

Heritage Citation



Key details

Addresses	At 9 Gray Road, West End, Queensland 4101
Type of place	House
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Filigree
Lot plan	L2_RP10978
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Information — October 2006
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

People/associations William Alexander Wilson (Association)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic; (H) Historical association

'Hillside' was constructed circa 1888 for prominent local businessman William Alexander Wilson as a rental property for upper middle class tenants. The house is directly linked to its neighbour, 'Wanda Walha,' the family home of Wilson, which was built around the same time. Both houses are believed to have been designed by either Arthur Morry or William Cotton Clark. 'Hillside' is a house of substantial proportions and presents a fine example of the Victorian Filigree style of architecture.

History

This property was part of a land grant issued to John Perrell Wilkie of Brisbane in January 1854. Wilkie paid £32 for 16 acres of crown land, in South Brisbane, that had been given the designation Portion 54. In August 1874, Edward Thomas Jones Wrench and Robert Pemberton Richardson, both of Sydney, bought Portion 45 from Wilkie. They held the title for only a few months before transferring Portion 45 onto Robert John Gray in January 1875. Gray had already obtained the adjacent Portions 46 and 47 in September 1874, so this latest purchase brought his total land holdings in this part of Hill End to 33 acres and 1 rood. This made Robert Gray one of the largest landowners in the area, a fact reflected later in the naming of Gray Road after him.

In 1885, Gray subdivided Portions 45, 46 and 47 into two allotments, with the smaller allotment of Subdivision 1 being drawn the land in Portion 45. The larger allotment, designated as Subdivision 2, Gray sold to John Potts and Gustavus Caesar Horstmann in January 1885. The remaining 3 acres and 1 rood of land of Subdivision 1 were sold, by Gray, to William Alexander Wilson in March 1885. Potts and Horstmann resubdivided Subdivision 2 into smaller blocks and eight of these were subsequently sold off to Wilson during 1885 and 1886.

Wilson also dabbled in resubdivision, when, in April 1886, he had Subdivision 1 converted into Allotments 147 and 148. His multiple land holdings in Hill End were a reflection of his success as a grocer and owner of several stores in the area. Wilson had been born in the West Indies where his Irish father was a teacher. William Wilson had learnt the grocer's trade at Enniskillen in Ireland before immigrating to Sydney in 1863. In 1873, he moved with his family to Brisbane where he set up shop in George Street. By 1886 he had moved his business to shops in Hill End and had expanded his interests to include a partnership in a local lumber firm, the West End Sawmill and Steam Joinery Company. In that year Gray had his family home, which he named 'Wanda Walha' built next door to the land currently occupied by 9 Gray Road.

There is some confusion as to the architect who designed 'Wanda Walha'. The Queensland National Trust suggests that it was "probably designed by Arthur Morry, whose own home 'Nassagaweya' stands nearby." But the book Queensland Architects of the 19th Century gives credit for 'Wanda Walha' to architect George Cotton Clark. Clark (also known as Clarke) had been commissioned to design two dwellings at Hill End. 'Wanda Walha' as erected first at 15 Gray Road and the Clark began work on the nextdoor house at 9 Gray Road. This residence was 'Hillside'. The use of timber to build both 'Hillside' and 'Wanda Walha' was still unusual for large Brisbane private homes in the 1880's but it would become the norm by the turn of the century. The deciding

factor for the choice of building for both of these homes was probably the easy accessibility of timber from Wilson's nearby West End Sawmill.

'Hillside' was completed by 1888 and Wilson had probably intended to offer it for lease, as he was having other, smaller wooden homes built nearby for a similar purpose. But in May 1888, Edward Cook Pritchard and his wife Mary Ann purchased 9 Gray Road. While the Pritchards were undoubtedly the first occupants of 'Hillside', Edward C. Pritchard's occupation remains a bit of a mystery. In the dual 1889 Post Office Directories, he is listed as both the Reverend Pritchard and as the manager of the Mutual Temperance Life Insurance Company. The Pritchard's time at 'Hillside' was only brief for in March 1889, the property was sold back to William Wilson. Thereafter Wilson rented 'Hillside' out to professionals such as Lewis Phillips, an auctioneer.

By the early 1890's, Wilson had also placed 'Wanda Walha' on the rental market. But the rental from 'Hillside' and his other properties were not enough to save Wilson from financial difficulties. In 1910, Wilson put 'Wanda Walha' up for sale but with little success and, in 1912, all Wilson's land was repossessed by his mortgagee, William Beit. Beit had the land containing 'Hillside' and 'Wanda Walha' resubdivided and sold. The block containing 'Hillside' was reduced to its existing size of 32.4 perches and in June 1912, the property was sold to John Sutherland. Frances Lilian Wilkins, wife of Frank Wilkins purchased 'Hillside' in April 1916. Frank Wilkins worked as an indenture agent for shipping interests and his family became the longest continuous owners of 'Hillside'. After Frances Wilkins death in 1962, the property was shared amongst 10 family members: Frank Wilkins, George Maxwell Wilkins, Frank Geoffrey Wilkins, Stanley Alan Wilkins, Roy Wilkins, Leonard Watson Wilkins, Vida Francis Lewis, Clarice Rosalind Cunningham, Nancy Lilian Wheeler and Myra Caroline Sutherland.

The Wilkins family relinquished control of 'Hillside' in February 1965, when they sold the property to Robert and Eileen Lawrence. Prior to this sale, in September 1964, Robert Lawrence had gained Brisbane City Council approval to convert 'Hillside' into 10 flats. Reflecting the poor, run-down image that South Brisbane had at that time, 'Hillside' had a rapid turnover of owners in the 1960s and 70s. The Lawrences sold the property to Dereck Leslie Rintel in June 1966 and he, in turn, passed 'Hillside' onto Demitrios Katsadoros and Zampeta Catsadoros in February 1968. Katsadoros enclosed the house's verandah in order to create even more rooms for rent. In September 1972, George and Vespina Petavarakis purchased 'Hillside'. In April 1973, a proposal to convert the property into a four-storey block of eight units never got beyond the planning stage.

In September 1975, Kieron Owen Timothy Quinn purchased 'Hillside' and began restoring it to its original condition. Tim Quinn was elected as Alderman for The Gabba Ward of the Brisbane City Council in 1985. In 1997, he became the Deputy-Mayor of Brisbane.

Description

This two-storey timber residence is an example of Federation Filigree. Being symmetrical in design it has a short-ridge corrugated iron roof core with a stepped verandah roof and a pediment centrally placed on the top level. On the top level the square verandah posts are decorated with cast iron brackets and valances and on the ground level are decorated with vertical battening. The dwelling has cast iron balustrading on both levels and is raised above ground level on square posts.

The front door is most ornate door to the house. It is low waisted with a pair of rectangular panels above and

below the waist. The door is framed by glass sidelights with fanlights above. Glazed french doors with fanlights open onto top and bottom verandahs.

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

That demonstrates West End's residential development in the late nineteenth century.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as an architect-designed, Victorian Filigree style house of substantial proportions.

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 rental property built for successful local businessman William Alexander Wilson.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Building Approval cards
2. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plans
3. Brisbane City Gallery, Biographical Details on Brisbane City Councillors, 1994
4. Commonwealth Electoral Rolls for the Subdivision of Brisbane South – 1917
5. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
6. Hogan, Janet, *Historic Homes of Brisbane*, National Trust of Queensland, 1979
7. Hogan, Janet, *The Elite Brisbane House*
8. Queensland Heritage Register File No. 600228 – ‘Wanda Walha’
9. Queensland Post Office Directories
10. Queensland Trustees Review – July 1910
11. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay 1994, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia

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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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