

Heritage Citation



Runcorn Progress Association Hall (former)

Key details

Also known as	Pinelands Lions Hall
Addresses	At 21 Nathan Road, Runcorn, Queensland 4113
Type of place	Hall
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L6_RP41820
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — April 2011

Construction	Roof: Ribbed metal; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Runcorn Progress Association (Association)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (G) Social

This modest timber hall was constructed in 1925-6 by members of the newly formed Runcorn Progress Association. It was built on an acre of land purchased with local funds from the local Fertilizer Co-operative Ltd. Since its opening, the hall has been the venue for numerous community entertainment, fund-raising and social events to benefit the local community.

History

Runcorn was originally part of the Brisbane Agricultural Reserve declared in 1861. Soon afterwards Courtenay Spry purchased 86 acres of this land for £86 and 'peppercorn' rental. Further settlement of the area was encouraged by the completion of the Beenleigh Rail Line in 1885. A Bone Mill supplying fertiliser was established in 1886. The principal activity in the district was farming and growing small crops and cotton. A school was established in 1901, but settlement remained sparse. By 1922 there were only six houses between Warrigal and Nathan Roads. However a local Progress Association (men only) was formed in July 1924 with early residents working to develop the community.

In 1924 the Runcorn Progress Association campaigned for a local public telephone and improvements at the Runcorn Railway Station. Euchre (card game) and dance nights were held to raise funds for community improvements. In February 1925 the Secretary of the Association reported that he had spoken to the owner, and one acre of land in the vicinity of the railway station could be had for a "very reasonable sum". In December 1925, trustees George Whincop, Robert Fitzell and Chris Wharburton gained title to one acre of land held by the [illegible] Co-operative Fertilizer Ltd.

The Runcorn Progress Association Hall was officially opened on Saturday 23 January 1926. Mayor of the newly created Greater Brisbane, William Jolly opened the hall and commended the actions of local residents, stating that if the Greater Brisbane Scheme was to succeed "people would need to make more of an effort to help themselves" as the residents of Runcorn had done. The hall, with floorspace measuring 49ft by 30ft "was built by the [35] members of the association in their spare time." It cost £300 for materials and contained a piano owned by the association. The association President, Mr A.F. Tuke referred "eulogistically" to the assistance given by the ladies during construction and remarked that the association hoped to obtain another 9 acres for a sports reserve and recreation ground. Alderman Jolly confirmed that he had recommended to the Parks Committee that land nearby be taken up, and by April 1927 over 9½ acres were resumed. In January 1928 the Association decided to purchase material for erecting a stage in the hall and for fencing the recreation grounds.

Throughout the 'twenties and 'thirties the association remained active, campaigning for better road and rail facilities, expressing particular concern for school children being crowded into the smoking compartments of trains. The hall continued to host euchre / card and dance nights raising money for the Queensland Ambulance

and Transport Brigade and the Returned Soldiers League. The district remained sparsely settled – a petition to Council in 1935 for electric light and power was signed by 70 residents of Runcorn requesting 280 house lights, 33 power points and power for four motors. Other progress included the admission of women as Progress Association members which was unanimously decided in 1930.

The hall continued to be the hub of community entertainment and social events. As closer settlement and development of the suburb continued during the 1960s and 1970s the hall continued to host 'get-togethers' and trophy nights for the district's sports clubs as well as playing host to cultural pursuits such as the Sunnybank and Districts Brass Band. A toilet block was added in 1978.

The hall was the centre of community activities and social events for over 50 years but was dilapidated and faced demolition in 1979. The Lions Club of Runcorn undertook a project to renovate the hall, again with local community assistance, and obtained title in 1988. Further renovation was undertaken in 1997.

The former Runcorn Progress Hall, renamed Pinelands Lions Hall, continues to fulfil an important role as a venue for community events.

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

for the evidence it provides of the development of the community of Runcorn and district in the 1920s when it was a rural farming settlement.

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 an early twentieth century timber community 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 a hall constructed and paid for by the Runcorn Progress Association and as the venue for numerous local community groups, fund-raising and social events since 1926.

References

1. Brisbites <http://www.ourbrisbane.com/suburbs/runcorn/history>
2. *Brisbane Courier* 'Runcorn Progress Association'
3. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>
4. Queensland Certificates of Title
5. Stories of the Southside, 1991

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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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