

Heritage Citation

Tufnell Home Orphanage Chapel (former)

Key details

Addresses	At 230 Buckland Road, Nundah, Queensland 4012
Type of place	Chapel
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Brisbane Regional
Lot plan	L1_RP34701
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 17 May 2013 Date of Citation — November 2012
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (G) Social

The Tufnell Home opened in 1901 in the former Gardner residence (1891). The orphanage was named after Brisbane's first Anglican Bishop Edward W. Tufnell, whose wife funded its formation. It housed girls aged 3 to 14 and boys aged 3 to 8. In 1914, a chapel was added to the site for the orphans' religious instruction and worship. A modern brick Tufnell Toddlers Home was added in 1946. The original nineteenth century house/dormitory was subsequently demolished and the Tufnell Home closed in 1975. The Chapel remained in continuous use by the orphanage and more recently has been used for weddings and religious services.

History

This site was originally part of a freehold land purchase made by Joseph Bancroft on 28 December 1864. He paid £34.10.2 for 10 acres, 1 rood and 11 perches designated Portion 350 in the Parish of Toombul. In 1888, the land was transferred to Charles Howard Gardner. He obtained two mortgages totalling £3,500 in 1888 and 1890 and built his residence on the Nundah hilltop land off Buckland Road in 1891. Gardner was a businessman of the

firm Carew, Gardner & Billing as well as a Justice of the Peace.

On 19 July 1900, part of Gardner's land was transferred to the Corporation of the Synod of the (Anglican) Diocese of Brisbane. The Church of England acquired Subdivision 1 of Portion 350, comprising 4 acres, 2 roods and 27 perches that included Garner's large house. The Anglican Diocesan Council had paid £1,576 for the purchase of the orphanage site. This money had come largely from Mrs Laura Tufnell, the wife of the first Anglican Bishop of Brisbane Edward Wyndham Tufnell (1814-1896). After her husband's death in 1896, Laura Tufnell donated £1,000 of the orphanage's purchase money plus a further £200 towards repairs and additions to the existing house so that it could accommodate 50 children. The orphanage was created as a memorial to Bishop Tufnell and it was named in his honour.

The Nundah orphanage had its origins when Anglican Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent (SSA) opened the Home of the Good Shepherd at Eton House, Nundah on 10 June 1893. It was a girls' school that was known as the Eton High School for girls by 1898. In 1894, the Home of the Good Shepherd accepted 'private payment orphans' (sponsored) who were girls aged 12 to 13 who were trained as household domestics. Orphan girls under the care of the Queensland government were also sent to Eton House but this practice stopped in 1897 when the 'State girls' were sent to the Ormiston House orphanage at Ormiston. The Anglican Girls High School at Eton House was converted into St Francis Theological College in 1907.

On 6 February 1901, the new orphanage that housed both girls and boys and named the Tufnell Home was opened at 230 Buckland Road, Nundah by Bishop W.J.B. Webber. The main entrance was off Buckland Road (opposite Bishop Street) with a service road running through the site and connecting to Dalziel Street.

The Tufnell Home was run by the Sisters of the Sacred Advent. The orphan boys were housed there until they turned 8, when they were sent elsewhere. The orphan girls continued to be trained as domestics, though in 1914 the training of 12 year olds ceased when the state government raised the age of employment to 13 years. That year, a new, purpose-built chapel was constructed beside the old house/dormitory. The chapel provided the setting for the daily religious instruction lessons conducted by the Reverend Canon Stevenson as well as daily religious services. On Sundays, the orphans attended community services at St Francis Church in the grounds of the former Eton House. In 1919, an extension to the house created an 8-bed hospital ward for sick children. This ward was run by a resident nurse, who was overseen by Northgate GP Dr. Hedley Brown.

In 1921 and again in 1922, The Brisbane Courier ran a public appeal to raise funds for a better sanitation system and water supply for the orphanage. By 1924, the Tufnell Home housed 70 children (40 girls, 30 boys). Their ages ranged from 3 to 14 with the majority aged 10 and under. The orphanage relied on growing its own food, the making and mending of children's clothes by volunteer women, a small levy on the parents with children at Nundah State School and the occasional private or state government endowment. The site was described as:

The grounds stand on the highest part of Nundah, where the north-east sea breezes blow in delight before they reach the city. The grounds are large enough to provide one roomy playground for the girls and another for the boys, as well as a garden.¹

The orphans received their education at the Nundah State School (163 Buckland Rd.). As a result of the successful The Brisbane Courier Appeal, £192.10.7 was raised providing additional funds for the construction of a new wing to the 1891 residence. This 22-bed boy's dormitory plus a matron's room was opened on Saturday 22 October 1927 by the Anglican Archbishop Dr. Sharp. In 1936 after St Francis Theological College relocated to 'Bishopsbourne' at Milton, a public petition saw St Francis Church retained and relocated in Nundah. Renamed

the Church of the Holy Spirit and rededicated on 7 February 1937, the church building had been moved to 39 Imbros Street, a location that was even closer for the orphans attending the Sunday services while the chapel continued its use for daily services.

The Sisters of the Sacred Advent struggled to provide facilities due to the limited funding available. Appeals were made for the public donation of cricket bats, stumps and balls, old tennis balls, graded standards and crosspieces for high jumping by the Tufnell Home. In 1942, Laurette Burgess ('Aunty Lauri') a member of the Stolen Generations was sent to the Tufnell Home. She later recalled the conditions:

Aunty Lauri remembers spending days locked in a cold place underneath Tufnell Home, with no toys to play with, apart from a tennis ball she found. "The room had a concrete floor, two Toilets and two basins," she said. "We were locked in there every day and on Saturday afternoons we were allowed out to play. If we did something wrong, the nuns would lock us in different rooms". Aunty Lauri says she was the only indigenous child in the home and most other children did not stay long.²

On 1 March 1946, the Brisbane City Council granted permission for the construction of a separate, new brick and tiled-roof Toddler's Home building within the grounds of the Tufnell Home. The tender was awarded to builder J.R. Gillon. Construction began in 1946 with the modern building constructed on the hill beside Buckland Road (across from Tufnell Street). The Tufnell Toddler's Home opened on 14 September 1947. From 1956 to 1958, four successful applications were made to Council to provide alterations and/or additions to the Tufnell Home. It is thought that during this period, the original nineteenth century house that had been the orphanage's central building since 1900 was demolished and the chapel relocated within the site. The Tufnell Toddler's Home was licensed under the state government's *The Children Services Act* on 4 August 1966. This replaced the previous (1938) *The State Children's Act*.

The Tufnell Toddler's Home closed in 1975. In February 1988, the former Anglican orphanage site became the Tufnell Child Care Centre. From 1991, with the construction of 6 to 8 brick dormitories around the site of the demolished Gardner residence, the site was also utilised as Tufnell Lodge providing accommodation for tertiary students. The Child Care Centre operated until 2011 when it became unviable. The Chapel remains in good condition and is used on occasions.

Description

The simple timber rectangular chapel is "intact and in good condition" having had refurbishment works carried out in 1998 according to a report by RPS. "The interior retains features of interest such as low level pews designed for children and an expressed timber A-frame roof with curved brackets." Despite a modern Colorbond roof, it "appears largely unaltered" when "compared to an early, undated photo". The bell near the entry to the chapel is also an important feature.³

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 1914 chapel for an orphanage established in 1901 in a nineteenth century residence which operated until 1975. The chapel was the hub of religious worship for the orphans and staff of the orphanage and has been used for religious ceremonies since 1914.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as an early twentieth century timber chapel built for and utilized by the staff and orphans of first orphanage for state wards run by the Anglican Church in Brisbane

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as the purpose-built 1914 Chapel for a nearby orphanage.

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 purpose-built chapel used for almost a century of worship and religious services, it has a strong association with the religious, pastoral and welfare services of the Church of England which later became the Anglican

References

1. "The Tufnell Home", *The Brisbane Courier*, Wednesday 3 September 1924, p.17
2. "The End of a Sorry Saga", *The Sunday Mail*, 9 February 2008
3. RPS 'Submission on behalf of the Corporation of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane regarding the proposed inclusion of Tufnell Home Orphanage (former), 230 Buckland Rd in Brisbane's City Plan Heritage Register'. 16 February 2012
4. Ancestry.com, re Tufnell Home for Children, Nundah 1900s, www.archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/GENANZ/2005-06/1118217322
5. Brisbane City Council, aerial photographs 1946 & 2009
6. Brisbane City Council, post-1946 Building Cards
7. Brisbane City Council Properties on the Web
8. Brisbane City Council, *Sewerage Map No. 1274*, 21 February 1950
9. *The Brisbane Courier*, 6 June 1893
10. CLAN –Care Leavers Australia Network, ww.clan.org.au/homes_details.php?homesID+219
11. "Diocesan Council", *The Brisbane Courier*, 12 June 1901, p.6
12. "Tufnell Home – Help For A Deserving Institution", *The Brisbane Courier*, 31 January 1921
13. "Tufnell Home Appeal – Who Will Help A Deserving Institution", *The Brisbane Courier*, 27 January 1922
14. "The Tufnell Home", *The Brisbane Courier*, 7 July 1927, p.48
15. "The Tufnell Home – New Wing Opened This Afternoon", *The Brisbane Courier*, 22 October 1927, p.26
16. "Public Notices", *The Brisbane Courier*, July 1893
17. Department of Natural Resources, title deeds and other documents
18. *Queensland Post Office Directories 1888 to 1949 Editions*
19. *The Queenslander*, 12 May 1894
20. "The Eton High School for Girls", *The Queenslander*, 15 January 1898, p.124
21. Spiritus – WHO WE ARE – History, www.spiritus.org.au/WHOWEARE/History.aspx
22. www.clan.org.au/homes_details.php?homesID=219

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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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