WITHNELL HOUSE
68 Guildford Road, Mount Lawley W.A.

20 Sept. 1952   This property is the first *Salvation Army* YOUTH HOSTEL in Western Australia. It was officially opened by the Governor, Sir Charles Gairdner K.C.M.G.-K.C.V.O.-C.B.-C.B.F.-K.ST.J. *(as recorded in the History Book).*

(Note: The original Opening Plaque has disappeared?)

Prior to opening as a Youth Hostel, **Withnell House** operated as an Annexe to *The Salvation Army* Nedlands Boys Home, *(formerly West Subiaco Boy's Home)* under the management of Captain David Capes. This Nedlands Boy's Home was located on the site of Hollywood Senior Citizen's Village.

1948   Due to the loss of early records, I can only guess that this Annexe commenced around 1948 when the property was donated to *The Salvation Army* by Ellen Withnell a few weeks before her death, in memory of her husband **James Aubrey Withnell.** (See attached family history).

18 Aug. 1952   Prior to the Official Opening, Captain & Mrs. Colin Knop arrived with their two children, Margaret & Bernie to take up residence as Officers-in-Charge. Their previous appointment being at Box Hill Boys Home in Victoria.

26 Sept. 1952   Captain Minnie Dore arrives as Assistant to Captain & Mrs. Knop. Her previous appointment being at the Nedlands Boys Home.

During this time, painting and refurbishment took place with the kind assistance of Brigadier & Mrs. Archie Burtenshaw *(State Men's Social Services Secretary)*, and Colonel & Mrs. Percival Dale *(Territorial Men's Social Secretary).*

1960's   During the 1960's *The Salvation Army* operated four main Centres for Children and Youth Services in Western Australia. (Note: There were a few other Homes as in Maylands etc.)

(1.) **Withnell House** 68 Guildford Road, Mt. Lawley (Opened 1948 - Closed as a Youth
>   Home 1993). It then Opened as "Tanderra Hostel" for men.
>   The boys were transferred to Crossroads West Programme which began
>   in 1987, and they moved into "Oasis House."

(2.) Cottesloe Girl's Home 15 Broome Street, Cottesloe (Opened 1919 - Closed 1969).
>   The girls were transferred to Hollywood Children's Village which in
>   1965 had been re-named from Nedlands Boy's Home.

(3.) Seaforth Children's Home 2498 Albany Hwy. Gosnells (Opened 1920's - Closed 1960's)
>   The children were transferred to the new Hollywood Children's Village.

(4.) Nedlands Boy's Home became "Hollywood Children's Village during the 1960's and
>   Closed 1987 as Crossroads West came into service.

In order to improve services it was decided to amalgamate children's residences onto the Hollywood site and construct a Children's Village. And so began openings of ...

(1.) **1965**   BRAND HOUSE Opened

(2.) **1966**   PIED PIPER COTTAGE Opened

(3.) **1969**   BUCKINGHAM COTTAGE Opened

(4.) **1970**   **WITHNELL COTTAGE** Opened 25 January, by Comm. Frederick Harvey

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The Opening of **Withnell Cottage** as reported in *The WAR CRY 14 February 1970*, was attended by Captain Harold Sanders, the Manager of this Hollywood Children's Village. Other guests included the Advisory Board Chairman, Sir Eric Sandover & Lady Sandover. Also attending was the Mayor of Nedlands Councilor, Charles Smith & Mrs. Smith. The architect, Mr. John Fitzhardinge, presented the key to Commissioner Harvey. The new State Men's Social Secretary, Brigadier Kowlick, presided over the Ceremony. Note: *A photograph of this Opening is in our Heritage Museum.*

1997 Three of the above building were demolished to construct the Warrina Dementia Centre.

1996 to 2000 *The Salvation Army* Historical Society stored their memorabilia in **Withnell** until they moved into their own Heritage Museum in Divisional Headquarters .

2005 Only **WITHNELL COTTAGE** remains, as of (March 2005) as the Village Library, Jumble Storage and also a portion as a general Meeting Place.

Historical facts are sometimes mixed with historical mystery, and so we are only able to speculate on some matters. For example...

WITHNELL "COTTAGE" in Hollywood Village, has many times and by many people been often called **"Cottesloe Cottage"**. The reason put forward is that the original Cottesloe Girls had moved into **Withnell,** and just continued to call it the name they were used to.... "Cottelsoe Cottage."

However, the name **"WITHNELL"**, being on the Opening Plaque, was borrowed from the original **Withnell House** in Mount Lawley which only housed boys! As the Mount Lawley property was a "Youth Hostel," *The Salvation Army* wanted to preserve the **"WITHNELL"** name in Children's Services by incorporating it in this new Children's Cottage.

It's worth noting that the *Salvation Army* Children's Services began in 1899 when the Collie Settlement was opened. Children ranged from tiny tots to teenagers, and included orphans, reformatory boys and the intellectually disabled. This closed in 1920 as more appropriate services were to be employed.

The Salvation Army relinquished responsibility for these reformatory boys in the early 1960's as Government agencies became more involved. I believe Riverbank and Longmore were constructed during this time? *(more research.)*

Tiny Tots were also phased out, as large scale institutions closed in order to provide a more home-like atmosphere in fostering with individual families.

The intellectually disabled boys from Collie moved to Seaforth, where they lived until old age. The last of these men died in the 1980's as *The Salvation Army* slowly phased out this service to men by not accepting any more disabled youngsters. Again, community advances dictated changes.

The age of children in our care increased from about the 1950's, to teens and young folk to age 25. Today, *The Salvation Army* Crossroads West Programme is involved in this ministry.

*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *There is one more page...*

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WITHNELL FAMILY

(by Bill Booth - The Salvation Army Historical Society - March 2005)

The land at 68 Guildford Road is an original land-grant of 1829 provided to William Withnell. This is the year the Swan River Colony was founded, and he was among the first pioneers. It is his grandson, **James Aubrey Withnell, after whom Withnell House is named. But it was his wife Ellen who actually donated the property to** *The Salvation Army,* **after his death, because it was his desire.**

In the beginning, Grandfather William Withnell arrived in the *Swan River Colony* from England with his toddler son John. He took up farming in the York district. As John grew older, he met Emma Hancock whose family had arrived in 1829 on the good ship, *Parmelia* as the first pioneers to arrive in *The Swan River Colony. Emma* was born in Beverley in 1842. John met and married Emma in 1859. Four years later in 1863, and with two babies, they set off to pioneer the North-West of Western Australia, making Emma the first *white* woman there.

They charted a sailing ship the *Sea Ripple,* loaded 1,000 sheep, 12 horses and 6 cows among other necessities. Sailing out of Fremantle, it took a month to reach what is today, Cossack. They set anchor, unloaded stores and animals one at a time into a small boat, and rowed to an unknown shore. Only 86 sheep, 1 horse and 1 cow survived.

That first night, they boiled the billy and made damper under the stars. Exhausted, they soon fell asleep. By morning a storm arose, and their stores on the beach were washed out to sea. Salvaging leftovers, they built a 'home' of mud bats and spinifex. The family grew to ten children. Among them was **James Aubrey Withnell** who was born in 1869 at *Mount Welcome Station* in the very first house of what later was named the town of *Roebourne.*

This Station was not very productive, so John and Emma, along with their ten children walked on to the *Shirlock River.* There they found better pasture and water. Wanting to improve his land holdings, he went on to *Mallina.* In 1888 their son James, aged 19 stumbled upon a large stone that he was about to throw at a crow, when he saw a glint of gold and the crow received a reprieve. This might be the origin of that famous Aussie saying... *"Stone the crows"?* This was also the beginning of the Pilbarra gold rush.

The growing family struggled, worked hard, prospered and survived. However, discouraged by a succession of bad years, **James** walked off Mallina Station in the 1890's and came south to prospect for gold in the Kalgoorlie District.

After a number of years this did not prove bountiful, and he went north again to join his mother and brother at *Karratha Station.* **James** later sold out his share and took over *Dirk Hartog Station.* Later he bought *Mardie Station* and also *Edjudina Station.*

No other family established more Stations in the North-West than the Withnells. *Mount Welcome, Sherlock, Mallina, Karratha, Dirk Hartog, Chirrita, Mardie and Edjudina* - these represented a vast area of Western Australia opened and developed by one family.

Around 1910 Frank & Ellen came to live in Perth. Frank died in 1936 aged 67. His widow Ellen lived another 12 years and died in 1948. *(Note: these are approximate dates).* Several weeks before her death, Ellen gave the gold nugget to the Perth Museum and donated **Withnell House** to *The Salvation Army.*

Although John & Emma Withnell had 10 children, their son and daughter-in-law **James & Ellen Withnell** had no children, and I have been unable to uncover any family association with *The Salvation Army?* But as reported in *The West Australian Newspaper 20 September 1952...* "His *(James Withnell)* is a fitting spirit to reside in this **Withnell Hostel** for teenage boys to be run by *The Salvation Army.* This property has been presented by his widow Mrs. Ellen Withnell, a partner in their pioneering days, as a memorial to her husband."

THE END!