

Austin Bastow

(*Twentieth Century Impressions of Western Australia*, P.W.H. Thiel & Co, Perth, 1901, p.397)

Austin Bastow (1867-1942) was born 9 October 1867 in Cleveland, Ohio USA. His father, architect and botanist Richard Austin Bastow (1839-1920) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. In 1862 Richard eloped with Catherine Broadbent to America, where Austin was born. Richard and Catherine returned to Great Britain due to Catherine's mother's health, after her death they decided to emigrate to Tasmania, where in 1884 Richard became Town Surveyor in Hobart. They had five children, two dying young, the other three being Austin and daughters Dorothea and Daisy. In Tasmania, Richard Bastow became interested in bryology. His definitive work, *Mosses of Tasmania*, was published in Hobart in 1886. Richard moved to Victoria in 1888, where he initially worked privately, but later became an employee of the Public Works Department. After Richard's death Austin donated his collection of more than 10,000 molluscs to the National Museum of Melbourne, while Richard's main collection is in the Melbourne Herbarium, with other collections in the Museum of Victoria.

Austin Bastow commenced service with his father in 1886, working in Hobart for six years without completing formal articles. He may have been more aligned with the work of a surveyor-land agent, rather than as an architect, in these early times. At one stage Bastow was selling Western Australian land from Tasmania, before moving to work from Collins Street, Melbourne around 1892. With James Thomas Peet, who had worked as a draftsman for Chaffey Bros at Mildura, he formed the real estate agency Peet and Bastow, whom amongst their other projects, were involved in marketing Wanneroo Park in WA (now Bayswater, North Perth, and a part of northern Dianella). The general timing of the real estate business was unfortunate. With widespread economic malaise on the east coast, J.T. Peet moved to gold-boom Perth in July 1895 and soon set up the real estate

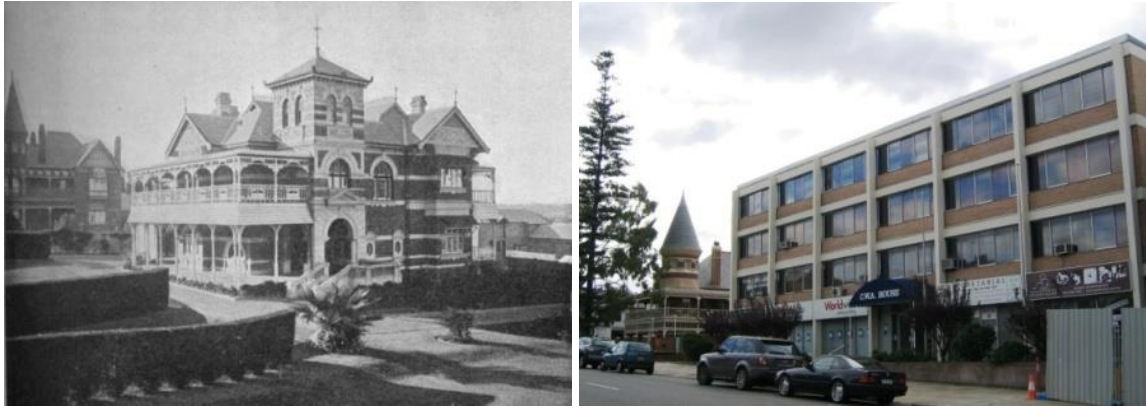
development company Peet & Co, still in existence today. Bastow struggled on in Melbourne and was listed in practice at 562 Collins Street during 1894 and 1895.

Bastow moved his family to WA, and a business announcement in *The West Australian* during December 1896 carried note of the Volta Cycle Company opening rooms in St George's Terrace under the management of Austin Bastow, 'late proprietor and manager of the Dux Cycle Company in Melbourne ...'. In the same month Richard and Austin Bastow advertised as 'Bastow and Son Architects' in the National Mutual Building, the same location as the Volta Cycle Company. To make ends meet, Bastow may have worked in a number of business arrangements in Perth from 1896 through to 1909. Newspaper advertisements reveal architecture was his primary business, and he was eventually made a Fellow of the West Australian Institute of Architects (FWAIA).

Around 1897 Bastow became a councillor of the municipality of Subiaco, and in 1899 he was elected Mayor. During the same year he entered into a partnership with D.B. Hedderwick ARVIA, and advertised to take on a pupil. This union does not appear to have lasted long, and in December 1903 it was announced that 'Mr Austin Bastow, architect, St. George's Terrace, Perth, has taken into partnership Mr H.M. Marwood, a gentleman who gained considerable experience in Melbourne under Mr D'Ebro, the talented architect of the Federal capital.' Designs of the partnership Bastow & Marwood include two-storey residential shops in Hay Street, Subiaco, cottages in Railway Road, Subiaco, and additions to a Presbyterian Church, also at Subiaco. The major and most prestigious project for the firm was the Hassell residence in Hay Street, West Perth, valued at over £5 000.



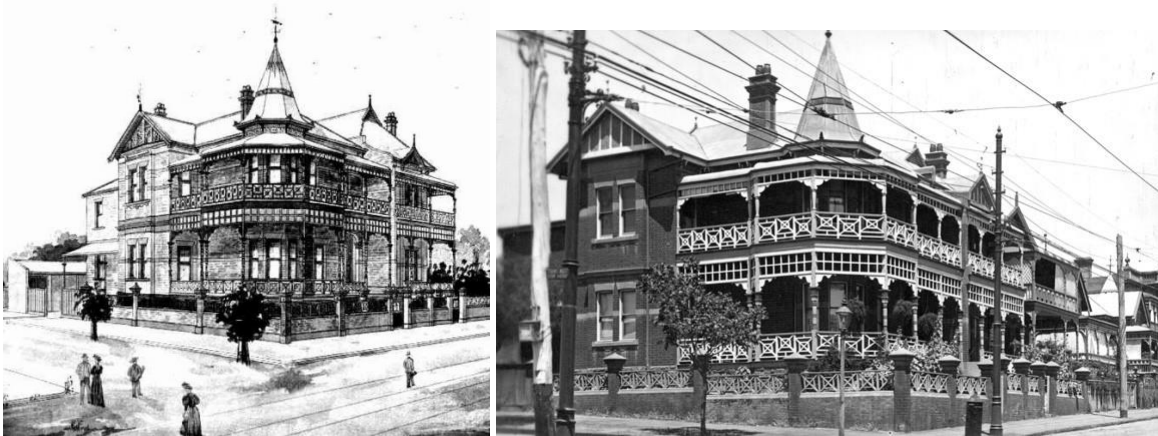
Floor plans and elevations of 1904 Hassell residence *Kendenup* in Hay Street, West Perth (slwa_b1910704).



1904 Hassell residence *Kendenup* in Hay Street, West Perth, and at right, the building that replaced it. *Meerlinga* at the left is extant.

(Battye, J.S., *Cyclopedia of Western Australia*, Vol.1, 1912, p.269; John Taylor 2008)

Ultimately the combination was not harmonious, as Bastow soon advertised that the partnership had ‘expired’ on 14 December 1904. Indeed, it was reported that Bastow removed Marwood’s name from the sign board at the Hassell’s house, and in 1905 a description of the building was published under the heading ‘a Palatial Residence’, attributing the design to Bastow. Harry Marwood wrote to the local journal, and the next edition included his letter declaring that ‘I am solely responsible for the architecture of the residence in question, the same having been designed by me whilst a partner ...’



Desborough House, 1161-1163 Hay Street, cnr Havelock Street West Perth (sketch *Western Mail*, 30 May 1903, p.28; 1916 photo SLWA 009581d).

A sample of works attributed solely to Bastow in a very busy period include in 1903: two residences in Hay Street, West Perth (now Desborough House, cnr Havelock Street); eight residences in Seddon Street, Subiaco; a large residence at Claremont for Mrs T.H. Hardinge; in 1905: nine shops, Wellington Street, Perth;

four residences in Rupert Street Subiaco; in 1906: a residence for Cartney Woods at Katanning; and three residences in Guildford Road, Mount Lawley.

At a later time (1921), Bastow listed his major works in WA as the Miners' Institute at Kalgoorlie (1902) [although this building may in fact have been designed by Harvey Draper], markets at Perth (1904), Mosey's Chambers in Barrack Street, Perth (1904), and St Andrew's Church of England in Barker Road, Subiaco (1906). In 1905 the new Perth Markets were in the course of erection. The new general produce wholesale and retail markets built on four acres of land at Charles, Duke and John Streets in Perth were to be ready early in December 1905, valued at around £4,000, but the whole plan was for an outlay of about £20,000.



1906 St Andrew's Church at 257 Barker Road Subiaco c.1915 (SLWA 001177D)

In May 1907 Bastow formed another partnership, this time with Harold Boas, perhaps looking to relinquish some of his workload. Bastow and Boas practiced from Surrey Chambers in St George's Terrace, Perth. In December 1906, Bastow had successfully applied at the Katanning Land Agency for a homestead farm of 160 acres, and 1,000 acres on conditional purchase, and approval was given shortly thereafter. In 1907 he resigned as Mayor of Subiaco, and *The West Australian* carried notes revealing a rural direction for Bastow:

'A complimentary smoke social is to be tendered to Mr. Austin Bastow at the King's Hall, Subiaco, to-morrow evening. Mr. Bastow, who has been closely identified with the municipality of Subiaco almost since its foundation, and who has served the town for five years as Mayor and two years as councillor, has now determined to try his fortune on the land, his intention being to settle at Kojonup. His fellow-towns-people, desirous of bearing testimony to his good work as a citizen, have arranged to entertain him on the eve of his departure in the manner already stated.'

By July 1908 Bastow had moved back into local government affairs, and he was elected unopposed as a member of the Kojonup Roads Board. It was announced that ‘... plans have been prepared for a new Roads Board Office and were laid on the table at the meeting. They provide for a suitable Board-room, 18 ft x 25 ft; with secretary's office in front. The probable cost is £250. The plans were prepared by Mr. A. Bastow.’ Ultimately, the country venture does not appear to have met with Bastow's expectations, and he subsequently returned to Victoria. Directory advertisements indicate that around 1911 Boas formally took over the Bastow and Boas architectural practice, and from 1912 to 1916 the business entered a new phase with Edwin Summerhayes, as Summerhayes and Boas.

Newspaper advertisements indicate that Bastow worked both as an architect and land agent following his return to Melbourne. His son Richard returned safely from service in the Great War of 1914-1918. Austin had gained his own military experience at Perth in the early twentieth century, setting up a volunteer force in Subiaco, and having previously advertised in Victoria as a FWAIA, ‘Major’ Bastow applied to be made a Fellow of the RVIA in 1921. His address at that time was 312 Flinders Street, Melbourne, and one of the nominators, Thomas R. Ashworth, provided note of Bastow having worked on the Tramway Trust Buildings at Coldblo Road in Malvern, Victoria. From the same Flinders Street address in 1934, Bastow as President of the National Roads Association wrote a letter to the *Argus* on ‘how motorists may help’.

Austin had married Mary Richards in 1890, and they had eight children that survived infancy. Following Mary's death in 1939 he remarried, to Mary Tutty, in 1941. Bastow died aged 75 years, on 7 November 1942 at his home 134 Milton Parade, Malvern. He was noted as the “dearly beloved husband of Mary, loving father of Kate (b.1894), Richard (b.1896), Marjorie (b.1898), Winifred (b.1903), Dorothea (b.1907), George (b.1909), Mary (b.1912) and Austin (b.1914)”.

References:

‘West Australian Scenery’, *Launceston Examiner*, 13 April 1892, p.2.

‘To the Editor’, *Launceston Examiner*, 3 May 1892, p.3.

‘Western Australia’, *Launceston Examiner*, 9 June 1892, p.4.

‘Business Announcements’, *The West Australian*, 18 December 1896, p.5 (Volta Cycle Co.).

Notices, *The West Australian*, 9 September 1899, p.5 (Bastow & Hedderwick).

‘Public Notice’, *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 26 September 1899, p.6 (pupil sought).

- 'Yachting', *The West Australian*, 17 October 1900, p.7 (2 storey PFS club building gratis).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 18 October 1902, p.5 (residence Cannington for A.R. Fleming).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 28 May 1903, p.2 (four cottages Hay St Subiaco for T. Britnall).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 28 October 1903, p.5 (two shops at Claremont).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 1 December 1903, p.2 (residence Claremont, Mrs T.H. Hardinge).
- W.A. Mining, Building, and Engineering Journal* [WAMBEJ], 19 December 1903, p.18 (Marwood).
- The West Australian*, 9 January 1905, p.1 (expiry of partnership with Marwood).
- 'The New Perth Markets', *Daily News*, 26 September 1905, p.3.
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 23 November 1905, p.3 (2 two-storey shops/residences Hay St Subiaco).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 13 December 1905, p.9 (Warehouse King St Perth for F. Mosey).
- 'Church News', *Western Mail*, 7 July 1906, p.42 (St Andrew's Church Subiaco).
- 'Land Settlement', *Western Mail*, 29 December 1906, p.4.
- 'Business Announcements', *The West Australian*, 18 May 1907, p.14 (Bastow & Boas).
- 'Personal', *The West Australian*, 18 July 1907, p.5.
- 'Kojonup', *The West Australian*, 16 July 1908, p.5.
- 'Tenders', *Argus*, 5 March 1920, p.2 (extension to Malvern Tramway Car Repair Shop, Coldblo Rd)
- 'Tenders', *Argus*, 20 June 1927, p.2 (bakehouse and stabling at Camberwell).
- The West Australian*, 16 March 1931, p.10 (gifts original tramway spike for Subiaco Council).
- 'How Motorists May Help', *Argus*, 17 October 1934, p.8 (President of National Roads Association).
- 'Deaths', *Argus*, 9 November 1942, p.2.
- 'Bastow, Austin', RVIA notes, State Library Victoria MS 9454 box 85, barcode M06291, envelope 5.
- Kelly, Ian, 'Western Australian Architectural Biography, 1890-1915', appendix to the Master of Architecture thesis: *The Development of Housing In Perth (1890-1915)*, UWA, 1991.
- 'A history of Peet', Peet and Co., www.peet.com.au, accessed 30 November 2011.
- Bastow, Austin, Maj [Major], VMF [Volunteer Military Forces?], NAA series B4717, barcode 9526836, digital copy, accessed 29 October 2012.
- 'Richard Austin Bastow', Wikipedia, accessed 28 October 2012.

Contributing author: John Taylor

Heritage Committee review: 29 November 2012 Last updated: 30 May 2023

Citation details:

Taylor, John J., 'Austin Bastow (1867-1942)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.taylorarchitects.com.au/Biographies.htm> accessed DATE.