

Heritage Citation



The Gables

Key details

Addresses	At 15 Molonga Terrace, Graceville, Queensland 4075
Type of place	House
Period	World War I 1914-1918
Style	Composite
Lot plan	L2_RP111309; L1_RP111309
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2005 Date of Citation — November 2010
Construction	Roof: Tile; Walls: Masonry - Render
People/associations	Walter Taylor (Architect)

This large Federation house was built in 1915-16 by noted Brisbane builder Walter Taylor to a design of his own. It was constructed a time when Graceville was slowly transforming from a farming district into a residential suburb popular with Brisbane's wealthier citizens and is therefore illustrative of that period in Graceville's history. The house is also significant for its aesthetic qualities.

History

Louisa Taylor, wife of building contractor Walter Taylor, acquired 1 acre, 3 roods and 21 perches of land in June 1915. On this land her husband Walter Taylor constructed 'The Gables' to his own design.

The *Architecture and Building Journal of Queensland* of June 1924 noted particular design features of The Gables:

The walls are solid and substantially built and contain ideal recesses, such as bay windows, single nooks, linen presses, etc. [...]. The extensive entrance hall contains a very fine silky oak staircase. The fittings throughout, including all furniture harmonise, and no expense has been spared to make the home an ideal one for its occupants.

The grounds of the residence were also considered to be of special merit.

In the spacious grounds may be seen a circular fernery, in the centre of which is a revolving spray, which automatically sprays all plants. Another similar apparatus is installed in the fountain in the front garden. Another novelty noticed was the turntable or revolving floor of the motor garage, which enables cars to be turned within the garage. This has also been one of Mr Taylor's own ideas.

In 1926 the Taylors moved to the house 'Glen Rae', which they had built on their acreage closer to the river. The bulk of this land, which included 'The Gables', was sold in 1945, although Louisa retained the land around 'Glen Rae' until her death in 1962.

Walter Taylor was born in Sheffield, England in 1872. His family had emigrated to Australia when he was ten years old. Walter worked for the railways in Queensland until 1902 when he returned to England to market some inventions. He returned to Australia in 1912, having spent much of his time overseas studying methods of reinforced concrete construction. In Queensland, Walter undertook construction contracts with many leading architects, building such structures as Tritton's furniture warehouse at North Quay; Brisbane Newspaper Company bulk stores at William and Margaret Streets; warehouse and offices for Hooper & Harrison Ltd, G Smith Esq, Hoey Fry Ltd, and Gordon and Gotch. He also built the nine story Craigston Flats in Wickham Street; No 2 Block and the Nurses Quarters at the Brisbane General Hospital; RSL Club in Elizabeth Street; Tristram's Aerated Water Factory at South Brisbane; and the Breakfast Creek Bridge, Albion.

In his local district he constructed other residences: the Central Buildings on Honour Ave, which contained shops and his own office, and the Graceville Methodist Church, which he also designed. He is probably best known for

the Walter Taylor suspension bridge which crosses the Brisbane River at Chelmer, which he both designed and constructed. With Harold J. Foote, W. T. Smillie, and W. H. Green, Walter Taylor was one of the directors of the directors of the Indooroopilly Toll Bridge Ltd, the company that built the bridge which now bears his name. Taylor was heavily involved in the administration of the Methodist Church in Queensland for almost fifty years and also in community work. He was president of the Graceville Progress Association and the Indooroopilly-Chelmer Centenary Memorial Bridge League. An inventor, designer and builder, Taylor was also an accomplished bookbinder, exhibiting in Brisbane in 1924 in conjunction with Lloyd Rees. He died in 1955.

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 it is a large, fine house built on a large property at a time when Graceville was starting its gradual transformation from farmland to residential use.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a large, imposing house attractively formed with a distinctive tower.

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

as an example of the work of noted Queensland builder Walter Taylor.

References

1. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Queensland Certificates of Title
2. *Walter Taylor South Character and Heritage Study*, BCC Heritage Unit, 1997
3. Queensland Post Office Directories
4. Brisbane City Council Water Supply & Sewerage Detail Plans
5. Architectural and Building Journal of Queensland
6. Lawson, Ronald *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*. St Lucia U of Q Press, 1973
7. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
8. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*. (St. Lucia: U of Q Press, 1984)

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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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