Working with the community to know, value and care for our heritage

下図 Heritage 紀2 Branch About Us Listings Development

Heritage Council Publications & Forms Conservation

About Heritage Research Funding

Home ▶ Listings ▶ Heritage Databases ▶ Heritage Database Search ▶ Heritage Item

Click on the BACK button of your browser to return to the previous page.

Graythwaite

Item

Name of Item: Graythwaite

Other Name/s: Graythwaite Nursing Home

Type of Item: Built

Group/Collection: Health Services
Category: Nursing Home

Location: Lat: 151.20300929 Long: -33.84073295

Primary Address: 20 Edward Street, North Sydney, NSW 2060

Local Govt. Area: North Sydney

Property Description:

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOT	2	-	DP	539853

All Addresses

Street Address	Suburb/Town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
20 Edward Street	North Sydney	North Sydney	Willoughby	Cumberland	Primary

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
NSW Department of Health	State Government	

Statement of Significance

Graythwaite is an early example of a prominent North Shore residence which has been altered extensively over its life to reflect the social standing and status of its changing ownership. The early development of the property is associated with Thomas Walker, Deputy Commissary General. His substantial two storey residence 'Euroka' built in the mid 1830's is encapsulated within 'Graythwaite' and together with the detached stables are arguably the earliest remaining fabric of the early settlement of North Sydney.

The sandstone stables are the oldest examples of stables outbuilding in North Sydney and provides evidence of the importance of the horse for transport. The property also has strong associations with the Dibbs family and particularly Thomas Allwright Dibbs, manager of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, who was also ex-officio appointee to the Royal Commission on the Public Service of 1887-90.

Its present use as a convalescent home reflects the compassion and generosity of Thomas Allwright Dibbs to provide a caring place for Australian soldiers on their return from the Great War. The grounds on which 'Graythwaite' is located retains intact its size and configuration of the 1873 subdivision. It retains remnants of the extensive garden curtilage developed from that period and during Dibbs' ownership and retains those magnificent harbour views and vistas to the south and west.

This 2.7 hectare property is an unusually large land parcel considering its close proximity to the CBD of North Sydney which retains substantial land terracing reinforced with mature landscaping. The buildings grand Victorian Italianate architectural form located on the highest part of the property reflects a major renovation, within the Victorian period 1880-

1885 during Thomas Allwright Dibbs' ownership, to capture outstanding views and vistas of Sydney Harbour and beyond. The landmark qualities of this building is no longer apparent when viewed from its main street frontage, but the outward views and vistas from the building to the south and west are unparalled and extensive. Building alterations and additions that have occurred since 1936 and 1952 for use as a Red Cross Hospital have compromised historic fabric and the aesthetic significance of the earlier residential building complex.

'Graythwaite' is valued by the surrounding community for its historical significance as an example of North Shore residential for the wealthy. Its significance has also been established socially through its use as a convalescent home, a hostel for long term disablement and then a geriatric hospital. The main building (although altered for hospital use since 1916) retains detailed finishes, fireplaces and hardware from the Victorian period usually lost in buildings of this type in private ownership. It also contains timber floor and ceiling framing of pit sawn origins with ceilings framing connections using timber pegged tenons, further establishing its early origins and importance of 'Euroka' as one of the earliest surviving structures in the North Sydney area.

The former stables outbuilding with loft is a remnant of early venacular form and formed part of the original building group on land granted to Thomas Walker in 1832. The residence and stables buildings contain remnants of all phases of the property's development and this is reflected in its high archaeological, educational and research potential. The property has been recognised by others to contain one of the largest and most significant collections of late 19th century cultural plantings in the North Sydney area.

Date Significance Updated: 13 Mar 01

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Branch intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Goold and Hilling; Edmund Blacket

Builder/Maker: Aaron Loveridge Construction Years: 1858 - 1885

Physical Description: SITE & LANDSCAPE

The site is situated with dual frontages to Union and Edward Streets, generally rectangular in shape with a finger of land making an 'L' to Union Street.

The termone embedding of land making and L to union street.

The terrace embankments and driveway north from Union street are tree and shrub vegetated and flatter areas grassed.

Vehicular and pedestrian access is obtained from both Union and Edward Streets, however the preferred and most used is Edward Street directly behind the buildings to a small visitor car park. (The buildings' street address is Edward Street).

Entry from Union Street is through a recessed entrance gateway via a formalised driveway to the front of the historic building. A carriage driveway (date?) from Union Street is lined on the west with brush box (Lophostemon confertus) and on the east by camphor laurels (Cinnamomum camphora), which appear to be at least pre 1950s, possibly 1930s. (Recent (late 1990s) plantings of Populus simonii have been put in east of the drive to replace rust-affected Lombardy poplars (P.nigra 'Italica').

To some extent 20th century building development near the historic building group has severed and/or changed the immediate landscaped gardens but remnants of the earlier plantings still remain close to the building. Views and vistas from the building group remain substantially unaltered from site development since the late 19th century. The semi detached villas and other subdivision developments to the south and west are screened by vegetation even through they remain close by in distance terms. The land slope and terraced vegetation to the south and west substantially screen nearby urban development from view. Views and vistas of suburban Sydney, the Harbour , Parramatta River and mountains to the west are visible above the tree line.

BUILDINGS

The building group known as Graythwaite Nursing Home is positioned on an elevated part of the site at the north eastern corner is ringed by security fencing to prevent patients straying. The remainder of land steps down to the south and west with graded embankments and flatter areas to provide a terraced effect.

The three storey substantial building with associated single storey masonry buildings is the historic building known as Graythwaite. From on site inspections it was established that the periphery of mainly single storey buildings relates to the property's use since 1916 as a convalescent and nursing hospital. Physical evaluation of the perceived historical hub buildings was carried out during the study period and reinforces the notion that the three storey sandstone building has grown from smaller building complex, possibly dating to the 1830s.

The Graythwaite property comprises:

- 1. A substantial sandstone Victorian Villa with attached kitchen wings (generally 2 and 3 storeys respectively.) Single storey sandstone outbuilding with loft (former 1830s stables) Single storey masonry outbuilding (ashlar finish) (former secretaries office and staff dining room)
- 2. Single storey brick building (former recreation room)
- 3. Single storey brick outbuilding with attic (former 1880s stables)
- 4. Single storey hospital ward building and service additions and service addition c1918. Alterations to hospital ward (infill of veranda) c1936.
- 5. Service yard and car park.
- 6. Associated terraced and landscaped grounds.
- 7. Recent linking building.
- 1. Graythwaite is a former c.1823 residence which has been altered and has grown through the 19th century from a less prominent building to a grand villa c1882 and then undergone adaptation to a convalescent hospital and nursing home after 1916. Owing to the building's development over considerable time there remains recognisable features from all stages of its development. The building can be described as having three (3) main areas, a) the substantial sandstone Victorian Villa with attached Kitchen Wing, b) a single storey sandstone outbuilding with loft, c) and a single storey masonry outbuilding (ashlar finish).

For further analysis of the physical evidence on site, refer to the Conservation Management Plan prepared by Graham Edds and Associates for the NSW Department of Health dated February 2000 and endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW in August 2000.

(Site notes from a visit 12/1/03, Stuart Read, landscape specialist, Heritage Office)

Shore School owns land immediately east and north of Graythwaite, and further west. This land all formed part of the GT estate under earlier owners, and comprises a range of buildings including houses built for Dibb's children, c.1880s, and later school development, c1900 and later.

Immediately west of the property (and under it) dives a railway line tunnel (half way along the western boundary) being the main northern line to Waverton/Hornsby. This runs directly west/east under the property.

The Terracing on the property is thought to have been made initially for grape/vine planting, although this was abandoned at some point as unsuccessful, much of the terraces facing south, an orientation not suited to ripening fruit. 3 or 4 major terraces face south, and an unknown number (vegetation is too dense to see as yet) to the west of the site, which is steeper. Ground levels appear to have been modified in terms of slope, as well as terracing.

Much deliberate and accidental tree planting has followed on these terraces, making the site rather secluded now, with the exception of long views from the main house south/south-sou-east to the city/Pyrmont, and west/west-sou-west to Balmain/Leichhardt and the river.

Mature specimen trees remaining include perimeter plantings of Moreton Bay figs (Ficus macrophylla) lining boundaries to adjacent housing on Union Street (south) and Bank Street (west). These are at least 100 years old, some of them magnificent specimens, others planted closely (as windbreaks?).

Mature tree specimens across the site comprise mainly figs (about 40 large specimens) being a large number of Moreton Bay figs, also Port Jackson figs (F.rubiginosa), giant bamboo to the west of the main house, and to the south-east of the main building group, firewheel tree (Stenocarpus sinuatus), pepperberry tree (Nth NSW rainforest species), Cook's pine (Araucaria columnaris) - a very tall specimen visible across (south of) the Harbour Bridge) on this ridge, Monterey pine (Pinus radiata), 4 Florida palms (Washingtonia robusta) and Norfolk Island hibiscus (Lagunaria patersonae) line a carriage loop immediately south of the main house, and large numbers of white/grey poplar, Populus

alba, some of which are suckers of older trees/regrowth clumps, spreading (but which probably represent earlier shelter belt or ornamental plantings of this species).

A number of fruit trees remain/have been planted in the last 10/20 years in some cases on the banks immediately west and south of the main house. These may reflect replanting of earlier orchard areas. These include citrus (oranges, lemon, mandarin), fig, loquat, pomegranate, carob, peach, banana (extensive clumps of these), a quince tree, pawpaw, white mulberry (over 40 years old) etc.

Weed species/naturalising plants

A number of "weedy" species trees, sh, although volunteers are clearing the worst of these and replanting locally native and NSW rainforest species to replace them. "Weeds" may of course represent earlier deliberate plantings, which have reproduced themselves on site, or wild seedlings introduced by visiting birds dropping seeds or regenerating naturally with relatively little disturbance/changing light conditions as mature trees fall or are removed. Species include: white poplars (as above), long leaved privet (Ligustrum ovalifolium), small leaved privet (L.sinense), nettle tree (Celtis australis), camphor laurels (as above), sweet pittosporum (Pittosporum undulatum) (probably wildlings ex bird-dropped seed), brush box (as above), night cestrum (C.parqui), coral tree (Erythrina x sykesii), smooth leaved rambutan/native quince, Alectryon species (local native, some bird-seed dropped, some natural regeneration), bleedling heart tree (Omolanthus populnifolius), African olive (Olea africana), lantana (L.camara)- much of which has been removed since 2000 by volunteers, asthma plant (Parietaria sp.), Madiera vine, butterfly bush (Cassia tomentosa), fennel, moth plant (Araujia sp.).

Archaeology

Two brick/stone lined cisterns were discovered to the west of the main house, and recently studied by Goddon Mackay Logan. One appears to be double brick lined, the other sandstone.

Physical Condition and/or Archaeological Potential:

The structural condition of all buildings on the property appear to be well founded and in a structurally stable condition. The site and buildings are occupied on a day to day basis. The site & landscaped grounds are maintained regularly. A volunteer group is weeding the "bush" areas of the garden, and planting locally native and rainforest species to replace weeds such as nettle trees, privet, white/grey poplars, sweet pittosporum (native but weedy). (Read, S., pers.comm., 13/1/03) **Date Condition Updated:** 29 Oct 01

Modifications and Dates:

The Graythwaite group has evolved through three (3) main phases of development: Phase I 1830s residence and outbuildings; c1855 terracing created, planted an orchard on the lower grassed area on Union St. Most of the current garden dates from Dibbs c1875 Phase II 1880s major renovation; Phase III alterations and additions since 1916 for use as a convalescent hospital and nursing home.

Further Information:

Zoning - site zoned special uses. Adjoining land to south and west (Union and Bank Streets) zoned 2(b), permitting two storey development, residential mainly. Commercial use site immediately south-west of GT - which has adaptively reused a former GT/Shore School building, c.1870s.

Current Use: hospital
Former Use: private home

History

Historical Notes:

In September 1832, Thomas Walker, public official paid 60 pounds 9 shillings for a 39 acre land grant. On the 25 October 1833, Thomas Walker conveyed 13 acres of his grant, to the north and east of where Graythwaite was later built, to William Miller, for 20 pounds thirteen shillings. At the time of the purchase of 39 acres, Walker's address was 41 Pitt Street Sydney. When the land was surveyed in 1832, there were no buildings on the land. By 1837, Walker had built himself a residence on his grant almost adjacent to Miller's newly built house. An 1837 plan of the Government Reserve on North Shore shows Walker's and Miller's houses. In January 1845 Walker drew up his will bequeathing his house 'Euroka' and 16 acres to his wife and he died in 1850.

Three years after his death, the house and remaining land was sold to George Tuting, a mercer of Pitt St, Sydney for 1500 pounds. In that conveyance, the grounds are described as 113 acres. Tuting held the land only briefly, possibly for the purposes of speculation at a time when land and house prices boomed in the early 1850s after the discovery of gold. He sold the house and land in 1853, for more than double what he had bought it for.

The new owner, Edwin Sayers, was a shipowner who had arrived in Sydney from Melbourne

about 1850. He was mainly interested in the coastal shipping trade. Sayers occupied Euroka and remained there until 1868. Sayers added a large new two storey sandstone wing circa 1855, created the terracing and planted an orchard on the lower grassed area on Union St. As a merchant seeking to utilise all of his available capital and with the problems of unexpected calls being made upon his resources, from unexpected financial crises or due to the vagaries of shipping weather, Sayers needed to use his substantial house as security for loans at times. Hence, on the 23 July 1855, Tuting conveyed the house and land to Edwin Sayers, Sydney for \$3900 pounds. Sayers' financial affairs became embarrassed and he mortgaged his home.

On 16 April 1860 Sayers conveyed the title to Clark Irving and others as trustees for the benefit of Sayers' creditors. On 20 April 1860 further conveyance of all of Sayers' property to trustees was signed. Sayers' financial difficulties continued until 1867 when the property was offered at auction by Richardson & Wrench, on behalf of the mortgagee, on 8 July 1867. There were no buyers.

The property was next purchased by Thomas Allwright Dibbs, the manager of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney. He had been buying up many parcels of land on the North Shore. By 1882 Graythwaite was the family home of Thomas Dibbs and in 1888 the mortgage of 1882 was discharged.

Dibbs circa 1875 demolished Walker's house and added to the Sayers sandstone building to complete Euroka/Graythwaite as it

remains today. Dibbs was a huge landowner on the lower north shore and bought the adjoining Holtermann property when Holtermann died and later sold it to the church for Shore School. Apparently Holtermann closely guarded access to his tower and so many of the early photographic panoramas of Sydney were taken from Graythwaite instead. Most of the current garden dates from Dibbs circa 1875 (the fig trees can be seen as little trees protected by wooden frames from wandering stock in the 1875 photos).

Dibbs' prestige as well as his reputation as an astute and skilful manager of the Bank underlay his renown. His management of the Bank was generally credited with saving it from the fate of other less fortunate banks in the 1890s Depression. From his interest in philanthropy, sprang the gesture which converted his family residence into a convalescent home. Like many Australians, Dibbs was apparently shocked at the carnage taking place overseas during World War I. In April 1915, Australian troops first saw action when they landed at Gallipoli. Dibbs donated his home, Graythwaite, to the state as a convalescent home for soldiers returning from the front.

On 1 October 1915 the property was formally transferred by Dibbs to the Crown, in consideration of 'my admiration of and sincere sympathy for those brave men who have so unselfishly given their services and their lives fighting for the Empire in the cause of Justice and liberty.' as a 'Convalescent Home for our Sick and Wounded Soldiers and Sailors and when not required for that purpose as a Convalescent Home in perpetuity for distressed subjects of the British Empire regardless of Sect or Creed.'

An official opening of Graythwaite was held on 1 March 1916. Dibbs presented the deeds of Graythwaite to the Premier who handed the property on to the NSW branch of the Red Cross.

Graythwaite was altered to fit it out as a convalescent home and was at first used for less severely ill convalescents. In 1918, the Red Cross decided that Graythwaite should be converted into a Hostel for long term cases of disablement. A change in emphasis required substantial changes to the building.

Graythwaite was used as a convalescent home to 1977, when civil cases were referred by the Health Commission. The Red Cross then decided to relinquish the Hospital to enable it to be used as geriatric hospital by the Home of Peace Hospitals, under the supervision of the Health Commission. The buildings were officially handed over in December 1980.

Historic Themes

Australian Theme (abbrev)	New South Wales Theme	Local Theme
	Health - Activities associated with preparing and providing medical assistance and/or promoting or maintaining the well being of humans	Operating convalescent and rehabilitation hospitals

settlements, towns and	Accommodation - Activities associated with the provision of accommodation, and particular types of accommodation - does not include architectural styles - use the theme of Creative Endeavour for such activities.	Housing the prosperous - mansions in town and country -
	Towns, suburbs and villages - Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages	Decentralising metropolitan activities to provincial cities -
7. Governing - Governing	Defence - Activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation	Repatriating returned service personnel -
7. Governing - Governing	Defence - Activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation	Involvement with the First (Great) World War -
7. Governing - Governing	Defence - Activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation	Involvement with the Second World War -
7. Governing - Governing	Welfare - Activities and process associated with the provision of social services by the state or philanthropic organisations	Hospital/nursing home phase -
8. Culture - Developing cultural institutions and ways of life	Leisure - Activities associated with recreation and relaxation	Enjoying public parks and gardens -

Assessment of Significance

SHR Criteria a)

[Historical Significance]

Graythwaite has historical significance as an early example of a prominent North Shore residence which has been altered extensively over its life to reflect the social standing and status of its changing ownership.

SHR Criteria b)

[Associative Significance]

The property has strong associations with the Dibbs family and particularly Thomas Allwright Dibbs, Manager of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, who was also ex-officio appointee to the Royal Commission on the Public Service of 1887 - 90. Its present use as a convalescent home reflects the compassion and generosity of Thomas Allwright Dibbs to provide a caring place for Australian soldiers on their return from the Great War. The grounds on which Graythwaite is located remains intact in size and configuration of the 1873 subdivision. It retains remants of the extensive garden curtilage developed from that period and during Dibbs' ownership and retains those magnificent harbour views and vistas to the south and west.

SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic Significance]

Graythwaite has aesthetic significance because this 2.7 hectare property is an unusually large land parcel considering its close proximity to the CBD of North Sydney which retains substantial land terracing reinforced with mature landscaping. The buildings grand Victorian Italianate architectural form located on the highest part of the property reflects a major renovation, within the Victorian period 1880 - 1885 during Thomas Allwright Dibbs' ownership, to capture outstanding views and vistas of Sydney Harbour and beyond.

The landmark qualities of this building is no longer apparent when viewed from its main street frontage, but the outward views and vistas from the building to the south and west are unparalleled and extensive. Remannt landscape elements and plantings are evident over the entire site area. These remnants are in the form of mature isolated and group plantings nearby the building group but extend to the terraced forecourt in rows and clusters on the terrace embankments. Other mature plantings line the driveway entrance from Union Street and extend to the main building then to the west and links up with the car parking areas at the 1880s coach house and Edward Street public car park. To the south and west, remant landscape plantings provide a dense barrier to the immediate suburban development. Distant views and vistas over the top of the landscape provide a pleasant outlook. Formalised garden plots and pathways are located between several of the buildings.

SHR Criteria d)

[Social Significance]

SHR Criteria e) [Research Potential] Graythwaite is socially significant to the surrounding community for its historical significance as an example of North Shore residence for the wealthy. Its significance has also been established socially throug its use as a convalescent home, a hostel for long term disablement and then a geriatric hospital.

Graythwaite has technical/research significance because the main building (although altered for hospital use since 1916) retains detailed finishes, fireplaces and hardware from the Victorian period usually lost in buildings of this type in private ownership. It also contains timber floor and ceiling framing of pit sawn origins with ceiling framing connections using timber pegged tenons, further establishing its early origins and importance as one of the earliest surviving structures in the North Sydney area.

The former stables building with loft is a remnant of early vernacular form and formed part of the original building group on land granted to Thomas Walker in 1832.

The buildings contain remnants from all phases of the property's development and this is reflected in its high archaeological, educational and research potential.

The property has been recognised to contain one of the largest and most significant collections of late 19th century cultural plantings in the North Sydney area.

SHR Criteria f)
[Rarity]

The highest levels of significance of Graythwaite then relates to its associations with the early development of North Sydney and not necessarily its Convalescent Hospital use. With regard to its historic, aesthetic and technological/research criterion, Graythwaite retains remnants both in its building fabric and its landscape from the earliest development of the North Shore and is considered rare and of state significance.

SHR Criteria g)
[Representativeness]

The social criterion is assessed as representative, reflecting the choice of the North Shore, particularly North Sydney, for development of substantial residences and its later association with health care since 1916.

Assessment Criteria

Items are assessed against the State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended Management

CMP recommends that immediate action proposed in Clause 5.4 of the 1993 Conservation Plan (and attached at Appendix 3 of the Conservation Plan Review dated 2000) would hold the buildings' condition for 12 months and with regular maintenance for a longer period of time. Longer term action requiring substantial conservation works to all roof areas was recommended to be contemplated within a time period of two years by the original Conservation Plan. This work should now be regarded as immediate action required. A detailed Schedule of Perceived works was included in Appendix 3 of the original Conservation Plan. The content of the long term Schedule of Works provides a basis for this work and, the dollar value put to these works has now been updated to represent present day costs. (October 1998)

Recommendations

Management Category	Description	Date Updated	
Recommended Management	Carry out interpretation, promotion and/or education		

Procedures / Exemptions

Section of Act	Description	Title	Comments	Action Date
21(1)(b)	Conservation Plan submitted for endorsement	Graythwaite Hospital CMP, prepared by Graham Edds & Associates for NSW Health Department, dated February 2000	CMP endorsed by Heritage Council 15 August 2000 for a period of five years, expires 15 August 2005.	Aug 15 2000
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS HERITAGE ACT 1977 Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977 I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order: 1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and 2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached. FRANK SARTOR	Sep 5 2008
			Minister for Planning Sydney, 11 July 2008 To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link	

below

Talendard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		01617	01 Nov 02	201	9415
Register of the National Estate			21 Mar 78		

References, Internet links & Images

Туре	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Tourism		2007	Post Office to Waverton Heritage Walk	Click here
Tourism	Attraction Homepage	2007	Post Office to Waverton Heritage Walk	Click here
Written	Graham Edds & Associates	2000	Conservation Plan Review 2000 for Graythwaite Nursing Home	
Written	Graythwaite 20 Edward Street, North Sydney : conservation plan review		Graham Edds & Associates (prepared and reviewed by)	

Note: Internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.









(Click on Thumbnail for Full Size Image and Image Details)

Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Branch

Database Number: 5051393 S90/03212 File Number:

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the Database Manager.

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Branch or respective copyright owners.

NSW Government Site Map **Contact Us** Copyright Disclaimer **Privacy**