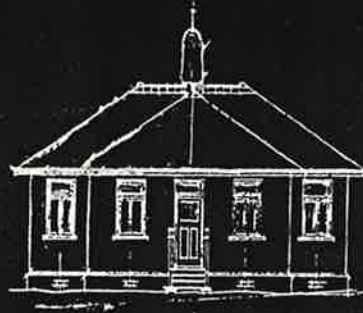


FRONT ELEVATION



Capital Works and Assessment Management Branch



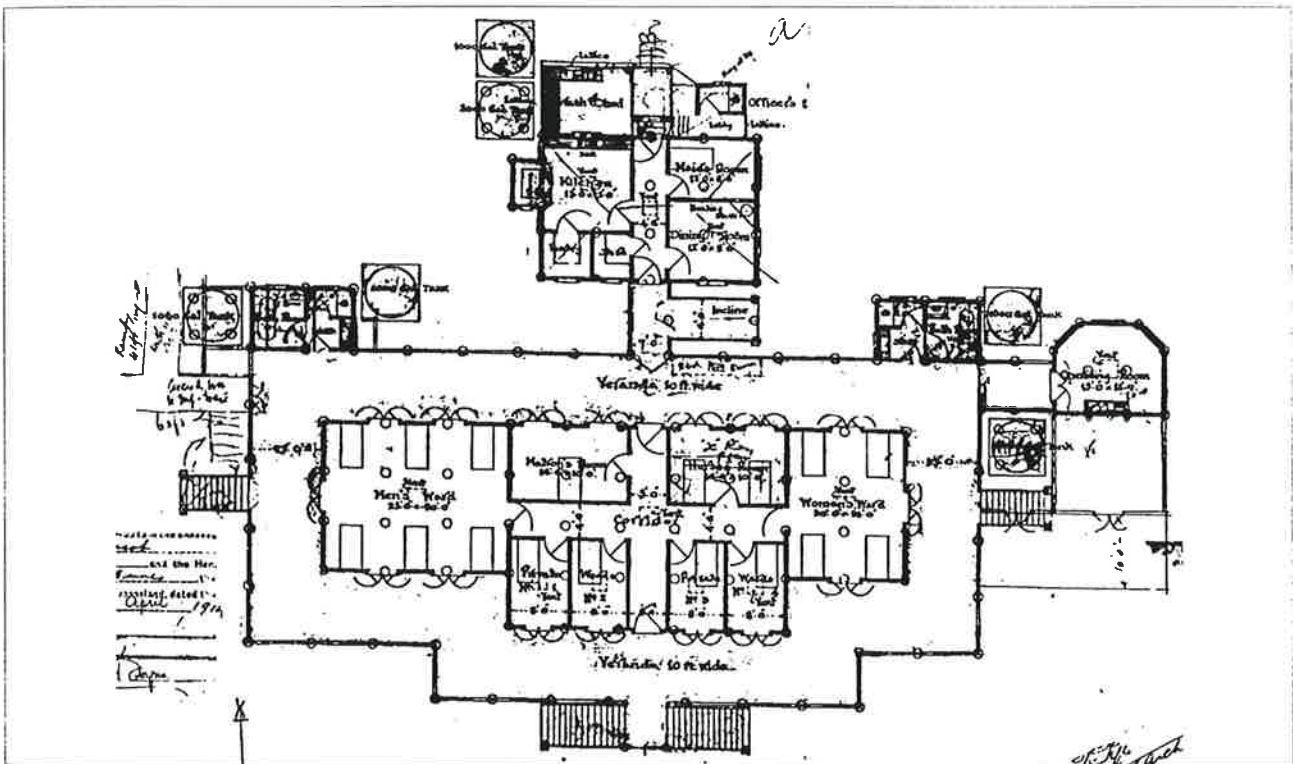
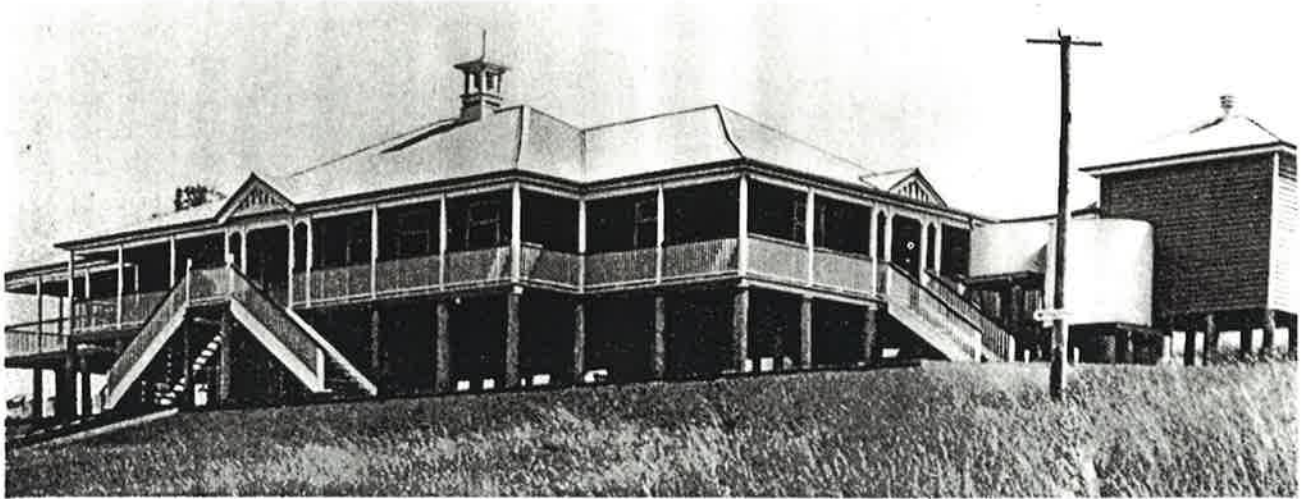
# Health buildings in Queensland: an historical overview



FRONT ELEVATION



QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT



Kingaroy Hospital, erected in 1915. This building is a good example of the Queensland variation of the pavilion plan. The principal elements of this type included timber and iron construction and wide verandahs (Department of Works Annual Report, 1915; ASD drawing collection).



The essential element of a good hospital site was an elevated position on a generous area of land, preferably on the outskirts of a town. An elevated site was an advantage in catching breezes and enhancing the flow of fresh air through the wards. A large hospital reserve, well removed from the urban centre, was also an advantage in minimising the effect of noxious and foul vapours.

Once the importance of fresh air was established in hospital design, whenever a new hospital reserve was created, it was almost invariably on the outskirts of a town and comprised an extensive area of land. Certainly the area of the hospital reserve was well in excess of what was required with the main block and outbuildings occupying less than a tenth of the total reserve.

### The Queensland variation – the pavilion plan in the 20th century

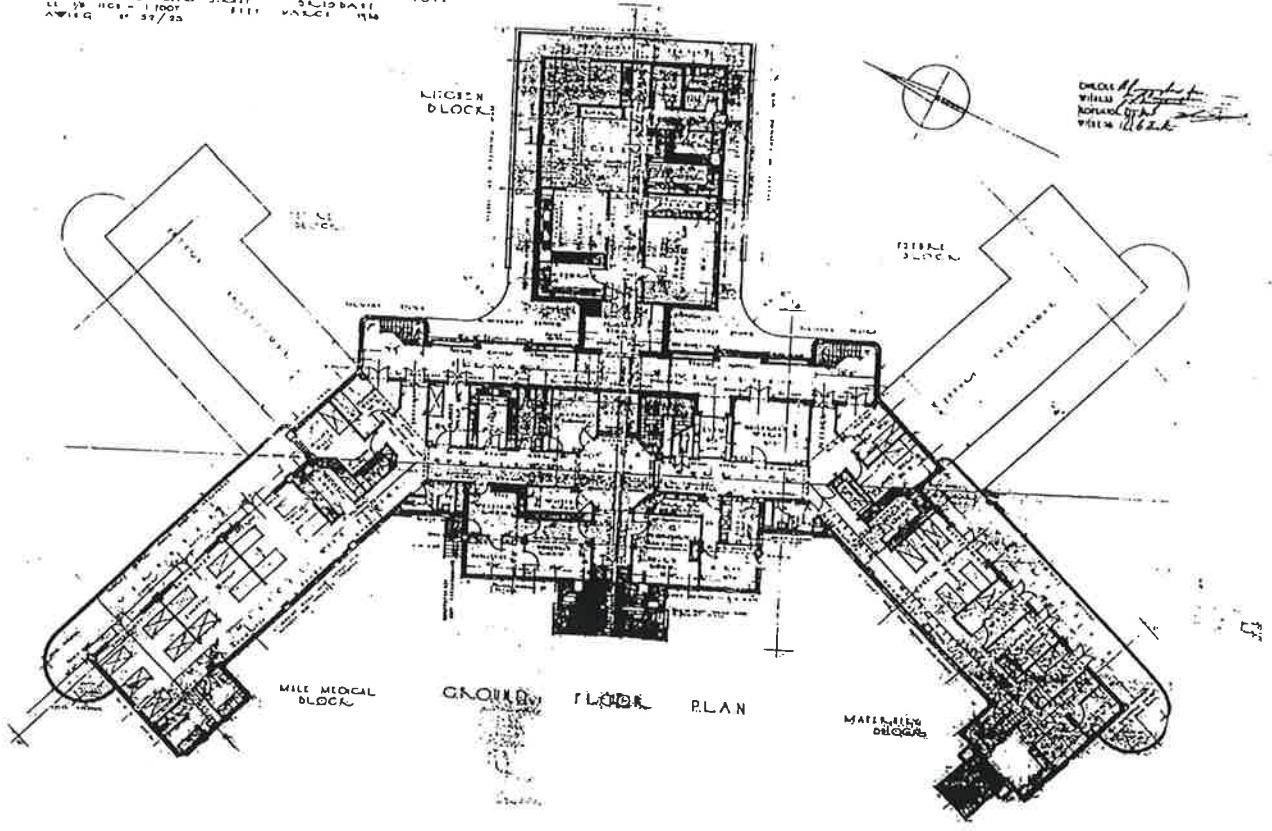
In a study of modern English, Continental and American hospital construction published in 1913, William Milburn observed that in England at least, the pavilion plan was 'rarely departed from except in matters of detail'.<sup>24</sup> No less so in Queensland, the pavilion plan continued to be the accepted form of hospital design in the early decades of the early 20th century. However, Queensland designers did not slavishly follow overseas or southern trends but developed a Queensland variation of the pavilion plan. This Queensland variant emerged primarily due to the work of the Architectural Branch in the Department of Public Works. The Branch was responsible for the design of an extensive number of country hospitals and developed a particular form and style of hospital building. Hospital committees in country areas required a building that was economic to construct, contained all the necessary facilities including male and female wards, and was appropriate for the climate.

A plan was developed that met these requirements and was used repeatedly throughout the state. It was not strictly a 'standard plan' as was used for schools and other public buildings, but certain basic elements were incorporated in these buildings. An early example of this small hospital plan was Wondai Hospital which was built in 1915 and described in the Department of Public Works Annual Report for 1915.

A one storied building of wood, with spacious verandahs and iron roof, having main block 71 ft by 23 ft, comprising three private wards and nurses' room, and male and female wards 24 ft by 22 ft and 22 ft by 16 ft respectively, with operating-room and dispensary placed at the angles of front verandah. Two detached lavatory and bathroom blocks, detached ward block containing two 12 ft by 9 ft wards, and also kitchen block consisting of kitchen, dining-room, pantry, and maid's and nurses rooms.<sup>10</sup>

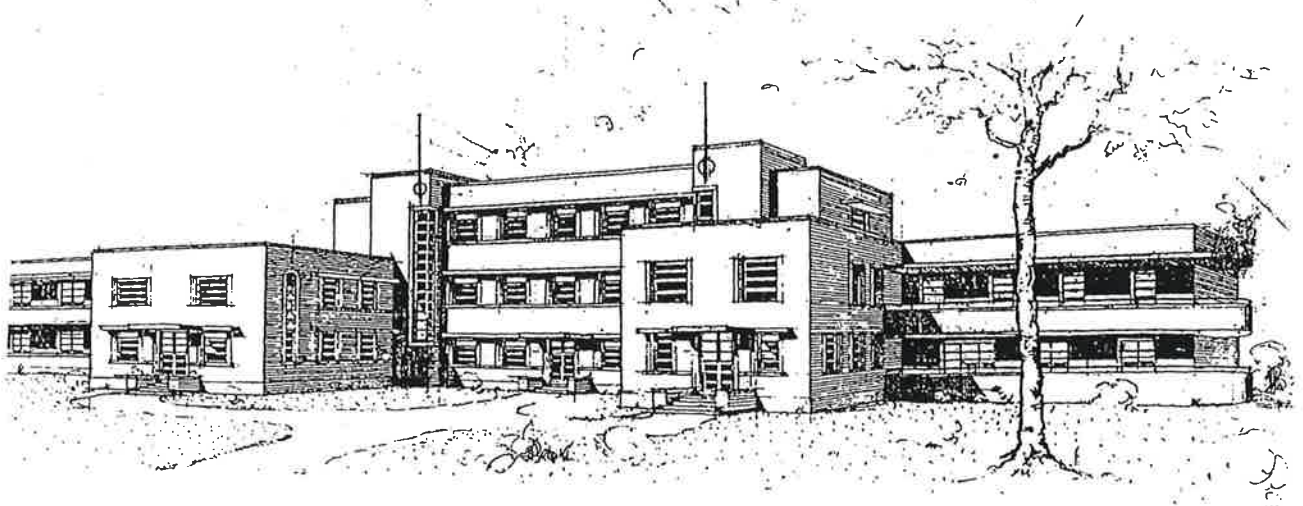
This description could equally be applied to many other hospitals erected between 1910 and 1940 in Queensland. The use of timber and corrugated galvanised iron was one of the key features that distinguished the small Queensland hospital from its counterparts overseas or in other states where masonry was the norm. Timber was the predominate building

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Roma Hospital, (below) designed by CH Fulton and completed in 1940. This building was planned on similar manner to Kingaroy Hospital. A fine example of a country hospital built on modern principles (Architectural Building & Engineering Journal, 1947).

Ground floor plan, Kingaroy Hospital (above) Designed by CH Fulton, this building was an early example of a modern hospital in Queensland and Australia. A feature of the planning was the narrow wards, just two beds wide. The northern wing accommodated male surgical patients. The southern wing comprised the maternity block (ASD drawing collection).



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1930s was the adoption of the functionalist or modernist style. The South Brisbane Acute Hospital (1957 – later known as the Princess Alexandra Hospital), Brisbane Chest Hospital (1959), and Redcliffe Hospital (1965) were all multi-storey blocks designed by Conrad & Gargett. The firm were also responsible for multi-storey nurses quarters at South Brisbane (1957), Rockhampton (1958) and the Brisbane Women's Hospital (1952).

Another key figure in the development of modern hospitals in Queensland was Charles Fulton. Fulton (1906-1989) trained in Sydney and during the early 1930s worked in London. He came to Brisbane in 1933 and took up a position in the firm of Hall and Cook. Fulton was conversant with overseas trends in architecture, and established a reputation as an accomplished and innovative architect. In 1936 Fulton formed a partnership with JP Donoghue and the firm were responsible for several buildings in the modern idiom including Nudgee Junior College at Indooroopilly, and residences at Stanthorpe and Indooroopilly. The firm was commissioned to design several new hospitals in Queensland. The first major hospital completed by Fulton was at Kingaroy. This building was opened in 1939 and was arguably the first truly modern hospital in Queensland. It was modern in every way – planning, stylistically and in the integration of services – and marked a distinct break from previous approaches to hospital design. The Kingaroy Hospital was a two storey brick building of two wings and most services were integrated in the main block. One of the most significant aspects of the building was the inclusion of the maternity section within the main block. Without exception, in all other Queensland hospitals, maternity wards were accommodated in separate wings.

After his Kingaroy commission, Fulton was engaged to design new hospitals at Townsville, Ayr, Barcaldine, Kingaroy, Roma and Clermont. He was also commissioned to design maternity wings at Goondiwindi and Warwick.<sup>14</sup> Fulton was undoubtedly a pioneer in hospital design in Queensland. He was the first to synthesise modern architectural style with contemporary principles of hospital planning and medical services.

By the 1950s, the functionalist style was accepted without question by almost all hospital designers working in Queensland. Multi-storey hospitals became commonplace. The Princess Alexandra Hospital was but one example of a multi storey modern hospital with main block of nine storeys in a X shaped plan. Another was the seven storey Chest Hospital at Chermerside.

## NOTES

1 John D Thompson & Grace Goldin, *The Hospital: a social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 189.

2 N Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976), 158.

3 Quoted in Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust, *Studies in the Design and Function of Hospitals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 2

4 Ibid, 3.

5 AC Robinson, 'Hospital materials and equipment,' *Architectural Record*, August 1944, 94-96.



### **Staff quarters, Bundaberg Hospital**

These quarters were erected in four major stages commencing in 1928. It is significant as a good example of the type of accommodation that was provided for nurses following the *Nurses Award of 1921*. The building also has some aesthetic qualities in the composition of the main facade.

### **Cossart House, Toowoomba Hospital**

Cossart House was erected in 1927 and is significant as an example of a substantial 1920s nurses quarters. It demonstrates the changes that occurred in nursing and nurses' accommodation during the 1920s as a result of the 1921 *Hospital Nurses Award*. The building is also significant for its square plan with courtyard, which was unusual for nurses' quarters.



*Staff quarters, Bundaberg Hospital*

### **Red Cross Blood Bank/Museum, Rockhampton Hospital**

Erected as quarters for night staff in 1929, this building is significant for its unusual plan form incorporating a large sleeping out space in the core of the building. Outdoor sleeping was popular at the time but was generally provided on verandahs. The building demonstrates an innovative solution for providing for maximum ventilation.

### **Administration/staff quarters, Kingaroy Hospital**

The Kingaroy staff quarters was erected in 1941 and 1946. Designed by CW Fulton, it is significant as an example of modern architectural design in Queensland. Such buildings were influenced by European modern architecture, and were in stark contrast to other architectural design in the 1930s. This was one of the first nurses' quarters to be designed in the modern idiom.



*Staff quarters & administration block, Kingaroy Hospital*

### **Administration block, Nambour Hospital**

Designed by CW Fulton, this building was erected as nurses' quarters in 1941. The building is significant as an example of modern architectural design in Queensland. Such buildings were influenced by European modern architecture and were in stark contrast to other quarters erected in the 1930s.

### **Staff quarters, Barcaldine**

The Barcaldine Staff quarters is a two storey masonry building with distinctive skillion roofs. It was designed by CW Fulton and is a good example of post war Functionalist architecture in western Queensland.

### **Staff quarters, Babinda Hospital**

Erected in 1953, this building was designed by SG Barnes of Cairns. The building is significant as an example of innovative modern architectural design in North Queensland. It has considerable aesthetic value brought about by the massing of elements particularly the concrete balcony.



*Staff quarters, Babinda Hospital.*