

Heritage Citation



St Margaret's Anglican Church

Key details

Addresses At 58 Rainbow Street, Sandgate, Queensland 4017

Type of place Church

Period Interwar 1919-1939

Style California Bungalow

Lot plan L2_C850

Key dates Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004
Date of Citation — January 2003

Construction Roof: Terracotta tile;
Walls: Face brick

People/associations Chambers and Ford (Architect)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

Built in 1927, St Margaret's Anglican Church is the second church built on the site and demonstrates a tradition of Anglican worship on Rainbow Street, which dates from the 1890s. Designed by the noted architectural practice of Chambers and Ford, St Margaret's is a unique example of an adaptation of the California bungalow style for ecclesiastical use. Internally, St Margaret's includes carvings by noted Brisbane sculptor Daphne Mayo within lunettes above two stained-glass windows. The original 1890s church was later converted to a rectory by 1909 and still resides on-site. The church complex also contains a monument built in honour of Robert Travers Atkin, a former member of the Queensland State legislature. In the 1870s, Atkin regularly visited the site on which St Margaret's was subsequently built in the 1890s. The monument, erected in 1872, is carved from sandstone and features a broken Corinthian column, symbolising a life cut short.

History

The Sandgate area was surveyed from 1852, and occupation and development, beginning in what became known as Shorncliffe, dates from the early 1860s. The area was popular because of its proximity to the sea and the healthful breezes. The bridging of Cabbage Tree Creek in 1861 and the improvement of the road from Brisbane increased the area's popularity, and notable figures from Brisbane society became regular visitors to the area.

One such person who frequented Sandgate was Robert Travers Atkin, a former member of the Queensland legislature. Atkin played an essential role in establishing the Church of England in Sandgate. After migrating to Australia from Great Britain in the 1860s, Atkin became involved in journalism in Queensland. In the late 1860s, Atkin became involved in State politics, initially as the member for Clermont. However, Atkin resigned in 1869. He later became the member for East Moreton in 1870, but again, Atkin resigned in 1872 because of ill-health. Atkin had lived in Brisbane, but to help relieve his illness, he moved to Sandgate. It is recorded that Atkin regularly frequented the site upon which the original St Margaret's Anglican Church would be constructed in the 1890s. On his death in 1872, Atkin left a sum of £50 towards the building of a church, a sum matched by his sister, Grace, who drowned in 1876. Grace had run a school for young ladies in Brisbane. Both Robert and Grace were buried on the hill where St Margaret's now stands. The monument, designed by Mr P. Donovan, was erected through funds raised by members of the Hibernian Society, which Atkin was instrumental in forming. Inscribed on the front of the monument is the following epithet to Atkin:

*Erected by members of the Hibernian Society of Queensland in memory of their late Vice-President,
Robert Travers Atkin, born at Fern Hill, County Cork, Ireland, November 29th, 1841.*

Died at Sandgate, Queensland, May 25th, 1872.

His days were few, but his labours and attainments bore the stamp of a wise maturity.

A side panel of the monument provides further details of Atkin:

This broken column symbolises the irreparable loss of a man who well represented some of the finest characteristics of the Celtic race — its rich humour and subtle wit, its fervid passion and genial warmth of heart. Distinguished alike in the press and parliament of Queensland by large and elevated views, remarkable powers of organization and unswerving advocacy of the popular cause. His rare abilities were especially devoted to the promotion of a patriotic union amongst his countrymen irrespective of class or creed combined with a loyal allegiance to the land of their adoption.

After she died, the following inscription was added to the rear panel of the monument in honour of Grace Atkin:

In memory of Grace T. Atkin, died January 26th, 1876, aged 32 years. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

The first recorded Anglican service in Sandgate took place in 1871 in a slab shed in Kate Street, Shorncliffe. When the town of Sandgate was planned, land was allocated for a Church of England. From 1874 there was some dispute and confusion over plans for the church, which the Select Committee of the Diocesan Council resolved in 1879. The first Church of England in Sandgate, St Nicholas' Anglican Church, was opened on 7 December 1880. The timber church was built at the junction of Yundah Street and Signal Row, close to the developing town centre. St Nicholas' was designed by designed by F.D.G. Stanley; a noted Brisbane based architect. Among his various roles, Stanley served as the Colonial Architect to Queensland Government between 1873 and 1881. St Nicholas' remained an essential part of the Sandgate parish until 1988, when it was secularised and sold.

With the construction of the Sandgate Railway link with Brisbane in 1882, the area became even more popular, with more residents establishing homes and seaside villas. Archdeacon, later Canon, James Matthews was appointed Rector to the parish in 1886 and soon noted that a chapel should be built for Lower Esplanade, Brighton, and Nashville residents. A meeting of parishioners in 1891 considered the building of a church school on the site in Rainbow Street. No time was wasted, and the 'foundation stone' of the first St Margaret's church was laid by Walter Barrett, the Mayor of Sandgate, on 9 August 1891. Architect William Alfred Caldwell produced a design for a timber church that was modified to lower the cost. Caldwell had worked for noted architect Richard Gailey during the 1880s before starting his own practice in 1889 that operated until 1905. After this point, Caldwell worked for Queensland Government until his death in 1918. With gifts from the Mayor of Sandgate totalling £50, and from the architect, as well as a loan of £100, St Margaret's was completed in hardwood and pine, with a single skin wall nailed inside the studs, and a porch and steps facing east.

Plans to build a rectory at the same time as the original St Margaret's church were shelved as the 1890s economic depression reduced parishioners' circumstances. In 1901, St Margaret's was rendered unsafe by a gale. In 1905, the need for a rectory had become evident. With funds collected, the original St Margaret's church was converted into a rectory with a room for a Sunday School added. This work was completed by 1909. In 1916, several donations financed the construction of Sunday School Hall, using the original school room from the rectory, which was removed and enlarged. The two-storey hall was bought by the Sandgate 16ft Skiff Club, dismantled, and re-erected on the bank of Cabbage Tree Creek in the late 1940s.

The Sandgate parish debt was reduced during the 1920s, and it was decided to build a more suitable church on the Rainbow Street site. Monies were collected and promised. These were added to the £258 raised at the October Fair in 1926, the £20 annually for five years promised by Mr Lovelock, and a loan of £2,000 from the Commercial Bank of Australia. Architects Chambers and Ford were appointed to design a new church, and Mr

O. Brooks was engaged as the builder.

Chambers and Ford were a well-known Brisbane based architectural practice established in 1920. C.W. Chambers trained in Melbourne, and in 1889, he became the Brisbane based a junior partner of the Sydney practice of McCredie Brothers and Chambers. Between 1892 and 1910, Chambers worked independently until entering a partnership with Leopold Lange Powell in 1911. Chambers relocated to Sydney in 1915 where he opened a branch of Chambers and Powell. After Chambers and Powell dissolved in 1920, Chambers was joined in practice by Eric Marshall Ford, who, after migrating to Australia, had worked as the office manager of Chambers and Powell. Ford managed the Brisbane-based commission. In 1935, Chambers retired, though the practice continued to operate under Chambers and Ford's name until 1951 when Theodore Hutton and Peter Newell joined Ford in partnership. The practice eventually closed in the 1980s by which time, after several changes in personnel, it was known as Lund Hutton Ryan Morton. Chambers and Ford were well known for their ecclesiastical designs. For example, as well as St Margaret's, the practice also designed the Spanish Mission-inspired Holy Trinity Church in Woolloongabba (1930).

The foundation stone to the new St Margaret's was laid on 31 July 1927 by his Grace Archbishop Sharp in front of a congregation of about 500 adults and children. The new St Margaret's was dedicated by Archbishop Sharp on 11 December 1927. At the ceremony, the architects, the builder, and contractors were congratulated on the work 'done as a permanent expression of man's desire to give God Honour and thanks.' Parishioners donated many of the furnishings for St Margaret's, and the pulpit, pews and font were procured from the old St John's Pro-Cathedral in Brisbane. The bell from St Nicholas' Anglican Church, which also came from St John's, now hangs in a belfry at St Margaret's.

In the late 1930s, the eldest son of Robert Travers Atkin, Lord Atkin of Aberdovey, donated a sum of money to repair the monument that had been erected in the 1870s in his father's honour. Lord Atkin, born James Richard Atkin in Brisbane in 1867, had returned to Great Britain in 1870 before his father died. This was due to the ill-health of Lord Atkin's younger brother, Robert. After attending the University of Oxford, Lord Atkin became a lawyer and, in 1906, was made a King's Counsel. In 1928, Lord Atkin was made a member of the House of Lords. He became widely regarded for his judgements related to the idea of the 'neighbour principle' in negligence law. He died in 1944.

Once the work on the monument was completed, the remaining money was devoted to placing a memorial in St Margaret's in memory of Robert Atkin. Noted Brisbane sculptor Daphne Mayo was commissioned to prepare a pair of carved lunettes located above stained-glass windows in the sanctuary. These were unveiled and dedicated in February 1937. Mayo, born in 1895, was widely feted as 'Queensland's girl sculptress.' Amongst Mayo's notable work in Brisbane are the tympanum at City Hall (1927-1930) and the Queensland Women's War Memorial in Anzac Square (1929-1932). In 1959, Mayo was awarded an MBE (Member of the Order of British Empire) for her service to art. Mayo died in 1982. Other memorials included an electric carillon, installed in 1948 to commemorate those who served and died during the Second World War. Unfortunately, this fell victim to cyclone Wanda in 1974, but numerous other memorials remain in St Margaret's.

From the time of the construction of the first St Margaret's in 1891, the Church became the base for numerous social and community organisations and activities. For example, the Gordon Club, established by Cannon Matthews, encouraged youth in the parish to participate in sport, while from the late 1920s, the Girls' Friendly Society also involved parish youth in community work and sporting activities.

Description

Located on a wedge-shaped site, St Margaret's Anglican Church is positioned on an elevated position and is accessed via Rainbow Street. The site retains three significant structures that are associated with the tradition of Anglican worship on Rainbow Street. The elements of the site that have cultural heritage significance are:

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Standing in their original locations, the buildings are aligned along a north-south axis: St Margaret's is visible from Rainbow Street, the timber rectory behind, and the Atkin Monument to the rear of the complex. St Margaret's is therefore highly visible from the street. The rectory is still visible but less prominent, and the Atkin Monument is wholly obscured.

General description – St Margaret's Anglican Church

Built in the California Bungalow style, St Margaret's is rectangular in plan form, with a sanctuary at the northern end and a smaller baptistery at the southern end. The Church is setback from Rainbow Street. A small chapel is attached to the northwest corner and an entry porch attached to the south-east corner.

St Margaret's is constructed in brickwork laid in English garden wall bond up to sill level. Extending from sill level to the underside of the eaves, the brickwork has been coated with stucco render. A brick soldier course defines the change in surface finish. The inside face of the outside walls has been left exposed.

Stepped, brickwork buttresses strengthen external walls with double weathering at the top of the buttresses and the stepping point (sill level). The double weathering's are rendered to provide a contrast to the face brickwork.

The simple hipped roof to the nave and roofs to the sanctuary, baptistry, chapel, entrance porch and ventilator are sheeted in terracotta tiles. The projecting gable ends to the chapel and entry porch are supported on exposed timber beams and the eaves lined with slatted boarding. All other eaves are unlined.

The north and south gable ends above the projecting sanctuary roofs are lined with timber shingles. Fixed timber louvre vents in timber framing are in the apex of these gables. The gable end to the side chapel projection is lined with fibro cement sheeting with vertical timber cover strips fixed over the joints in sheets.

Windows are lead lighted timber-framed casements with a semi-circular fibro cement spandrel panel over. A header course of face bricks lines the jambs and arch and terminates at a bullnose brick sill. Windows to the baptistry apse are similar but consist only of a single casement.

A western window panel to the side chapel has replaced a doorway. It consists of two stained glass fixed window panels and a coloured glass centre panel above a timber sill and a fixed fibro cement panel under the sill.

Windows to the entry porch are clear glass fixed panels in metal frames. Both appear out of character with the other windows and are non-original.

Doors to the entry porch and the nave are framed tongue and groove vertical jointed double-leaf doors with a small, glazed panel in the top portion.

The entry porch door is accessed by a small flight of brick steps with a fabricated steel handrail, whilst a concrete ramp accesses the side entry to the nave with a pipe handrail on both sides.

Timber hoods over the nave side door entry and chapel window panel are supported on timber brackets and hung on chains fixed to sidewalls.

An octagonal-shaped ventilator ventilates the roof space with fixed timber louvres on each face. The flashing to the ventilator is a slate-like material dressed down over the tiled roof.

A brick fence of similar make to the brickwork used in the Church is located along the street perimeter. The church complex contains mature vegetation, including trees and bushes.

Internally, the floor to the nave is timber, with carpet runners laid down the aisles and walkway areas. The raised sanctuary and chancel floor is covered with carpet.

The walls to the nave are face brickwork terminating at the underside of the roof trusses. The space between the top of the brickwork and the underside of the ceiling is lined with a gauze mesh allowing permanent ventilation to the interior.

The ceiling is lined with fibre-cement sheeting supported on top of exposed purlins fixed to timber-framed open scissor trusses.

The gable end wall over the altar (above brick-level) is sheeted with timber boarding coated with a dark stain.

Two original carved lunettes in the form of angels are retained in the sanctuary. These were produced by Daphne Mayo and are carved out of silky oak. They comprise part of the timber-framed lead lighting dedicated to St Margaret and St Cecilia.

General description – Rectory building

Adapted from the original 1890s St Margaret's Church, the rectory is a single-storey building, primarily constructed of timber. It is rectangular in plan with a stepped hip roof and remnants of a U-shaped verandah. The south elevation appears symmetrical, save for a non-original bay window at the south-western corner. Entry is via a central timber stair, with timber balustrades and handrails.

The verandah has been partially enclosed by fibre-cement sheeting on the eastern elevation, including aluminium framed louvre systems. At the rear of the vestry, the northern elevation is also symmetrical in appearance, with two non-original bay windows at the northern-eastern and north-western corners.

The vestry has a stepped metal roof with timber slat soffits, and exposed joist ends. A verandah on the southern elevation has a three-rail timber balustrade and handrail, original timber posts and brackets, and a timber valance.

The external walls are primarily constructed of timber. From the ground level to the eave line, external walls on the south elevation (inside the verandah) are single skin, with exposed framing, timber vertical join boards and a chamfered rail. The external walls on the north elevation are double skin, with timber vertical join boards.

Much of the original door openings, joinery and lead lighting are retained. On the south elevation, timber-framed French doors open to the verandah. The central door has stained glass lead light viewing panels on either side, and the door at the south-east corner has similar inset lead lighting. Doors in the verandah have fanlights above.

Windows are later additions, including aluminium-framed louvre systems, a timber-framed double-hung sash window on the eastern elevation, and timber-framed casement windows with metal eaves on the northern

elevation.

The rectory has a timber-framed subfloor system, set on concrete stumps. Of note is the commemoration stone laid by Walter Barrett ESQ, Mayor of Sandgate on 9 August 1891. This commemoration stone doubles as a stump for the rectory. An inscription commemorating the event can be found on the stump. Timber valance is used between the external concrete stumps; however, this is non-original. Horizontal timber battens once concealed the stumps and subfloor system.

General description – Atkin Monument

The Atkin Monument is constructed of exposed sandstone and includes a fluted Corinthian column atop a four-tired, square-set pedestal. A prominent feature of the monument is the column's broken shaft and missing capital, symbolising a memorial to one whose life was cut short. Inscriptions on the pedestal record the nationality, virtues, and talents of the memorialised. Details of these inscriptions are outlined in the history.

The remnants of a perimeter fence surround the monument, including sandstone piers with cross-vaulted capping and edges or kerbing with tooled surfaces and bevelling.

Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance are:

- **St Margaret's Anglican Church:**

- Original location and orientation of the church
- Rectangular form with sanctuary, apse, chapel and entry porch, and hip and gable roofs
- Terracotta roof covering
- Timber shingle roof coverings
- Timber slat eave linings
- Exposed timber roof beams
- External brickwork walls, including:
 - English garden wall bond course
 - Soldier courses
 - Stucco render
 - Exposed brickwork
 - Exposed brick vents
- Stepped brickwork buttresses, including:
 - Rendered double-weathering at the top of the buttress and stepping point
- Original window and door openings
- Original timber-framed lead light casement windows, including:
 - Semi-circular spandrel
 - Bullnose brick sill
- Original doors entry porch door with framed tongue-and-groove vertical jointed, double leaf door and small glazed viewing panel
- Brick stairs to the entry porch, including metal handrail
- Timber door hoods including timber brackets
- Octagonal roof ventilator with fixed timber louvres
- Brick perimeter fence on Rainbow Street
- Belfry and bell in grounds
- Interior elements, including:
 - Timber flooring
 - Exposed internal brick walls
 - Timber panelling on walls

- Exposed timber scissor trusses
 - Original timber carved lunettes by Daphne Mayo in the sanctuary
- **Rectory:**
 - Original location and orientation of rectory
 - Rectangular form with stepped hip roof
 - Metal roof sheeting
 - Timber slat eave linings
 - Exposed joist ends
 - Front verandah, including:
 - Triple-rail balustrade and handrail
 - Timber posts
 - Timber brackets
 - Timber valance
 - Vertical join boards with exposed framing and chamfered rail in the verandah
 - Original window and door locations
 - Timber-framed French doors including fan lights
 - Central door, including stained glass lead light viewing panels on either side
 - Timber-framed subfloor system on concrete stumps
 - Commemorative memorial stone, including the inscription'
- **Atkin Monument:**
 - Original location and orientation of monument
 - Monumental form
 - Sandstone construction
 - Fluted Corinthian column with a broken appearance
 - Four-tiered, square-set pedestal
 - Original inscriptions
 - Sandstone piers, including cross-vaulted capping
 - Sandstone edges/kerbing
 - Tooled surfaces and chamfering

Non-significant features

Features not of cultural heritage significance are:

- Later additions to the church, including:
 - Western window panel to the side chapel
 - Concrete ramp with pipe handrails
- Later additions to the rectory, including:
 - Non-original bay windows
 - Later fabric enclosing the verandah
 - Aluminium-framed window systems
 - Timber-framed casement windows on the eastern and northern elevation
 - Metal window eaves
 - Non-original doors
 - External timber vertical join boards on the eastern and northern elevation
 - Timber valance between concrete stumps
- Non-original shed structures to the rear of the property

Curtilage

The curtilage captures all significant or original elements of the place as described. It consists of the entirety of

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

The site of St Margaret's Anglican Church demonstrates the presence and growth of the Anglican faith in Sandgate. The development of the site over time, including the erection of the first church in 1891, its later conversion to the rectory by 1909, and the erection of the Church in 1927, provides evidence of the importance of the Anglican church to the community of Sandgate.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

The site of St Margaret's Anglican Church contains several features of aesthetic significance. Erected in 1872, the features, fabric and scale of the Atkin monument demonstrate the importance of the Atkin family to Brisbane. Carved from sandstone, the monument features a broken Corinthian column, symbolising a life cut short, on top of a stepped plinth, and is surrounded by carved sandstone posts and kerbing. The first church was built on the site in 1891 and later adapted to the rectory by 1909. The rectory building has distinctive aesthetic qualities for that period, including the addition of the timber wrap-around veranda, valance and brackets and prominent hipped roof. Designed by Chambers and Ford Architects, the Church was built in 1927 and is an adaptation of the California bungalow-style, with a plain brick base, rendered upper walls, expressive carpentry features and tiled gable roof. Internal aesthetic features of the Church include Daphne Mayo carvings within lunettes above two stained-glass windows. More recent developments have seen the relocation of furniture from the former St Nicholas Church as well as the reuse of that church's bell in an external freestanding belfry.

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

The St Margaret's Anglican Church complex has a special association as a place of worship and gathering for the Sandgate Anglican community since the building of the first church on the site in 1891.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

The monument, built in honour of the life and work of Robert Atkin, a former member of the Queensland state legislature, and including a dedication to his sister Grace, has a continued association with the Atkin family through ongoing restoration works initiated with funds donated by distinguished lawyer and High Court Judge, Lord Atkin of Aberdovy, Wales. The monument is located on a site that Robert Atkin frequented during the final months of his life.

References

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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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