



Bevan Knott in the 1970s (Knott family)

Bevan John Knott (1937-2024) was born 11 November 1937 at Nurse Ash's Private Hospital in Wasley Street Mount Lawley, to parents John Robert and Constance Freda (nee Peel) Knott of 103 Eton Street, North Perth. The couple had married at St Brigid's Church, West Perth in December of 1935. Educated at Narrogin and then Bunbury High School, John Knott won a bursary which took him to the University of Western Australia, where he qualified as a civil engineer. When Bevan was born, John was an engineer for the Perth City Council, and Constance was a dressmaker. After a period as engineer to the Kalgoorlie Municipality, where he supervised the construction of the Olympic Baths, in 1939 John was appointed Town Clerk-Engineer at Bunbury. The family moved from Kalgoorlie to Bunbury in early 1939, where Bevan's brothers Robin James (1942) and Stephen Colin (1945) were born.

John Knott resigned from the position at Bunbury, and became the engineer at the South Perth Road Board in early 1947. Bevan then grew up in South Perth (*Wises Directory* of 1949 lists John Knott at 26 Hensman Street South Perth) and completed his high school studies at Aquinas College in 1955. He entered the relatively new School of Architecture at Perth Technical College (PTC), under the directorship of Senior Bolland from mid-1954 following the untimely death of course founder William (Bill) Robertson (1905-1953). At PTC until 1958, Bolland applied a more definite emphasis on design in course teaching than his predecessor, and this was reflected in Bevan's life-long design strengths.

Bevan studied at PTC from 1957 until 1962. In 1958 he won a WA Historical Society measured drawing prize. Fellow PTC student Colin Moore recalls of Bevan's skills in another field: *if Bevan was in the first floor studio above the Terrace [St George's Terrace] and heard an MG [British sports car] he would confidently state whether it was a TA, TB, TC or TF.*

Having successfully completed the course, on 2 April 1963 Knott registered with the Architects Board of Western Australia (ABWA reg no 415). At the time he was at 22 Leonora Street Como – with the same address listed in 1968. Bevan graduated from PTC with a class that included other architects in WA: John Flower (397), Geoff Harveson (399), John Blake (401), 1958 A.R.L. Wright Prize winner, 1962 E.G. Cohen Medal winner, and 1963 W.H. Robertson Travel Grant winner Tony Wegener (402), Rob Sewell (407), John Tsigulis (408), Bob Allan (409), John Mathieson (410), Graham Walker (411), Robin Kornweibel (412), Colin Moore (413), Graham Langley (414), and 1961 W.A. Nelson Prize winner Brian Harrison (417).

Bevan John Knott and Mary English Clarke were married at the Church of the Holy Family in Como during 1963, with John Flower the Best Man at the wedding. The couple subsequently had children Simon b.1966, Kate b.1968, and Matthew b.1971. Bevan and Mary travelled overseas for 3 years from 1964, leaving Fremantle by ship for Greece, then Europe and on to London. Bevan worked for a firm in London at Baker Street, while Mary worked at the Natural History Museum. Continuing the world experience, the Knotts crossed the Atlantic to Canada, and Bevan worked with the Toronto-based modernist architects Webb Zerafa Menkes Housden, a partnership which had been established in 1961.



Mary and Bevan Knott (Knott family).

The Knotts returned to Perth around 1968, where Bevan joined Forbes & Fitzhardinge Architects; and then with Brian Klopper (1937-2020, reg no 333), Bob Gare (1938-, reg no 357), and Ian Oldfield (1946-, reg no 606), worked running the office of colourful architect-entrepreneur Len Buckeridge (1936-2014, reg 354) for a period while Buckeridge was away overseas. John McKenzie (1944-, reg no 628) came from Melbourne to start the same time that Oldfield

came from the PWD c.1969 (after Len paid out Ian's PWD cadetship bond). It seems Klopper, Gare, Oldfield and Knott all moved on from L.W. Buckeridge & Associates around the end of 1973. Klopper and Gare worked in a partnership from 1973 to 1979; Oldfield and Knott joined together in a practice 1974 to 1986. K.V. Gray Investments Pty Ltd made an application in April 1972 for approval to redecorate and upgrade the Public Bar at the Great Western Hotel (Brass Monkey) at an estimated cost of \$15 000. The application was approved by the City of Perth in June 1972. Designed by Bevan J. Knott Architect, the work was implemented in 1972, perhaps indicating that Bevan was undertaking private work outside of his main employment.

Ian Oldfield and Bevan Knott founded Oldfield Knott Architects (OKA) on 1 January 1974. Ian provided 'hard-nosed' commercially-driven business principles to the practice, whereas Bevan was highly focussed on design quality. Sixteen-year-old drafter Danny Jones joined OKA in 1974 at 17 Rheola Street West Perth, where his first project was a tavern at Geraldton.

Bruce Callow (1949-, reg no 714) worked at OKA from 1975 to 1979, and remembered Bevan as a great mentor. Bruce notes that: *Bevan taught me good practical design skills for workable architecture – aiming high but always feet firmly on the ground. Together with using an enquiring mind, problem solving and professional integrity these were his lessons that have served me well through my career and architectural practice.* Long-term OKA stalwart Hugh Gill (1951-, reg no 766) commenced work soon after Callow departed.



Bevan Knott designed and Mike Ipkendanz detailed the Custom Credit Building at 11 Harvest Terrace West Perth (Fritz Kos, Sept 1984, SLWA 222448PD; *The Architect*, 1986/3, p.50).

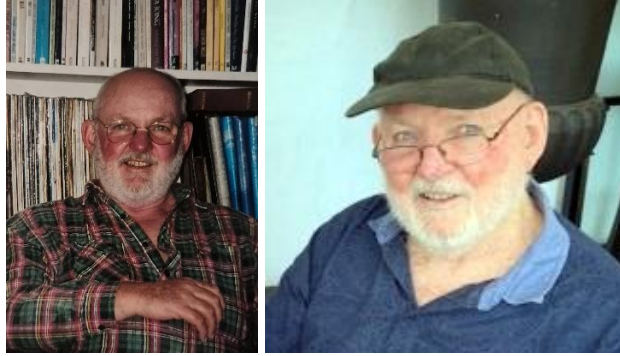
In early days, the OKA practice was run out of various rented premises at Kings Park Road and Colin Street in West Perth. By 1982 the office was at 48 Ord Street West Perth, and in 1984 at 1 Rheola Street West Perth. The practice moved to new office premises it designed for client Mike Hodgson at 567 Hay Street Daglish in 1985, where it remained until 2024 when Oldfield wound-up the business. Not long after the move to Daglish, Ian Oldfield determined to lead the business solo, and bought out Bevan's interest in the practice in 1986. ABWA records note that in 1988 Bevan's office was at 17 Kingsway, Nedlands.



OKA designed the Canon Building at 297 Selby Street North, Osborne Park (Ian Hocking, 'Perth – The Building Challenge', Master Builders Assoc. of WA, West Perth, 1987, p.130).

By 1969 and up to 1981 Bevan and Mary lived at 70 Shenton Road adjacent to Scotch College in Swanbourne, later moving to Cottesloe on the corner of Hawkstone Street, then in the late 1980s with poor business conditions lived in a rental property at MacArthur Street Cottesloe. By 1991 Bevan's office was located at 3 White Place Subiaco. John McKenzie recalls that Bevan undertook projects for Perth western suburbs clients Alan and John McGillvray (Macs Supermarkets) that included a four-unit residential complex at Mosman Park, and at the Eric Street shopping centre in Cottesloe.

Bevan's parents passed away in the later 1990s, John Knott died in April 1996 at North Fremantle aged 85 years, and Constance Knott died in September 1997 at North Fremantle aged 88 years. In 2002 Bevan was listed at Donnybrook – when he was 65 years old - and he ran a cherry farm there for some years. Bevan and Mary (a talented artist) then moved to a neatly-detailed residence that he designed for their property fronting Geographe Bay at Robbies Close, Quindalup.



Bevan Knott in later years (Knott family, William Barrett and Sons online funeral notice).

Bevan Knott passed away 15 April 2024, survived by Mary, their children, nine grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; his brothers Robin (an architectural drafter who also studied at PTC), and Stephen (a dentist and then forensic odontologist). Bevan was one of the more talented designers of the 120-plus Western Australian architects who graduated from PTC between 1950 and 1967, when the course was transferred to the Western Australian Institute of Technology. The close association of PTC graduates of the 1950s and 1960s gave this group a strong sense of familiarity and cohesion, and many travelled interstate and overseas together to absorb further international developments in modern architecture. They developed distinctive local domestic and commercial styles, now gaining further study and recognition.

References:

'Marriages', *The West Australian*, 8 January 1936, p.1 (John Robert Knott to Constance Freda Peel at St Brigid's Church West Perth).

'Births', *The West Australian*, 12 November 1937, p.1 (Bevan John at Wasley Street Mt Lawley).

'Council Appointment', *South Western Times*, 7 February 1939, p.1 (background to John Knott).

'Mr J.R. Knott Resigns', *South Western Times*, 5 December 1946, p.1 (JRK photo, South Perth).

'Bunbury Municipality', *The West Australian*, 6 January 1947, p.12 (JRK to South Perth).

Webb Zerafa Menkes Housden partnership see <https://www.wzmf.com/about/history/>

'Plans Great Western Hotel', Bevan J. Knott, Architect, April 1972. City of Perth Approvals File 1309/72, April 1972, cited in HCWA Assessment for Brass Monkey Hotel.

Pers. comms. Mary Knott, 18 March 2025, Kate Knott-Johnson April 2025.

Pers. comms. Tony Wegener, Colin Moore, Danny Jones, March 2025; Stephen Knott, April 2025; John Koivisto, June 2025; John McKenzie, John Flower, Bruce Callow, February 2026.

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