

Heritage Citation



25 Virginia Avenue, Hawthorne

Key details

Addresses At 25 Virginia Avenue, Hawthorne, Queensland 4171

Type of place House

Period Victorian 1860-1890

Style Queenslander

Lot plan L268_RP12476; L267_RP12476

Key dates Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004
Date of Citation — October 2010

Construction Roof: Corrugated iron;
Walls: Timber

This timber house was built in the late nineteenth century for John Tregenza, a messenger with the Queensland National Bank. Constructed at a time when the Bulimba/ Hawthorne area was changing from a farming district to a residential area, it is indicative of the growing urbanisation of the district at this time. The grounds include a large mature fig tree near the north-east corner of the house.

History

This property was once part of eighty acres purchased by Pollet Cardew for £80 in January 1854. Queensland was then still part of the colony of New South Wales but had been open for non-convict settlement since 1842. David McConnel purchased 173 acres of Bulimba land in the first land sales in 1849 and had a sandstone cottage, which still stands in Kenbury St, built later that year. It functioned as the centrepiece of a model manorial farm which, besides the cash cropping, operated self-sufficiently with a dairy herd, numerous livestock and poultry, kitchen garden and extensive orchard. By 1853 the farm comprised 220 acres and included a variety of outbuildings: kitchen, laundry, store, stable, coach house, workrooms, dairies, barns and workers' cottages.

During the 1860s and 1870s land in the district remained in large holdings of generally around 50 to 100 acres and was mainly used for farming. Bulimba residents and farmers travelled to Brisbane using an overland track that passed through Galloways Hill before joining the track that linked Brisbane and Cleveland. From 1864 a licensed ferry operated between Bulimba and New Farm.

Pollet Cardew resold almost 73 acres of his land in 1874 to William Baynes who resold it to Robert Stewart in May 1875. In the 1880s Brisbane's economy boomed and immigrants poured into the colony. A suspension bridge across the river linking Hawthorne to New Farm and Fortitude Valley was proposed and numerous large land holdings were subdivided and sold.

Robert Stewart subdivided his land and it was offered for sale as the Hawthorne Estate by Arthur Martin & Co from early 1885. Comprising 378 "superior allotments" the "really magnificent property" was "situated almost equal distances from Norman Creek and Bulimba Ferry, and was "only a few yards from site of the proposed suspension bridge". The 'half-a-mile' of river frontage had been divided into large blocks varying from 1 rood to 3 acres and the agent had been instructed "to sell every lot by public auction" even though there had been "several requests to sell particular lots privately". Although many smaller allotments were purchased in the second half of 1885, the subject allotments were part of 13 allotments totalling almost 2 acres purchased by Alfred Edward Harris in May 1887. Harris subdivided and sold the land soon afterwards.

This holding of two subdivisions was purchased by John Tregenza in March 1888. Tregenza, a messenger with the Queensland National Bank, had this house constructed around 1889-1890 and is recorded as receiving mail here in 1891. Although there was an economic downturn, exacerbated by the 1893 floods, in the early years of the 1890s, by the end of the decade residential development in the Bulimba area continued to consolidate. By 1898 Oxford Street had developed as a commercial centre with a store, Post Office, stationer, fruiterer, newsagent, millinery, fancy goods and boot warehouse in the first block from the ferry. There were concentrations of housing in Brisbane Street, Pine, Princess and Quay Streets and Riding Road. The river

frontages of New Cleveland [now Wynnum] Road and Virginia Avenue were also popular with finer residences built there by some of Brisbane's leading citizens. An indication of the growth of the population in the district can be seen in the enrolment numbers of the Bulimba State School which, at the turn of the century, totalled 83 children from 62 families.

Tregenza sold the house and land to Bridget and John Joseph Howard in February 1919. A mortgage, taken out on the house at the time of sale, for £450 indicates at least a portion of the purchase price. The Howards owned the property for ten years. During the 1920s the area was well developed as residential suburbs. Commercial development spread along Oxford Street, including the 'Avro Picture Dome' and in 1922 the Hawthorne Picture Theatre was built as an 'open air barn' until it was enclosed in 1927. It was later called the Balmoral theatre. In 1924, just before its amalgamation into the greater Brisbane City Council, the Balmoral Shire had an estimated population of 10,000 and 2,300 improved properties.

The house and land were sold in 1929 to John Irwin who took out a mortgage in 1937, possibly to have additions made to the house. Following his death, the Union Trustee Company of Australia Limited, nominated as trustee under Irwin's will, was granted permission to sell the house in 1953.

A large significant fig tree in the front yard appears to have been planted circa 1940s.

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 a residence constructed in the late nineteenth century when the area was developing into a residential area.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance for the large, mature fig tree on the northeastern corner of the block which provides an attractive setting for the house.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Bulimba District Character Study, July 1996
 2. John Oxley Library, Hawthorne Estate Maps
 3. Queensland Certificates of Title
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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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