

Heritage Citation



Cannon Hill School of Arts

Key details

Addresses	At 958 Wynnum Road, Cannon Hill, Queensland 4170
Type of place	Hall
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Free Style
Lot plan	L412_SL2045
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 17 May 2013 Date of Citation — June 2011
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (G) Social

The Cannon Hill School of Arts was built in 1923 with funds collected by the Cannon Hill community. The timber building was built at a time when many outer Brisbane suburbs were focusing on establishing local cultural

centres that could be used for community events. As with most School of Arts buildings, a library was included in the design. The Cannon Hill School of Arts has played a continuous role as an entertainment and community meeting place since the 1920s.

History (previous revision)

In the late nineteenth century the suburb of Cannon Hill was a rural outpost, with large farms and limited transportation into and out of the area. With the coming of the railway line to Cleveland in 1889, Cannon Hill became more accessible and suburban development escalated with increased land subdivision and sale. However, it was after 1913 that Cannon Hill's development intensified due to the construction of the Swift Company Meatworks beside the river. Many of the employees moved to Cannon Hill and as a result a small village community developed. By 1915 the Cannon Hill State School had been built, a reflection of the area's population increase. By the interwar period Cannon Hill had a cluster of stores and a Post Office as well as several churches.

As the Cannon Hill community grew it was agreed that a School of Arts would benefit the local area. As early as 1849 Brisbane had been able to support its first School of Arts. The Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Art movement flourished in the later parts of the nineteenth century, aided by subscription and suitable injections of government funding. In Britain, free municipal libraries were taking over the business of lending books, however local authorities in Australia were reluctant to bear the cost of public libraries, seemingly content to sporadically support existing institutions. Even though local government authorities in Queensland were enabled by act of parliament to develop municipal libraries from 1878, none did so. In the half-century or so before World War I many city suburbs and country towns organised their own Mechanics' Institute or School of Arts, which usually provided free or subsidised library service and meeting hall facilities for the community.

In 1917, a parcel of land was made available by the Bulimba Shire Council for the establishment of a School of Arts at Cannon Hill and the community undertook fund raising events to raise money for the construction of the building. A School of Arts Committee was formed in 1920. An example of the fund raising activities carried out occurred in August 1922 when a 'Paddy's Market' was held. The president of the School of Arts committee stated "that a start had been made to erect the building"¹. The School of Arts was completed in 1923.

The final building consisted of a large hall and a library, the floor area being 45 square feet. The front of the building had two sets of stairs that ran from each side of a front and central portico at the entrance of the hall. At each side of the entrance was a set of three casement windows with window hoods. A white picket fence was built surrounding the hall. Immediately after the School of Arts was opened community events were held - dances, musical concerts, dramatic entertainment, weddings and community meetings. The hall was also used by several church groups for their services, the Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

During the Second World War the hall was constantly used for dances that were attended by both the local community and American troops from the 391st Engineers Company that were based adjacent to the School of Arts.

In the 1950s alterations and additions were made to the hall. The front entrance and double staircase were removed and the side and rear of the building extended. The roofline was also altered and the casement windows replaced. The height of the building was lowered. Attempts have been made to reverse this work with the entrance porch being reinstated at the front. The Cannon Hill School of Arts has played a continuous role in the social lives of many members of the Cannon Hill community.

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 an interwar School of Arts building that represents the growth of the area in this period and the community need for social facilities.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as a School of Arts built by and for the Cannon Hill community that has had continuous use since 1923.

References

1. *The Brisbane Courier*, Thursday 17 August 1922. p15
2. Historic Titles, Department of Environment and Resource Management
3. Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Map
4. Apperley, Richard and Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guild to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus and Robertson Publishers, Sydney, 1989
5. University of Queensland, 'Queensland Places: Cannon Hill'
6. Cannon Hill School of Arts: 75th Anniversary 1923-1998, Cannon Hill Community Association, 1998
7. Brisbane City Council Building Cards

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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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