

Heritage Citation



Fig Tree Lodge

Key details

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| Addresses | At 351 Priors Pocket Road, Moggill, Queensland 4070 |
| Type of place | Farm house |
| Period | Victorian 1860-1890 |
| Style | Bungalow |
| Lot plan | L38_SP105867 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 17 May 2013 Date of Citation — September 2011 |
| Criterion for listing | (A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic; (H) Historical association |

Fig Tree Lodge was built circa 1889 for Joseph Sinnamon and his family. The timber house was part of the 'Trinity Stud', a large farm at Prior's Pocket owned and run by the Sinnamon family. Joseph Sinnamon was one of the earliest farmers in the Moggill district and was famous for his breeds of Jersey cows. Fig Tree Lodge continues to be used as a farmhouse and is an exceptional example of a nineteenth-century farmhouse in the Moggill district. It is a representation of the early settlement of the area as a farming district.

History

The Moggill district was noted for possible agricultural possibilities as early as 1823 by Lieutenant John Oxley on his explorations down the Brisbane River. He reported "the country...[is] well adapted for cultivation or grazing the timber abundant". As European settlement began in Queensland, the Moggill area was soon home to several early European squatters. The area was first surveyed in 1849. The first resident squatter in the district was William Sheehan who illegally established a cattle station on Crown land on the banks of Pullen Pullen Creek. Sheehan occupied this land prior to 1849 as Plan 1118.21 from that year notes the existence of the cattle station. Darby McGrath was another early European pioneer of the district. McGrath was granted a lease for 46 acres in 1849 on which he and his brother John established a farm.

Much of the land in the Moggill district was cleared through logging, thus opening the way for farming. Dairy farms were established in the Moggill district throughout the late nineteenth century. Crops such as arrowroot, potatoes and corn were planted to provide extra income for dairy farmers. Livestock and poultry farms were also established in the district. Pineapple farms were an important feature of the Moggill landscape. As the population gradually increased in the district, the need for certain services arose. By 1866 the district had a post office, a school and a cemetery.

The peninsular of land delineated by the Brisbane River at Moggill when first cleared was originally called Toocoobah. In the 1851 survey map of the land it shows all the portions were owned by Thomas Prior. Thomas Lodge Murray-Prior was a pastoralist and at this time owned a large station in the Logan district named 'Broomelton', he then moved to another large station in the Burnett district. Murray-Prior served as Queensland's first postmaster-general. In 1876 a large portion of his land at Moggill was transferred to his son Thomas De Montorenci Murray-Prior.

In 1879 Joseph Sinnamon purchased thirty-four acres of this land on the peninsular. Joseph had arrived in Australia from Ireland in 1862. As part of the pioneering Sinnamon family, Joseph originally lived at Seventeen Mile Rocks until he could establish his own farm. Joseph was one of ten children that came to Brisbane with their parents, James and Margaret, from Ireland in 1862. After acquiring land at Seventeen Mile Rocks, the Sinnamon family established a successful farm and contributed to the progress of the district.

The first evidence of Joseph Sinnamon residing at his farm in Moggill is found in the Electoral Rolls. In 1889 he is first recorded in Moggill, prior to this he is listed at Seventeen Mile Rocks. This coincides with the evidence provided in the Post Office Directories that also first lists him at an address in Moggill in 1889. Therefore, it is likely that the house was constructed in the late 1880s.

Joseph Sinnamon was an important figure in the Queensland dairy industry in this period. As early as 1896 Sinnamon was winning agricultural show prizes for his Jersey cows. His farm became known as the 'Trinity Stud'

and was well regarded for the breeding of these cows. In 1930 his farm was mentioned in a feature about the Moggill district in the Brisbane Courier, it stated "Some dairymen...have consistently maintained Jersey herds. Mr. J. Sinnamon is notable in this respect, his stock being of excellent quality. He owns a particularly good looking Jersey bull, valued at 200 guineas, and some young stock in his paddocks looked very promising" (The Brisbane Courier, Saturday 25 February 1928, p20). Sinnamon's Trinity Stud continued to be one of the best Jersey breeding farms in Queensland until well into the 1940s.

It is not clear when the nineteenth-century farm house became known as 'Fig Tree Lodge' but it is repeatedly referred to in the social pages of several Brisbane newspapers from as early as 1916. The large timber house has had only a few alterations made to it over the years. The house is situated in an exceptional pastoral setting, on a gentle rise from the Brisbane River.

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 the home of Joseph Sinnamon, early Moggill pioneer, it is a reminder of the early settlement of Moggill as a farming community.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as an example of a large timber farmhouse constructed in the late nineteenth century that has had continuous use as a farmhouse and as such it is rare in Brisbane.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a nineteenth-century timber farmhouse situated on the rise of a hill above the Brisbane River, it remains in its pastoral setting surrounded by paddocks.

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 farm of Joseph Sinnamon, early Brisbane pioneer and owner of the successful cattle stud, 'Trinity Stud', from the 1880s to the 1940s.

References

1. Cameron, Ian, *A Green and Pleasant Land: An Account of the Pullenvale-Moggill District of South-East Queensland*, Ian Cameron, Pullenvale, 1999
2. Wager, Libby. *Mud-maps of Moggill*, Pullenvale Field Study Centre, 1988
3. *Queensland Places*, Moggill and Bellbowrie, University of Queensland, <http://queenslandplaces.com.au/home>
4. Sugars, Bruce and Mabel Kelly, *A Time to Remember: Descendants of Moggill Pioneers*, Souvenir Booklet, 1988
5. Lawson, Ronald. *Brisbane in the 1890s: a study of an Australian urban society* (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1973)
6. Historic Titles, Department of Environment and Resource Management
7. Queensland Post Office Directories
8. Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Map
9. Queensland Electoral Rolls
10. Sinnamon, H. V., *The Gentleman Farmer's Paradise*, 1980
11. *The Brisbane Courier*, Monday 28 April 1930, p20
12. *The Brisbane Courier*. Thursday 13 August 1896, p5, 6

13. *The Courier Mail*, Saturday 3 July 1937, p21
 14. *The Courier Mail*, Thursday 8 February 1945, p4
 15. *The Brisbane Courier*, Saturday 25 February 1928, p20
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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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