

WHERE TO GO

Claremont Museum

66 Victoria Avenue
Claremont WA 6010
T 08 9340 6983
E museum@claremont.wa.gov.au

Before accessing records held at Claremont Museum it is advisable to ring first for an appointment.

Claremont Library

Claremont Community Hub
327 Stirling Highway
Claremont WA 6010
T 08 9285 4353
E library@claremont.wa.gov.au

State Records Office

Ground Floor
Alexander Library Building
Perth Cultural Centre
Francis Street, Perth WA 6000
T 08 9427 3360
W www.sro.wa.gov.au

The J S Battye Library of West Australian History

3rd Floor
Alexander Library Building
Perth Cultural Centre
Francis Street
Perth WA 6000
T 08 9427 3111
WA 1800 198 107
Int. +61 8 9427 3111
W www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/wa_history/land

Landgate

*(formerly Department of Land Information,
DOLA – Department of Land Administration)*

1 Midland Square
Morrison Road
Midland WA 6056
T 08 9273 7373

And

Perth Cloisters
200 St Georges Tce
Perth WA 6000
T 08 9429 8433
W www.landgate.wa.gov.au

*Landgate provides access to location information including:
property details, titles, valuations, property sales reports, maps,
aerial photography and satellite imagery.*

Information compiled by Lindy Wallace of
Lowanna Connections.

Design by Chameleon Creative.

EASY STEPS TO RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOUSE



Looking for some more information about the history of your house? Don't know where to start?

What do you want to know?

When was the house built?

Who designed and built the house?

Who were the earlier owners and occupiers?

Has the house been altered over the years?

This guide helps you answer those questions by pointing you in the direction of the most commonly used resources and where to locate them.

Before beginning your research it is important to understand how Claremont developed. The following timeline gives you a brief outline of that development.



C.1905, Avanna, 5 Goldworthy Road, Claremont Museum

CLAREMONT TIMELINE

1870's-1895 - Large private estates were built around where Christ Church Grammar, Methodist Ladies College and Bethesda Hospital now stand. At the same time investors, speculating that the railway would pass through the area bought smaller blocks ranging from three-quarters of an acre to five acres from the government. These smaller blocks were gradually subdivided and ranged from quarter acre to 400 square metre blocks.

The variety of block sizes in Claremont made the area affordable to a broad

range of budgets. By 1895 there were 64 homes and businesses and a church, Christ Church, in Claremont. All the prominent surviving buildings from this time are of stone and timber.



C.1910, Knutsford, Claremont Museum

1896- 1902 - In 1896 there were 76 households and businesses recorded. The popularity of the area saw Claremont declared a municipality in 1898 and the number of households and businesses had risen to 469 by 1902. The most popular style of housing at this time is now known as 'Federation'.

1903-1915 - This was a period of vigorous growth in both the provision of housing and amenities. Population and housing grew steadily with 701 households or businesses in 1905, 872 in 1910 and 1,240 in 1915. The 'Federation' style of housing was still dominant.



C.1910-1920, Kilkerran, Claremont Museum

1921-1939 - Growth slowed after the First World War but picked up again during this time when there was an increase in development. Interwar housing was mainly in either the 'Californian Bungalow' or 'late Federation Bungalow' styles.

A large number of Claremont's houses with their unique architecture, which gives the suburb its distinct character, were established prior to World War II. However, the story of Claremont's development and enhancement has continued and as time passes, more places will be recognised as being special and important to the community.



C.1910-1920, Kilkerran, Claremont Museum

Now that you have a general knowledge of housing development in Claremont it is time to begin your research by starting with the documents listed below.

It is important though to begin with realistic expectations about what information is still available about your house. In some cases street names may have changed and house numbering may have altered. Some records may no longer be available and many of these sources may not be found on the internet so be prepared to visit organisations to do the searching in person.

MAPS AND PLANS

Maps and plans generally have information on property divisions in a street as well as larger allotments in a block. Using maps with a range of dates will help represent the changes over time. District maps record the growth of Claremont's subdivisions from the first allocation of allotments by the colonial government from the Crown land estate (land held in the name of the Crown) to the current day. Early district maps that have been superseded are called 'Cancelled Public Plans'. Some maps have reference numbers that are useful in the context of title searching. They also sometimes have application numbers and subdivision plan numbers.

The State Records Office (SRO) has the original records for cancelled public plans. You can obtain scanned copies (fees apply) or take in your own camera. It is advisable to ring 2-3 days in advance to request the retrieval of plans, as many of them are stored offsite.

Landgate has microfiche copies of the cancelled plans, from which you can obtain copies.

Building Plans

Local councils maintain floor plans, elevation and site plans included in the application provided to the council, at the time the house was built or extended. Check with your local council to see if they still hold copies of the building plans. Availability and access will vary from council to council.

Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board Plans and Field Books

Surveys in the form of maps were usually done in preparation for a sewer. They provide information about buildings which existed at the time of the survey and normally include the outline of the dwelling and any outbuildings, water source such as windmills or wells etc. Some may also include the lot number, individual house numbers and/or names. The field books may provide slightly more information than the plans.

Claremont Museum has a limited number of plans in its collection. The State Records Office has the field books and a set of plans from approximately 1901-1995 on microfilm.

Real Estate Agents Advertising Posters

As some of the larger estates in Claremont were being subdivided, real estate agents often produced large, colourful posters to market the land. These often show divisions of land, street numbering, auction dates, descriptions of properties and land measurements.

Claremont Museum has a small number of local area posters in its collection as does the State Library of Western Australia.

POST OFFICE DIRECTORIES

Post office directories were published in Western Australia during the period 1893-1949, first by H Piersene and then by H Wise & Co. They provide the names of people who have lived in the house.

The aim in using the directories is to find out when a house is first listed on a particular site and who was living there at that time. Directories also contain separate government, trade and professional indices. When using the directories it is best to start at a date when you are sure the house existed and work backwards from there.

A word of caution when using the directories:

- They list 'occupants' as distinct from 'owners'
- Some of the early editions do not have street listings; they have alphabetic listings by householder name
- Street numbers were not included until the mid 1920s and they can change over time
- Street names were changed from time to time - for instance: Stirling Highway was once known as Claremont Avenue

Where to find post office directories:

- Local Studies Collections of most public libraries
- State Library of Western Australian at: www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/wa_history/post_office_directories

COUNCIL RATE BOOKS

Council rate books will tell you the date of when your house was built. They are a good source of information about the occupiers and valuation of a particular property over a number of years.

They are the registers that record the property taxes levied by local councils. The books are divided into wards and within each ward the streets are listed alphabetically. Keep in mind that some street names and house numbers may have changed.

Information that may be found in the rate books:

- Description of the property, e.g. vacant land, house or business
- Valuation
- Type of building material (timber, stone, brick)
- Owner and/or occupier and occupation

Rate books are not always easy to access and some are no longer available. Very old rate books may be fragile and some records have been lost or destroyed.

Claremont Rate Books from 1903-1970 are available on microfilm at the State Library of WA, the State Records Office and Claremont Museum.

MUNICIPAL INVENTORY

Under the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 every local government authority within Western Australia is required to prepare, and periodically review, a Municipal Inventory.

A Municipal Inventory is a list of buildings which in the opinion of the local government are considered to be of local cultural heritage significance. They provide information such as street/lot number; type of dwelling; construction date; construction materials and name of original owner.

You will find copies of the Claremont Municipal Inventory at the offices of the Town of Claremont, Claremont Library at the Claremont Community Hub and Claremont Museum.

CLAREMONT STREET HISTORIES

The history of a selection of eighteen Claremont streets is available in separate booklets available for purchase at Claremont Museum. They have been produced in partnership with Curtin University's Research Institute for Cultural Heritage.

We invite you, when compiling the history of your house and its occupants, to please give consideration to donating a copy of your research to the Town of Claremont's local history collection at Claremont Museum. Your contribution will provide an invaluable resource for future research into the history of Claremont.