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New International Selection
Full Documentation Fiche 2012

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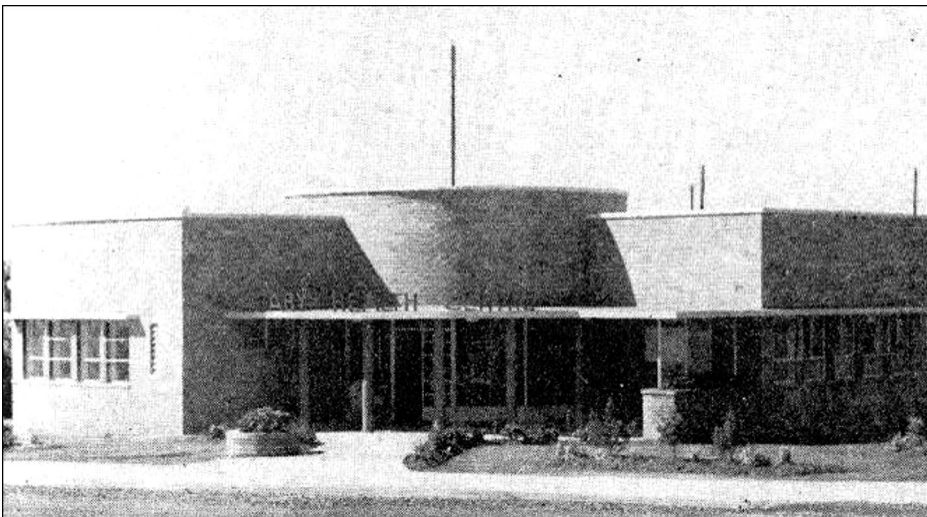
composed by national/regional working party of:

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modern movement

AUSTRALIA

0. Picture of building/ group of buildings/ urban scheme/ landscape/ garden



depicted item: Punchbowl Baby Health Centre source:

Building and Engineering Journal

date: July 1948



depicted item: Punchbowl Baby Health Centre source:

Building and Engineering Journal

date: July 1948

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1. Identity of building/ group of buildings/ group of buildings/ landscape/ garden

1.1 Data for identification

current name: Punchbowl Baby Health Centre
former/original/variant name
number(s) and name(s) of street(s): 748 Punchbowl Road
town (suburb) Punchbowl
province/state: NSW
post code: 2196
block:
country: Australia
national topographical
grid reference:

current typology: Health (HLT)
former/original/variant typology: Baby Health Centre

comments on typology:

One of a series of baby health centres erected as a joint project by the Bankstown and Canterbury Municipal Councils shortly after World War II.

1.2 Status of protection

protected by: state/province/town/record only

Heritage Item under the Canterbury Planning Scheme Ordinance
And as a local heritage item under the draft Canterbury LEP

grade: n/a
date: Listed since 1996
valid for: whole area/parts of area/building Whole site
remarks: see www.nsw.heritage.gov.au

1.3 Visually or functionally related building(s)/site(s)

name(s) of surrounding area/building(s): Warren Reserve, Punchbowl

visual relations: The Baby Health Centre is located within a small park.

functional relations: Baby Health Centres in Sydney were typically erected in council parks.

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2. History of building(s) etc.

2.1 Chronology

Note if the dates are exactly known (e) or approximately estimated = circa (c) or (±)

commission or competition date:	1945
design period(s):	1946
start of site work:	c. 1948
completion/inauguration:	Opened 28 February 1948 by the Honourable James McGirr, then Premier and Treasurer of New South Wales, and MLA for Bankstown.

2.2 Summary of development

commission brief:	Jointly funded by Bankstown and Canterbury Council and the Department of Health. Circa 1946
design brief:	By Davey and Brindley Architects for Bankstown and Canterbury Councils, based on requirements by the NSW Department of Health. Original block plans still held by Bankstown Council Originally intended to be part of a complex that included a library and children's day nursery.
building/construction:	Erected late 1947/early 1948
completed situation:	Site and maintenance provided by Council Staffing by the Department of Health
original situation or character of site:	Situated in a small park near the Punchbowl shops and railway station.

2.3 Relevant persons/organisations

original owner(s)/patron(s):	Canterbury Council
architect(s):	Davey and Brindley John Millard Davey and Wildred Davey

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landscape/garden designer(s): Probably by the Council
consulting engineer(s): Unknown
building contractor(s): E. J. Moss

2.4 Other persons or events associated with the building(s)/site

name(s): Dr Grace Cuthbert (Grace Cuthbert Brown)
association: Director of Maternal and Baby Welfare
NSW Department of Health
event(s): Responsible for the establishment of free Baby Health Centres in NSW
period: 1944

2.5 Summary of important changes after completion

type of change alteration/renovation/restoration/extension/other;
date(s): recent, date unknown
circumstances/ reasons for change Minor alterations have been undertaken such as the addition of security screens, upgrading of the power supply, addition of signage and the installation of a new roof.
effects of changes: The original form of the building remains evident.
persons/organisations involved: Works attributed to Canterbury Council.

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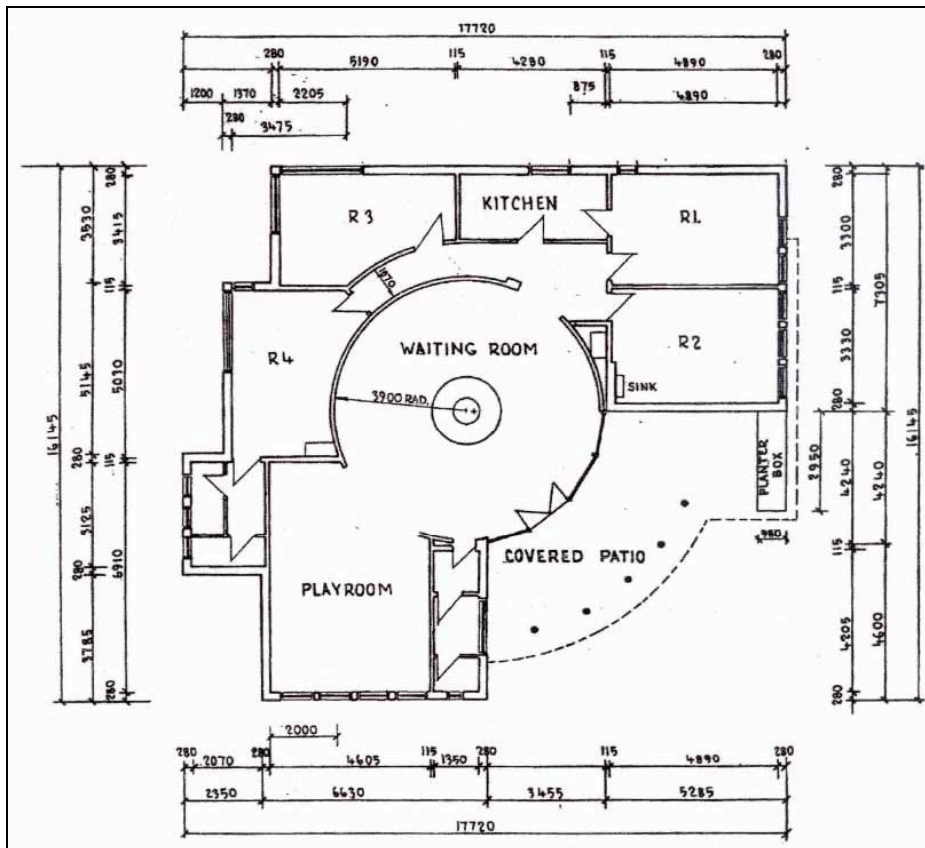
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3. Description of building(s) etc.

3.1 Site/building character

The following description has been extracted from the Conservation Management Plan (p 10-11)

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre is located on the busy thoroughfare of Punchbowl Road and faces the open parkland of Warren Reserve. It is a single storey brick building designed and constructed in the 1940s. It has a distinctive curved symmetrical facade and wings extending off each side from the curved entry. The building presents to the northwest with the entry set at an angle to Punchbowl Road addressing the former corner of Punchbowl Road and Urunga Parade. It is accessed by a cement path that is also set on an angle from the Punchbowl Road footpath. The Centre is an unusual design, consisting of a series of rooms situated around a central circular Waiting Room. The entry into the waiting room is via a covered curved porch set flat at ground level, which was designed to provide easy access for prams. The pathway to the building is lined with flower beds and at some stage after the official 1948 opening and associated photographs, a flagpole was constructed on the north-western side beside the cement path.



Existing floor plan prepared by Canterbury Council (extract from the CMP p.11)

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3.2 Current use

of whole building/site: Currently not in use
of principal components (*if applicable*):
comments: Awaiting a new use

3.3 Present (physical) condition

of whole building/site: The building is in fair condition.
of principal components (*if applicable*):
comments: A schedule of repairs has been prepared as part of the
Conservation Management Plan

3.4 Note(s) on context, indicating potential developments

A Conservation Management Plan has been prepared for the building, as a precursor to
the building being repaired so that it can be occupied.

4. Evaluation

Intrinsic value

4.1 technical evaluation:

The Punch Bowl Baby Health Centre was erected shortly after World War II. Although the restrictions on building materials had been lifted, the range of materials available was largely limited to materials produced locally such as bricks and materials obtained from the factories switching back to civilian production after the war (eg steel windows). The choices of materials were influenced by municipal modernism in Europe and in London.

4.2. social evaluation:

Baby health centres were the result of a National health initiative established across urban and rural communities. In 1944 the Commonwealth Department of Health published guidelines for centres, *The Infant Welfare Centre as a Community Service*. The guidelines were quite prescriptive regarding the facilities and number and type of rooms, however, the physical design of the centre was generally the responsibility of the architects and Councils. (CMP pp.73-76)

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre is important in the pattern of the local area's cultural history as it was a joint initiative between Canterbury and Bankstown Councils for the provision of full time health services to mothers for their infants. The Punchbowl Centre opened in 1948 and continued to offer services to the community from the site for 50 years before closing in 1998. The joint initiative was a rare collaboration as other centres were the responsibility of one Council alone. The site had been chosen for ease of access to residents in both Council areas. (CMP pp.73-76)

4.3. cultural and aesthetic evaluation:

The building was purpose designed and built to serve the community by the architects Davey & Brindley and the builder E.J. Moss, and was the second Baby Health Centre opened in the Canterbury LGA. The use of regular painted columns across the entry, white painted cement awnings or hoods and rows of small rectangular windows were typical elements that were used for the building type. The circular entry feature and its rooftop and the distinctive Functionalist style of the Punchbowl building appear to be unique in the design of the post war baby health centres. It therefore demonstrates a high degree of aesthetic characteristics in this regard. Additionally, the Punchbowl Baby Health Centre garden landscaping is a signature of the architects, who included garden design as part of their other Baby health Centres. The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre building has significance within the local area for its design and as a fine example of the design style. (CMP pp.73-76)

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre is a significant item in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the Functionalist architectural style. The small scale of the building combined with the raked horizontally lined brickwork emphasised by the white painted hoods and awning around the rounded centrepiece convey a streamlined effect that was very modern for the 1940s. Decoration was kept to a minimum, with no excessive pediments and even the columns being simple and round. (CMP pp.73-76)

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Comparative significance

4.4 Canonical status (local, national, international)

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre is one of only a few remaining 1940s constructed purpose-built centres in Sydney. (CMP pp.73-76)

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre is one of six centres in the Canterbury LGA designed by the architects Davey and Brindley. It therefore has strong associations with Brindley and Davey, as part of the body of their considerable civic work for a number of Sydney councils during the late 1940s and 1950s. (CMP pp.73-76)

4.5 historic and reference values:

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre building demonstrates the historical layout outlined for full time baby health centres in 1944. Its location in proximity to the railway station also demonstrates the ideal position originally determined for baby health centres. (CMP pp.73-76)

The Punchbowl Baby Health Centre is a good example of the 1940s era baby health centres built as part of the national health programme for healthy mothers and babies. (CMP pp.73-76)

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5. Documentation

5.1 archives/written records/correspondence etc. (state location/ address):

Conservation Management Plan for the Punchbowl Baby Health Centre,
748 Punchbowl Road, Punchbowl prepared by City Plan Heritage, September 2010

5.2 principal publications (in chronological order):

The July 1948 issue of *Building and Engineering Magazine* contained a feature article entitled "Three New Baby Health Centres". This article contained black and white photographs and brief descriptions of the recently opened baby health centres for Lakemba, Punchbowl and Botany (see below). Davey and Brindley were the architects for both the Lakemba and Punchbowl centres and the architect R. Lindsay Little was the architect for the Botany Centre.

The description of the Punchbowl Centre noted that:

The Baby Health Centre has a very unusual feature in the form of a circular waiting room from which radiates the other accommodation comprising two consulting rooms, test feeding room, kitchen, nurses' room and toilet accommodation and toddlers' room, the wall of which are decorated with coloured mural of nursery rhymes.

It is interesting to note that this project was carried out by the two Municipal Councils in conjunction with the Department of Public Health, the latter contributed 50% of the cost of the building and the equipment, which is in pursuance of their policy as declared in July, 1944.

Building & Engineering Journal, July 24 1948, page 21

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5.3 visual material (state location/ address)



Recent view of the Punchbowl Baby Health Centre – Cityplan Heritage



Recent view of the Punchbowl Baby Health Centre – Cityplan Heritage



Recent view of the Punchbowl Baby Health Centre – Cityplan Heritage

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Refer also to the images in Section 1.0

5.4 list documents included in supplementary dossier

PDF of the Conservation Management Plan for the Punchbowl Baby Health Centre

6. Fiche report

name of reporter: Noni Boyd
address: GPO Box 1334, Sydney, NSW 2001
telephone: +61 412 737 921 fax: n/a
e-mail: noni_jd@hotmail.com
date of report: July 2012

examination by DOCOMOMO national/regional section

approval by wp co-ordinator/registers correspondent (name):

sign and date:

examination by DOCOMOMO ISC/R

name of ISC member in charge of the evaluation:

comment(s):

sign and date:

ISC/R approval: date:

wp/ref. no.:

NAI ref. no.:

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