

Heritage Citation



Linstarfield

Key details

Also known as	Queenwood
Addresses	At 64 Enderley Road, Clayfield, Queensland 4011
Type of place	House
Period	World War I 1914-1918
Style	Queen Anne
Lot plan	L13_RP122111
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2011 Date of Citation — December 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

'Linstarfield' is an elegant Federation era timber house that was built on two acres circa 1917 for Percy Rylance, a successful mine owner and the father of Brisbane architect Mervyn Rylance. In 1919, the property was purchased by HG Noble, another wealthy mine owner, who expanded the grounds to six acres and made significant improvements including a stable complex (since demolished) to house his racehorses and an imposing sandstone boundary wall which today extends into Alexandra Road. A small timber building which served as staff quarters is located near the western boundary. The house has been altered and extended but the main part of the house has retained much of its original appearance.

History

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Clayfield was a farming area with some industry centred on the local claypits. It also attracted several wealthy residents who established large rural estates such as *Stanley Hall* and *Ralahyne*, both built in the 1880s in Enderley Road. By the early twentieth century, Clayfield was developing into a prestigious residential suburb for the mercantile and professional classes who could afford to build large, often architect designed homes with generous grounds. The historical factors which shaped the physical development of Clayfield and Ascot are reflected today in streets such as Enderley Road, Alexandra Road and Adelaide Street East where graceful homes with extensive grounds provide evidence of the social and economic standing of those that built them. This distinctive character was described in a *Brisbane Courier* article of 1930:

Clayfield has always attracted prominent public, business and professional men, who have built for themselves charming homes, surrounded by delightful lawns and gardens. And it is for this reason that Clayfield has always been regarded as one of the most beautiful suburbs of Brisbane.

Linstarfield is situated on land which was part of the five and three quarter acre parcel purchased in 1877 by Francis Spence, a bookbinder employed at the Government Printing Office. Spence lived at his Clayfield property, which he named *Liddleton*, for many years, gradually reducing the size of his holding. Members of the Spence family continued to live on the land they retained on Alexandra Road until the 1910s. The original Spence home does not appear to have survived.

In 1917 two acres of Spence's original holding on the corner of Alexandra Road and Enderley Road were purchased by Florence May Rylance, wife of Percy Douglas Rylance. Rylance was a well known Brisbane socialite and mine owner. The Rylances built a house on the two acre site which they named *Queenwood*. Postal and electoral records indicate that the Rylances occupied their new home by 1917.

The house, which originally addressed Alexandra Road, was built in the Federation style popularised in the 1890s and early 20th century. It originally had a terracotta tiled roof with gable finials which has, at some stage, been replaced with corrugated iron. Other Federation style features of the house include a five-sided bay window in the front (eastern) elevation, restrained timber verandah balustrading, slender columns dividing the façade into bays, deep verandahs, large simple roof planes and prominent gable verges. The house was originally on stumps with lattice screens underneath but the lower level has now been enclosed to provide car accommodation. Photographs dating from circa 1920s show the timber stained in the fashion of the times and

the detailing painted white. The overall impression was one of restrained simplicity, similar to the Federation Bungalow style of the 1910s described in Appely et al's *Identifying Australian Architecture*.

In 1919, the two acre property was sold to Henry George Noble, another prosperous mine owner. Once again, registration of the title appears to have lagged behind possession of the property as, according to the Noble family, Henry Noble's brother organised the purchase of the house during the honeymoon of Henry and Agnes Noble in September 1918. The Nobles renamed the house *Linstarfield*, creating the name from three of their racehorses – Lincome, Snowstar and Fieldacre.

From 1919, several other blocks surrounding the house were purchased by HG Noble's wife, Agnes. This gave the Nobles almost six acres of land between Enderley Road, Sefton Road and Alexandra Road including much of Francis Spence's original holding.

After immigrating as a child from England in the 1870s, H.G. Noble started his own business in Brisbane as a forwarding agent and cartage contractor in the 1890s. At the time that he purchased the Enderley Road property, HG Noble was enjoying the height of his business success after acquiring several collieries. His company employed over 400 people and was one of the biggest producers of coal in Queensland.

The Nobles were active in Brisbane "society". HG Noble was on the Committee of the Queensland Turf Club, a foundation member of the Brisbane Club and a Brisbane City Council alderman in 1909-10. He and his wife were also foundation members of the Royal Queensland Golf Club. HG Noble was appointed Vice-Consul for Finland in Queensland in 1920. He died in 1934. The Nobles' four children were all born at *Linstarfield*. They were delivered by Dr Thelander who lived at nearby *Rangemoor* in Adelaide Street East.

While living at *Linstarfield*, the Nobles employed several people to help take care of the family and the property. These included a nurse for the children, a cook, a housemaid, a gardener and a chauffeur. A small timber building on the western side of the house served as quarters for some of the staff. The children's nurse lived in the house and some staff may have lived off the site. The former staff quarters has survived but has not been inspected internally. It is possible that it was built by the Percy Rylance prior to the sale of the property to HG Noble.

HG Noble's wealth allowed him to make significant improvements to *Linstarfield*. According to the history published by the Noble family, these included the construction of a purpose built stable complex ((known as *The Lodge*), for the family's racehorses, with accommodation for the trainer and stable staff. An electrical plant was built to supply the entire property with electricity. A landscape gardener from Melbourne oversaw the development of the grounds which included a lawn tennis court, putting green, large rose gardens and a fish pond complete with a bridge leading to an island. HG Noble also built a large billiard and smoking room on the northern side of the house and a private kindergarten near the northern boundary, known as *Chellwood*. The billiard room was demolished by a later owner, but the school has survived (with some alterations) and is now a private home in Sefton Avenue.

Another improvement made to the property by HG Noble was the construction of the sturdy brick and sandstone wall along the Enderley and Alexandra Road boundaries. The wall is interspersed with substantial stone and cast iron pillars linked with heavy chains and extends east from *Linstarfield* along Enderley Road and into Alexandra Road. It continues until the northern boundary of 102 Alexandra Road which once marked the northeastern corner of Noble's land. Various changes have been made to some sections of wall that front other properties in Enderley and Alexandra Road, however, the wall still provides physical evidence of the extent of HG Noble's holding along these frontages.

Photographic evidence reveals that the original entrance to *Linstarfield* was located on the corner of Alexandra

and Enderley Roads. After HG Noble subdivided the land between *Linstarfield* and Alexandra Road for residential development in the mid-1920s, the current entrance on Enderley Road became the main entry point. The large sandstone piers and iron gates were presumably constructed around this time. Over an acre of land was retained around the house after the subdivision. As part of the subdivision, Sefton Avenue was created on the northern side of the property.

The Nobles sold *Linstarfield* in 1928 to Alice Russell, the wife of a medical practitioner. In 1946, the house was sold once again, to Charles and Mary Whitehouse. The Whitehouses, who raised a family at *Linstarfield*, further subdivided the property and planned extensions and renovations to the house using the Brisbane architectural firm of Chambers and Ford. They also demolished the billiard room, which included a viewing gallery. The home was sold in 1982 after the death of Mary Whitehouse. According to a member of the Whitehouse family, an underground air raid shelter existed near the garage (demolished) facing Enderley Road.

Subsequent owners have made further changes to the residence which have included both extensions and some demolition of the building at the rear - (the western side). A pre-1946 garage at the south-western corner of the site was demolished in February 2009. Relatively recent additions such as the two storey addition at the northwest corner (built on the site of the demolished billiard room) and the bedroom/bathroom in the roof space are not considered to have cultural significance. The grounds of the house have been reduced to just over three quarters of an acre (3101 square metres).

Despite these changes, the house is recognisable as the elegant Federation home that was built circa 1916. The appearance of the house is enhanced by the mature street trees – including fig, jacaranda and Poinciana - along the Enderley Road frontage. An attractive mature Poinciana tree is located within the boundary near the entrance gates on the eastern side of the property.

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 elite residence built during the early twentieth century when Clayfield was developing as a prestigious residential suburb and fine homes were being constructed within spacious grounds.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as a good example of a large Federation era residence in Clayfield with detached former staff quarters.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its elegant design and restrained detailing, imposing brick and stone boundary wall and iron entrance gates and its spacious grounds.

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 the home for ten years of HG Noble, a prominent Brisbane businessman and mine owner who made significant improvements to the property.

References

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9. Department of Natural Resources and Mining, Certificates of Title and Application records
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13. Fryer Library, University of Queensland
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15. Noble, Brian. *HG Noble and his family*. Brisbane: Brian Noble, 1992
16. *Pink Un.* 9 Dec 1922
17. Queensland Post Office Directories
18. Information kindly supplied by Mrs Barbara Main, phone conversation, 2 July 2009

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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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