

## Heritage Citation



### Wunkoo

### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 27 Eblin Drive, Hamilton, Queensland 4007
<b>Type of place</b>	House
<b>Period</b>	Victorian 1860-1890
<b>Style</b>	Arts and Crafts, Georgian
<b>Lot plan</b>	L1_RP47743
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — April 2013

**Construction**

Roof: Slate;  
Walls: Stone;  
Walls: Timber

**Criterion for listing**

(A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic

'Wunkoo' was originally a low-set, one-storey house constructed in the 1860s. It was probably built for Alfred J.W. Nightingale, an early manager of the Government Savings Bank, who purchased over 13 acres at Hamilton in the 1860s. 'Wunkoo' (allegedly an Aboriginal word mean "high and rocky land") was leased to tenants from the mid-1880s. Mary Brownlow Cole, a former tenant, bought the property in 1919 and added an upper timber storey which was let as a separate flat. This was replaced by a later owner circa 1980. 'Wunkoo' is one of the oldest surviving residences in Hamilton and is important in demonstrating Hamilton's emergence in the 1860s as a rural enclave favoured by many of Brisbane's upper class residents.

## History

This residence was originally a low-set stone house with a slate roof and a verandah on three sides, facing south towards the view of the Brisbane River. It is believed to have been built in the 1860s for Alfred J.W. Nightingale. Although Nightingale did reside at 'Wunkoo' at certain times (eg in the early 1890s), he frequently leased the property to tenants.

Nightingale, an early manager of the Government Savings Bank who arrived in Brisbane in 1860, acquired the title for over 11 acres on the slopes of Toorak Hill in 1863. He purchased an additional two acres bordered to the south by Langside Road in 1866. It is on this lower portion of land that Wunkoo was built.

During the 1860s, Hamilton was an elite rural enclave with views from Toorak Hill over the Brisbane River. Several substantial homes were built at this time at Hamilton by Brisbane's wealthy and influential families including Lochiel in the 1860s, for auctioneer, John Buckland, Toorak House (c 1865) for James Dickson, also an auctioneer and later, Premier of Queensland, and Eldernell (1869) for William Hemmant, a draper and politician.

Nightingale mortgaged his Hamilton property for £500 to James Cowlshaw in 1866. Several other mortgages to various institutions followed. Nightingale continued to mortgage the land heavily during the early 1890s. He rented 'Wunkoo' to various tenants including E.I.C. Brown, MLC for Queensland and a proprietor of the Courier and Mrs Bridget Brownlow Cole, a widow. It seems he suffered financial difficulties during the depression of the 1890s as the land (now 11 ½ acres) was repossessed by the Australian Mutual Provident Society in 1905.

In 1919, Nightingale's former tenant, Bridget Brownlow Cole, purchased 'Wunkoo' and just over an acre of land surrounding the house between the new road of Eblin Drive and Langside Road. According to F.E. Lord's 17 December 1931 article in the Queenslander, the house at this time had a room at each end of the verandah and another verandah at the rear of the house (facing Eblin Drive). The original brick kitchen with its own verandah was also located behind the house. Stables, a coachhouse, fowl house and other outbuildings were situated

behind the house on the western boundary. These were demolished prior to 1931. A maid's room opened off the inner end of the brick kitchen. The kitchen was demolished at some point prior to 1946.

Mrs Brownlow Cole made substantial alterations to the house, adding an upper timber storey with two large rooms and a balcony, kitchenette and bathroom above the rear verandah. A porch was built onto the verandah below and a laundry added to the old brick kitchen. She also reportedly moved the staircase from the hall to the north eastern end of the verandah allowing access to the upper storey. Much of the southern end of the front verandah was converted to a room and one of the original "end verandah rooms" used as a bathroom. In 1931, F.E. Lord provided a lengthy description of the house and grounds for the *Queenslander*, including a description of the lower floor:

The lower floor of the main house comprises the long divided room so often mentioned, which takes up the right hand side as one enters from the front and a door from each part opens into the hall which extends through the house. Across the hall are two rooms, the principal bedroom in front and the dining room behind it. Each contains a fireplace with a white marble mantelpiece in the former room and a wooden one in the latter.

In 1935, Mrs Brownlow Cole sold some 51 perches fronting Langside Road and began to use Eblin Drive as main entrance to the house. After her death at Wunkoo in 1940, the property was transferred to her unmarried daughter, Cecily Brownlow Cole. Miss Brownlow Cole sold the house and remaining three quarters of an acre to Edmund Cuppaidge in 1943.

Cuppaidge, a solicitor, and his family took up residence at Wunkoo, and the house remained in the Cuppaidge family until 1994. Since 1944, the house has been on a smaller parcel of land of around half an acre (2378m<sup>2</sup>) with no frontage to Langside Road. In 1949, Cuppaidge received approval for repairs and alterations and to relocate the garage to a new position. He was granted approval for further additions in 1980. According to photographic evidence, it appears that at this time, the interwar flat on the upper storey and the upper sections of the stone walls on either side were removed and a new timber upper storey constructed, converting the building back to a single residence.

Despite these changes, in 1993, a *Sunday Mail* article described many original features in the house, including pressed metal ceilings with plaster cornices, the marble fireplace, panelled internal doors and three sets of French doors onto the verandah.

Further changes occurred in 1999 when a large extension was added to the rear (southern end) of the house, the upper storey altered internally, stone tiles removed from the hallway, the old garage demolished and a tennis court, fountain, pool and new garage added.

Many of these changes to 'Wunkoo' reflect its transition from a mid-19th century home on a large estate with numerous outbuildings which overlooked the Brisbane River to a suburban home in Eblin Drive. The stone 1860s core of the house provides evidence of the period when Hamilton was a fashionable rural retreat for the city's wealthy professionals.

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## Description

'Wunkoo' is now approached from Eblin Drive. The original stone lower storey has a timber storey above, with a shingled roof and decorative stone chimney. The upper storey features timber shutters and skirted timber walls. A small porch adorns the front entrance.

The large extension at the rear has effectively doubled the footprint of the house.

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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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#### Historical

##### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history as one of a handful of elite residences built on the slopes of Toorak Hill at Hamilton in the 1860s.

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#### Aesthetic

##### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for the picturesque appearance created by the juxtaposition of elements such as the entrance porch, stone walls and chimney, skirted timber upper walls, window design and shingled roof.

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## References

1. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Queensland Certificates of Title
2. Brisbane City Council aerial photographs, 1946, 2001, 2009
3. Brisbane City Council, Properties on the Web, Building Cards

4. Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit, 'Heritage Trail: Hamilton' (Series No. 9, 2nd edition)
5. BCCI. Surveyor's notebook. BCA C126 – 13
6. Brisbane City Council Town of Hamilton Detail Plan 252, 1923
7. McKellar's Map of Brisbane and Suburbs. Brisbane: Surveyor-General's Office, 1895
8. *Queenslander*, Dec 1931. Oct 1883
9. *Courier Mail*. Dec 1940. *Brisbane Courier*, 1898- 1950. NLA Trove digital newspaper website. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper?q> Viewed April 2013
10. *Sunday Mail*. Mar 1993
11. John Oxley Library, 'Notable Brisbane Houses of the Nineteenth Century' (1975)
12. Queensland Post Office Directories

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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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