

Heritage Citation

NEW RESIDENCE AT GRACEVILLE, FOR WALTER TAYLOR, ESQ.



Glenrae

Key details

Addresses	At 95 Bank Road, Graceville, Queensland 4075
Type of place	House
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L1_RP143343
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 December 2017 Date of Citation — December 2014

Construction	Roof: Tile; Walls; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Hare Krishna - mid-1980s to c2011 (Association); Walter and Louisa Taylor - Residence from 1928-1962 (Occupant); Walter Taylor (Architect)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (F) Technical; (H) Historical association

'Glenrae' is a substantial, reinforced concrete and timber house situated in generous landscaped grounds on the Brisbane River. It was designed and constructed by prominent Brisbane builder and engineer, Walter Taylor, in 1928 as his residence. It was the second Taylor family home built in Graceville and hosted many society events for the local community. Walter Taylor's widow, Louisa, continued to live at 'Glenrae' until her death in 1962. In 1967, 'Glenrae' was sold to the Methodist Church. It was leased for use by the Hare Krishna religious organisation for some twenty five years from the mid 1980s until circa 2011.

History

'Glenrae', an attractive, two storey residence with a reinforced concrete base and timber walls, was designed and built by Walter Taylor circa 1928. It was the second home that Taylor built for his family at Graceville.

The house is situated on the Brisbane River on a large block of land (4 076 m²). This block was part of a parcel of one and three quarters of an acre purchased by Walter Taylor's wife, Louisa, in 1915. Walter Taylor built an earlier family home, 'The Gables', on this parcel of land in nearby Molonga Street circa 1915-16. The Taylors resided at 'The Gables' until they moved to their new home in Bank Road.

Walter Taylor was born the son of a draper and joiner in Sheffield, England in 1872. His family immigrated to Brisbane when he was ten years old. His father (also named Walter) established himself as a building contractor but was declared insolvent after his accidental death on a building site in 1889. Young Walter worked with his father in the family business and learned the building trade.

In 1900, Walter Taylor married Louisa Braun, and, in 1902, they sailed with their young daughter to England. Whilst there, Taylor gained further experience in the building industry, including methods of reinforced concrete construction. He returned with his family to Australia in 1912.

In Queensland, Walter Taylor undertook construction contracts with many leading architects, building Trittons' furniture warehouse at North Quay (1922, demolished); Brisbane Newspaper Company bulk stores at William and Margaret Streets (1925, dem'd), and warehouses and offices for Hooper & Harrison Ltd (1923), G Smith Esq (1920), Hoey Fry Ltd (1924), and Gordon and Gotch (1925). He also built the nine story 'Craigston' flats in Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill (1928), No 2 Block (1930) and the extension to Lady Lamington Nurses Quarters at the Brisbane General Hospital (1931), the RSL Club in Elizabeth Street, Tristram's Aerated Water Factory at South Brisbane (1930) and the Breakfast Creek Bridge, Albion (1927).

In addition to his two family homes, Walter Taylor designed several other buildings in the Graceville area. During the Interwar period, the Chelmer/Graceville locality continued to develop as a popular, residential area enjoying rail access to the employment and retail opportunities of the city. Streets on the western side of the railway line, such as the iconic Laurel Avenue, were home to many fine residences. Walter Taylor played a significant role in encouraging growth in the area.

Walter Taylor is perhaps best known for the steel and concrete Indooroopilly Toll Bridge (1932-36) which he both designed and constructed. The bridge was renamed the Walter Taylor Bridge after his death aged 82 in 1955. Other buildings designed and constructed by Walter Taylor in this locality include several residences, the Central Buildings on Honour Ave (1924), Graceville Methodist Church (1930) and the Graceville Methodist Memorial Hall (1951). Taylor also built himself an office and bulk store for his prefabricated concrete blocks at 11 Rakeevan Rd between 1924 and 1928. The Central Buildings, his bulk store and 'Glenrae' were among the first buildings Taylor constructed using his innovative reinforced concrete blocks.

Concrete construction was used in Brisbane as early as 1870 when engineer, Charles Lambert Depree, built a small concrete building in Fortitude Valley to demonstrate the possibilities of building with this material. Depree patented his concrete building method which used moveable formwork in 1871. Employed by the Queensland Railway from 1873 to 1890, he oversaw the use of concrete in the construction of railway culverts and tunnels. In 1885, Depree built his family home, 'Goldicott', at Toowong, using his poured concrete methods. Walter Taylor continued to develop the use of concrete in construction, and later used a method of pre-cast reinforced concrete blocks that were able to be used in a similar fashion to masonry.

In addition to playing a significant role in construction in the Graceville area and elsewhere in Brisbane, Walter Taylor was heavily involved in community work and the administration of the Methodist Church in Queensland for almost fifty years. He was president of the Graceville Progress Association and the Indooroopilly-Chelmer Centenary Memorial Bridge League. An inventor, designer, and builder, Taylor was also an accomplished bookbinder, exhibiting in Brisbane in 1924 in conjunction with Lloyd Rees. His wife, Louisa, also played a prominent role in the local community, particularly as part of the Graceville Methodist Ladies Church Help Society.

The Taylors hosted many social events at 'Glenrae', most notably an annual Garden Party following the fete of the Graceville Methodist Church. In 1930, this fundraising effort contributed to the costs of constructing the Graceville Methodist Church. In 1933, the 'chief attraction of the afternoon's entertainment' was a model of the new toll bridge over the river at Indooroopilly which was under construction.

'Glenrae' functioned as a home office as well as a family residence. According to Taylor's grandson, Noel Davis, the house had a large recreation room with a billiard table and a desk where Taylor could work from home. An adjoining room contained bookshelves and a drafting table. Beneath the house was a large and well equipped workshop where he spent many hours working. According to Taylor's grandson, Noel Davis, the stained glass windows of the Graceville Methodist Church were made here. Both 'The Gables' and 'Glen Rae' boasted the unusual innovation of turntables in their garages for the family car. 'Glen Rae's turntable has been filled in and cemented over. The large grounds between the house and the river have been extensively landscaped with concrete steps and terracing.

In 1945 Louisa was issued a new title for 3 roods and 17 and 6/10 perches around 'Glenrae'. She continued living at 'Glenrae' until her death in 1962 when the property was purchased by Thelma Davis. Davis also acquired just over 18 perches on the Bank Road frontage previously sold by Walter Taylor in 1957.

After Louisa Taylor's death, the whole property was transferred to the Methodist Church in 1967. The Church renamed the house 'Koinonia' and used it as a conference centre. The property was sold into private hands in 1978 and leased, according to a neighbour, in 1984 until around 2010 to Hare Krishna organisation.

'Glenrae' and its landscaped grounds are part of the legacy left by Walter Taylor who made a significant contribution to the development of Graceville and the city of Brisbane and was a prominent member of the local community.

Description

'Glenrae' is a substantial, two storey home constructed from timber and precast concrete blocks. It has a tiled roof and is set amongst a substantial, landscaped garden with walled terraces that step down to the river. A masonry wall in a complementary style provides the entrance from the street.

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 example of the fine homes constructed in Graceville during the interwar period when the area was continuing to develop as a fashionable residential suburb.

Technical

CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

as an early example of a residential building constructed using Walter Taylor's design of precast concrete bricks.

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

for its close association with prominent Brisbane builder and engineer, Walter Taylor, who built the house as his family residence and was a significant member of the local community.

References

1. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Queensland Certificates of Title
2. *Walter Taylor South Character and Heritage Study*, BCC Heritage Unit, 1997
3. Queensland Post Office Directories
4. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plan no. 1474, 1949
5. *Architectural and Building Journal of Queensland*, August 10, 1928
6. *Queensland Government Gazette*, 14th January 1956
7. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
8. JOL Estate Map Collection and photographic collection
9. Noel Davis. *The Remarkable Walter Taylor*. Oxley-Chelmer History Group Inc.: 2011
10. Digitised newspapers and other records. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>
11. Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. Queensland Heritage Register entry for Mount St Mary's Convent (601601). Viewed 17 Nov 2014
12. Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. QHR entry for Graceville Uniting Church Complex (601584). Viewed 18 Nov 2014

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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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