

Marie Jackson-Harding
(*The Record*, 25 Dec 1941, p.9)

Marie Therese Jackson (1916-1993) was born 3 November 1916 at 142 Chelmsford Road, North Perth; daughter of Robert Thomas Jackson (1876-1930) and Mary Josephine McCann (1877-1965). Marie was educated to the Leaving Standard at Loreto Convent School, Claremont and commenced an Arts degree at the University of Western Australia (UWA) before deciding on architecture as a career. She became articled to prominent Perth architect Reginald Summerhayes (1897-1965) from 3 January 1937 for around 3 years. Reg Summerhayes' designs at Loreto Claremont were built in 1937; family memory suggests Jackson's involvement with this project and later guidance work for the school's successor founded in 1977, John XXIII College.

Sadly, in April 1939 Marie Jackson, her friend Zoie Bennett and many others from the architectural profession in Western Australia attended the Karrakatta funeral of Alfred R.L. Wright (1861-1939), Architects' Board chair and mentor to many young architects. It is possible that Jackson was considering sitting examinations for registration as an architect at this time, as family records contain examples of Board examination drawings for the period.

The Clontarf Chapel was designed by Marie Jackson in 1940, after she had been introduced to the superior, Christian Brother Paul Francis Keaney. This fine chapel was quite an achievement for such a young architect. Early in 1941 Jackson joined the staff of the Public Works Department (PWD), where she worked during at least a portion of the Second World War. There is also a war service record for Marie in the National Archives of Australia, indicating further employ during the war, but these details are not available on the internet as yet. As an indication of her status amongst her confreres, at the annual "T-Square Ball" hosted by the Architectural Students' Association of WA in May 1946, from

the Association Marie Jackson and John D. Mercer (1923-1988) were appointed to receive the Lieutenant-Governor Sir James Mitchell and Lady Mitchell at the Embassy Ballroom. Jackson was President of the Architectural Students' Association in 1947.

With the disruption of the Second World War slowing the potential studies of both men and women, just six females were registered as architects in Western Australia in the first half of the Twentieth Century, with Marie Jackson being the sixth female registrant - no. 200 in February 1949. Marie followed Margaret Pitt Morison (Oct 1924, no.102 & Aug 1929, no.129), Nancy Allen (Dec 1932, no.138), Dorothea Hancock (Dec 1932, no.139); Zoie Bennett-Fryer (Dec 1933, no.142), and Margaret Feilman (Dec 1945, no.176). Jackson remained a registered architect in WA from 1949 until at least 1968.

Marie married engineer Lewis Ronald Harding (1917-2008) in 1947. Lew Harding eventually became the chief structural engineer in the Architectural Division at the PWD. Marie designed the family residence at 55 Waratah Avenue, on the corner of Curlew Road in Dalkeith during 1950, and it was built in 1951. The couple had children: Michael 1950 stillborn, 1951 Peter, 1953 Roger (completed a Bachelor of Architecture degree at UWA), and in 1955 John. Perhaps with the assistance of family that she was raising at the time, a greater record of Marie Jackson-Harding's work from the 1950s onward remains to be documented. Marie died at Dalkeith 13 March 1993, aged 76 years. Lewis lived on to 91 years, and passed away at Dalkeith in 2008.

References:

'His Grace Opens New Chapel', *The Record*, 25 Dec 1941, pp.9, 11, 12.

'T-Square ball', *The West Australian*, 28 May 1946, p.7 (details of attendees, dress of Jackson).

'Architects Dance at the Embassy', *The West Australian*, 29 May 1947, p.13 (President ASA).

Heritage Council of Western Australia, Register of Heritage Places assessment documentation for Clontarf, accessed 25 March 2014 at <http://inherit.stateheritage.wa.gov.au/public>
Meeting with Roger Harding, 25 March 2014, at 55 Waratah Avenue Dalkeith.

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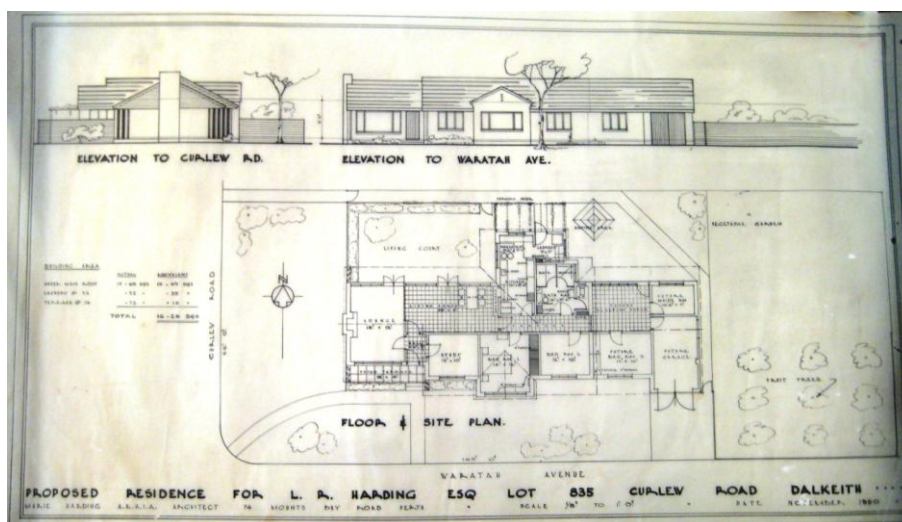
Taylor, Dr John J., 'Marie Therese Jackson-Harding (1916-1993)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.architecture.com.au/> accessed DATE.



Exterior of Clontarf Chapel of 1941 (*The Record*, 25 Dec 1941, p.12).



Interior of Clontarf Chapel of 1941 (*The Record*, 25 Dec 1941, p.11).



Residence 55 Waratah Avenue cnr Curlew Road Dalkeith 1950 (courtesy Roger Harding).