

## Heritage Citation

### Anzac Cottage No. 48

#### Key details

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Also known as</b>         | Hart  |
| <b>Addresses</b>             | At 128 Dibar Street, Wynnum, Queensland 4178                                      |
| <b>Type of place</b>         | Cottage, House  |
| <b>Period</b>                | Interwar 1919-1939  |
| <b>Style</b>                 | Queenslander  |
| <b>Lot plan</b>              | L592_SL9779   |
| <b>Key dates</b>             | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 December 2017<br>Date of Citation — September 2016 |
| <b>Construction</b>          | Walls: Timber   |
| <b>Criterion for listing</b> | (A) Historical; (B) Rarity  |

128 Dibar Street was built under the Anzac Cottage and TB Homes scheme, an initiative of the Queensland War Council under the auspices of the Anzac Cottages sub-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. 128 Dibar Street 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.

According to records held by the Queensland Public Trustees Office and Brisbane City Council, this cottage is Anzac Cottage No. 48. The cottage was named 'Hart' and was first occupied in March 1921 by widow, Mrs Mary Elizabeth Donovan. War casualty list no.448 published in December 1918 lists Gunner R.J. Donovan of Wynnum dying of illness while overseas fighting, but it has not been confirmed that he was the husband of Mary Elizabeth. In the early years, there was some confusion about the payment of Council rates. In the late 1920s Brisbane City Council wrote to the Public Curator which managed the cottages, pointing out that the rates for the cottage were in arrears for a few years. The Public Curator replied in 1931 that Mrs Donovan had hitherto always paid her bills in advance and that perhaps she was "having one of her periodical spells in hospital".

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.

Anzac Cottage 'Hart' at 128 Dibar St was occupied by Mrs Donovan until she died in September 1944. Her son Ernest Donovan, a seaman in the Merchant Navy, and also a recently returned soldier had also lived there. In 1945 the cottage was allocated to Mrs E.H. Somerfield.

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.

The last tenancy for an Anzac Cottage commenced in October 1978. By 1983 all but one cottage had been sold. Mrs Somerfield was given notice to quit the cottage at 128 Dibar St by March 1983. In 1983 some new construction work was undertaken and the cottage was sold for \$29,000 to someone who lived in nearby Walnut St in May 1983.

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.

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## Description

The former Anzac Cottage / TB Home is now a two storey timber-framed and clad cottage with a hipped roof that extends over the front verandah. The roof is clad with corrugated metal sheets.

Extensions to the side and rear of the house are not of cultural heritage significance.

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# 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:

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### 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.

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### 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.

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## References

1. 'Anzac Cottage Opened' *Brisbane Courier*, 9 February 1920, p.7
2. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/rendition/nla.news-article20429346.3.html?followup=d66c47201d9a724f574d0681af67c0f9&print=true>
3. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage 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, Queensland Certificates of Title and other records
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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