

Heritage Citation



J.W. Robinson Farmhouse

Key details

Addresses	At 544 Robinson Road West, Aspley, Queensland 4034
Type of place	House
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L1_RP103784
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — May 2008
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

People/associations Robinson family (Occupant)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association

Built circa 1892, this cottage is one of the oldest residences in Aspley. It was built for James Walker Walton Robinson, a member of the Robinson family who were prominent district pioneers. J.W.W. Robinson did not follow his family into pineapple farming, but was a gardener, and this modest cottage reflects the presence of those residents who followed other occupations in the Aspley farming district.

History

This property was part of a purchase of crown land made by John Warner, of Brisbane, on 4 March 1867. Warner paid £20 for 20 acres of land that was designated as Portion 400 in the Parish of Kedron. On the same date, Warner purchased the adjoining Portion 406, which also comprised 20 acres. After he bought Portions 398, 399, 401 and 402, it gave him control of 120 acres of land between Robinson Road West and Ellison Road. Warner transferred both Portion 400 and Portion 406 to David Stewart, of Brisbane, on 16 May 1869. Carl Stabe, of Kedron, took over ownership of both blocks on 29 August 1877.

Henry Walton Robinson purchased the 40 acres of farmland in Portions 400 and 406 on 28 November 1882. On the day of purchase, Henry Robinson took out a mortgage for £1,025 on Portions 400 and 406 through the Trustees of the City and Suburban Providential Building and Investment Society. Henry may have needed the loan to fund the conversion of the land to pineapple growing, which the Robinson family undertook in order to supply the J.C. Hutton smallgoods factory that had opened down the road at Zillmere in 1881. The Robinson family had been purchasing land in the Aspley and Zillmere districts for quite some time, with William John Robinson having owned Portion 399 that was next to Portion 400, since 1869.

Portion 400 was subdivided into two blocks by Henry Robinson, with the 3 acres of subdivision 1 passed to John Robinson and John Low on 25 May 1887. Subdivision 2 of Portion 400 was transferred to James Walker Walton Robinson on the same day. James gained an 'L' shape block comprising 17 acres, 2 roods and 10.7 perches of farmland. On 8 June 1894, James Robinson secured a mortgage of £40 through the Queensland National Bank Limited on his property. By this time the area east of Cabbage Tree Creek had become known as the Zillmere district. James Robinson does not appear as a resident of Zillmere in the Queensland Post Office Directories until the 1892-93 edition. At that time, his occupation was listed as a gardener.

Thus it would appear that the house at 544 Robinson Road was erected around 1892, and that its completion was paid for by the mortgage that James Robinson took out in 1894. Both the 1946 aerial photograph and the 1965 sewerage maps of Aspley reveal that James Robinson had a modest home, that was best described as a cottage, erected at 544 Robinson Road. This would have befitted his position as a gardener. Certainly James Robinson had a much smaller home than that of his relative, Henry Walton Robinson who had a farmhouse built on Portion 399 (now 500 Robinson Road West) c1891.

Jean Elms, the wife of Mark Elms, obtained the title to the cottage and land on 16 April 1910. She held onto the property for just over a year before passing it to Cynthia Martha Currie, the wife of Charles Currie, on 9 May

1911. She mortgaged the cottage and land for £125 through the Bank of New South Wales (now Westpac) on 5 May 1911. Neither Elms nor Currie are listed as Zillmere residents at this time, so during the period 1910-1911, the cottage was either rented or remained vacant.

On 16 December 1912 Samuel Francis Mison, of Zillmere, took ownership of the property. On the day that he purchased the cottage and land, Mison mortgaged it for £150 through Christopher Charles Locke Burgess. The mortgage may have been taken out to support Mison's other farm on Robinson Road, for he had already purchased another of the Robinson family's property, on Portion 399, in 1905. Mison was not listed in the Queensland Post Office Directories, as living in the Zillmere district, until 1921-22. At that time his occupation was listed as a factory manager and it is likely that he was employed at the J.C. Hutton smallgoods factory as this was the only factory anywhere near Robinson Road. As Mison did not reside in the area between 1912 and 1921-22, it is presumed that the cottage at 544 Robinson Road West was placed on the rental market.

Samuel Mison's copy of his mortgage agreement with Burgess was destroyed in a fire, so a new copy was issued to him on 29 November 1913. He mortgaged the farm for a second time, on 24 March 1924, with the new lender being a widow, Annie Bertha Early. After Samuel Mison's death on 26 May 1940, his estate passed to his widow, Mary Annie Mison.

Mary Mison held onto the property until 24 November 1950, when she transferred title to husband and wife, George Leslie Campbell and Beatrice Louise Campbell. George Campbell died on 22 March 1951 and so Beatrice became the sole owner of the cottage and land. On 6 June 1952, Alexander Stewart became the next owner of the property. Five days later he obtained a mortgage from Beatrice Louise Campbell.

By the early 1960s, with the land at Zillmere and Aspley being converted from small farms into housing estates, it was not long before the old Robinson family farmland was subdivided into suburban blocks. On 11 March 1963, the farm was split into 56 subdivisions. A total of 2 acres, 3 roods and 6 perches of this land was resumed by the Brisbane City Council for road purposes. Gordon Wallace Estates Pty Ltd placed these housing subdivisions up for sale, with subdivision 1 being the block containing James Robinson's 1892 cottage.

This block was sold to Rita Maria Woodman, the wife of Donald George Woodman, on 24 April 1970. They became the joint owners of 544 Robinson Road West on 24 September 1970. They mortgaged the property through the Bank of New South Wales on 12 January 1972. Desley Elizabeth Mahon and her husband William Michael Mahon became the next owners, on 10 December 1973. The Mahons took out a mortgage, also through the Bank of New South Wales, on the house and land, on 10 December 1976.

On 29 February 1980, Kathleen Scott Stormant took control of the title deeds to the property and received a mortgage from Bank of New South Wales. After Kathleen changed her surname to Whitehead, she obtained a new title deed and a second mortgage, through A.G.C. Industrial Limited, on 5 July 1989. Rose Vitale, Mary Rinaudo and Quieta Mantellato took one-third shares in the property on 6 March 1990. The current owners of 544 Robinson Road West are Edward Rakesh Sharna and Deborah Charmaine Turnbull, who gained title on 3 March 1992.

Description

The dwelling, located close to the front boundary on Robinson Road, was original sited on a small farm. This "timber and tin" cottage has timber board cladding and a transverse hipped corrugated iron roof.

The cottage has a separate curved verandah roof to the front in a fashion common to nineteenth century dwellings.

The cottage appears to be elevated on short stumps. The front verandah was partially enclosed at a later time causing the front door to be off-centre to the frontage. A small round pipe flue extends through the centre of the verandah roof.

Front steps, originally centred along the open front verandah, lead directly up to the front door. 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.

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 an 1892 cottage built at the beginning of the period (1890s-1920s) when the Aspley District converted from large land holdings to small farms.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as one of very few nineteenth century cottages that survive in the Aspley District, due to the rapid urbanisation that occurred from the 1950s to the 1990s.

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 built by the Robinson Family who were prominent pioneers in the Aspley and Zillmere districts.

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. Teague, D.R., *The History of Aspley*, (Brisbane: Colonial Press, 1972).

Copyright Brisbane City Council

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.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised September 2020)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane