

Heritage Citation



Valley Masonic Temple (former)

Key details

Addresses

At 149 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006

Type of place	Hall
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Free Classical
Lot plan	L60_RP9780
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Information — September 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Masonry
People/associations	McArthur and Walker (Builder); Thomas Blair Moncrieff Wightman (Architect)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

The Valley Masonic Temple in Brunswick Street was constructed in 1922 from designs by architect T.B.M Wightman. It was used by Tullibardine Lodge, originally a Scottish Masonic lodge, for sixty years. It was purchased by its current owners, the Embroidery Guild, in the early 1980s.

History

Freemasonry came to Queensland from 1859, with the first lodge, 'North Australian', launched in the Freemasons' Hotel in Albert Street. 'St Andrews', the first Scottish lodge in Queensland, was established five years later. Freemasonry was a fraternal society with religious and charitable aspects. The aims of freemasonry, as stated by the Right Worshipful Brother A.M. Hertzberg on the inauguration of the 'Adolph Hertzberg' Lodge, include the exercise of a wholesome influence, a practical expression of altruism and brotherly love, self-sacrifice and the acknowledgement of God, resulting in the banding together of 'the best among men, whom nationality, creed or prejudice would otherwise keep apart.' Hertzberg also pointed out the distinction from friendly societies of the time, which focused on providing medical services to members (who were generally working-class people). Freemasonry was spread throughout Queensland by individuals, each promoting his own lodge. As a result, the primary loyalty of lodge members was to their founding lodge in England, Scotland or Ireland. Attempting to bring all lodges in Queensland into conformity with one another, the Queensland Grand Lodge was launched in 1904. It achieved some success, with all 25 Irish-based lodges in Queensland and fourteen of the Scottish lodges joining at inauguration. However, all English and the remaining Scottish lodges remained separate, retaining their loyalty to their founders.

Tullibardine lodge was one of a number of lodges formed under the Scottish Constitution in the 1910s, and one of several lodges based on Fortitude Valley. It was created in 1913 and was named for the Marquis of Tullibardine, who had led the Scottish Horse Brigade in the South African War. Tullibardine was one of the

Scottish lodges which did not belong to the Queensland Grand Lodge. Early meetings of Tullibardine were held in the A.C.B. Building in Wickham Terrace, in the Valley. The lodge's first social function held in Sandgate in 1918 had 250 attendees, with a performance from the Windsor band.

The popularity of masonry had grown over the course of the early twentieth century. By 1920 there were 86 English lodges and 101 Scottish lodges within Queensland, which cooperated to form the Queensland Grand Lodge in April. Unity of all the Queensland lodges was finally achieved in 1921, and the masons who attended the inauguration of the United Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons in Queensland packed the Exhibition Concert Hall. The new united body consisted of 281 active lodges totalling 14,000 members, with Grand Lodge funds of £50,000 and £30,000 from individual lodges. Many men in positions of power in Brisbane had memberships in a Masonic society, including Alfred Hubbard (who was mayor of Brisbane in 1877-8) and the mayor of Toowoomba, who was appointed the Grand Master of Scottish Freemasons in Queensland in 1907. Masonry also played a role in some significant events: the foundation stone of the new Town Hall, for example, was laid with full Masonic Honours.

The popularity of both masonry and the Valley was reflected in the establishment of multiple lodges in Fortitude Valley in the 1910s and 1920s. The Valley had become a successful commercial and industrial district by the 1910s and was still growing in the 1920s. Despite this, purpose-built lodge halls were few and far between. Meetings were held in public rooms where there were no lodges. The Valley had the Wickham Street Masonic Lodge, later replaced by Tullibardine's lodge on Brunswick Street.

The 'Masonic Lodge Tullibardine' purchased the Brunswick Street site in March 1920, at a cost of £650. The site was in a mostly residential area, which had become increasingly more populated as the commercial and industrial value of the Valley Corner grew. Business and residences alike moved out further from the intersection of Brunswick and Wickham Streets, into areas that had formerly been sparsely populated. Tullibardine's new neighbours included the Vita Vim Bread Company, McCaul's Motor and Electrical business, upholsterers, a boarding house, and a number of residents.

The foundation stone for the new temple was laid on 27 May 1922 at a ceremony attended by the United Grand Master, Alexander Corrie; the Grand Architect, Mr V. Larson; and approximately 250 other brethren. Thomas Blair Moncrieff Wightman, an architect who was also a mason, was to design the building, and McArthur and Walker the contractors.

Architect T.B.M. Wightman was born in Scotland and emigrated to Brisbane in 1910. He was employed by eminent firm Atkinson and McLay in 1912, before setting up his private firm, which he conducted from 1913 until his death in 1933. He was briefly partnered with Phillips from 1914-1918. Wightman held prominent positions in the Queensland Institute of Architects and was a fellow of the Royal British Institute of Architects. He is particularly well known for his domestic architecture, which contributed to the development of the interwar style of residential buildings.

On 29 September 1922 the finished temple was consecrated by the deputy Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Quinn, with 300 members witnessing the ceremony. The main entrance of the building was a shop entrance, which led to a harmony hall and banquet hall of 50 feet by 31 feet with a platform. The upper floor provided a lodge room the same size as the banquet hall. Tullibardine shared the room with other lodges, which had contributed towards the cost of construction, although the building was still £3000 in debt at the time of the opening ceremony. 'Valley Masonic Temple' is inscribed on the parapet. Grand Master Most Worshipful C. Stumm, not present at the opening of the hall, was one of the Grand Registrars of the Grand Lodge and R.F.N. Quinn was the Assistant Grand Master of the recently formed Grand United Lodge.

The popularity and status of freemasonry continued in the 1930s, with a huge temple completed in Ann Street in 1930. The Valley hall, which replaced the old Wickham Street hall, continued to host socials, meetings and events for other lodges, meetings and events, including Lodges Kilwinning, Theodore Unmack, Kaye, British, Lord Saltoun. It also hosted wedding receptions.

The Masonic Lodge Tullibardine owned and used the building for the following sixty years, despite the decline of the Valley in the second half of the twentieth century. The last Masonic meeting was held in the hall on 27 March 1982. Later that year it was sold to the Embroiders Guild which has occupied the building for over twenty years.

Statement of significance

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the criteria for entry in the Heritage Register of the Brisbane City Plan 2000. It is significant for the following reason/s:

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 physical remnant of a time when freemasonry played a role in the lives of many prominent Brisbane citizens, and of the growth of Fortitude Valley in the early twentieth century.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its contribution to the streetscape of Brunswick Street.

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 Masonic meeting place for sixty years which had a special attachment with the Masonic community of Brisbane.

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

for its association with architect T.B.M. Wightman, a prominent interwar architect.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit Citation August 1995
2. Information from R.J. Carmichael, Tullibardine Lodge
3. Newspaper Cutting from Mason's Records, May 1922
4. Queensland Post Office Directories
5. Pugh's Almanac, 1922
6. A Richards, The Centennial Story: The History of Freemasonry in Queensland, Australia over the First One Hundred Years, 1859-1959, Brisbane: Hundred Years Committee of the UGLQ
7. Queensland Land Title Records
8. *The Brisbane Courier*, 1907-8, 1913-4, 1921-2, 1930

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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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