

CITY OF SOUTH PERTH LOCAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Management
Category

B

PLACE RECORD FORM

Prepared by *Heritage Today*, March 2000
Most recent update by City of South Perth, November 2015

Place No: Co 3 **Residence:** 426 Canning Highway -
‘Blue Waters’



(*Heritage Today* 1999)

LOCATION

Name of Place	<i>Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’</i>
Other / former names	
Address	426 Canning Highway
Suburb	Como
Local Government Authority	City of South Perth
Scope of listing	This heritage listing applies to the dwelling house, but not to the pool or to any detached outbuildings.

LISTINGS BY OTHER BODIES

Name of Body	Reference No.	Grade of Listing	Date
Heritage Council of Western Australia	4812	Data base only – not listed	-

LAND DESCRIPTION

Reserve No.	Lot	Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio
N/A	206	Swan 42	4156	V 1347 F 674

PERIOD	Post War (c1940-1960)
Design Style	Functionalist/International
Construction Date	1952-53
Source/Details	Oral History

USE(S) OF PLACE

Original	Residence
Present	Residence
Other / former	

HISTORICAL NOTES

(Much of this historical material is drawn from a Wikipedia article – ‘Blue Waters, Perth’.¹)

Despite this *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* being recognised by two eminent architectural authorities as 1930s design style, the house was actually approved by the South Perth Council in 1951. It has been described as having functionalist, Art Deco and International Cubist characteristics. The house was built in 1952-53 by Mabel and Keith Perron.

Shortly before World War II, the Perrons were inspired by a magazine illustration of a Florida Art Deco house design. Work towards construction of the 1930s design was delayed, owing to the shortage of building materials during and after the War. The house plans were approved by South Perth Council in 1951, but construction did not occur until a year or two later. Due to the design of ‘Blue Waters’ involving a greater quantity of bricks and glass than the ration system permitted, Keith Perron decided to establish a brickworks from which to source the required quantity of bricks.¹ The curved glass windows and frames could not be manufactured locally and were shipped from the U.K.

The house became both a social hub and a landmark for many years, outside which tour buses would regularly pause.

Blue Waters made an ideal location for photographic backdrops for the modelling career of the Perron’s daughter, Judith.

Keith Perron’s cousin, Marshall Perron, lived at Blue Waters for a while as a young man before becoming a Northern Territory politician. He was a Country Liberal Party member of the Legislative Assembly in the Northern Territory from the formation of the Assembly in 1974 until his resignation in 1995. From 1988 to 1995, Perron was the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory.²

In May 1956, Council approval was given for the erection of a garage adjoining the rear of the house, abutting the southern boundary of the site. Access to this garage would have been via the rear right-of-way, Daisy Lane. This building was later converted into a games room.

¹ Source: Wikipedia article - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_Waters,_Perth

² Source: Wikipedia article - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Perron.

HISTORICAL NOTES (cont’d)

In 1961, the *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’*, complete with its original furniture, was sold to Joy and Eric Lillingston, owner of the yacht ‘Yeulba’,³ for £12,500 (A\$25,000). In 1965, it was bought by Mr Bodica, a bookmaker, and in 1973 by the deputy mayor of Fremantle and butcher, Denis Sowden and his wife Margaret. In 1974, the property was sold to Mirjam Norvilas who retained the house for 32 years before selling in 2006 to David Cavanagh, who has restored the house to its original condition.

In May 2013, the *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* was one of the venues for the filming of the movie, *The Reckoning*, written by John V Soto and starring Luke Hemsworth and Jonathan LaPaglia. The property owner, David Cavanagh was the film’s associate producer.

Although set back about 17 metres from the street boundary, the *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* is in threat of possible damage or demolition due to Canning Highway road widening works that are proposed by the State government. In July 2013, at the request of David Cavanaugh, owner, the Council resolved that:

- “(a) in order to conserve and protect the integrity of the heritage-listed house, ‘Blue Waters’, on Lot 206 (No. 426) Canning Highway, Como, the Council supports a reduction in the width of the proposed road widening across the site from 17.5 metres to 16.0 metres;
- (b) the WA Department of Transport be requested to reduce the planned road widening for this lot, as referred to in part (a) above;
- (c) if the Department of Transport agrees to reduce the road widening from 17.5 metres to 16.0 metres in this location, the Department of Planning be requested to implement a corresponding amendment to the Metropolitan Region Scheme.”

The Council request was referred to the relevant government agencies, but at the time of preparing these notes, the effect of this long-term project on the *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* has not been finally resolved. It will be reviewed by Main Roads Western Australia closer to implementation of the Canning Highway upgrade project.

DESCRIPTION

The *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* is situated on Canning Highway set back some distance from the road. It has a dominant curved (almost circular) two storey section with a one storey wing. The single garage is situated under the house. The mature palm trees that are the main feature of the landscaping in the front yard appear to fit with the almost nautical feel of the house.

This *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* has many features that place it in the Functionalist/Art Deco design style category. These include asymmetrical massing, simple geometric shapes, long horizontal balcony (similarities to a ship), roof concealed behind parapet, rounded corner and windows with curved glass and aluminium frames.

The house, though built in 1952-53, has the classic lines of a style of architecture first introduced in the 1920s and 1930s, which emphasised functionalism, clean lines and a complete disassociation from the past.

³ *Yeulba* was built in Auckland in the 1920s for Lord Forster, Governor-General of Australia. The 8 metre yacht was made from New Zealand kauri timber, and was designed by W Fife, well-known Scottish boat designer. (Source: *Trove Digitised Newspapers – The West Australian*, Tuesday 17 August, 1954)

ASSOCIATIONS**ASSOCIATION TYPE**

R M Neal and Allan	House designers
Keith and Mabel Perron	First owners, commissioned the design of the house
Eric and Joy Lillingston	Owners 1961 – 1965
Mr Bodica	Owner 1965 – 1973
Denis and Margaret Sowden	Owners 1973 – 1974
Miriam Norvillas	Owner 1974 – 2006
David Cavanagh	Owner 2006 onwards

HISTORIC THEME / Sub-theme**CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Demographic Settlement/ <i>Residential Land Subdivision</i>	Aesthetic
	Historic
	Rarity

RATING AND ASSESSMENT**High****Low**

Aesthetic value (streetscape, setting)	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Architectural merit (design features)	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Rarity value	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Value as part of a group/precinct	1	2	3 ✓	4	5
Condition	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Integrity	1	2 ✓	3	4	5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* has aesthetic, representative and rarity cultural heritage significance. It has been recognised by a number of heritage and architectural professionals for its unusual design style. It has high streetscape value and is a fine representative of functionalist architecture. Residences of this design style with such high integrity and few changes to the original external plan are rare in the City of South Perth.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**Management Category B : Considerable significance**

Conservation essential. Reflects the highest level of local cultural heritage significance. Very important to the heritage of the locality. High degree of integrity and authenticity. Demolition or significant alteration to a place in Management Category B of the Heritage List is not permitted. Any alterations or additions are to be guided by a Conservation Plan, if any, and reinforce the heritage values of the place.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION / BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P., *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus and Robertson NSW, 1989.
- City of South Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory (No.1) 1994.
- Molyneux, I., *Looking around Perth: A Guide to the Architecture of Perth and Surrounding Towns*. The Royal Institute of Architects, 1981.

HISTORY OF HERITAGE LISTING BY CITY OF SOUTH PERTH

	Date Adopted by Council
Initial listing in MHI	December 1994
Update of MHI	February 1996
Update of MHI	December 1996
Update of MHI	December 1997
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	June 2000
Update of MHI	June 2002
Update of MHI	March 2003
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	February 2006
Interim Heritage List – Policy P313 ‘Local Heritage Listing’	April 2013
Updated in renamed LHI	November 2015



Front porch, curved steps and entrance.

(Gina Fraser, City of South Perth, 2006.)



View northwards from the balcony towards the City.

(Gina Fraser, City of South Perth, 2006.)



LEFT: View along front balcony towards curved window feature.
(Gina Fraser, City of South Perth, 2006.)

BELOW: Etching of sailing ship and birds on a rear window.
(Gina Fraser, City of South Perth, 2006.)





View of the classic front garden and *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* c1960.
(Photograph reproduced with kind permission of David Cavanagh, 2006 owner.)



The hand-dug pool at the rear of *Residence: 426 Canning Highway - ‘Blue Waters’* c1960.
(Photograph reproduced with kind permission of David Cavanagh, 2006 owner.)



WESTERN MAIL, December 3, 1953

STREAMLINED BLUE WATERS

Overlooking the blue waters of the Swan, the new home of Mr. and Mrs. L. K. Perron of Como took its name from the view. Pale pastel-blue walls and deep blue curtains

tone with the river scene.

Upstairs, immediately over the drawing-room, the centre of interest is a huge rumpus-room which opens out on to loggias.

But the room to linger in is the bathroom. It is in rose pink with contrasting black, glossy tiles and "postage-stamp" beige tiles on the floor. The pink appointments were ordered in the Eastern States and imported from abroad.

Newspaper article announcing the completion of 'Blue Waters'.

(Source: Trove Digitised Newspapers - <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article39361403>)



1953 aerial view of *Residence: 426 Canning Highway – ‘Blue Waters’* and the surrounding locality, showing the limited extent of development in the area at that time.
(City Records)

LOCATION MAP



(Digital Cadastral Data supplied by Landgate, WA. P295)