

Heritage Citation



Fernfield

Key details

Addresses	At 11 Bryden Street, Windsor, Queensland 4030
Type of place	House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Georgian
Lot plan	L155_SP248926; L123_SP253394; L223_SP253394; L181_SP251184; L180_SP251184; L152_SP248924; L153_SP248924; L135_SP253384; L136_SP253385; L129_SP248947; L323_SP300038
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — October 2006
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Brick - Painted

People/associations John Richard Hall (Architect)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association

'Fernfield' was built in 1873 for James Bryden, a Brisbane cabinet maker and upholsterer. The brick house, which provides evidence of the local brickmaking industry, was designed by successful Brisbane architect John Richard Hall, who designed a number of fine commercial and residential buildings in Brisbane throughout his career. 'Fernfield' is one of the oldest houses in the Windsor-Lutwyche district and is a rare, surviving example of a brick residence from the 1870s.

History

The house is situated on land which was included in a large allotment granted to Brisbane businessman, George Byrne, in 1856. In 1859, George Byrne sold the northern half of the allotment (9 acres) to John Bryden, also a cabinet maker and the brother of James. John Bryden divided his land in 1873, transferring the southern half to James.

John and James Bryden were Irish immigrants. Their father, James Bryden, of Newry, County Down, was also a cabinetmaker. John Bryden emigrated to Sydney in 1841, arriving in Brisbane shortly after. James Bryden, his sister, Isabella and their niece, Martha Brennan arrived in Australia during the mid-1850s. They spent some 3 years in Victoria before joining John Bryden in Brisbane. By 1863, James Bryden had established an upholstery business in Queen Street. Tenders for the construction of a house for James Bryden were called by architect John Hall in March 1873. The house cost £700 to build.

John Hall was a British architect who emigrated to Australia in the mid-19th century. In 1859 he was appointed to the Queensland Colonial Architect's Office as a works foreman. From 1864, he was in private practice in Brisbane, becoming the Queensland National Bank architect in 1872. One of Brisbane's more successful and prolific architects, he built several substantial residences for Brisbane's elite, including *Greylands* at Indooroopilly, now entered on the Queensland Heritage Register. He was also responsible for additions to James Bryden's shops in Queen Street in 1878.

Situated just 50 metres to the north of *Fernfield*, is the two-storey brick house, *Skilmorlie*, which was built for John Bryden, probably also around 1873. Both houses are built of dark reddish-brown bricks, similar to those used in the Government Printing Office in William Street, constructed in 1874. The Printing Office was built from bricks made at William Williams' brickworks at Lutwyche. It is possible that the bricks used to build *Fernfield* and *Skilmorlie* were also from this brickworks.

John Bryden and his wife, Susanna, lived at *Skilmorlie* and James, Isabella and Martha Brennan resided at *Fernfield*. After the deaths of James Bryden in 1888 and Isabella Bryden in 1889, ownership of *Fernfield* passed to Martha Brennan. Martha's brother, David Brennan, a master mariner, emigrated to Brisbane with his family and lived in *Skilmorlie* from around 1890. Martha Brennan later married Alfred Jago. She died in 1923. The property was subdivided from 1939 with subdivisions passing to various members of the Brennan and Bryden families. *Fernfield* remained in the Brennan family until at least the 1970s.

Fernfield is one of a group of surviving 19th century houses along this section of Lutwyche Road. Not far to the south of *Fernfield* is *Nyamber* (now the Marooma Nursing Home) built for the family of George Byrne circa the 1890s. *Dumbarton*, also built for George Byrne, was situated between *Fernfield* and *Nyamber* but was removed from the site in the 1990s. Another 19th century house, *Rosemount*, is situated in the grounds of Rosemount Hospital to the immediate north west of *Skilmorlie*. These houses were originally built on large allotments extending to Lutwyche Road (then known as Bowen Bridge Road) but have since been separated from the road by later housing development. The residents of these homes were members of the professional classes who could afford to build substantial houses on prime land and had access to private transportation to the city.

Today, *Fernfield*, remains as a private home. Extensions have been added to the original house. It is a significant building in terms of the evidence it provides of the early European history of Windsor.

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

as one of the few remaining substantial residences overlooking this section of Bowen Bridge Road which provides evidence of the development of the area during the mid to late nineteenth century as a middle class suburb. Also, for the evidence it provides of the Windsor-Lutwyche-Kedron area as Brisbane's largest brickmaking industry in the 1870s and 1880s.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as a rare, surviving example of an 1870s brick residence in Brisbane.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

for its association with John Richard Hall, a prominent nineteenth century Brisbane architect.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plans
 2. Brisbane Courier, 17 February 1866, 4 August 1891, 7 November 1921
 3. Department of Environment and Heritage. Entry in the Queensland Heritage Register 6001830. Skilmorlie
 4. Department of Environment and Heritage. Suburb File - Windsor. 4 February 1998
 5. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 6. JOL Estate Map Collection and photographic collection
 7. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
 8. Surveyor-General's Office. *McKellar's Official Map of Brisbane and Suburbs*. Brisbane, 1895
 9. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay 1994, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
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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.

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