

Place No. 67 Watson & Tee Store (fmr), Roebourne



Watson & Tee Store (fmr), Roebourne, 2012

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Watson & Tee Store (fmr), Roebourne
Other Name (1)	Roebourne Library
Other Name (2)	Watson's Store, HJ Watson & Co
	Roebourne Baptist Church
	Masonic Hall
Location/Address	
Street Number	47
Street Name	Sholl St
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	515120 mE, 7702880 mN (MGA94 Zone 50) Longitude: 117.1453 Latitude: -20.7738

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Shire of Roebourne				
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.
	12	P528	1659/869	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8689
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
Management Category	A
DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	1888
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Individual Building or Group
Use(s) of Place	
Original	COMMERCIAL: Shop\Retail Store (single)
Present	EDUCATIONAL: Library

<i>Other</i>	GOVERNMENTAL: Town, Shire or District Hall RELIGIOUS: Church, Cathedral or Chapel RESIDENTIAL: Single storey residence SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL: Masonic Hall EDUCATIONAL: Primary School
Construction Materials:	
<i>Walls</i>	9. STONE 904 Local Stone
<i>Roof</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated iron
<i>Other</i>	11. TIMBER 1199 Other Timber
Condition	Good
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Largely intact
Physical Description	
<p>The building was designed as one large room to be used as a store. It is constructed from local stone laid in a semi-random pattern with cement mortar. It has two separately pitched skillion roofed verandahs with decorative cast iron posts. The main room was a hipped roof with two rows of cyclone battens. Built on a sloping site, the building has a large basement, with windows and a ground level door to the basement for deliveries to the original store. The building is designed in the Victorian Georgian and Northwest vernacular style.</p>	
History	
<p>This elevated and prominent site was part of John Withnell's original town land grant of six acres and was sold by Withnell in 1888 to brothers Robert and Arthur Bunning.¹ The building was constructed in 1888, probably by the Bunning brothers, for use as the Watson & Tee Store. The Bunning brothers arrived in Western Australia from England in 1886 and as building contractors were responsible for many of Roebourne's public buildings including the hospital and post office. They founded the successful firm Bunning Brothers which continues to trade as 'Bunnings Warehouse' and is now owned by Wesfarmers.</p> <p>Prior to the construction of this building the Watson & Tee Store operated from another premises in Roebourne. A newspaper article in August 1888 reported that;</p> <p>'The enterprising firm of merchants, Messrs, Watson & Tee, at Roebourne, have had erected a substantial store building. It is the largest store in the district, and very commodious, having two departments, one for general merchandise and the other for drapery and soft goods. They have also had erected a substantial store at Cossack. Roebourne is increasing in importance, if buildings are a criterion.'²</p> <p>Harry John Watson and George Tee operated the Watson & Tee store for a decade, when the partnership was dissolved. The store was then known as HJ Watson & Co. William Porter became Watson's junior partner in 1912. Watson was a member of the Roebourne Road Board for many years and also served as Chairman. The Watson Collection of business and family correspondence is held by the Shire of Roebourne Local History Office. It includes a large collection of personal and commercial letters, legal documents and papers dated 1880s-1940s.³</p> <p>Alice Mary Wainwright owned the building from May 1934. During Wainwright's ownership the building is said to have been used as a school, Sunday school, town hall and private residence.⁴</p> <p>In 1946 it was bought a group of pastoralists for use as a Masonic Lodge.⁵</p> <p>In 1984 the Roebourne Christian Fellowship bought the building and it was used for a time as a Baptist Church.</p> <p>More recently it has been used as the Shire of Roebourne public library.</p>	

Archaeology
There is potential for archaeological investigations to provide some additional information related to the use of the location over time. The large cellar may be of particular significance if the floor has been built up over time rather than re-excavated.

SIGNIFICANCE	
Historic theme (s)	<p>3. OCCUPATIONS 308 Commercial services and industries</p> <p>4. SOCIAL AND CIVIC ACTIVITIES 404 Community services and utilities 406 Religion</p> <p>6. PEOPLE 602 Early settlers</p>
Statement of Significance:	
<p>The Watson & Tee Store is a good example of an early substantial stone building, associated with prominent early settlers in the district, John Withnell and built by the Bunning Brothers. It has historic significance for its various uses and functions it has served for the Roebourne community including as a general store, Masonic lodge, Baptist Church and public library. The building contributes to the aesthetic value of Roebourne as an historic town.</p>	

ASSOCIATIONS	
Architect/Designer (1)	
Architect/Designer (2)	Bunning Brothers builders
Other Associated Person(s)	<p>John Withnell Harry John Watson George Tee William Porter Alice Mary Wainwright</p>
MHI 1996	Site assessed and Place Name Record created
MHI Review 2012	Entry updated



Watson & Tee Store, 1889

Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.2271

¹ Royal Australian Institute of Architects Architectural Evaluation Report, 1986, Local History Collection, Shire of Roebourne

² 'A new store', *Western Mail*, 25 August 1888, p 40

³ Watson & Tee Family Correspondence Collection, Shire of Roebourne Collections Significance Assessment, p 53-54

⁴ Royal Australian Institute of Architects Report.

⁵ Royal Australian Institute of Architects Report; Classification Assessment, National Trust of Australia (WA); Register of the National Estate, Database number 010120.