

## Heritage Citation



**Ithaca Hall**

### Key details

|                      |   |
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| <b>Also known as</b> | Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australia (PAFSOA) Hall         |
| <b>Addresses</b>     | At 53 Kennedy Terrace, Paddington, Queensland 4064                      |
| <b>Type of place</b> | Bank, Shop/s, Hall  |
| <b>Period</b>        | Victorian 1860-1890   |
| <b>Style</b>         | Carpenter Gothic  |
| <b>Lot plan</b>      | L51_RP20751   |
| <b>Key dates</b>     | Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002<br>Date of Citation — May 2001 |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Construction</b>          | Roof: Corrugated iron;<br>Walls: Timber                                    |
| <b>People/associations</b>   | Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australia (Association)            |
| <b>Criterion for listing</b> | (A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (H) Historical association |

This hall is significant as an example of a simple timber Carpenter Gothic style hall built in Paddington in the late nineteenth century. The hall has served a variety of social and commercial uses including bank branch, meeting place, World War II dance venue, shoe repair business and residence over a period of some 110 years. It provides evidence of the activities of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australia (PAFSOA), an organisation involved in providing an early form of health insurance to Queenslanders. The hall serves as a reminder of the development of Paddington in the late nineteenth century.

## History

The hall is situated on land that was part of a parcel of Crown land purchased, by John MacFarlane Ballantine of Brisbane, in February 1870. Ballantine paid 76 and 11 shillings for the 3 acres, 1 rood and 4 perches of land, deemed Portion 806 in the Parish of Enoggera. In March 1880, Ballantine sold Portion 806 to Charles Meills. By 1885, Meills had subdivided Portion 806 into suburban allotments and placed them up for sale. Benjamin Winston bought Subdivision 52, now 52 Kennedy Terrace, in October 1887. In October 1888, Winston transferred this 14.1 perch block to Henry Thomas Stack and solicitor, Robert West Kingsford, who had a Queen Street practice. Both men were members of the Queensland branch of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australia (PAFSOA) and they acquired Subdivision 52 for PAFSOA.

Friendly Societies were organisations devoted to providing financial support for members and their families during periods of sustained illness, throughout old age, and after death. In effect, the societies offered an early form of health insurance protection to those wishing to join their ranks. These societies, such as the Independent Order of Oddfellows and the Foresters, had probably developed from the craft guilds that operated in Britain during the Middle Ages. PAFSOA was a sectarian organisation, the first Australian branch having formed in Melbourne in 1868. Its Catholic counterpart was the Hiberian Australian Friendly Benefit Society, which was founded in Ballarat in 1867.

The first PAFSOA lodge in Queensland was formed in Maryborough on 21 June 1872. Pride of the Valley no. 2, established in Brisbane in 1874, was the second PAFSOA lodge to operate in the state. In 1881, a new lodge, Rose of the Hill no. 16, was founded at Red Hill to recruit members from Brisbane's western suburbs. Thus this particular PAFSOA lodge had been in existence for seven years before it acquired the land at 52 Kennedy Terrace. Kingsford and Stack organised the building of a lodge meeting hall soon after they purchased the property. Stack, as secretary of the Rose of the Hill no. 16 lodge, oversaw the construction and by 1890, the building, which was given the name 'Ithaca Hall', had been erected on the site. The hall was also used, at the time of its opening, as a branch of the Penny Savings Bank. This usage of the hall as a bank did not last very long because by 1895 the site was listed in Post Office Directories as just the 'Ithaca Hall' with R. H. Scott shown

as being the secretary.

Stack's partner in the purchase of the 'Ithaca Hall' site was Robert West Kingsford, who was a leading member of the Queensland branch of PAFSOA. By 1896, Kingsford had risen in PAFSOA to the position of Grand Secretary but he soon became the cause of "what was easily the biggest scandal in the history of PAFS in Queensland". In September, it was discovered that Kingsford had embezzled over £300 from various PAFSOA accounts, including the Funeral Fund, the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, the Lodge Relief Fund and the Management Fund. On 24 September 1896, shortly after the discovery of the missing money and his dismissal from PAFSOA, Kingsford died thereby avoiding both prosecution and public disgrace. So effective were the PAFSOA Queensland executive's efforts to stop the details of Kingsford's embezzlement from reaching the public that, on 5 October, the Pride of the North lodge gave an eulogy to Kingsford and requested a letter of commiseration be sent to his widow.

Kingsford's defrauding of PAFSOA and his death impacted upon the property at 52 Kennedy Terrace. He and Stack had taken out a £300 mortgage on the site in December 1888 and then a second mortgage for ?60 in February 1890. On both occasions the property had been mortgaged to the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Company and it is possible that as a result of the mortgages remaining unpaid, the company seized control of 52 Kennedy Terrace in December 1901. The matter was quickly resolved with the trustees of the Rose of the Hill no. 16 lodge regaining the title to their property in January 1902. By then PAFSOA was thriving with one of its most tangible benefits being the cheap medicines that were sold to members through the various Brisbane Associated Friendly Societies (BAFS) dispensaries. The first BAFS dispensary opened in January 1885 and by 1904 there were dispensaries in South Brisbane, Fortitude Valley, Townsville, Mount Morgan, Toowoomba and Ipswich.

The Rose of the Hill no. 16 lodge retained control of the site until just after World War Two. In the 1930s, Ithaca Hall was also commonly known as the 'PAFSOA Hall.' During 1939 to 1945, the hall was used for a number of war-related activities including fundraising dances for the local residents. Later in the war, the US forces rented the hall for regular Friday night dances that were organised reputedly for just their black servicemen. Military police (MP) patrolled the grounds surrounding the hall but there apparently were no serious incidents reported at these Friday dances.

Brian Stevenson's history of PAFSOA notes that "the immediate postwar years were difficult ones for the Society." The Commonwealth's medical benefits scheme, introduced by the Curtin Government in 1944, was a direct competitor with the primary service offered by PAFSOA to its membership. Thus it became increasingly difficult to recruit new PAFSOA members. When on 31 December 1931, the British Medical Association in Queensland (forerunner of the AMA) ended all special contracts between doctors and PAFSOA lodges, the Society's membership rapidly declined.

It was during this tumultuous period for PAFSOA, that the Rose of the Hill no. 16 lodge transferred the title to its hall and land, in July 1948, to Sidney John Edward Craigie and his wife Naomi. The Craigies immediately mortgaged the property through the National Bank of Australia but by November 1948, their mortgage had been placed in the hands of three trustees – Harold Arthur Walter, Henry Charles Plant and Garnet Edward Gilbert.

In June 1949, Mabel Wright Worrad and her husband Ernest Edward Worrad took over the title to the Ithaca Hall site. Ernest Worrad, a bootmaker, gained Brisbane City Council approval in October 1949 to modify Ithaca Hall. He had a storeroom and office, constructed by builder J.H. Strachan, added to the hall from where he intended to conduct his slipper manufacture and boot repair business. The Worrals' boot repair shop did not last long for in December 1950, they placed the title to Ithaca Hall in the hands of Charles Edward Thomas Hagger and his wife Vera Hagger. The Haggars also made changes to Ithaca Hall to assist with their commercial operations. A

planned extension to the hall, in June 1956, never eventuated but in March 1958, the Hagers had builder H.J. Hodges add a garage on the site. In July 1963, John Edward McCarthy obtained a three-year lease over part of the land at 53 Kennedy Terrace. McCarthy intended to use Ithaca Hall as the site of his clothing manufacturing business.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the property at 53 Kennedy Terrace, changed hands many times. In July 1985, the Durham Road Nominees obtained control of the site for the purposes of turning Ithaca Hall into a photographic gallery and restaurant. Such redevelopment of the Ithaca Hall site was not given approval by the Brisbane City Council and in April 1996 the property was transferred to Karen Shilleto and Judy Wooley. The hall, which is currently in use as a residence, has since changed ownership twice, and is now in private hands.

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## Description

This timber-clad Ithaca Hall is a very simple timber construction characterised by its relatively modest size and simplicity of form. The building presents to the street front a wide and steep street-facing gable with a round ventilator in the gable front. The roof is clad with corrugated iron.

The frontage has a symmetric form with a projecting smaller gable over its entrance. The windows are long and narrow, typical to that of the Carpenter Gothic style.

The small street-fronting trees enclosed behind the timber picket fence partially screen the hall from the street.

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## 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:

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### Historical

#### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as it demonstrates the pattern of Paddington/Red Hill's history in the late nineteenth century, particularly urban development along Kennedy Terrace.

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## Rarity

### CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as it is an uncommon example of an 1890 hall built for a sectarian organisation.

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## Representative

### CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as an example of a nineteenth century timber community hall built for a social purpose rather than for a church organisation.

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## 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 it has a strong association with the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australia, an organisation of importance in the City's history.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council Building Cards
2. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans
3. Buckberry, Dawn (editor), *Padd Paddo Paddington*, (Brisbane: Red Hill Paddington Community Centre Inc. and the Paddington History Group, 1999)
4. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
5. Queensland Post Office Directories
6. Stevenson, Brian, *'Let Brotherly Love Continue' – a History of the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society in Queensland*, (Brisbane: Boolarong Press, 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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