



**Thomas Anthoness**

(courtesy Kim Wheatley)

**A**nthoness, Thomas (1866-1950), was born at Growlers Creek (Wandiligong), Victoria, a son of miner and sawyer George Anthoness who had in 1860 married Mary Eleanor Hale, a widow with children. In the early 1870s the larger Anthoness family moved from rural Victoria to South Melbourne, and by 1878 George had prospered to the extent he was able to purchase the extensive property *Fairholme* at 35 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. George's fortunes flourished in the boom times of 'Marvellous Melbourne' during the 1880s, and he became an extremely wealthy hotelier, brewer, wine and spirit merchant.

Thomas Anthoness became a successful architect in the late 1880s, possibly with some patronage from his father, and was responsible for residences in Carlton and a number of fine hotels. From 1889 to 1894 Anthoness was listed as an architect at 47 Queen Street, Melbourne. His design for the landmark Tower Hotel on the Heidelberg Road at Alphington includes a three-storey corner tower, an ornate rendered façade and asymmetrical composition. Another grand arrangement, the Royal Hotel at Williamstown, was completed by 1893.

Thomas' mother died in February 1890, and his father died at *Fairholme* just six months later. In May of 1892 newspapers reported that a motion had been commenced for the revocation of probate of the will of George Anthoness, alleging his 1860 marriage to Mary in New South Wales had been bigamous. The children of a marriage at Birmingham, UK in 1850, were contesting the will. The estate at the time of obtaining probate was valued at the enormous sum of £171,091. By the will the estate was left to the children of George and Mary, of whom there were eight. Thomas may have eventually gained a portion of his inheritance, probably sorely needed at the time, as the 1890s were a disastrous economic period in Victoria and most

architectural practices had little or no work. Consequently many architects were forced to seek alternative employment, or to move to more prosperous locations.

Anthoiness appears to have visited Western Australia in June 1895, arriving at Fremantle on the *Australind* from Singapore. Possibly following his brother George, Thomas moved to WA with his wife May (Mary nee Speight - sister of Victorian architect Richard Speight) and son Thomas Richard Tallis Anthoiness (b.1896), arriving by January of 1898. With many architects having already landed and established themselves in WA, taking advantage of fantastic opportunities during the 1890s gold boom and period of building expansion, Anthoiness was somewhat 'late on the scene'. Consequently his business activity, indicated by the nature and number of tender notices in the newspapers, was initially very slow.

Perhaps sustained by family assets at their outset in WA, the family grew with the addition of a daughter Ethel Marian in August 1899, born at their home *Linlathen* in Hooper Street, West Perth. As the commencement of the Twentieth Century, Anthoiness' reputation and clientele steadily increased. In September 1900, he called tenders for the Duke of York Hotel in Boulder, in May 1901 to develop *Cremorne Lane* (later Cremorne Arcade) linking Annie Oliver's Hay and Murray Street properties, and then in April 1902, for a warehouse for Freedman Brothers, and works for the Stanley Brewery Company. By 1903 the architect was in 'full swing', and buildings for that year include: 81-83 High Street (now RSL Wyola Club), Fremantle; Monash House, cnr Hay and King Streets, Perth; His Majesty's Hotel, 2 Mouat Street, Fremantle; five two-storey houses in Hay Street, East Perth for George Glyde; major additions to the Britannia Coffee Palace, William Street, Perth; Marmion Building, cnr High & Market Streets, Fremantle; a warehouse and shops in Murray Street, Perth for the estate of Mrs H. Hoyt; and three-storey premises in St Georges Terrace, Perth.

Anthoiness had a consistent number of developments in the Perth metropolitan area, with differing building types such as offices, shops, residences, warehouses, and factories. He completed projects for the Methodist Church at Bagot Road, Subiaco and Ventnor Avenue, West Perth in 1906-1907. Further examples of his versatility include a cold-storage works at West Perth, seven residences at Palmerston and Newcastle Streets, Perth, and a shops-residential building at the corner of Hay and Outram Streets in West Perth, all in 1907.

By the 1920s, and following general economic recovery after the First World War, Anthoness' projects became greater in complexity and value. His theatre designs for Sir Thomas Coombe in this period were undoubtedly his finest works, although there are no remains to be seen today. The deluxe Prince of Wales Theatre in Murray Street Perth was opened in December 1922, with significant involvement from local artisans including interior decoration by Philip Goatcher. Unfortunately Anthoness' 1926 design for a Regent Theatre in central Hay Street was not realised, as Coombe became tied as a director of Union Theatres with Bohringer, Taylor and Johnson. A Bohringer designed Regent was built for Hoyt's in 1927 utilising the side walls of the old Queen's Hall in William Street, Perth, on a site owned by the Methodist Church, for whom Anthoness had re-developed the Queens Buildings complex in 1924.

In 1925 he was working for the Freedmans again, with projected new buildings from Hay through to Murray Streets in central Perth reported to the massive value of £45,000. But tender notices of the very late 1920s became fewer and of less value, including minor tasks such as alterations to houses, and the Great Depression years may have been the time when Anthoness retired from practice at around 65 years old.

Other places attributed to Anthoness on the Heritage Council of Western Australia database are Manning Buildings, 36-50 South Terrace, Fremantle; Empire Buildings, 146-152 Stirling Terrace cnr York Street, Albany; and the Bellevue RSL War Memorial at Purton Place, Bellevue. Thomas Anthoness died aged 81 years in February 1950 at West Perth. His wife, May, had died just two days beforehand.

#### References:

Birth place and date etc from Anthoness family notes held by Kim Wheatley, Nedlands.

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'Deaths - Anthoness', *Argus* (Melbourne), 23 August 1890, p.1.

'In Memoriam', *Argus* (Melbourne), 6 February 1891, p.1.

'In Memoriam', *Argus* (Melbourne), 22 August 1891, p.1.

'A Disputed Will', *Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW), 18 May 1892, p.7.

'Sensational Will Case', *Advertiser* (Adelaide), 18 May 1892, p.5.

'Deaths - Anthoness', *Argus* (Melbourne), 25 August 1892, p.1.

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 29 September 1900, p.7 (hotel cnr Burt & Thomson Streets, Boulder).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 30 May 1901, p.1 (Two Two-storey premises Hay St for Mrs Oliver).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 23 April 1902, p.3, (Freedman Bros Warehouse; Stanley Brewery Co Brewing Tower & Cooling Floors).

'Stanley Brewery Company', *The West Australian*, 9 June 1902, p2.

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 28 May 1903, p.2 (5 two-storey houses, Hay Street for George Glyde).  
 'New Methodist Church at Subiaco', *The Western Mail*, 19 May 1906, p.42.  
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 'Perth's New Theatre - The Prince of Wales Opening', *The West Australian*, 5 December 1922, p.7.  
 'Prince of Wales Theatre - fine work of local artisans', *Sunday Times* (Perth), 17 December 1922, p.11.  
 'Queen's Buildings', *Sunday Times* (Perth), 18 May 1924, p.8 (adding another floor etc).  
 'Rest Home for the Aged Blind at Victoria Park', *Sunday Times* (Perth), 27 July 1924, p.31.  
 'New Buildings Murray Street', *The West Australian*, 11 April 1925 p.10 (S. Freedman & Co £45,000).  
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 'Ambassadors' Theatre - Atmospheric Interior', *The West Australian*, 2 July 1927, p.10.  
 'Hoyt's Regent – A Beautiful Interior', *The West Australian*, 3 September 1927, p.8.  
 Honniball, Jack, 'Cinemas 1896-1985', accessed 19 September 2011 at  
<http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/film/image/Honniball.html>  
 'Personal', *The West Australian*, 15 February 1950, p.2.  
 'Anthoness, Thomas', Architects Board of Western Australia, 10 July 1922, reg number 42.  
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Heritage Committee meeting approval date: 13 October 2011 Last updated: 13 October 2011

**Citation details:**

Taylor, Dr John J., 'Thomas Anthoness (1866-1950)', *Western Australian Architect Biographies*,  
<http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=13453>, accessed DATE.



Tower Hotel, Heidelberg Rd, Alphington (http://www.panoramio.com/photo/46753405) Duke of York Hotel, cnr Burt & Thomson Sts, Boulder demolished in 2011 (Google 2011)



3<sup>rd</sup> floor etc, Britannia Hotel  
 William St, Northbridge  
 (John Taylor 2008)

His Majesty's Hotel  
 Mouat St, Fremantle  
 (John Taylor 2008)

Empire Buildings  
 Stirling Tce cnr York St, Albany  
 (Google 2011)



Prince of Wales Theatre, Murray St Perth (SLWA 001675D)



Cremorne Chambers, 572-578 Hay St Perth (SLWA 280146PD)



3<sup>rd</sup> floor etc, Queen's Buildings, cnr William & Murray Sts Perth (John Taylor 2008)



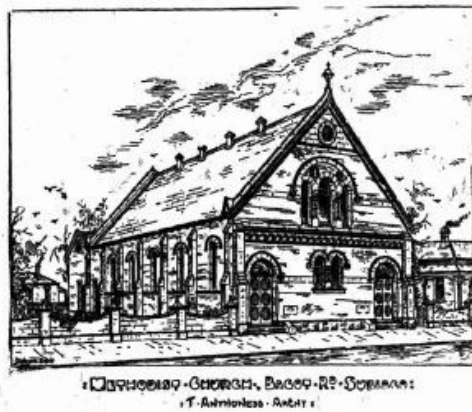
Monash House, cnr Hay & King Sts Perth (SLWA 237849D)



Memorial to Jewish Services Personnel, Kings Park (<http://www.warmemorials.net/memorials/perth/kingspark>)



Bath House, South Perth Zoological Gardens (*The Western Mail*, 9 August 1918, p.2)



Methodist Church and Manse, Bagot Rd, Subiaco (*The Western Mail*, 19 May 1906, p.42).

