

## Heritage Citation



### Royal Queensland Society of Blind Citizens Building

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 247 Vulture Street, South Brisbane, Queensland 4101
<b>Type of place</b>	Hall
<b>Period</b>	Interwar 1919-1939
<b>Style</b>	Spanish Mission
<b>Lot plan</b>	L8_RP45725; L9_RP45725; L1_RP45725
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — January 2011

**Construction**

Roof: Terracotta tile;  
Walls: Masonry - Render

**Criterion for listing**

(B) Rarity; (G) Social

Constructed in 1933, this Spanish Mission styled hall was purpose built for the Queensland Society of Blind Citizens. The hall remained in use by the Society for sixty years and was the site of regular dances for most of that time. The hall has a longstanding connection with the vision impaired residents of South Brisbane and also the wider community.

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## History

This hall, once the headquarters of the Queensland Society of Blind citizens was constructed in 1933, replacing an older residence on the site which the Society had occupied since 1924.

The Queensland Musical, Literary and Self-Aid Society for the Blind first gained title to the property in August 1924. For almost ten years the Society worked from an old converted residence on the site and was known as the Queensland Technical School for the Blind.

Constructed in the Spanish Mission style, the building features offices in the front, a lounge room and music room, a popular dance hall which can accommodate up to 400 people, and a supper room in the basement. The building was the site of regular dances, open to the broader community and these remained popular throughout the Society's tenure.

During the Second World War the building was occupied by the United States Army which used it as a post office.

The Queensland Society of Blind Citizens was founded in 1917 by blind people to assist the blind. It has branches in several locations throughout Queensland. In 1986 the Society changed its name to Royal Queensland Society of Blind Citizens. The hall was sold in 1993, but has remained in use as a dance studio and fitness centre.

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## Description

This building is almost church-like in its organisation of plan form. The main body of the hall with its gambrel roof is flanked by two subsidiary spaces like the side aisled of a church. The front section of the building with the entry and offices to either side has its own separate hipped roof at right angles to the body of the hall. Centred on top of this roof is an ornate octagonal ventilator, and directly below this a gable end above the entry on which is located the building signage. The front porch with a flat roof sits below this supported on barley sugar columns, with Corinthian capitals.

The porch roof has sculpted rafter ends. The walls are stuccoed to a rough texture, but an ornamental row of moulded arches runs around the building just below eaves line. The door and window architraves also have ornamental mouldings.

The white stucco along with the mottled terracotta tiled appearance of the roof shows that the building was greatly influenced by the Spanish Mission style popular at the time it was constructed.

The building has a basement level below the main hall and entry level. The right hand side of the hall as viewed from the entry has suffered from the addition of modern aluminium framed glazing.

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## 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:

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#### Rarity

##### CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as it is a rare example of the Interwar Spanish Mission style adapted to an institutional building.

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#### 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 it has a strong and long lasting connection with residents of South Brisbane who have attended the hall for a variety of social, recreational and developmental activities since it was completed in 1933.

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## References

1. Titles Office Records
  2. Brisbane City Council Sewerage Detail Plans
  3. *Queensland Society of Blind Citizens Executive Committee*, Queensland Society of Blind Citizens, South Brisbane, 1971
  4. *Telegraph*, 1 July 1983
  5. *Wynnum Herald*, 24 November 1993
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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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