

City of Vincent

## Researching the history of your house

A brief guide

*When was the house built?*

*Who built it?*

*Has the house been altered over the years?*

*Who were the earlier owners and occupiers?*

*Are there photographs?*

*What is the history of the street?*



In this booklet you will find a checklist of resources in the Local History Centre and online, as well as suggestions of other places where you may find useful information.



## Where do I start?

Researching the history of your house can be a long yet fruitful process.

An important first step is to note what you already know about the place including details such as the property number, lot number and any unusual or dominant physical characteristics of the place.

### **Before searching...**

- Bear in mind that records are not perfect and are subject to errors.
- Be aware that many street names and property numbers in the documents have changed over the years.

## What is available online?

### **Municipal Heritage Inventory**

The properties listed on the *MHI* are considered to be of heritage value within the City. You can search by individual property address or street name. Records include the general history of the area and the historical background of the property as well as architectural details.

[www.vincentheritage.com.au](http://www.vincentheritage.com.au)

You may also wish to visit the websites of the Heritage Council of Western Australia and National Trust of Australia (WA Branch). See address list at back.

### **Post Office Directories**

Wise's Post Office Directories provide street listings of suburbs covering the years 1893 to 1949. Streets within the City of Vincent are listed alphabetically under **Perth**. You need to work back from 1949 and use adjoining houses and street intersections to help track your house, as numbers and street names may change. Remember that the Directories record occupiers, not owners as the lands titles do, and they are not completely reliable as omissions occur and sometimes houses temporarily 'disappear' from the directories when they are unoccupied.

[www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/wa\\_history/post\\_office\\_directories](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/wa_history/post_office_directories)

## ***Trove Digitised Newspapers***

The National Library of Australia has digitised the major newspapers of each State. Western Australian newspapers include The Daily News (1882-1950), Mirror (1921-1956), Sunday Times (1902-1954), The West Australian (1879-1954) and Western Mail (1885-1954).

Using the *Advanced Search* option, it is easy to search by address or name. This gives free access to notices on births, deaths, engagements and marriages at the address, as well as other items such as sales and rentals. You may also find articles relating to the property or the people who have lived there.

[www.trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper](http://www.trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper)

***Ancestry.com.au is a subscription website which may be accessed for free in the Library and Local History Centre. On it you will find:***

- ***Council Rate Books***

Rate books record the property taxes levied by local councils. Information recorded may include: the name of the owner, the occupier, occupation of the occupier, the type of building on the site and the valuation of the property. The City of Perth rate books from 1880-1946 can be searched on *Ancestry*. The State Records Office also holds these records on microfiche.

Ownership enquiries from 2002 onwards can be made at the City of Vincent Customer Service Centre. (There are costs involved in this form of research).

- ***Electoral Rolls***

Electoral rolls were compiled during election years and can provide the names, addresses and occupations of the adults who were resident at an address. WA rolls from 1903 to 1980 are available on *Ancestry*. For recent Electoral Rolls the National Archives (WA) holds 1987 to 1993. (Vincent rolls between 1987 and 1993 are held in the Local History Centre Archive.)

- ***Birth, Death and Marriages, Burial Records and Wills***

These records will provide information on the people who lived in the house you are researching. A name search on *Ancestry* may locate the basic information. If this is unsuccessful you may try the Battye Library, the Western Australian Genealogical Society, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Metropolitan Cemeteries Board and Probate Registry.



## Photographs

The City of Vincent **Local History Image Library** contains over 4,000 early photographs. These include houses, families, businesses, streets, schools, parks and facilities. This can be accessed from the Library & Local History web page at [www.vincent.wa.gov.au/library/Home](http://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/library/Home) or at [www.photosau.com.au/vincent/scripts/home.asp](http://www.photosau.com.au/vincent/scripts/home.asp)

Further photographs may be located and viewed on the State Library of Western Australia website.

[www.catalogue.slwa.wa.gov.au/search~S2](http://www.catalogue.slwa.wa.gov.au/search~S2)

## What can I find in the Local History Centre?

### A Brief History of the Suburb

There may be a great deal more information available about your suburb than about your house. Therefore researching the history of your suburb is useful in providing a context for your property. A series of eight brochures has been produced to provide an historical overview of the development of each suburb. These can be picked-up from the Local History Centre or viewed on their webpage. The brochures and further individual property information can also be viewed at the City's dedicated heritage website.

[www.vincentheritage.com.au](http://www.vincentheritage.com.au)



### Estate Agents' Subdivision Posters

The posters were produced by the estate agents when blocks of land went on sale for the purpose of residential development. These posters are helpful in creating a profile of the development of your neighbourhood.

### Street Files

Organised alphabetically by street names, these files contain previous research on properties. Information can include: Certificates of Title, photographs, heritage reports and assessments, newspaper articles and real estate advertisements.

## ***Sewerage Plans***

Sewerage Plans are historical records of street blocks which show: lot boundaries, the outline of buildings and outbuildings, the main construction material and usually include a property number.

There are two main sets of sewerage plans available. The first are the Public Works Department series that date from 1897 to 1903. These plans are available in hard copy in the Local History Centre map cabinet.

The second set are a series prepared by the Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage & Drainage Department (MWSS&DD) which date from 1915 to the late 1950s. The plans are available as digitised images that can be viewed in the Local History Centre (with the ability to zoom in and out of each plan).

## ***Maps and Street Directories***

The Map Collection consists of early maps of the Perth and Highgate areas dating from 1838 and twentieth century maps of the other City of Vincent suburbs. The Street Directory collection dates from the 1930s, and if compared with current directories, they can be used to identify any changes to the layout of your street or those nearby.

## ***Oral Histories***

The Oral History Collection has transcripts of over 400 interviews with past and present residents. Topics include residences, streets, businesses, schools and general life in the City, which may help provide context for your research.

## ***Local Newspapers***

The Local History Collection contains copies of *The Voice News* and *Guardian Express* dating back to 2000 with irregular issues back to the 1980s and some earlier newspapers.

## ***Architecture Books***

The Local History Collection includes useful illustrated architecture books that can help identify the age and style of your property. These books are mainly shelved at call number 728 and are to be viewed in the Local History Centre.

## What other sources of information are available?

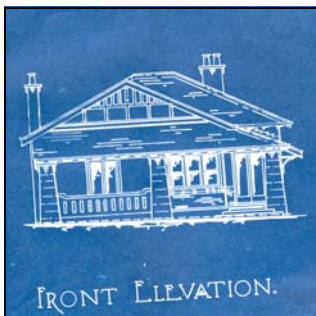
### **Certificates of Title**

Certificates of Title provide detail on the ownership of the land, not the existence of structures on it. However, when used in conjunction with other sources the titles can help to narrow down a date range. Starting with your current Certificate of Title, you can trace back through the previous Titles for the property to find the names and sometimes the occupation of previous owners. *Where to find:* Landgate and State Records Office (There are costs involved in this form of research).

### **Aerial Views**

Landgate have aerial views of Perth going back to 1953 on their website. To access them on the Map Viewer page select 'Buy Aerial Photo' and locate by your address. A list of aerial maps will display in date order. Click to view. These may be purchased.

[www.landgate.wa.gov.au/bmvt/app/mapviewer/](http://www.landgate.wa.gov.au/bmvt/app/mapviewer/)



An example of an elevation located through an Archive Search

### **House Plans and Styles**

Architectural plans and building application records give the name of the architect, the builder and sometimes include the cost of construction and building specification.

*Where to find:* You can lodge an Archive Search Request at the City's Customer Service Centre. (There will be costs involved in this form of research).

### **Telephone Directories**

Telephone directories may be useful as an extension to *Wise's Post Office Directories*. They can be used to provide details on the occupier of the house in which you are researching, presuming that the resident remained at the subject house. *Where to find:* Battye Library has telephone directories from 1919 to 1959 on microfiche and 1960 to date in hard copy.

# Address List:

## **Landgate**

1 Midland Square, Morrison St (cnr Great Northern Highway),  
Midland, WA 6056  
Telephone: (08) 9273 7373  
website: [www.landgate.com.au](http://www.landgate.com.au)

## **State Records Office**

Ground Floor Alexander Library Building,  
(James Street West entrance)  
Perth Cultural Centre, James Street,  
Perth, WA 6000  
Telephone: (08) 9427 3360  
website: [www.sro.wa.gov.au](http://www.sro.wa.gov.au)

## **State Library of Western Australia/ Battye Library**

Alexander Library Building, Perth Cultural  
Centre, James Street, Perth, WA 6000  
Telephone: (08) 9427 3111  
website: [www.slwa.wa.gov.au](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au)

## **National Archives (WA)**

384 Berwick Street,  
East Victoria Park, WA 6101  
Telephone: (08) 9470 7500  
website: [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

## **The Western Australian Genealogical Society**

6/48 May Street, Bayswater, WA 6053  
Telephone: (08) 9271 4311  
website: [www.wags.org.au](http://www.wags.org.au)

## **Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages**

Level 10, 141 St Georges Terrace, Perth,  
WA 6000  
Telephone: 1300 305 021 or  
(08) 9264 1555  
website: [www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au](http://www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au)

## **Metropolitan Cemeteries Board**

website: [www.mcb.wa.gov.au](http://www.mcb.wa.gov.au)

## **Probate Registry**

14th Floor, National Mutual Building, 111  
St Georges Terrace, Perth, WA 6000  
Telephone: (08) 9421 5152

## **Royal Western Australian Historical Society**

Stirling House, 49 Broadway, Nedlands,  
WA 6009  
Telephone: (08) 9386 3841  
website: [www.histwest.org.au](http://www.histwest.org.au)

## **Heritage Council of Western Australia**

Bairds Building, Level 2,  
491 Wellington Street, Perth WA 6000  
Telephone: (08) 6552 4000  
website: [www.stateheritage.wa.gov.au](http://www.stateheritage.wa.gov.au)

## **National Trust of Australia (WA)**

Address: Old Observatory, 4 Havelock  
Street, West Perth, WA 6005  
Telephone: (08) 9321 6088  
website: [www.ntwa.com.au](http://www.ntwa.com.au)

## *Final Note*



Once you have compiled all of your information to create a chronological picture of your house, it would be appreciated if you could donate a copy to the Local History Centre to ensure that your research is not lost and is available for future researchers and residents.



### ***City of Vincent Library and Local History Centre***

*Loftus Centre, 99 Loftus Street, Leederville, WA 6007*

*Telephone: (08) 9273 6090*

***website: [www.vincent.wa.gov.au/library](http://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/library)***

### ***City of Vincent***

*Administration and Civic Centre*

*244 Vincent Street (cnr Loftus Street), Leederville, WA 6007*

*Telephone: (08) 9273 6000*

People with specific requirements can request to have this document in an alternative format.

***Booklet printed by City of Vincent January 2017***

*Disclaimer: Any statement, opinion or advice expressed or implied in this publication is made in good faith but on the basis that the City of Vincent, its agents, associated organisations and employees are not liable (whether by reason or negligence, lack of care or otherwise) to any person for any damage or loss whatsoever which has occurred or may occur in relation to that person taking or not taking (as the case may be) action in respect of any representation, statement or advice referred to above.*