



Len Walters (Le Page, p.521); 114 Forrest Street North Perth (Google 2024).

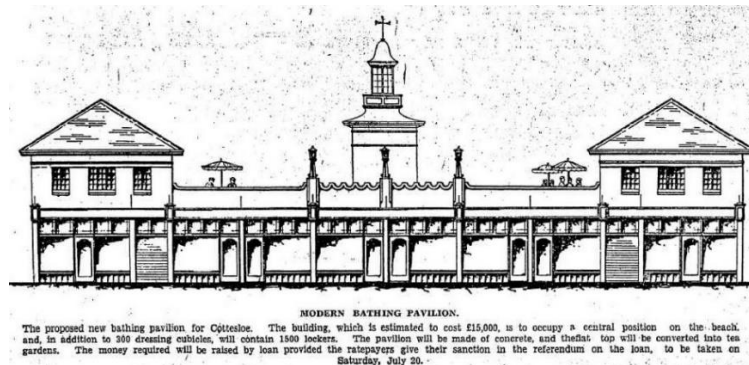
**Leonard James Walters** (1903-1989) was born 28 October 1903 at Forrest Street North Perth, son of Frank Leonard and Catherine May (nee Hughes) Walters. 'Len' had brothers John Hughes (1906), Frank Alan (1911), and Ross Hughes (1913) Walters. In 1903 Frank Walters was working with Walter Meston, trading as Meston & Walters sign writers, painters and decorators at 167 Murray Street Perth. The family lived in a modest Federation style residence at 114 Forrest Street North Perth for many years, and it is likely that Len and his brothers attended the nearby North Perth Primary school.

The results of the examinations of candidates qualifying as architectural and mechanical drafters, held at Perth in December 1919 by the Adelaide School of Arts, noted that Leonard James Walters of Stotts Business College achieved excellent results in: Model Drawing, Freehand, Solid Geometry, Plane Geometry and Perspective. Len may have begun articles with Powell & Cameron architects around this time. Alexander Donald Cameron (1878-1961) had served articles with James William Wright (1854-1917), and remained in Wright's office as draughtsman-assistant until 1906, when he and Thomas Walter Lloyd Powell (1864-1946) were made partners in the firm, which carried on as Wright, Powell & Cameron until Wright's death in 1917.

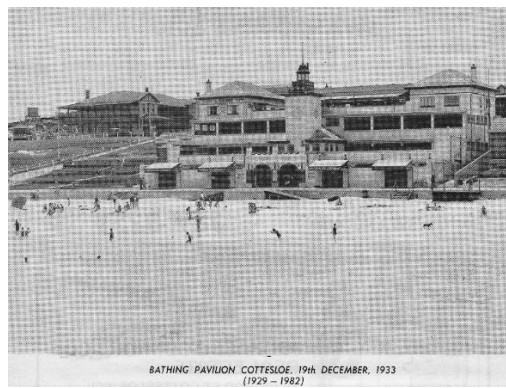
Clearly a talented young man with pen and pencil, Len's 'Address of Welcome to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales' was presented at Government House in July 1920, and described in the press: *A very excellent illuminated address has been executed by Patrol Leader Len Walters, Troop No. 32 (Highgate Hill), and is now on view in the Economic Company's window, Hay-street. The artist has the best congratulations of the Boy Scout Council on the splendid result of his energies. We feel sure His Royal Highness will be very pleased with this unique address, demonstrating as it does diligent and careful work by a keen Western Australian Scout.*

By 1922 Len was a member of the recently formed Architectural Students' Association (ASA), whose founders included Colin Ednie-Brown (1894-1960) and Margaret Pitt Morison (1900-1985). He was still a member in 1934. Len Walters registered with the Architects Board of Western Australia (no. 103) on 15 December 1924 (under *Architects Act Amendment Act*, 1923, Section 2 which notes "or having completed articles or indentures holds a certificate in writing by the practicing architect to whom the applicant was articulated or indentured proving the completion of such articles or indentures.")

Len Walters and Doris Jean Paterson were married in 1928, as noted in the *Sunday Times*: 'On Saturday, March 24, the Presbyterian Church, North Perth, was the scene of a pretty wedding, when Doris, second daughter of Mrs J.B. Paterson of "Ben Lomond," Ruby Street, North Perth, was married to Leonard, eldest son of Mr and Mrs F.L. Walters of Walcott Street, Mt Lawley.' The couple initially lived at Inverness Crescent in Mount Lawley, and from 1933 were at 22 Melrose Crescent Mount Lawley. In association with Oswald Victor Chisholm (also 1903-1989) at Powell & Cameron architects, Len won a competition for the design of the Cottesloe Bathing Pavilion in 1929.



Street view of Cottesloe Bathing Pavilion (*Daily News*, 6 July 1929, p.4).

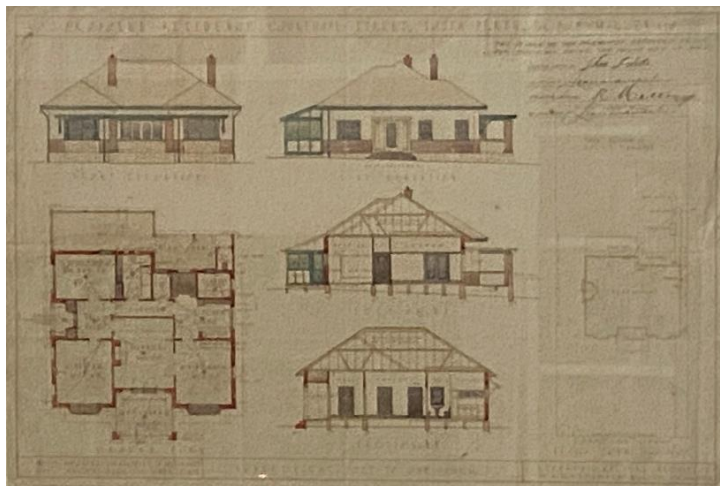


Cottesloe Bathing Pavilion, pictured in 1933 (*Civic Centre News*, June 1982, v.31, no.9)

Len Walters is listed under 'Architects' at Perth in *Wises Directory* from 1929-1936. There are some examples of his domestic work from this Great Depression period, but a lack of tender notices suggests that he may have been primarily employed by others. Len moved to work at the State Government's Public Works Department (PWD) sometime in the 1930s, perhaps seeking greater financial security in the difficult economic times.



'Mrs Robinson's residence in Guildford Road, Maylands – L.J. Walters Architect'. This is likely to have been no. 240, now a shopping centre (*Sunday Times*, 10 September 1933, p.12).



L.J. Walters Architect (at A.M.P. Building) drawing of a 1933 residence at 3 Courthope Street South Perth for Bert and Myrtle Miller. The current stairs at the front are an addition. The entrance was on the left hand side of the house half way along. (Ruth Baird; Google 2024)

Both Len Walters and Len Green (1902-1981) were mentioned by PWD Principal Architect A.E. (Paddy) Clare as being closely associated with the design of the Perth Girl's School at East Perth, winner of a Royal Institute of British Architects award conferred in 1939 upon Clare and the PWD's Architectural Division.



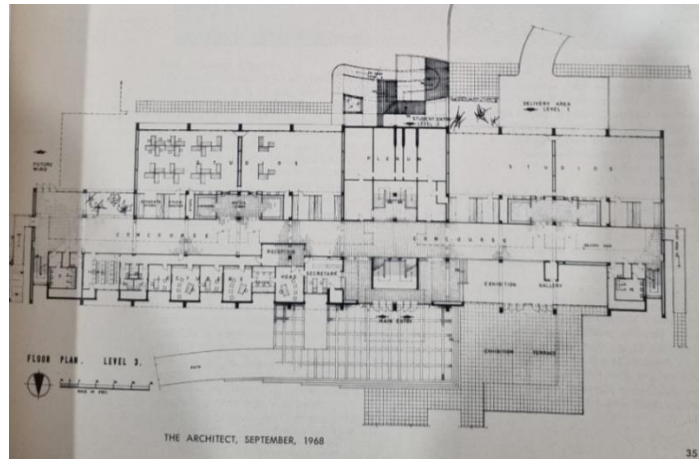
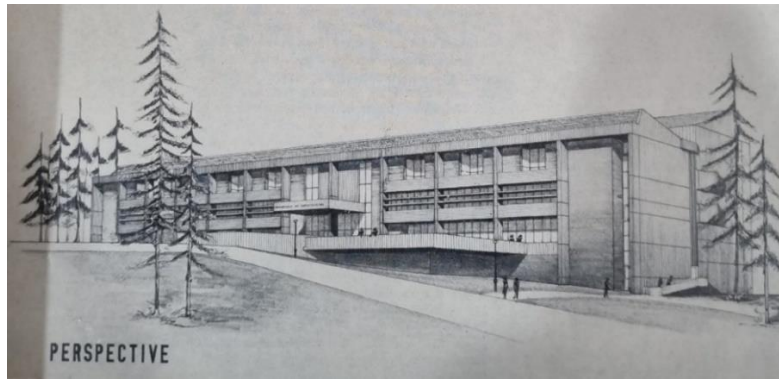
Perth Girls' High School of 1934, RIBA Bronze Medal winner in 1937 (SLWA 095926PD).

Walters appears to have worked at the PWD through the Second World War (1939-1945). Len's father Frank died in 1941 aged 64 years, his mother Catherine was to pass away in 1955 aged 77 years.

PWD and Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) stalwart Vin Davies (1928-2010) was a member of the first architecture class at Perth Technical College when the course was introduced in 1946. He graduated in 1950 and joined the PWD as a cadet architect. Davies provides great testimony to the character of Clare, to his influence on the structure and output of the PWD in halcyon years, and also to some of the key staff:

*Paddy Clare was the first Principal Architect under whom I served. He was a remarkable man. He thoroughly understood and appreciated the vibrant architectural heritage which was now his to continue. His sense of responsibility as a senior public servant and his loyalty to the Department and his staff stamped him as a leader to be respected. And respected he was, both inside and outside the Public Service; both within the architectural profession and elsewhere. ...*

*Most importantly Clare was well informed on the changes occurring in architectural theory and design, including the Modern Movement, the landmark work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mies Van der Rohe and Willem Dudok. The younger pre Second World War architects, like W.L. Green, G.W. Finn, L.J. Walters, W. Leighton and a little later S.B. Cann and E.H. Van Mens, were also aware of and influenced by these trends.*



Perspective and floor plan of Architecture Building at West Australian Institute of Technology, L.J. Walters Principal Architect (*The Architect*, 1968, Vol.3, pp.33-35).

Len Walters succeeded his long term colleague Len Green as principal architect at the PWD from 1967-1968, and he took charge of the Architectural Division during the period when a substantial proportion of the public works programme had become available to the private sector. In 1968 Len retired after a long career in the Public Service and the short final period as Principal Architect. After some governmental consideration of reorganization of the PWD, in 1981 Jerry Bateman was made the final Principal Architect. In January 1985 a large staff contingent finished their employment with the Department, and the PWD that had its origins in 1829 came to the end of its official life on 30 June 1985. A new organization named the Building Management Authority began operating under a much reduced staff.

WA Government Principal Architects were:

1891 – 1897 George Temple-Poole

1897 – 1905 John Harry Grainger

1905 – 1917 Hillson Beasley

1917 – 1927 William Burden Hardwick

1927 – 1930 John Melvin Tait

1930 – 1960 Albert Ernest (Paddy) Clare

1960 – 1967 Walter Leonard Green

1967 – 1968 Leonard James Walters

1968 – 1980 Stanley Buckingham Cann

1981 – 1985 William Edward (Jerry) Bateman

In professional recognition, Walters became an Associate member of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) in 1946, and was made a Fellow of the RAIA in 1968. Len and Doris raised children Brenda (married John Ledder 1961) and Lloyd at Mount Lawley; in later years they lived on the Esplanade at Mount Pleasant. Len Walters died 28 September 1989 aged 85 years, Doris Walters had passed away 20 September 1973 aged 68 years.

References:

'Drawing Examination', *The West Australian*, 27 April 1920, p.8 (held in Perth December 1919).

'Address of Welcome to HRH The Prince of Wales', *Daily News*, 26 June 1920, p.7.

'Scout News', *Daily Telegraph and North Murchison and Pilbarra Gazette*, 15 July 1920, p.2.

'Walters-Paterson', *Sunday Times*, 29 April 1928, p.3 (marriage at North Perth).

'Cottesloe Bathing Pavilion', *The West Australian*, 28 June 1929, p.22 (J.F. Allen comp assessor).

'Cottesloe Bathing Pavilion', *The West Australian*, 21 December 1929, p.10 (official opening).

'Civic Pride', *The West Australian*, 15 June 1939, p.19 (Perth Girls' School).

Album of around 60 pages illustrating the work of the PWD, presented to A.E. Clare by the staff of the PWD at his retirement in 1960, held by grandson Bill Clare.

Davies, Vincent, 'Building in the Public Realm. A personal view', pp.6-8, in 'Creating the Public Realm: public architecture in Western Australia: 1890-2000', catalogue for exhibition curated by Barbara van Bronswijk and Duncan Richards at the Alexander Library Building, 1994.

Le Page, John Stanley Herbert, *Building a State*, Water Authority of Western Australia, Leederville, 1986, pp. 466, 520-521.

'Reg Walters: An Artist At War', <https://www.artistatwar.com/reg-walters>

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**Citation details:**

Taylor, Dr John J., 'Leonard James Walters (1903-1989)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.taylorarchitects.com.au/Biographies.html> accessed DATE.

Following are photos of some of the projects under 'Paddy' Clare [from a retirement album for Clare] that illustrate the design styles of the period in which Len Walters was working as an 'engine-room' architect at the PWD. Research into signatures/initials on archived PWD drawings and files would likely reveal further authorship details for the individual projects.



Maylands Blind School 1937, Narrogin Agricultural High School 1951 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



Caves House Yallingup 1938 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



Royal Perth Hospital 1939 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



Leederville Technical College 1945 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



King Edward Memorial Hospital Nurses' Home of 1947, RIBA Bronze Medal winner in 1955 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



Perth Chest Hospital and Quarters 1955 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)

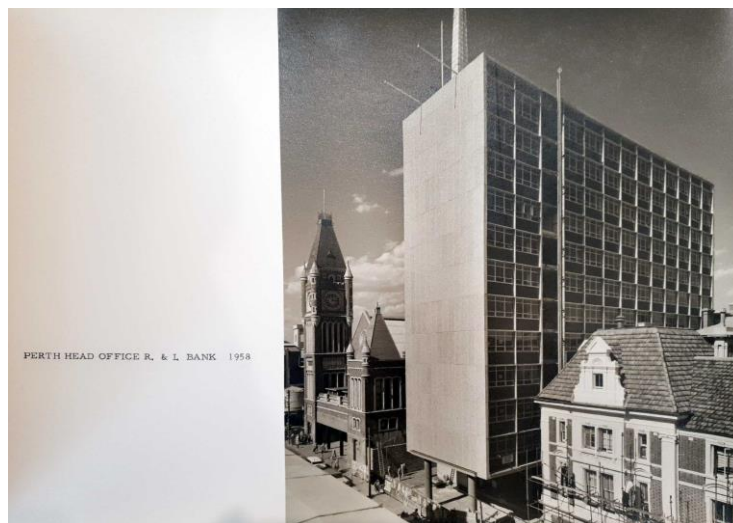




Lotteries Commission Offices 1957 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



Biochemistry Block Medical School 1957 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



Rural & Industries Bank Head Offices, Barrack Street Perth 1958 – now demolished (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)