

## Heritage Citation



### Stewart Place (including war memorial)

#### Key details

**Addresses**

At 8 Stewart Road, Ashgrove, Queensland 4060

|                              |                                                                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of place</b>         | Monument / memorial, Reserve                                                     |
| <b>Period</b>                | Postwar 1945-1960                                                                |
| <b>Lot plan</b>              | L990_SL3677                                                                      |
| <b>Key dates</b>             | Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000<br>Date of Citation — February 1997 |
| <b>Construction</b>          | Memorial: Stone                                                                  |
| <b>Criterion for listing</b> | (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social                                                        |

This porphyry war memorial was erected on Anzac Day eve 1957 by the Ashgrove Sub-Branch of the Returned Soldiers' League of Australia, in memory of local residents who served in World Wars I and II. Five years later, 33.5 perches of land around the memorial were officially gazetted for use as a park reserve and memorial and named Stewart Place after successful merchant, and Ashgrove resident, Alexander Stewart. This memorial continues to play an important role in Anzac Day services for the Ashgrove Sub-Branch of the Returned Soldiers' League of Australia and the local community, and serves as a reminder of the contribution of local residents to Australia's efforts in both World Wars.

## History

The war memorial is situated in a small park, Stewart Place, at Ashgrove. Stewart Place is named for Alexander Stewart, a successful merchant who in the 1870s acquired a property of 250 acres that included the present park. After Stewart's death in 1918, most of his estate was developed for housing by T.M. Burke.

Prior to being placed under the control of the Brisbane City Council, Stewart Place was vacant Crown land. Although Council accepted responsibility for the land as early as 1930, it was not until February 1962, that the 33.5 perches was officially gazetted as a Reserve for Park (Soldiers' Memorial) Purposes and formally placed under the control of the Brisbane City Council as trustees.

In 1930, a petition was presented to Council by Alderman Lanham on behalf of residents of Ashgrove requesting that the land be developed into a park. The request was denied due to a lack of available funds.

In 1957 the Ashgrove District War Memorial Fund, under the auspices of the Ashgrove RSL, sought the Council's approval to erect a memorial on the land then known as Stewart's Place in remembrance of those who gave their lives in the two world wars. The site had been used since World War II for Anzac Day services. Approval was granted and the memorial constructed by Ron Turmaine, a stonemason, and several other World War II veterans of the Ashgrove Sub-Branch of the RSL who had cared for the site since the late 1940s. This group of men started building the memorial on the night before Anzac Day, 1957. As the memorial was not quite finished in time for the morning service, a butterbox and Australian flag were draped over the top of the monument to give a finished appearance. The stone for the memorial was carted from Helidon. A time capsule containing the names of the men who assisted with building the memorial was placed inside it.

After the development boom at Ashgrove during the interwar period, the population of the suburb had dramatically increased. The erection of a war memorial provides evidence of an established sense of community at Ashgrove.

Although several memorials to those who fought in the Boer War were constructed in Queensland early this century, it was the loss of some 60 000 Australian soldiers in World War I which prompted the erection of war memorials in practically every city and town across Australia. These memorials took many forms including sculptures of "diggers", obelisks, halls and specially planted trees. They became the symbol of a nation's grief and a focus for Anzac Day ceremonies. War, or more specifically, the notion of the Australian "digger" has played a significant part in the creation of a national identity. After World War II, new memorials were constructed and existing ones altered to include those who lost their lives in the Second World War.

The memorial in Stewart Place is of considerable importance to the Ashgrove community. This is demonstrated by the annual Anzac Day march to the park, and the use of the memorial in Anzac Day ceremonies. Mr Allan Kropp, a war veteran and member of the Ashgrove RSL involved in the establishment of the memorial in 1957, became the park's unofficial and unpaid keeper, a role that he continues to fulfil. Trees planted near the memorial include one that commemorates a World War I veteran, whose widow asked that the tree be planted in his memory.

In 1994 improvements to the park carried out by the Brisbane City Council included the installation of a flagpole and new paving around the memorial. The Council has also provided the Pencil Pine trees planted near the memorial.

This park and war memorial are significant as evidence of the Ashgrove community's desire to commemorate local residents who lost their lives in two world wars.

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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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## Aesthetic

### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as the layout and prominent position of the park and memorial create a strong sense of place and make a strong contribution to the streetscapes of Waterworks Road and Stewart Road.

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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 evidence of the importance to the local community of commemorating those residents who lost their lives while serving during World War I and World War II.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council Parks File DO187: Stewart Place
2. Brisbane City Council Minutes of Proceedings, 1930, 1956-57
3. *Courier Mail*, 1983
4. Department of Environment Site File 60049: *Glen Lyon*, 24 June 1992
5. McIvor, Trevor and Shirley McIvor. *Salute the Brave: A Pictorial Record of Queensland War Memorials*. Toowoomba: University of Southern Queensland Press, 1994

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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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