

Heritage Citation



Anglican Church Grammar School

Key details

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| Also known as | Cathedral School |
| Addresses | At 79 Oaklands Parade, East Brisbane, Queensland 4169 |
| Type of place | Private school |
| Period | Interwar 1919-1939 |
| Style | Free Gothic, Old English, Queen Anne |
| Lot plan | L2_RP11256; L2_RP11248; L1_RP11248; L1_B3514; L9_RP11086; L38_RP11090 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2011 Date of Citation — March 2010 |
| People/associations | Atkinson, McLay, Conrad, Gargett (Architect) |

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association; (H) Historical association; (H) Historical association

The Anglican Church Grammar School is one of the Great Public Schools of Australia, a boys' high school which was founded in 1912 and established on its present site in East Brisbane in 1918. School House and its extensions, the Canon Jones Memorial Chapel, the Darnell Memorial Library, the Jackson Science Laboratory, Donaldson and the first stage of Magnus Hall represent a significant example of a cohesive aesthetic scheme of buildings constructed between 1918 and 1938 in the interwar Old English style (with vernacular and Gothic elements). The line of trees and fences along Oakland Parade was established by 1946 and provides a continuous frontage and setting for the school. The courtyard area on Cameron's Hill provides an important setting for the buildings. The buildings also provide extensive examples of the work of prominent Brisbane architects Atkinson and Conrad.

History

The Anglican Church Grammar School was founded in 1912 as St Magnus Hall Collegiate School. Its founder and headmaster, Rev. (later Canon) William Perry French Morris, established the school at 'Ardencraig', Toowong, with four students. Morris' school was run privately, as at that time the Church of England did not control any secondary schools in Queensland. There were few secondary schools in Queensland in the early twentieth century; and secondary schools managed by the Anglican Church had not succeeded. In spite of this, Morris expressed the desire that the school would be operated as an Anglican public school, and until it was, he would run it as 'public in spirit'. Prominent Anglican figures took interest in the school and contributed to its development, in particular St Clair Donaldson, the Archbishop of Brisbane, who composed the founding motto.

In 1913, with approximately twenty boys enrolled, St Magnus was amalgamated with St John's Day School. Morris operated the new combined school, called the Cathedral School, at St John's Cathedral. With the development of an educational policy spearheaded by Archbishop Donaldson, the Anglican diocese took over the administration of Rev. Horace Dixon's Southport school (established similarly to Morris' school) in 1913. The adoption of Morris' school followed in 1914, with Morris retained as headmaster. The school became public and was officially renamed the Church of England Grammar School.

Assisted by Archbishop Donaldson, the school acquired an additional property at Chelmer in 1915 to accommodate its increasing numbers, but by 1917 it had outgrown these premises as well. A selection of land (about 30 acres) adjacent to Norman Creek at East Brisbane, formerly part of the Barker Estate, was purchased from two local land owners, Frank Melton and Waverley Cameron. The new property was almost entirely bushland, but was preferred to an inner-city location because of the potential for expansion. It also met recommendations given by Dr Ernest Jackson for the new school site. 146 students attended classes on the new site in February 1918, using a hut purchased from the Y.M.C.A. as their classroom.

Architects H.W. Atkinson and Charles McLay were contracted to design a school house in August 1917. The building was funded from the school's profits and the students' fundraising endeavours. School House was completed and opened on 10 June 1918, having cost just over ?9,000. It was the first construction in Morris'

larger scheme of Old English-style red brick and tiled buildings for the school.

In 1923 a foundation stone was laid for a chapel. The Canon Jones Memorial Chapel (Canon Thomas Jones had taken an interest in the school) was designed by the eminent architects H.W. Atkinson and H.A. Conrad, along with David Wales, the designing draughtsman. According to Morris, the hand-selected brickwork was laid by World War I veterans who refused to go to another job until the brickwork was finished. It was consecrated by the Archbishop of Brisbane on 4 May 1924. Morris was particularly pleased with the Chapel's dimensions, which resembled a small English parish church, and its red bricks, which invoked a sense of 'solidarity, consistency and religious presence'.

By 1925, the school had purchased two adjoining properties, as well as land across Norman Creek, to add to the school grounds. Conrad, Atkinson and new partner Powell made extensive additions to School House in 1928, including the construction of a five-storey Tower Block, adding three storeys to the lavatory block. The Goodwin wing, containing dormitories and classrooms, was also added to School House. Finally, an extension was built upon the existing the kitchen wing, with a store, garage and maids' bedrooms.

Further expansion was halted by the Depression. While the school itself remained profitable, struggling families were assisted by a scholarship program which depleted the school's funds. But in 1933, after the school received \$5,000 from the estate of John Darnell, Atkinson and Conrad were again commissioned to design the John Darnell Memorial Library. J. Hutchinson constructed the building for \$4,159 and the library was opened in 1934. A western wing addition to School House, to be used as the new Preparatory School, was opened at the same time. It was originally called 'Gerald' after Archbishop Gerald Sharp, who had died earlier in the year.

Morris' development scheme for the school accelerated in the mid to late 1930s. Intensive construction saw the opening of at least one building a year from 1935 to 1938. All buildings were designed by Atkinson and Conrad, who by this time held prominent positions within the Queensland Institute of Architects and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. The first stage of Magnus Hall opened in 1935, the same year Morris was appointed as an honorary canon. North Goodwin (a senior dormitory and class room) was added to Goodwin by May 1936. Boarding house Donaldson opened in 1937. The Jackson Science Hall (named in honour of Dr Edward Sandford Jackson, a 24-year School Council member who died months before the building was finished) was opened on 31 August 1938. The completion of the Jackson building gave the school the largest of its 'Three Sisters' on Cameron Hill: the Chapel, Darnell and Jackson.

Although school numbers had increased to 440 boys in 1939 and 600 in 1944, the Second World War prevented any further buildings from being added to the school before 1947. However, a flagpole and platform construction called the 'Churchill Post' was erected outside the Chapel in 1941. A sundial, purchased for the benefit of the Red Cross, was placed in front of the Post in 1946.

Volunteers, including the Parents and Friends' Association and students and staff, contributed to the clearing and landscaping of the property over the life of the school. By 1946 the school featured a continuous frontage of large trees and fences along Oaklands Parade, which remains in place today.

The school's development continued, despite Canon Morris' retirement in 1946. Conrad and later partner T.B.F. Gargett designed several buildings for the school, including The HK Wade Memorial Library (opened in November 1959); new Science Laboratories (opened June 1962); Morris Hall (opened 1962 by Princess Alice); the Stanley Preparatory School Classroom Block (opened February 1964); the Arthur Midson Memorial Building (opened August 1964); the Lanskey Science Block (1967) and the Roberts Centre (1969). Conrad and Gargett also designed extensions to Magnus Hall which were completed in 1952, 1959 and 1961. At the opening of the final extension, Headmaster H.E. Roberts praised the architects for their 'imaginative planning and their skilful

direction of the four stages of the building.’

Additional buildings in the school include: Arnott (1981); Fisher (1987); Gerald (1990); Hayward (1990); Midson (1990); Jensen (1994); Strong (1994). The buildings erected from 1990 are situated on the western side of the school, between Barker St and Oaklands Pde.

In 1984 the school once again changed its name, this time in line with the diocese’s adoption of the term ‘Anglican’ replacing ‘Church of England’. The school is now officially named the Anglican Church Grammar School, although it is more commonly known as ‘Churchie’.

Description

The Anglican Church Grammar School comprises structure and landscaping elements. The buildings are situated on the land bordered by Oaklands Parade and Norman Creek include School House and its additions, Donaldson, the Chapel, Darnell, Jackson and the single-storey wing of Magnus. The landscaped component is the continuous landscaped frontage along Oaklands Parade from the intersection with Heath St to the front of School House (as well as the 6m/10m curtilage?) The courtyard area on ‘Cameron’s Hill’, the land adjoining Chapel, Darnell and Jackson and containing the sundial and Churchill’s post, is important as a visual setting for the buildings (but not physical fabric.)

All of the included buildings are red brick with terracotta tiled roofs, designed in the interwar Old English style. While most of the buildings prominently feature Gothic elements, School House contains some vernacular aspects, particularly its verandahs.

School House, completed in 1918, is a north-facing two-storeyed building with a gabled hip roof, with chimney and cupola. Verandahs on both storeys of the east, south and northern sides are the most obvious vernacular elements. The verandahs include two-rail balustrades, timber slats and decorative posts. A central staircase with balustrading leads up to a central projecting hip-roof portico on these three sides. The portico is continued on the second level, with central pediments with timbered gables. The verandahs have been enclosed since its original construction. Other vernacular elements are a vented roof and Marseilles roof tiles.

Tower Block, on the southern side of School House, is the five-storey 1928 addition with a pyramid roof. It features climbing buttresses and a tapering display of varied brick.

The eastern wing of School House, Goodwin, is two storeys with a gabled hip roof. The verandah, on the eastern side, is 15.2m x 3.6m. Goodwin also contains Old English features of castellation, strong buttresses and half-timbered gables. The upper storey has red hardwood floors and brick walls. The western wing matches Goodwin, though it is smaller in scale to fit its use as a Preparatory School. The school crest features in the street level windows. It also has a projecting upper window and half timbered gables.

The Canon Jones Memorial Chapel is single storey (75ft x 27ft x 27ft - Morris) building, with a Marseilles terracotta roof. Its Gothic elements distinguish it from School House: an entrance porch on the southern side with a gabled roof, stone steps and a segmental arch, and a large stained glass window. External features include large buttresses, stone tracery and mullioned bay windows. The bellcote next to the entrance (represents) an asymmetrical vertical element on the skyline.

The John Darnell Memorial Library is a single storeyed building, with a Marseilles tiled gabled roof. It is similar to the Memorial Chapel, with Gothic features. The exterior entrance porch is constructed with Helidon stone and holds the foundation stone. A deeply recessed doorway is set into the porch, with a massive stone arch with a carved grapevine design. The rooms are divided into an entrance vestibule, a large main room with a smaller 'quiet library'. Glass doors lead into the vestibule which has a tiled floor, handsome panelling, coffered wood barrel vaulted ceiling of plaster decorated with enriched Tudor style strapwork and pendants. The main and quiet rooms have clear glass windows with leaded bars, with the school crest in stained glass in bay windows. Top lighting is above the bookcases and large easily opened bay windows admit light and air.

The single storey wing of Magnus constructed in 1935 is a brick gabled roof building used for classrooms. (Same style.)

The Jackson Science Laboratory is two storeys on the eastern side with a red tiled gabled roof. It is similar to the Chapel and Darnell, though the upper storey of the eastern side includes an arcade with segmented arches. Its prominent Old English features are decorative half-timbered gables, clear glass windows in lead frames and strong buttresses.

South-facing Donaldson is similar to the Chapel and Darnell, but has a timber porch.

(The Oaklands Parade street frontage runs from School House to Heath St intersection, providing a continuous border of fence and trees. The 'Cameron Hill' area adjacent to Darnell, Jackson and Chapel, containing Churchill Post (1941) and the sundial (1946) provide context for the buildings.)

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 large development reflecting the pattern of development in East Brisbane during the twentieth century

(significant expansion but impacted by the Depression and the Second World War).

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as an appealing group of interwar Old English brick buildings with vernacular and Gothic elements, adhering to a consistent design style over a period of twenty years.

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 an example of the work of prominent Brisbane architects H.W. Atkinson and H.A. Conrad, who significantly contributed to the construction of Brisbane private schools, including The Southport School (1925), Brisbane Boys' College (1931) and the Somerville House Library (1934).

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 the first secondary school in Brisbane to be successfully run by the Anglican diocese (located on the site since 1918), one of two continuing secondary schools in Queensland to be set up privately and subsequently administered by the diocese.

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 connection with prominent Brisbane citizens, William Perry French Morris, honorary canon of the Anglican Church (1935), Officer of the Order of the British Empire (1955); St Clair Donaldson (Archbishop of Brisbane); Ernest Sandford Jackson (medical practitioner, founder of medical school at the University of Queensland and

foundation member of the Queensland branch of the British Medical Association).

References

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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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