



Duncan Henry Inverarity

(courtesy Max Inverarity)

Duncan Henry Inverarity (1863-1941) was born at Digby in western Victoria, the third and youngest child of rural doctor Robert Henry Inverarity and Mary Anne Street. Duncan's father died when he was three years old, and his remaining family may have subsequently moved to NSW.

Duncan was made an associate member of the NSW Institute of Architects in 1884. As his name does not appear in newspapers of the 1880s, we can assume Inverarity was working for an architectural practice and gaining further experience. This is partially confirmed by an 1896 article in *The West Australian*, where it was noted with 'two years architectural study in Europe and America', Inverarity was also 'fortunate in having had experience in ecclesiastical architecture in the office of the late E.T. Blacket, of Sydney, an acknowledged specialist in this branch of the profession'.

With economic recession impacting on the east coast in the early 1890s, Inverarity moved to gold boom Western Australia around 1896, and entered into partnership with William Haughton Bell, who had also previously been engaged in Blacket's office, in July 1896. A public notice in *The West Australian* of August 1896 informed that the firm had been expanded to include Harry Whitfield Mills, 'Licensed Surveyor and Civil Engineer (late of the Public Works Department)', as 'Mills, Bell and Inverarity'.

The services of trio were described: '*They undertake all descriptions of Building, Civil Engineering and Surveying Work*'. Prospects must have been bright, as in

October 1896 the firm was advertising to secure an articled pupil. However, the partnership was dissolved in March 1897, with Bell leaving. Mills and Inverarity then seem to have focussed on engineering works.

Tender notices in *The West Australian* in May 1900 note Mills and Inverarity as civil engineers organising road works for the Belmont Roads Board. This type of consulting work appears to have eventually caused Inverarity great distress, as in December 1900 he took the Bayswater Roads Board to court over unpaid fees, only to lose the case, and find the very substantial counter-claim of £100 by the Board was awarded against him.

In 1901 Inverarity was still advertising as both architect and civil engineer, and the lack of tender notices for new buildings indicates that he took on more engineering consulting work than he did architectural design projects at this time. Around 1902 Inverarity began acting as the Council Surveyor for the South Perth area. In September 1903, Council resolved to 'build offices at once at a cost not exceeding £200', as the Council offices and meetings had previously been located, with some difficulties, at the local Mechanics' Institute Hall. In November 1903, plans were submitted by Inverarity as architect for the project, and within three weeks tenders had been called and received. The foundation stone for the new Council offices was laid on 9 June 1904, with the first meeting held in the building the following November.

Inverarity's architectural tender notices from 1904 to 1909 indicate he was only securing small-scale, low-value projects. WA had suffered a downturn in the building industry at this time. It was reported that at Perth city in 1901-02 the value of new building permits was £250,000; in 1902-03, £321,000; 1903-04, £357,000; 1904-05 £315,000; 1905-06, £214,000; 1906-07, £174,000; 1907-08, £75,000; and a major reversal of fortune did not really occur until after 1910. It is not entirely clear why the Inveraritys departed their city home at South Perth, but Duncan may have needed to seek 'greener pastures' for his young family, and he moved into farming at Kellerberrin around 1910. Family sources suggest another Perth architect Edgar J. Henderson also took up property in the Kellerberrin area at this time.

The *Architects Act of Western Australia 1921* received formal assent in 1922, and Inverarity duly registered with the Architects Board of WA in October 1923.

This allowed Duncan to continue to offer his services to associated entities during his farming days, and at the age of 62 he was the architect of new premises for the Kellerberrin Farmers Co-op Company Ltd in 1925.

Inverarity eventually retired from farming, and died at his 80 Suburban Road (now Mill Point Road), South Perth residence on 21 September 1941, aged 78 years. Duncan Inverarity had married Victoria Cowen in 1897, and she lived on till 1958. They had three children, a son Rollo born in 1898, and daughters Muriel in 1907 and Pattie in 1910, all born at South Perth.

References:

- 'General quarterly meeting', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 September 1884, p.7 (IANSW).
- 'Business Announcements', *The West Australian*, 25 July 1896, pp.3,6 (Bell & Inverarity).
- 'Public Notices', *The West Australian*, 10 August 1896, p.8 (Mills, Bell & Inverarity form).
- 'Situations Vacant', *The West Australian*, 15 October 1896, p.8 (Mills, Bell and Inverarity seeking articulated pupil in architecture and land surveying).
- 'Business', *The West Australian*, 3 November 1896, p.1 (Mills, Bell & Inverarity move to Austral Chambers, Barrack Street, Perth).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 23 February 1897, p.6 (2 shops & dwellings Marquis Street, West Perth for Miss Spratt).
- 'Partnerships', *The West Australian*, 8 March 1897, p.6 (Mills, Bell & Inverarity dissolve).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 20 February 1899, p.1 (well at Bayswater for Ben Copley).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 20 April 1900, p.1 (road work for Belmont Roads Board).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 12 May 1900, p.1 (road work for Belmont Roads Board).
- 'The Bayswater Roads Board Dispute', *The West Australian*, 11 December 1900, p.7.
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 16 January 1901, p.1 (additions consisting of 2 shops, Old Guildford Road for G.S.B. Pickett).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 2 March 1901, p.11 (2 cottages Bulwer Street, Perth for James Daley).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 2 December 1901, p.1 (brick cottage Tiverton Street off Beaufort Street, Perth for C.A. Foreman).
- 'Lost Brooch', *The West Australian*, 13 October 1902, p.1 (Mrs Inverarity South Perth).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 27 January 1904, p.2 (4 brick residences Chatsworth Road, Highgate Hill for W.J. Hayes).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 18 March 1904, p.2 (offices for the South Perth Municipality).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 25 March 1904, p.1 (villa Stirling Street, Perth).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 13 April 1904, p.2 (2 brick residences Charles Street, Perth for C.H. Braddock).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 12 May 1904, p.1 (brick villa South Perth for F.M. Stone).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 20 May 1904, p.1 (1st portion of brick and stone Baptist Church at North Perth; additions to cottage Judd Street, South Perth).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 6 January 1905, p.2 (painting Windsor Hotel & Villa South Perth).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 13 February 1905, p.5 (3 villas North Fremantle).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 8 April 1905, p.3 (2 brick cottages, Bayswater).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 13 September 1905, p.2 (2 shops & residences Mends Street, South Perth for F.M. Stone).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 20 October 1905, p.3 (brick billiard room at Mechanics' Institute South Perth).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 1 December 1905, p.1 (2-storey factory buildings near West Perth Station for D. Domenech).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 9 April 1906, p.7 (2 storey & cellar additions to shop, cnr Lake & James Street, Perth for B. Roberto).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 9 April 1907, p.1 (weatherboard cottage Maylands).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 15 July 1907, p.1 (brick cottage Mundaring for T. Coombe).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 4 June 1909, p.3 (brick residence, Churchill Avenue, Subiaco).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 3 March 1910, p.1 (alterations cottages, South Perth).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 6 May 1911, p.7 (shearing shed, Cuttening for J. Deane Hammond – plans also shown at William Nelson's office in Perth).

'Artisan Labour', *The West Australian*, 28 September 1911, p.7 (new building values annually).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 21 September 1912, p.6 (brick and stone rectory Kellerberrin for Anglican Church Vestry).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 5 October 1912, p.7 (brick and stone Agricultural Hall, Doodlakine).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 6 August 1913, p.4 (brick and stone Agricultural Hall, Doodlakine – plans also shown at William Nelson's office in Perth).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 5 June 1918, p.4 (stone Agricultural Hall, Doodlakine).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 11 February 1925, p.12 (premises Kellerberrin Farmers Co-op).

'Deaths', *The West Australian*, 22 September 1941, p.1.

HCWA Place No: 02393 Name: Old Council Offices, 111 Mill Point Rd, South Perth.

HCWA Place No: 01367 Name: Old Anglican Manse (fmr), 61 James Street, Kellerberrin.

HCWA Place No: 06117 Name: Terrace of 4 Houses, 47, 49, 51, 53 Chatsworth Rd, Highgate.

<http://www.swvic.org/digby/family/inverarity.htm> accessed 17 April 2012.

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1904 offices for the Municipality, Mill Point Road, South Perth (HCWA Pic578).



1913 Anglican Rectory (fmr), 61 James Street, Kellerberrin (Google 2012).