

Heritage Citation



117 Dyson Avenue, Sunnybank

Key details

Addresses	At 117 Dyson Avenue, Sunnybank, Queensland 4109
Type of place	House
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L1_RP67014
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — September 2008
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

This interwar timber residence was built in the 1930s for James Fordyce and is one of only a few remaining substantial interwar residences in the area. In the 1940s an electrical business was established on the property which has continued to serve the local community. The house has remained in the Fordyce family.

History

This property was once part of the Brisbane Agricultural Reserve, an area of 7876 acres proclaimed by Sir George Bowen, Governor of Queensland, in 1861. This was later added to and in 1864 became the Eight Mile Plains Agricultural Reserve. The area, which covered the present day suburbs of Sunnybank, Sunnybank Hills, Runcorn, Kuraby, Eight Mile Plains and parts of Coopers Plains, Algester and Stretton, developed into an agricultural district of privately owned farms as settlers took up land grants which were later subdivided into smaller parcels of land. Produce in the area included a variety of crops such as pineapples, pawpaws, custard apples, avocados and vegetables. Plant nurseries, poultry farming and dairying also played a role in the history of the district.

The agricultural industry and population of the area were boosted by the opening of the railway line from Yeerongpilly to Beenleigh in 1885. This was the first section of the planned railway to Logan and the Gold Coast. The new railway provided transport for the agricultural produce of the district when stations opened at Coopers Plains, Sunnybank (although this station was originally named Eight Mile Plains), Runcorn and Kuraby in 1885. The station name of Sunnybank was derived from the nearby 'Sunny Brae Estate'. A formal stopping place was not provided at Banoon, between Coopers Plains and Sunnybank Stations on the Beenleigh line, until 1937.

James Francis Fordyce's property was part of the 32 acre Portion 177, sold to William Dyson by Deed of Grant in 1867 for £32. Dyson Avenue is presumably named for this early property owner. The land was sold several times and subdivided before 2 acres were acquired by Fordyce in 1923.

Postal records first list James Fordyce as a resident of Sunnybank in the 1924-25 directory. Electoral rolls for this period give his occupation as 'mill hand'. Mr Fordyce and his wife, Eliza Ann Fordyce, established their home on Beenleigh Road before building a second house in Dyson Avenue during the 1930s. The house, along with some sheds and a small commercial building which reportedly date from the 1940s, is situated on a parcel of land bounded by Dyson Avenue and the railway line to the north, and Stable Swamp Creek to the south.

Both the layout and the name of Dyson Avenue have changed since the 1920s when part of the street was a continuation of nearby Keats Street. This section, which is shown on a 1951 map of the area as Troughton Road, once continued south across a bridge over Stable Swamp Creek to intersect with Beenleigh Road. Dyson Road now terminates at the southern end at Stable Swamp Creek.

By the time the Fordyce family settled at Sunnybank, the suburb had developed significantly since the time of the opening of the railway through the district as had the neighbouring localities of Eight Mile Plains and Coopers Plains. By 1923-24, some 70 households are listed in the postal directory for Sunnybank. Many of these families were involved in dairy or poultry farming, fruit growing or other produce, including Chinese families who had

market gardens between Beenleigh Road and Keats Road in the swampy areas around Stable Swamp Creek. After the opening of the interstate railway to Kyogle in 1931, local produce could also be shipped by train to the southern states. Non-rural occupations at Sunnybank at this time reflected the usual necessary services of a developing township such as stationmaster, teacher, butcher, minister, and general store and post office. With the railway providing relatively cheap public transport to the city, residents were also able to commute to the city or elsewhere for employment. Local businesses, such as that later established by the Fordyce family, provided retail and other services to the local community.

The title of the Fordyce's property on Dyson Avenue passed to Allan James Fordyce, an electrical mechanic, during the late 1940s-1950s (subdivision 2 at the southern end in 1949 and the larger subdivision on which the present house stands in 1955). An auto electrical business was established on the property during the 1940s. The family business with its accompanying sheds is still operating on the same site today, under the management of the present owner, Mr Ian Fordyce.

The property, which includes an Interwar house, has retained its semi-rural setting, and is a reminder of the character and history of the area prior to World War II and urbanisation. Although the entire site provides a visual and historical context for the house, the sheds and automotive shop building are of lesser significance and do not necessarily need to be retained.

Description

The residence is an interwar design, offering a broad, impressive frontage to the northern part of Dyson Ave bounding the site. It is constituted by a truncated pyramid roof clad in painted galvanised iron, weatherboard wall cladding, front stairs to Dyson Avenue, and wrap around verandahs to the north, west and east. The french doors on the front verandah feature highly decorative jambs and fanlights. The verandahs are included under the main part of the roof but are distinguished by angled timber interwar brackets across each opening affording the facade a rhythm and grace. The lower part of the verandah balustrade may have been enclosed with weatherboards now in place across the lower part. The undercroft of the building is decorated with large battened lattice, a contemporary variation to the usual vertical battens.

This house is notable as an important feature in the Dyson Street streetscape where the road wraps around the corner. Its current setting in an open landscape contributes to its semi rural charm where local residents have the opportunity to experience a remnant of the earlier residential settlement in this area.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*.

It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

for the evidence it provides of the transitional development of the area during the interwar period from a rural area to a suburban outpost of Brisbane.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as one of only a few substantial interwar residences that still remain in the area.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Building Cards
2. Brisbane City Council. Kuraby District Local Area Plan Character Study. July 1996
3. Brisbane City Council 1951 Land Use Map
4. Kerr, John. *Destination South Brisbane*. Australian Railway Historical Society, Brisbane, 1984
5. Kerr, John. Railway notes data base compiled 1994
6. Queensland Certificates of Title
7. Queensland Commonwealth Electoral Rolls. 1925-1961
8. Queensland Post Office Directories
9. Sunnybank Historical Committee (Qld.). *Local Areas of Folk History: Coopers Plains, Sunnybank, Runcorn, Kuraby, Eight Mile Plains*. Brisbane: Sunnybank Historical Committee, 199?
10. A.Ward *Queensland Railway Heritage Places Study: Stage 2 Vol.4*. April 1997

Copyright Brisbane City Council

Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2020)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane