

Heritage Citation



Homestead Park

Key details

Also known as	Archerfield Homestead
Addresses	At 9 Atherton Circuit, Forest Lake, Queensland 4078
Type of place	Defence site, Park, Tree/s
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Lot plan	L48_RP838399; L409_RP841182
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2011 Date of Citation — April 2009
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic

Archerfield Homestead was established by Mr. Farley in 1872 and was one of the first stations between Brisbane and Ipswich. Homestead Park is all that remains of this important site. A large avenue of twenty-three mango trees, originally planted in the 1870s, outlines the front drive of the homestead. Scattered around the park are mature trees planted at a time when Archerfield Homestead was an important farm. These include a Kauri Pine, Date Palms, Macadamia Nut trees and Jacaranda trees. During the Second World War Archerfield Homestead was an important military and communications base for the United States Army's Ordnance Depot.

History

The Richlands area was first settled by Europeans in the mid-nineteenth century. Initially the land formed part of Dr. Stephen Simpson's cattle and horse breeding station 'Woogaroo'. In 1859 approximately 15, 000 acres of this property was purchased by Mr. Farley. The holding was named 'Archerfield' and incorporated the area now known as Richlands, Inala and Forest Lake.

Farley had established the station 'Archerfield' by 1872. The homestead that was built was a timber two story building with verandahs on both floors, thirteen rooms and iron roof. Stables and workers' quarters were constructed in the grounds and a double rail fence surrounded the entire property. In the late nineteenth century some of the labour on the station was done by South Sea Islander labour (then known as Kanaka labour).

Many of the plantings within Homestead Park today were originally planted in the late nineteenth century by Farley, this includes the avenue of twenty-three mango trees that ran up to the homestead. In 1881 the property was purchased by Michael 'Stumpy' Durack and the homestead was rebuilt due to a termite infestation in the original building. Archerfield Homestead continued to operate as a working station well into the early twentieth century.

The significant plantings that remain on the site reflect the pattern of development and layout of the homestead. The existing trees include varieties such as Macadamia, Date Palms and Jacaranda. As a large pioneering station Archerfield was an important rural outpost nestled between Brisbane and Ipswich. Unfortunately the homestead burnt down in the 1930s. Although a smaller cottage was built on the site the homestead never returned to its former prominence.

During the Second World War the property was used as the United States Army's command post and co-ordinated all communications for the area. In early 1942 Richlands became host to the largest U.S Ordnance Depot in the South West Pacific. Covering an approximate area of twenty square miles, the Darra Ordnance Depot (as it was called by the military) was swiftly constructed by the 636th Ordnance Company of the United States Army on the land behind the corner of Archerfield and Government Roads. Ordnance refers to military supplies that include weapons, ammunitions, equipment, tools, and combat vehicles. The work carried out within an ordnance depot comprised the procuring, protection and distribution of ordnance as well as repairs and maintenance, in many cases it was extremely dangerous work. One unfortunate accident occurred at the Darra Ordnance Depot in 1945 when one American soldier was killed and two others injured as a gas shell exploded that was being prepared for dumping.

The mission of the Ordnance Corp was to "support the development, production, acquisition and sustainment of weapons systems and munitions, and to provide explosive ordnance disposal, during peace and war, to provide

superior combat power to current and future forces in the United States Army.” The Ordnance Depot at Richlands included a vast munitions dump that required strict security at all times. Recollections from many Richlands residents describe the rows and rows of large American trucks full of ordnance coming and going from the Depot to the Wacol railway station or to the Port of Brisbane. The main security gate was situated on the corner of Archerfield and Government Roads and was entered and exited through a patrolled boom gate with a number of other security posts scattered on the periphery of the Depot. In the 1942 detailed survey map produced by the Department of the Interior, Works and Services Branch Queensland (Survey and Property Section) the ordnance depot is shown as a vast area of paralleled roadways with a series of symmetrically laid slabs connected by tracks. Temporary igloo structures were erected on the slabs and covered with tarpaulins to be used as storage units. The aerial photos taken a year after the cessation of the war support the survey map. The Darra Ordnance Depot was manned predominately by black soldiers, under the direction of white officers.

In 2005 the Richlands-Inala History Group funded and erected a memorial stone in Homestead Park. The stone was to commemorate the presence of American and Allied forces in the area during the Second World War. The inscription on the plaque reads:

‘Command Post Place’ Honour Stone.

To Honour United States of America and other Allied Forces stationed in this vicinity during World War II and to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of the war in the Pacific.

Unveiled and Dedicated on August 31, 2005.

A project of the Richlands-Inala History Group.

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 it provides tangible evidence through its extensive and mature tree plantings, including the avenue of mango trees, of early pioneering life in this area. The park is also an important site in Brisbane's war time history as it was the central command post of the United States Ordnance Depot during the Second World War, and this has been acknowledged by a commemorative stone within the park dedicated to the American and Allied Troops serving in the Richlands area.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as it has retained the original layout of Archerfield Homestead through its mature plantings that include a large Kauri Pine, Macadamia Nut trees, Jacaranda trees and an avenue of mature mango trees.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

particularly the avenue of mature mango trees that was originally laid out on the front drive of Archerfield Homestead and the scattering of mature trees that were once part of the homestead.

References

1. Resilience of 'White Australia', *Journal of Black Studies*, V. 25, No. 3, p.331-348
2. *U.S. Army Ordnance Corps on-line*
3. E. Daniel Potts and Annette Potts, *Yanks Downunder 1941-1945: The American Impact on Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1985
4. Kay Saunders, "Racial Conflict in Brisbane in WWII: The Imposition of Patterns of Segregation upon Black American Servicemen", *Brisbane at War*, Brisbane History Group Papers, No. 4, p 29-34
5. Kay Saunders, *War on the Homefront: State Intervention in Queensland, 1938-1948*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1993
6. Vicki Mynott, *World War Two Stories From Brisbane's South West: Richlands, Darra, Wacol, Goodna and Oxley*, Richlands, Inala and Suburbs History Group Inc, 2006
7. Dan Leach, "An Incident at the Upper Ross: Remembering Black Servicemen in Australia During the Second World War", *Overland*, 2004, p. 82-87

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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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