

Heritage Citation



Grosvenor Hotel and Duncalfe & Co extension (former)

Key details

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| Also known as | Duncalfe Chambers |
| Addresses | At 332 George Street, Brisbane City, Queensland 4000 |
| Type of place | Hotel (accommodation), Shop/s |
| Period | Victorian 1860-1890 |
| Style | Filigree |
| Lot plan | L2_RP776; L5_RP776; L4_RP776 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2009 Date of Citation — June 2006 |

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| Construction | Walls: Masonry |
| People/associations | John Hall and Son (Architect) |
| Criterion for listing | (A) Historical; (H) Historical association |

Construction of the Grosvenor Hotel extension, designed by architectural firm John Hall and Son, began in 1883 and was completed in 1886. In 1924, the extension was sold to Duncalfe & Co., a men's clothing company that occupied the building next door. The building was subsequently renamed 'Duncalfe Chambers' and was occupied by the company until 1969. It remains one of the few examples in Brisbane of a nineteenth century hotel extension and is one of only two such extensions designed by prominent architectural firm John Hall and Son.

History

This extension to the Grosvenor Hotel was started in 1883 and, due to various delays, was completed in 1886. In 1924 title of the extension passed to the tailoring company, Duncalfe & Co, whose principal building was next door to the extension. The building continued to be used by Duncalfe & Co until 1969.

The Grosvenor Hotel was erected in 1881-82 at the southwest corner of George and Ann Streets. The architect and property speculator, John Richard Hall (1835-83), designed the building. Hall was a prominent Brisbane architect who began his private practice in 1864 before going into partnership with his son Francis Richard Hall in 1883.

The impetus for the construction of a new hotel on the site no doubt came from the opening of a new Supreme Court building at the southeast corner of George and Ann Streets in 1879. Thus the new Grosvenor Hotel attracted Brisbane's legal fraternity and it could also expect to draw passing trade from travellers using Brisbane's first railway station in Roma Street, which opened in 1873. The first licensee of the Grosvenor Hotel was Albert Albertson, who had previously run the old Supreme Court Hotel.

Advertising for the hotel emphasised both the quality of its accommodation and its prime location:

(Facing the Supreme Court, Land Office &c. Three Minutes to the Railway Station.) This First-class and Popular Hotel has accommodation for VISITORS and FAMILIES unsurpassed by any hotel in the Colony.¹

Albertson was clearly successful in attracting trade, particularly those seeking accommodation, as the Hotel had to be extended by 1883. J. R. Hall again was commissioned to design this extension, though by this time, he was in partnership with F. R. Hall as John Hall & Son. The death of J. R. Hall in 1883 may have caused a delay in the project because the Grosvenor Hotel extension at 332 George Street was not completed until 1886.

In 1888, the lease for the Grosvenor Hotel was transferred to the Castlemaine Brewery and Quinlan Gray & Co, the company that would eventually become Queensland's most famous brewer, Castlemaine Perkins. The

company had first released its Castlemaine XXX Sparkling Ale to the public in 1878. By the 1880s, another 'X' had been added to the brand, and the 'XXXX' trademark was registered in the 1890s. In this period major brewers bought hotels or secured leases to them to ensure sale of their product. Thus the Grosvenor Hotel would have been one of the first XXXX hotels in Brisbane, an association which continued into the twentieth century. Castlemaine Brewery and Quinlan Gray & Co finally bought the hotel in 1924. In the same year the company sold the extension to the adjacent business, Duncalfe & Co.

Duncalfe & Co was formed in 1897. In 1900 they began trading as tailors and hatters from 338 George Street and in 1908 purchased their shop space, which comprised half of the building. Business continued to prosper, as did the retail precinct in George Street more generally, and in 1924 the company purchased the former Grosvenor Hotel extension. A connecting doorway was knocked through the adjoining walls of the top floor of both buildings to provide access. In 1926, the company contracted the building firm of Leutchford Ltd to alter the shop front of both the extension and Duncalfe's original building next door. The principal change made to the shop front of the extension was the replacement of the awning, which was consistent with Duncalfe's other building and much of the street landscape in George Street at this time.

The building was renamed 'Duncalfe Chambers' and it appears that Duncalfe & Co used the first floor of the building (connected to the original nineteenth century building next door) and let the street level shop out to various tenants, including a dressmaker and restaurant. By 1940, both the former Grosvenor Hotel extension and the original Duncalfe & Co building were known as 'Duncalfe Chambers'. In 1949 Duncalfe & Co was renamed Duncalfe & Co (Queensland) Pty Ltd, indicating that the company had expanded into other Australian states. Duncalfe & Co retained ownership of the building until 1969, when it was sold to Gold Coast Textiles Pty Ltd, thus maintaining a continuous link with the clothing industry over a considerable period of time.

The retail fortunes of George Street declined from this period onward, particularly with the emergence of suburban shopping centres in the 1960s. Nonetheless, there are a number of important buildings that remain in the precinct that illustrate the flourishing trade carried out there in the past. In particular, the 1886 extension to the Grosvenor Hotel retains the form of the hotel and is one of the few such nineteenth century extensions to survive the constant makeovers of Brisbane's hotels.

Description

The original building was a two-storey masonry building in the typical fashion of the Victorian Filigree style to match the Grosvenor Hotel.

The original awning was later replaced with a suspended awning. The upper veranda, with its lacework, has also been removed leaving the first floor arched windows exposed above the newer street awning.

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 a significant extension to the popular Grosvenor Hotel undertaken during the economic and population boom of the 1880s.

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 an extension designed by the prominent architectural firm of John Hall and Son.

References

1. *The Queensland Figaro*, 21 May 1887
2. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, post-1946 building approval cards
3. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
4. Norris, Merle (Compiler). *Brisbane Hotels and Publicans Index: 1842-1900*. Brisbane History Group. Sources No.6. 1993
5. Brisbane City Council Sewerage Maps
6. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
7. Donnelly, J.J. *Hotels of Brisbane*, B. Arch thesis, University of Queensland, 1967
8. John Oxley Library, photographic collection.
9. Lawson, Ronald *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*. St Lucia U of Q Press, 1973

10. Mahlstedt & Son, City of Brisbane Detail Fire Survey, Map No. 4, 1951
 11. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
 12. State Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, *Buildings of Queensland*, Jacaranda, Brisbane, 1959
 13. *The Queensland Figaro*, 1887
 14. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
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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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