

## Place No. 18 Freddie Yee Palk's Bakery and Store (fmr)



Remains of Freddie Yee Palk's Bakery and Store (fmr), 2012

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Freddie Yee Palk's Bakery and Store (fmr)
Other Name (1)	
Location/Address	
Street Number	37
Street Name	Roe Street
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	mE 515319 mN 7702917 Longitude 117.1472 Latitude: -20.7735

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Phone/fax</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Item No.</i>
State of Western Australia				
<i>Reserve No.</i>	<i>Lot/Location No.</i>	<i>Plan/Diagram</i>	<i>Vol/Folio</i>	<i>Item No.</i>
UCL	Lot 170	223090	LR3157 / 21	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8669
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	No
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	Yes
<b>Management Category</b>	<b>B</b>

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	Pre-1889 (visible in 1889 photo of destruction to Roebourne after 1889 cyclone (LHO 2005.2266).
Construction Date (2)	

Site Type (Place Type)	Other Structure
<b>Use(s) of Place</b>	
<i>Original</i>	COMMERCIAL: Shop/Retail Store (single)
<i>Present</i>	VACANT/UNUSED: Vacant/Unused - Ruin
<i>Other</i>	
<b>Construction Materials:</b>	
<i>Walls</i>	9. STONE 904 Local Stone
<i>Roof</i>	
<i>Other</i>	
Condition	Poor
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Ruin
<b>Physical Description</b>	
<p>There are two partial simple stone buildings standing in ruin on the site. These do not have roofs. The buildings are constructed in local stone random laid with cement mortar. The main building consists of two rooms separated by a stepped wall, making two equal sized rooms. Bolts protrude from the outside walls where a verandah may have once completely surrounded the main structure.</p> <p>Of the second, smaller building, only partial walls remain.</p> <p>Some recent bulldozing for grading of the amphitheatre has occurred adjacent to the structures, impacting on the potential for archaeological research.</p>	
<b>History</b>	
<p>The pearling industry brought an influx of Malay, Chinese, Filipino and Japanese migrants to Cossack from the 1870s. There is also evidence that European settlers imported Chinese labourers as servants and labourers for the pastoral industry.<sup>1</sup> The recorded population of Roebourne in 1877 was '428 whites, 78 women, over 600 Aboriginal workers including station hands, almost 1000 Asians.'<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Freddie Yee Palk set up a commercial enterprise servicing the district. He established a bakery, store, tailoring business and market gardens from c1902. Evidence shows that Yee Palk dissolved a storekeepers business partnership in Port Hedland in 1902.<sup>3</sup> He started a tailors and outfitters business on Roe St in Roebourne, opposite the Mercantile Store selling the 'latest European styles' the same year.<sup>4</sup> By the 1920s, the store was selling groceries and it is likely that it was also a bakery from this time or earlier. His market garden was located behind the store on the banks of the Harding River. The memoirs of EH Tuslove, a resident of Roebourne in the 1920s, state 'I often went to Yee Palk's for green groceries and would see several men in the room noisily playing Mah Jong and smoking... everyone firmly believed they were smoking Opium.'<sup>5</sup> In 1955 the local health authority reported on Yee Palk's bakery 'Approx 50 loaves of bread made each week. The shop does a very limited trade.'<sup>6</sup> Yee Palk died a pauper in 1963 aged 75 and is buried in the Old Cemetery, Roebourne.</p> <p>The bakery and store were repeatedly damaged by cyclones and the Harding River in flood (1889, 1935 and 1954). The Roebourne Road Board had condemned the building by 1949, and permission was granted by the State Housing Commission to extend and improve the building in 1950.<sup>7</sup> It is unlikely this work was undertaken. In 2013 the building is on land being used by the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation Ltd (NYFL). Plans are underway to develop the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Cultural Complex, with the heritage values of the building and site preserved.</p>	
<b>Archaeology</b>	
<p>There is potential for archaeological remains related to the use of this structure over the time of its use. The archaeological values should be considered during the redevelopment of the area.</p>	

<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>	
<b>Historic theme (s)</b>	<p>1. DEMOGRAPHIC SETTLEMENT AND MOBILITY 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees 103 Racial contact and interaction 104 Land allocation and subdivision</p> <p>3. OCCUPATIONS 308 Commercial services &amp; industries</p> <p>5. OUTSIDE INFLUENCES 503 Natural disasters</p>

<b>Statement of Significance:</b>	<p>Freddie Yee Palk's Bakery and Store has historical significance as the only remaining structure in Roebourne that stands as a link to the role that Chinese people played in the development of the region. It has some aesthetic significance as a substantial ruin located in the central part of the town. This building provides an insight into the building techniques of the past.</p>
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<b>ASSOCIATIONS</b>	
Architect/Designer (1)	
Architect/Designer (2)	
Other Associated Person(s)	Freddie Yee Palk

<b>OTHER</b>	
<b>References</b>	
<p>See endotes. Kathy De La Rue, 'A multi-racial society', <i>Pearl Shell and Pastures: the story of Cossack and Roebourne, and their place in the history of the North West, from the earliest explorations to 1910</i>, Cossack Project Committee, 1979, pp 103-109.</p> <p>Photographs Local History Collection, Shire of Roebourne: Destruction of the Victoria Hotel and Yee Palk's store after the 1889 cyclone, 2005.2266 Post box at Roebourne (the first north of Geraldton) with Yee Palk's store in the background, dated 1898, 2005.2176 Yee Palk's store after a flood with kerosene cans and wooden crates strewn, 1935, 2005.2276a-d Harding River in flood with Yee Palk's store partially submerged, 2005.2230a-b Yee Palk's bakery, 1935 2005.2166a-b</p>	

MHI - 1996	Assessment undertaken and Place Name Record created as "Freddie Yee Palk's Old Building"
MHI Review – 2012	Entry updated and renamed "Freddie Yee Palk's Bakery and Store (fmr)".



**Freddie Ye Palk's general store, Cossack, 1935**  
Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.2166

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<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, 30 December 1874, p 2

<sup>2</sup> Riatti, J. c1964, *A history of the development of the NW of WA*, p 37

<sup>3</sup> 'Dissolution of Partnership' Notice *Northern Public Opinion*, 21 March 1902

<sup>4</sup> Advertisement in *Northern Public Opinion*, 18 April 1902

<sup>5</sup> EH Truslove 'Not so Long Ago' unpublished manuscript, held in Local History Collection, Shire of Roebourne

<sup>6</sup> Chief Inspector Sanitation Report, Roebourne Road Board, 1955, held in Local History Collection, Shire of Roebourne

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Secretary Roebourne Road Board to Secretary State Housing Commission, 19 Feb 1949; Consent to Commence Building Operations F Palk Roebourne, State Housing Commission, held in Local History Collection, Shire of Roebourne