

Heritage Information

Please contact us for more information about this place:
heritage@brisbane.qld.gov.au -OR- phone **07 3403 8888**



Brook Hill Hospital (former)

Key details

Also known as	Brook Hill Convalescent Home
Addresses	At 184 Shaw Road, Wavell Heights, Queensland 4012
Type of place	House, Care facility, Hospital
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L10_RP45976

Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2003 Date of Information — April 2003
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Daisy Hentschel (Occupant)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association

The former Brook Hill Private Hospital was originally constructed circa 1919 as a private residence for Daisy and Joseph Cressey. Around 1928, after the death of her husband, Daisy, who was a trained nurse and midwife, converted the home into a private hospital. The hospital operated until 1953 when it was converted into a convalescent home and in 1966 was re-converted for use as a private residence. This former hospital has played an important role in Brisbane's past by providing health care to many Brisbane residents in the early and mid twentieth century. The substantially intact residence serves as a reminder of one of Brisbane's early rural hospitals and retains significant historical and cultural significance for the local community.

History

The land, on which this former hospital now sits, was part of 70 acres of crown land that was purchased by Thomas Trilly, John Trilly and John Wood on 31 July 1857. The three partners bought the property described as Portion 2 in the Parish of Kedron. Their land was bounded on one side by Kedron Brook and on two other sides by government roads that would become Shaw and Edinburgh Castle Road. The area of Trilly, Trilly and Wood's land purchase was originally known as German Station and it was named after the German missionaries who had established a mission for Aborigines at Zion's Hill (now Toombul) in 1838. This mission closed in 1849 but many German families established farms on the surrounding land, thereby opening up the area for further development.

On 26 May 1884, Mary Anne Shaw, wife of William Shaw, a Kedron Brook farmer, purchased Lot 2. With the opening of the rail line to Sandgate in 1885, German Station changed its name to Nundah. As a result, the area around Cocks (later renamed Rode) Road became known as West Nundah. It was a hilly area used principally for grazing cattle for the local slaughteryards operated by people such as Tom Cocks. The opening of the Nundah Railway Station on 21 June 1882 encouraged more people to settle in the Nundah district. As a result in early 1888, the Shaws decided to subdivide Lot 2 and convert the land into small farm allotments. As part of the land sale organised by the Shaw family, John Gleadhill bought subdivision 3 on 28 March 1888.

Gleadhill was a Nundah farmer and his new purchase added 1 acre and 2 roods to his land holdings. The land was used for grazing for it had limited investment potential. Thus Gleadhill was only able to raise ?20 from the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Society when he mortgaged the land on 14 March 1899. He obtained a further ?10 from the same lender when he mortgaged the land on 8 June 1899. By 11 February 1903, when Gleadhill mortgaged the land for a third time, he was able to borrow ?15 from the Brisbane Permanent Building

and Banking Society. On 20 April 1903, the land transferred to another family member, Daniel Gleadhill. Daniel was a little more successful in using subdivision 3 as an investment property for he mortgaged the land twice during 1910. On 9 February, he obtained ?50 through the City and Suburban Building Society. On 26 April, he obtained a further ?25 from the same firm.

The Gleadhill family disposed of subdivision 3 to Joseph Henry Cressy and his wife Daisy Gertrude Cressey on 26 September 1917. That same day, the Cresseys took out a mortgage for ?75 through the City and Suburban Building Society on their vacant block of land. The purpose of this mortgage is unclear but perhaps it was used, in part, to finance the building of a family home for the Cresseys on their land that fronted Shaw Road. Joseph Cressey is first listed as a resident of Shaw Road in the 1919-20 edition of the *Queensland Post Office Directory*. Thus the Cressey residence at 184 Shaw Road must have been built around 1919. The house may have been built in stages, for the Cresseys mortgaged their house and land on 21 March 1921. This mortgage, provided by the Federal Deposit Bank Limited, was for ?150. This money may have been used for putting an extension onto the house. On 16 July 1921, Joseph Cressey died and the property passed to the sole ownership of his widow, Daisy.

On 19 August 1925, Daisy lost 2 roods of her land to a Brisbane City Council road resumption. The new roads became Cressey, Power and Florence (later renamed Tarm) Streets. As a result a new title deed was issued to Daisy Cressy on 16 September 1925. This showed that her house and land at Shaw Road covered an area of 1 acre and 2 roods. 1928 was an important year for Daisy Cressey. She was a trained nurse and midwife and as result, at the beginning of 1928, she converted her home into a private hospital. Then on 28 March 1928, she married again, this time to Edmund Charles Hentschel. On 1 June, she converted the ownership of her land in Shaw Road to a joint partnership between her and her new husband.

Before World War Two, local private hospitals were a major section of the health care industry in Brisbane, as they augmented the work of the two existing public hospitals - Royal Brisbane Hospital on the northside and the Princess Alexandra Hospital on the southside. These private hospitals were generally run by a nurse/midwife who lived at the hospital. The attending physician was usually the local general practitioner whose role was to admit patients into the hospital and conduct a daily round when he would visit patients and discharge those who had recovered. Maternity duties occupied a large part of a private hospital's business but in a rural district such as West Nundah, farm accidents and childhood illnesses would also have brought in many patients. The most serious medical cases would have been redirected to the Royal Brisbane Hospital.

After World War One, West Nundah and surrounding districts experienced a steady population growth prompted by returning soldiers moving into the new estates such as the Rode Heights Estate, Shaw's Estate, Westwood Estate and Glenora Park Estate. The nearest private hospital to West Nundah was the Virginia Private Hospital (established 1912) at 19 Prince Street, Virginia. Thus by 1928, Daisy Hentschel nee Cressey saw an obvious need for a private hospital to service her local district. Daisy named her private hospital "Brookhill". To help pay for the conversion of her home into a hospital, Daisy sold off 24 perches of her land to John Francis Nolan on 13 July 1928. Brookhill Private Hospital serviced an area that extended to Chermside, Boondall, Zillmere, Geebung and Aspley.

To provide medical services to such a wide area, Daisy Hentschel had to further expand her building. To finance this building work, Daisy and Edmund Hentschel further subdivided their land into 24 perch blocks and then sold off the blocks during a period from 1937 to 1949. Roy Alexander Gleadhill bought subdivision 8 on 16 November 1937. Archibald Wilson Wallace bought subdivision 5 on 30 October 1941. Harold Wilson Neil bought subdivision 4 on 18 April 1945. Subdivision 2 was bought by John Laurence Abbot on 17 July 1945. Subdivision 3 went to Stanley David Jolly and his wife Phyllis May Jolly on the same day. Sarah Elizabeth Neil obtained subdivision 1

on 2 November 1945. The last block, subdivision 7 was sold to Fay Jean Gleadhill and her husband Norman James Gleadhill on 15 September 1949.

During World War Two, West Nundah was marked for major changes. In 1941, with the war entered its third year, plans were made by the Brisbane City Council to turn West Nundah into the ideal new suburb for the postwar period. Modern Queensland Housing Commission homes were planned for wide streets that would meander along the hills of West Nundah. These homes would have views of the expanding city and modern amenities such as a new school and hospital were planned for the suburb. Initially it was proposed to change the name of West Nundah to Beverley Hills but due to the war situation, a more morale-boosting name was chosen. This was Wavell Heights and it was named after General Sir Archibald Wavell who, in 1940-41, had been commander of all allied forces in the Middle East. He was a popular hero of the time as he had led the forces, including Australian troops, that had defeated the Italians in Libya and East Africa and he overseen the defeat of the Vichy French forces in Syria. On 9 October 1941, a patriotic concert at the Imperial Theatre, Nundah, attended by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Brisbane, was held to inaugurate the new suburb. Proceeds from this concert went to the Patriotic Fund.

By 1950, the hospital had become a two-building complex, with the buildings connected by a separate corridor with its own external stairs. Daisy Hentschel continued to operate the hospital until her death on 15 October 1951. The hospital continued to operate after her death It was leased to an E. Trumble, for on 11 September 1953, this person applied the Brisbane City Council to have the hospital converted into a convalescent home. This was a reflection of how the importance of the Brook Hill Hospital had declined because a new private hospital had opened at 62 Handford Road, Zillmere in the early 1950s. Leo Garton Catt and Francis Edward Murray Jones were appointed as the trustees of Daisy Hentschel's estate on 15 February 1957. Thus they became the owners of the Brook Hill Hospital. On the 13 September 1957, they sold the hospital to Ernest and Margaret Sophia Williams. They held onto the property for less than a year before selling it to Gordon and Mary, May, Ann Easton on 3 January 1958. The Eastons also had difficulty retaining the property and on 5 August 1958, ownership passed to James Malcolm Dickinson and his wife Ailsa Margaret Dickinson. Trumble continued to operate the Brook Hill Convalescent Home during this time though its importance further declined when the new Prince Charles Public Hospital opened at 545 Rode Road, Chermside in 1959.

On 8 December 1961, the convalescent home changed ownership again, when Tynsdale John Rendle-Short and his wife Angee Mary Rundle-Short bought the place. Then on 27 August 1964, Robert John Anderson and his wife Elaine Frances Anderson bought the convalescent home. Not long after this, the Andersons finally closed the Brook Hill Convalescent Home. The Andersons applied to the Brisbane City Council on 29 December 1966, to have the former hospital converted into a residence. They put an addition to their residence in 1967 and a carport was added in 1969. On 6 January 1982, the Anderson's property was passed to Ross Malcolm Anderson, Gregory John Anderson, Catherine Elaine Anderson, Rhonda Margaret Anderson, Anita Maree Anderson and Heather Mary Baumgartner. They sold the property at 184 Shaw Road to the current owner, Ronald Thomas Boon on 28 March 1988.

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 evidence of changing patterns in maternal and post-natal care in Brisbane and Queensland during the twentieth century.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as one of the few remaining examples of a private hospital 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

as the former residence of matron Daisy Hentschel who delivered many of the babies born in West Nundah/Wavell Heights area between 1927 and 1951.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, website, post-1946 building cards
2. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
3. Brisbane City Council's Central Library, local history sheets.

4. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 5. John Oxley Library, Brisbane Suburbs – Estate Maps
 6. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
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Note: This information 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 information 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.

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



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