

Heritage Citation



Loyal Hope of the Valley

Key details

Addresses	At 50 Morgan Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006
Type of place	Hall
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Arts and Crafts
Lot plan	L1_SP270549; L2_SP270549
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — December 2007
Construction	Walls: Timber
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (G) Social

The Loyal Hope of the Valley Lodge of the Queensland Branch of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows Friendly Society was established in Fortitude Valley in 1863. The order operated as a philanthropic society to which members made regular donations with the understanding that their medical and/or funeral expenses would be taken care of in the event of illness or death. The Order operated from a purpose built hall in Wickham Street from 1880 but sold that building in 1902. Twenty years later the trustees purchased this Morgan Street site and the Oddfellows moved into their new timber hall in October 1923. It served as a meeting place for the Oddfellows and a number of other Fortitude Valley associations. The Oddfellows retained the hall until 1993.

History

Mutual benefit associations or friendly societies are believed to have begun in Britain during the seventeenth century. Most societies established in Australia were branches of British organisations. The Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows organisation was originally founded in Manchester, England as a philanthropic society that provided medical and funeral benefits to members and their widows and dependants. An Australian branch of the Oddfellows organisation was established in Melbourne in 1840 when English MUIOOF member Augustus Greaves migrated to Australia. Organisations providing some form of medical and funeral insurance helped to defray the high costs of sickness and death during an era of poor public health standards, high funeral costs and limited (or non-existent) government funding for hospitals and medical expenses. Members made regular contributions to their Lodge funds in return for payment upon death or illness to either themselves or their dependents.

The Queensland branch of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows began in August 1848 when the Loyal Strangers Home Lodge began conducting meetings in Brisbane. By 1863 a separate Brisbane District

had been approved and lodges became much more than mutual, self-help health insurers. The organisation was governed by a hierarchy of officers and each lodge met regularly at public or private rooms or halls, while non-members were barred from meetings. Lectures were delivered to Lodge members at meetings and a set of rules were also established to govern the behaviour expected of members during these meetings.

Fortitude Valley in the 1860s was a small residential area, sparsely populated and cut off from the central district of Brisbane by Duncan's Hill. As such, it was one of the first townships in Brisbane to establish friendly society branches. The Loyal Hope of the Valley Lodge, a branch of the Manchester Unity Oddfellows, was opened in 1863. It joined the Star of Queensland Lodge, a branch of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows Friendly Society.

As well as providing a form of insurance to members, Friendly Society rooms or halls performed an important role as social venues for local communities. The Loyal Hope of the Valley Oddfellows opened a new hall in Wickham Street in 1880, designed by architect Richard Gailey. The Valley Hall, as it became known, served this public function through the last two decades of the twentieth century. In 1902 the property was sold, and the Oddfellows began to lease premises for their meetings.

The trustees of the Loyal Hope of the Valley Lodge of the Queensland Branch of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows Friendly Society gained title to this 22.5 perch site in July 1922. Nearly a year later, in June 1923, their plans for a new wood hall in Morgan Street were approved. The hall was built by a local contractor named Jones.

Meetings in the hall in Morgan Street were held from October 1923. Other local community groups, including the Australian Natives Association and the Star of Queensland Lodge of the Grand United Oddfellows, also held meetings in the hall. The rooms remained in possession of the GUOOF for many years, and in 1963 were the site of that society's centenary celebrations. The Oddfellows retained the property until 1993.

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 interwar lodge hall built for the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows who began providing essential health benefits for members and their families at a time when the government did not. It is also significant as it demonstrates the importance of the GUOOF in Fortitude Valley.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as an inner city timber meeting room built in the 1920s.

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 small, purpose-built interwar meeting hall.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as the lodge hall for the Loyal Hope of the Valley Lodge chapter of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows for more than seventy years.

References

1. Post Office Directories
2. Titles Office Records
3. *Grand United Order of Oddfellows Friendly Society Queensland Centenary Souvenir 1863-1963*, Brisbane 1963
4. Pers com. John Lawrence, General Manager, GUFS
5. City of Brisbane, Register of New Buildings for month ending 30 June 1923

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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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