

History of St James Estate

Our estate had a long history before it was developed. No one seems to know, for sure, how the name, St James, was arrived at. It began as part of an area of 50 acres of land that was first leased from the Crown in 1868. The parcel of land Portion 211 in the parish of Indooroopilly "had as the eastern boundary Chapel Hill Road along to about Ludlow Street with the southern boundary being Moggill Road. A copy of the first survey plan is attached (note the use of trees as survey posts). The lease was granted to Henry William Turner under the "Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1868". The conditions of the lease allowed the purchase of the land once the land had been improved and the equivalent of ten years' rent had been paid. The sale was completed in 1873 for the total cost of twenty pounds.

In the early 1870s cotton was grown for the Lancashire cotton mills as there was a global shortage following the American Civil War, however, this was short-lived. Dairy farming became the main activity supplying the rapidly growing city of Brisbane.

In 1875 the Henry Turner sold the property to John Newman who farmed the land until the early '80s when it was purchased by William Penhaligon. The farm now known as Rosedale continued as a dairy farm with poultry, pigs, and slaughterhouse. William and his brother John who had a property where the Kenmore Anglican Church now stands on Moggill Road broke in horses for horse-drawn trams. William and his wife Christina raised a family of four sons and five daughters. Four other children died in infancy and are buried in the Chapel Hill cemetery. Their youngest son John was killed at Gallipoli. His name is listed on the Kenmore War Memorial. Rosedale was still operating as a dairy farm when it was sold to Andy Magee in March 1947 for two thousand pounds.

In 1966 part of the land to the northeast of Cubbela Creek was subdivided with the construction of Boblynne, Eagle, and Whitian Street, however; there was no explanation for the choice of names when registered with Brisbane City Council. In 1983 the subdivision was expanded to include Lucyanne and Jocelyn Court, Rebecca and Vanimmo Street. The girl's names are from the daughters of staff employed by George Wimpey (Aust) Pty Ltd who were the developers. Vanimmo Street appears to have been named after a town in Papua New Guinea.

Plans for the development of Kenmore Plaza were approved by the Brisbane City council in 1981. The plan included a Shopping Centre and Tavern. Many residents were opposed to the development and especially the Tavern. On 21 February 1982 P.A.C.T. (People Against Chapel Hill Tavern) was formed to raise funds to support legal action to appeal against the approval. The matter was finally resolved in the Local Government Court in November 1983 in favour of the developer Carlton & United Breweries (C.U.B.).

A seven-acre block facing onto Boblynne Street was not required by the developer and was placed on the market.

Benjamin Smith and a team at Royce Properties realized the possibilities of this area just fifteen minutes from the central business district and close to other amenities and the block

was purchased. Royce Properties had completed a successful development at Ashgrove but buyers were asking for something larger and it was realized that this location would be ideal for such a development.

It took two years of planning and lodging applications before all approvals had been gained from the Brisbane City Council in 1991. The vision was to build the ultimate in sophisticated living. The planning was meticulous with award-winning architect Warren Webb being retained to prepare the complete concept. Lots were carefully planned to give the right aspects, privacy, and sun angles.

Warren Webb spent many hours designing a choice of homes, the original plan being to offer a choice of nine uniquely designed houses with three or four bedrooms. The idea was then conceived for Warren Webb to work with the purchasers to amend and to add to the original designs so that greater individuality to suit purchasers would be obtained. An interior decorator was also retained to advise on colour schemes and other interior matters.

Extensive civil works were necessary to move a hill in the centre of the Lot and the road surface was patterned, not only to look good but also to reduce traffic speeds. The roads were contoured to drain rainwater to the centre of the road and away from the individual blocks.

Berela Constructions, a highly successful construction company with a proven track record, was chosen to build the houses and this company constructed many of the early residences on the Estate.

The first house was completed and occupied in 1992 and progressively other houses were completed and landscaped. The first Annual General Meeting was held on 9 September 1992. Some 28 years later the footbridge which traverses State Land to Kenmore Tavern Plaza is yet to be found in any official documentation and work is underway to register an easement in favour of the St James Estate with the State Government.

Living in a community where proprietors are subject to By-laws requires co-operation and goodwill, but it also provides many advantages and safeguards. Those who live in St James have found it a safe and secure environment with the opportunity to know neighbours in a much greater way than would apply in normal residential development. Every effort is being made to maintain St James as a beautiful Estate of which the original pioneers would be proud.

(Special thanks to Kenmore District Historical Society Inc for providing some of the information)

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