

Heritage Citation

Edge Hills

Key details

Addresses	At 17 Darvall Street, Taringa, Queensland 4068
Type of place	House
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Lot plan	L2_RP125099
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 29 November 2019 Date of Citation — October 2017
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic

This residence was built in 1911-1912 and is a classic example of a Queenslander Bungalow with full front porch and gable pediment.

Home to prominent Brisbane families such as the Phillips' and Cullinans, Edge Hill (as the building was named by the Phillips' in 1912) was at the centre of Taringa social events during the mid-twentieth century and witnessed the evolution of Taringa as a residential and commercial city-suburb.

It is one of three Traditional Queenslander character homes still standing on Darvall Street (previously Hill Street), and is an important link to the area's social and economic history.

History

The suburb of Taringa was originally part of the Indooroopilly local government area. It became an authority in its own right in 1890 when the Taringa Divisional Board was created under the *Divisional Boards Act 1887*. The name 'Taringa' comes from the combination of two Aboriginal words tarau (stones) and nga (made up of), which together means 'place of stones'.

Large tracks of land were originally owned by notable pioneers such as Thomas Lodge Murray Prior, James Henderson, Richard Gailey and Robert Cribb until the 1870s when the land began to be subdivided. Taringa, situated between Brisbane and Indooroopilly, had a station on the Ipswich railway line from 1875, and land sales started from the late 1870s, situated among rural acreages. The suburb continued to be settled and had grown to such an extent by 1919 that the suburb was included in the Fire Brigade Act for property protection, and was incorporated into the Greater Brisbane Council in 1925. The construction of the University of Queensland at St Lucia in the 1930s positioned Taringa as a residential hub for students, and the suburbs' close proximity to the Brisbane CBD (approx. 6km) made it a popular choice for professionals looking for an easy commute to work. This has increased steadily in recent years, with medium density dwellings becoming more prevalent in the suburb.

This property sits on subdivisions of the original portion 38 and portion 42a, purchased by Thomas Lodge Murray Prior in 1860 and 1865 respectively. Prior used the land to run his cattle from the Darling Downs through to his extensive holdings in Cleveland, and it remained unimproved. Significant subdivisions and resubdivisions had occurred from 1876 when Walter Horatio Wilson purchased the portions and resubdivided them. Graham Lloyd Hart purchased several subdivisions and largely retained them until the late 1880s when he sold off further subdivisions. Alexander John Turner bought four of these resubdivisions in 1888, but did not build on them. Both men were professionals in their own fields and bought the land as an investment as they lived in other areas of Indooroopilly during their ownership of this property. Hart was a Partner at the Queen Street solicitors firm Hart and Flower, and Turner was a Partner of chartered accounting firm Turner and Strong, also based in Queen Street.

The Union Trustee Company of Australia Ltd obtained ownership of the property (Resub. 102, 103, 118 & 119 of Sub. 11-13 of Portions 38 & 42) in 1904, when large portions of Turner's properties were sold off. It remained under Trust until June 1911 when Thomas Tonks purchased the property, however he then sold it to Jessie Marion Phillips (wife of Arthur Sydney Phillips) in February 1912. There is no evidence that Tonks built a house on the land prior to selling it. Jessie Phillips advertised for staff in May 1912, suggesting the very rapid construction of this house of that it was already started or completed.

It is therefore possible that Thomas Tonks either built the residence in the 8 months he owned the land, and then sold it to the Phillips family who were able to move straight in; or he started the construction and the Phillips completed it.

Arthur Phillips was born in Gloucestershire, England in 1866, and Jessie Collie in Falmouth, Cornwall in 1864. Although they lived in similar areas, it is highly doubtful that they would have immigrated to Australia together in the 1880s. They were married in 1890 in Queensland. Jessie and Arthur Phillips were socialites of high standing in the Indooroopilly/Taringa area, holding bridge parties and dances at their home. Their activities were covered extensively in The Telegraph, The Brisbane Courier and The Queenslander. Arthur Phillips owned the auctioneering firm A. S. Phillips & Sons Pty Ltd, based in Queen Street. Both Arthur and Jessie Phillips were staunch patriots and were very outspoken in their support of conscription during WWI - Jessie was on the working committee promote support for the referendum which was held on 28 October 1916. They were also very proud that, as advertised in the paper, their nephew had been given the rare opportunity to join the Australian Flying Corps and had obtained his commission.

The Phillips family remained in the house until 1939 when they moved to an apartment in Gregory Terrace. Prior to moving, Mrs Phillips held an auction of their household furnishings and "appointments", which included a piano, gramophone, records, chairs, sewing machine, and large items of furniture, which were unable to fit in

their new residence. The advertisement for the property indicates the lavish lifestyle which the Phillips' enjoyed – 6 bedrooms, basins in the bedrooms, staff quarters, double garage (at a time when petrol was rationed and motor vehicles were still seen as a luxury), glass house, aviary, tennis court and putting green. Life at the Phillips is a snapshot into the lives of the social elite in Brisbane during the first half of the twentieth century.

There were two changes of owners over the war years until Thomas Cullinan bought the property in 1946. An advertisement placed by him in *The Telegraph* indicates one of the major social problems of post-war Queensland – returning servicemen who lost their jobs when they enlisted for war service and were unable to find a new position on their return.

Cullinan advertised for a handy man, but stipulated that applicants were to be “ex-servicemen, pensioner”, that accommodation and meals were included plus a weekly salary of £30, and directions on how to get to the property plus a promise to refund the bus fare. This was generous and telling of the socio-economic upheaval that the war had caused to working class Queenslanders.

Cullinan also added further luxuries to the property – lights to the tennis court and a swimming pool. He passed away in 1953, and his wife Kathrine sold the property to Allan and Eleana Humphries in 1955.

Description

This property is constructed in the Bungalow style with full front porch and gable pediment. It is constructed from timber and has a broken-back bungalow roof, which appears to have been replaced. The roof has an ornamental cap at the top ridge of the roof. The gable pediment has a horizontal tie beam resting on exposed purlins surmounted by timber battens over fibro or plaster sheeting.

The front steps are at right-angle to the house, leading up to the gabled porch. The balustrading matches the rest of the verandah. The verandah posts are square posts rising to the ceiling with elongated brackets in a geometric/keyhole style. The balustrading is three rails with geometric brackets connected to the square post between the two top rails, and dowel inserts between the bottom and middle rails.

The property is surrounded by a white picket fences – the top of the picket is rounded to match the brackets of the verandah. This is clearly an addition by the current owners, as the fence is not there in a photo from August 1999. The gardens have also been tidied significantly in recent years.

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 represents the transition of Taringa from a semi-rural suburb on the outskirts of Brisbane Town, to a professional and affluent residential area of large houses on large land holdings of multiple lots.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a prominent, attractive and largely intact Federation-era residence situated high on a slope and set back from the street with generous grounds and fine verandah detailing. The 1770m² garden setting echoes the former 8012m² holding and includes the semi-circular drive and attractive vegetation around the perimeter.

References

1. Ancestry.com. www.ancestrylibrary.com
2. Brisbane City Council Building Cards
3. Brisbane City Council Detail Plans
4. Digitised newspapers and other records. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>
5. Centre for the Government of Queensland. Queensland Places. www.queenslandplaces.com.au
6. Queensland Certificates of Title and other records
7. Queensland Post Office Directories
8. Queensland Electoral Roll
9. Judy Gale Rechner, *Brisbane House Styles 1880 to 1940: a guide to the affordable house*, Brisbane: Brisbane History Group Studies No. 2, 1998

Copyright Brisbane City Council

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)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane