



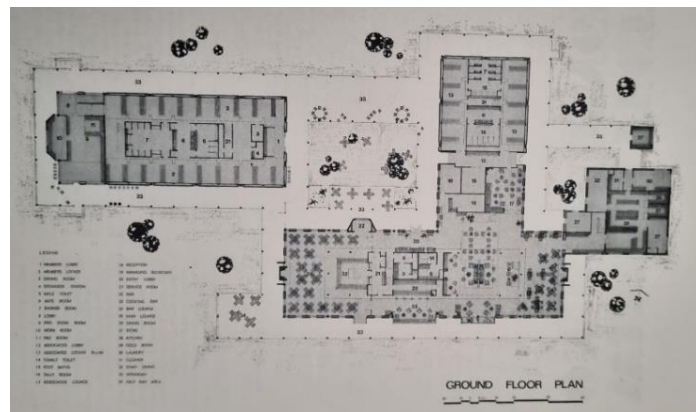
Mike Croudace (architecture.com.au)

Thomas ‘Michael’ Croudace (1940-2022) was born 20 February 1940 at Cessnock in New South Wales. His parents Thomas (Tom) Orton and Barbara (nee Bowker) Croudace had married in 1933 at Christ Church, Toronto, on Lake Macquarie in NSW. When Michael (or Mike as he was also known) was born, the family was living at Aberdare, a suburb of Cessnock, a large town based on coal mining in the Lower Hunter Region in NSW. Michael had an older sister Jennifer, born at Muswellbrook in 1935. By 1949 Tom Croudace was manager of the Aberdare and Caledon collieries of Caledonian Collieries Ltd. Tom spent practically the whole of his life in an atmosphere of coalmining and had a personal background of coalmining history; his grandfather, father and several other relatives having been prominent in the industry in NSW. In 1950 the family relocated to Collie, around 55km east of Bunbury in the south-west of Western Australia, where Tom had been appointed as Manager of Western Collieries. Tom, Barbara, Jenny and young Mike Croudace were soon established in a modest residence at 16 Hutton Street in Collie.

Jenny completed high school at St Hilda’s in Perth. Mike went to primary school at Collie, attended Guildford Grammar briefly, but didn't like it and went back to finish high school in Collie. He won a government scholarship to study architecture at Perth Technical College (PTC). A gifted student, he was awarded the 1963 E.G. Cohen Medal, and the 1964 W.H. Robertson Memorial Travel Grant, which allowed him to travel for two years. The travel grant was awarded jointly by the Architects Board of Western Australia (ABWA) and the WA Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) to a student of PTC. The grant had been named to commemorate the late William (Bill) Hayden Robertson (1905-1953) who had inaugurated the first architectural course at PTC in 1946.

Mike was registered as an architect with the Architects Board of Western Australia (reg no 439) on 4 February 1964. Travelling to London, he worked with Colin Stansfield Smith (1932-2013) at Emberton Tardrew and Partners, embracing the innovation and creativity of the office environment. While in London he married Susan (nee Aley) at St Andrews Church in Sonning-on-Thames, and together they travelled throughout Europe. Upon return to WA he joined the Public Works Department (PWD), working on several public building projects under then PWD principal architect Walter Leonard Green (1902-1981). Mike joined the RIAA in January 1966 and was soon active on several professional committees, task groups and awards panels.

Croudace commenced work with Mervyn Parry (1913-2006) and Ken Rosenthal (1923-2008) at Parry & Rosenthal Architects in 1969, bringing new directions and ways of practice. In 1970 Parry & Rosenthal's (P&R) design of the James Hardie & Co factory at Rutland Avenue Welshpool received a RIAA award citation, and P&R were the recipient of the 1973 RIAA Bronze Medal for the Lake Karrinyup Country Club clubhouse, a project of which the practice was extremely proud.



New clubhouse for Lake Karrinyup Country Club (photo SLWA 327522PD; plan *The Architect*, 1974-1, p.27).

Croudace introduced many new commercial clients to Parry & Rosenthal, with his established ability to identify and assess the development potential of a site and to negotiate with the planning authorities to secure development approvals. Michael first applied this approach to a series of highly successful multi-residential apartment developments. Examples are the Queen Street Apartments and Swan Street Terraces, both in South Perth, Mount Street Apartments in Perth, the Quarterdeck in Crawley, and several projects on the beach front in Cottesloe and on the river at Nedlands.



Townhouse development Wingfield Avenue Crawley (*The Architect*, 1979-4, p.17).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, when tourism was gaining momentum in WA, Michael recognized the need for much improved facilities for resorts and recreation. World class golf courses, marinas, coastal resorts and hotels all attracted his attention when he undertook an overseas study tour. Many of the ideas applied successfully abroad were introduced by him to prospective developers in Perth and resulted in new and exciting projects. New golf courses and residential developments at Mandurah and Bunbury, resort hotels at Mandurah, and the redevelopment of the Esplanade Hotel at Fremantle, are enduring examples of his comprehensive design approach.

As the practice of Parry & Rosenthal grew, Mike's design skills were applied to a range of larger scale development projects often requiring input from other disciplines. Consequently, in the late 1970s Michael established Planning Collaborative along with planners John Chapman and Mike Glendinning, a multi-disciplined group including statutory planning and financial modelling which, together with architecture, offered a coordinated approach to the planning of larger more complex projects.



Parry & Rosenthal designed offices: Prudential Assurance Building, located on a prominent intersection at the corner of Bagot Road and Thomas Street in Subiaco, also housed the practice for a period in the 1970s (c.1972, SLWA 327085PD); and in the 1980s the practice was at 15-17 Altona Street, West Perth (1994 as Local Government House, SLWA 316105PD).

With Mervyn Parry and Ken Rosenthal comfortably retired, by the mid 1980s Mike was the senior partner of the architectural practice, supported by Graham Whitley and Chris Hardy; associates were Max Dunne (who moved to Queensland to guide P&R resort projects), Barrie Rae, and Gus Connor.



66 St George's Terrace, Perth, April 1991 (Fritz Kos, SLWA 222625PD).

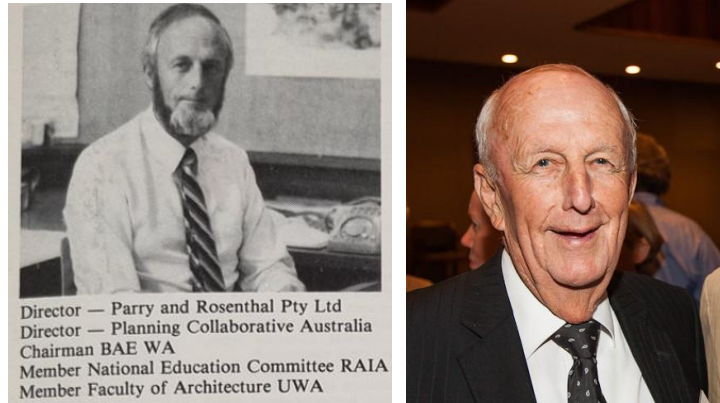
When WA's economy expanded in the 1980s and 1990s the capital city also grew with new towers and other office developments. Michael was the lead architect for two office towers in St George's Terrace at Perth, and many smaller boutique buildings in West Perth and Subiaco. His design for the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry Headquarters at 180 Hay Street East Perth won a RAIA commercial design award in this period.



The P&R designed offices at 256 St George's Terrace Perth were carefully kept under Parliament House sight lines – planning rules that didn't seem to apply in 'WA Inc' times to the Harry Seidler designed QV1 office tower behind it ! (Google 2024).

Paul Rossen, long-term architect and eventual practice director at Parry & Rosenthal, wrote in an obituary for Mike that: *With an eye to the future of the office and the profession, Michael always encouraged younger professionals to excel, to take responsibility, and to take the reins, encouraging them to be involved at all levels in the community and in the profession of architecture. Michael retired in the late 1990s but remained a friend and mentor to Parry & Rosenthal Architects. He was always available and generous with his time, advice, and mentorship. He was proud of the practice and rightly saw it as a lasting legacy. Michael's approach to architecture was always well conceived, imaginative, and well-mannered in its contribution to the built environment. He loved to use local limestone and timber as building materials, with well-proportioned and crafted buildings that brought functionality and delight.*

Mike Croudace became a member of the Architects Board of Western Australia in 1970, and was chair of the Board from 1976 to 1979. His professional qualities were recognized over time by the conferring of honorific titles: Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and as an active member of the RAIA, Associate of the RAIA, Fellow of the RAIA, and Life Fellow of the RAIA in 1991. In 1992 he received the Architects Board of WA award for his wider contributions to the profession and community at large.



Mike Croudace in 1984 (*The Architect*, 1984-4, p.27); and at an ABWA certificate presentation evening in 2014 (John Taylor).

Michael Croudace died at Claremont on 7 March 2022 aged 82 years, survived by wife Sue, children Ben, Julian and Serena, and their children. Mike's father Tom had died in 1971 at Nedlands aged 66 years, and Barbara passed away in 1989 at Nedlands aged 80 years.

References:

'Weddings', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 March 1933, p.7 (Thomas Croudace and Barbara Bowker at Christ Church Toronto).

'Births', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 4 January 1936, p.8 (daughter 20 Dec 1935 at Muswellbrook).

'House Hunting', *Daily Telegraph*, 30 May 1936, p.9 (at Aberdare, daughter Jennifer).

'Births', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 February 1940, p.8 (at Cessnock).

'Personal', *Cessnock Eagle and South Maitland Recorder*, 27 February 1940, p.3 (birth of a son).

'Coalmining Manager', *The West Australian*, 4 February 1950, p.8 (Western Collieries Appt).

'Board and Residence', *The West Australian*, 12 August 1950, p.31 (14yo girl St Hilda's, 16 Hutton Street Collie).

'New Clubhouse, Lake Karrynup Country Club', *The Architect*, 1974-1, pp.25-27.

'Townhouse Development, Mounts Bay Road Crawley', *The Architect*, 1979-4, pp.16-17.

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'Winner of the 1992 Architects Board Award', BOMA WA News, June 1992, p.6.

Paul Rossen, 'VALE Thomas Michael Croudace LFRAIA', *The Architect*, Homes Edition 2022, pp.98-99.

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