

Heritage Citation

Laurel Bank

Key details

Also known as	St. Pauls' Court
Addresses	At 29 Ellerslie Crescent, Taringa, Queensland 4068
Type of place	House
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queen Anne
Lot plan	L75_RP23358; L76_RP23358; L74_RP23358
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 November 2012 Date of Citation — June 2011
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Edward Ernest Quinlan (Occupant); South Toowong Estate (Association)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic

'Laurel Bank' was built in 1895 by Frederick Robert Sharpe, Managing Director of Thomas Heaslop and Co. Pty Ltd. As one of several large homes built on the 'South Toowong Estate' in the nineteenth-century, 'Laurel Bank' reflects the increase in affluent and professional Brisbane residents who moved to this area of Taringa as a result of the extension of the railway line. In 1919 'Laurel Bank' became home to Edward Ernest Quinlan, successful Brisbane solicitor and local politician who renamed the house 'St. Pauls's Court'.

History

The area now known as Taringa was a large land holding owned by Mr. McGrath in the 1860s. Very little development occurred in this period. Closer settlement of the area was stimulated by the construction of the railway linking Brisbane and Ipswich. Work started in 1873 with the Railway Commissioner acquiring parts of Louis Stamp's property at Indooroopilly. The Taringa Station was originally situated closer to the Indooroopilly Station and was opened in 1875. Early rail services to Ipswich included a ferry ride across the river until the first railway bridge was completed in 1876.

As a result of the coming of the railway increased development around Taringa Station occurred. New houses, shops and facilities appeared as the area was subdivided and settled. The efficient public transport into the city meant that many white-collar workers began to call Taringa home and throughout the district large, architect designed homes were built.

In 1884 the 'South Toowong Estate' was created with 173 new subdivisions in the area now known as Taringa. The hill on which the Estate was situated was known as 'Ellerslie' and was marketed at the wealthy and professional, "Situated on the rise of a hill known as Ellerslie, alongside the Railway line, commanding views of the whole City of Brisbane, two reaches of the Brisbane River, and the surrounding mountain scenery. High and dry... suitable for superior residences on sites absolutely unequalled"¹. One of the main selling points for the estate was the proximity to the railway station that ensured ease of transport into and out of the City centre. This appealed to professionals that worked in the City.

Several stately homes already existed within the estate including 'Wilcelyn' on Belle Vue Parade and 'Ellerslie' on Ellerslie Crescent. In 1900 Frederick Robert Sharpe and his wife Matilda Elizabeth purchased 3 roods and 39 perches of land in Ellerslie Crescent. The Sharpes were first listed at the address in 1895, suggesting that the house was built prior to the Title Deeds being transferred to them.

F. R. Sharpe was a successful Brisbane businessman and for many years was Managing Director of Thomas Heaslop and Co. Pty. Ltd, the successful grocery supplier who owned the Queensland wide grocery chain of The People's Cash Store. In 1909 Sharpe was appointed a Justice of the Peace. 'Laurel Bank' was often the scene of social activity in Taringa in this period with Mrs Sharpe often holding events at the house, as evidenced in the social pages of the *Brisbane Courier*. After residing in the house for approximately twenty-four years, the Sharpes sold the property in 1919. An advertisement for the sale of the house was featured in the *Brisbane Courier* in January 1919 and reflected the upper-middle class professional target market and stated:

"Laurel Bank". Situated in Ellerslie Crescent, on charming elevation, convenient to the Railway Station...The Residence is a most substantial one, containing about 5 good rooms and offices, with wide verandahs, with good motor garage, septic tank, and every convenience, also tennis court, bushhouse, good garden, ornamental and fruit trees"².

'Laurel Bank's' new owner was Edward Ernest Quinlan. Continuing the area's pattern of attracting affluent professionals, Quinlan was a successful Brisbane solicitor. Also playing a role in local politics, Quinlan became a candidate for the Lord Mayoralty in 1928 against William Jolly but was not successful. Quinlan at one time changed the name of the property to 'St. Paul's Court' and once again the property became a focus of social activity in the area as Quinlan and his wife Jane Edith held tennis tournaments on the property. According to the *Electoral Rolls* Quinlan had reverted the house's name back to the original 'Laurel Bank' by the 1930s. Quinlan continued to successfully practice law until his retirement in 1947 and remained in the Ellerslie Crescent home until his death in 1952 at the age of 83.

The property was then sold by auction in October 1953. The advertisement for this sale was featured in the *Courier Mail*

on Saturday 17 October 1953, and described the property as “A substantially Built Chamferboard Dwelling, ideally suitable for family residence... it occupies an Outstanding Position, with double frontage allotment... Accommodation includes 5 bedrooms, large lounge and dining room arched, breakfast room off kitchen, pantry, maid’s room, library, front and side verandahs”³. The property was sold to Adam and Elspeth Campbell. ‘Laurel Bank’ is situated on a prominent position on the crest of the hill on Ellerslie Crescent and the large timber home continues to reflect the affluence of its early residents.

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 fine nineteenth-century house that was part of the South Toowong Estate that reflects the increase in professional and affluent residents moving to this part of Taringa.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a large timber nineteenth-century house that displays many of its original features as well as retaining extensive gardens and built on the crest of a hill.

References

1. *The Brisbane Courier*, Thursday July 1884, p8
2. *The Brisbane Courier*, Monday 20 January p10
3. *The Courier Mail*, Saturday 17 October 1953, p15

4. Memories of Taringa Village, Ed. Peter Collins, Taringa History Group, 2006
5. An Introduction to the History of St. Lucia, St. Lucia History Group, July 2006
6. Brown, Peter, "St. Lucia History, 1823-1893", Royal Historical Society of Queensland Journal, Volume 20, No. 1, Feb. 2007
7. England, Marilyn, "William Dart, Sugar Planter of St. Lucia", Royal Historical Society of Queensland Journal, Volume 19, No. 2, May 2005
8. University of Queensland, *Queensland Places*, <http://queenslandplaces.com.au/home>
9. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
10. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
11. Judy Gale Rechner, *Brisbane House Styles 1880 to 1940: a guide to the affordable house*, Brisbane: Brisbane History Group Studies No. 2, 1998
12. Historic Titles, Department of Environment and Resource Management
13. Queensland Post Office Directories
14. *Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Maps*
15. Queensland Electoral Rolls
16. Brisbane City Council Building Register 1936
17. Apperley, Richard and Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guild to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus and Robertson Publishers, Sydney, 1989
18. *The Brisbane Courier*, Friday 6 August 1909, p6
19. *The Brisbane Courier*, Thursday 11 November 1897 p4
20. *The Brisbane Courier*, Thursday 22 October 1914, p15
21. *The Brisbane Courier*, Tuesday 28 October 1952, p3
22. *The Brisbane Courier*, Thursday 12 September 1929, p5
23. *The Brisbane Courier*, Monday 13 February 1928, p3
24. *The Courier Mail*, Saturday 28 December 1940, p5

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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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