

Heritage Citation



St John's Lutheran Church (former)

Key details

Also known as	Christadelphian Church Hall
Addresses	At 110 Church Road, Zillmere, Queensland 4034
Type of place	Church
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Carpenter Gothic
Lot plan	L1_RP26191
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2003 Date of Citation — January 2003

Construction

Roof: Corrugated iron;
Walls: Timber

Criterion for listing

(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social

St John's Lutheran Church was first built in 1865 to service the large German farming community who had moved into the Zillmere District. Built on land donated by a local farmer, this new church was constructed in 1875 to replace the slab hut church that had been built ten years earlier. After serving the local Lutheran community for almost 100 years, services ceased at St. John's in 1983 and the building was sold the following year to the Christadelphian Church.

History

The land on which this church was built was originally part of a crown land purchase made by John William Zillman on 3 January 1866. Zillman, a resident of Brisbane Town, paid £12 for 12 acres of land described as Portion 237 in the Parish of Kedron. Zillman was a Zillmere district pioneer and Zillmere was originally named Zillman Waterholes. On 21 September 1869, Zillman's transferred the land to David Pfunder, also a resident of Brisbane Town.

On 23 February 1875, Pfunder subdivided the land into two parts. The smaller part, encompassing 2 roods of land was set aside for the erection of a Lutheran Church to service the needs of Zillmere's large German migrant population. A slab hut style church had been built at the corner of Zillmere and Church Roads in 1865 and it had served the terms of the first two Lutheran pastors – F. Copas (1866-1867) and Wilhelm Burghardt (1867-1873). But the arrival of Burghardt's replacement, Daniel Hartwig, in 1873, saw a push for a new church building. Fund-raising would have been conducted within the local community to help pay for the new church.

By 1875, when Hartwig was ordained as a pastor, the new timber building named St John's Lutheran Church had been built. But Mr Brandenburg, a lay preacher, ran the nearby parish school and as a result of a falling-out with Pastor Hartwig, he preached to a congregation who did not attend the new church. After Hartwig left in 1877, the rift was healed by Pastor Ernest Otto Mais. A camphor laurel tree was planted around this time in the church grounds possibly to provide shade for parishioners' carriages. On 25 February 1890, Pfunder formalised the donation of his land to the Zillmere community by transferring the small block containing the local Lutheran Church to a group of trustees – William Worda, Carl Beckmann the Younger and Carl Freier. All three men were local farmers.

Theodore Emmanuel Egan was the next pastor from 1886-1895. Burghardt then became his replacement and served until 1899. Thereafter the church was without a pastor until 1901 when Peter Bonifacius Hoefner was ordained. He oversaw the painting of the church for the first time as well as the lining of the church walls. Hoefner resigned in 1923 and the church remained without a pastor until 1925. Pastor Otto Herman Adler took control in 1925. By 1929, the congregation had risen to 98 members.

During 1932, the church was renovated. The entrance porch was enlarged and a new altar and vestry were placed in an extension to the back of the church building. The cost of this work was £152, which was fully

covered by the ?164.16.1 raised in public subscriptions from the Zillmere community. The renovated church was re-dedicated on 6 November 1932.

Pastor Adler left for another posting in 1950 and he was replaced by Pastor N.C. Kellar. Pastor R.W. Gerhardy arrived in 1955 at a time when Zillmere was rapidly changing from a farming district to an urban centre. Instrumental to this change were the Queensland Housing Commission estates that were built in the area using migrant labour. Many of these labourers were refugees from a devastated Germany and they caused a surge in St John's congregation's numbers. As a result, there was seen the need for another building to be added to the site, particularly for use as a Sunday school. The ready availability of Army surplus buildings solved the problem and an ex-Army was moved to the site in 1958. It was then altered by volunteers from the congregation. The new hall was opened by Pastor F.H. Schmidt on 23 October 1961. A toilet block was added to the site, at a cost of ?450, in September 1964. In 1968, the hall was converted for use as a church-run kindergarten.

The last Lutheran services were held at St John's Church in 1983. On 16 March 1984 the property was sold to the Wilston Christadelphian Ecclesia and it continues to operate as a Christadelphian Church.

Description

The church is a good, fairly intact example of Carpenter Gothic style. It is a timber building with weatherboard cladding and a steep pitched roof, clad with corrugated iron. A small belfry sits at the apex of the roof at its front end. The bell has been later removed. The original building has a symmetric form with a porch located centrally to the front. The building is simple but elegant in its form.

Four narrow windows are equally spaced along the sides while two windows are at each side of the front porch. The originally stained glass has been removed from these windows and replaced with glass louvres. Only the small window above the front porch has retained its original glass. The small protruding area at the rear also has two narrow side windows.

The church is accessible via a flight of timber steps at one side of the front porch. An entrance at the rear end on one side is also a later addition.

The interior of the church is fairly original, with its timber-lined walls, entrance doors, narrow staircase leading to a small choir loft with decorative balustrading. The ceiling retains its original pressed metal cladding and decorative ceiling roses. Near the back of the church is the altar area. At the entry of this area there is a large archway. On its front is painted, in gold, with old English typeface, the phrase: "The Lord Our God Be With Us. Halleluiah."

A large camphor laurel tree, to the side of the church, probably planted close in time to when the church was built, to provide shade and shelter to the worshippers after services, provides an important setting/context to the church building and has an imposing presence in the street.

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 a Lutheran church built in the Zillmere farming district in 1885 for the local German community.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as the oldest surviving church within the mid-north Brisbane District.

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places as a late nineteenth century timber Lutheran church.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance as a fine example of a small nineteenth century Victorian Carpenter Gothic church.

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 Lutheran church that served as a place of worship for Zillmere's German community for almost 100 years.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, post-1946 Building Cards
 2. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
 3. Chermshire and Districts Historical Society, notes written by Mr Holtz (Bakerhouse) on the Lutheran Church (Taken from hand written notes at Zillmere Library)
 4. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 5. John Oxley Library, *Centenary of St Johns Lutheran Church 1866-1965*. Robinson
 6. *Queensland Post Office Directories, 1868-1949*
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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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