



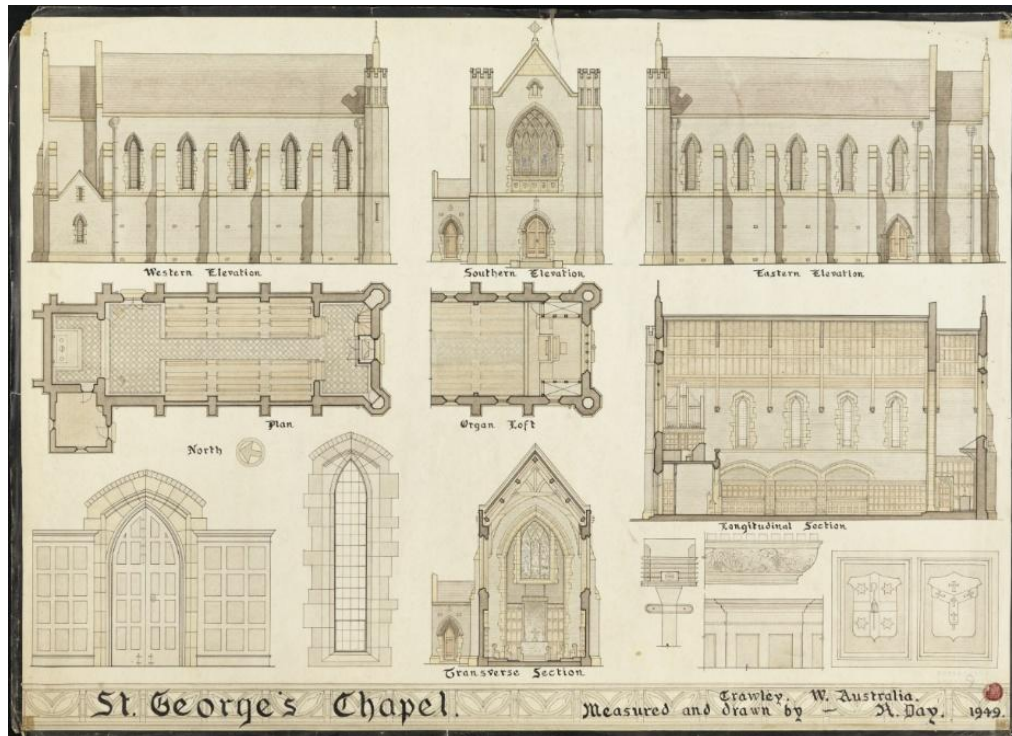
Bob Day (*The Architect*, March 1967, p.30)

Robert Day (1925-2021) was born 13 December 1925 at Port Adelaide in South Australia. His parents Horace Eugene and Lilian Grace (nee Martens) Day had married in April 1922 at St Bartholomew's Church at Norwood, and were to have three sons - Colin b.1922, 'Bob' b.1925, and Murray b.1928. In the 1930s, the Day family moved to Western Australia, and Bob gained his secondary school education at Wesley College, South Perth during the period 1938-1942. Other future WA architects of Bob's age at Wesley were Gil Nicol (1925-2010) and Warwick Broomfield (1925-2005).

Following the onset of the Second World War (1939-1945), Bob joined the Royal Australian Navy as a seventeen-year-old, just five feet five and a half inches tall. The family home was at 118 Forrest Street South Perth when Bob enlisted on 3 June 1943. He initially went to the Navy training base *Cerberus* in Victoria, with later overseas service north of Australia at Morotai and Madang. Following demobilisation in mid-1946, Bob decided to attend Perth Technical College (PTC) and commence architectural studies.

Prior to the war, architectural students who did not receive academic training overseas or in other States, had been obliged to train in WA under a system of indenture to individual architects. The products of this system of architectural education were trained rather than educated and clearly bore the marks of the architect who trained them. 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. Robertson had attended meetings of the Modern Architectural Research Society (MARS) at Sydney in the early 1940s, and through him MARS had an influence on the nature of the course at PTC. Robertson was also strongly oriented to construction and practical aspects, and the curriculum he organized was accordingly a very practical one.



St George's Chapel at St George's College Crawley, measured and drawn by Bob Day in 1949. (SLWA CN146; drawing also shown in *Phi*, 1950, p.5)

Bob Day attended PTC in the years 1947-1953 as a Commonwealth Reconstruction Trainee, and the close-knit PTC community were shocked to hear of Bill Robertson's death in March 1953, aged just 48 years. Another sad event for Bob whilst studying at PTC, was the passing of his father Horace in July 1950 at South Perth, aged just 53 years. Newspaper coverage provides notice of his occupation: *'Timber Man Dies - Mr Horace Eugene Day, of 118 Forrest Street South Perth, died at Hollywood Hospital early today. Mr Day was managing director of the WA Salvage Co Ltd, West Perth, and Australian Lumber Co Ltd.'*

Whilst at PTC, in 1951 Bob was married to Thelma Grace Martin at Perth. The couple had two daughters Robyn b.1956 and Susan b.1958. Bob completed his Associateship in Architecture in 1953 within a tight-knit class that included

Warwick Broomfield, Ted Cartwright, Ross Chisholm, Ray Durbridge, Lex Hill, Bob Lyon, Fred Warren, and Jim Wilkinson. In December 1953 *The Sunday Times* carried notes of the students' and their partners' joy at completion of the course: *QUITE a change to see party hats in the sophisticated Shaftesbury surroundings. Reason for the Jollity was the conclusion of final exams for a group of budding architects, and the large party consisted of Bob and Thelma Day, Jim Wilkinson, Phyl Baskerville, Bob and Beryl Lyons [sic], Ted Cartwright, Beryl Marshall, Fred Warren, "Liz" Humphrey, Warwick Bloomfield, Pat Bimer, Lex Hill, Joanne Ainsley, Ross Chisholm, and Shirley Sutherland.*

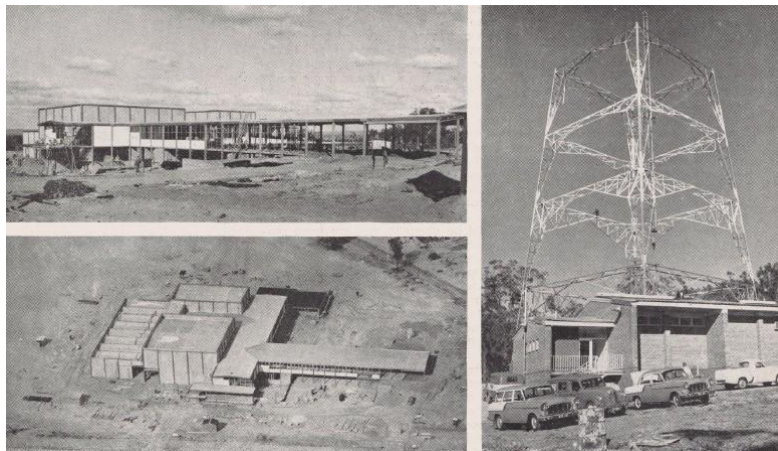
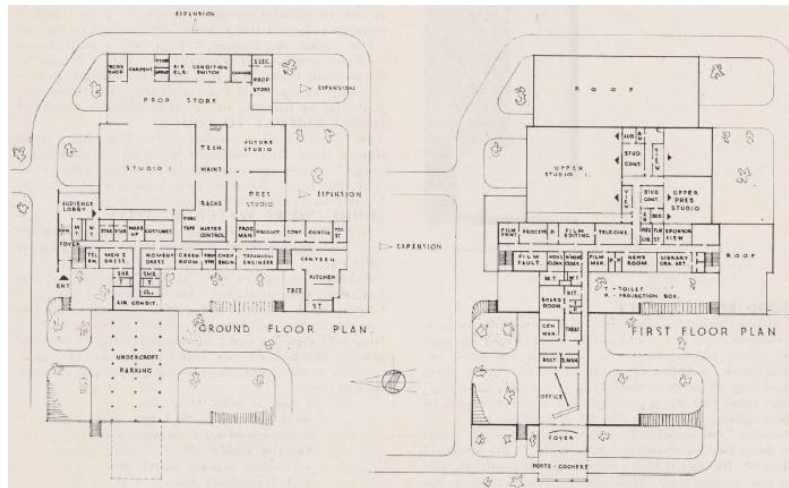


PTC School of Architecture football team 1952 (courtesy Lidbury family)

Back: Peter Bruechle, Don Collins, Jack Finney, Bob Lyon, Ross Chisholm, Bill Weedon, Alex Doepel
 M: Arch Jones, Ron Facius, Gus Ferguson, Col Nicholas, Morris Fairbrother, Scott Thompson, Bill Angove
 Front: Eddie McMillan, Bill Waters, Bill Robertson, John Lidbury, Bob Day, Ted Cartwright
 (Bill Weedon noted in 2021 that Bill Angove – a photographer – set up this image with a timer and then joined the group in the photo, taken at UWA's James Oval).

Bob registered with the Architects Board of WA (ABWA no. 273) during 1954, at this time he was living at Drew Road in Applecross. With the PTC architecture course only commencing in 1946, in the first three PTC graduating years (1950-1952) preceding Bob's class there had been just 23 graduates, and a fair number of these young architects soon travelled to gain further architectural and worldly experience, living as 'ex-pats' overseas.

Bob joined the architectural practice of Hobbs Winning & Leighton (HWL), a firm formed after the war, and became a partner in 1960. He was associated with many buildings completed by the business, including the TVW Channel 7 complex, the Fremantle Port Authority Passenger Terminal, the Perth Entertainment Centre, Adventure World at Bibra Lake, along with hotels and industrial projects. Bob completed a world study tour in 1964.



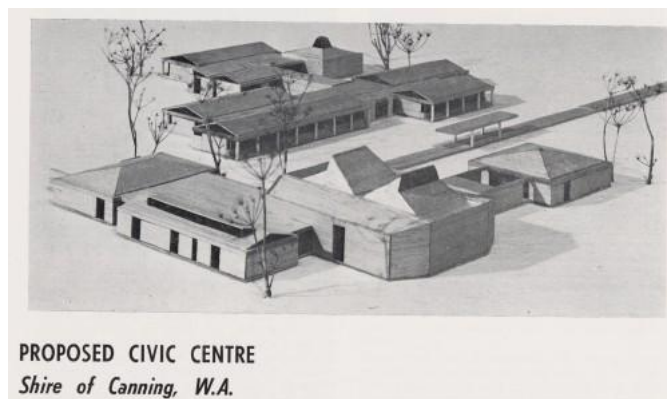
TVW Channel 7 Tuart Hill - plans and photos (The Architect, September 1959, p.24-25).



Fremantle Passenger Terminal 1962 (SLWA 340518PD),



Hobbs Winning & Leighton offices, 37 Ord Street West Perth in 1966 (SLWA 340824PD)



'Proposed Civic Centre, Shire of Canning' corner Albany Highway and George Street Cannington - winner of a limited competition (*The Architect*, March 1967, p.38).

Although it is impossible to attribute the practice's extensive works in the 1960s and 1970s to individuals, Bob's directorship of the practice and ongoing maintenance of client relationships ensured HWL remained successful. Under Bob's and other partners' guidance, the business grew to become Hobbs Winning Leighton and Partners. By the early 1970s Athol Hobbs (1899-1979) had retired and the firm had around seventy persons employed, with a branch office at Albany. At that time there were six partners (Bill Leighton, Bob Day, Graeme Pollock, John Lidbury, Gary Leighton, Colin Nicholas), six associates (Harold Smith, John Shepherd, James Blair, Brian Moody, Dennis Brokenshire, Graham Dyker), an in-house chartered engineer (Peter Airey) and an interior designer (J.P. Morgan) listed on the company prospectus.



Hobbs Winning & Leighton partners (company prospectus, circa 1974).

In 1975 the huge HWL staff included partners Bob Day, John Lidbury, Gary Leighton, Graeme Pollock, Colin Nicholas, John Shepherd; associates were James Blair, Brian Moody, Dennis Brokenshire, Graham Dyker, Michael Gray, and David Uhe. Bill Leighton was noted as a consultant to the practice. HWL practiced prolifically and with distinction for over five decades, and with the creation of a Sydney office in 1989, became Hobbs Winning Australia. At the very end of the twentieth century, the business was absorbed by the Woods Bagot company.

Bob's professional qualities were acknowledged by the conferring of the honorific titles Associate of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) in 1954, and Fellow of the RAIA in 1969. By the 1980s Bob had moved from Applecross to 45A Irvine Street Peppermint Grove. He retired around 1986 or 87, hence acting in a consultant role for HWL for a short period.



HWL company brochure c.1987 – Consultant Robert Day, and Directors from L-R David Uhe, Terry Holton, Colin Nicholas, John Lidbury, George Winning, Tony Shepherd (Sue Day-Walker).

Bob Day died 3 February 2021 at Murdoch, aged 95 years. In private life, he had married again to Carol Vincent, and enjoyed membership of The Weld Club, Lake Karrinyup Country Club, and Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club from 1954 - being a successful yachtsman in the international Dragon class. Teaming with Tony Manford and Tam Thompson, the trio won the Prince Philip Cup (Australasian Dragon Championships) four times between 1964 and 1970.

Bob Day was one of the new breed of architects in WA in the highly-charged post Second World War development period. Although a few still chose to develop their skills through an article system (with Architect Board examinations), and immigration brought a small number of European refugee architects, the majority of WA architects at this time were locally-born and graduates of PTC. The close association of PTC graduates of the 1950s and 1960s gave this group a strong sense of familiarity and cohesion. They developed distinctive local domestic and commercial styles, now gaining further study and recognition.

References:

'Marriages', *The Advertiser*, 13 May 1922, p.10 (Horace Eugene Day and Lilian Grace Martens at St Bartholomew's Church Norwood).

NAA: A6770, DAY ROBERT, Service Number F5073: DOB 13 Dec 1925: POB PORT ADELAIDE: POE FREMANTLE WA: NOK DAY HORACE.

'Architecture', *The West Australian*, 17 December 1947, p.12 (PTC annual exam results).

'Timber Man Dies', *Daily News*, 15 July 1950, p.29 (Horace Day).

'What's News', *Sunday Times*, 13 December 1953, p.18 (Shaftesbury gathering).

'Results Announced in Architecture', *The West Australian*, 15 December 1953, p.18 (PTC).

'Contributors', *The Architect*, March 1967, p.30 (short bio details).

'Proposed Civic Centre, Shire of Canning', *The Architect*, March 1967, pp.38-44.

Hobbs Winning Leighton and Partners, company prospectus, circa 1974, design and photography Fritz Kos Photographer Pty Ltd, preparation and printing Print Image Pty Ltd.

Hobbs Winning & Leighton photographs 1960s-1980s, 82 images by Fritz Kos, online at SLWA. Chisholm, Katrina, 'Hobbs, Winning & Leighton', *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, CUP, Port Melbourne, 2012, pp.335-6.

Pers comms Carol Day May-June 2026, Sue Walker June-July 2026.

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