

Heritage Citation

Zillmere State School A Block

Key details

Also known as	Zillman's Waterholes School
Addresses	At 70 Murphy Road, Zillmere, Queensland 4034
Type of place	State school
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Bungalow
Lot plan	L817_SL8439
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2003 Date of Citation — January 2008
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (D) Representative; (G) Social

Constructed in 1924, this timber building, now known as 'A' Block, was the second to be constructed in the grounds of Zillmere School and replaced the original building that had been constructed before the school opened in 1877. 'A' Block was part of an interwar mini building boom of schools within the semi-rural outer northern suburbs that included the construction of new schools for Virginia and Boondall and extensions to Aspley School. Zillmere remained a major district school until the construction of Geebung School in 1948 which reduced its pupil catchment area and prepared it for its new role as a Brisbane suburban state primary school.

History

Zillmere had its beginning in the failed attempt to establish the first free settlement in Queensland, at Zion's Hill (Nundah) in 1838. When the Zion Hill Aboriginal Mission Station, run by German migrants had failed by 1845,

many of the former missionaries became farmers. They headed north from Zion Hill, attracted to the land that had fresh water supplied by Downfall Creek, Cabbage Tree Creek and other local waterholes. Thus German migrant Johann Leopold Zillman took up farmland located around a cluster of waterholes that were soon to be positioned adjacent to the road that led to the seaside village of Sandgate. This source of fresh water for travellers became known as Zillman's Waterholes and this name was soon attributed to the entire surrounding district.

The German settlers soon established a vibrant community in this district. Roads were surveyed and named after local farmers such as Beam, Groth, Mueller and Neumann. In 1874, the German farmers replaced the slab hut that they had been using as their Lutheran church building. They replaced it with a more permanent timber structure, which they named St John's Lutheran Church and the carriage path leading to St John's Church soon became known as Church Street.

Then in 1875, the local community began to lobby for a school for the education of district's children. The nearest schools were located at German Station (Nundah) or at Sandgate, a considerable distance for children to walk. Two community meetings raised £50 for a school building fund. On 15 November 1875, Joseph Lee, Secretary of the local school council, was forwarded onto the Queensland Department of Public Instruction, with a request for a school to be constructed at Zillman's Waterholes. On 10 February 1876, the Department of Public Instruction notified the local school council that as soon as £90 had been raised and deposited in a government account designated for the erection of a Zillman's Waterholes School, tenders would be called to construct school buildings.

The spot chosen for the new school was on a hill along Murphy Road, a major route for local traffic heading to Brisbane town via Gympie Road. Murphy Road derived its name from Irishman Edwin William Murphy who had a large paddock where the road intersected with Gympie Road. On 3 July 1876, the proposed site was cleared and a well was sunk to provide water for the school. A standard school building, being 16 feet long and 16.5 feet wide was erected on the land. The Zillman's Waterholes School opened on 22 January 1877. Its teacher/principal was Mr. James Spiers with an initial enrolment totalled 66 pupils.

In 1888, the Queensland colonial government opened the railway to Sandgate, which choose to the name "Zillmere" for the rail siding, a loading bank, railway gates at Murphy Road and an office for the gatekeeper that it built down the hill from the school. As a result the school was renamed Zillmere School on 8 March 1888. The railway attracted further infrastructure to Zillmere. In 1888, a Church of Christ was built near the new rail facilities, and a School of Arts followed in 1889. James Caruthers Hutton established a bacon and ham-curing factory at Zillmere the year the Sandgate Line opened and J.C. Huttons developed into the largest employer in the Zillmere District.

Zillmere School remained the only educational institution in Brisbane's outer northern farmland district until 6 August 1890, when the Little Cabbage Tree Creek School (later renamed Aspley) opened at Maundrell Terrace. The following year, the Roman Catholic Church opened Nudgee College on the hill overlooking where Sandgate Road crossed Zillman's Waterholes and thereby providing a private school option for the district's children.

During World War One (1914-18), the Army built a temporary training camp at Sparkes' Paddock. This was designated the Military training Camp Chermside but was more commonly referred to as Chermside Camp. As the soldiers marched or rode their horses up and down Murphy Road to Zillmere Railway Station, they provided an exciting spectacle to the children at Zillmere School. During lunch hours and before school, the shout of "Oh, Soldiers!" would bring children racing to the school fence to watch the military drill and to cheer for the soldiers.

'A' Block was built after World War One, when the population expanded, particularly as many ex-servicemen moved to the district. With the resultant increase in school-age children, a mini-building boom in schools occurred throughout the district. The first project in the state government's school building program for the district was the construction of a school along Sandgate Road at Virginia. Next came the building of a new school building - 'A' Block at Zillmere School. The original 1877 school building had become overcrowded as the school serviced families not only from Zillmere, but also Geebung, Boondall and even some from Virginia, Aspley and Bald Hills. Thus the larger 'A' Block was to be a larger and more modern design, containing multiple classrooms and therefore better suited to the needs of the semi-rural district that Zillmere had become by the 1920's. The old school building was moved down Murphy Road and onto the Zillmere Showgrounds. Once there, it was cut-up, with its verandahs removed and added to one side of the 1889 School of Arts building while the remainder of the school building was attached to the other side of the School of Arts. In 1925, a new school for Boondall's families opened on Sandgate Road, while it was not until 1932 that Aspley's one-room school building was extended. Nudgee College also added two new buildings to its site in 1920.

During the interwar period (1919-39), the Zillmere School was the focal point for all Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies held at Zillmere. Local veterans would be invited to attend the School's Anzac Day Service and talk to the children about the First World War. Each Remembrance Day (11 November), would assemble outside of 'A' Block at 11 AM to hold a minute's silence followed by a short talk from the principal. Sometimes the children would bring flowers from their home gardens with the flowers meant to represent the Flander's poppies.

During the Second World War (1939-45), the children and their parents dug slit trenches for use as air raid shelters in the grounds of Zillmere School. An air raid siren located at the J.C. Huttons factory off Zillmere Road, was the signal for the school community to head to air raid trenches. In 1939, the principal of Zillmere School, Roger Griffith, reported that as his school already held 200 children in five classrooms and so could offer little accommodation if there arose a need to evacuate children from Brisbane's inner suburbs due to the effects of enemy bombing. The teachers and children dug a 12- foot square garden plot and planted vegetables as part of a schools' competition designed to increase food production for the war effort.

The opening of the Geebung School in 1948 helped relieve the pressure that Zillmere School had experienced in servicing such a large section of outer-northern area of Brisbane. From 1949, the land between Beams Road and Zillmere Road was subdivided into a Queensland Housing Commission (QHC) estate with many of the houses constructed by German, Italian and French builders who had been brought to Australia as part of the Marshall Plan for postwar reconstruction in Europe. Some of these builders became migrants, thereby adding to the multicultural nature of Zillmere. The QHC largely oversaw the transformation of Zillmere during the 1950's and 1960's, from a semi-rural community into a Brisbane residential suburb.

Thus Zillmere School had overseen the transformation of its education catchment area from farmland, to semi-rural district and finally into a modern Brisbane suburb. As well, 'A' Block has survived better than some of the other buildings that were constructed during the district's mini-building boom in schools that during the 1920's. Virginia School's 1920 building was severely damaged by storms in 1924 and again in 1931. Boondall School's 1925 building was destroyed by fire in the 1990s. Further afield, both the Chermside School (opened 1901) and the Nudgee School (opened 1874) have closed and the sites redeveloped, while Northgate School is a post-war educational institution, having opened in 1959.

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 a school building that was constructed as a part of the state government's school building program to cater for the population increase after World War I.

Rarity

CRITERION B

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

as the oldest remaining building of the first school constructed in Brisbane's outer northern suburbs.

Representative

CRITERION D

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

as an interwar timber state school building.

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

for its association with generations of teachers and children who attended the school.

References

1. Ballard, Kath, *Geebong Story*, (Brisbane: Kath Ballard, 1995)
2. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, website
3. Brisbane City Council, 1946 & 1938 aerial photographs
4. Brisbane City Council, *Brisbane Images* photograph archive website
5. Brisbane City Council's Central Library, local history sheets
6. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
7. Ford, Jonathan (Jack), *Marching to the Trains – the Chermerside Army Camp Remembered*, (Brisbane: Ford, 2005)
8. John Oxley Library, Brisbane Suburbs – newspaper clippings file on Zillmere
9. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
10. Teague, D.R., *The History of Aspley*, (Brisbane: Colonial Press, 1972).
11. Wilson, Angela (ed), *Zillmere State School 120 Year Anniversary 1877- 1997*, (Boondall: Pace Print, 1997)

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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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