

REDLAND BAY QLD



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Name: School of Arts

**Address: Cnr. School of Arts Road & Queen Street Redland Bay
Queensland 4165.**

The District:

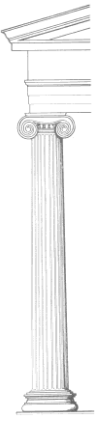
Redland Bay is situated on the shores of Moreton Bay, south east of Brisbane. It is named after the rich red volcanic soil in the area and formerly produced much of the fruit and vegetables for the Brisbane markets, although much of the area is now estate housing.

The land was settled by farm selectors in the 1860s-70s, who cleared tangled shoreline scrub and forest land further from the coast. Excellent timber was used for the first slab huts and later steep-pitched 'Queenslander' dwellings. Sugar cane plantations were tried quite early and a mill was operated during the 1870s. Cotton and rice were also tried. Cane was replaced by banana growing, and that was overtaken by pineapples and citrus in the 1890s. A Methodist church was opened in 1885, a primary school the following year and a school of arts in 1889.

Redland Bay extends south from Victoria Point to the Logan River, a distance of 13 km. Its western boundary adjoins Mount Cotton and Carbrook, areas originally settled for timber harvesting and farming.

¹ *Redland Bay* by Mary Howells. First published 2000

This publication is one of a series produced by Redland Shire Council's Local History program



Redland Bay remained determinedly agricultural for more than three-quarters of the twentieth century. The township had fewer than 1000 people in 1976, and was best known for its fruit, vegetables and the Moreton Bay boat services from its jetties to Russell, Macleay, Stradbroke and Karragarra Islands².

The Building:

The Redland Bay School of Arts was built in 1889, situated on the corner of Queen Street and School of Arts Road. It was designed by architect Victor Carandini and built by W. Patterson on land donated by Doig and Harlen³. The building provided a hall 40 feet by 20 feet with walls 18 feet high and a large platform. The roof was ceiled and varnished. Entry was via a porch 14 feet long with two rooms each 14 feet square to right and left of the entrance, one the library housing over 500 books, and the other the reading room. The Committee consisted of Messrs. F. Muller, Daniel Collins, H. Day, J.P., James Moore, J. Collins, W. Peters and J. Doig⁴.

In December, 1893, Sergeant John White of Cleveland inspected the Redland Bay School of Arts building in regard to the issue of a Stage License. His report stated the building is built of pine and hardwood, one storey, will seat 250, forms and chairs are used for seating, there is a stage but no scenery is used, there are no fire appliances, there is an iron tank outside full of water.

There are two doors in front, one five feet wide two leaves, opens inwards, the other 3 feet wide opens outwards into the reading room. There is one door in back of building 3 feet wide opens inwards. There are fan lights over all the doors. The building is ceiled and is ventilated by six windows.

There are library and reading rooms attached, entrance by Arch.

As there is no scenery used there is little probability of accident by fire. The means of exit is sufficient to empty the building in two or three minutes.

I believe it is a suitable and safe place for public meetings and stage performances.

A note on the side of the report signed by A.B. Brady, Government Architect, recommended that all exit doors be made to open outwards⁵.

Social History:

The official ceremony to launch the building was held on July 12. The opening day, Saturday 10 August 1889, 12 months after the idea of the institution was first mooted, was a gala opening consisting of a public afternoon tea for over 100 people, and a public meeting and concert in the evening with guests attending from local and adjoining areas.

A letter written by William J. Nuttall, Hon. Secretary of the Redland Bay School of Arts, to the Colonial Secretary, Brisbane, on 26th June, 1890, read

In reply to your memo of the 23rd Inst re Beale & Co. contribution. I have by direction to inform you that the Contribution was in the form of a Cheque as donation to the School of Arts.

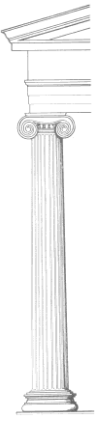
The committee negotiated for the purchase of a piano, and the cash price for the instrument was 52 Guineas. As the committee were not in a position to pay that figure, they represented

² queenslandplaces.com.au

³ Book by Mary Howells.

⁴ NLA Trove—Queenslander 17 August 1889

⁵ Queensland State Archives (QSA): copy of report from Sergeant John White, 16 December 1893: provided by Artie Rentoul.



the matter to Beale & Co who, seeing that the instrument was to be used in a public building and in a neighbourhood where pianos are not numerous, gave the above donation as an inducement for a cash purchase⁶.

Again regarding the piano, Mr. Nuttall wrote to the Colonial Secretary on October 8th 1890 – I am instructed by the Committee of the Redland Bay School of Arts to write you regarding the Government Endowment claimed for the half year ending 30th June. The committee received notice of your objection to the item Beale & Co, and though not sharing your opinion with regard thereto, request you would kindly inform them when the amount less Beale & Co's donation will be placed to their credit, as they have received no notice of its being so placed up to date.

The Hall was used for Lodge installations, electioneering speeches and local meetings including many related to the fruit growing industry in the area. One event of interest was a farewell to Mr. A. Hurwood and Mr. P. Hornibrook when they set off with the Australian Cricket team to tour England in 1933. The first fancy dress ball was held in 1903, with net proceeds of £4 being given to the City Ambulance. There were many fund raising functions held in the hall including one in 1914 raising £60 for the Patriotic Fund and another in 1904 in aid of the Hospital Aid Association.

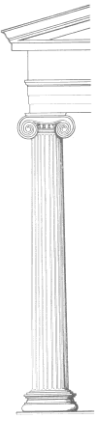
Currently (2012):

The building was demolished in the mid 1990s⁷. Today, its existence is recollected by the busy School of Arts Road and the School of Arts Playing Fields on the corner of School of Arts Road and Queen Street.



⁶ QSA: copy of letter provided by Artie Rentoul

⁷ Redland Bay City Council Local History Section



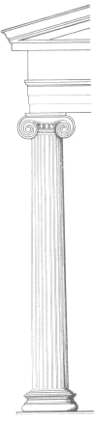
Above:
The School of Arts Playing Fields in Redland Bay marking the site of the former School of Arts building

Acknowledgements:

Artie Rentoul
Redland City Council
Queensland State Archives

References:

Redland Bay by Mary Howells. Redland Shire Council 2000
National Library of Australia - Trove



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