

Heritage Citation



Salvation Army Hall (former)

Key details

Also known as	Foresters Hall
Addresses	At 3 Ellis Street, Stones Corner, Queensland 4120
Type of place	Hall
Period	Federation 1890-1914, Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Carpenter Gothic
Lot plan	L1_SP183400; L2_SP183400; L3_SP183400; Common property_SP183400
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2005 Date of Citation — May 2025
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Salvation Army (Association); Ancient Order of Foresters (Association); Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows (Association)

The larger hall was built in 1891 in Ellis Street in the Knowsley Estate for the Stones Corner Lodge of the Society of Oddfellows. It was called Knowsley Hall, then Foresters Hall, before being bought by the Salvation Army Corps in 1925. The Corps relocated a smaller hall from Edith Street, Stones Corner a short distance across Old Cleveland Road to Montague Street that same year. It was put behind the existing hall. In early 1926, the site was officially opened as the Coorparoo Salvation Army Hall. The large building was named the Senior Hall. The smaller building was the Junior Hall. It remained a Salvation Army site until 1998.

History

Friendly Societies in Brisbane

Friendly societies emerged in Britain in the 17th and 18th centuries, evolving out of the concept of medieval guilds. Their primary function was mutual aid, with members contributing small fortnightly payments to the society in return for aid should they be unable to provide for their families due to illness, old age, or death. They proliferated in the 19th century, and became highly popular throughout Australia prior to the introduction of comprehensive welfare measures after the Second World War.

Alongside their financial purposes, friendly societies also became key community institutions, taking part in parades, sports competitions, and regular social gatherings. Throughout Australia, their halls became community hubs, hosting dances, banquets, and political rallies. While some friendly societies restricted membership to particular professions or religious denominations, others were open to a wide variety of members, allowing them to become highly popular and influential organisations. Prior to the First World War, membership of friendly societies in Australia has been estimated to at least a quarter of the population, rising to well over a majority in small towns and among certain occupations.

The Manchester United Independent Order of Oddfellows (M.U.I.O.O.F.) was one of the most populous and influential friendly societies in Brisbane. They had arrived in the city in 1848, with the establishment of the Loyal Strangers Home Lodge. In 1863, the M.U.I.O.O.F. had one lodge in Brisbane, with 120 members. They grew rapidly through that decade, reaching 17 lodges with over 2,000 members by 1868. By the 1880s, the Oddfellows had grown so numerous in Brisbane that lodges could be established to serve specific localities, such as Stones Corner.

Construction of the Oddfellows' Hall

The Loyal Native Rose Lodge became the hub of Oddfellow activity in Stones Corner. After conducting social events and gatherings in the area in the late 1880s, they approached the Coorparoo Shire Council in 1890 to declare their intention to build a hall on Ellis Street at the Knowsley Estate, near Stones Corner. Construction was planned to take three months, and the Lodge called on the Council to improve the nearby streets and extend the gas mains to the building, allowing for the use of gas lighting.

The Oddfellows' Hall at 3 Ellis Street was officially opened on the evening of 4 June 1890. It was described as a 'neat and commodious structure built of wood', comprising of 'a large hall with the necessary ante and committee rooms'. In the opening ceremony, eight new members were initiated into the Loyal Native Rose Lodge, bringing the Lodge's membership to 83 individuals. A speech was delivered by Brother C.S. Birkbeck, who commended the members of the Lodge 'on their pluck and determination in securing the commodious hall'. He noted that at

that time there were 75 lodges throughout Queensland, numbering 6,000 members, and with £50,000 worth of property.

Within the month, the Oddfellows' Hall had become available to other community groups. As there were few available meeting places in the small locality, and the Oddfellows would only use the hall weekly or fortnightly, it was quickly utilised by groups like the Coorparoo Ratepayers' Association, the Coorparoo Cricket Club, the Coorparoo Tennis Club, the Dunellan School, and various political candidates. Community group meetings and social gatherings were held at the hall during this time, alongside fundraisers, political rallies, and theatrical performances. When it was used by these various community groups, it was often referred to by the generic name 'Knowsley Hall', after the estate on which it was built.

Court Progress and the Foresters' Hall

The Ancient Order of Foresters was another friendly society of considerable influence in Brisbane that would make use of Knowsley Hall. Rather than lodges, their local groups were known as 'courts,' with the first being Court Fortitude, established at Fortitude Valley in 1859. By 1893, they had grown to 900 members throughout Brisbane, and were valued at £7,134. By that year, a branch of the Foresters had been established in Stones Corner. Known as 'Court Progress,' they convened regularly at Delaney's Hotel (now Stones Corner Hotel), before building a hall of their own on Logan Road in 1895.

Court Progress continued to grow in number through the following decade. In 1905, their hall on Logan Road was damaged during a severe flood. Subsequently, though the Oddfellows' Hall at 3 Ellis Street remained under the ownership and use of the Oddfellows, it began to be referred to as the Foresters' Hall in official documents from 1914. The Foresters used the hall for their meetings, as did other community groups at that time, such as the Stones Corner branch of the Red Cross.

Salvation Army Hall

The Salvation Army was founded as the Christian Revival Society in 1865 in London by Methodist minister William Booth. In the 1880s, it was renamed the Salvation Army, and reorganised along military lines, with soldiers and officers organised into Corps and dressed in military uniform. They arrived in Brisbane around that same time, where they established barracks and began training recruits to fulfil their mission of aiding and converting people suffering from poverty and homelessness.

By the early 1920s the Salvation Army was active in Stones Corner. A large tent gathering was held in the area in 1923 under Commissioner H.E. Whatmore, whipping up an air of religious revival which drew large crowds to Stones Corner. Around that time, a small branch of the Salvation Army was established in Stones Corner by Captain Oliver, based in a small hall on Edith Street. Recognising that this small building was insufficient for the significant levels of new soldiers he wished to recruit, Oliver set out to acquire larger premises, and on 30 June 1926 secured the transfer of the hall at 3 Ellis Street from the Oddfellows. The sale of Knowsley Hall may have been in part a result of a fire the previous year, started by a house adjacent to the hall. The hall itself had been insured for £500 (including furniture), but was largely saved by the quick response of firefighters, suffering only severe damage to its eastern wall and rafters.

Upon purchasing Knowsley Hall, the Salvation Army extensively renovated and refurbished the damaged building. That same year they had the smaller hall on Edith Street relocated to the site and placed south of Knowsley Hall, where it would remain. Knowsley Hall became known as the Senior Hall, with its smaller counterpart becoming the Junior Hall. Over the following decades, they would serve as a hub for Salvation Army activities throughout Stones Corner and Coorparoo, hosting gatherings, meetings, recitations, memorials and parades.

During this time, the Salvation Army Hall remained an important community space. It hosted a concert by the South Brisbane Philharmonic Society in 1937, and during the Second World War became a Ration Book Issuing Centre and a local base for the Air Raid Precautions wardens to congregate and attend lectures. When the threat of air raids became a serious concern, the Salvation Army Hall was designated as an Emergency Hostel for the use of any locals that might be rendered homeless during such an event. Throughout these decades it was used as a polling location in elections, and after the war became the meeting place for the Coorparoo Progress Association.

The halls at 3 Ellis Street would remain with the Salvation Army until 1998. Since then, the larger hall has been adapted to residential use, while the smaller hall has become a commercial premises.

Description

The Salvation Army Hall (former) is located on the corner of Ellis Street and Montague Streets, Stones Corner. Situated on a large block, the place consists of two modest, timber halls. The large hall fronts Ellis Street and has been adaptively reused for residential purpose. The smaller hall fronts Montague Street and is used for commercial purposes. Despite a timber and masonry fence surrounding the larger hall, both halls are highly visible from the street.

General description

The larger hall is single-storey and is primarily constructed of timber. It is rectangular in plan with a gabled roof. The Ellis Street elevation is symmetrical with a centred, gabled entry porch and a single window either side. The Montague Street elevation is also symmetrical, and includes a centred, gabled entry porch with three windows on either side. Both the southern and eastern elevations have skillion roof structures.

The roofs of the large hall, entry porches and skillion structures are sheet metal. The Ellis Street gable end is half-timbered to mimic a king post truss and has an extensive picket skirt. The opposite gable end is infilled with fibre cement sheeting and includes a vent. Timber finials decorate the main gable. The roof of the Ellis Street entry porch is similarly half-timbered. While the main roof has lined eaves, the Ellis Street entry porch is unlined with exposed joists. External walls are clad in chamferboard.

Most windows on the large hall are tall and narrow, with multiple panes, timber sills and metal flashing. The windows on the Ellis Street porch are aluminium framed, with similar sills and flashing details. An entry door exists on the Ellis Street porch, and a centralised door exists on the Montague Street elevation. Several doors lead to external spaces on the eastern elevation.

Non-original additions to the larger hall include shade sails and medium-height fences separating occupancies.

Fronting Montague Street, the smaller hall is a single-storey, timber building with a rectangular plan and a gabled roof. The Montague Street elevation is symmetrical with a centred, gabled entry porch. The entry porch has a single window on either side, and two windows on each side elevation.

The roof of the smaller hall is sheet metal, with undecorated gable ends, centralised vents, and lined eaves. All external walls are clad in chamferboard.

Windows on the smaller hall are shorter and include timber sills and metal flashing. The Montague Street elevation has two sheet metal window hoods with timber slat brackets.

Non-original additions to the smaller hall include a chamferboard-clad lean-to on the southern elevation, and two skillion shade structures.

An asphalt car park is located to the south of the smaller hall. Both halls are sited close to the property boundaries, with limited vegetation or gardens.

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

Constructed in 1890, the Salvation Army Hall (former) at 3 Ellis Street, Stones Corner, remained a key community hub for the Stones Corner, Greenslopes, and Coorparoo areas for over a century. Built by the Oddfellows, and used extensively by the Foresters and Salvation Army, it provides insight into the history, development and popularity of Brisbane's major friendly societies and community groups.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

The Salvation Army Hall (former) at 3 Ellis Street, Stones Corner, is an uncommon example of a single site encompassing two early halls utilised by various friendly societies and community groups, particularly the Salvation Army.

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

The Salvation Army Hall (former) at 3 Ellis Street, Stones Corner, has a special association with the Salvation Army which, from the hall, served the local community for over seventy years. The hall also has a special association with the Loyal Native Rose Lodge of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows, as well as Court Progress of the Ancient Order of Foresters, demonstrating their reach, membership and influence as

some of the most populous and influential community organisation in Brisbane at the time.

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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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