

Heritage Citation



Corner Shop

Key details

Addresses	At 67 James Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006
Type of place	House, Shop/s, Shophouse
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Free Style
Lot plan	L45_RP8955
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — August 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (D) Representative

This timber corner shop and residence, which was originally constructed as a standalone house, was built circa 1878 for puntman and labourer Laurence Muir. Muir lived here until 1917 when he sold the house to Frances Smethurst whose family owned a newsagency on Arthur Street in the Valley. The Smethursts continued to run their shop from Arthur Street until around 1926 when they had the house extended to include a shopfront. They were then able to move the shop and their family to the James Street premises, which they owned until 1940. The building was still in use as a newsagency and house into the 1990s.

History

This building has evolved from a house to a house and corner shop. The house was built for Laurence Muir, a puntman and labourer around 1878. Muir acquired title to the 16 perch block of land in 1875 and in 1878 borrowed £60 from a building society, presumably to contribute to the cost of constructing the house.

At the time of its construction, there were less than a dozen other buildings along this side of James Street between Ann Street and the river. Among them was Thomas Lawless's shop which still stands. The Fortitude Valley area was among the first settled by Europeans after the closure of the Moreton Bay penal settlement of Moreton Bay in the early 1840s. By the mid 1880s the Valley housed a large proportion of Brisbane's residents. It was a heterogenous area, and it was not uncommon for houses to have factories, churches and even hotels as neighbours. Houses occupied many of the streets away from the main commercial sector centred on Brunswick Street. Most of these houses have been lost to redevelopment during the twentieth century

Mass immigration in the 1880s caused enormous growth in Brisbane's population, increasing from 37,000 to 100,000 in the ten years to 1891. This served to intensify settlement in the inner core of suburbs, including Fortitude Valley. Soon Muir's house was joined by others along James Street.

Muir sold the house in 1917 to Frances Smethurst. At the time, the Smethurst family ran a newsagency on Arthur Street, in the block between Brunswick and James Street. They continued to operate from this store and rented the house out. A 1924 Detail Plan shows the house was still without the shopfront in that year. Around 1926 the Smethurst family had the shop added to the front of the house and in that year moved its newsagency to this site. The building remained in the Smethurst family until the 1940s.

The building continued to be used as a newsagency and residence into the 1990s.

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 the working class housing which predominated in Fortitude Valley in the 1870s.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as a good example of a combined corner shop and residence dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

References

1. Post Office Directories
2. Brisbane City Council Sewerage Detail Plan, 1924
3. Titles Office Records

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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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