

ORMISTON QLD

Name: School of Arts

Address: Dundas Street off Gordon Street, Ormiston.

The Town/District:

Ormiston was originally part of Cleveland. Its name changed to Ormiston gradually over a long period. The name came from Ormiston House, which was built overlooking Raby Bay in the 1860s by Captain Louis Hope. He named the property Ormiston House after one of his family's properties in Scotland.

Although the house was called Ormiston, the area around it was still known as Cleveland for many years. When the railway came through the area in 1889, the new railway station and the area around it also became known as Ormiston. In 1899, the local school was renamed the Ormiston School.¹

Ormiston, a suburb of Redland City, is now a mainly residential area with a Primary School and the private Ormiston College. The railway line to Brisbane runs through the suburb, with Ormiston Station having a large park and ride facility. The eastern side of the suburb overlooks Raby Bay. Ormiston House is still standing, now in the grounds of the Carmelite Monastery, lovingly tended by a band of dedicated volunteers, and a major tourist attraction in the Redlands, hosting many well-attended functions, such as musical evenings and afternoon teas – the type of social functions that once would have been held in the School of Arts.

Establishment & Building:

The only reference located is in the Redland City Timeline which says the Ormiston Hall was finished in 1921.

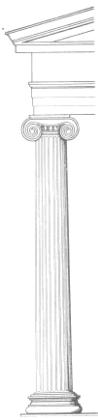
Social History:

The first event mentioned was a book evening and dance in the Ormiston School of Arts when books and cash of £5 were received. There was also, from today's point of view, a rather unusual raffle held when Mr. W. Gibson of Ormiston donated a **horse** which was won by Mr. Congreave of Thornlands.² Maybe not much different to the cars offered as prizes today.

There were many dances and parties held in the Hall in the early days, some with unusual names. What, for instance, was a "cretonne dance"? There appear to have been many held around the world and around that time. An interesting sounding party was held in September, 1926, when the hall was decorated with balloons and streamers with a jazz orchestra playing music for dancing which included a *chocolate waltz* and a *balloon dance*.

¹ Redland City Council Timeline

² NLA Trove – Brisbane Courier of 8th Jun 1925



In 1926, repairs were made giving the district a *fine hall and dance floor*.³ The Brisbane Courier of 6th December, 1926, reported that a fete had been held raising £30 towards enlarging the library. At the 1927 Annual General Meeting, the hall was in a very good financial position considering the improvements that had been made. Mr. A. Webb was elected as President.⁴

On the 14th May, 1927, the Redlands sub-branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A. held a dance in the hall in aid of funds for the new War Memorial Hall (and School of Arts) to be built at Cleveland. During the evening there was an exhibition of dancing by members of H.M.A.S. *Marguerite* which was anchored off Cleveland.⁵ The R.S.S.I.L.A. also held their annual meeting in the hall on July 23rd, 1927.

The hall seems to have been a busy place during the 1920s and 1930s with dances, fetes, meetings, flower shows and balls being held there.

Long time resident of the area, Rolf Bruce, remembers going to dances in the hall in the 1950s, walking to the hall up a grass path behind the Daffodil Margarine Factory which operated in Gordon Street from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Currently (2012):

The hall is no longer there - a house has now been built where once people danced, debated, borrowed books, and met together as part of the lifestyle of a bygone era.

Contributors:



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³ NLA Trove – Brisbane Courier of 4th Dec 1926

⁴ NLA Trove – Brisbane Courier of 24th Feb 1927

⁵ NLA Trove – Brisbane Courier of 23rd May 1927