

Heritage Citation



Millwraith Croquet Club

Key details

Addresses	At 21 Dixon Street, Auchenflower, Queensland 4066
Type of place	Club house, Sportsground
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L44_RP18582; L49_RP18582; L50_RP18582; L51_RP18582; L53_RP18582; L54_RP18582; L46_RP18582; L47_RP18582; L48_RP18582; L42_RP18582; L43_RP18582; L40_RP18582; L41_RP18582; L52_RP18582; L45_RP18582
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — May 2001

Construction

Roof: Corrugated iron;
Walls: Timber

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (G) Social

The Mcllwraith Croquet Club has been in continuous operation for more than 85 years. Its establishment twenty years or so after the first public Croquet Club at Eagle Farm is indicative of the process of democratisation of the game in Brisbane. The building itself, which is an intact example of interwar timber architecture, in combination with its surroundings of well maintained lawns and sun shelters makes it a site of considerable aesthetic appeal. Finally, as a social and recreational facility, the Mcllwraith Croquet Club has been a significant place on the social and cultural landscape of the Auchenflower region since 1923.

History

This is an early twentieth century croquet club established in a Brisbane City Council park in 1923. It has been in continual use for 78 years.

The Mcllwraith Croquet Club was founded in 1923, on more than an acre of land donated to the old Toowong Town Council in October 1911 by Lady Harriette Mcllwraith, second wife and widow of three times Queensland Premier Sir Thomas Mcllwraith. There is some evidence to suggest that Lady Mcllwraith intended that the land be put to public use and it now contains Mcllwraith Park, part of which has been leased at low cost to the Croquet Club since the early 1920s. The establishment of such leases for community and recreational purposes was not uncommon in Brisbane in the early part of the twentieth century.

The land that Lady Mcllwraith donated was originally part of the holding surrounding "Auchenflower House", which had been family home of Sir Thomas. The land was subdivided for residential development from around 1908. The estate was named 'Auchenflower Estate' and was noted for a large ornamental pond that contained a small island. This was eventually filled and the Croquet club is located directly over the old pond site. The naming of Mcllwraith Street and Harriett Street (with changed spelling), both in the immediate vicinity, commemorates the association between the Mcllwraiths and the district.

Auchenflower historian, John Pearn, states that the clubhouse has stood on the site since the Club's inception. Volunteer labour has played an important part in the continuation of the Club, the members themselves maintaining the grounds and structures, including the clubhouse and sun shelters, and caring for the three playing surfaces that the Club uses.

Croquet had been played in Brisbane since the late nineteenth century but, like so many recreational pursuits, remained an upper-class game conducted at the homes of the wealthy. It was not until the first croquet lawn and club was established at the Eagle Farm racecourse in 1900 that the game started to become more accessible to the general public. Though the Club at McIlwraith Park was established a little more than 20 years after this, it was nonetheless at the forefront of the democratisation of the game in Brisbane. Other surviving early croquet clubhouses from this period include the Windsor Croquet Club at Blackmore Street (1911), and the East Brisbane Croquet Club at Mowbray Park, East Brisbane (1920).

The McIlwraith Croquet Club and clubhouse is still in operation, having provided a social and recreational facility to the local community for 78 years.

Description

This purpose built Inter-war clubhouse is symmetrical in elevation with a central building and two smaller side wings. The building presents transverse gables to the front and is predominantly rectangular in plan.

The clubhouse is a timber structure clad with timber boards and raised on stumps.

The main gable and two gabled extensions on either side are sheeted with corrugated iron. These extend beyond the external walls to provide eaves overhangs above the timber sash windows. The gable ends are decorated with timber battening.

Tin sunhoods with timber bracing provide protection to the windows at the gable ends.

A pediment highlights the entry to the building. Symmetrical steps parallel to building lead from either side of the clubhouse to the entrance porch.

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 early clubhouse associated with the development and democratisation of croquet in Brisbane, which is in itself indicative of the changing pattern of community recreational pursuits in the period following the nineteenth century.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as an intact example of an interwar timber croquet clubhouse.

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 base of a social and recreational facility that has been a significant feature on the local cultural landscape of Auchenflower for many years; and, as many people residing in the area would have had some direct or indirect association with the croquet club since its inception.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plans
2. Department of Natural Resources. Queensland Certificates of Title
3. Lawson, Ronald. *Brisbane in the 1890s: a study of an Australian urban society* (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1973)
4. Pearn, John. *Auchenflower, the Suburb and the Name* (Brisbane: Department of Child Health Publishing Unit , 1997)
5. Queensland Post Office Directories

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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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