

# Christmas Island Heritage Survey 2022



*Flying Fish Cove, circa 1963*

## Executive Summary

Local Governments in WA are required to produce a *Heritage Survey*, formerly known as a *Municipal Inventory*, of places of cultural, historical, spiritual, scientific or natural heritage value in their local government area in conjunction with the community under the *Heritage Act (WA)(2018)*.

This Act was put in force on the Territory of Christmas Island by the Commonwealth for the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 as it is needed to assist in the legislative framework for the Commonwealth's *Strategic Assessment* of Christmas Island under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (Cth)(1999)*.

The existing service delivery agreement with the WA Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage was extended to fund the officers in the Heritage division to assist in the management and application of the provisions of the Heritage Act (WA)(2018) on Christmas Island.

A local government's Heritage Survey exists at the local level of heritage inventory management. The tier structure is as below –

Cultural heritage places in Australia can be recorded under many different heritage listings. Some of these listings give statutory protection to heritage places, and others are simply lists with unofficial or semi-official designations, often arising from local, community-based or thematic surveys as is a Local Government's Heritage Survey.

Statutory listings are issued by government organisations such as the Heritage Council, the Australian Heritage Council or local governments. The listing types are:

Listing Type	Organisation	Legislation
State Register of Heritage Places	Heritage Council of WA	WA Heritage Act 2018
Protection Order	Heritage Council of WA	WA Heritage Act 2018
Heritage Agreement	Heritage Council of WA	WA Heritage Act 2018

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Listing Type	Organisation	Legislation
Heritage List	Local governments	WA Planning and Development Act 2005; Local Planning Schemes
Heritage Survey	Local Governments	WA Heritage Act 2018
National heritage list	Australian Heritage Council	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)

Note that it is the Local Heritage **Survey** from which a Local Heritage **List** will be drawn from. Items in the Local Heritage List under the WA Planning and Development Act 2005 and named in the local government's Local Planning Scheme instrument carry statutory protection. The Local Heritage **Survey** affords no statutory protection.

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# Settlement Precinct

**Heritage Value:** Exceptional

Historic / Scientific /Representative/ Aesthetic / Creative/technical

**Authenticity:** High

**ADDRESS/LOCATION/BOUNDARY:**

Both sides of Gaze Road in Settlement; from the southern boundaries of properties MQ31 and MQ5 and following the arch of Rocky Point continuing east as far as the eastern boundary of the Sea View Lodge, a projection from this boundary in each direction running north as far as the Indian Ocean and south to the base of the escarpment. **Road Frontage-** Gaze Road

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Settlement Precinct is a relic of post- World War II housing development by the British Phosphate Commission (BPC). It is significant with large numbers of standard pattern single and married accommodation that were constructed in designated areas for different ethnic groups. There are sufficient buildings surviving from the pre-BPC period to provide a diverse and interesting group of house types used since the 1920's which is demonstrative of the standard and variety of accommodation provided for the European community. The precinct has aesthetic qualities arising from its combination of low scale regular housing set amongst mature plantings of exotic trees and shrubs, as well as its foreshore oriented aspect.

Contrasts in approaches to the tropical environment is evident in the design of different buildings from different periods. This is illustrative of the social expectations and technological capabilities of different periods.

The Settlement Precinct is shaped in a crescent around the tip of Rocky Point. A blend of one and two storey residential buildings, masonry rendered bungalows and cottages infill a space between Gaze Road and the large timber bungalows which face the foreshore. These substantial residences have spacious gardens with servants quarters. Pre-war and post war, one storey bungalows and cottages are situated around the tip of Rocky Point. Two large concrete masonry houses, the Rumah Tinggi and the Seaview Lodge, were erected in identical materials at different times using one of several standard patterns.

**HISTORY:**

The Settlement Residential Precinct was developed in the 1930s by the British Phosphate Commission. A two storey Manager's Residence called the "Rumah Tinggi" was erected in 1931 east of Rocky Point. West of the Rumah Tinggi five substantial bungalows were built in a row facing the shore line. Attached to each bungalow are service areas for Asian domestic servants.

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These bungalows were occupied by Japanese forces during the WWII occupation of Christmas Island. Two of the bungalows were damaged during the occupation and subsequently demolished post WWII. Between 1946 and 1949, eight new bungalows were built along the foreshore, due to an increase in economy and access to materials, two more bungalows similar to the types built pre-war were erected with some improvements in the design.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Post-war, the area around the Settlement bungalows became the site of married and single quarters built to standard pattern designs in concrete masonry by the British Phosphate Commission (BPC). The Rumah Tinggi was then converted to single men's quarters for a short period of time while housing developments were completed; the Rumah Tinggi was then converted to a central Mess for single staff. Other facilities in Settlement, such as Visitors Quarters and a European Primary School were built post-war.

The Seaview Lodge at the eastern extremity of the Settlement Precinct was completed mid-1950 and became the new Managers House until 1988. East of the Seaview Lodge, three new community cemeteries were established, one European, one Chinese and one Malay. By early 1960s the Settlement precinct was mostly in place, minimal building occurred until the 1990s. The European Primary School was converted to a preschool for all children regardless of ethnicity. Since 1992 houses have been privately owned and some additions and alterations have taken place. In 1992/93 Seaview Lodge was purchased by the Christmas Island Casino and Resort (CIR) and used as an Administration Office. After the CIR closed in 1998, Christmas Island Phosphates purchased the Lodge. In 2007, the Seaview Lodge was purchased privately and restored to its original condition conserving its structure, form and character.

### **Integrity/Authenticity**

Exceptional/High

Relatively good form/Character and structure intact.

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: The Men who Made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.  
Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.

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# Rumah Tinggi

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic / Representative / Aesthetic/ Associative / Social

**AUTHENTICITY** : High

## **ADDRESS/LOCATION:**

Eastern side of Jalan Rumah Tinggi between Coconut Grove and Indian Ocean. Road frontage - Gaze Road

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

Rumah Tinggi was built by the British Phosphate Commissioners in 1931 and is one of the few pre WWII British colonial masonry buildings to survive. Historic provision of accommodation, Island Manager's residence for first ten years, converted into single men's quarters and central mess in 1949. It was a core component in the experience and lifestyle of European employees. This building is closely associated with post war single men's and single women's buildings built nearby in 1956. In the 1970s a single men's barracks was added at the back of the building.

## **HISTORY:**

Rumah Tinggi was built in 1931 as the Island Manager's residence. It was occupied by Manager G.Vinen, and his wife for the first ten years until the Japanese Occupation of Christmas Island in 1942. It is unclear what it was used for during WWII. In 1949, post-war, the Rumah Tinggi was converted into single men's quarters until the construction of housing for single men and single women was completed in 1956. In the same year a butchery, bakery and staff quarters were added. Since 1988 the Rumah Tinggi has been used as a tavern, restaurant. The original men's barracks at the back of the building has been converted into backpackers accommodation.

## **Physical Description:**

Rumah Tinggi is a large two storey building of rendered brick and concrete masonry blocks, with a corrugated colour bond roof. It has single storey wings on the east and west side and an entrance portico on the north side with an enclosed upper level balcony, the two storey central section is the original building dating from the 1930s. A grass lawn and coconut palms sit on the seaward side in front of the portico alongside recently added steps and a verandah leading up to the bar. The roof above the central section is undergoing renovation due to weather events.

## **Integrity/Authenticity:**

Exceptional/High

Good Form/Structure intact/Character intact/Appropriate Additions and alterations

# Settlement Pre-War Bungalow Group

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Representative/Aesthetic/Associative/Social/Scientific/Creative-  
Technical **Authenticity:** High

### **Address/Location:**

Road Frontage Gaze Road

### **Statement of Significance:**

The pre-WWII buildings are historically significant as the last residential buildings constructed by the British Phosphate Company prior to the Japanese occupation. A high degree of pre-war creative achievement demonstrated in different techniques and approaches to the tropical environment. The attached service quarters at the rear of each house were for Asian servants. Pre-war residences illustrate a structure of class and race evident in the context of their period. This group is associated with the Japanese occupation as the garrison soldiers occupied the buildings during WWII. These buildings are significantly associated with senior European staff, the pre-war bungalow group is historic as the largest and finest pre-war colonial pattern design. The Pre-war group has aesthetic qualities, oriented to an ocean front perspective with substantial gardens of native shrubs and plantings.

### **History:**

Five early 1930s pre-war bungalows on the west side of the Rumah Tinggi Managers Residence were occupied by 1935 by Senior European staff. Each house had servants quarters with a walkway clad in asbestos concrete at the rear of the bungalow. All were occupied by the Japanese during WWII, post war they needed repairs, three mid 30s ocean facing bungalows (MQ 5, MQ 6, MQ 8) around the projection of Rocky Point were built to an identical design were refurbished post-war and two Bungalows were demolished and replaced. In 1992 the pre-war bungalow group was sold to private purchasers except for no.6, which became the Administrators House.

### **Physical Description:**

The Pre-war bungalows erected mid 30s are erected in timber on rendered concrete masonry piles. Set approximately 1.5 metres above ground level, concrete steps provide entry access to the building. A skillion roofed verandah is enclosed. The servants quarters dating post-war are rendered in concrete masonry and connect to the rear of the house under gabled corrugated roofs. Alterations and refurbishment is appropriate.

### **Integrity/Authenticity:** High/High

Good form/ Structure intact/ Character intact /Appropriate additions



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Williams and Macdonald, The Phosphateers, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.

Hunt, J. Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island, John Hunt 2011.

Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.

# Seaview Lodge

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/ Scientific / Representative / Aesthetic/ Creative / Social / Associative

**Authenticity:** High

## **Address/Location:**

East of Seaview Close, between Gaze Road and the Indian Ocean. Road frontage- - Gaze Road

## **Statement of Significance**

The Seaview Lodge is the most prestigious residence on Christmas Island. It was called into prominence as a new Island Manager's residence from the early 1950s until 1988. Used for many formal functions, it also served as accommodation for visiting dignitaries. Designed with purpose to impress the occupants' status upon visitors, its substantial size and neo-classic symmetrical architecture, was appointed to outclass the former District Officers residence.

Within the context of the Island, this provided evidence of the status of these two functions. The Seaview Lodge is representative of post war colonial architecture which diverged when the British Straits government began to develop economic resources. This is reflected in the neo-classical, rational, formal style of Seaview Lodge defining its heritage as an example of British architecture in the Straits Settlements pre-war. It has aesthetic qualities in its stripped style architecture flanked by manicured gardens , its outlook over the Indian Ocean provides a picturesque setting.

## **History:**

The Seaview Lodge was built in the 1950s by the British Phosphate Commission for a new Island Manager. The Lodge remained the Island Manager's residence until the closure of the British Phosphate mine in 1988. Ownership was then taken over by the Australian Government . In 1994 the building was sold to Indonesian entrepreneurs who opened the Christmas Island Casino and Resort (CIR), despite its prosperity it closed in 1997. Ownership then changed hands to Christmas Island Phosphates (CIP) who then sold it in 2007 to a private owner. The new owner of the residence funded a complete restoration of the building back to its original 1950s state. The Seaview Lodge is representative of post-WWII economic expansion and illustrates social and class expectations in the lifestyle of European society. The capability to construct this colonial style architecture, demonstrates post war economic expansion on Christmas Island the 1950s.

## **Physical Description :**

Seaview Lodge is a post-war two storey rendered concrete masonry residence. A gabled hipped corrugated colorbond roof , has appropriately replaced the original roof which was

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clad in asbestos cement but looked remarkably the same. The building retains its concrete-block masonry and has been restored appropriately to conserve its Straits Settlement neo-classical British colonial heritage. The stark white reminiscent of British- Singapore architecture has been repainted lemon, which does not mask its historical value. The building features a porte-cochere over the driveway, with a balcony on the upper level. Previous 80s alterations in walls have been restored to its original form to conserve the historical period and prestige of the Seaview Lodge.

### **Integrity/Authenticity**

Exceptional/High

Excellent form/Appropriate Alterations/ Restoration/ Conservation/Intact

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.

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# Tai Jin House

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic / Aesthetic / Social / Scientific / Rarity / Representative

**Authenticity:** High

## **Address/Location:**

South side of Smith Point Road, 500 metres west of the boat jetty in Flying Fish Cove. Road frontage – Smith Point Road

## **Statement of Significance**

Tai Jin House is historically significant, erected in 1931 as one of the first pre-WWII concrete masonry buildings. It served as the District Officer's and Former Administrator's residence. It is representative of colonial administration and a central component in the lifestyle and experience associated with many employees on the Island. Tai Jin House (known colloquially as Buck House) served as a courthouse, the Office of the Chinese Protectorate, government office, venue for formal functions and the government representative's residence until 1995. Its facilities and layout are demonstrative of amenities provided by the Christmas Island Phosphate Company to the Government representative, and are illustrative of the expectations and self-concepts of Colonial District Officers. The building is constructed in a typical Colonial Straits Settlements design complete with servants quarters. It is associated with similar features of former Mine Managers Residences, Tai Jin House was designed to impress visitors with the status of its government occupant. Within the Island context, this demonstrates evidence of the relative importance of these functionaries. It has aesthetic qualities with its style associated with South East Asia's colonial architecture. Its gardens are remnant of British grandeur sloping to a spectacular ocean out-look. Tai Jin House is positioned on top of the Smith Point cliff, its prominent location in a picturesque setting makes it distinguishable as a local historical local landmark.

## **History**

Tai Jin House was completed pre-war as one of the first buildings constructed in concrete masonry on Christmas Island in 1931. Designed first to house the District Officer's residence, it replaced the former Colonial Officer's timber house built on the same site in the early 1900s. The upper floor housed the District Officer with the lower floor used as offices, and official functions. British Sovereignty was transferred to Australian Sovereignty in 1958; this signaled the replacement of the British District Officer with an Australian Official Representative. In 1962, the interior was refurbished and etched glass replaced the timber lattice screens in the arched windows on the ground floor and in 1964 a cantilevered balcony was constructed, in 1968 the title of the government representative was upgraded to Administrator and in 1970 a welcoming portico was added at the entrance beneath the

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balcony. The last Administrator vacated the building in 1995. Tai Jin House was refurbished and repurposed as a small museum which opened in 2008.

### **Physical Description**

The former Administrator's house is a two storey pre-WWII building, constructed with rendered brick and concrete masonry. A hipped roof clad in terracotta tiles from Marseille covers the main building and the walkway to the servants quarters. A gabled portico over the steps at the entrance supported on circular concrete pilasters with a cantilevered balcony on the upper level over the portico roof is a feature of the building. At the entrance of the lower floor, a polished timber replica of an original sign states Queen Victoria took possession of Christmas Island in 1888 and represents the British colonial Heritage of the Island. Square columns support the upper floor over a concrete verandah which runs around three sides of the building. The building has aesthetic qualities; its sparse detail brings attention to large arched windows on the lower floor verandah. This detail is infilled with finely etched glass and French doors in timber framing. The other windows on the building are rectangular with multi-paned steel frames set in neutral painted walls of rendered concrete masonry. At the rear of the building are single storey Servants Quarters with a terracotta tiled gabled roof. A covered walkway clad in Marseille terracotta tiles and held up by timber posts, link the servants quarters to the main house. This building has aesthetic, associative, representative and historical value. The property retains original plantings of natural shrubs and flowering trees in a lawn sloping to an ocean outlook from the cliff on the northern side. A flagpole representing the government is set close to the cliff on the west side of the building.

### **Integrity/Authenticity**

Exceptional/High

In relatively good form/Structure and Character Intact/Appropriate minor alterations to design Museum space/ Funding required to preserve conservation and maintain purpose.

Godden Mackay, L., *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines*, Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island. 1988.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.

Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.

Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989.

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# Gun Emplacement

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/ Aesthetic/Rarity/Associative

**Authenticity:** High

## **Address/Location:**

South side of Smith Point. Road frontage - Smith Point Road

## **Statement of Significance:**

The Fort and all elements associated with it including; the BL 6-inch Mk VII naval gun (gun & breech), the barracks and armory is historically significant as a rare primary relic of WWII. The naval gun was installed at the fort on top of the cliff with a substantial ocean outlook overlooking Flying Fish Cove to strengthen seacoast defense. The gun represents the principal characteristics of colonial military strength in South East Asia.

In 1942 the naval gun and barracks played a significant role in events leading up to the mutiny of colonial troops, enabling the Japanese occupation of Christmas Island. A stone wall skirts the gun and connects to the barracks and the armory, all elements associated with the garrison, have scientific significance yielding information that can contribute to an understanding of British colonial naval defense in WWII.

The Smith Fort barracks and naval gun are associated with a 20<sup>th</sup> century period of strong colonial rule in South East Asia. It is also representative of the Japanese manipulation of British-Indian troops, of which they had entered into directed propaganda to drive British-Indian soldiers to revolt against their colonial masters. The gun demonstrates a high degree of technical achievement as naval heavy artillery emplaced at the Fort. The gun and garrison is associated with events leading up to the Japanese occupation of Christmas Island. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1942, British-Indian troops led a mutiny against colonial servicemen and executed the 5 English soldiers trained to man the gun while they slept in the barracks nearby.

This event enabled the Japanese occupation of Christmas Island.

The Fort and Gun are significantly associated with the Indian soldiers push against colonial oppression and their assumption that the executions were justified and liberation by the Japanese was inevitable. The gun has aesthetic qualities emerging from its military character and its picturesque setting high on the cliff with an ocean outlook. The gun and the fort are replete with associations to colonial activities. All elements of the fort are associated with colonial activity in South East Asia and represent the political position of Christmas Island at the start of WWII.

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## **History:**

In 1940, the 6 inch breech-loading naval gun (BL 6-inch MkVII) was emplaced at Smith Point to defend Christmas Island during WWII. On the 17<sup>th</sup> February 1942, the gun fired upon a suspected Japanese submarine, this was its first and only action. This makes it one of the few

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shore based guns to have ever shot in anger in Australia in time of war.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1942, British-Indian soldiers abetted by Sikh policemen, led the murder of five English troops as they slept in the Barracks nearby. They murdered the colonial troops expecting 'liberation' by the approaching Japanese. The Japanese landed in Flying Fish Cove on the 31st of March, the mutiny had disabled the Island's seacoast defense and enabled the Japanese Occupation of Christmas Island. Without 'liberation', the Indian mutineers surrendered. In 1983 a 'Plaque of Remembrance' with the names and ranks of the five executed English troops, was donated by ex-servicemen and erected on the stone wall adjacent to the barracks surrounding the gun. In 2000, Australian Navy volunteers from the HMAS Kanimbla restored the gun's mounting, refurbished the 6 inch rifling and repainted it in its original dark-grey colour representative of British Navy heavy artillery in the 1900s.

### **Physical Description**

Designed for seacoast defense, the breech-loading 6 inch Naval gun (BL Mark-VII) has a ranging station of 23,130 metres and a firing velocity of 900 metres per second, it is mounted on a central pivot Mk II with a heavy travelling carriage elevated at 45 degrees. It is a peak example of shoreline defence technology associated with British Navy artillery in WWII. The metal rifling was refurbished and the gun repainted in the original gun-metal dark grey colour in 2000. Due to salt damage caused by its proximity to the ocean and its elevation in line with frequent sea salt wind, signs of erosion continue to progress. Frequent intervention is necessary to maintain and conserve this rare, historical and associative surviving WWII relic.

### **Integrity/Authenticity**

Exceptional/High

Gun in reasonably good form/Character Intact/Structure Intact/ Fort has progressive signs of erosion, frequent intervention necessary to conserve garrison.

Godden Mackay, L., *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines*, Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island. 1988.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.

Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.

Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989.

Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.

# Christmas Island Mosque

## **HERITAGE VALUE: HIGH**

Historic/ Aesthetic/ Social/ Representative/ Associative/ Scientific

## **Authenticity: High**

## **Address/location:**

North East corner of the intersection of Jalan Pantai and Jalan Kampong Melayu

## **Statement of Significance:**

The Mosque is historically significant as a post-war religious facility constructed in 1951/52 for the Malay community using a template of a basic mining building. The current Mosque was completed with the Minaret in 1961-1962 and is an example of Islamic architecture applied to a typical colonial 1950s mining building. This demonstrates the cultural facilities provided by the mine for the Muslim Malay community during the early years of mining operation.

The completion of the Islamic architecture applied to the original basic mine building is illustrative of an increase in the economy which provided access to concrete masonry and tools. It has historical significance associated with Muslim Malay mine workers brought in to work for the Phosphate mine and for the mine's port facility nearby. The Mosque is significant, it is associated with the Malay community and representative of their spiritual, cultural and social life. The Mosque has aesthetic significance as a mining building with the application of Islamic religious architecture. In its context, it is a prominent landmark and demonstrates cultural facilities provided by the mining company for the Malay community during its primary operation.

## **History:**

The original Mosque was a basic rectangular building constructed in 1952/53 for the Malay community using the template of a regular mine building by the British Phosphate Commission. It is representative of the Islamic faith and culture associated with the Malay community and was provided in the early operation of the mine. From the early 1950s it has been the religious center for Christmas Island's Malay workers, was documented to be one of the largest Muslim communities in Australia (Forrest, P. 1989). In 1961/1962, the addition of the Islamic architecture applied to the Mosque illustrates a post-war increase in the economy which provided the mining company access to concrete masonry and tools to construct the Minaret. The Mosque has functioned from the time it was built to the present as an important religious and cultural facility; it is an important venue for prayers, gatherings and important meetings.

Since completing the Mosque, the Muslim community on Christmas Island has been led by an Islamic Council, an appointed Imam guides prayers in the Prayer Hall and sounds the call to



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prayer from the Minaret. Respected elders assist with decisions for the Malay community and Muslim teachings in the Madrasa, Islamic School. The Mosque has functioned as a religious center for the Muslim Malay community from the time it was built. The current Mosque and Minaret were completed in 1961. The Island celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Mosque in 2011 on the grounds of the Mosque, Islamic School and Malay Club. On a plaque directly outside of the Mosque, the year it was built is recorded as 1962. Both the 1961 and 1962 recorded dates of construction are accurate as on the Islamic calendar the Hijri year 1381 covers part of both, this indicates the time the Mosque was built.

### **Physical Description:**

The Mosque is a single storey rectangular building constructed in rendered concrete masonry in the early 1950s. It has a rendered concrete clad corrugated hipped roof, with a small rectangular projection bay in the middle of the west wall. The concrete octagonal Minaret tower with an onion domed roof completed in 1961/1962, is located at the North East corner to the Main Prayers Hall, elevated on top of the gold dome of the Minaret, and on top of the skillion -roofed single storey Main Hall extension built in 1972/1973, is an Islamic Star and Crescent symbol, which designates the Main Prayers Hall, Minaret and the Main Hall as Muslim religious facilities.

In 2013/14 awnings were added to the exterior of the east and west wall of the Main Hall, on the east side there are half-onion shaped rain hoods and semi-circular windows, the Mosque was refurbished in the 1990's. As an aesthetic/associative/representative and historic early post-war building, its scale, Islamic character and form should be conserved. Appropriate additions and awnings added to an extension of a Main Hall used for gatherings and meetings. The gold sheeting covering the half-onion domes on the south wall of the Main Hall preserve an Islamic character and mirror the gold sheeting of the dome on top of the Minaret.

### **Integrity/Authenticity: High/High**

Exceptional condition/Preserved form and character/Building intact.

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989  
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# Islamic School and Former Malay Quarters

## **HERITAGE VALUE: HIGH**

Historic/ Scientific/ Associative/ Representative/ Social

## **Authenticity:** High

## **Address/Location:**

North Side of Lorong Melayu, Intersection Lorong Melayu and Jalan Pantai. Road frontage – Jalan Pantai.

## **Statement of Significance:**

The Islamic School and the original Malay Quarters were built by the British Phosphate Commission during the post-war period. They are comprised of five rendered single storey, concrete masonry buildings, which demonstrate standard designs of residential quarters for Asians, and demonstrate a post-war Colonial approach to housing for Malay workers on Christmas Island. The Islamic School is associated with the Malay community and is culturally and socially important, converted from vacated Malay Quarters, the Islamic School has been aesthetically altered to impart a more Islamic architecture. The Islamic School and original Malay quarters group, is socially significant. It has strong spiritual and cultural qualities associated with the Malay community. It demonstrates the principle characteristics of the Malay community cultural environment and place. It is important in demonstrating a high degree of technical and creative achievement in the post-war period in its Island context.

## **History:**

The Malay Kampong was originally situated alongside European bungalows at the forefront of Flying Fish Cove. The European bungalows were removed post WWII and the Europeans resettled in Rocky Point in Settlement. In the 1960s, apartment blocks mirroring Singapore's Housing Development Buildings (HDB) were constructed to replace earlier housing. The Malay community left their homes to move into the newer building which were repurposed into the Islamic School to provide religious instruction. In the 1990s, the addition of an Islamic facade altered the buildings to represent a Muslim school. This post-war Islamic school is historically significant in its association with the Malay community and its representation of the Muslim faith.

## **Description:**

The Islamic School is included in the group of 1950s residential buildings known as the Malay Quarters. The Islamic School is comprised of five rendered concrete masonry buildings with gabled roofs, four buildings are longitudinally oriented. Both the Malay Quarters and the Islamic School are similar to each other built to standard designs by the British Phosphate

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Commission. The Islamic School is located in the southern-most three buildings which are refurbished and repainted with an Islamic motif. The most northern pair are used for storage and located in the potential rock-fall zone which is monitored. There is scope for sympathetic additions on the outside buildings. On the east side of the Islamic school, is an outside compound of old Malay Quarters buildings which retain their original structure. Within the compound, one unit is used as a small food store (Al Barakah) and is intact, in good form, some are used for storage, the north-eastern most units of the compound retain their structure but appear dilapidated in need of restoration. A gable-roofed pergola is carried on steel framing and clad with metal sheeting, it covers quarters parallel to each other between eastern-most and western-most units in the outside compound east of the Islamic School. The units of the original Malay quarters are associated with the Islamic School and Mosque, these buildings are high in heritage value and integrity and require conservation.

**Condition:** The Islamic School is in good condition with character structure, form and scale intact with appropriate additions added over the years. On the eastern side of the Islamic School is a Malay Quarters compound, one unit is a Malay-Muslim grocery store (Al Barakah), some are used as storage areas, these are in relatively good condition. Units on the north-eastern side of the compound appear dilapidated. The Malay Quarters group is historically significant, high in representative, associative and social significance, restoration and refurbishment is required for conservation.

**Integrity/Authenticity:** High/High

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989  
The Shire of Christmas Island, 2022.  
Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.

# The Christmas Island Club

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/ Aesthetic/ Social/ Representative/ Scientific/ Associative

## **Authenticity: High**

**Address/Location:** Southern extremity of Club Road, 100m east and south of the Club Road – Tong Chee Road intersection. Road frontage – Club Road.

## **Statement of Significance:**

The Christmas Island Club (known locally as the C.I Club) was erected pre-WWII as a European staff facility. It is historically significant as one of the earliest buildings constructed in the 1920's under the British Administration of Christmas Island and representative of colonial architecture in South East Asia. The Club is associated with European employees, and built to provide a facility for recreation and community activities. It was also in its early history the Island Managers residence until the Rumah Tinggi was completed in 1931.

In 1949, European Primary School classes commenced in the basement of the C.I Club until a purpose built European Primary School in Settlement was completed, today known as the Tom Patterson Early Childhood Centre.

The CI Club is socially significant as it is strongly associated with the lifestyle and experience of European colonial employees from 1920 through to the Australian sovereignty period post 1958 with its official apartheid policies in place through to the 1970s and early 80s separating Caucasian employees from non-Caucasian.

It thus demonstrates the early principle characteristics of colonial self-perception which continued anachronistically into the 1970s and early 80s within modern Australia in isolation from the progressive steps on the mainland in this space.

It has academic significance as it yields information that will contribute to an understanding of how the history of colonization is associated with colonial marginalization of people of colour under British rule. This building is associated with the British colonial administration of Christmas Island and broader to South East Asia and Australia. It has aesthetic significance in its basic bungalow design set in the picturesque setting with an Island outlook and distant ocean view. It is historically significant to Islanders in representing the downfall of colonial racism and the final lawful inclusion of Malay, Chinese and others who may wish to frequent the facility to participate in activities such as billiards, darts, social events or fundraising to name community events.

### **History:**

The Christmas Island Club was erected as a European Staff Club in the late 1920s as a venue for the provision of recreation pre-WWII. The Christmas Island club is symbolic of class and race segregation which is a feature of much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century colonial administration of South East Asia and Christmas Island.

The C.I Club demonstrates the facilitation of an elite experience and lifestyle under British administration. Similar in design and materials used for the construction of residential bungalows in Flying Fish Cove and around Rocky Point in Settlement, the C.I Club also served as a Primary School post-war which commenced lessons in its basement in 1949, until a purpose built Primary School for Europeans was erected in Settlement in 1952.

The C.I Club designated is associated with Europeans to provide recreational, social and community activities until desegregation occurred in the late 1970s and early 80s. It is associated with socio-political change, as the anachronistic local administration's policies to exclude people from attending the C.I club according to race and class were retired as the Union of Christmas Island Workers won legal civil rights argument after legal civil rights argument in the late 70s and early 80s.

The heritage value of the C.I Club is significant in historic, social, representative, associative, scientific, and aesthetic qualities. Conserving its heritage is fundamental in understanding the socio-political landscape of pre-war and post-war, colonial history and changes in values and attitudes illustrated by the community, location and events in the time period and design of this building. The C.I Club is exceptional in heritage value, progressive erosion a lack of funding has severely impacted restoration and a lack of funding has disabled conservation.

### **Description:**

The C.I Club is a two storey timber and steel framed building clad in cement sheets. The corrugated gable roof is hipped at the southern end, with a skillion extension over the verandah on the Western side. Various renovations include octagonal concrete piers between the upper floor and the steel joists which are inserted into the framing to increase an internal clear largely open space on the upper and lower floors. Partition walls designate service rooms, bar and kitchen upstairs and store rooms downstairs. The open balcony on the north side is comprised of a concrete slab over concrete piers. In the 1990s, the basement was briefly used as a gymnasium.

### **Condition:**

Due to the C.I Club being abandoned in the early 2000s, it is in extremely poor physical condition with a severely dilapidated interior. This exceptional heritage building has structural issues that need to be addressed.

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This building is assessed as an individual listing, exceptional in heritage value and high in integrity. It is listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List but does not have the required Heritage Management Plan under the EPBC Act (1999)(Cth) in place to manage it.

Restoration is necessary to retain its contribution to the precinct, maintain its heritage significance and comply with the EPBC Act (1999)(Cth).

### **Integrity/Authenticity**

Exceptional/High

Extremely poor form/ Evidence of scale and character/Not Intact

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989  
Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.  
Australian Government, Attorney General's Department, Christmas Island Club, ARUP, Canberra, 2009  
Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.

# Roundabout Flats

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Associative/representative/Aesthetic/Creative- Technical

**Authenticity:** High

## **Address/Location:**

East side of Gaze Road – Road frontage Gaze Road

## **Statement of Significance:**

The pre-war Roundabout Flats or former Asian Staff Quarters is significant as they provided residential quarters for non-laboring Asian staff. Characteristic of their colonial period, they provide a contrast in size, location, and layout to European pre-war residences and are demonstrative of class, race and social structures.

The Pre-War two storey design provides a contrast to pre-war single storey European residences. They are associated with the WWII Japanese Occupation of Christmas Island, in that the two Roundabout buildings were used to house prisoners of war. There is aesthetic significance, as two storey pre-war buildings the Asian Quarters contribute a visual impact to their streetscape position between the traffic roundabout and the Murray Road intersection. They are a strong distinct landmark constructed in the 1920s with an identical approach to the tropical climate a characteristic of their colonial-architecture in contrast to the buildings constructed post-war by the British Phosphate Commission.

## **History:**

The Asian Staff Quarters, locally known as the Roundabout Flats, were erected in the early 1920s in association with the Christmas Island Phosphate Company Administration. As part of the group of residential builds in the Administration Precinct, the Roundabout Flats are significantly associated with the Japanese occupation and were used to house prisoners of war during WWII. They continued to operate as Asian Staff Quarters until de-segregation occurred in the 1970s. The buildings have been purchased privately since 1990 as residential flats.

## **Physical Description:**

The buildings are part of the 1920s historic pre-war group of residential buildings (locally known as the Roundabout Flats), consisting of two buildings, constructed in rendered brick concrete-masonry. Almost identical, the buildings are accessed via the concrete steps central to each building. In each building there is a breezeway attached at the rear of four, two-storey flats. The upper floor is supported by a rendered masonry wall, serving as a verandah banister. The external walls have vent holes in the upper surfaces to allow for a flow of hot tropical air. Since 1992 private owners have purchased the property. The buildings are in generally

Christmas Island Heritage Survey 2022  
Adopted 25.10.22

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moderate condition but require stages of renovation to paint, refurbish and conserve to halt progress of deterioration.

**Integrity/Authenticity:**

Exceptional/High - Moderately good form/ Structure Intact/Character Intact

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989  
Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.  
Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.



# George Fam Centre

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Aesthetic/Social/Representative/Associative

**Authenticity:** High

## **Address/Location:**

2 Murray Road, - Nearest precinct Settlement

## **Statement of Significance:**

The George Fam building is historically significant, built post-war as an Asian School it delivered all lessons in English and is known locally as the “English School”. After the British Phosphate Commission took over, this building was erected as the first formal Asian Primary School in 1950 and first opened in 1951 and later became the first Asian Secondary School. The building illustrates the provision of an Asian community education-facility by the British Phosphate Mining Company. Its location and size is indicative of the social situation and size of the Asian workforce in the Island context, during that period.

In 1961 the George Fam Secondary School admitted a small number of willing European students.

## **History:**

The George Fam building is a purpose built Asian education facility erected in 1950 under the administration of the British Phosphate Commissio. The British Phosphate Company was instrumental in the provision of community facilities and the George Fam Asian English - Language Primary School opened in 1951 which later expanded to also accommodate Secondary School students. It was instrumental as the British Government required the BPC to provide as such under the terms of operations; Australia was not yet a formal governing body on the island until 1958 when the transfer would occur.

Its location and size are indicative of the social situation and size of the Asian workforce in the Island context at that period of time. Over the next decade progressive expansion determined its current size. A new Asian Primary School opened in Drumsite in 1961, which left George Fam as the only Secondary School with the attendance of a small number of European students. In the late 1980s it was converted to accommodate offices for the Shire of Christmas Island, and renamed out of respect for the former Headmaster Fam Choo Beng (George Fam) the “George Fam Building”.

In 1974, the area school in Drumsite was opened for Primary and Secondary students up to Year 10, and the George Fam Secondary School was closed shortly after. The Christmas Island District High School in Drumsite now caters for students from Pre-Primary up to Year 12, the

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George Fam Building contains offices for The Shire of Christmas Island and a small community Library.

**Physical Description:**

The George Fam Building is a single storey, rendered brick and concrete masonry building with a gabled modern corrugated iron roof which replaced a corrugated roof clad in asbestos-cement. Running North/South along the main wing are three projections from its western side extending with covered ways to two toilet blocks on the eastern side at ground level.

Positioned against the escarpment, square concrete piers carry the projecting three wings. The building was originally asymmetrical with three wings until a lower an additional wing was extended northwards at the northern end of the building. The addition of solar panels was recently installed on the roof, other restoration, additions and refurbishment is appropriate, conserving the structure, form and character of the building. Original signs indicating the "Boys" and "Girls" toilets and the library are remnant of a 1951 Asian Language school.

**Integrity/Authenticity:**

Exceptional/High

Form Exceptional/ Structure and Character Intact /Appropriate addition of signage/ / Roof Solar Panels appropriate/Restoration, Refurbishment and Conservation upkept by the Shire of Christmas Island.

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989  
Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.  
Williams, M. *Three Islands*, The Griffin Press, Adelaide, 1971.  
Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.

# Japanese House, Bungalow 702, Drumsite

## **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Aesthetic/Representative/Associative/Creative-Technical

**Authenticity:** High

**Address/Location:** 12 Lam Lok Loh - Drumsite

## **Statement of Significance:**

The Japanese House, Bungalow (702) is historically significant, similar to bungalows in the pre-war group in Settlement and one of the last residential buildings built by the British Phosphate Company as a residence for the Chief Mechanical Engineer, associated with the mine and railway workshops. It was built in the mid 1930's and is associated with the Japanese Occupation of Christmas Island from 1942-1945. It is the only building of its type in Drumsite as a member of a pre-war group of four surviving on the Island. It illustrates creative and technical differences between approaches and building technologies indicative of the pre-war period and illustrative of class and racial social structures of the period, compared post-war buildings erected by the British Phosphate Commission.

Bungalow 702 is associated with the Japanese Occupation who used it as a residence and radio station for garrison soldiers lending the name "Jap House" from this time. It is one of the finest and largest pattern design residences of the pre-war group of four surviving on the Island. It has significant aesthetic qualities with its Northern side ocean outlook, interrupted only by a vacant grass land embedded with steel tracks which had bordered Jarrah Wood sleepers, remnant of trains used to charter locals or phosphate to different precincts. It is a premium example of Colonial architecture in its building design and approach to the tropical climate.

## **History:**

Bungalow 702 was erected for the Chief Mechanical Engineer by the British Phosphate Company during 1934-1935. The engineer was in charge of mining structures and railways on Christmas Island. Similar to surviving European bungalows in Rocky Point and also to demolished European Bungalows in Flying Fish Cove from this time. During WWII, it was occupied by Japanese garrison soldiers which forged the name "Jap House" from this time. After the war it was refurbished as European Married Quarters. In 1975, school teacher Michael Grimes a key figure in establishing the Union of Christmas Island Workers and his family occupied the residence. In 1988 a cyclonic weather event severely damaged the building leaving it uninhabitable. The Commonwealth later sold it to a local private purchaser after 1992, who dedicated the better part of 10 years to restore and refurbish the building into a livable modern family residence.

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### **Physical Description:**

The Jap House Bungalow; is a one storey rendered brick masonry building set 1.5 meters above ground level, accessible north side via concrete steps. The timber frame was restructured post storm damage, and set on rendered masonry piles with large concrete caps, the original gabled cement asbestos clad roof, has been replaced with a gabled corrugated steel roof with solar panels attached, an enclosed verandah runs from north to south, south to west and west to north extending rooms in the interior of the building. The rendered masonry servants quarters at the rear of the building, are linked to the house via a covered walkway. It has aesthetic significance set in spacious grounds remnant of a colonial garden with an uninterrupted ocean outlook.

### **Integrity/Authenticity:**

Exceptional/High Form intact/ Restoration- refurbishment conserves structure/Character intact/Added roof solar panels appropriate/Scale and structure intact.

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989  
Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.  
Williams, M. *Three Islands*, The Griffin Press, Adelaide, 1971.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985  
Primary research interviews with CI residents, 2022.



## SHIRE OF CHRISTMAS ISLAND

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SUBMISSION TO	Ordinary Council Meeting 23 April 2024
AGENDA REFERENCE	10.2.2
SUBJECT	Local Heritage Survey, Batch Two Adoption
LOCATION/ADDRESS/APPLICANT	Nil
FILE REFERENCE	2.10.2
INTEREST DISCLOSURE	Nil
DATE OF REPORT	17 April 2024
AUTHOR	Chris Su, Director Planning, Governance & Policy
SIGNATURE OF AUTHOR	SIGNED
SIGNATURE OF CEO	SIGNED

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Council adopts the following batch of places nominated by the public for the first *Christmas Island Local Heritage Survey* in accordance with the *Heritage Act (WA)(CI) 2018*.**

### BACKGROUND

The *Heritage Act (WA)(CI) 2018* was put in effect on Christmas Island from 1 July 2022 as part of the necessary legislation needed for the completion of the Commonwealth's *Christmas Island Strategic Assessment*. Even though the CISA has been paused as of June 2023, the *Heritage Act (WA)(CI) 2018* is still in force.

Under this Act and its applicable regulations, Council is required to develop a Heritage Survey and a separate Heritage List.

Council's Public Notice 25/22 '*Christmas Island Heritage Survey*' of 17 June 2022 requested nominations from the public for local areas and built forms that they would like to see on the list. A total of 20 buildings, retired mining plant, precincts and one shipwreck were submitted by the public and these were adopted in Resolution 100/2022 at the October 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting.

### COMMENT

The SOCI research desk contacted officers from the Dept. Planning, Lands and Heritage for guidance on the creation of a Local Government Heritage Survey. Director Adelyn SIEW and Assistant Manager for the Historic Heritage Conservation unit Lara WATSON provided great assistance to Council staff.

Research officer Karin LWIN-LINES utilized archived secondary research and conducted new primary research for the project. The new primary research sheds light on some gaps in the existing literature on Island heritage, dominantly the 1988 Godden Mackay Logan's *Christmas Island Heritage Review* and the 1999 Peter Forrest *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*.

In recent 2024 consultations with DPLH Assistant Manager Lara WATSON requested that SOCI consider documenting the known spiritual values of specific trees on Christmas Island. DPLH provided that these trees can be added to a Heritage Survey by a local government and noted that some councils consider inclusion of trees considered significant by indigenous groups in their municipal area.

**STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

Heritage Act (WA)(CI)2018

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS & MILESTONES**

Supports the framework needed for the Commonwealth's *Christmas Island Strategic Assessment* program.

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

A simple majority is required.

**ATTACHMENTS**

10.2.2.1 – Christmas Island Heritage Survey, batch two

- 10.2.2.2 –
- i) Four Faced Buddah Banyan Tree Grove
  - ii) Mahayana Temple Gaze Road Banyan Trees and Mountain Shrine
  - iii) Drumsite Banyan Tree

# Christmas Island Heritage Survey 2024



*Flying Fish Cove, circa 1963*

## Executive Summary

Local Governments in WA are required to produce a *Heritage Survey*, formerly known as a *Municipal Inventory*, of places of cultural, historical, spiritual, scientific or natural heritage value in their local government area in conjunction with the community under the *Heritage Act (WA)(2018)*.

This Act was put in force on the Territory of Christmas Island by the Commonwealth for the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 as it is needed to assist in the legislative framework for the Commonwealth's *Strategic Assessment* of Christmas Island under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (Cth)(1999)*.

The existing service delivery agreement with the WA Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage was extended to fund the officers in the Heritage division to assist in the management and application of the provisions of the Heritage Act (WA)(2018) on Christmas Island.

A local government's Heritage Survey exists at the local level of heritage inventory management. The tier structure is as below –

Cultural heritage places in Australia can be recorded under many different heritage listings. Some of these listings give statutory protection to heritage places, and others are simply lists with unofficial or semi-official designations, often arising from local, community-based or thematic surveys as is a Local Government's Heritage Survey.

Statutory listings are issued by government organisations such as the Heritage Council, the Australian Heritage Council or local governments. The listing types are:

Listing Type	Organisation	Legislation
State Register of Heritage Places	Heritage Council of WA	WA Heritage Act 2018
Protection Order	Heritage Council of WA	WA Heritage Act 2018
Heritage Agreement	Heritage Council of WA	WA Heritage Act 2018



Listing Type	Organisation	Legislation
Heritage List	Local governments	WA Planning and Development Act 2005; Local Planning Schemes
Heritage Survey	Local Governments	WA Heritage Act 2018
National heritage list	Australian Heritage Council	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)

Note that it is the Local Heritage **Survey** from which a Local Heritage **List** will be drawn from. Items in the Local Heritage List under the WA Planning and Development Act 2005 and named in the local government's Local Planning Scheme instrument carry statutory protection. The Local Heritage **Survey** affords no statutory protection.

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## **ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Aesthetic/Representative/Scientific/Social/Associative/Rarity

**AUTHENTICITY:** High

### **ADDRESS/LOCATION:**

Administration Precinct-Gaze Road. **Road Frontage** - West side of Gaze Road

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Administration Building is historically significant as a rare surviving pre-WWII building and one of the first rendered brick and masonry buildings erected by the British Phosphate Company (CIPCo). It served as the main Mine Office and played a significant role in the management of the mine from the time of its construction in 1926, until the mine closed in the 1980's. The building is pivotal in the experience and lifestyle of Europeans associated with the management of the mine's production of phosphate, is hosted broader administrative functionalities such as the welfare office, Post Office and bank. The building has aesthetic qualities, its understated Georgian styling is noted in its axial symmetry and strict uniformity designed to optimize its function as a government building. The former Mine Office is associated with the pattern design of British colonial entrepreneurs. It's construction adheres to cubed proportions of colonial Georgian architecture, and demonstrates a high degree of technical and creative skill to wed its style to functional features in its approach to the tropical weather. It is representative of the self-perceptions and privileged life style of European workers and mine managers. The former Mine Office is strongly associated with colonial principles of stratification of race and class, demarcation favouring European managers and employees over Asian workers, the Administration building is illustrative of the dominant colonial culture of the period in the context of Christmas Island.

### **HISTORY:**

The Administration building was the first building erected in 1926 in rendered brick and concrete to function as a Mine Office for the Christmas Island Phosphate Company (CIPCo). It served broader functionalities as a bank, welfare office and Post Office for the majority of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was central in the management of Phosphate mining on Christmas Island throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Japanese troops took control of the building during their occupation of Christmas Island from 1942 to 1945, this restricted the activities of the Phosphate Commissioners and led to defected plant and equipment upon the reluctant retreat of the Japanese. Post WWII, damage sustained to the mine's infrastructure underwent reconstruction using the Commissions resources. The Administration building played a significant role in reconstructing the successful production of phosphate in response to a post-war increase in demand. The British Phosphate Commission took over the building on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1949 and the New Zealand and the Australian Governments collaborated to

purchase the Christmas Island Phosphate company's interests from the British Commissioners, this was enabled the management of the phosphate mine, which was then administered under the Christmas Island Phosphate Commission (CIPCo). Singapore transferred sovereignty to Australia in 1958, and in 1981 the mine closed. In the 1990's the mining company was dissolved and the Australian Government took over the building. The building was used to host officials responsible for the administration of Christmas Island, which has continued since that time. In the late 1960's a mine office was erected in the Drumsite precinct for supervisors and engineers, Australian managers remained in the Administration building until 1988 when the mine closed. In the 1990s, post the mining company being dissolved, the building was taken over by the Australian Commonwealth Government. The Administration building currently hosts the main office of the Island Administrator, and provides broader functionalities such as an office for property management, court matters, motor vehicle registry, collector of public monies (utilities), and administrative government departments.

#### **DESCRIPTION/CONDITION:**

The Administration Building is a simply detailed, two storey, rendered brick office, of the standard pattern design of a colonial government office building. Erected in 1926, it originally had an open verandah demarking the first and second level, this is now enclosed. It has a gabled corrugated modern colorbond iron roof which appropriately replaced the asbestos clad gabled roof, at the northern side a hipped gabled end replicates the original structure. It adheres to a colonial version of Georgian design, its cubed proportions determine the system of windows relative to wall areas, the space occupied by the first and second floor windows are roughly proportioned to a square. Its Georgian style axial symmetry, proportions and understated elegance is enhanced by square columns supporting the upper floor over a ground floor verandah which continues around the eastern side of the building. Elevated steel, multi framed windows, on the northern and western side, have been replaced with modern, single-pane metal windows. The rectangular windows on the southern and eastern side of the building have retained their original steel multi-paned frames. Its plain wall surfaces are undecorated, projecting window sills and openings, and the string course between floors appropriately break the surface. A two storey wing attached on the western façade replicates the original form, detailing and proportions of the main building. At the first floor level, a flat concrete verandah roof is supported on steel posts which flows around the the northern and western side of the building.

#### **Integrity/Authenticity:**

Very good condition /High authenticity

Structure and Character Intact/ Appropriate Additions and Alterations to its original Georgian styling/Functionality- remains as a government building.

Domestic Architecture [Georgian Architecture] 1700-1960, University of the West of England, Bristol, 2009 . [Fet.uwe.ac.uk]  
Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

## **THE BARRACKS SHOPS**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: HIGH**

Historic/Aesthetic/Rarity/Representative/Associative

**AUTHENTICITY:** High

**ADDRESS/LOCATION:** Gaze Road western side, Southern end of former hospital. Road frontage-Gaze Road

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Barracks are historically significant, originally as a group of residential buildings provided as accommodation for resident government employees by the British Phosphate Commission. Erected in the early 1950s by the British Phosphate Commission (BPC), the Barracks demonstrate the difference in the social status of government employees compared to employees of the phosphate mine. They are illustrative of the size of the Government services associated with the social stratum of the period in the Island context. In 1988, damage by a severe weather event left ten of the Barracks buildings standing, as the last residential group to survive on their side of Gaze Road, their reuse for retail purposes and not as residences for government employees, is indicative of the type of buildings which were removed. They are significant as a group of low-scale buildings with aesthetic qualities, which relate well to the tropical environment and their situation roadside, opposite the area of the Cocos Padang.

### **HISTORY:**

The Barracks buildings were erected in the late 1950s by the British Phosphate Commission as living quarters for government employees in which teachers and clerks resided. A comparison with housing provided for employees of the mine is associated with a difference in social status between government employees and employees of the mine and is strongly associated with the nature of Christmas Island as a mining township. Under the administration of Singapore and until the 1980s the police were sent from Singapore and enforced Singapore laws, they resided in the barracks accompanying the Police Station during the period from the 1950s to the 1980s. The Barracks buildings were damaged in the cyclone of 1988 and abandoned for approximately five years, some had to be removed, and in the mid 1990's the Australian government released them for repair and then for private purchase, they were occupied progressively by retail premises.

### **DESCRIPTION/CONDITION:**

The Barracks group of buildings are located opposite the Cocos Malay Padang on the western side of Gaze Road. There are currently seven main buildings attached to a single storey Barracks block, in

1963 the Barracks at the southern-most end, were converted into a purpose built two storey police station. At the rear of the Police Station is a steel framed intrusive storage shed and a garage clad in corrugated iron. The rest of the Barracks buildings are contemporary in style with 6 buildings comprised of four pairs of semi-detached cottages, and two single cottages second and third from the north end. All the buildings are rendered in concrete masonry with an alteration of modern corrugated iron roofs. At the rear is the addition of a variety of skillion roofs with the front line of the roof extending over a front verandah, supported by timber posts. Built in the 1950s as government housing, the Barracks have undergone a range of renovations, alterations and additions since the 1990s, some continue to operate as retail shops, some as accommodation with the exception of the Police Station at the south-west end. The Barracks are in relatively good condition with some further appropriate restoration necessary, to conserve the structure, character and survival of the buildings.

**Integrity/Authenticity:** moderate condition/High authenticity

Relatively good form/Structure and Character Intact/Requires funding to promote conservation and restoration for future re-use of several unoccupied buildings.

Christmas Island Heritage Review, DCPs and Guidelines

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.

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The Shire of Christmas Island, Building archives, [accessed] 2022

F. Leblanc, 2022. *Cultural heritage conservation terminology* [online] <http://ip51.icomos.org/feblanc/documents/terminology/doc>

Research: The Shire of Christmas Island Heritage Survey, 2022.

## **COCOS PADANG MALAY QUARTERS**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: HIGH**

Historic/Aesthetic/Rarity/Associative/Social

#### **AUTHENTICITY:** High

#### **Address/Location:**

42-56 Gaze Road, east side of Gaze Road between the lower terminal of the phosphate haulage way at the incline and the laundry.

#### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Cocos Malay Quarters and Cocos Padang is historically significant, the location was used by the Cocos Malay community when they were recruited to work by the British Phosphate Company for the mine in the mid 1950s. The area is socially significant as the Cocos Malays are a distinctly individual cultural group with much of their practiced culture associated with Indonesian heritage with traits influenced early by Scottish entrepreneurs, unlike the Christmas Island Malays with their culture associated with traditions from Malaysia and traits influenced early by British entrepreneurs. The Cocos Quarters and Padang has social and scientific significance due to its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Christmas Island's cultural heritage and the specific association with the works and life of the Cocos Malays on Christmas Island. The Cocos Padang is aesthetic, it has established Tropical flowering trees and palms on a open green space which was used for social and cultural practices and represents the principle characteristics of a Cocos Malay environment, the Cocos Malay quarters are associated with the social stratum of employees of the Christmas Island phosphate mine, they are low scale Asian residential buildings of a condensed size compared to the spacious accommodation provided for Europeans by the British Phosphate Commission which is illustrative of social status in the island context at the time.

#### **HISTORY:**

From 1925 to the mid 1950s, the base of the incline at the Cocos Padang was the area used for Marshalling rail trucks. In the mid 1950s the British Phosphate Commission recruited workers from the Cocos Islands as post-WWII much of the economic activity in their environment had collapsed. A dedicated set of Cocos Malay quarters were erected at the base of the former incline in Settlement, isolated from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Cocos Malays developed a unique culture with a distinct identity dissimilar to the Christmas Island Malays, this was acknowledged in the allocation of a separate area and facilities. The Cocos Malay Padang was also known as the Kampong Cocos Baru which signified that it was a new Cocos Village erected by the British Phosphate Commission during the 1950s building program and designed in the standard pattern of Asian Labourers Barracks. In the late 1960s when the British terminated the Asian labour contract scheme and replaced the employment with European tradesmen, the Cocos Malays were rehoused in the new standard

Singapore buildings erected in the Kampong. The Malay quarters then became a scouts and guides hall. After many years of neglect the building was renovated in 2014, retaining its structure, form and original character and reopened as the Cocos Padang Lodge for tourist accommodation.

**DESCRIPTION/CONDITION:**

The Malay Quarters are situated on an area of open land referred to as the Cocos Padang, which has established tropical palms and frangipani trees. The Cocos Malay Quarters underwent renovations, restorations and refurbishments but retain the buildings original structure/ form and character for re-use as an appropriate Cocos Padang Lodge for tourists. The addition of dark beige solar panels on the roof, serves a necessary function to provide clean energy to avoid releasing homogenous emissions in the Cocos Padang environment. The sleeping and living areas are at the front with a separate kitchen and bathroom at the rear where there's a connected covered breezeway.

**Integrity/Authenticity:** Excellent condition/ Authenticity High

Appropriate additions, alterations, refurbishments, restorations and renovations/ Structure intact/  
Character intact/Form intact

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
A Christmas Island Tourism Association. *A Step Back in Time*, Australian Government., 2019.  
F.LeBlanc, 2022. *Cultural heritage conservation terminology* [online]<http://ip51.icomos.org/feblanc/documents/terminology/doc>  
Research: The Shire of Christmas Island, 2022.



## **ROUNABOUT FLATS / FORMER ASIAN STAFF QUARTERS**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Associative/representative/Aesthetic/Creative- Technical

**Authenticity:** High

### **ADDRESS/LOCATION:**

East side of Gaze Road – Road frontage Gaze Road

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The pre-war Roundabout Flats or former Asian Staff Quarters is significant as they provided residential quarters for non-laboring Asian staff. Characteristic of their colonial period, they provide a contrast in size, location, and layout to European pre-war residences and are demonstrative of class, race and social structures. The Pre-War two storey design provides a contrast to pre-war single storey European residences. They are associated with the WWII Japanese Occupation of Christmas Island, in that the two Roundabout buildings were used to house prisoners of war. There is aesthetic significance, as two storey pre-war buildings the Asian Quarters contribute a visual impact to their streetscape position between the traffic roundabout and the Murray Road intersection. They are a strong distinct landmark constructed in the 1920s with an identical approach to the tropical climate a characteristic of their colonial-architecture in contrast to the buildings constructed post-war by the British Phosphate Commission.

### **HISTORY:**

The Asian Staff Quarters, locally known as the Roundabout Flats, were erected in the early 1920s in association with the Christmas Island Phosphate Company Administration. As part of the group of residential builds in the Administration Precinct, the Roundabout Flats are significantly associated with the Japanese occupation and were used to house prisoners of war during WWII. They continued to operate as Asian Staff Quarters until de-segregation occurred in the 1970s. The buildings have been purchased privately since 1990 as residential flats.

### **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The former The Asian Staff Quarters are 1920s historic pre-war group of residential buildings (locally known as the Roundabout Flats), consisting of two buildings, constructed in rendered brick concrete-masonry. Almost identical, the buildings are accessed via the concrete steps central to each building. In each building there is a breezeway attached at the rear of four, two-storey flats. The upper floor is supported by a rendered masonry wall, serving as a verandah banister. The external walls have vent holes in the upper surfaces to allow for a flow of hot tropical air. Since 1990 private owners have purchased the property. The buildings are in generally moderate condition but require stages of renovation to paint, refurbish and conserve to halt progress of deterioration.

Christmas Island Heritage Survey

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**Integrity/Authenticity:**

Exceptional/High - Moderately good form/ Structure Intact/Character Intact

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.

Forrest, P. *Christmas Island Cultural Heritage Survey*, 1989

Hunt, J. *Suffering Through Strength: the men who made Christmas Island*, John Hunt 2011.

F. Leblanc, 2022. *Cultural heritage conservation terminology* [online] <http://ip51.icomos.org/feblanc/documents/terminology/doc> Shire of Christmas

Island. Building Archives/Property File – Tong Chee Road 10946 , [ accessed] 2022.

Research: Shire of Christmas

Island, Heritage Survey, 2023.

## **TONG CHEE HOUSE**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: EXCEPTIONAL**

Historic/Aesthetic/Rarity/Technical/Associative

**AUTHENTICITY:** High

### **ADDRESS/LOCATION:**

6 Tong Chee Road – Directly east of the Roundabout

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

Tong Chee House is historically significant as one of the few pre-WWII buildings surviving on Christmas Island. It is attached on its east side to the Former Asian Staff Quarters, now known as the Roundabout Flats, these buildings were originally constructed in the 1920s as accommodation for non-European staff. The Former Asian Staff quarters and Tong Chee House, are associated with the Japanese occupation of the island in WWII, the Japanese used the Former Asian Quarters to house European Prisoners of War, Tong Chee house is attached to these quarters on its east side, (referred to as the “no.33 building”) and used to force Chinese women taken from the White House brothel nearby, into sexual servitude, systematically abused and raped by Japanese soldiers during their occupation of Christmas Island, (Hunt, J. 2011) (Foster, I. 2019) (McCarthy, J. 2020). The building has scientific value in its ability to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the Island’s social cultural history and its violation under Japanese occupation during WWII. The building is historically significant as a colonial British pre-war building constructed for non-European workers and utilized by the Japanese in WWII. It played a significant role as accommodation for Asian staff of the Christmas Island Phosphate company administration and as part of a group of administration buildings, located in the vicinity of the main Administration Building. The building continued to house Asian residents, since the 1970s racial distinctions have been desegregated. Since the 1990s the building has been privately purchased by Europeans, in 2000 it was re-purchased and appropriately refurbished, employing contemporary South East Asian styling whilst preserving its South East Asian Heritage and colonial structure. It continues in its role to provide accommodation Tong Chee House serves as a lodge for tourists, on Christmas Island.

### **HISTORY:**

Tong Chee house was originally erected in the 1920s by the British, a single storey, square residential building attached to the west side of the former Asian Quarters. During the Japanese occupation of Christmas Island, senior imperial troops demanded that collaborator Jimmy (Kang Kiang) and his unwilling accomplice Mandor Tong Chi, (Chee), bring Chinese prostitutes from the White House Brothel (previously located along the site of the current Tourist bureau) to live in sexual-servitude for troops at no.33 building (Japanese numbering), as was replicated by Japanese forces across South East Asia. The women were repeatedly raped and abused by Japanese soldiers and forbidden to leave the building for the duration of the Japanese occupation on Christmas Island from 1942 to 1945. The site was addressed by the Japanese as “no.33 building”, and is documented to have been attached on the left of the former Asian Quarters (now colloquially known as the

Roundabout Flats) on Tong Chee Road. Post-WWII the building was re-addressed as no. 6 Tong Chee Road, and used as accommodation, before being re-purposed as “Yews Coffee Shop.” After storm damage was sustained by a free-falling tree in 1991, the building was re-roofed, refurbished and purchased by an Australian couple who renamed it as “Yew’s 2” coffee shop. It was on-sold in 2005, restored and appropriately renovated as the ‘Tong Chee House Villa’ for tourist accommodation, at 6 Tong Chee Road.

#### **DESCRIPTION/CONDITION :**

The building is in excellent condition. In 2005 it was sold to an architect who preserved its character, scale and structure, included were appropriate additions of an outside bathroom and timber balcony. Alterations denote an appropriate reference to its South East Asian heritage. Restored concrete steps lead up to the addition of a polished timber balcony, which is in sight of the entrance to Tong Chee House marked by a large Indonesian carved teak door at the main entrance. The steps are flanked on either side by concrete arched air-wells proving a sophisticated approach to the Island’s tropical weather. The building’s original colonial architecture is evident, its form and character is preserved with additions appropriately reflecting its South East Asian heritage. Modern steel framed and meshed doors attached to the rear ablution blocks and to bedrooms, serve as a sophisticated approach to the Island’s humid climate and insects. The building’s appropriate alterations and additions demonstrate its aesthetic value and its renewed functionality as an upmarket tourist accommodation which will aid its longevity and conservation.

**Integrity/Authenticity:** Excellent condition/Authenticity high

Appropriate additions, alterations, refurbishments, restorations and renovation/ Structure intact/  
Character intact/Form intact

Christmas Island Tourism Association. A Step Back in Time, Australian Government, 2019.  
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McCarthy, J. Why These WWII Sex Slaves Are Still Demanding Justice, NPR Legacy, Pulitzer Center, 2020 .  
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Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.  
Williams and Macdonald, *The Phosphateers*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1985.  
Shire of Christmas Island, Building Archives/Property File – Tong Chee Road 10946  
Research: The Shire of Christmas Island Local Heritage Survey, 2023..

## **GENERAL ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE (1943)**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: HIGH**

Historic/Rarity/Associative/Technical

**AUTHENTICITY:** High

**ADDRESS/LOCATION:** Tip Site – 5-9 Quarry Road Christmas Island.

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The 1943 USA built General Electric 9402 (B/No. 17938), was sent to Sydney from America under lease conditions after WWII. The British Phosphate Commission purchased the unit from the N.S.W.G.R in 1974, shipping the locomotive to the Island was more complex than expected, it was found to be in need of rewiring and a complete overhaul due to a lack of maintenance in the latter years of its service. It was rebuilt in Perth, and on its side are inscribed the words “British Phosphate Commission, Christmas Island, Indian Ocean”. This locomotive is historically significant as it played a significant role in the success of the British Phosphate Commissions transport and restoration of the production of Phosphate post WWII. It is strongly associated with the operation of the mine until the 1980s. It is significant as one of the final choices in type of locomotives used to transport Phosphate by the British Phosphate Commission and retained this role under the Australian owned Christmas Island Phosphate Company. The 1943 GE locomotive is scientifically significant in providing information about the Christmas Island Phosphate Company’s employees and the operation of the phosphate mine, the last train driver of the G.E 9402 locomotive was mining employee Mr J De Cruz, who parked it at the end of its phosphate journey in Drumsite near the locomotive workshops. It is the last surviving locomotive to have travelled the standard gauge rail system, it is significant in demonstrating a high degree of technical achievement in the transport of phosphate in the period and was part of the hub of mining activity in the latter period of utilization of the standard gauge rail system on Christmas Island. The 9402 locomotive is strongly associated with the life and work of employees of the Christmas Island phosphate mine and demonstrates of a high degree of technical achievement in the period, associated with the successful diversification of the phosphate mine’s economy, from 1990 it transported phosphate mined from left over stockpiles and used the rail bridges that accessed the loadout at Drumsite, these have since been demolished. The 1943 General Electric 9402 locomotive demonstrates a rare example of phosphate mining entrepreneurship across two significant periods of the administration of the mine in the context of Christmas Island.

### **HISTORY:**

The General Electric Locomotive 9402, was used to transport phosphate approximately south-west from the power station along Murray Road, six kilometers from Drumsite and from where Phosphate mining continued to take place (later from stockpiles left over from previous mining) until the 1990’s, the railway sidings are slowly being removed but had indicated that the brake applications of the G.E locomotive had to be kept to a minimum during the red crab migration. The G.E 9402 was one of the

final choices of locomotive by the BPC to transport phosphate for the Christmas Island Phosphates Company, it was frequently utilized for most of the latter life of the standard gauge rail system and present in the Drumsite hub of mining activity. Singaporean scrap metal merchants took most of the redundant locomotives and much of the railway track-work on Christmas Island for scrap metal, but the 1943 G.E locomotive remains, albeit in very poor condition, at the Quarry Road Tip-Site.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The integrity of the 1943 General Electric locomotive is suffering from progressive deterioration; it is immersed in jungle vegetation at the Christmas Island Tip Site, and is in a near dilapidated condition. Its integrity has been stalled through neglect as a lack of funding inhibited efforts towards its conservation. The structure and character of the locomotive is still visible through the foliage, it is not absolutely impossible to restore, however it would require expertise, time and a vast amount of funding for its effective conservation. Its heritage is of High value and its history is significant in the context of Christmas Island.

**INTEGRITY:** Extremely poor condition

Godden Mackay, L., 1988. *Heritage Review, DCPs and Development Guidelines, Christmas Island*. Christmas Island [Collection] Christmas Island. 1988.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *We Were the Christmas Islanders*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

Neale, M and Adams, J. *Christmas Island the Early Years*, Bruce Neale, ACT, 1998.

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Research: *The Shire of Christmas Island Heritage Survey*, 2023.

## **M.S EISVOLD**

### **HERITAGE VALUE: UNDETERMINABLE**

Historic/Rarity/Associative

**AUTHENTICITY:** High

**LOCATION:** Smith Point

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The M.S Eidsvold, is historically significant, it arrived at Flying Fish Cove on Christmas Island during WWII on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 1942, to load phosphate and transport it to Fremantle in Western Australia. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 1942 she was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine and sunk.

### **HISTORY:**

The M.S Eidsvold was built in 1934 in Sweden, for Norwegian company (Skibs-A/S Edsiva) who operated under the Sverre-Ditler – Simonsen Co. The Eidsvold was 116.64 metres long, with a beam of 16.89 metres, the 6-cylinder, 4 stroke diesel engine, propelled the vessel at 12.2 knots ( 22.6 km per hour). She was a 6,184 Gross Register Tonnage motor vessel and she arrived in Flying Fish Cove to be loaded with Phosphate on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of January. The loaded phosphate was to be transported to Fremantle in Western Australia but a storm delayed the voyage and on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, the captain reported an incident when the wake of a torpedo was spotted from the bridge. by the 2<sup>nd</sup> mate. The life boats were brought out and equipment checked, and the Eidsvold brought closer to land, assuming the cannon and the fort on the cliff top above would protect them. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 1942 she was sunk by Japanese submarine 1-159 Yoshimatsu, loaded with 3700 tonnes of phosphate. All 31 members of the crew survived and made it to shore, locals brought them in to various homes until the HMS Durban picked them up two weeks later on February the 6<sup>th</sup> and took them to Batavia in the Dutch West Indies.

### **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The wreckage was visible in the 1950s, the torpedo had broken it in two. Today one half of the Eidsvold sits between 5 and 18 metres, the other half has fallen over the edge and is not accessible for exploration by divers. The remains of the hull remain visible and in full reach of divers to explore, it has become a home for colourful tropical fish and colonies of coral.

### **Integrity/Authenticity:**

Decrepit, destroyed/ Authenticity/ remnants High

The Eidsvold is a destroyed ship wreck that lies in Smith Point, it was torn in half on impact of the torpedo, it has low integrity due to its condition, but its remnants have high authenticity and historical value.

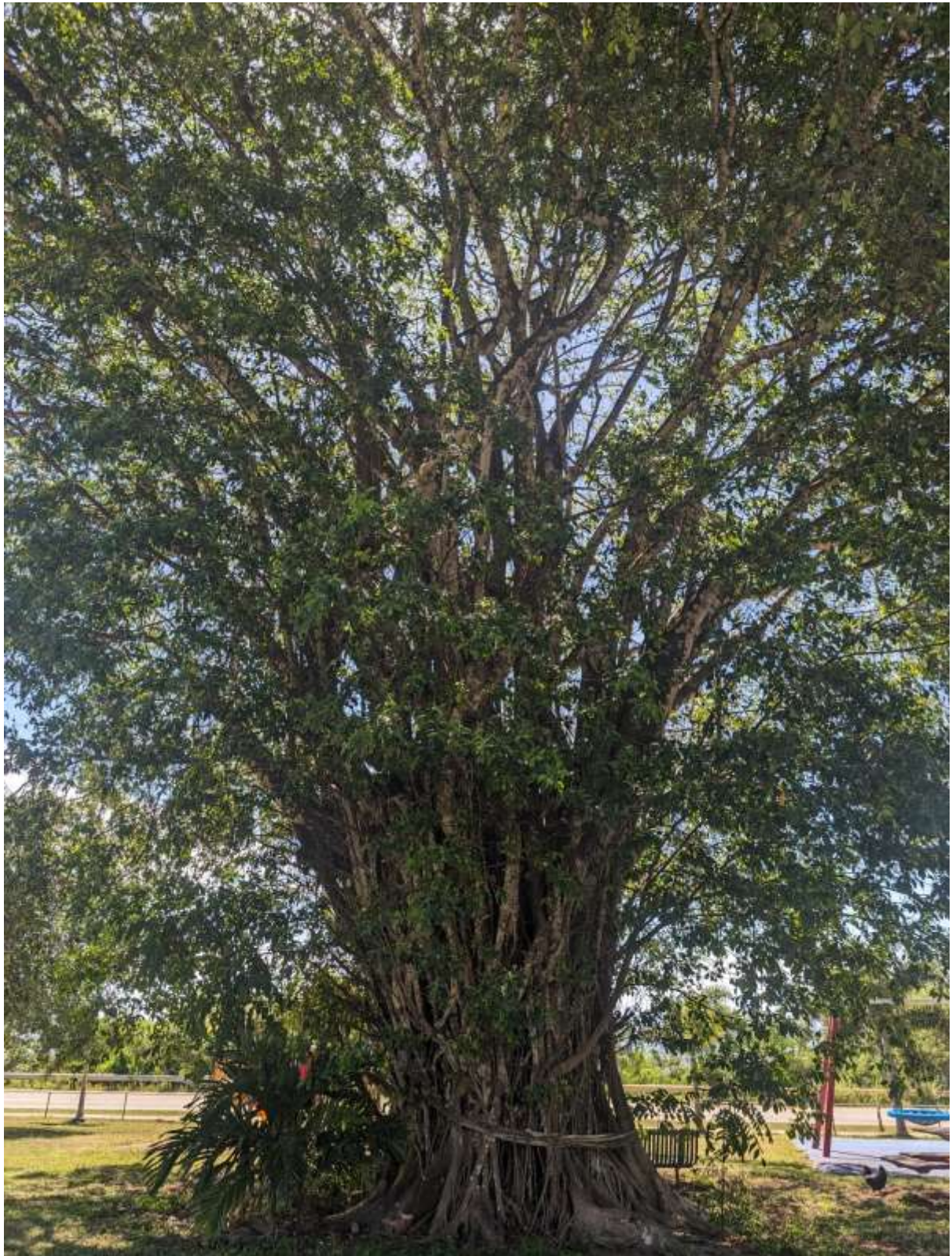
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## Drumsite Banyan Tree

<b>Integrity / Authenticity</b>	High
<b>Address/Location</b>	Drumsite Park, Christmas Island
<b>Statement of Significance</b>	<p>The banyan trees of Christmas Island are regarded as places of spiritual significance to followers of the Chinese Taoist folk religion on Christmas Island. Many of the Chinese believe that local spirits inhabit the tree; these spirits are recognized with offerings of food, drinks and incense. Devotees make increased offerings at this other banyan trees like it during the Ullambana Ghost Festival of the seventh lunar month in recognition of the ancestral wandering spirits on Christmas Island during the festival.</p>
<b>History</b>	<p>Chinese migrants to Christmas Island brought with them their cultural and religious practices which often included elements of the Taoist folk religion prevalent in their southern Chinese homelands. Taoism encompasses a diverse array of beliefs and practices characterised by their fluidity and adaptability.</p> <p>At the core of Taoist folk religion are various observances and rituals, such as ancestral worship, where reverence is paid to deceased ancestors as a means of honoring and seeking their guidance. Additionally, practitioners may engage in the worship of a pantheon of Taoist deities, each associated with different aspects of nature, spirituality, and human affairs.</p> <p>One distinctive aspect of Taoism is its openness to incorporating influences from other belief systems, including Buddhism and Confucianism. Buddhist concepts and practices, such as meditation and karma, may be integrated into Taoist rituals and worldview. Similarly, Confucian teachings on ethics, social harmony, and filial piety are often embraced by Taoist practitioners, creating a syncretic blend of spiritual traditions.</p> <p>In this way, the Taoists of the Chinese diaspora have a reverence for the banyan tree, which is held in high esteem by practitioners of Buddhism. Buddhists think that Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, attained enlightenment under the shade of a banyan tree. Hence, it is an important symbol to the Buddhist schools of India, and eventually the schools of Buddhism that took root across South East Asia and China.</p> <p>On Christmas Island, the practice of Taoism among Chinese migrants reflects this history of melding Buddhist ideals within wider Chinese folk</p>

	<p>beliefs. Taoist shrines are sometimes embedded within the tree; these may range from a humble collection of bricks capable of holding joss sticks to a dedicated wooden shrine capable of providing shelter to offerings made at it.</p> <p>Followers make offerings to typically not the tree itself, nor any particular deity in the Taoist pantheon, nor to their ancestors, but to the spirits of the area.</p>
<b>Description / Condition</b>	<p>The banyan tree is healthy, with no signs of infestation.</p> <p>The Drumsite banyan tree has a yellow sash draped at its base. This is a form of offering to the spirit of the tree, and the spirits in the area, acknowledging their presence. It is periodically changed by followers on the island.</p>



*Banyan Tree in Drumsite Park, Christmas Island. Note the yellow sash at the base*





*Close up of yellow sash at base of Drumsite Banyan Tree*



*The bricks are used as an adhoc offering altar. Note the red joss stick container in the background; followers make offerings and burn incense sporadically here.*



## Four Faced Buddah Banyan Tree Shrines

<b>Integrity / Authenticity</b>	High
<b>Address/Location</b>	Taman Sweetland, Christmas Island
<b>Statement of Significance</b>	<p>The banyan tree and two wooden joss house shrines it houses are examples of folk Taoist worship in the Christmas Island residential areas. The banyan tree is a tree of great significance to the Taoist Chinese.</p> <p>Followers make offerings of food, drinks and incense at the wooden joss houses periodically. An increased amount of offerings are made during the Ullambana Ghost Festival in the seventh month of the lunar calendar. The Four Faced Buddah shrine is adjacent.</p>
<b>History</b>	<p>The banyan tree precedes the construction of the Four Faced Buddah shrine in Taman Sweetland park. Both are valued by residents as part of the Taman Sweetland public park area.</p> <p>As with other banyan trees in the township that have achieved significant size, local Chinese Taoist followers create makeshift altars at the base and in this instance, set two wooden joss houses at the base.</p>
<b>Description / Condition</b>	<p>The banyan tree is in healthy condition, although it has lost a number of branches in the 2024 wet season.</p> <p>Worshippers have added two wooden joss houses to the base of the tree; one is many years older than the other. The older of the two is on a stand, with the newer one close to the floor.</p> <p>Offerings are made inside the joss houses as well as at a red paving stone altar featuring a red brick to hold incense sticks.</p> <p>There is a makeshift storage shed next to the newer joss house. It holds some chairs and miscellaneous items. A new storage shed is located adjacent to the Four Faced Buddah Shrine 20metres away.</p>



*Note the two wooden joss houses at the base of the banyan tree erected by local Taoist followers.*



*Close up of the older of the two wooden joss houses*





*Note a makeshift offering altar with a red brick to receive incense offerings.*



*Note the Four Faced Buddah Shrine in the background*





*Close up of the wooden shrine. Incense and an offering of sweet coconut at the altar.*

## Banyan Tree Grove, Bell Arch and Mountain Shrines

<b>Integrity / Authenticity</b>	High
<b>Address/Location</b>	Lower Terrace escarpment, Christmas Island
<b>Statement of Significance</b>	<p>The banyan trees of Christmas Island are regarded as places of spiritual significance to followers Buddhism on Christmas Island.</p> <p>The Banyan Tree Grove in the escarpment of the lower terrace is tended by the Mahayana Buddhists at a nearby temple.</p> <p>Note that offerings to the ancestral spirits of the seventh lunar month during the Ullamana Ghost Festival are not made at these banyan trees. A nearby temple undertakes annual karmic prayer recitals to assist Chinese ancestral spirits.</p>
<b>History</b>	<p>The elders of the CI Mahayana Buddhist Society Temple on Gaze Road report that the Banyan Tree Grove in the lower escarpment as well as within the Temple and Chinese Literary Association precinct were planted by visiting monks many years ago.</p> <p>Buddhists consider the Banyan Tree, sometimes called Bodhi Tree following the Sanskrit name, as a revered symbol in Buddhism as Siddhartha Gautama was said to have attained enlightenment under one in India.</p> <p>Several of the trees in the grove feature a yellow sash tied at the base to recognize the spiritual significance of that tree.</p> <p>It is unknown when the mountain shrine was constructed amongst the banyan grove, or the bell archway installed at the steps leading to the site.</p> <p>The mountain shrine provides a sheltered place for the placement of religious artifacts. Offerings are made there from local Mahayana practitioners.</p> <p>Of note the only bell-arch on Christmas Island is at the top of the staircase leading to the Banyan Tree Grove and mountain shrine. Bells are a symbol of enlightenment in some schools of Buddhism, particularly in Tibet. It is said to be an echo of the voice of the Buddha, leading the way to enlightenment.</p>

<p><b>Description / Condition</b></p>	<p>A makeshift concrete staircase moulded into the rockface leads to the Banyan Tree Grove and Mountain Shrines.</p> <p>The banyan trees in the grove are healthy, with no signs of infestation. Yellow sash is roped around the base of several of the trees in the grove. The grove features some cemented flooring to provide an evenness to the volcanic rock. Buddhist flags are hung up in the area.</p> <p>The top of the concrete staircase features the island's only bell arch. The bell is hung about six foot off the ground and is about a foot in length itself. Visitors to the grove find they have to bow their heads to enter the area; this is possibly a design feature of the bell arch.</p> <p>The mountain shrine is made in a natural rock fissure, with makeshift bamboo and tarp housing covering the top that is maintained by local followers of the temple. A series of religious artifacts lay in the shrine.</p> <p>There are two other mountain shrines in the vicinity, one within the grove and the other at the base of the staircase.</p>
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*Staircase to the Banyan Tree Grove and Mountain Shrine*





*Close up of the Bell-Arch, marking the entry to the Banyan Tree Grove*



*Note the yellow sashes tied at the base of trees in the grove. Worshippers have erected simple retaining walls and fencing in the area to demarcate the mountain shrine.*





*Buddhist Mountain Shrine within the Banyan Tree Grove. Offerings and religious ornaments are on the altar.*



*Two other mountain shrines are in the vicinity of the Banyan Tree Grove. The Chinese community still make offerings at these sites. The one above has the altar moulded into the rock face. The one below features scrap sheet metal to shade over the tablet and offering area. The use of scrap building material such as red bricks and sheet metal is a feature of the resourcefulness of the people.*

