



Perth Technical College architectural students: Peter Grigg at left, Ean McDonald centre, and John Lidbury at right (*Phi*, 1950, p.8)

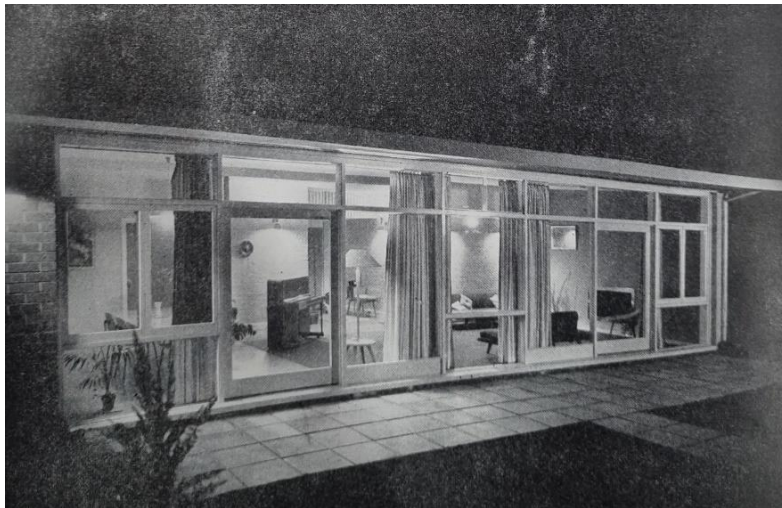
Peter John Grigg (1925-2015) was born 7 June 1925 in Perth, son of Ernest William and Myrtle Elvira (nee McDonald) Grigg, who had married at the Central Methodist (Wesley) Church at Perth in 1914. Ernest was a builder, and the couple had other children Ernest William (Bill) b.1917, Robert Neil b.1919, Myrtle Emily (Meg) b.1922, and Judy Isabel b.1927. Peter commenced his schooling at Darlington State School aged 6, and then went on to Hale School.

Following the onset of the Second World War (1939-1945), Peter joined the Royal Australian Navy as a 17 year old in 1942. The family home was at 26 Outram Street West Perth when Peter enlisted on 1 October 1942. He initially went to the Navy training base *Cerberus* in Victoria, only to soon hear by telegram of his older brother Bill's death. Bill was killed at Kokoda 24 October 1942, and prior to enlisting was an architectural student. Peter had initially thought that he would study engineering, and then work with Bill. Following demobilisation in mid-1946, Peter decided to return to Perth Technical College (PTC) to complete his matriculation, and to commence architectural studies.

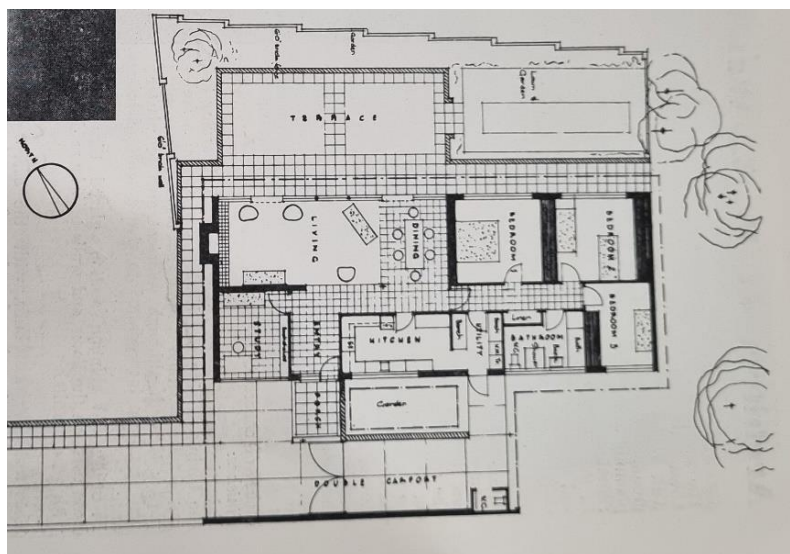
During the war it could be foreseen that great demands would be placed on the building industry when peace eventuated, and in 1946 William (Bill) Robertson (with Arnold Camerer) inaugurated the first academic architectural course at PTC. Peter attended PTC 1947-1954 as a Commonwealth Reconstruction Trainee, also undertaking vacation employment in Perth architectural practices.

He noted that ‘the course involved construction, the history of architecture, plumbing, wood working, cabinet making, free drawing and architectural drafting. Classes were also held at Leederville Technical College on brick laying, timber work and painting - it was a very practical approach to architecture.’

Whilst at PTC and twenty-one years old, in January 1947 Peter was married to Dorothy Downs at St Marys Church, Colin Street West Perth. The couple had children Peter John b.1948, Deborah Anne b.1951; and David George c.1956. To accommodate the growing family, Peter designed their house at 9 Bateman Street Mosman Park during his final year at PTC. David followed his father into architecture, was the Architectural Education Prize Winner at UWA in 1977, and moved to New York with the assistance of a Gledden Scholarship.

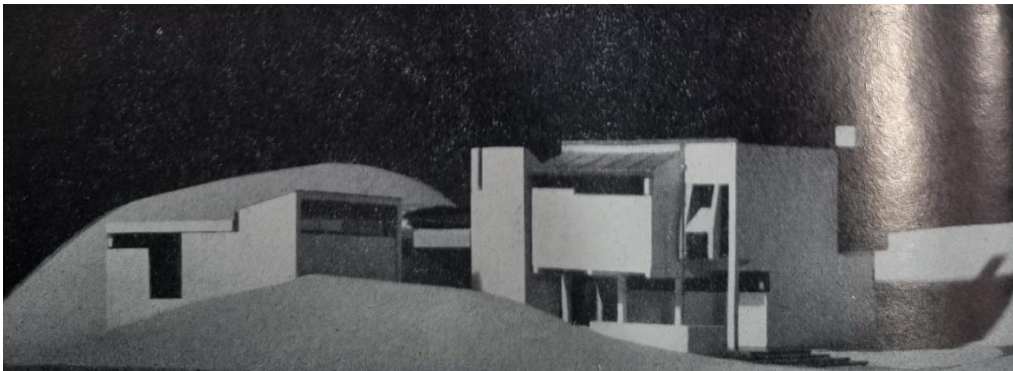


Northern elevation of Grigg House of 1954 (*The Architect*, September 1957, p.26)

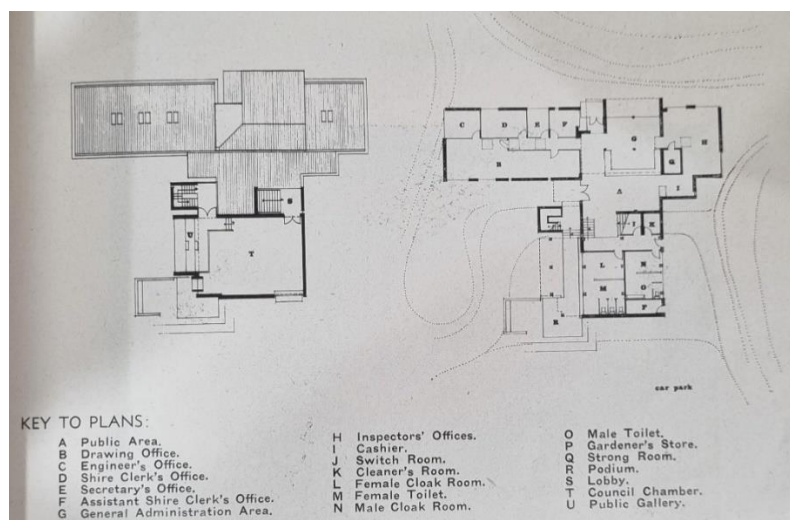


Plan of Grigg House of 1954 (*The Architect*, September 1957, p.27)

Peter Grigg graduated from PTC with an Associateship in Architecture, part of a small year group that included Ray Arcus, Deryck Groves, Allen Hutton, Colin Rule and Des Watson. Peter started work at Cameron Chisholm & Nichol, and was registered with the Architects Board of Western Australia (reg no 284) on 5 April 1955. He moved on to practicing at Oldham Boas & Ednie-Brown, where he remained for some years, undertaking commercial and residential work. Peter assisted with the drawings for South Fremantle Power Station under Syd Musto (1919-1996). Peter commenced his own practice from Bateman Street in the late 1950s, and Neil Wood commenced working for Peter whilst still studying at PTC in 1959. Grigg had significant amounts of 'bread and butter' local government work. In 1965 the practice's design of new Council Chambers for the Shire of Esperance was featured in *The Architect* magazine. The building, consisting of a Council Chamber and administrative offices valued at over £38 000, was to constitute the first stage of a civic centre development.



Model of Council Chambers for the Shire of Esperance 1965 made by Neil Wood – Neil still has the model (*The Architect*, March 1965, p.32)



Plans of Council Chambers for the Shire of Esperance 1965 (*The Architect*, March 1965, p.33)



Royal Park Bowling Club, south-east corner of Charles and Vincent Streets (Town of Vincent)

A 1960s Grigg project that is still readily visible in Perth is the former Royal Park Bowling Club (now Royal Park Hall). In the later 1960s Peter formed the practice Peter Grigg and Partners with Neil Wood and Lindsay Short, before Short left for Papua & New Guinea, hence the firm was known as Peter Grigg & Wood. The State Records Office of WA holds files on the firm's works at government schools. These included projects at Maida Vale (1969-1971), Lesmurdie (1969-1971), and Goomalling (1970-1974). The practice offices were variously at 16 Kings Park Road and 26 Outram Street in West Perth (rented from the Grigg family estate until it was sold), and were shared with Fred McCardell for a period.

Peter was made a Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (FRAIA) in 1969, was the State President in 1975-1976, on the National Council for 1985-1986, and eventually was recognised with Life Fellowship. From early days, Peter had become involved with various committees for the RAIA, especially on the practice committee. As a result of this participation, in 1971 he was invited by Roger Johnson, acting head of the School of Architecture at the University of Western Australia (UWA), to become a visiting lecturer in the fifth year of the course. Peter taught UWA students professional practice and lectured on the responsibilities of the architect at common law and contract law. This continued on when he became a full-time member of staff, and taught second year studio work in simple design programmes. He also lectured in building construction. Other UWA architecture staff in this period included Margaret Pitt-Morison and then Michael Hugo-Brunt who ran history courses; whilst Peter Bruechle provided an introduction to engineering associated with building design. Some of the teaching attitudes from PTC were carried over to its successor course at the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) and also to UWA.

The UWA architecture department was initially located in temporary ex-army buildings at the north-west side of the Crawley campus, near the Sunken Garden. For second year teaching, Peter had approximately 15-20 students, and by this time the numbers of male and female students had become relatively similar. It was a demanding five year course. Each student was provided with a work station and drawing board, undertaking studio-project works outside of lecture times. Peter occasionally took his second year students to building sites at weekends to reinforce the lectures, and to Rottnest Island for sketching. He organised an art week at York for clay modelling, painting and live drawing classes to further artistic skills.



Peter Grigg in 1975 (AIA WA)

Grigg worked with other general lecturers at the UWA architecture school including John White and Cal Green. Derek Carruthers brought his expertise in acoustics to the course and headed up building science. Geoff Roy introduced computer studies in the late 1970s, enthusing Peter to do a sabbatical year in Britain and visit offices that were using computers. Amongst others, Ralph Drexel provided part-time studio sessions around this time. The school also had a number of visiting lecturers who would assist with parallel subjects such as plumbing and mechanical services. Peter later noted that he really enjoyed teaching his students, but with strong friendships, didn't relish providing grading to the work! He invited year groups to lunch and showed them the house that he had built at Mosman Park, proud of its northern exposure and sunlight control.

Following significant work as a practitioner, long involvement with Institute affairs, and with architectural education at UWA for 14 years, Peter retired in 1985. He died 16 March 2015 at Mosman Park, aged 89 years.

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Pers. comm., Neil William Wood, 27 October 2022.

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