

## Place No. 12 Dalgety House (fmr)



Dalgety House (fmr), Roebourne

LOCATION	
Name of Place	<b>Dalgety House (fmr)</b>
Other Name (1)	Yinjaa-Barni Art Centre
Other Name (2)	Dalgety & Co Store (fmr)
Location/Address	
Street Number	48
Street Name	Roe Street
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	mE515237 mN 7702755 Longitude: 117.1464 Latitude: -20.7749

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Shire of Roebourne				
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.
	Lot 3	P528	1390/918	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	13254
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	Yes
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	No
<b>Management Category</b>	<b>A</b>

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	c.1889
Construction Date (2)	1865
Site Type (Place Type)	Individual Building or Group Historic Site
<b>Use(s) of Place</b>	

<i>Original</i>	COMMERCIAL: Shop/Retail Store (single) Warehouse RESIDENTIAL: Single story residence
<i>Present</i>	SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL: Other – Aboriginal Art Centre
<i>Other</i>	
<b>Construction Materials:</b>	
<i>Walls</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated Iron 11. TIMBER 1199 Other Timer
<i>Roof</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated Iron
<i>Other</i>	9. STONE 904 Local Stone
Condition	Fair
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Moderate
<b>Physical Description</b>	
<p>Dalgety House is a single story timber-framed building clad with corrugated iron, in the North-West vernacular style. The building has an 'L' shaped floor plan surrounded by a deep open verandah, partially enclosed on the northern and western sides of the building. The verandah has timber balustrades, and timber stairs leading up to it. The prominent timber-framed hipped roof is clad in corrugated iron sheets fitted with timber cyclone battens.<sup>1</sup></p>	
<b>History</b>	
<p>Dalgety House is situated on a portion of Lot 1, which was owned by John Withnell in 1866. Evidence suggests that even before the official land grant in 1865, Withnell had built a stone storehouse on the banks of the Harding River, and this building was likely on the site now occupied by Dalgety House (fmr). The existing stone cellar of Dalgety House may be part of Withnell's original 1865 building. Documentary evidence shows that the site has consistently been occupied by a store from 1865.</p> <p>From 1870, Withnell's stone store was leased to McRae &amp; Co and Fauntleroy. Kathy de la Rue writes that they were the 'first company to establish a successful store in the North West.'<sup>2</sup></p> <p>McRae &amp; Co was established by Farquhar McRae from the McRae family, who were amongst the earliest settlers in Roebourne. According to Kay Forrest, the McRaes built the first store in Cossack to store freight for the settlers, resulting in most of the settlers owing them money.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>In 1872, Roebourne was hit by a destructive cyclone which all but destroyed the town. Nancy Withnell Taylor notes that the store that John Withnell built of stone, clay and cement with a thatched roof, and rented to McRae &amp; Co and Fauntleroy, 'had lost its roof and part of the wall had fallen.' She goes on, 'stock in the building, valued at around £1000, was destroyed. Some was seen floating down the main Street of the town.' She quoted McRae who wrote to his parents:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">'...we were just getting established in a very good business, backed by a very good house on the Swan...we have made far too liberal advances on wool and pearl shell, the greater part of the wool in the district being consigned to us in a season.'<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Withnell rebuilt the store after the 1872 cyclone and McRae &amp; Co continued to operate the store for another twelve years.<sup>5</sup> By 1884 McRae &amp; Co had been bought by the North West Mercantile Co, who had stores at both Roebourne and Cossack.<sup>6</sup> The North West Mercantile Co. continued operating from the store that had been rebuilt in by Withnell 1872.</p> <p>In November 1888 a fire destroyed the store. It was rebuilt in c1889 as the jarrah and iron roofed building that is now on the site.<sup>7</sup></p>	

In 1892, William Dalgety Moore, partner of the North West Mercantile Co., bought the site from John Withnell. At this time, evidence shows that F.W. Teesdale resided in the building on this site and managed a store from here from 1891-1901.<sup>8</sup> It seems that the North West Mercantile Co. store ceased operating from this location in 1891. Teesdale purchased the property from Moore in 1899.<sup>9</sup>

In 1901, Dalgety & Co. bought out Teesdale, purchasing the property, store and stock.<sup>10</sup> Teesdale wrote in a letter at the time that the land was 'in a first class position in the main street next to Union Bank opposite Tramsheds.'<sup>11</sup> The land included the store and dwelling house, and six buildings with four store stables, leased to tenants, an unoccupied Blacksmith's shop and a Chemist's shop that Teesdale had recently erected.

Dalgety & Co was established in 1854 in the UK with branches in Australia and New Zealand. The company provided a wool brokerage service and was a stock, station and shipping agent. Dalgety's monopolised the financing, production and marketing of rural produce throughout rural Australia. When the Singapore shipping agency began to operate a direct line from Cossack to Singapore, it became viable for Dalgety's to open a branch in Roebourne.<sup>12</sup> The argument for opening a branch of Dalgety's in the Roebourne district strengthened with the news that a port at Point Samson was to be established without the need for lighterage to get cargo onto the ship, as was the case at Cossack.<sup>13</sup>

Dalgety's opened in Roebourne in March 1901, with Teesdale continuing on as manager. Dalgety's also purchased Galbraith's store at Cossack.<sup>14</sup> Soon after, Dalgety's took over the Singapore shipping agency from Cossack.<sup>15</sup>

At around the same time, Dalgety's was also preparing to open a branch in Port Hedland, attracted by the prospect of the railway line being constructed from Marble Bar to Port Hedland; this was eventually completed in 1911.<sup>16</sup>

By 1927 Dalgety's business had expanded to such an extent that it had produced a record wool clip of 176,000 bales. However, the town of Roebourne was in decline by the late 1920s, with the pearling industry of Cossack eclipsed by Broome's and the railway to Port Hedland resulting in that town's increasing importance.

The depression followed by drought and by the outbreak of World War Two resulted in 'banks and stock firms put heavy pressure on the struggling pastoralists, many of whom, because of poor pastures and low lambings, were facing bankruptcy.'<sup>17</sup>

Dalgety's continued to operate in Roebourne until the mid-1980s. From 1987 to 2000 the property had several private owners. In 2000 Dalgety House was purchased by the Shire of Roebourne, 'to preserve the historic property for Roebourne Shire residents.'<sup>18</sup>

It is now occupied by Yinjaa-Barni Art Group.

### **Archaeology**

There is the potential for archaeology at this site, especially in relation to locating evidence of Withnell's original stone store.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

<b>Historic theme (s)</b>	<p>1.DEMOGRAPHIC SETTLEMENT &amp; MOBILITY 104 Land allocation &amp; subdivision 107 Settlements</p> <p>3.OCCUPATIONS 301 Grazing, pastoralism &amp; dairying 307 Intellectual activities, arts &amp; crafts 308 Commercial &amp; service industries 311 Hospitality industry &amp; tourism</p> <p>5. OUTSIDE INFLUENCES 503 Natural disasters</p> <p>6. PEOPLE 601 Aboriginal people</p>
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<b>Statement of Significance:</b>	<p>Dalgety House is significant as an example of a residence displaying the characteristic North-West Vernacular style, which has been designed, built and adapted to address the regional climatic demands. It is an uncommon example in Roebourne, and the North West more generally, of a mostly intact residence from the late nineteenth century.</p> <p>Dalgety House is a landmark defining the southern end of Roe Street, the town's main street, and makes a positive contribution to the streetscape.</p> <p>Dalgety House demonstrates the expansion of Roebourne in the late nineteenth century due to pastoral settlement in the region.</p> <p>Dalgety House has associations with Dalgety &amp; Co. and thus provides a reminder of the early development of the region. Dalgety's personnel based in the region provided essential shipping, stock and merchandise to the northwest, which were all necessary for the development of the pastoral and mining industries.</p> <p>Until recently, the front yard of Dalgety House featured a Tamarind tree which was highly valued by the Indigenous population in Roebourne.</p> <p>Dalgety House is valued by the community of Roebourne, as evidenced by the reuse of the property as a community arts centre.</p>
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<b>ASSOCIATIONS</b>	
Architect/Designer (1)	
Architect/Designer (2)	
Other Associated Person(s)	<p>John Withnell Farquhar McRae Fauntleroy William Dalgety Moore F.W. Teesdale Ngarluma community Yindjibarndi community Dalgety and Co.</p>

<b>References</b>	<p>See endnotes. 'Register of Heritage Places – Assessment Documentation Dalgety House, Roebourne', Permanent Entry on the State Register of Heritage Places, Heritage Council of Western Australia, 11 August 2009.</p>
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MHI - 1996	Assessment undertaken, Place Record Form created
MHI Review - 2012	Entry updated

- <sup>1</sup> *Dalgety House Conservation Plan*, Toland Architectural Design Partners, June 2011
- <sup>2</sup> Kathy de la Rue, *Pearl Shell and Pastures*, Cossack Project Committee, 1979, p 23
- <sup>3</sup> Forrest, K. 1996, *The Challenge and the Chance: The Colonisation and Settlement of North West Australia 1861-1914*, Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, p 161
- <sup>4</sup> Withnell Taylor, N. 2002, *Yeera-Muk-A-Doo: A saga of the North West*, Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, p 161. Alex McRae letter 19 May 1872, 386A, Batty Library.
- <sup>5</sup> Withnell Taylor, N. 2002, p 161.
- <sup>6</sup> *West Australian*, 23 October 1884, p 3
- <sup>7</sup> 'Disastrous Fire at Roebourne', *West Australian*, 27 November 1888, p 3.
- <sup>8</sup> Letter and plan of site from F.W. Teesdale to F. Wittenoom, Roebourne 6 Feb 1901, Dalgety Archives, Noel Butlin Archives, Australian National University, Z153/43
- <sup>9</sup> Landgate property title information, Vol 46, Folio 33.
- <sup>10</sup> Letter and plan of site from F.W. Teesdale
- <sup>11</sup> Letter and plan of site from F.W. Teesdale
- <sup>12</sup> A.G. Leeds, Dalgety's Fremantle Manager to Dalgety's Company Secretary, London, 19 October 1900. Dalgety Archives, Noel Butlin Archives, Australian National University, N8/95.
- <sup>13</sup> F.F. B. Wittenoom, Manager and General Superintendent for WA, 21 Dec 1900. Dalgety Archives, Noel Butlin Archives, Australian National University, N8/95.
- <sup>14</sup> Dalgety House Port Hedland, Conservation Plan, Bruce Callow & Associates, August 1998.
- <sup>15</sup> F.F. B. Wittenoom.
- <sup>16</sup> Gregory, J. and J. Gothard (eds) 2009, *Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia*, UWA Press, Crawley, WA, p 692
- <sup>17</sup> Hardie, J. 1988, *Nor-Westers of the Pilbara Breed*, Victoria Park, WA. Hesperian Press, p 230-231
- <sup>18</sup> Ann-Marie McCann, 'Council had to move fast on purchase', *North West Telegraph*, 31 May, 2000, p 4