



Warwick Broomfield in 1943 (NAA A9301, 441678)

Warwick St Clair Broomfield (1925-2005) was born 29 July 1925 at St Clair's Hospital Bunbury. His parents were a First World War (1914-1918) veteran, David Sydney Broomfield (1893-1957) and Dorothy Alice (nee Bennett 1898-1973) Broomfield of Treesville, who had married at Perth in 1923. Treesville was a small timber industry settlement to the north-east of Bunbury, about 40 km east of Mornington. Warwick's sister Desbye (named after her father's initials DSB) was born at Perth in 1935.

Warwick attended Perth Boys School from 1938-1940, Wesley College at South Perth 1941-1942, and Perth Technical College (PTC) in 1943. In July 1943, when he applied to join the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), he noted that he living at 39 Preston Street Como and studying at PTC with a view to sitting for his Leaving Examination at the end of the year.

Enlisting for Second World War (1939-1945) service in December 1943, Warwick was based in WA, SA and NSW through 1944. In February 1945 he travelled to study at the RAAF training school 1 WAGS Ballarat, Victoria. The school was purpose-built to train wireless operators, air gunners, and navigators as part of the Empire Training Scheme. Over 6000 personnel were trained at Ballarat during the war, and tragically approximately 20% of the trainees were killed in action or on active service. Fortunately, records include Warwick's discharge from RAAF 25 Squadron in mid-1946 as a navigator. Following demobilisation, he decided to again attend PTC and to 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.

With the assistance of funding from the Commonwealth Reconstruction Scheme, Warwick Broomfield studied architecture from 1947-1949, took 1950 off whilst working full time at architects W.G. Bennett & Associates, and then 1951-1953. Broomfield and the close-knit PTC community were shocked to hear of Bill Robertson's unexpected death in March 1953, aged just 48 years.

Warwick completed his Associateship in Architecture in 1953 within a class that included Ted Cartwright, Ross Chisholm, Bob Day, 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.*

With the PTC architecture course only commencing after the Second World War (1939-1945), in the first three PTC graduating years (1950-1952) preceding Warwick's class there had been just 23 graduates, so he was one of a new breed of architect in WA – almost all locally born and trained. Broomfield registered with the Architects Board of WA (no. 275) in July 1954. After a period of freelancing, in 1957 he re-joined W.G Bennett & Associates and then Forbes & Fitzhardinge for a number of years, in 1962 returning to private practice. In 1966 Warwick was still living with his mother at Preston Street Como.



Broomfield's 1954 proposal for a multi-storey carpark at the south end of William Street in Perth
(*The West Australian*, 14 August 1954, p.9).

In a 'Practice Overview' document Warwick produced from his Onslow Road, Shenton Park office around 2000 (at 75 years of age), he provides 'a brief summary of various works undertaken' as follows:

- 1963 40 bed hospital
- 1964-67 Commissions for Commonwealth Department of Works including:
Army depot Canning Highway
Transmitter station Caversham
Barrack's Store and Works depot Pearce base
PMG Warehouse Kewdale Stage 1 and preliminary Stage 2
- 1968 Fireworks factory Jandakot
- 1969 Ready Mix Office Block at Gosnells quarry
- 1972 Hollywood caterers extensive works at Claremont Showgrounds
Young Australia League redevelopment Araluen Camping Centre
- 1973 Office building Canning Highway
- 1976 SECWA Depot Albany
- 1979 Institute of Engineers alterations to Headquarters
- 1982 G.B. Hill & Partners Architectural Consultant for Cape Peron Outlet
Transition Tower (Engineering Award of Excellence)
- 1984-85 Howlett & Bailey Architectural Consultant - Contract Administration:
Government Offices East Perth : \$24.00m
Albert Facey House \$16.00m
Midvale Velodrome \$ 6.80m
Buckland Hill housing development \$ 4.25m
Rockingham TAFE \$ 0.75m
Donnybrook DHS Library \$ 0.30m
- 1992 Homeswest Contract administration 62 APU development \$ 3.00m
Officers' Mess Alterations Leeuwin Barracks Stage 1
- 1993 7 dwelling units Armadale
13 APUs Warnbro

1994	Banksia Park Retirement Village Kwinana Stage 1 B.M.A. Conservation Plan 93/95 High Street Fremantle
1995	Cox Howlett & Bailey Arch Consultant - Contract Administration Donnybrook Primary School additions Griffin Coal works Rockingham TAFE Additions
1996	Renovations - additions residences and commercial developments Heritage assessments to various residences
1997	Heritage assessment Johnsons Boat Deck Peppermint Grove Royal United Service Institute alterations Leeuwin Barracks Pathology Centre Hollywood Hospital (Architect in Association) 5 Villa units Kalamunda
1998	Federation of Police & Citizens Youth Clubs new hall Camp Variety
1999	Federation of Police & Citizens Youth Clubs development plan Camp Mornington New facilities Success Hill Park for Town of Bassendean Flying Angel Club Fremantle alterations and maintenance works Contract admin for Cordelia Holdings hotel Victoria Avenue Perth

The State Library of WA has an extensive collection of Broomfield's drawings, sketches and related correspondence, which provides further direction toward understanding details of the projects above, and could provide material for a comprehensive undergraduate thesis on his architectural work and career.

In private life, Warwick's father David, an accountant, was largely absent in the lives of his children, coming and going. He was found deceased in a hotel at Darwin during 1957, living under another name. Dorothy Broomfield, a teacher, died at Como during 1973, aged 74 years. Whilst a student at PTC, in 1951 Warwick had a very brief relationship and a daughter Monica was born in 1952 at Sydney, but until the 1980s Broomfield did not wish to acknowledge the fact. Warwick's sister Desbye notes that he was married to Barbara Evans in February 1977, but they were divorced within a short period of time.



Warwick Broomfield and daughter Monica in 1984 (Monica Byrnes)

Warwick St Clair Broomfield continued to work until his death on 16 November 2005 at West Perth, aged 80 years. Warwick had been an honorary architect for the National Trust of WA, and served on many community organization committees, including as Senior Vice President of the Royal Australian Engineers Association WA. He had designed the RAE Memorial at Karrakatta in 1999, where a memorial bench seat was placed to his memory in 2006.

Warwick Broomfield 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:

NAA B2455, BROOMFIELD D S, Broomfield David Sydney : SN 1547 : POB Carlisle England : POE Enoggera QLD : NOK M Broomfield Elizabeth

'Births', *The West Australian*, 7 August 1925, p.1 'Births' (at St Clair's Hospital Bunbury).

NAA A9301, 441678; BROOMFIELD WARWICK ST CLAIR, SN 441678: DOB 29 Jul 1925: POB BUNBURY WA : POE PERTH WA : NOK BROOMFIELD DAVID.

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

'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).

'Warwick Broomfield Architect, Practice Overview', c.2000 (courtesy Desbye Shields).

'BROOMFIELD, WARWICK, 1925-2005', SLWA private archives manuscript note MN 2658 (lists extensive drawings, sketches and related correspondence within ACC 7246A, 8192A).

'The Purple Circle', November 2005, p.2 (magazine Royal Australian Engineers Association WA).

Pers comms Russell McEntyre, President RAE Assoc of WA (Inc), May 2026

Pers comms Desbye Shields May-June 2026.

Pers comms Monica Byrnes May-June 2026.

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