

Heritage Citation



29 Burns Road, Toowong

Key details

Also known as	Rhos-y-Medre
Addresses	At 29 Burns Road, Toowong, Queensland 4066
Type of place	House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L11_RP19844
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — October 2006

Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Walter Horatio Wilson (Occupant); William Arthy (Occupant)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (H) Historical association

Constructed in the early 1880s, this colonial era residence was home to two prominent Toowong residents in the late nineteenth century. These were William Arthy, the head and first teacher of the Toowong School (Long Pocket School) and the Honorable Walter Horatio Wilson, solicitor and statesman. Wilson named the property 'Rhos-y-Medre' after his birthplace in North Wales.

History

The Deed of Grant was issued for this property on 14 May 1862 to Robert Cribb. The property then passed through a number of hands until it was purchased by Walter Horatio Wilson in 1877. In 1879 he subdivided the land. The property's size, just prior to subdivision, standing at just over 15 acres and 3 roods. On 18 July 1880 William Arthy purchased just over one rood and 12 perches from this sale. Evidence indicates that it was Arthy whom had the original core of the present house constructed.

At the time of purchase Arthy obtained a mortgage of ?400/-, with further sums of ?100 and ?30 being borrowed in December 1880 and May 1883 respectively. William Arthy was prominent within the local community. He was head and first teacher of the Toowong School (Long Pocket School); he also gave singing lessons at Petrie Terrace School and was the first organist of St Thomas' Church at Toowong. Arthy also may have given private music lessons from his Burns Road house.

In 1886 Walter Horatio Wilson again acquired the property from Arthy, and took out a mortgage of ?400/-/. It is highly probable Arthy and Wilson were associates as they were involved in the same community and church society and this may have resulted and/or influenced the original sale and repurchase of the property.

The Hon Walter Horatio Wilson moved to Queensland in 1865 to practice law as a solicitor. Although suffering at times from ill health he entered the Legislative Council in 1885 and served in a number of positions, which included Minister without Portfolio (1890-93, 1894-98) and Postmaster General (1893-94 & 1898). Wilson had a diverse

State and local profile. He founded and was president of the Brisbane Liedertafel. He had donated an harmonium to St Thomas' Church at Toowong and 'deputised for the organist.'

It is likely at this stage (1886) substantial alterations occurred to the dwelling. During the same period notable Brisbane Architect Richard Gailey was undertaking work on Wilson's legal chambers. It is probable that Gailey under took the work on the remodelling of this residence. Evidence indicates that Wilson lived in the house for only a short period, as it is likely he was awaiting the construction of his new house Wilcelyn. Also in support of the supposition that Gailey was involved in Rhos-y-Medre's remodelling is the fact that Gailey was also the

supervising Architect for Wilcelyn.

Wilson named the property after his place of birth Rhos-y-Medre, Raubon, Denbighshire, North Wales. In December 1887 the property was placed on trust, to be held by family members. It is known he frequently suffered from ill health. The property then appears to have been rented out until it was transferred in 1896 into the name of Susannah Miller. Wilson died six years later. The property since this date has had a number of owners and occupiers and is at present being restored by its current owner.

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 an example of early residential development in Toowong during the Boom era.

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 dwelling that was owned and occupied by statesman and solicitor, Walter Horatio Wilson and Toowong School's first teacher, William Arthy.

References

1. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. (Melbourne University Press) Vol 12: 1891-1939. Smy-Z. pp.531

2. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans
3. *Brisbane Courier*. 2 October 1886 p.7 & 1 March 1902 p.5
4. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
5. Environmental Protection Agency
6. Helen Gregory (ed). Fewings, J.B. *Arcadian Simplicity* (Brisbane: Library Board of Qld. 1990)
7. JOL Estate Map Collection and photographic collection
8. Lawson, Ronald *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*. St Lucia U of Q Press, 1973
9. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
10. *Queenslander*. 8 March 1902. p.530
11. Waterson, D.B., *A Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972
12. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South 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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