

Heritage Citation



Norwich

Key details

Also known as	Cambanora
Addresses	At 16 Sussex Street, West End, Queensland 4101
Type of place	House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L40_RP11750
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — October 2006

Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Archibald Meston (Occupant)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (H) Historical association

'Norwich', constructed in 1878, was one of the first houses to be built in Sussex Street and is a good example of an 1870s middle class dwelling. From 1905 until 1912 it was home to well-known Queensland politician, explorer, journalist and newspaper editor, Archibald Meston.

History

The house at 16 Sussex Street, 'Norwich' is one of the oldest houses in this street. Hugh Hamilton purchased the land from land speculator William Steele in 1877. It was initially part of an allotment granted to Thomas Grenier in 1856. The neighbouring house, 'Carnoch' at 14 Sussex Street, was also part of this original grant. The two houses were constructed in the same year, 1878, and were the first to appear on the east side of Sussex Street. Together they form part of a mini historical precinct. Title Deeds indicate that a £250 mortgage was obtained to construct 'Norwich' in 1878, while post office directories show that the owner, Hugh Hamilton, occupied it until 1885-86.

In 1888 ownership was transferred to Joshua Bailey, a Wickham Street tailor in Fortitude Valley, who rented the house to the Reverend John Horsley. It was while Horsley was living there that the house was initially referred to as 'Norrige Villa'. Directories suggest that the house be used primarily as a rental dwelling by its owners until the early 1900s.

In 1905 it was purchased by the politician, journalist and explorer, Archibald Meston, who renamed it 'Cambanora' for the duration of his stay. Born in 1851 in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, Meston represented Rosewood in the Queensland Legislature from 1878-1882 and Cook in 1907. By the 1890s after a period working as a journalist and editor of the *Townsville Herald* and *Toowoomba Chronicle* as well as sugar cane plantation owner, Meston was commissioned to prepare recommendations for the improvement of Aborigines' welfare in Queensland. His proposals were subsequently embodied in the *Aboriginals Protection Act 1897*. While Meston was resident at 'Cambanora' he became Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Southern Region. Meston also involved himself in scientific explorations of the time. Among others, he was leader of the Queensland Government's expedition to the Bellenden Ker Range where he found a new plant of the mangosteen family that was named *Garcinia mestonii* in his honour. He was author of *Geographic History of Queensland* (1895), *Scheme for the Improvement of Aborigines* (1895) and *The Sacred Ibis* (1902).

The property passed through various owners and tenants throughout the latter part of the 1900s until Alfred Bennett purchased it in 1912 and 'Norwich' became associated with the Bennett family until the early 1950s. Noel Hall then purchased the property for his wife Doreen, who lived there until 1972. The property once again changed hands a number of times through the 1970s and 1980s.

Description

'Norwich' survives with its essentially pyramidal shaped corrugated iron roof, the shallow eaves of which are supported on paired ornate timber brackets. The timber boarding on the house is relatively deep, a characteristic often associated with these early houses.

The front verandah has a concave corrugated iron roof and balustrading with diagonal members. The verandah posts are spaced symmetrically but unevenly across the front of the building, dividing it into five bays. One is defined by a verandah post to each side of the entry door, and the two to either side of a similarly small proportion, while the outside ones are quite large. Solid timber brackets of varying angle span to the centre of each bay below the eaves line.

The entry door is a panelled timber door with a central doorknob. Windows are located behind the wider bays of the verandah. The front fence and entry stair is very solid in comparison to the light-weight timber structure of the building itself. Large rendered posts topped by moulding, widely spaced, extend up to a common level.

A solid portion of fence between these posts retains earth above footpath level, and above the ground level between the posts are cast iron bars topped by arrowheads as infill. A gate is made in a similar fashion, and stands in front of a concrete stair, which extends up to the verandah level entry.

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 it provides evidence of the residential development of West End as early as the 1870s and was one of the first houses to be built in Sussex Street.

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 former residence of politician, journalist, naturalist and explorer, Archibald Meston.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plans
2. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of Title and other records, Environmental Protection Agency
3. Evans, Ray, Saunders, Kay & Cronin, Kathryn, *Race Relations in Colonial Queensland*, (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1993
4. JOL Estate Map Collection and photographic collection
5. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
6. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
7. Pike, Douglas, ed, *Australian Dictionary of Biography 1851-1890*, Vol 5, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1974
8. Waterson, D.B., *A Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972
9. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century: A Biographical Dictionary*. Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994

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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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