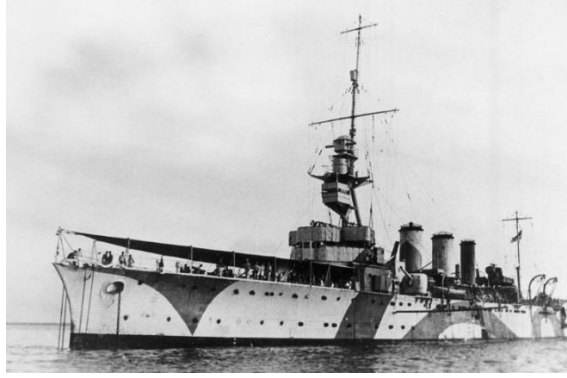


Alan Shepherd (*Phi*, Architectural Students Assoc of WA, 1950, p.8)

Alan John Shepherd (1922-1991) was born 30 November 1922 to Wilfred Joseph and Rose Martha (nee LeEVERS) Shepherd of Mary Street, Nedlands Park, who had married at the Coolgardie goldfields of Western Australia in 1916. According to electoral records, Wilfred was a clerk. Alan had four siblings: Grace (Gay, b.1917); Wilfred (Bill, b.1918), Rose (b.1921); and Patricia (b.1926), and they all attended Nedlands Primary School.

Alan's grandfather was saddler Joseph Shepherd, who was born at Willunga, South Australia in 1854, arrived in WA during 1896 gold boom times, and died at Nedlands' Tresillian Hospital in January 1946, aged 91 years. At that time he had been living at 53 Princess Road Nedlands. He was well-known in the Claremont-Nedlands area, where until just before passing he had been involved with one of his three sons, John (Jack), in managing a Stirling Highway garage.

As a nineteen-year old, Alan enlisted with the Royal Australian Naval Reserve for Second World War (1939-1945) service as an 'ordinary seaman' from March 1942. His next of kin was listed as his father, then at 5 Princess Road in Nedlands, and his height given as 5 foot 3 inches. Thus it was not surprising that Alan was later known by fellow architectural students as 'Shorty' Shepherd. He served on the cruiser *HMAS Adelaide* from August 1942 until January 1945. After completion of a refit in mid-1942, the *Adelaide* was based at Fremantle for convoy and escort duty in the Indian Ocean, until her seagoing service ended in early 1945. Alan served the remainder of 1945 on the frigate *HMAS Lachlan*, which was principally engaged in survey support around the Philippines, Brunei, and New Guinea.



Alan Shepherd served 1942-1945 on the *HMAS Adelaide* (www.navy.gov.au/hmas-adelaide-i)

With hostilities over, Alan was demobilised in Fremantle at the *Leeuwin* naval base during January 1946, and thus was able to attend his grandfather's funeral. He capitalised on government-sponsored education opportunities for returned servicemen, and with 'Commonwealth Reconstruction Trainee' assistance, elected to enrol in the newly-founded five year architecture course at Perth Technical College (PTC).

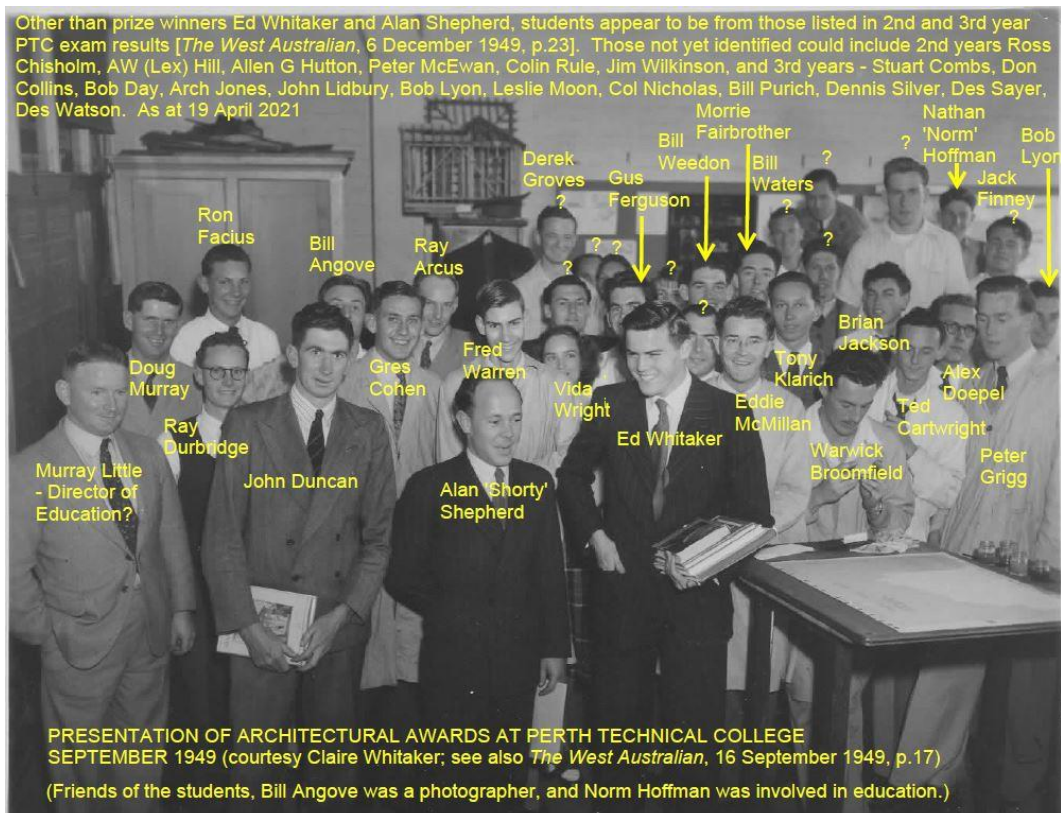
Prior to the Second World War, architectural students who did not receive academic training overseas or in other States, had been obliged to train in WA under a system of indenture to individual architects. The products of this system of architectural education were trained rather than educated and clearly 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) in Sydney in the early 1940s, and through him the society's philosophies had an obvious influence on the nature of the course at PTC. The war had made housing a major consideration, and a practical objective of industrialization for the Modern Movement. Robertson was also strongly oriented to construction and practical aspects, and the curriculum he organized was accordingly a very practical one. But as has been elucidated by Geoffrey London and Duncan Richards in the late twentieth-century study *Modern Houses*, the major post-war architectural style inspiration on the west coast of Australia was derived from British (particularly London) and Continental sources, leading to a regionally distinctive form of architectural modernism.

**EXHIBITION OF STUDENTS' WORK FROM
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE,
PERTH TECHNICAL COLLEGE.**

- 78—Greek Architecture—R. Strauss.
79—Comparison of the Arch and the Beam—A. J. Shepherd.
80—Greek Architecture—A. J. Shepherd.
81—Egyptian Architecture—G. E. Summerhayes.
82—Lettering—A serlio Alphabet—T. G. Hales.
83—Details of Door Construction—R. Strauss.
84—Details of Brick Construction—A. J. Shepherd.
85—Window Details—R. Strauss.
86—Working Drawing—Y. F. A. Davies.

Alan Shepherd's work featured in 3 of 9 PTC student examples exhibited by the RAIWA in 1947 (1947 RAIWA WA exhibition catalogue, p.19).



Alan Shepherd front and centre in PTC group at Architecture Awards event in September 1949 (courtesy Claire Whitaker).

The seven fifth-year students of the PTC architecture course in 1950 were given a town-planning exercise in their final term – to design a housing settlement for a 469 acre (190 ha) site nine miles (14.5 km) north from Perth on the Wanneroo Road. Shepherd and his fellows undertook a preliminary survey, assessed needs and finally tabulated a list of areas, numbers and descriptions of buildings etc. Secretary of the Architectural Students' Association of WA in 1950, Shepherd wrote a comprehensive description of the students' work, soon

The oldest of his cohort by some years, Alan embarked to work in Great Britain soon after graduation. In London, Alan married Joan Wearne during September 1951, with Gil Nicol (a later RAI A Gold Medal winner, in 1983) enjoying acting as best man for his fellow graduate.



Joan and Alan Shepherd shortly after return to Perth in 1954, with Joan's sister Shirley at right
(*Sunday Times*, 12 September 1954, p.15)

Alan and Joan returned to Perth in late 1954, and then moved to Melbourne, setting up a home at 44 Fitzroy Street St Kilda, from where they had a daughter Merinda born in 1956. Alan and Joan lived at 2 Campbell Street Brighton from 1958-1972, and later had a home at 24 Birdwood Avenue Elwood. Alan Shepherd had become an Associate of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1951, and was made a Fellow in 1970. He registered as an architect in Victoria (no. 1355).

At Melbourne, Shepherd worked in partnership with Vienna-born Albert Genser (1927-1996), who had migrated to Australia before the Second World War. Known as Genser, Shepherd and Associates, their offices were located on Punt Road in Richmond, with the business thriving on the development of 'six-pack' (on half-acre blocks) and 'eight-pack' (on 1 acre) apartments at inner and east Melbourne. Albert's son Ben Genser, also an architect-developer, recalls that a unit design at Gold Street in Clifton Hill was one of their better-known ensembles, and that Alan had a particular strength in engineering. Ben has a recollection that Shepherd may have worked on bridge design whilst in London during the early 1950s. Alan had retired from architecture by the early 1980s, due to poor health, and he and Joan bought The Black Spur Inn at Narbethong. Alan Shepherd died at Elwood on 25 July 1991, aged 68 years.

It is important to recognise that prior to the First World War, the overwhelming majority of architects in WA had been born and trained elsewhere. This gradually changed during the Inter-War years (1919-1939), as more locally born individuals studied whilst under articulated arrangements with senior practitioners. Shepherd was one of the first 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 Architects 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, and many soon travelled overseas together to absorb further international developments in modern architecture. They developed distinctive local domestic and commercial styles, now gaining further study and recognition.

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- 'Architectural Awards', *The West Australian*, 16 September 1949, p.17 (winner of £3/3 prize).
 A.J. Shepherd, 'Housing Settlement', (*Phi*, Architectural Students Assoc of WA 1950, pp.12-14).
- 'People and Parties', *The West Australian*, 9 December 1950, p.13 (Architectural Students Association of WA function at Tintern Lodge, Shepherd secretary).
- 'People and Parties', *The West Australian*, 3 October 1951, p.11 (marriage in London).
 London, Geoffrey and Richards, Duncan; *Modern Houses: Architect-designed Houses in Western Australia from 1950 to 1965*, School of Architecture, UWA, 1997, pp.2-3.
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