

Heritage Citation



St John the Baptist Catholic Church (former)

Key details

Addresses	At 133 South Pine Road, Enoggera, Queensland 4051
Type of place	Church
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Gothic
Lot plan	L1_SP186467; L3_SP186467
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — January 2006

Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Face brick
People/associations	Walter Carey Voller (Architect)
Criterion for listing	(D) Representative; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

This modest Federation Gothic style brick church, designed by Brisbane architect W.C. Voller, was opened in 1908 with funds raised by local parishioners. It demonstrates the development of Enoggera from farmland to suburb and the desire of the Catholic Diocese to provide a local place of worship and focal point for the community.

History

At the time of its opening in 1908, St John the Baptist Church at Enoggera was described in the Catholic Age as “one of the very few brick churches on the outskirts of the city ... [occupying] ... a splendid and prominent situation of the South Pine Road, close to Alderley railway station”. The gothic style church was designed by prominent Brisbane architect, W.C. Voller, whose work in Brisbane spans four decades from the 1890s to the 1930s. The church was blessed and opened on 15 March 1908 by Archbishop Dunne.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Enoggera was predominantly farmland, bush and swamp with few houses. Development in the area, stimulated by its position en route to the Gympie gold fields of the 1860s, had been slow due to the lack of available transport to the area other than private horse-drawn vehicles. A state school was established at Enoggera in 1871 not far from the future site of the Catholic church. Access to the city improved when the railway line built to service the saleyards at Newmarket was opened on 5 February 1899. The line terminated at Enoggera to cater for passenger traffic. Horse drawn buses were also introduced at this time. The electric tram system did not reach Enoggera until the 1940s.

In 1963, fifty years after the parish of Enoggera was created, Archbishop Duhig recalled the early days of the parish: “Half a century ago it had a poor beginning with a small area of land and a small population which gave it scanty prospects for the future”. The first moves to provide a Catholic church in the area occurred in 1908 when Fr J. Hegarty of Red Hill was appointed chairman of the church building committee. At this time, Catholic residents in the area travelled to St Brigid’s at Red Hill (often on foot) or St Stephen’s in the city to attend mass. At the instigation of Archbishop Dunne, a Sunday School had been established in 1901 in the O’Connor home at Alderley by the Sisters of Mercy who travelled each Sunday from All Hallows in Fortitude Valley. With funds collected from the local Catholic community, the building committee secured three acres of land on South Pine Road, one third of which was donated by Mrs A. Clugton, a local resident. The remaining funds were sufficient to justify the erection of a church on the site.

On 15 March 1908, Archbishop Dunne laid the foundation stone of the new church - £60 was collected at the ceremony and £370 had already been subscribed. For the opening of the church on 9 August, a special train service was provided from Central station to Alderley. The new church was filled with members of the Catholic communities of the Enoggera, Alderley, South Pine and Newmarket districts. Archbishop Dunne officiated at the

blessing and opening ceremony, announcing his intention to secure a weekly service for the church as soon as possible. However there was a shortage of priests in the Brisbane area due to several deaths during the preceding twelve months.

It was not until 1912 that Archbishop Duhig appointed a priest, Fr Michael Gallagher, to the church. Prior to this, Fr Hegarty had travelled from Red Hill to tend to the needs of parishioners at Enoggera. Fr Gallagher, who was also chaplain to the General Hospital, did not reside in the parish but travelled by horse and sulky to Enoggera to minister to the congregation. Enoggera became a separate parish from Red Hill in 1913. In the early days of the church, people travelled from as far as Herston and Ashgrove to attend services. The parish of Enoggera originally also included Newmarket, Grovely, Mitchelton, St John's Wood, Dorrington and Stafford. From the 1920s, new parishes were divided from Enoggera and established in their own right.

Contracts for the construction and decoration of the church, which was built to accommodate 200 people, were let to builder, Charles Crowther; carpenter, Thomas Marshall; James Campbell and Son for joinery work and Campbell Bros. for plumbing. With the collection of £60 from the congregation at the opening ceremony the remaining debt on the church was slightly less than £100.

Under Archbishop Duhig, major improvements were made to the parish. In 1918, he saw the need for a Catholic school in the district and bought 13 acres of land on Shine Hill, a short distance from the church. The property was purchased for £2,150 from Mr M.H. Finlayson, and included a large residence which was converted to a convent for the Good Samaritan Sisters. This building was sold and removed to rural Queensland in 1995. "Our Lady of the Assumption" school, designed by G. Trotter, was opened on the site in 1919. This building was demolished to make way for extensions to Marcellin College in 1972. In 1931, a brick presbytery was erected between the convent and the school building. The presbytery remains on site in the school precinct.

In 1961, a modern brick church was built next to the first St John the Baptist Church, continuing a tradition of Catholic worship in this suburb which dates from the beginning of this century.

Description

This simple, single storey brick church is set on low brick piers and has a steep, corrugated iron gable roof. Gothic in style, it sits on a spacious site next to a modern church and townhouses. Located at the end of a row of houses, it has a prominent position near the intersection of South Pine Road, Pickering Street, Shand and Raymond Roads.

The building which comprises of a nave with choir gallery and a timber framed vestry to the rear can be entered via a front or side entry porch.

Exterior

The side walls of the building are divided into five bays by stepped buttresses. Each bay features a single timber framed lancet window, and a shallow arched opening below floor level which ventilates the undercroft of the building. A darker brick plinth encircles the building and is capped with chamfered blue/grey bricks. The same coloured bricks are used as decoration in the form of window surrounds, heads and a horizontal band at sill height. Render has been applied to the top of this sill band, and on the splayed sections of each buttress.

The front gable wall of the nave features a central rose window, with two lower lancet windows to each side of the central entry porch. Accessed by a flight of concrete steps to each side, the porch has a skillion roof that forms a gable to the front. A pointed arch opening sits within this gable, and has a rectangular opening to each side. The walls of the porch that have corner buttresses, have been painted.

The weatherboard vestry has a lean-to corrugated iron roof. It extends from the nave's rear wall between two single lancet windows and below three central lancets. Set on timber stumps, a door to each side of the vestry is accessed by a few timber steps. Two timber framed, double hung windows to its rear wall have security grills.

The timber framed side entry porch is set on steel columns and clad in fibre cement. It has a gable roof and a few timber steps access a timber door to its front wall.

Interior

The interior of the nave features rendered walls, timber lined ceiling and timber floor that extends into the other areas. A timber gallery to the front end of the nave sits above a pair of arched timber doors forming the main entry to the building.

The timber framed lancet windows of the nave comprise three pairs of obscure or clear glass. Some windows in the building's gable ends contain coloured glass including the rose window that has been partly boarded in. The front two lancet windows of the nave also have some boarded in panes.

The heritage listing does not include the retirement village at the rear of the property, which is fenced off from the church and the hall.

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:

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as an example of a small and modest Federation Gothic style brick church built in the early 1900s.

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

as a site of continuous Catholic worship from 1908 and its importance to successive generations of Catholics in surrounding areas.

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 prominent Brisbane architect W.C. Voller.

References

1. *Age* (Brisbane), 14 March 1908; 15 August 1908 & 4 April 1908
2. *Catholic Leader*, 19 September 1963, & 3 October 1963
3. Greenwood, Gordon and John Laverty, *Brisbane 1859-1959: A History of Local Government*, The Council of the City of Brisbane, Brisbane, 1959
4. Kerr, J. 1988, *Brunswick Street, Bowen Hills and Beyond: The Railways of the Northern Suburbs of Brisbane*, Australian Railway Historical Society - Queensland Division, Brisbane
5. *Let Your Light Shine: Memories of Seventy-five Years of Catholic Education at Our Lady of the Assumption School, Enoggera, 1919-1994*, Held at Catholic Archives
6. *Northwest News*, 20 September 1995
7. O'Leary, Rev J. 1919, *Catholic Progress: Archdiocese of Brisbane 1912-1919*, J. O'Leary, St James' Presbytery, Coorparoo
8. *Telegraph*, 11 July 1980, 3 July 1965
9. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay, *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*, UQ Library, 1984

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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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