



Syd Deykin (Instagram - architects_wa)

Sydney Clement Deykin (1935-2024) was born 21 January 1935 at Tresillian Hospital in Nedlands, to parents Cecil James and Helen Beatrice (nee Dewar) Deykin, who had married in January 1930 at St John's Church in Albany. Cecil's father James Samuel Deykin (1869-1941) was born in England, arrived on the *RMS Ormuz* at Albany in 1891, followed the Goldrush to Coolgardie in 1894, and was in partnership at times with Robert Ironside and William Jervis as mining surveyors, civil engineers, architects and draftsmen from 1896 to 1902. James Deykin married May Edwards at St John's Church Albany in 1899, having children Cecil (b.1900), Dean (b.1906) and Nancy (b.1918); and ran the Freemasons Hotel at Albany before moving to Perth in 1922.

Cecil Deykin was a wool classer at Albany, and then ran shearing teams in the north-west of WA during the 1930s to 1950s. When 'Syd' was born, the family was living at 23 Langham Street in Nedlands. His siblings were John Dewar (b.1933) and Catherine Cecily (b.1938). By the 1950s, they were living at 55 Vincent Street Nedlands. A talented student, Syd undertook his early education at East Claremont Practising School and then Hale School, gaining his Leaving Certificate in 1951 when still just sixteen years of age.



Seventeen-year-old Syd Deykin dancing with Jann Loader at Royal Kings Park Tennis Club
(*Sunday Times*, 11 May 1952, p.7).

Syd Deykin studied and passed the First-Year engineering course at the University of Western Australia (UWA) in 1953. He continued in the Second-Year before deciding to work with his father as a wool classer, also running two shearing teams of his own. Syd was a judge for wool classing at the Perth Royal Show for many years.

Syd and Diana (Di) Elizabeth Woodroffe were married in 1959, and they had children Jane, Anna and David. The family lived for many years at 13 Grange Street in Swanbourne, a road that was named after the residence of the first Western Australian born and trained architect - Henry Stirling Trigg (1860-1919). Syd started working with Faulls at Subiaco in the 1950s. Faulls were the Western Australian distributors for Rover vehicles from 1933 to c.1978, when they merged with Winterbottom Motors. After the Americans formed a communications base at North West Cape in the early 1960s, Syd sold many Land Rovers suited to the services personnel work on the tough terrain.

After the architectural course had been moved from Perth Technical College to the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) in 1967, Syd decided to study at WAIT, commencing in 1968 and then finishing his studies at UWA – graduating with a Bachelor of Architecture (Hons) in 1973. He continued running the shearing teams while studying. He also had his pilot's license - very useful for traveling around the north-west of WA, and for taking fellow students on flights allowing arial photos to be taken for assignments.

Syd Deykin first worked with architects Forbes & Fitzhardinge while studying, and then practiced with Parry & Rosenthal after graduating. He registered with the Architects Board of Western Australia (ABWA reg 754) in 1974 – he was nearly forty years old. Syd entered into partnership from January 1977 with Scottish-trained Douglas Roger Campbell Hay (1935-2006), also ex-Parry & Rosenthal, practicing as Deykin & Hay Architects in a small former residence at Subiaco.



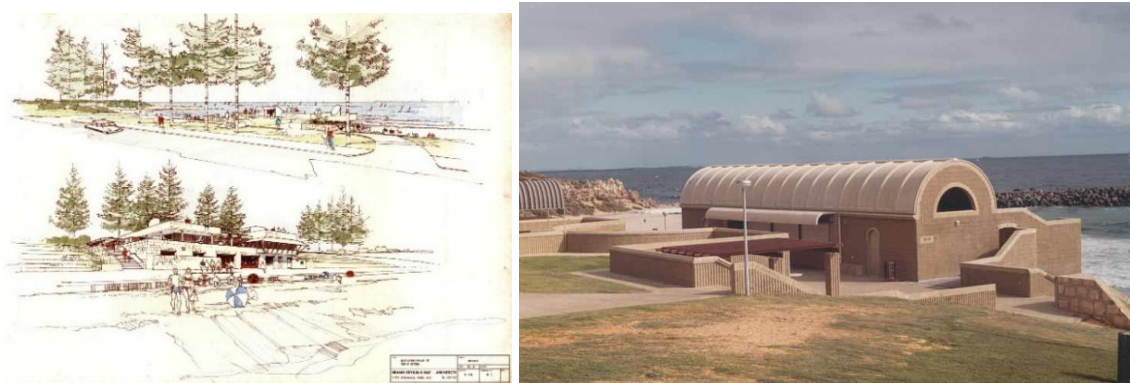
Deykin & Hay design of showroom, offices, and workshops for Mole Engineering at Welshpool Road, Welshpool (The Architect 81.2, p.9).

The Deykin & Hay partnership extended to include ex-Forbes & Fitzhardinge architect Tony Brand (1932-2025) in January 1981, practicing as Brand Deykin & Hay Architects, and the trio continued in business together until June 1992. Long-term staff member Mark Armstrong (ABWA reg 1183) recalls: *It was a very small firm when I joined them in 1981, just shortly after Archie Temelcos started with the practice, which at that stage comprised Partners - Tony, Syd and Doug, Senior Architect Fred Warren and Draftspersons Ged Dunning and Kevin Kiddy. Fellow graduates Martin Mileham, Mark Unger and Michael Bradshaw, later joined to form the core group of Brand Deykin and Hay. Even though the firm was considered a small practice, we undertook many complex and challenging commissions. There was great camaraderie in those early days which grew quickly from staff of about 12 to well over 50.*

Syd and Doug's practice was located in a small house off Hay Street Subiaco [ABWA records suggest 324 Hay Street] before Brand, Deykin and Hay's office was located at the top floor of 8 The Esplanade Perth, a heritage listed building otherwise known as The Atlas Building. ...

Whenever Syd thought there was a lot of unnecessary chatter in the drawing office, he would emerge from his adjacent office cubicle to tell us we were worse than a "bunch of shearers".

With a large staff working across many complex projects, attribution of BD&H design work in the 1980s to singular persons would be unrealistic, and projects in the time when Syd was a partner of the practice included a great variety of commercial, educational and residential works.



1981 Bathing Pavilion design for Cottesloe (Grove Library CPM04297) and 1983 photo of the newly completed Cottesloe Beach Pavilion (Grove Library CPM01961).

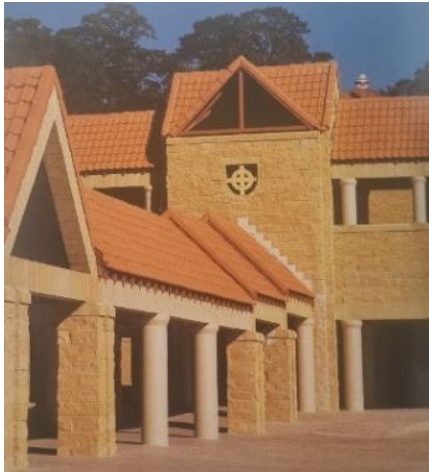
By the late 1970s, the 50-year-old Centenary Bathing Pavilion at Cottesloe was deteriorating and considered structurally unsound. A pounding by Cyclone Alby in 1978 also led to safety concerns about the concrete boardwalk leading to the rock groyne. In 1979 the Council began demolition of the boardwalk and commissioned a report on the best options for the Pavilion. The report recommended demolition as it was not considered economically viable to restore the Pavilion. In June 1982 demolition began. A new plan for the site by Brand, Deykin & Hay was proposed. The two-storey Cottesloe Bathing Pavilion included a boatshed and changerooms at the beach level and café/restaurant area on the second level, preserving the open view out to sea. After much public consultation, a simpler building with a domed roof opened in 1983 and included a kiosk and change rooms with a boatshed underneath for the Cottesloe Surf Life Saving Club. It was over the top of this building that the current Indiana was built.



The Weld Club, Barrack Street Perth (Conservation Plan, John Taylor Architect, 2002).

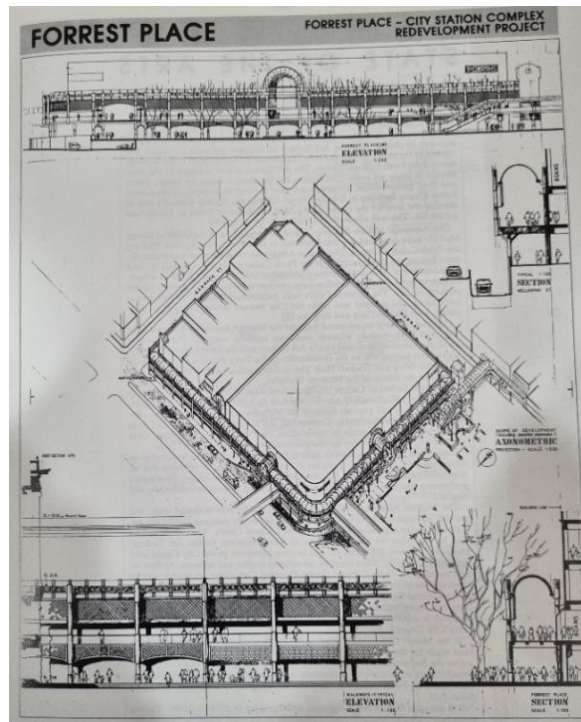
One of Syd's most personal projects was the redevelopment of The Weld Club at Perth. In 1985, years of pondering by the Club culminated in the decision to undertake a major change to the property. This involved the construction of a modern multi-storey office building on the north-western portion of the Club's landholding. The Club granted a lease of the land for a minimum term of 99 years and in return received exclusive use of a billiards room, five fully furnished luxury hotel-type rooms and a larger dining room, rebuilt for improved aspect and greater appeal and use.

A carpark was replaced with landscaped terraces and a new underground carpark was constructed for the Club. Architects for the project were Peddle Thorp & Walker of Sydney in association with Brand Deykin & Hay. The project served the requirements of the Club, which were: to preserve the Club building, retain large areas of landscaped gardens, provide for space, sunlight and air to Club premises, maintain carparking to Club requirements, and to improve Club facilities. Syd was President of the Weld Club 2003-2004, and able to enjoy the benefits of the improvements for many years.



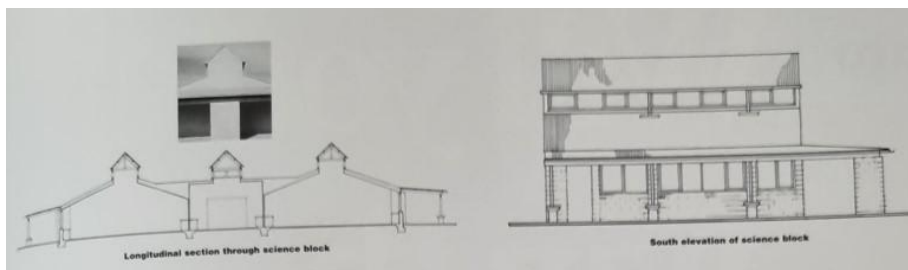
Hedland College (*The Architect*, June 1983, p.24); John XXIII College, built from 1986 (Ian Hocking, *Perth - The Building Challenge*, 1987, p.56); Tony Brand, Syd Deykin and Doug Hay (BDH promotional brochure c.1989 courtesy Archie Temelcos).

Brand Deykin & Hay designed the South Hedland College, which won a 1985 RIAA award, and from 1986 developed the new John XXIII College campus at Mount Claremont. The Forrest Place Perth City Station Complex Redevelopment, also of 1986, was another complex project that reflected the larger scale of jobs undertaken by the practice in these boom years.



Forrest Place Perth City Station Complex Redevelopment (*The Architect*, 86-1, p.17).

The John Wollaston Community Centre at Westfield was a staged construction project that included Primary, Secondary, Specialist, Science, and Library teaching spaces as well as an Administration Building and Change Rooms. The school layout was determined by the placement of sporting fields to the low-lying part of the site with the buildings placed on higher ground with easy access to Centre Road.



John Wollaston Community Centre (*The Architect*, 90.2, pp.20-21).

Two major projects that Deykin was intimately involved in procuring and running were Gateways Shopping Centre at Thomson's Lake (Cockburn), which Syd brought onto the practice through his connection with Michael Gregg of Richard Noble & Co, and the One Howard Street office building for Walter James. BDH undertook the Thomson's Lake commission c.1997 with Tomkin Shaw & Evans, who were experienced shopping centre designers based in Melbourne.



THOMSONS LAKE CENTRE
 THOMSONS LAKE PROPERTIES PTY LTD
 BRAND DEYKIN & HW / TOMKIN SHAW & EVANS ARCHITECTS

Gateways Shopping Centre at Thomson's Lake - perspective by Ron Tapper (Archie Temelcos).

The style and finish of the boutique office building in Howard Street reflected Walter James' conservative personality and style. A feature was the entry lobby which he personally approved and encouraged – with the lobby's vaulted ceiling finished in gold leaf, and secured after-hours with a black wrought-iron style gate. The façade was finished in Donnybrook stone and Albany granite, reflecting James' strong loyalty to WA materials.



Façade and entry lobby of One Howard Street office building (Archie Temelcos).

By the late 1980s, the firm's staff at the Atlas Building in Perth included associate directors Paul Aris, Mark Armstrong, Terry Brabazon, Michael Bradshaw, Martyn

Piercey, and Archie Temelcos – with office management by Judy Halligan. After Brand's departure in 1992, the business name was continued and Brand Deykin & Hay's (BDH) 1996 design of the John Curtin Centre at Curtin University of Technology won a 1998 RAI A award. Sometime after the retirement of Deykin in the later 1990s, BDH was last listed as a corporation by ABWA in 2000. Mark Unger (ABWA reg 1392) was a partner by this stage and along with Doug Hay, led the negotiations in regard to a merger to form Woodhead International - BDH. Key staff such as Archie Temelcos (ABWA reg 1154) moved with the changes as the business was eventually purchased by GHD, a global multidisciplinary professional services network.



50 Riverside Drive Nornalup (sketch courtesy Jane Deykin, photo Brad and Ross Minchin).

Syd noted that one of his favorite projects was a family residence at 50 Riverside Drive Nornalup, documented by Mark Unger and located close by to another at 16 Riverside Drive designed for Peter Bird and family, with both residences built by Ross Minchin. Syd was a part-time lecturer at the University of Western Australia in the late 1970s to early 1980s, and held office with the Association of Consulting Architects (WA). He was an active member of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA), and his professional qualities were recognized by the conferring of the honorific titles Associate of the RAIA in 1974, and Fellow of the RAIA in 1982. Syd was appointed a Senior Counsellor in 1998.

Deykin was an unusual latter Twentieth Century practitioner in WA, in that he entered the profession after working in other fields for some time before undertaking mature-aged architectural studies. He achieved great commercial success, and his company's projects were recognized with a number of awards. Syd made significant contributions in teaching architectural practice, and in mentoring many employees and associates. Syd Deykin died on 28 February 2024 aged 89 years. Di had passed away in August 2021. Their daughter Jane studied at UWA, and became a registered architect (ABWA reg 1282) in 1988.

References:

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 'Matrimonial', *Coolgardie Miner*, 12 January 1899, p.4 (James Deykin, May Edwards at Northam).
 'Tenders', *Coolgardie Miner*, 4 July 1901, p.2 (hotel at Bulla Bulling for OFW Palmer, architects Ironside Deykin and Jervis).
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 'Births', *The West Australian*, 21 December 1933, p.1 (a son at Tresillian Hospital Nedlands).
 'Births', *The West Australian*, 8 February 1935, p.1 'Births' (a son at Tresillian).
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 Pers. Comms. Jane, Anna and David Deykin August 2024-June 2026, Tony Brand February 2025, Mark Armstrong May 2026, Mark Unger May 2026, Archie Temelcos June 2026.
Heritage Committee review: 18 June 2026 Last updated: 18 June 2026

Citation details:

Taylor, Dr John J., 'Sydney Clement Deykin (1935-2024)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.taylorarchitects.com.au/Biographies.html> accessed DATE.