

Heritage Citation



St Seraphim Russian Orthodox Church

Key details

Also known as	Dalma
Addresses	At 60 Hawthorne Street, Woolloongabba, Queensland 4102
Type of place	Church, Flat building, House
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Immigrants' Nostalgic
Lot plan	L1_RP12258; L7_RP12258
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2002 Date of Citation — October 2006

Construction

Roof: Tile;
Walls: Masonry - Stucco

Criterion for listing

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

This building was originally constructed in 1925 as the residence 'Dalma,' for Theodore Harvey Bird. In 1940, 'Dalma' was converted into flats before being converted again in 1952 for use as a Russian Orthodox Church, the second to be established in Brisbane. For more than 50 years, the church, with its unusual architectural features, has had a strong cultural resonance with the Russian population and church congregation of Woolloongabba.

History

The original land purchase in this section of Hawthorne Street was made in 1861, when Mary Anne Peterson purchased portion 212. It was 12 acres and 6 perches in size and was bought for the cost of 24 pounds, 1 shilling, and sixpence.

The land remained un-subdivided until 1874 when James Timms purchased subdivisions 6,7,22, and 23, a total of 3 roods and 8 perches. Further transfers took place until John Theodore Harvey Bird took possession of subdivisions 7 and 22 in 1908, and took out mortgages in that year and in 1910. Post Office records show Bird residing in Hawthorne Street in 1909 so the building must have been constructed by this time. The House was named 'Dalma'.

The property was transferred to Thomas Frederick Clacher in 1912 who similarly, took out two bills of mortgage in 1912 and 1913. Further subdivision and re-subdivision took place and the property reached its modern configuration in 1920, though this had no effect on the section with the house on it. Clacher's land was now described as subdivision 7 and re-subdivision 1 of subdivision 22. By 1940 the house had been converted into flats but retained the name "Dalma".

The property remained with Clacher until 1944 when the Dyer family purchased it. It was sold again in 1952 when it came into the ownership of Nicholas Filippovich Alelekoff Svetove. Council records show that an application to convert the existing building into a church by the Russian Orthodox Church itself was granted in 1952.

There is some evidence to suggest that the Church initially planned to construct a new building on the site, but it seems that the decision was taken to convert the existing building. Council Building records show that an application to convert the building was made as early as 1950, which means that the Dyer family may have had some involvement with the Church, or negotiations of some sort had already begun with them about the Church's use of the building.

Russian migrants have traditionally been a large part of the population in the Woolloongabba area. First arriving in Brisbane in the 1850s, the population grew steadily until 1911 when there were 809 Russians in residence. Russian migration to Queensland increased again during the years 1911-1914, when people of several ethnic groups, along with radicals and revolutionaries, left their home land to escape repressive policies of the last

Tsarist regime. There was a second influx in the years immediately following the October Revolution in 1917. Queensland had very successfully encouraged Russian migration with an assisted passage program, but this came to halt in 1918 after the establishment of the new communist government, and Russia's subsequent withdrawal from the war in Europe. Nevertheless, large numbers fled Russia and came to Queensland unassisted in the years immediately after the revolution.

The first Russian Orthodox parish was formed in Brisbane at Vulture Street in 1925 in response to the needs of the still growing Russian population. This could not fulfil all the requirements of the Brisbane Russian Orthodox residents, and the church under consideration here was established in 1952, at Hawthorne Street.

Evidence suggests that the present building is a conversion of the "Dalma" flats that originally existed on this site. The conversion of the original building was probably carried out by volunteer labour, most likely the parishioners themselves. The conversion was a complex one and would have been a substantial undertaking. The church has had several alterations and additions since then, including the addition of an extension to house a Sunday school and library in the 1960s. The church is currently still in use by the congregation.

Description

This church building has been converted from flats. It has a tiled roof composed of various elements and stucco clad walls. The roof has a transverse gable with a hipped projection at the front, which contains a small gable over the main entry doors. A smaller bellcast roof emphasises the entry, standing over a roof vent in the centre of the hipped roof. A golden onion dome with a cross on top extends the bellcast roof further creating a spire and marker for the church building. A smaller cross is attached to the ridge of the gable over the entry door, which has a picture of Saint Seraphim within the gable end. The entry doors are an arched pair of timber doors with decorative carving within their surface. A brick stair with a metal balustrade leads to the small landing in front of the stairs. The windows to either side of the main entry are casement with simple lintels but the other side windows have an ogee shaped decoration above them.

A second entry is on the right side of the building off a small porch accessed by a similar set of stairs to the other entry. Another pair of timber doors within an arched opening provides access to the space within. On the side of the porch is a rail with several metal bells hanging from it.

Secondary facilities and spaces have been built on the back of the building.

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 church that was constructed in response to Brisbane's growing Russian community.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as one of only three Russian Orthodox churches in Brisbane.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance for its distinctive and rare architectural features.

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 place of worship for the local Russian Orthodox community for more than 50 years.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans

2. Brisbane City Council Building Records
 3. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 4. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
 5. Galina Zakrjevsky, *History of St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Brisbane, Australia 1923-1993*
 6. Post Office Directories
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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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