

Heritage Citation



Alliance Hotel

Key details

Also known as	The Actress and the Bishop Tavern
Addresses	At 320 Boundary Street, Spring Hill, Queensland 4000
Type of place	Hotel (pub)
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Regency
Lot plan	L1_RP10335
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — November 2009
Construction	Walls: Masonry

People/associations	John B. Nicholson (Architect); Mr Lane (Builder)
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Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic
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The Alliance Hotel was built in 1888 for publican Charles Phillips to replace the earlier 1864 Alliance Hotel. The architect was John Beauchamp Nicholson who also designed the Princess Theatre and the Norman Hotel at Woolloongabba. The construction of the hotel reflects the increasing demand for first-class accommodation that resulted from the Queensland economic boom of the 1880s. Located in the centre of Spring Hill, the hotel saw the suburb's fortunes recede over the next 100 years. As a result, its facade did not receive the modern alterations that many of the other nineteenth century Brisbane hotels did. However, a million-dollar restoration in 2002 has helped to maintain the heritage appeal of the hotel.

History

The site that this hotel occupies was originally part of a block of land totally one acre and two roods, described as Suburban Portion 201 in North Brisbane. It was first sold to Charles Keid, a Brisbane resident, on 18 June 1857 for ?68.15. This land, being close to Brisbane Town, was ripe for development, especially as it was located beside the designated boundary of the Town (i.e. Boundary Street) that the Aborigines were not permitted to enter after dark. Keid obtained a replacement title for the same block of land from the new (founded 1859) Queensland colonial government on 2 October 1863. Keid then conducted a land sale after he subdivided Portion 201 into small house blocks, but retaining Subdivision 1, of nearly 19 perches of land, for himself.

This was an obvious location on which to establish a commercial enterprise that could service Brisbane residents on their way to and from the Town, as well as the residents of Keid's own housing estate. Thus in early 1864, the first Alliance Hotel was constructed on the corner of Boundary and Leichhardt Streets for Charles Keid. Keid did not run the hotel, but instead, leased it to a succession of publicans. Charles (Chas) Z. Bertheau was the first licensee of the hotel. John McGrath followed him in 1864. In 1866, McGrath transferred his publican's licence to Pat McGrath, who went on to advertise the lease of the hotel in Brisbane Courier newspaper on 31 January 1868, where the first Alliance Hotel was described as a capital Public House, complete with furniture, a beer engine and outhouses. In 1870, the publican's licence went to William Halloran, who transferred it in 1881 to Benjamin Walker. The last publican of the old Alliance Hotel was Charles W. Phillips, who received the transfer of Walker's licence in 1883.

Phillips ran the first Alliance Hotel for five years. By then, the hotel was 24 years old and was too small and outdated to accommodate the needs of people who were flocking to Brisbane because of Queensland's economic boom. This boom was driven by the high wool prices that benefited the Queensland sheep industry, as well as gold and other valuable mineral discoveries and the flood of migration to the colony. Both Phillips and Keid had tried to keep up with customer demands by building additions to the 1864 hotel. Thus in 1868, they called for tenders to erect a shop and additional rooms to the Alliance Hotel. On 4 September 1888, Keid sold the old hotel and land to Phillips. Charles Phillips decided that to meet the increasing needs of his clientele then he would need to build a new Alliance Hotel. He immediately mortgaged his purchase to John Jackson for

?3,500 and this money may have been used to construct the new hotel.

Phillips employed architect John Beauchamp Nicholson. Nicholson had arrived in Brisbane from England in 1876. He learnt his architectural trade while working as a foreman and clerk for contractor and architect Andrew Murphie. Nicholson set up his own practice in offices in Brisbane's Town Hall in October 1885. He ran his architecture and property speculation businesses together, particularly in the area of local government where he also acted as an advocate for projects from which he might profit.

*In the boom conditions of the late 1880s Nicholson's practice prospered, with wide-ranging architectural commissions, speculative and otherwise.*¹

Nicholson also designed the Princess Theatre (1888) and the Norman Hotel (1889) at Woolloongabba, the Shafton Hotel (1889) at East Brisbane. On 1 March 1890, he partnered with Robert Linus Wright. Nicholson & Wright designed the Normanby Hotel at Red Hill (1890) and Chardon's Hotel at Annerley (1891). The partnership ended in December 1891, when the onset of the 1890's Depression forced Nicholson into liquidation.

A contractor Mr. Lane, who completed the work by the end of 1888, built this, the second Alliance Hotel. The new hotel featured the latest c1888 appliances, served the best brands of liquors and offered 12 bedrooms for accommodation and two ballrooms, two bars, six parlours, two drawing rooms and a dining room for entertainment. Charles Nicholson remained the publican until 1909, when he leased his hotel to Edward Percy Fowles. In 1911, Fowles transferred the lease to Walter Edward Tohman. Then in 1915, the licence returned to Phillips, when he leased the hotel to his wife Margaret. The next year, Phillips leased the Alliance Hotel to Timothy James McKinnon. In 1918, McKinnon renewed his lease for a further three years but in 1919, he transferred it to Henry John Luckie and a spinster Lily Selwood. In December 1919, they transferred the lease to Samuel White, with James Patrick Gleeson taking over the lease in 1923, followed by Michael Thomas Sullivan in 1925.

From 1910 to 1925, the major Queensland brewery, Perkins & Co Ltd (later Castlemaine Perkins) took an increasing interest in the operations of the Alliance Hotel. In 1910, Charles Phillips mortgaged the property for ?1,643 to Perkins & Co Ltd and they supplied him with another mortgage for ?2,516 in 1915 and a mortgage for ?2,000 in 1919. Phillips' only other mortgage was for ?3,000 from the Bank of Queensland in 1917.

But Perkins & Co also became involved with the publicans who leased the hotel. The company provided more than ?9,000 in mortgages to the various lessees of the Alliance Hotel during the period 1916 to 1923. But on 17 April 1924, Charles Phillips switched beer brands when he leased the Alliance Hotel to Queensland Brewery Ltd, which produced 'Bulimba' beer. That company re-leased the hotel back to Philips on the same day, while at the same time providing a mortgage to publican James Gleeson. A similar mortgage was provided to Sullivan when he became the new publican. On 9 November 1926, Charles Phillips sold the hotel, which he had had built nearly 40 years before, to Martin Scanlan.

The Alliance Hotel continued to be a focal point for the rivalry between Queensland's two major brewers. The new owner, Martin Scanlan immediately sold control of the hotel's lease to Castlemaine Brewery & Quinlan Gray & Co Brisbane Ltd. This company had begun producing the famous 'Fourex' beer in 1924, and with the acquisition of Perkins & Co Ltd in 1928 Castlemaine Perkins became the largest brewer in the state. Also in 1928, Michael Sullivan transferred his lease back to Martin Scanlan. There followed a rapid turnover of publicans, with Charles Owen O'Connor taking the lease in June 1928 then transferring it to Thomas Francis Page in September 1928, who then passed it to Albert John Roberts in September 1929. Roberts ran the Alliance Hotel during the difficult years of the Great Depression (1929-39) and World War Two (1939-45). Martin

Scanlan died on 16 May 1957 and ownership passed to his widow Elizabeth Agnes Scanlan and son Denis Benedict Scanlan. Elizabeth died on 26 March 1964 and the hotel was sold to Stafford Enterprises Pty Ltd. The Scanlan family maintained their link to the hotel though, as Oscar Edward Scanlan was retained as the lessee.

But the Alliance Hotel changed from a 'Fourex' hotel back to a 'Bulimba' hotel when Queensland Brewery Ltd took control of the lease and then ownership of the hotel in 1965. In 1975, Queensland Brewery Ltd was taken over by the southern-based Carlton United Breweries (CUB) and the Alliance Hotel started serving 'Carlton' beers. In 1985, CUB sold the hotel to Ashwick Pty Ltd, who passed the property onto Krojdin Pty Ltd in 1993. Around this time, it had had a name change to the Alliance Tavern.

By 1993, the Alliance Hotel was more than a hundred years old and it seen the changing fortunes of the suburb that it serviced. By the 1920's, Spring Hill was no longer a fashionable residential suburb. The encroachment of the Central Business district together with the largely old, nineteenth century housing, meant that Spring Hill was considered to be a poor, run-down part of Brisbane, populated by low income earners such as students and artists as well as a considerable criminal element. Unlike many of Brisbane's other nineteenth century hotels, little effort was made to modernise the Alliance Hotel. Most changes were new internal fit-outs brought about by the requirements of new lessees. Brisbane City Council recorded requests to do balcony work in 1949, a 1952 hotel addition, a 1953 hotel alteration, a 1961 drive-in bottle shop, a 1963 hotel addition as well as other building work in 1948, 1960, 1970 and 1974. A major change was the removal of the second floor verandahs and this may have occurred around 1956 when the Alliance Hotel lost 4 perches of land to the widening of Leichhardt Street by the Council. Four small porches were added to the façade to replace the lost verandahs.

Beginning in the 1980s, Spring Hill was rediscovered by affluent people who were looking for an inner-city lifestyle. Property prices rose and many of the old houses and buildings in Spring Hill were renovated or given new makeovers. In mid-2002, the Alliance Tavern was put up for auction. The advertising noted that the hotel had not been refurbished since 1996 and it was claimed to be one of Brisbane's original hotels. The new publican, Bob Cooper, was quoted on his plans to utilise the heritage significance of the hotel:

"We like heritage. We like old stuff; we really do"

And that is how Alliance Tavern publican Bob Cooper simply explains why he and his wife Helen have ploughed a million dollars into restoring the historic Spring Hill pub to its former glory.²

At that time, the Alliance Tavern was unusual, in that it was one of the few Brisbane hotels to shun both poker machines and televisions showing continuous sports coverage.

The Alliance Hotel has been identified as having heritage significance in a number of publications. It was featured in 1988 on a Heritage Tour of Brisbane produced by the Brisbane History Group. In 1993, it was marked as the fourth stop in the Spring Hill Heritage Tour St Pauls to Gregory Terrace. When the Alliance Hotel was auctioned in 2002, it was featured repeatedly as an item in *The Independent* newspaper, which described the building as "One of Brisbane's iconic pubs".³

Description

Built in the Renaissance style, it has fine floral mouldings and a decorative corner knob on its parapet. It has

been shorn of its original verandahs.

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 hotel that reflects the economic boom of the 1880s that saw many earlier, simple timber hotels replaced by grander masonry hostelryes.

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 late nineteenth century hotel that has retained numerous elements from its original façade.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a hotel designed in the Victorian Regency architectural style with fine floral moldings and a decorative corner knob on its parapet; and, for its prominent location and pleasing contribution to the Boundary Road streetscape.

Supporting images



Unknown photographer,
'Horsedrawn delivery cart outside a shop in Spring Hill,
Brisbane, ca. 1905',
John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland.

This is a view from the corner of St Paul's Terrace and
Isaac Street, Spring Hill, looking south-west toward
Boundary Street.

The Alliance Hotel, at the junction of St Paul's Terrace
and Leichhardt & Boundary streets, is visible in the
background.

References

1. Watson, Donald & McKay, Judith, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, Brisbane, Queensland Museum, 1994. p.130
2. Unknown, "Historic Alliance Tavern returns to former glory" in *The Independent*, 25 July 2002. P.8
3. Sandy, Alison, "Chance to build up an Alliance" in *The Independent*, 13 May 2002. P.11
4. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, website, post-1946 building cards
5. Brisbane City Council, 1946, 2001 & 2005 aerial photographs
6. Brisbane City Council's Central Library, local history sheets
7. *Brisbane Courier*, 31 January 1868, p.1

8. Brisbane History Group, *Brisbane Hotels and Publicans Index 1842-1900*, (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group, 1993)
9. Brisbane History Group, *Brisbane 1988 Heritage Tour*, (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group, 1988)
10. Brisbane History Group, *Spring Hill Heritage Tour St Pauls to Gregory Terrace*, (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group, 1993)
11. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
12. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
13. Sandy, Alison, "Chance to build up an Alliance" in *The Independent*, 13 May 2002
14. *Telegraph*, 11 December 1886. p.5.
15. Unknown, "Historic Alliance Tavern returns to former glory" in *The Independent*, 25 July 2002
16. 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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