

Heritage Citation



H. E. Burgess Farmhouse

Key details

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| Addresses | At 545 Robinson Road West, Aspley, Queensland 4034 |
| Type of place | Farm house, Farm |
| Period | Federation 1890-1914 |
| Style | Filigree |
| Lot plan | L3_RP118206 |
| Key dates | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — May 2008 |
| Construction | Roof: Tile; Walls: Timber |

People/associations Burgess family (Occupant)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

This Federation era farmhouse was built circa 1902 for Henry Burgess, a member of a prominent local family of fruit farmers and tradesmen. The Burgess family settled in the Aspley District in the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century built many homes for district residents. This farmhouse is representative of the Burgess family's building and farming operations in the Aspley and Zillmere Districts.

History

The property, on which this house stands, was first purchased by Deed of Grant, on 3 October 1865, by Christian Winkel of Brisbane. Winkel paid £20 for Portion 389 that comprised 20 acres, 1 rood and 5.5 perches of former crown land.

Title deeds indicate that it was transferred on 29 January 1875 to Michael Ruthenberg, a local farmer from the Cabbage Tree Creek district (now Aspley). There is no evidence to indicate that Ruthenberg lived on this property for he was already listed in the title deed as a local resident at the time of purchase. However his name only appears as in the *Queensland Post Office Directories* in the 1883-84 edition when he is listed as a resident of the nearby Downfall Creek (now Chermside) district. Ruthenberg mortgaged for Portion 389 for £2,000, with provision for further advances, on 15 May 1887. There is little evidence to suggest that the money was used to build a house on Portion 389 and it seem likely that Ruthenberg used the money raised through this mortgage, for business purposes.

Ruthenberg's mortgagor, the Queensland National Bank, sold the property to Henry Edwin Burgess on 19 February 1902. By this time, the district east of Cabbage Tree Creek was known as Zillmere. The *Queensland Post Office Directories* list Henry Burgess as being in receipt of mail in the Zillmere area, for the first time, in 1903. This would suggest that Burgess built the farmhouse at 545 Robinson Road West in 1902, shortly after he purchased Portion 389.

The Burgess family migrated from Devonshire and owned farms in the Aspley and Zillmere Districts, farming pineapples and bananas. Male family members were tradesmen and used their skills to widen the business base of their farms. For example, John Burgess built eight workman's cottages along Zillmere Road and then renting them for six shillings each. Therefore it is possible that the Burgess family, particularly John Burgess built the farmhouse on Henry Robinson's land.

Portion 389 was subdivided in 1913 into Lots 1 and 2. The farmhouse was on Lot 1 where Henry Burgess continued to live while he sold Lot 2 Edwin Alfredson on 13 December 1913. On 25 June 1921, Alfredson, of Zillmere, also purchased Lot 1 using a £900 mortgage from John James Burgess to do so. When John Burgess died on 8 August 1924, the mortgage passed to the control of his spinster sister, Elizabeth Burgess. The Alfredson family lived at the farmhouse and they worked the two blocks of land that comprised Portion 389 throughout the 'Roaring Twenties', the Great Depression, the Second World War and through to the 1960's.

The lifting, in the 1950's, of the area's status as part of Brisbane's 'green belt' had ushered in a period of rapid urbanisation and many of the small farms began to be subdivided for residential blocks. The Queensland Housing Commission resumed 5 acres and 8.6 perches of land from Alfredson's Lot 1 on 20 August 1952. The Housing Commission was endeavouring to cope with the serious postwar housing shortage, which was exacerbated by the lack of labour and materials. The Housing Commission and private developers, coupled with the aforementioned legislative change, were instrumental in changing the land use of Aspley dramatically in the 1950s.

Edwin Alfredson died on 15 February 1962. His 5 acres and 13.7 perches of land, that included the farmhouse at 545 Robinson Road West, was transferred to his son, Edwin Harold Alfredson. In May 1968, due to increasing pressure from developers wanting residential land along Robinson Road West, was further subdivided into 4 small and 1 large block. The large block, comprising 4 acres, 1 rood and 19.7perches including the farmhouse, was retained by Alfredson while the smaller blocks were sold. In July 1968, Alfredson further subdivided his land into 21 blocks. As a result, the farmhouse at 545 Robinson Road West was left on a block comprising only 33.4 perches.

The farmhouse finally passed from the hands of the Alfredson family in 1972. Kenneth Reginald Jackson and his wife Margaret Eileen Jackson took ownership of the property on 24 May 1972. They funded the purchase through a mortgage provided by Edwin Harold Alfredson. Diana Margaret McClymont and her husband Malcolm Alexander McClymont obtained title on 3 July 1973. The next owners were Graham Gordon Meredith and his wife Kathryn Ann Meredith, who took control of the property on 21 October 1977. The current owners of the farmhouse at 545 Robinson Road West are John and Leisa Mackenzie.

Description

The residence sited along Robinson Rd West is a timber construction, symmetrical in design and with timber boards wall cladding. In fairly recent times sheets of what appear to be decramastic tiles were applied, probably over the existing corrugated metal roof.

The house appears to be set on low stumps and has a pyramid roof and an encircling veranda, with a separate lower roof typical of 19th century houses. The front steps are centred along the front verandah and opposite to the front door.

The verandah roof has a pediment, supported by a pair of square timber posts, with a decorative motif highlighting the front entry to the house.

A closer inspection would be necessary to ascertain if the verandah cast iron balustrading and brackets are part of the original structure or a later addition.

The front timber picket fence contains an entry feature consisting of two posts with a shaped beam across the top and over a low picket gate. Mature trees in the grounds also contribute to the prominence of the site in the streetscape.

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 federation era farmhouse built in an area of Brisbane once designated a 'green belt,' which later succumbed to rapid urban development.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as a former farming residence built in the Little Cabbage Tree Creek district (Aspley) when farming was the pre-dominate industry within the local area.

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 a house that was built by the Burgess family who were influential as farmers and builders in the Aspley district.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, website
2. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
3. Brisbane City Council's Library, *Local History – Zillmere – Geebung – Aspley – Bald Hills*
4. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
5. John Oxley Library, *Parish of Nundah, County of Stanley, L.A.D. of Brisbane map*, (1899 land grant map).
6. John Oxley Library, Brisbane Suburbs – Estate Maps
7. Queensland Government, *Queensland Pioneers Index 1829-1889*, (Brisbane: Department of Justice and Attorney General, 2000)
8. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
9. Teague, D.R., *The History of Aspley*, (Brisbane: Colonial Press, 1972).

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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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