

Harold Boas (27/9/1883–17/9/1980), an architect and town planner, was also prominent in civic and political affairs and within the Jewish congregation of Western Australia.

Boas was born in Adelaide and attended state primary school and then Whinham College, completing his final three years at Prince Alfred College. An interest in drawing prompted him to become an architect. He was indentured to the Adelaide architect Edward Davies between 1899 and 1904, at the same time completing subjects at the South Australian School of Mines and Industry. He spent a year as a draftsman in Davies' office before moving to Western Australia in 1905 where he went into private practice as an architect. Around 1907 he took over the practice of Austin Bastow in Perth and from 1912 to 1916 formed the partnership of Summerhayes and Boas with Edwin Summerhayes. In 1920 he continued the practice of the late Charles Oldham; in 1923 the firm became Oldham, Boas & Ednie-Brown when Colin Ednie-Brown joined. Commissions were varied and the practice designed churches and synagogues, social, educational and charitable buildings, and all classes of industrial, commercial, banking and insurance buildings.

Boas became interested in town planning when, in 1914, as a Perth City Councillor, he helped to organise a series of lectures by Charles Reade, a representative of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association of Great Britain. Boas extended his knowledge of garden cities when on overseas service during the First World War and on a later trip to the United Kingdom, Europe and North America in 1929. In 1928 he was appointed Chairman of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission that reported to the State government on planning matters. He then helped to create a Town Planning Committee within the Perth City Council and was Chairman of this Committee until 1942. Following the Second World War he prepared town planning schemes for several local government authorities, including the City of Fremantle. In 1970 he was appointed to a government committee to report on the development of the Perth railway and on the treatment of railway land.

He was prominent in both architecture and town planning institutes. He transferred his associateship of the South Australian Institute of Architects to the Western Australian Institute of Architects when he moved west. He was a member of the West Australian Chapter Council for some years. He was made a Life Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1943 and served on its Council including taking on a term as Vice-President. He was the first Secretary of the Town Planning Association of Western Australia (1914), foundation President of the first Planning Institute of Western Australia (1914), was elected a member of the Town Planning Institute of Great Britain and of the American Town Planning Institute (1929) and was the Australian representative at the International Town Planning and Housing Congress held in Rome in 1929. He was made a Life Fellow of the Royal Planning Institute of Australia, was elected a member of the Institute of Urban Studies and was granted the inaugural Silver Medal of the Australian Planning Institute of Western Australia when he retired from practice in 1974.

Active in conservative politics for many years, Boas unsuccessfully stood for the Legislative Council in 1932. He was on the Council of the City of Perth for 20 years from 1914; was first President of the United Nations' Association of Western Australia in 1948; was a foundation member of the Australian–American Association of WA and made an Honorary Life Member; was a member of the Chamber of Commerce from 1911, granted honorary life membership in 1975; was President of the Save the Children Fund from 1963 to 1972; and

BOAS, Harold COLLECTION
Architecture Museum, Adelaide University

was a Justice of the Peace from 1931. He was awarded an OBE in 1969 for service to town planning and to the Jewish community in Perth.

SOURCES

Harold Boas (1967) 'Bricks and Mortar', *Architecture in Australia*, February, 56, 1, pp.116-122.

Max Poole, 'Boas, Harold (1883 - 1980)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, copyright 2006, Australian National University

<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A130239b.htm>

Christine Garnaut, (2002) 'Harold Boas', in R. Aitken and M. Looker (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne. Published in association with the Australian Garden History Society.

Indenture and assorted papers related to Harold Boas and his work, Architecture Museum, University of South Australia.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The documents comprising the Harold Boas collection are of a biographical nature. They include documents from early in his career such as his indenture for his time as an articulated architectural pupil in 1899 and a reference for Boas from 1904. The collection also includes a curriculum vitae from 1975 and his reminiscences from 1965.

Series List

Series no.	Description
S201/1/1	Indenture for Harold Boas 14/2/1899
S201/1/2	Reference for Boas c.1904
S201/1/3	CV for Boas OBE, JP April 1975
S201/1/4	Reminiscences of Harold Boas, Perth, WA, 1965