

Heritage Citation



Ardmayle

Key details

Addresses	At 193 Arthur Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006
Type of place	Cottage, House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L72_RP9237; L62_RP9237
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — May 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Brick - Painted

This sturdy brick cottage on a porphyry base was built circa 1887 by builder, developer, and landlord James Ryan. The land on which it is built incorporates a tiny subdivision that preceded the 1885 Undue Subdivision of Land Act. The home of a middle class family, the history of the cottage demonstrates important themes in the local area's developmental history.

History

The slopes on which this house is situated were undoubtedly familiar to the several North Brisbane Tribes which used the New Farm peninsula and 'Binkinba' as a favoured hunting ground. They ranged across the vast stretch of 'open undulating forest' which Surveyor Wade depicted in his 1844 map of the district following the closure of the penal settlement in 1840.

The first sale of land in Fortitude Valley was held in 1844. Nine suburban allotments of two and four acres each were offered at an upset price of £3 per acre. However the land at Kangaroo Point and in the centre of the settlement at North Brisbane was more sought after and when in 1846 the town limits of Brisbane were proclaimed, Fortitude Valley fell outside the town.

By 1854 there were about 150 dwellings in the Fortitude Valley area, then called Booroodabin, stretching as far as Breakfast Creek. At this stage very few commercial premises were established, and Valley residents relied on North Brisbane traders for supplies. Despite these difficulties the population was steadily growing. A government census in 1861 showed that there was a total population of over 1300 people in Fortitude Valley.

This two-lot holding was part of 102 acres acquired in 1861 by James Gibbon, an urban property speculator and a recent arrival in the new colony. It was subdivided in October 1866 into Eastern Suburban Allotments (ESA) 53 and 54. In 1878 Henry Stark acquired the eighteen and four tenths perches of ESA 54 which later became lot 72. In September 1881 he added the neighbouring eighteen and four tenths perches. Stark re-subdivided this parcel in October 1881 to two lots of nine and two tenths of a perch which became lots 61 and 62.

This type of tiny subdivision was the product of population and building booms that accompanied a widespread economic boom in Brisbane in the 1880s. Between 1881 and 1891, Brisbane's population increased from 37,000 to 100,000. More than half the increase in metropolitan population during the period 1881-1886 was concentrated in Fortitude Valley, Spring Hill, Newstead and South Brisbane.

To cater for the influx of working class families, new housing was built on tiny allotments in narrow streets, where speculators had divided estates into the maximum possible number of blocks of land. Tiny cottages sprang up in the streets beyond the Valley's commercial centre. These tiny subdivisions prompted the government in 1885 to pass the Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Act which prohibited the subdivision of allotments smaller than 16 perches.

In July 1882 James Ryan, whose family were aerated water and cordial manufacturers, purchased lot 72 and lot

62. Soon afterwards he borrowed against the land mortgaging it to John Hayes and Cornelius Ryan. Although used by a gardener in the interim, by 1888 James Ryan was living at the property. It is possible James Ryan built the house himself as he is recorded as a timber salesman, labourer and builder/contractor in 1885/86. By 1900 the name 'Ardmayle' is recorded as the name of James Ryan's residence in Arthur St. Perhaps reflecting Ryan's Irish origins, Ardmayle is the name of a County Parish in Tipperary, Ireland.

Evidently seeking his fortune outside the family cordial and aerated water business, James Ryan ceased to be connected with the firm in 1890. Ryan sought to capitalise on the demand for housing and became a landlord. He advertised a five-roomed house in Brunswick St, New Farm to let in 1888 and an eight-roomed house in Spring Hill in 1893 – potential clients were to contact James Ryan at Ardmayle, Arthur Street. James and his wife Bridget prospered, remaining at Ardmayle until Bridget's death at 50 in November 1902. James continued his business letting another house near Beaconsfield Terrace in 1903. After the nomination of Annie Ryan, spinster and Bridget Smith, wife of William Smith, as trustees for Cornelius Ryan, James Ryan died at home aged 71 at Ardmayle on 5 April 1904. Friends were invited to attend his funeral, moving from his late residence, Ardmayle on 6 April 1904 to Nudgee Roman Catholic Cemetery.

Title to the land passed to Annie Ryan who had married Joseph Patrick Power on 28 October 1903. Annie and Joseph Power lived at Ardmayle in 1905 but then let the house to a number of tenants throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The property then passed in 1946 to John William Gilchrist and Ellen Gilchrist, widow. Retaining Ardmayle as a rental investment property, John Gilchrist capitalised on postwar housing shortages and the property was a registered tenement for 10 persons throughout the 1950s. In 1963 the property was registered as a service station. At the time many houses in the Valley streets away from the commercial centre had motor garages and the neighbourhood was frequented by 'larrikins' - gangs of working-class youths who regarded the streets as their playground. The property fell into disrepair in the 1970s and Council ordered repairs to the structure in 1974. Gilchrist sold the house in 1979 to a purchaser who sold it to the Commissioner of Main Roads in 1980 in preparation for a proposed bridge to Bulimba.

Restored and maintained by the Main Roads Department, the house remains a testament to its sturdy construction of brick on a porphyry base enduring the development of surrounding streets from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first. Similarly to the nearby state-listed Doggett's Cottage it demonstrates the skill of a master builder taking pride in his work and the early residential development of the local area that was to become an alternate commercial centre to the city.

Description

Built on porphyry foundations, 'Ardmayle' is a single-storeyed brick cottage with a steeply pitched corrugated iron roof and towering chimney stack. The single-level dwelling was built to maximise its small allotment, being built almost to the front alignment of the block.

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 it is an intact brick house constructed in Fortitude Valley at a time when the locale experienced significant population growth.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as it is an uncommon, substantially intact, nineteenth century brick cottage built on Porphyry foundations.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as it is a substantially intact, nineteenth century brick cottage.

References

1. *Brisbane Courier* 1881- 1904. <http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>
2. R. Lawson *Brisbane in the 1890s* Brisbane:University of Queensland Press, 1987
3. Queensland Post Office Directories
4. Queensland Certificates of Title

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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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