

Item Details

Name
Russian Orthodox Church
SHR/LEP/S170
LEP #I8

Address
9a Kempsey Street BLACKTOWN NSW 2148

Local Govt Area
Blacktown
Local Aboriginal Land Council
Unknown

Item Type	Group/Collection	Category
Built	Religion	Church

All Addresses

Addresses								
Records Retrieved: 1								
Street No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postcode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
9a	Kempsey Street	BLACKTOWN/NSW/2148	Blacktown	Unknown			Unknown	Primary Address

Significance

Statement Of Significance

The presence of the Russian Orthodox church in Kempsey Street is an important historic marker in Blacktown of the post war immigration of refugees from Europe particularly during the soviet expansion in the 1950’s and 60’s. The Russian Orthodox diaspora have an additional layer of migrant history having with Australia being a second escape after first the Russian Revolution and then the soviet expansion through Europe and the communist revolution in China. The church form and contents clearly represent the Russian Orthodox cultural background of the congregation.

The post war immigration of refugees from Europe was a key developmental factor in the development of Blacktown as a city of great cultural diversity.

Criteria a)

Historical Significance

The presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Kempsey Street is an important historic marker in Blacktown of the post war immigration of refugees from Europe particularly during the soviet expansion in the 1950’s and 60’s. The Russian Orthodox diaspora have an additional layer of migrant history having with Australia being a second escape after first the Russian Revolution and then the soviet expansion through Europe and the communist revolution in china. The church form and contents clearly represent the Russian Orthodox cultural background of the congregation.

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Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

The church has aesthetic significance as a representative example of a small community church built by the Russian Orthodox families that migrated in the post war era to Blacktown. The building represents a clearly Russian Orthodox aesthetic with the use of splayed weather boards, and decorative roof forms. It is also unique in that it achieves the Russian Orthodox style whilst using the low cost materials that were available in the 1950's.

Criteria d)

Social/Cultural Significance

The church and its contents have strong and special association with the Russian Orthodox community in Blacktown and the icons within, donated by local families, having been protected for generations, the church is of particularly high social and historic significance.

Criteria e)

Research Potential

The church and its contents provide the potential to research Russian Orthodox iconography and building techniques, and how they have adapted to their various cultural and locational changes over two centuries.

Criteria f)

Rarity

The Church is a rare but collective example of the cultural expressions of the many migrant communities that immigrated to Blacktown after the Second World War up to today. The collection of ethnically specific buildings in Blacktown is a feature of Blacktown and strongly represents the diverse cultural history of the city.

Integrity/Intactness

High

Owners

Records Retrieved: 0		
Organisation	Stakeholder Category	Date Ownership Updated
No Results Found		

Description

Designer Builder/Maker

Physical Description Updated

The church is located on a small site in the residential areas near the centre of Blacktown. The building is a simple timber framed structure with fibre cement and weatherboard lining. The windows and roof / eave / awning details include specific detailing that reflects the Russian Orthodox Cultural aesthetic including the onion top to the turret, and awning shapes, peaked windows and hexagonal bays to the altar enclosure.

Internally the décor includes the alter screen and several icons, including triptych screens, and religious objects some of which have been transported from their original Russian origin through the diaspora of 1919 - 1920. Others were painted in China and indicate the interwar period of migration in China.

Physical Condition Updated 03/25/2015

Fair - Needing repair to detailed timberwork.

Modifications And Dates

Further Comments

Current Use

Church

Former Use

Church

Listings

Listings

			Records Retrieved: 1		
Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazzette Number	Gazzette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Blacktown Local Environmental Plan 2015	l8	7/7/2015 12:00:00 AM		

Procedures/Exemptions

Records Retrieved: 0					
Section of Act	Description	Title	Comments	Action Date	Outcome
No Results Found					

History

Historical Notes or Provenance

Updated

The Blacktown Russian Orthodox community has direct links back to the Russian Revolution in 1917 when the Orthodox Church was placed under persecution at that time. A number of church members fled to China in 1917 and Eastern Europe taking icons and special mementos and furniture from the churches in Russia with them, and then incorporating them into their new churches established in China.

The first Russian family to arrive in Blacktown also fled the revolution and arrived in 1920.

The church at Kempsey Street was established after a large number of Russians who had previously fled in 1917 to Europe and china, then migrated to Australia after the Second World War as a result of further soviet and communist revolutions placed their expatriate churches under threat.

As a result the furnishing and icons of a number of Russian Orthodox churches in Sydney and in particular Kempsey Street, includes furnishings that date from prior to the 1917 Russian revolution.

The family heritage and strong cultural connections of the Russian orthodox community in Blacktown has ensured that the provenance of many of the icons is well known and recorded, and the strong cultural connection with the Russian heritage and orthodoxy is represented clearly also in the building form.

The church at Kempsey Street was built in 1959 and represents both the cultural heritage and the post war migration of the Russian community in Blacktown. This community has a further layer of migrant history represented in the church and its contents, as immigrants who have escaped a number of persecutions in different countries but have retained their essential cultural identity.

The icons within the church are a mix of Icons brought from Russia dating from the 17th century, Icons made in china and other countries after the 1917 diaspora, and icons made in Australia after the post war immigration. As such the church provides a visual history of the travails of the Russian orthodox community.

Historic Themes

Records Retrieved: 1

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
2. Peopling	Migration	Unknown

Recommended Management

Management Summary

Management

Records Retrieved: 0

Management Category	Management Name	Date Updated
No Results Found		

Report/Study

Heritage Studies

Records Retrieved: 1

Report/Study Name	Report/Study Code	Report/Study Type	Report/Study Year	Organisation	Author
In House Heritage Items Review			2009		Margaret Fallon

Reference & Internet Links

References

Records Retrieved: 2

Type	Author	Year	Title	Link
Written				
Oral History	Val Smolonogov			

Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Data Source	Record Owner	Heritage Item ID
Local Government	Blacktown City Council	1140278

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