

Heritage Citation

Anzac Cottage No. 34

Key details

Addresses	At 45 Wassell Street, Wynnum, Queensland 4178
Type of place	House
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L89_RP33080
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 29 November 2019 Date of Citation — May 2018
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (H) Historical association

45 Wassell Street was built under the Anzac Cottage and TB Homes scheme, an initiative of the Queensland War Council under the auspices of a sub-committee named the Anzac Committee. Its directive was to establish homes for widows and dependants of enlisted men killed, and later those who contracted tuberculosis in the First World War. The construction of the homes was funded by the Queensland Lottery, the 'Golden Casket' and they were built on donated land using volunteer labour. Only thirty-eight Anzac Cottages were built in Brisbane, many of which no longer survive. All Anzac Cottages and TB Homes in Brisbane were constructed between 1917 and 1932, with this one built c.1920. 47 Wassell St is important as a rare surviving example of an Anzac Cottage in Brisbane.

History

The Anzac Committee was formed as a sub-committee of the Queensland War Council in mid 1917 in an effort to ease the hardship experienced by the widows and children of soldiers and sailors killed in the First World War. The committee was formed in Brisbane to acquire land for the construction of homes for the widows and

dependants of enlisted men, both military and naval, killed in the war and to establish new homes on the land. The scheme provided timber cottages, mostly built on donated land and constructed by volunteer labour. Much of the material used for the construction of the cottages was supplied at cost by many Brisbane businesses.

The costs associated with the establishment of the cottages were funded from the profits made by draws three, four and five of the Queensland lottery, the "Golden Casket", which had been set up by the Queensland War Council to assist the war effort. This was an initiative of the Anzac Committee headed by Harry Coyne, MP.

The committee was also responsible for allocating the houses. A prerequisite for occupancy was that the widow was to be of 'good character', remain unmarried and respectable. The widow was to pay a small rent of 1/6 per week as well as the rates and other expenses. The rental monies were accumulated to fund the ongoing maintenance of the cottages. If the widow was to re-marry it was required that the cottage be vacated. The land was to be held in perpetuity by the Public Curator, with the widow or dependant signing a lease.

In Brisbane thirty-eight Anzac Cottages were built, with the first one opened in 1917. By 1920, a total of 32 Anzac Cottages had been built. This home was allocated to Mrs Mary McCarthy, the widow of Sapper John Michael McCarthy of the 4th Pioneer Battalion. Mrs McCarthy occupied the cottage from June 1920 to August 1964. The cottage was then occupied by Mrs A. R. Freeman.

In June 1923 the Queensland War Council decided to use the balance in the 'Anzac Cottage' fund to build 'TB' homes. TB homes were intended for returned soldiers and sailors suffering from tuberculosis ('TB') and were rented for 8/- per week. Only married servicemen who did not own or were not buying a home were initially eligible and they were required to be members of the TB Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Association of Queensland.

Homes were designed and built under the auspices of the Workers' Dwelling Branch and were of a standard type, different to Anzac Cottages, costing around £700. The Public Trustee managed them in a similar way to Anzac Cottages. By October 1924 nine TB homes had been built.

The design of the TB home shared similarities with precut houses produced by firms like Campbell's and particularly Brown & Board. Both firms were recorded as supplying materials to the Anzac Cottage scheme and produced designs which conformed to the requirements of the Workers Dwelling Act.

In 1927 the War Council agreed to build 23 more homes and terminate the scheme. Proceeds from the Golden Casket in 1929 were allocated towards the construction of more cottages. In 1932, the War Council passed control of the TB Homes and Anzac Cottages to the Public Curator who became the Trustee of the Anzac Cottages Trust. From this time both TB homes and Anzac Cottages were collectively called Anzac Cottages. The War Council was disbanded in November 1932 and the Anzac Cottage Committee ceased to exist.

The cottages continued to be rented to the descendants of Anzac soldiers and administered by the Public Trustee's office. During 1956 all Anzac Cottages in Brisbane and nearby were inspected and it was estimated that repairs and painting would cost £17,000. As it was becoming increasingly difficult to find eligible homeless widows of soldiers or soldiers still suffering from TB, the Public Curator suggested that some of the vacant houses be sold to fund repairs. In 1960 the Queensland Legislative Assembly passed the Anzac Cottages & TB Homes Act which permitted the Public Curator to sell lands held in trust for the construction of Anzac Cottages or TB Homes and to sell vacant cottages for which no eligible occupant could be found. At the time it was reported that three cottages were vacant, 14 let to ineligible tenants and 33 to Anzac widows. Of the 26 TB homes, 22 were in Brisbane, one in Ipswich and three in Stanthorpe.

No.34 at 45 Wassell Street was approved for sale by public auction in July 1969. In 1972 the cottage was re-sited onto one of the two blocks in the holding, and a new house was constructed at 47 Wassell St that year. The last tenancy for an Anzac Cottage commenced in October 1978. By 1983 all but one cottage had been sold.

The Anzac Cottages Trust was wound up in 2000. The fund from the sales of land and cottages was distributed to six charitable institutions providing housing for veterans and used to construct, repair or improve rental units. In 2000 Strathearn in Alderley, the last Anzac Cottage constructed on donated land and administered by the Public Trustee was sold. It was listed on the Queensland Heritage Register in February 2007.

Description

The subject house is a highset single-storey timber house with pyramid hip roof, weatherboard clad external walls and a large timber front deck located on a residential street in Wynnum.

Wynnum is a bayside suburb east of the Brisbane central business district. The subject area has a predominantly residential character with a mixture of early 20th century, mid-century and contemporary housing. Wassell Street is a wide residential street with mature street trees. Buildings on the street are typically one or two-storey with medium setbacks from the front boundaries.

The subject property is located partway along the northern side of Wassell Street. The house has a similar setback from the street as other buildings in the area. The subject house is located at the eastern boundary of a narrow, long lot. A large street tree is located in front of the subject property and vegetation in the property is limited to small shrubs at the western boundary and some small trees in the back yard. A small structure is also noted at the north of the property.

The subject house has a high pitched pyramid hip roof clad in corrugated iron with a ventilator at the ridge. The original verandahs at both front and back are contained under a continued roof line.

The subfloor is enclosed with timber battens and has a large access door at the eastern side. A single flight of unfinished timber stairs leads to the timber front door. Aluminium framed sliding windows extend the length of the western half of the front elevation. The eastern side of the front elevation features French doors that open on to a large deck situated over the driveway.

The eastern elevation has walls clad in larger weatherboard at the subfloor level. Double hung windows are noted on the side elevations with a large bank of glass louvres at the eastern elevation closest to the front deck. Glazed French doors open on to a timber deck located at the rear of the house.

The interior features timber floors throughout. Walls are clad in VJ throughout with simple skirting boards and cornices, wider VJ walls with belt rails are noted in the front living room and dining room. Both bedroom doors feature timber filigree breezeways above the doors.

The subject house is in excellent condition and has seen several additions and alterations including the enclosing of both the front and rear verandahs, enclosing of the subfloor, addition of the front deck and rear verandah.

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

having been built under the Anzac Cottages & TB Homes Scheme to provide accommodation for the family of a Queensland enlisted soldier or sailor who died in the First World War. The houses were funded with the proceeds of the Queensland lottery, the Golden Casket, particularly draws three, four and five.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as a rare extant Anzac Cottage built as a demonstration of community appreciation of the sacrifices of servicemen who died or contracted tuberculosis during World War One.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as a relatively intact typical Anzac Cottage being one of the two styles of cottages built under the Anzac Cottages scheme found in Brisbane.

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

The house has a special association with the work of the Anzac Cottage Trust, a sub-committee of the Queensland War Council and a special association with the Queensland lottery, the Golden Casket.

References

1. 'Anzac Cottage Opened' Brisbane Courier, 9 February 1920, p.7.
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/rendition/nla.news-article20429346.3.html?followup=d66c47201d9a724f574d0681af67c0f9&print=true>
 2. Brisbane City Council. Register of Anzac Cottages and TB Homes No.1. BCA
 3. Brisbane City Council Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Detail Plans
 4. Brisbane City Council. Heritage Unit, research file – Anzac Cottages
 5. Brisbane City Council Properties on the Web
 6. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Queensland Certificates of Title
 7. Miles, J. and Rechner, J. *Anzac Cottage "Strathearn" Conservation Plan* (Brisbane: Miles & Rechner, 2002)
 8. *Queensland Post Office Directories, 1868-1949*
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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.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2020)



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