

Other Names	Bundaberg Base Hospital, Bundaberg General Hospital.	
Street Address	273 Bourbong Street	Bundaberg
Title Details/ GPS Coordinates	80B158103	

Historical Context

Bundaberg was established in the late 1860s. The Burnett River was identified by John Charles Burnett (after which was it named) during his exploration of the Wide Bay and Burnett regions in 1847. Pastoral stations were established throughout the Wide Bay and Burnett in the late 1840s through to the 1860s, including stations such as Gin Gin, Walla, Bingera, Electra, Monduran and Tantitha. The stations were initially stocked with sheep, but progressively were replaced with cattle. When prices were low, or there was an oversupply of stock (particularly in the 1860s), the cattle were rendered to produce tallow. A boiling down works was established in Baffle Creek to render the stock from the stations. John and Gavin Steuart secured a contract to provide the works with timber for tallow casks. The Steuarts established a camp in North Bundaberg in 1866 and erected a sawmill in the following year. Interest in the settlement grew rapidly and a town was surveyed on the southern bank of the Burnett River in 1868 on the site of the present day city.

Timber was the industry that acted as a catalyst for the creation of a European settlement. However, it was sugar that came to define the history of Bundaberg and the surrounding region. Sugar cane was planted in the 1870s and the first commercial sugar mill, located at Millbank (west of the city on the southern bank of the Burnett), began operating in 1872. The industry was thriving by the 1880s, with major mills such as Millaquin, Bingera and Fairymead processing cane juice from cane plantations and farms throughout the region, particularly in land formerly occupied by the Woongarra, Bingera and Gooburrum scrubs. From its early years, the industry relied on South Sea Islander labour (referred to as 'Kanakas' at the time). The importance of Bundaberg was further strengthened when it became the port for the Mount Perry copper mine, with a railway from Mount Perry to North Bundaberg constructed in 1884 (although a rudimentary road existed from the early 1870s). A rum distillery was established at Millaquin sugar mill in 1888, later known as the Bundaberg Rum Distillery. Bundaberg also developed a foundry and engineering industry to support the sugar and juice mills, and the copper mines at Mount Perry. The first local government, the Bundaberg Divisional Board, was gazetted in 1880.

The first Bundaberg Hospital was a simple timber building constructed in 1881. The building was referred to as the 'Cottage Hospital', reflecting its humble design. It also had a separate ward for South Sea Islanders, who were heavily employed in the sugar plantations in the region. The population of Bundaberg steadily increased and by the late 1890s it was becoming clear that the hospital was not sufficient for the city. However, it was not until 1910 that planning for the new hospital began. The Hospital Committee that oversaw the operations of the hospital secured seven acres of land excised from Queen's Park and the new hospital, designed by the prominent Bundaberg architect FH Faircloth and built by NC Steffensen, one of Bundaberg's most prominent builders in this period, was completed in 1914. Funding for the hospital was heavily supported by the local community; the Queensland government matching every pound raised with £2. The Bundaberg community eventually raised over £5,000.

The new hospital was two storeys high and divided into three wings. The eastern and western wings were comprised of female and male wards respectively. The central building was more diverse, including the Executive offices, a private ward, surgery, operating theatre, dispensary, dining rooms and a kitchen. The central building also included two lifts. The grounds were enclosed in a brick fence with cast iron gates. A nurses' quarters was also constructed, although it was completed after the hospital had been finished.

The hospital has continued to expand over time as the population has increased and medical technology and hospital design has changed. The female and male wings of the hospital were replaced in the c1950s. Buildings have been continuously added to the site since then, and the original landscaped grounds have also been altered. The central building has remained, although it too has been altered internally to varying degrees to accommodate new uses. Nonetheless, major elements of the original hospital remain relatively intact, including the central building and nurses' quarters, sections of the original fence and possibly other features, including a laundry and morgue. The buildings that replaced the female and male wards are located in generally the same configuration as the original wards. The other buildings in the complex reflect different attitudes and approaches to hospital care over time.

Physical Description

The Bundaberg Hospital complex occupies over 10 hectares on the southern bank of the Burnett River. The site is bounded by Queens Park to the north, Hinkler Avenue to the east, Bourbong Street to the south and Hope Street to the west. The main hospital complex is located in the eastern half the site, with a specialist clinic, staff accommodation and car parking located to the immediate west. The majority of the western part of the site contains remnant bushland, grassed areas and a recent university facility with associated car parking on its northern boundary. A number of sealed roads and walkways provide access to the complex and individual buildings and there are also some designated car parking areas. The site shows evidence of varying levels of landscaping throughout, with a recently completed garden in the south eastern corner being a major focus.

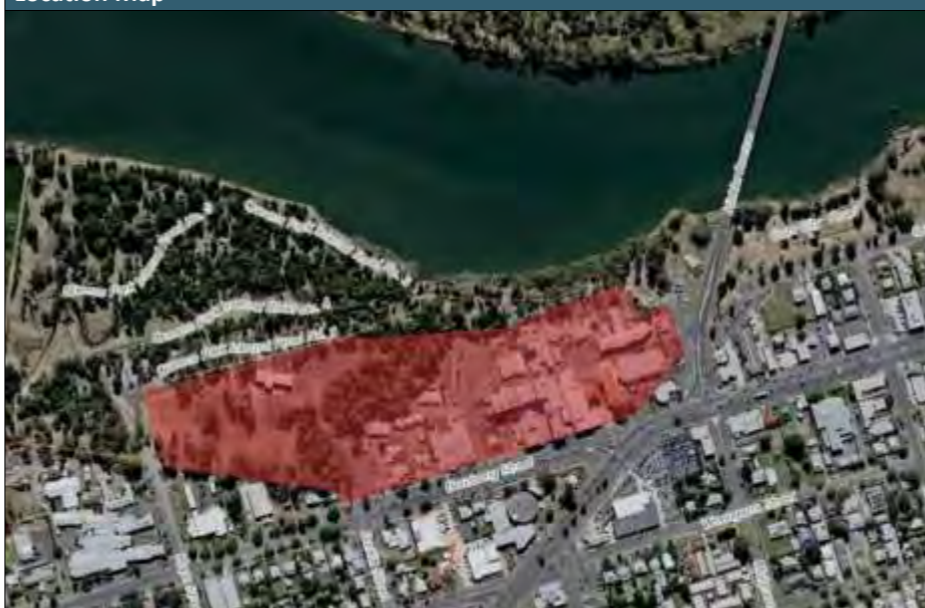
The complex comprises a large number of structures illustrating the progressive development of the hospital over time.

Heritage Significance	
Criteria	Definition
A	<i>The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history.</i>
Statement	The Bundaberg Hospital complex is important in demonstrating the evolution of the region's history. The 1914 hospital replaced the first hospital in the district, known as the 'Cottage Hospital'. The substantial masonry building was substantially larger than the original, single storey timber hospital, reflecting the increasing population and prosperity of the Bundaberg district in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (largely as a result of the growth of the sugar industry). The continuing changes to the hospital complex over time also reflect the evolution of the region's history as the region has continued to grow over time and technological and architectural changes to medical practice are applied.

E	<i>The place is important to the region because of its aesthetic significance</i>
Statement	The Bundaberg Hospital complex is important to the region for its aesthetic significance. Although visually circumscribed, the original central building, built to the design of the prominent Bundaberg architect FH Faircloth, retains key architectural features that reflect its period of construction and remain aesthetically significant. The remnants of the fence and landscaped grounds (although the latter have been altered over time) contribute to this significance. Later structures also contribute aesthetically to the complex, in particular the former nurses' quarters constructed in 1914 and the c1950s buildings that replaced the female and male ward wings of the original hospital - these are excellent examples of architectural influences of the 1950s period including extensive use of tiles, rounded external mouldings and glass.

G	<i>The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons important to the region.</i>
Statement	The Bundaberg Hospital complex has a special association with the prominent Bundaberg architect, FH Faircloth, and the builder NC Steffensen, both of who were responsible for the design and construction respectively of numerous buildings and structures in Bundaberg in the early twentieth century.

Location Map



Southern elevation of Centre-Block.



Southern elevation of Old Quarters.



South-western corner of E-Block.

Significant heritage elements are:

- Centre – Block
- Remnants of original fence
- Old quarters
- 'E' – Block
- Breast screen clinic

And, to a lesser degree:

- Main Block
- 'F' – Block
- Morgue (former)

Centre – Block (1914)

This building addresses Bourbong Street and is the only remaining part of the 1914 opened hospital that consisted of three connected buildings. Centre – Block consists of a double storey, partially rendered, masonry structure (originally face brick) with a corrugated iron clad, Dutch gable roof fronted by two protruding gable sections on the corners and an enclosed balcony in the centre. The core building features a verandah with separate roof on the sides and rear. The façade shows a number of classical decorative elements, including pilasters on the corners supporting entablatures and pediments in the gables, moulded string courses, moulded architraves with keystones at the windows and round columns and decorative wrought iron panels at the balcony. The main entrance is via a large, moulded arch leading through a portico into a hall containing an ornate timber staircase and some pressed metal coverings. A tall structure with hipped roof joins onto the core building on the north-eastern corner, followed by an L-shaped two storey rendered (ashlar) masonry structure with Dutch gable joining onto the rear. The windows are sash and casement configuration with accentuated sills. Access is via French doors on ground level and there are stairs leading to the upper level. A single storey extension adjoins the rear of the building.

'E' – Block (c1950s)

'E' – block is located to the east of Centre – Block (replacing the former female ward) and consists of an elongated, double storey, face brick structure with tiled roof, hipped at the front (south) and Dutch gable at the rear. A narrow, two storey protrusion with gable roof spans extending from the main façade spans the central portion of the southern elevation and contains the main entrance. The building features Art Deco style elements, including geometrical building composition and window configuration. A verandah with separate roof extends about a quarter of the length of the building from the southern corners on both side and features rounded corners, decorative pillars and accentuated trims. The balconies join onto bold rectangular rendered segments that extend beyond the roof line. A tall structure with hipped corrugated iron clad roof and a two storey building with hip and valley corrugated iron clad roof are attached on the western elevation towards the north. On the eastern elevation, the building is joined via a connecting element to 'F'-Block.

Remnants of original fence (1914)

Sections of the original fence are located on the southern perimeter, along the periphery of a recent garden and consist of decorative, rendered brick pillars. Two larger pillars, former gate posts, are more elaborately decorated and each topped with an orb shaped element. Originally, the pillars were face brick and only the capping was rendered.

Old Quarters (1915 – Nurses' Quarters)

The Old Quarters are a short distance from 'E'-Block to the north and consist of an elongated, rectangular, two storey, face brick structure with a number of wings extending to the north and an extension joining at an obtuse angle on the eastern side. The building has a rib (trim) deck clad iron roof in a combination of Dutch gable and hip configuration, with three gables at the façade (southern elevation). The building is fronted by a wide verandah with separate roof supported by waist height brick piers and timber posts and arches on the upper level at the front and sides. The verandah has a simple, timber slat balustrade. Access is via several French doors. On ground level the building is dominated by an arcade spanning the entire front and featuring an accentuated keystone in each arch and simple timber balustrades. A number of brick steps lead into the arcade. Several French doors provide access into the building on ground floor. The main entrance is via a two storey protruding section covered by a wide gable. This section features quoining.

Breast Screen Clinic

The Breast Screen Clinic is located to the west of the Old Quarters and comprise the original building and a recent extension (1995) partially mirroring the layout and style of the original structure. The building consists of a single storey, face brick structure with complex hip and valley roof, clad with rib (trim) deck sheeting. Significant features of the original building include rounded front section with pentagonal roof, portico with brick arches, and what appears to be original metal balustrades, doors and windows. The architectural style reflects a combination of Bauhaus/minimalist and late Art Deco elements.

'F'- Block and Main Block (c1960s)

The external elevations of 'F' – Block and Main Block are representative of the modernist, minimalist architecture with "brutalist" overtones, and featuring cubic composition, face brick walls with rendered concrete window frames (main block) and banks of windows.

Former Morgue

The former morgue is located on the northern boundary and consists of a single storey, face brick building with a corrugated iron clad, hipped roof. The building, currently used for storage, has been altered significantly with windows and some doors closed in with bricks of a different colour.

Statutory Listings	No statutory listings
Non-Statutory Listings	No non-statutory listings
Inspection Date	4/12/2015

References

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