

Heritage Citation



Stone Retaining Wall (Montreal)

Key details

Addresses	At 72 Chester Street, Teneriffe, Queensland 4005
Type of place	Retaining wall
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Lot plan	L1_RP58500; L2_RP58500; L3_B31692
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2011 Date of Citation — May 2009
Construction	Walls: Porphyry
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (E) Aesthetic

This is a nineteenth century retaining wall built for a private property and not, as was common, as a municipal works project. It was built c1897 for an investment property owned by prominent local identity Robert Dath. This residence would later be known as 'Montreal'. While 'Montreal' was demolished c1946, this porphyry retaining wall is a surviving remnant of one of Teneriffe's grand residences.

History

The site of the retaining wall at 72-78a Chester Street, Teneriffe was originally part of a large parcel of land that was first sold on 1 June 1854. The buyer was James Gibbon who paid £193.10 for 86 acres described as Lot 53 of the Eastern Suburban Allotments at New Farm. Gibbon, a Brisbane resident, subdivided Lot 53 and sold off some of the land. During the following 45 years, Lot 53 was re-subdivided on a number of occasions by a succession of owners. These owners were property developer and prominent Brisbane architect James Cowlshaw (in 1882), Nathaniel Corrigan later in 1882), James Bell Davidson (in 1885) and property developer Archibald McNish Fraser (in 1887). Fraser had purchased three suburban allotments described as resubdivisions 6, 7 and 8 of Section 27 of Lot 53 on 2 September 1887. Two years later, Fraser sold the land to prominent Teneriffe resident Robert Dath.

On 25 May 1889, Dath bought 1 rood and 15.5 perches of land located at the corner of Chester Street and Teneriffe Street. This was the final section of Chester Street before it ended and turned the corner to become Little Chester Street. In 1889, no houses had been constructed in this section of Chester Street. At the time of purchase (1889), Robert Dath lived nearby in the family home located in Kent Street, Fortitude Valley. He had a number of properties constructed in his local area. In 1890, he had a cottage built in Harcourt Street, New Farm not far from the site of the land 72-78a Chester Street. Dath commissioned architect John Jacob Cohen (1858-1939) to design this cottage and it is possible that Dath used the same architect to design the house he had built in Chester Street in 1897.

Robert Dath had become a successful businessman in the local area. Dath Street in Teneriffe is named after him. He was a major partner in timber merchants Dath, Henderson, Bartholomew & Co. The company began in 1868 and it had a lumber operation and sawmill on the Noosa River at Tewantin. It owned a fleet of small ships (Adonis, Countess of Bellmore, Otter) to deliver the felled trees via the Brisbane River to its timber yard and other sawmill at the company's premises at the end of Commercial Road, Newstead. Timber was cut at Newstead for use in Brisbane's flourishing building industry that benefited from Queensland's economic boom during the 1880s.

Robert Dath was a Justice of the Peace and he involved himself in civic affairs. He became the Mayor of Booroodadin Council that oversaw his local area including Teneriffe. He was also an alderman on the Brisbane Municipal Council. He died on 26 July 1905.

The first house to be built in the section of Chester Street past the intersection with Teneriffe Street was 'Eumarah' that can be seen in the 1927 sewerage map on page 1 of this citation. 'Eumarah' was constructed c1896. The following year, a neighbouring residence located at the corner of Chester Street and Teneriffe Street was built. Its first occupants were merchant and warehouseman Abraham Hertzberg and his wife Frances (Fanny). Hertzberg was a Jewish merchant who sold imported crockery, hardware, stationary, tobacconist goods

& tobacco, fancy goods and toys. He had been a businessman and alderman at Roma before moving to Brisbane where he married Fanny in 1894. Fanny Hertzberg became involved in charitable works being the 1898 treasurer of the Lady Musgrave Lodge Ball Committee. Abraham Hertzberg was an active member of the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce. He became president of the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce in 1921 and he was awarded its first life membership in 1933. Abraham Hertzberg was a trustee in the Queensland Palestine Restoration Fund. He and Fanny lived at the corner of Chester Street and Teneriffe Street from 1897 to 1908 when they moved to 'Montpelier' in Wickham Terrace, Fortitude Valley.

Hertzberg did not own the land and presumably the house was built as an investment rental property for Robert Dath. In the 1897-99 edition of The Queensland Post Office Directories, the Dath family were still listed as residing at their family home in Kent Street, Fortitude Valley. The land of resubdivisions 6, 7 and 8 of Section 27 of Lot 53 was sloping and provided scenic views of the Brisbane River, Fortitude Valley and Brisbane City. The slope though required the building of a porphyry stone (Brisbane Tuff) retaining wall with cuttings made into the wall to allow pedestrian access to the property from both Chester and Teneriffe Street. During the Hertzberg's time at this address, it was listed variously in the suburb of New Farm (1900), Stratton (1910) while Teneriffe Street was known as Wilson Drive (1901-05).

After businessman Robert Dath's death in July 1905, his estate passed to the state government's Queensland Trustees Limited. It took control of the property on 25 September 1906. There is no listing for a resident at this address in the 1909-10 edition of The Queensland Post Office Directories. In the 1910-11 and 1911-12 editions, a Robert Dath is listed as residing at this address. The Dath family still had an interest in the property and Robert was probably related to deceased businessman Robert Dath. This younger Dath is probably the Robert Dath, a clerk, who is listed in the 1913 edition of the Australian Electoral Roll as living at the Prince Consort Hotel I Wickham Terrace, Fortitude Valley. In 1911, the Dath family bought out William Henderson's interest in Dath, Henderson, Bartholomew & Co. Possibly to fund this business take-over, the family decided to dispose of some of its other assets.

On 6 July 1911, the property was sold to Sarah Jane McGuinness, wife of Edward McGuinness. Irish migrant Edward McGuinness had made his fortune as a mining investor on the Gympie goldfields. In 1883, he married Ipswich-born Sarah Jane Dillion and they honeymooned in Canada staying at Victoria in British Columbia and Montreal in Quebec before proceeding onto Britain. Upon their return and until their shift to Brisbane in 1912, they resided at Henry Street, Myola near Gympie. By this time, Edward's occupation was listed as 'Independent Means' as he was living off his savings and investments.

Edward McGuinness is first listed at living at this address in the 1912-13 edition of The Queensland Post Office Directories. On 7 November 1912, Edward died in his new Chester Street home. The cause of death was Apoplexy. It is unclear as to the exact year that the title 'Montreal' was applied to 78 Chester Street. The residence was listed as 'Montreal' in the 1919 edition of the Australian Electoral Roll. The name comes from one of Edward and Sarah McGuinness' favourite honeymoon locations. Sarah Jane McGuinness continued to reside at 78 Chester Street, Teneriffe first as Mrs. Edward McGuinness and then, from 1921 as Mrs. Sarah J. McGuinness. By 1927, 'Montreal' was a substantial residence. The house was spread across the site of the two current houses located at 72 and 78 Chester Street Gardens and outbuildings that included a garage accessed by an easement at the rear of the property, occupied the remaining land (now 78a Chester Street). By the early 1930s, 'Montreal' was allotted the street number of 78 Chester Street.

After 22 years at 'Montreal', Sarah Jane McGuinness died on 17 May 1933. Her estate passed the property to Eileen May Sheehan, the wife of Maurice Herbert Sheehan. Eileen lived at 'Montreal' until 1941. On 3 September 1941, ownership of the property was transferred to Harold Wood and Albert Joseph Parnwell. On the

day of purchase, they mortgaged the property through the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Company Ltd. By 1946, 'Montreal' was gone.

It had been replaced by a new home at 78 Chester Street, with another new home under construction on the corner allotment at 72 Chester Street. Wood and Parnwell had resubdivided the former site of 'Montreal' into three suburban allotments that fronted Chester Street. These three postwar homes continued to have their car access provided by an easement that ran along the boundary with the property at 5 Teneriffe Drive. As with 'Montreal', this easement ran behind the four properties at 5, 7, 9 and 13 Teneriffe Drive to give vehicular entry onto Teneriffe Drive. Pedestrian access from Chester Street was provided by easements from the original gate and stairs which serviced 'Montreal'. Subdivision 1 of resubdivisions 6, 7 and 8 of Section 27 of Lot 53 (17.9 perches) was sold to George Choy Shaw on 15 January 1946. This was the corner block that included the pedestrian gate and cutting in the retaining wall that allowed access to Teneriffe Drive. Subdivision 2 (now 78 Chester Street) were sold to Ada Anne Goggs on 13 April 1951. In 1953, Goggs applied to the Brisbane City Council to have the recently built house at 78 Chester Street converted into flats. It totalled 20 perches and included the house that was built c1946. Dorothy Eileen Jarrett purchased subdivision 3 (17.1 perches & now 78a Chester Street) on 6 July 1954. On 22 October 1954, Jarrett applied to the Brisbane City Council to have flats built at 78a Chester Street.

The street character of this part of Teneriffe is enhanced by this porphyry stone retaining wall. It is adjoined by a masonry retaining wall/fence (possibly also from the 1890s) at 80 Chester Street ('Eumarah') and by the masonry retaining wall fronting 5 Teneriffe Drive. Both of these adjoining retaining walls can be seen marked in the 1927 sewerage map. As well, the porphyry stone kerbing in front of the retaining wall, trees and a bus shelter complement the retaining wall. The porphyry stone retaining wall is an intact item of nineteenth century suburban infrastructure that is linked to the Dath family, who were prominent in the history of Teneriffe. This retaining wall is a surviving remnant of one of Teneriffe's grand homes - 'Montreal'.

Description

This stone retaining wall is constructed of Brisbane Tuff (porphyry) laid as coursed ashlar, with a corbelled capping course, extending over two street frontages and connecting with other retaining walls to adjoining properties.

Original pedestrian gate cuttings (Chester Street & Teneriffe Drive) which served the earlier house, still exist, with the Chester Street opening serving neighbouring properties via pedestrian easements.

The wall is prominent on both street frontages, with its visual impact softened by street trees and a large Poinciana tree at the top of the wall on the corner. The material of the wall is reflected in the Brisbane Tuff street kerbing, and a simple bus shelter and seat are located midway along the Chester Street frontage.

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 the remnant of an 1890s Stratton investment property built for prominent local businessman and politician Robert Dath; and aligned to two street frontages with matching intact cuttings for pedestrian steps and gates that were the main access ways to the demolished grand residence 'Montreal'.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage

as a nineteenth century porphyry stone retaining wall covering dual street frontages and built as a private not a municipal project.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a prominent and extensive stone retaining wall built of coursed Brisbane Tuff, incorporating original pedestrian openings, and complemented by similar stone kerbing and vegetation.

References

1. Australian Electoral Rolls of 1903, 1905, 1913, 1919, 1925
2. Brisbane City Council, aerial photographs for 1946, 2001 and 2005

3. Brisbane City Council, post-1946 Building Cards
4. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, Applications/Site History
5. Brisbane City Council, Sewerage Map No. 191, 28 July 1927
6. Death Certificate (Queensland) of Edward McGuinness, 7 November 1912
7. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of Title and other records
8. John Oxley Library, *Picture Queensland* photographic collection
9. Kerr, John, "Brisbane and South Brisbane Sawmills" in *Geographical Overview of Sawmilling*, (January 1998).
10. Mckellar's' Brisbane Survey Maps of 1895
11. Musgrave, Elizabeth, Kaylee Wilson and Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit. *New Farm and Teneriffe Hill: Heritage and Character Study*. October 1995
12. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
13. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay 1994, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
14. http://www.ancestry.com.au/?o_iid=22129&o_lid=22129
15. <http://judaicia.library.usyd.edu.au/histories/Central/ZA06.pdf>

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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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