdoor play areas. A multi-purpose central piazza serves as each building’s heart, incorporating kitchen and dining areas. This provides a place to come together for both meals and activities. The former primary school with large well lit classrooms built around a lofty central hall was a perfect fit for this criteria.
This place is located in a landscape known as Nanulgarup to the Noongar people. It was selected as a land grant in 1831 by a Captain Adam Armstrong, and named Dalkieth Farm. It has expansive views over Derbarl Yerrigan - the Swan River. The land was later purchased by James Gallop whose fruit and vegetable production was renowned, earning the name ‘Gallop Gardens’.
The current house is thought to have been built by Gallop in the early 1870s. The place was isolated and the river the major transport route for supplies between Perth and Fremantle.

Competition from Chinese market gardeners returning from the goldfields in the early twentieth century saw the decline of the gardens. Gallop House, as it is now known, saw a variety of private tenants until it became derelict after the Second World War. It was recognized, however, by the Royal Western Australian Historical Society in the 1960s which prevented its demolition. The house was conserved and privately run with limited public access until 2010 when the City of Nedlands transferred it to the National Trust.
Recognising its potential, then CEO Tom Perrigo sought and secured a collaboration with the Peggy Glanville Hicks Composer in Residence program in Sydney. At the same time he was able to honour the late Feilman sisters – Patricia and Margaret – Margaret being a founding member of the Trust in WA and the state’s first female architect and planner. The sisters’ legacy is administered through the Feilman Foundation which has generously supported recently completed conservation and interpretation works.
The Feilman Foundation Composer in Residence Program has been established in the house, supported also by the Australia Council for the Arts, the Australian Performing Rights Association, the Bundanon Trust and the Commonwealth Office for the Arts. Through a internationally advertised selection process, a composer is chosen annually, to live in the house for 12 months, with complete artistic freedom.
These projects would not have happened without partnerships. A range of mechanisms, in both public and private spheres, has enabled them including:

- State government support: a Treasury advance for the work at 57 Murray Street is being repaid through the Trust relinquishing management orders for places not assessed as being critical to its portfolio.

- ‘Public’ grant funding: Lotterywest supported the establishment of Wanslea as a best-practice example of combining heritage conservation with adaptive re-use while supporting vital not-for-profit care groups through a co-location arrangement.

- Private grant funding: the Feilman Foundation supported conservation and interpretation works at Gallop House whilst separate grants have enabled the Composer in Residence program to be established. It is anticipated that private sponsorship will be the key to ongoing success of this program.

- Institutional partnerships: Curtin University has enabled highly appropriate ongoing uses for both Murray St and Old Perth Boys’ School allowing ongoing public access and appreciation of the values of these places. Funds through the commercially based lease arrangements will enable ongoing maintenance.
• Private partnership: Schools of Early Learning has funded conservation in return for a subsidised rent for the first five years. After that time a commercial rental return will be achieved.
The theme of this conference, ‘Connections’, asks ‘what are the threads that connect places with their past? Whilst place is central to conceptions of heritage, it is the less tangible values—stories, memories, connections, emotions—that reveal and sustain our heritage. However places are often the vital link to this intangible heritage.

Traditionally, National Trusts around the world offer visitors a heritage experience in a museum-like environment however not all places can operate as museums and visitation is generally in decline. And museums can create static places where cultural pursuits and traditions no longer happen. Using a place keeps it alive.

In WA the largest visitor demographic to our properties is primary schools and seniors. Our audiences, in these adaptive re-use projects however, are university students, business people, parents and artists.

Breathing new life into places through finding a suitable use, particularly where there is a degree of public access, enables new audiences to be exposed to the intangible heritage of those places, and for past participants in the life of a place to come forward with their stories and memories. And the ongoing use of a place will be part of its stories and memories well into the future.
In each of the case studies I have discussed, interpretation has been a key element. A range of techniques, integral to the redevelopment, are designed to inspire the interest of anyone who either works at or visits the place; to enable exploration of the past and its links to the present through broad historic themes as well as the minutiae of life represented by a place. Oral histories have been recorded and a web presence established where places are less accessible to an audience. The marriage of reuse with key themes from the history of the place is central to each of these examples, although the journey to that outcome has been different in each.

Old Perth Boys’ School and 57 Murray St are once again welcoming educational audiences through public and industry group lectures; Wanslea continues to offer care and support to a broad cross section of the community; the Trust is working with the adjacent 100+ year old primary school, that the orphans attended, on an interpretive wall mural on the site. North Fremantle School of Early Learning has named its rooms after the past users of the place and recently opened its doors for the AGM of the Fremantle History Society.

The above examples represent a fraction of the Trust’s portfolio, however are probably the most valuable in terms of ‘economic return’. In the long term, the funds contributed by commercial leases will enable ongoing management of not only these but other important heritage places in our portfolio less able to ‘pay their way’.
Each of these projects required people with the vision and ability to make them happen. People who could see potential and a way through the crumbling stone, asbestos roofs and lack of dollars. They also came about through a combination of patience, good timing and luck!
The future is bright with a number of new projects in the wings including private partnership arrangements for:

- adaptive re-use of the c1895 Artillery Drill Hall – located in the buffer zone of the world heritage listed Fremantle Prison - into a live music venue;

- adaptive re-use of a 1929 Italian winery on the edge of a significant city wetland into a function centre and café;

- adaptive re-use of several c1860s stone buildings in central Greenough south of Geraldton;

and

- exploration of a commercial/ community mixed use for an early hospital complex in Geraldton.
VISION
A Western Australian community valuing and conserving its natural, Aboriginal and historic heritage for the wellbeing of current and future generations

National Trust
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Old Observatory, 4 Flavelle St, West Perth WA 6005 | PO Box 1162, West Perth WA 6872
T (08) 9331 6088 | F (08) 9331 1571 | e trust@ntwa.com.au | w www.nationaltrust.org.au/wa