

Heritage Citation



Sacred Heart Convent

Key details

Also known as	Our Lady Help of Christians Convent
Addresses	At 327 Given Terrace, Paddington, Queensland 4064
Type of place	Residence (group), Institutional / group housing
Period	World War I 1914-1918
Style	Queen Anne
Lot plan	L2_RP145942
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — January 2001

Construction Roof: Terracotta tile;
Walls: Face brick

People/associations Thomas Ramsay Hall (Architect)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

This ornate convent is significant for its aesthetic value as an example of a Federation Queen Anne style ecclesiastical building and as a local landmark. Constructed in 1918, it provides evidence of the continuing development of the Rosalie/Paddington area in the early twentieth century and of the extensive building program of the Catholic Church instigated by Archbishop James Duhig during this period. It is also significant as part of a large Catholic precinct which has developed on the site since the 1890s.

History

The convent at Rosalie was opened by Archbishop Duhig on the 8 February 1919. It was designed by Brisbane architect T.R. Hall who had already received several commissions for the Catholic Church. It was described in Rev. James O'Leary's 1919 history of the Catholic Church in Brisbane as "[o]ne of the most handsomely designed and beautifully finished Convents in the Archdiocese".

The site of the convent was once included in the Shire of Ithaca, which was divided from Enoggera Shire in 1887. The commercial and residential development that took place in the 1880s along La Trobe and Given Terraces and the surrounding streets saw the Paddington/Rosalie area become densely populated by the early twentieth century. The population of Ithaca township grew from approximately 3,000 in 1903 to 17,500 in 1910. The opening of the tramway along Given Terrace in 1897 and the extension from the Milton Road tramline along Baroona Road in 1904 provided a further impetus to development. With the increase in population came the need to establish schools, churches and other community facilities.

By 1898, the large Irish population at Paddington and other local residents expressed a desire for a Catholic church at Rosalie. According to Catholic historian, Father O'Leary: "[t]he city was spreading out in that direction at a rapid rate, and amongst the new inhabitants was a goodly proportion of Catholics who found it a serious inconvenience to travel into the city on Sunday morning". The movement to establish a church was so successful that a foundation stone was laid by Archbishop Dunne on 5 June 1898. The church, designed by W.A. Caldwell, was opened 11 December of the same year. It served as both church and school until 1907 when a new church, designed by J.H. Burley, was built to accommodate the growing congregation. Both of these early churches have since been demolished.

The present Sacred Heart Church was built to relieve crowded conditions at the parish school, established in 1906 in the first church which was later moved across Fernberg Road. It was decided to construct a new brick church, allowing the old church to be used as an additional school building, rather than erect a new school. The foundation stone of the church was laid by Archbishop Duhig on 17 June 1917. £1,400 was collected at the ceremony, a significant amount in a predominantly working class parish, particularly, as Duhig noted, during the

"stringent" years of World War One. Monsignor Cattaneo, the Apostolic Delegate, blessed and opened the new church one year later on 16 June 1918.

The development of the Catholic precinct at Rosalie followed the usual pattern of first establishing a church, which usually doubled as a school, then erecting a more substantial church, and finally, constructing a presbytery and convent. A purpose built school often followed. The Sacred Heart Presbytery, designed by the architectural firm of Coutts and Son, was built in 1915 and was significant as one of the few ferro-concrete buildings in the Archdiocese in Brisbane. This was an innovative building technique at the time. It has since been replaced by a modern presbytery.

T.R. Hall's striking brick convent was built a short distance to the north of the Sacred Heart Church in 1919. The foundation stone of the new convent was laid by Archbishop Duhig on 1 March 1918. Mr F.J. Corbett was the builder responsible for the convent's construction. Duhig returned to officially open the convent on 8 February 1919. The convent was a handsome addition to the existing buildings in the ecclesiastical precinct of Rosalie and was one of some 400 major buildings which Duhig saw erected over 50 years of his episcopate. Like many of Duhig's chosen sites, the Rosalie precinct was situated in a prominent position on a hill.

Thomas Ramsay Hall was born in Brisbane in 1879. He was the son of architect John Hall. Hall worked for the Queensland Government before establishing himself as an architect in 1907. From 1919-1929, he worked in partnership with G.G. Prentice. Their work included the design of the Brisbane City Hall. T.R. Hall later established a firm in partnership with L.B. Phillips which continued until Hall's retirement in 1948. Hall designed many ecclesiastical buildings for the Catholic Church including: the Holy Cross Presbytery, Woolloowin (1914); St. Laurence's Christian Brothers' School, South Brisbane, (1915); Convent, Lourdes Hill, (1916); Presbytery, Bulimba (1917) and St. Agatha's Church-school, Clayfield (1918). Hall and Prentice were responsible, among other Catholic buildings, for the design of the Bowen Hills Church-school, (1921); Our Lady of Victories Church, Bowen Hills (1921); Indooroopilly Church School (1926) and Presbytery (1928) and the convent and chapel at the Mater Hospital (1927).

The new convent allowed the Sisters of Mercy, who had travelled previously from All Hallows, to reside in the parish. The Sacred Heart School, run by the Sisters of Mercy, educated generations of children before being closed in 1995 as it was considered to be no longer viable.

Today, the convent continues its role as part of the large Catholic precinct in Given Terrace, which has met the spiritual needs of the local Catholic community for over 100 years.

Description

The Sacred Heart Convent is situated in an elevated position at the Rosalie end of Given Terrace, Paddington. It is typical of the convent buildings throughout Australia which were built as impressive buildings, often on a prominent site with a chapel within the building and a verandah. The timber detailing of the balustrades and valance are typical of the Federation Queen Anne Style. Also characteristic of this style are the brick walls, the terra cotta tiled roof and a projecting gable wing, which contains the chapel. Externally, a projecting bay with buttresses, a niche and statue marks the chapel. There is a two-storey verandah on three sides of the building. The balustrade and valance are timber and the design and workmanship is of a fine and decorative quality.

The convent building is further articulated by the use of sections of rendered and exposed brickwork, tall thin, two-storey, Tuscan columns built into the brick verandah pillars and expressed roof framing below the gutter line. The gable parapet end walls, at both ends of the transverse gable roof, and the front projecting gable are decoratively notched with a tall rectangular moulded embellishment in the centre and a cross at the crest of the gable. A smaller but similar cross is also mounted on top of the chapel. The entry to the buildings is via the verandah, where stairs meet one of the arched bays of the lower verandah.

A brick pier and timber cross braced fence with timber gate, edges the street frontage of the property. The fence is designed and crafted with matching materials to the main building and similar features to the verandah valances and is an integral part of the overall design of the place.

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 continuing development and growing population of the Rosalie/Paddington area during the early twentieth century.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as it is an excellent example of a Federation Queen Anne style convent built in the early interwar period.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a fine example of a Queen Anne style building built in the federation era and for its fine workmanship and landmark qualities.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

for its social significance to the Catholic Church, the Sisters of Mercy and several generations of the local Catholic community who have been associated with the convent, school and church of the Sacred Heart over a period of many decades.

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 a fine example of the ecclesiastical work of Brisbane architect Thomas Ramsay Hall, who designed many buildings for the Catholic Church during the interwar period.

References

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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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