

## Heritage Citation



**RGM House/Ardrossan Hall**

### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 33 Brookes Street, Bowen Hills, Queensland 4006
<b>Type of place</b>	Flat building, House, Hotel (accommodation)
<b>Period</b>	Federation 1890-1914
<b>Style</b>	Free Classical
<b>Lot plan</b>	L33_SP108970
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — February 1998
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (D) Representative

This building appears to have been constructed for William Johnson circa 1891 and may have been a private residence before operating as a hostel in the late 1890s. After a succession of owners in the early twentieth century, the house was purchased in 1927 by Sydney Soutter. He renovated the property and converted it for use as flats, which were being leased from around 1935. The building remained as flats until 1976 when new owners opened a restaurant on the site.

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## History

The property is part of two original Deed of Grants that were issued to James Cowlshaw in October 1875. Cowlshaw, an architect and founder of the Brisbane Gas Company lived in another part of Bowen Hills in his house Montpelier, later the site of Cloudlands. He subdivided the area, where Ardrossan Hall is now located, in the mid 1880s.

William Johnson purchased a total of just over 23 perches in 1887. In January 1891 Johnson took out a mortgage with the London Chartered Bank of South Australia for an undisclosed sum 'and further advances'.

The exact date of construction appears to be a matter of dispute. However, the Post Office Directory (PODs) show that by 1892 Johnson was living in Brookes St. This, together with the mortgage date, indicates the probable date of construction. Certainly by 1900 photographs depict the building as a type of hostel. The nearby exhibition grounds may have provided an inducement to establish such an enterprise.

The property then had a number of owners in rapid succession. In 1902 it was transferred to John Langfield Macdonald, and in January 1904 it was transferred to Alexander Joseph Macdonald. Macdonald, a medical practitioner, resold the property in October of the same year.

The house then appears to have been rented until 1913 when it was purchased by Maurice Cohen. Cohen lived at the house until his death and the property passed to his widow. After administering the estate, Thomas Nimo and Frederick Cosh briefly owned the property before selling it to Sydney John Soutter in 1927.

Evidence indicates that Soutter made a number of improvements, with bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and entrances being added. The PODs disclose that the property was vacant in the 1930-31 period. However, by 1935 it was listed as 'Exhibition Flats'. Soutter remained the owner of the property until his death in 1946.

The property passed into the ownership of Isobel Ferguson in 1955. Applications submitted to the Brisbane City Council in the 1950s for registration as flats indicate that the building was to accommodate between 17 and 18 persons.

Ardrossan Hall Pty Ltd purchased the property in 1976. Improvements were made and the premises was opened as Ardrossan Hall Restaurant in the following year.

Ardrossan Hall has been claimed to have been used as bordello, the site of a Cobb and Co stop and the scene of the death of a sailor during World War II. Evidence is far from conclusive on these points. It is however highly probable the building was constructed to take advantage of the clientele the neighbouring exhibition grounds would produce.

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## Statement of significance

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria:

### 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:

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#### Historical

##### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as a building that has been constructed and adapted to changing uses in response to changes in the nature of the surrounding area.

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#### Representative

##### CRITERION D

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

as an example of a late nineteenth century inner city building

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## References

1. BCC building cards
2. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans
3. Brisbane City Council Building Registers
4. History Research Service, State Library of Queensland. History of Ardrossan Hall
5. Queensland Post Office Directories
6. Queensland Women's Historical Association. *A Look Back in Time: A History of Bowen Hills - Newstead and 'The Creek'*. Breakfast Creek: QWHA, 1996.
7. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane:

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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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