



Len Green (Le Page, p.521)

Walter Leonard Green (1902-1981) was born 5 June 1902 at Greenbushes, 245 km south of Perth in Western Australia. ‘Len’ Green’s parents Albert Ernest Story and Mary Anne (nee Pollard) Green had married at Pinjarra in 1901. Albert was a building contractor, and the couple had another son Vane St Laurence Green at Greenbushes in 1908. It appears that Len went to St Ildephonsus’ boarding school at New Norcia, and in 1921 was one of the first few architectural cadets taken into the State Government’s Public Works Department (PWD).

The conditions governing the appointment of PWD architectural cadets were published in the *Government Gazette* in 1919. Cadets were articled to the principal architect for a period of four years and were required to register as students with the West Australian Institute of Architects (WAIA); they were also required to apply to the WAIA to sit the qualifying examination for associate membership of the Institute on completion of the cadetship. The first architectural cadets admitted under the system were Benjamin L.C. Clifton (1920), Travers T. Lewis (1920), Len Green (1921), and Marshall W.G. Clifton (1922). Len soon joined the recently formed Architectural Students’ Association (ASA), whose founders included Colin Ednie-Brown (1894-1960) and Margaret Pitt Morison (1900-1985); in 1925 he was Hon Secretary, and in 1930 President of the ASA.

Len Green registered with the Architects Board of Western Australia (no. 100) by examination 21 July 1924, the first to do so in that manner under the relatively newly proclaimed *Architects Act* of 1921 (Section 14d, by examination). The previous ninety-nine Western Australian architects were registered with recognition of previous architectural accomplishment.

Len was soon followed in Section 14d registration in October 1924 by another notable architect at no.101, W.G. (Bill) Bennett, and at no.102 the first female architect in WA, Margaret Pitt Morison (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.") The next registered architect at no.103 was Leonard James Walters on 15 December 1924. Len Walters was to eventually become a long-term colleague of Len Green's at the PWD, and was closely followed at no.104 by Oswald Victor Chisholm on 16 February 1925 (both under *Architects Act Amendment Act, 1923, Section 2*).

In 1929 Len and Mary Margaret (Rita) Edwards were married, the *Sunday Times* reported that: *On Wednesday April 3, the Queen of Martyrs Catholic Church Maylands, was the scene of a picturesque wedding when Rita, eldest daughter of Mr D. Edwards and the late Mrs Edwards of Central Avenue, Maylands, was married to Mr Leonard Green, of the Public Works Department, and elder son of Mr and Mrs A.E. Green of John Street, Mt Lawley. ... During the signing of the register, Mrs A. Clare [probably PWD architect A.E. 'Paddy' Clare's wife Sylvia] rendered "Ave Maria".* The couple soon moved into the modest home Len had designed at 65 Third Avenue in Mount Lawley, they had children Mary 'Barbara' (died at birth 1930), Francis 'Alan' (1932-2023), and Shirley 'Patricia' (b.1936).

Both Len Green and Len Walters (1903-1989) were mentioned by Principal Architect 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.

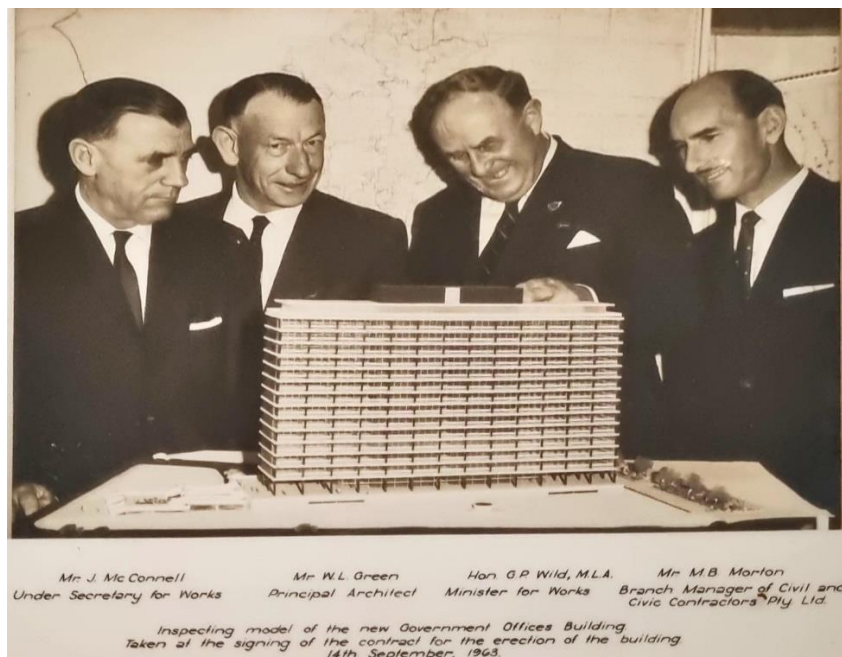


Perth Girls' High School of 1934, RIBA Bronze Medal winner (SLWA 095926PD).

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.



In Len Green's tenure as Principal Architect, Gordon Finn, Eduard Van Mens and Peter Maidment won an Australia-wide competition to design five State Government office buildings at Mt Eliza in Perth. The model pictured shows the only one of the five towers that was completed. Opened in 1966, the building was later named Dumas House. (Patricia Good).

Len Green succeeded Clare as principal architect at the PWD from 1960-1967, and was in charge of the Architectural Division during the period of major development when a substantial proportion of the public works programme became available to the private sector. In 1967 Len retired after a 46 year career in the Public Service and seven years as Principal Architect of the PWD. 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, in 1928 Green became an Associate member of the Royal Institute of the Architects of Western Australia (RIAWA) that had formed from WAIA in 1921; he became an Associate member of the RAIA's WA Chapter from 1943 when the RIAWA was absorbed into the national body, and was made a Fellow of the RAIA in 1962.

Len Green died 11 May 1981 at Mount Lawley aged 78 years, and Rita Green died 31 July 1990 at Glendalough aged 88 years. They were survived by children Alan, Patricia (Good) and their families.

References:

'Regulations governing the admission of architectural cadets, Public Works Department', *Government Gazette WA*, 31 October 1919, p.1928.

'Institute of Architects', *The West Australian*, 29 March 1929, page 12 (Associate of RIAWA).

'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.

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

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.

Richards, Duncan, *High Hopes - A history of the Institutes of Architecture in Western Australia*, Royal Australian Institute of Architects (WA), 2003, p.51.

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Citation details:

Taylor, Dr John J., 'Walter Leonard Green (1902-1981)', 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 Green 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.



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)



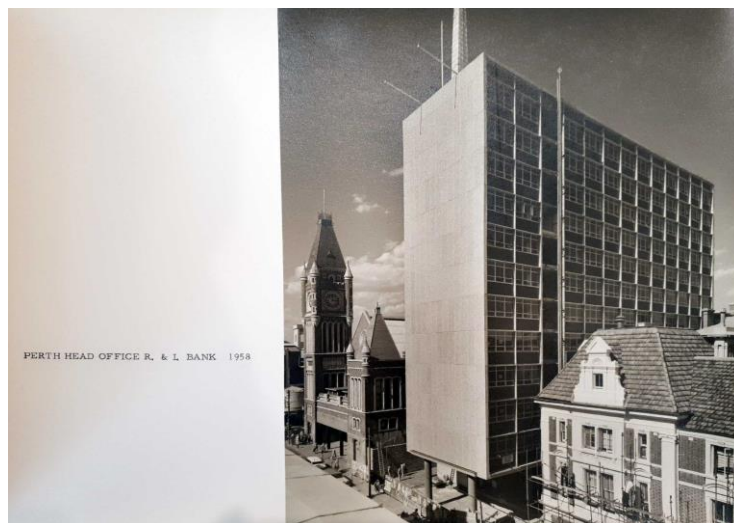
Perth Chest Hospital and Quarters 1955 (retirement album 1960, courtesy Bill Clare)



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)