



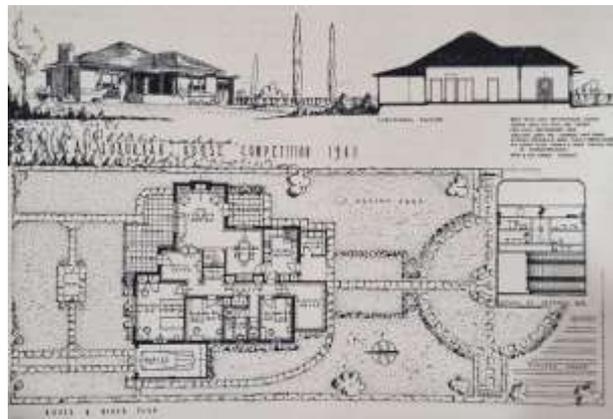
Ken Broadhurst c.1941 (courtesy Mike Broadhurst).

Kenneth Broadhurst (1923-2010) was born 18 April 1923 at Nurse Weaver's Private Hospital, Kirkham Hill Terrace Maylands, to parents Leslie and Alice Maria (nee Hill) Broadhurst of 241 Beaufort Street Perth. Divorcee Alice had previously married Frederick Griffiths in 1912. The Griffiths had a daughter Alice at Wagin in 1913, sadly not born alive. A second daughter, May was born at Wagin in 1914, and a third, Hylda at Maylands in 1917. Fred Griffiths left for war service in 1917, eventually deserting Alice, and she was granted a divorce in 1921. Bricklayer-builder Leslie and school teacher Alice married at Perth in 1922, and 'Ken' Broadhurst soon joined with his two young step-sisters in the family. Ken's younger sister Hazel was born in March 1927, also at Nurse Weaver's.

Ken attended Mount Hawthorn primary school and Perth Boys School where his mathematical and drawing skills became apparent. At a cost of £100, in 1939 his parents articed him to the architect Ernest William Warne (1893-1968) at the City Mutual Building, 62 St George's Terrace Perth. Ken also undertook classes at Perth Technical College (PTC) and the University of Western Australia (UWA).

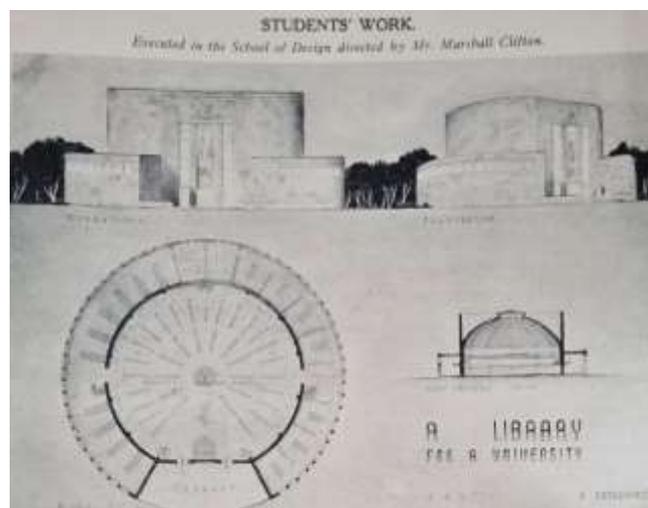
The School of Architectural Design had commenced at UWA in 1936, and Ken became a member of the studio class under Bill Leighton and Marshall Clifton, also attending evening lectures for students at UWA. By 1940 two ex-members of the Architectural Students Association, Jack Ballenger (1913-2005) and John McIlroy (1915-1987), were conducting architectural drawing classes at PTC. With the onset of the war, and many architects away, the UWA studio class experienced difficulties with support and was discontinued, with a formal architectural course not finally established at PTC until 1946.

Broadhurst benefited from his employer's close association with architectural education in WA. From 1938 Warne had been giving free lectures on architecture at UWA: 'A course of 15 free lantern lectures on 'The History of the Evolution of the Styles of Architecture' has been arranged by the Architects' Board of Western Australia, and will be delivered by Mr. E. W. Warne, A.R.I.B.A., A.R.I.A.W.A. ... Although the course is designed primarily for students of architecture, the lectures also will be open to all interested in the subject. Warne had succeeded the elderly Alfred R.L. Wright (1861-1939), who had provided architectural history lectures from the 1920s at UWA.



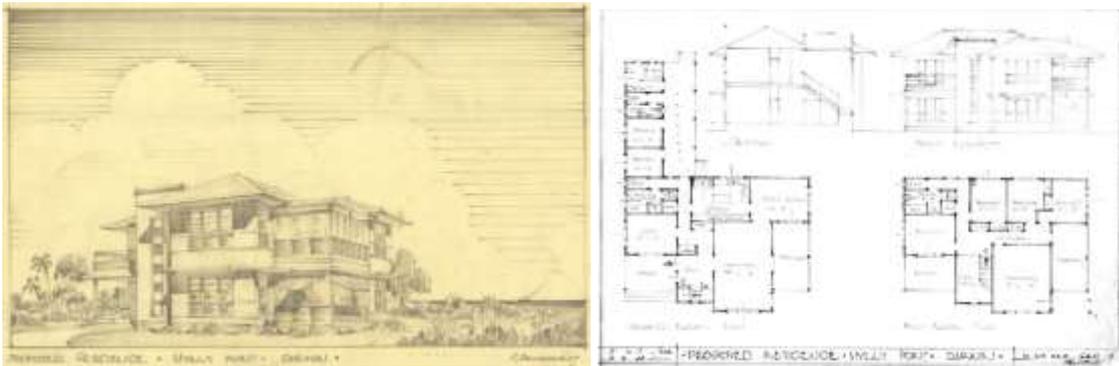
Ken Broadhurst's second-placed design for a suburban house in a RIAWA competition of 1941 (*The Architect*, June 1941, p.17).

In 1941 Ken took second prize in a student design competition held by the Royal Institute of the Architects of Western Australia (RIAWA) for the design of a residence to cost £1 500. At this time he was the honorary librarian of the Architectural Students Association.



Ken Broadhurst's design of 'A Library for a University' (*The Architect*, September 1941, p.19).

Ken's career was interrupted by the Second World War (1939-1945). At 18 years of age he joined the Royal Australian Engineers and worked on evacuation plans for Perth and in preparation for the demolition of Fremantle Harbour in the event of a Japanese invasion. Kenneth designed lightweight tank decoys for fitting over civilian vehicles to fool enemy aircraft into believing that Perth was heavily fortified. After Darwin's bombing in 1942, he travelled there to assist with airstrips and damage repair, also designing a house at Myilly Point for an Army General (likely to have been 7th Military District Commander Major General David Blake).



Perspective; plans, section and elevation of 1944 residence at Myilly Point Darwin (Mike Broadhurst).

Ken demobilised as a captain in 1945, and returned to Perth. At this time his parents were living at 71 Dunedin Street Mount Hawthorn. Resuming post-war work with Warne, Ken also studied hard, seeking to complete the Architects Board of Western Australia (ABWA) examinations and become a registered architect. *The Architect* of September 1946 noted the establishment of a Students' Memorial Library to honour the memory of students who had died in the war, housed in Warne's office, with Ken as honorary librarian. In February 1948, Ken registered with ABWA (reg no 185). At the time, passes in ten subjects including (i) Building Construction, (ii) Mechanics, (iii) Land Surveying, (iv) Quantity Surveying and Estimates, (v) Sanitary Science, (vi) History of Architecture, (vii) Professional Practice, (viii) Art Certificate, (ix) Design Problem, and (x) Examination in Design were required.

During war-time army training in Adelaide, Ken had met Dawn Sawford. The March 1947 edition of *The Architect* magazine, under 'Students' Notes', recorded that "*Ken Broadhurst just returned from Adelaide. What's the attraction there Ken? More than the Mt Lofty Ranges, we'll bet.*" Ken and Dawn were married at

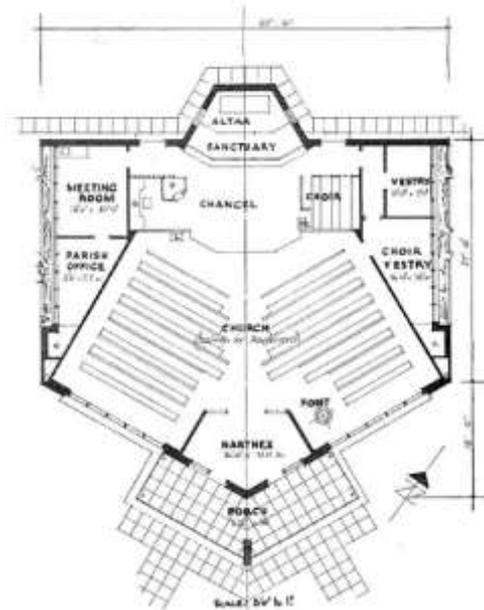
Perth in 1948, and soon sailed to England, hence obtaining work in London. In 1950 the architectural students' magazine *Phi* recorded within 'Ex Students' Notes' that: *Ken Broadhurst has a wonderful view of the cupola of St Paul's from the top of his omnibus each morning. Ken's letters cover adequately the food, weather, and uncultured drinking tastes of the English and from occasional whispers we learn he is with Messrs Searle and Searle, working on industrial projects, catching the 8.15 Flier in from Kent in the mornings, and taking Mrs B along to the office to keep his eye on her ...*

Ken wrote an article titled 'Preparations for the Festival of Britain' that was published in the June 1951 edition of *The Architect*. He outlined extensive alterations designed by architect Brian O'Rorke that were being made to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, and concluded with the hope that a similarly themed building might be constructed in WA. In England, children Leoné (1950) and Michael (1951) were born at Bromley, Kent. With the family growing, Ken applied successfully for a position with the Western Australian State Housing Commission (SHC) and returned to Perth in 1951, residing in a SHC house at 90 Todd Avenue, Como. In September 1952 another son Roderic was born at 'Harrisdale' in Como. Ken began private practice in the mid-1950s, possibly taking on additional former client contacts following Warne's departure to NSW at the end of this decade. He undertook a range of commissions - domestic work, local government structures, church design, and commercial projects.



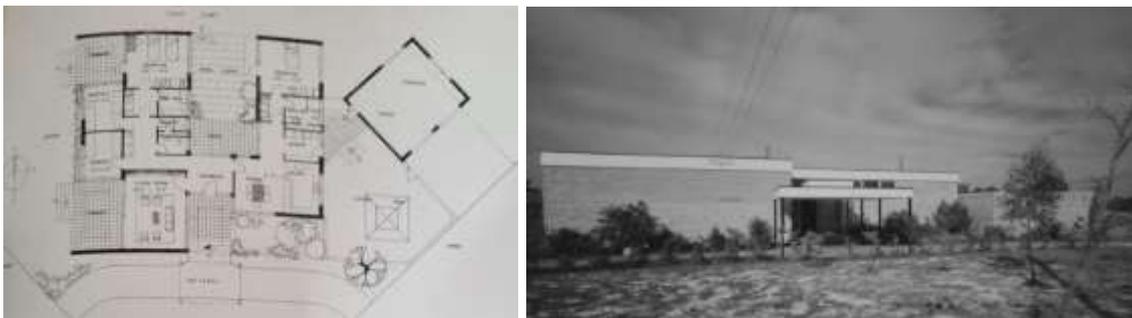
Photograph of the interior of a Ken Broadhurst design for the D.W. Gregson residence at Mayfair Street in Mount Claremont (*The West Australian*, 24 December 1954, p.6).

Ken's delightful modernist design for St Augustine's Church at Bayswater includes stained glass by noted artists Gowers & Brown. It is another fine example of the work of 1930s Perth-trained (and also post-war PTC-trained) architects returning to the State in the 1950s after time practicing in Great Britain, absorbing and introducing the latest international trends.



St Augustine's Church at Bayswater - south elevation and floor plan (*The Architect*, December 1957, pp.25-6)

Ken was listed in the 1960 Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) Year Book as Honorary Secretary of the WA Chapter, with an office at 135 St Georges Terrace in Perth, where Warne had also been located for many years. In 1960 Broadhurst moved his practice to the front of a house in Ventnor Avenue West Perth, with the family living at the rear of the building. As his practice flourished, Ken moved to Peppermint Grove in 1965, demolishing a house and subdividing to form Hurstford Close, designing the family home at 23 Leake Street in 1969.



Plan of residence at Alexander Street Rivervale (*The Architect*, December 1962, p.33);
Kilfenora, Rivervale of 1962 (SLWA 340539PD - Fritz Kos)



1962 Rockingham Change Rooms road side, and ocean side (SLWA 340537PD, 340538PD - Fritz Kos)

In the 1960s, Ken took on PTC graduates Noel Geoffrey Ryan (c.1933-2016) and William 'Bill' David Evans (c.1933-2011) as his junior partners. The City of Subiaco Council Offices at 241 Rokeby Road Subiaco opened in 1968 were designed by Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan and Evans, and Kenneth Broadhurst Architects designed further alterations and additions in the 1980s-1990s. The Subiaco Arts Centre, formerly Subiaco Theatre Centre, and prior to that the Subiaco Town Hall, was constructed in 1957. The design, by Peter Parkinson of architects Hawkins and Sands, was in post-war international style. In 1968, alterations were designed by architects Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan and Evans and included enclosing the undercroft to form a supper room and kitchen, and upgrade to toilet facilities. All the firm's architectural drawings for the City of Subiaco, including for the three-tier stand at Subiaco Oval, were gifted to the City's archives in 2017.



Ken Broadhurst joined the Returned Services League (RSL) in 1953 (<https://highgate-rsl.org.au/hall-of-honour/broadhurst-kenneth-wx38363-513770/>)

In these times, Broadhurst was also helping to train recruits in military engineering through the Citizen Military Forces. He had joined the Highgate Sub-Branch of the Returned Services League (RSL) in 1953, and was President in 1965. Other post-war service was with the 52 Construction Squadron 1956-57; Commander Royal Engineers, Western Command (CMF) 1957-58. He was a League Trustee in 1971. Ken was the architect for RSL War Veterans Homes at Mt Lawley, Geraldton and Mandurah, and awarded the RSL Meritorious Service Medal 1999.

Since 1929, the State War Memorial at Kings Park had developed around soldier-architect Talbot Hobbs' design of an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature. The memorial is situated at the top of the escarpment, overlooking the City of Perth and with beautiful views to the Swan and Canning Rivers. This elevated site makes for a very impressive ANZAC Day dawn service, with huge crowds offering remembrance, and a dramatic backdrop as the sun rises in the east over the Darling Range. Underneath the obelisk, the walls of a crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour, marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7 000 killed as a result of the First World War (1914-1918).



View toward the east across the State War Memorial, Kings Park, Perth (John Taylor 2008).

After the Second World War (1939-1945), a Court of Contemplation designed by Athol Hobbs was constructed to the west, adapting the earlier memorial and thus honouring the dead of both wars. In 1998-2000 the State War Memorial was enhanced with the addition of a Flame of Remembrance and Pool of Reflection in the Court. These were designed by Ken Broadhurst and his son Michael, honorary architects after Talbot and Athol Hobbs, who were the advisors for the

reconstruction of the State War Memorial obelisk and renovations to the crypt and undercroft in 2005. Work on the Prisoner of War, Tobruk and 2nd / 28th Battalion memorials in Kings Park was also undertaken by Kenneth Broadhurst Architect from 2000–2004.

Obituary writer Torrance Mendez recorded of Ken's Kings Park design that 'The work was the pinnacle of his achievements for those associated with the armed forces, which included homes for war veterans, maintaining the State War Memorial and serving the Returned and Services League, presiding over the Highgate branch in the 1960s. Sporting fans, too, can salute Kenneth for designing the three-tier stand at Subiaco Oval - the first stage of his 1969 grand design to encircle the entire oval and seat 75 000 people. However, only one three-tier stand was built. Elsewhere, he designed some of the first drive-in cinemas around Perth and in country areas, often those ending with the suffix "line", such as Skyline and Starline. The wavy-roofed toilet blocks at Rockingham beaches were his design, as was the Collier Park retirement village in South Perth.' In the 1980s Ken moved his practice to 355 Stirling Highway Claremont, and he eventually retired in 1998.

State Records Office hold files for Broadhurst Ryan & Evans projects:

Northam High School Science Block 1969-1971;

Kwinana High School - Additions 1970-1972;

Kent Street Senior High School 1971-1973;

Northam High School - Additions 1971-1973;

Kalamunda Senior High School - Completion of Science Block 1971-1974;

Kwinana High School - Science Block Additions 1972-1974;

Northam High School - Additions 1973-1975;

Kwinana High School - Science Laboratory 1974-1976;

Mount Barker High School - Science Laboratory 1974-1976; and

Eastern Goldfields Technical School (Kalgoorlie) - Redevelopment 1974-1977.

Family recall that Ken's most favourite project was possibly the Collier Park retirement village complex. He was also particularly proud of the work he did for

the RSL aged person homes in Menora and Mandurah. Practicing in later years with his son Michael (ABWA reg no 1080) and John Bott (ABWA reg no 1081), Kenneth Broadhurst Architects (KBA) were also the architects for the Italian Aged Care 'Villa Terenzio' at Cabrini Road in Marangaroo.

Ken was a past president of Royal Perth Golf Club and enjoyed playing snooker at the Weld Club in Perth. In 1999, he was devastated by the death of Dawn. They were on a cruise in the Arabian Gulf when she had a stroke, and died a few weeks later. Kenneth Broadhurst's health deteriorated from 2000, exacerbated by a series of falls, and then cancer. He died at Bethesda Hospital Claremont, on 17 January 2010, aged 86 years, survived by children Leoné, Michael and Roderic, ten grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Leoné worked as an interior designer on a number of KBA projects and as a visual artist; Mike had become a registered architect in 1985, and continuing the family's involvement in the profession, Mike's daughter Claire has also become an architect (ABWA reg no 3511).



Ken Broadhurst in later years (*The West Australian*, 26 February 2010, p.55).

Achieving success from a relatively modest upbringing in the 1920-1930s, interrupted by the difficulties of the Second World War, Ken Broadhurst's long-serving and significant contributions to practice in WA may gain greater study and recognition. Ken's professional qualities were acknowledged by the conferring of the honorific titles ARAIA in 1948, ARIBA c.1950, and FRAIA 1963; and he was awarded an Order of Australia in 2004.

References:

'BROADHURST KENNETH', Australian Army Service No: WX38363 513770, <https://highgate-rsl.org.au/hall-of-honour/broadhurst-kenneth-wx38363-513770/>

'Births', *The West Australian*, 29 September 1952, p.26 (son Roderic Girth at Harrisdale, Como).

'City of Subiaco Council Offices', 1968, HCWA place no. 18611.

SRO general files re Commission to Private Architect:

Northam High School - Science Block - Broadhurst Ryan & Evans; AU WA S82 cons1562 1969/0796 Item 1969-06-10 - 1971-02-03

Kwinana High School - Additions 1970/71 - Broadhurst, Ryan & Evans; AU WA S82 cons1568 1970/0686 Item 1970-04-23 - 1972-05-23

Kent Street Senior High School - Changerooms - Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan & Evans; AU WA S82 cons1568 1971/1177 Item 1971-11-19 - 1973-03-01

Northam High School - Additions 1971/72 - Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan and Evans; AU WA S82 cons1568 1971/0471 Item 1971-05-05 - 1973-06-01

Kalamunda Senior High School - Completion of Science Block - Broadhurst, Ryan & Evans; AU WA S82 cons1568 1971/0646 Item 1971-06-11 - 1974-01-29

Kwinana High School - Science Block Additions 1972 - Broadhurst Ryan and Evans; AU WA S82 cons1608 1972/0313 Item 1972-03-23 - 1974-07-09

Northam High School - Additions 1973/74 - Upgrade Classrooms & Staff Accommodation - K. Broadhurst, Ryan & Evans; AU WA S82 cons1608 1973/1529 Item 1973-12-19 - 1975-12-17

Kwinana High School - Science Laboratory - Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan and Evans; AU WA S82 cons1608 1974/0803 Item 1974-03-29 - 1976-01-13

Mount Barker High School - Science Laboratory - Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan and Evans; AU WA S82 cons1608 1974/0797 Item 1974-03-29 - 1976-08-02

Eastern Goldfields Tech School (Kalg) - Redevelopment - Kenneth Broadhurst, Ryan & Evans; AU WA S82 cons1608 1974/0542 Item 1974-03-06 - 1977-07-13

'Broadhurst, Kenneth, 1923-2010', SLWA OH2682/6, 1980 oral history interview by T. Hall and R. Reilly.

'Architect set mood for our reflections', *The West Australian*, 26 February 2010, p.55 (obituary).

Heritage Committee review: 15 August 2024 Last updated: 15 August 2024

Citation details:

Taylor, Dr John J., 'Kenneth Broadhurst (1923-2010)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.taylorarchitects.com.au/Biographies.html> accessed DATE.