

Heritage Citation



Holy Family Church (former) and Primary School

Key details

Also known as	Church of the Holy Family and Primary School
Addresses	At 102 Central Avenue, Indooroopilly, Queensland 4068
Type of place	Church, School, Private school
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Bungalow
Lot plan	L219_RP23457; L220_RP23457; L217_RP23457; L218_RP23457; L231_RP23457; L221_RP23457; L222_RP23457; L223_RP23457; L228_RP23457; L229_RP23457; L230_RP23457; L216_RP23457

Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 November 2012 Date of Citation — January 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Hall and Prentice (Architect)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (H) Historical association

The former Church of the Holy Family was the first Catholic church and school in Indooroopilly. Built in 1926 and designed by Hall and Prentice, the church was built as a response to Archbishop Duhig's vision of a Catholic church and school at Indooroopilly. The timber building was designed both as a church and a school. It was not until the arrival of the Brigidine Sisters in 1927 that the building began to be used as a primary school. The design of the building incorporated both ecclesiastical and educational features that are still apparent. The former church retains its use as a Catholic primary school.

History

European farming began in the Moggill, Fig Tree Pocket and Long Pocket districts from the 1860s. More intensive development of the area followed the opening of the Indooroopilly railway service in 1876. Wealthy families, drawn by the elevated land and proximity to the river, established gracious villas on large allotments of land. Some of these were subdivided during the prosperous years of the 1880s. By the end of the decade the local community was well established with Presbyterian and Primitive Methodist churches, schools, a post office, hotel and a number of stores.

By the turn of the century Indooroopilly had a well established European community and was rising steadily as an elite suburb with all the facilities and conveniences of a modern urban centre. The 1893 floods which destroyed the railway bridge, while having a devastating effect on the development of the suburbs on the south side, did little to impede the progress of this elevated area. A new rail bridge, the Albert, was opened in 1895. Station Road was becoming established as a retail and community centre. By the early 1920s the post office, a fruiterer, draper, butcher, boot-maker and stables were located there as well as a number of general stores.

Prior to the establishment of a Catholic parish and church in the Indooroopilly district the area came under the larger parish of Toowong. The closest church at this time for the Indooroopilly district was St Michael's in Toowong. Alternatively, Mass was often held in peoples' homes or in the Stamford Hall (now demolished), that was situated beside what is now known as the Indooroopilly Hotel. By the 1920s it was apparent that a separate parish was needed for the Indooroopilly district. The Catholic community in the area made an urgent request to the Archbishop for a parish to be established for Indooroopilly. This request was acted upon.

In early 1926 Archbishop James Duhig purchased a large portion of land at Indooroopilly. The land had been in the ownership of Gilson Fox Leslie Foxton, eminent Indooroopilly resident. It was Duhig's intention to establish a church and school on the site. Present on the property was the nineteenth-century brick residence 'Warranoke'.

The period in which the property was purchased saw an unprecedented amount of property acquisition and building by the Catholic Church in Brisbane. Under the leadership of Archbishop Duhig many new and important building schemes were undertaken. "Duhig the builder", a term of endearment used by his contemporaries, was renowned for his desire to obtain prime sites (often on the apex of hills) throughout Brisbane on behalf of the Catholic Church for the establishment of new churches, schools and hospitals.

On March 10 1926 a Tender Notice was published in the Architect and Builders' Journal of Queensland by Hall and Prentice for a "New Roman Catholic Church, School, Indooroopilly". The accepted tender was from R. Robinson. Only four days after the Tender was accepted the foundation stone was blessed by the Vicar General, Right Reverend Dr J. Byrne, in representation of the absent Archbishop Duhig.

The architectural firm of Hall and Prentice was chosen for the design of the new church and school. Established in 1919, Hall and Prentice were responsible for several of Brisbane's finest buildings, including Brisbane City Hall, Tattersall's Club, Ascot Chambers, Musket Villa in Ascot, Shell House and Sandgate Town Hall. T. R. Hall was a Brisbane born architect and the son of renowned architect Francis Richard Hall, of Hall and Dods. He played an important role in the history of Brisbane horse racing with his name commemorated in the T.R. Hall Handicap. George Gray Prentice, also a Brisbane born architect, played an active role in architecture and art in Queensland, being secretary and vice-president at various times of the Queensland Institute of Architects as well as president and vice-president of the Queensland Art Society.

On July 5 1926 The Brisbane Courier published a piece entitled "Holy Family Church: opened at Indooroopilly yesterday". The article stated "The Church of the Holy Family is a wooden structure, having 60ft. by 25ft. dimension, with two 10ft. veranda. The architects were Messrs. Hall and Prentice, and the contractor Mr. R. Robinson". The cost of the building was £2500. Although the Hall and Prentice interwar timber building was designed as both church and school, for the first one and a half years it was used only as a church. The first parish priest to be appointed to the Indooroopilly church was Father James Prout, who served the parish for twelve years.

The problem Duhig faced in establishing a school was the lack of available teachers. In 1927 Duhig invited the Brigidine Sisters from the Randwick Convent in Sydney to work in the newly formed Indooroopilly Parish. The Brigidine Order of Sisters was founded in Ireland by Bishop Daniel Delany in 1807. Initially the Order was established to provide free education for the poor. By also providing education to those who could afford to pay at day schools and boarding schools, the Brigidine Sisters were soon able to establish convents and schools outside of Ireland. In 1883 the first Australian Brigidine foundation was made in Coonamble, New South Wales. This was followed by four more in Victoria. The Brigidine Sisters continued to establish convents and schools in Australia. Accepting the Archbishop's invitation, the first community of Brigidine Sisters in Indooroopilly was a group of five Sisters, Mothers Brigid Foley, Anthony Macgrath, Ignatius Dunphy, Finbarr Treacy and Columba Phelan. The Brisbane Courier reported Archbishop Duhig's New Year Address on the 2 January 1928 in which he stated that the "Brigidine Sisters had come from Randwick to take up work in the new parish of Indooroopilly. They had a splendid reputation as teachers".

To accommodate the Sisters, the residence “Warranoke” that was being used as the presbytery was converted to the convent. The new presbytery was built in 1928 across the road from the convent and was also designed by Hall and Prentice.

With the arrival of the Sisters a primary school was founded as was Duhig’s initial plan for the Indooroopilly parish. The primary school opened on the 30 January 1928 with an enrolment of 101 students. In the first three years of the school’s existence classes were held in a partitioned area at the back of the church. The side verandahs also acted as makeshift classrooms as enrolments increased. The lack of classroom space was addressed in 1931 with the purchase of the former Toowong convent school building. This timber building had been built in 1903 and was moved to the Church of the Holy Family grounds in 1931. The re-erection of the hall was carried out by volunteers from the parish. With the extra classrooms and facilities the school continued to provide many of Indooroopilly’s children with education.

By the 1950s the problem of lack of space once again became apparent. In 1955 a new educational facility was constructed. On the 17 June 1955 Archbishop Duhig blessed and opened the new building. Designed by Brisbane architect F. Cullen and built by M. J. O’Leary, the new facilities included new classrooms, an auditorium, a library and administration offices. On the 23 June 1955 an article in *The Catholic Leader* entitled “New School Dedicated at Indooroopilly” reported on the opening ceremony attended by Archbishop Duhig and Indooroopilly parishioners, stating “Going through the various classrooms was a great pleasure to the visitors on Sunday... for everything to aid the children’s training had been well thought out and provided for”. The cost of the new facilities was £20, 000.

In 1963 a new church was built beside the original timber building. With all liturgical services being carried out in the new church, the former church and school building was used exclusively as classrooms. The Holy Family School continues to provide Indooroopilly children with education.

Description

The Church of the Holy Family School and former church incorporates a central gable roof which continues down to form hipped roofs over front and rear verandahs. The walls are clad with timber weatherboards with single skin vj walls sheltered by the verandah. A photograph taken in 1926 shows two open verandahs, however the verandah on the southern side has since been enclosed. The design of the building incorporates both ecclesiastic and educational features. Ecclesiastic features include the siting of the building with its length along the east-west axis, a small round window in the western wall and half-timbered gables incorporating timber battens with a gothic arch in the centre. However, the layout of the building conforms more to the educational types used by the Works Department from around 1914. Educational features include the plan form of central classrooms flanked by front and rear verandahs and the large bank of windows with its hipped roof window hood on the eastern end wall. The open northern verandah incorporates large double-hung windows and French doors with fanlights above to admit daylight and for access into the classrooms. This verandah retains its early detailing of timber posts with capitals and simple timber balustrades.

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 the former Church of the Holy Family it is the first Catholic church and Catholic primary school in Indooroopilly built as a response to the growing Catholic community's spiritual needs in this period and demonstrates the increase in the establishment of Catholic worship and educational facilities under the direction of Archbishop James Duhig in the interwar period in Brisbane.

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as the first Catholic building designed as a combined church and school in Indooroopilly with the express intent of serving both religious and educational needs of the local community, built by Archbishop Duhig and run by Brisbane's first order of Brigidine Sisters.

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

as the first Catholic church and primary school in Indooroopilly; as the first primary school in Brisbane run by the Brigidine Sisters; as the first Catholic primary school in Indooroopilly that continues to serve as an educational facility.

References

1. *The Brisbane Courier*, 2 January 1928, p12
2. *The Brisbane Courier*, 5 July 1926, p8
3. *Celebrating 75 Years, 1929-2004 Brigidine College Indooroopilly*, Anniversary Booklet
4. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
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6. Queensland Post Office Directories
7. Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Map
8. MacGinley, Rosa, "Irish Women Religious and their Convent High Schools in Nineteenth Century Australia", *Australian Journal of Irish Studies*, V.5, p.135-149
9. "Residence, 8 Westminster Street (1890s) 602057" Department of Environment and Resource Management Queensland Heritage Citation
10. *The Catholic Leader*, 23 June 1955, p9
11. *Diamond Jubilee: Holy Family Parish, Indooroopilly, 1926-1985*, Ed Erin Ahearn, 1986
12. *The Brisbane Courier*, 19 May 1917, p15
13. *The Brisbane Courier*, 11 January 1907, p7
14. *The Brisbane Courier*, 26 July 1902, p223
15. *The Brisbane Courier*, 2 November 1895, p861
16. *The Brisbane Courier*, 10 March 1891, p 6
17. *The Brisbane Courier*, 26 March 1926, p8
18. *The Queenslander*, 26 July 1902, p22
19. 14 January 1927, 'Letter to Archbishop Duhig from Randwick Brigidine Convent', Brisbane Archdiocese Archive
20. Brisbane City Council, *Register of New Buildings*, 1930
21. Tenders, March 10 1926, *The Architect and Builders' Journal of Queensland*
22. Tenders, April 10 1926, *The Architect and Builders' Journal of Queensland*
23. Tenders, October 10 1927, *The Architect and Builders' Journal of Queensland*
24. Tenders, November 10 1927, *The Architect and Builders' Journal of Queensland*

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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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