

Austral Masonry Head Offices
National

Gympie
Chr Woondum Rd and
Bruce Highway
Gympie QLD 4570
Tel. (07) 5489 6900
Email. sales@gbmasonry.com.au

Queensland
184 Burnside Rd
Yatala QLD 4208
Tel. (07) 3441 7500
Fax. (07) 3807 0954
Email. sales@australmasonry.com.au

New South Wales
44 Clunies Ross St
Prospect NSW 2148
Tel. (02) 9840 2333
Fax. (02) 9840 2344
Email. sales@australmasonry.com.au

Victoria
59 Elliott Rd
Dandenong VIC 3175
Tel. (03) 9791 6988
Fax. (03) 9791 1644
Email. sales@australmasonry.com.au

Trading hours
For trading hours please visit www.australmasonry.com.au



1300 MASONRY (1300 627 667)
www.australmasonry.com.au

Follow brickworksbuildingproducts on



proud supporters



11/2016 PARTNERS IN DESIGN

Paling Court

Case Study



masonry.
style and
function



A new place to call home



A gift made over 125 years ago is still paying dividends

Project: Paling Court
Location: Grasmere NSW
Function: Residential care facility
Owner: Carrington Centennial Care
Architect: Jackson Teece
Structural engineer: Mott MacDonald
Builder: Grindley Constructions
Bricklayer: JR Brick and Blocklaying
Featured products: Austral Masonry concrete masonry blocks: GB Honed in Pewter and Architec Polished in Alabaster
Photography: TBC

Carrington Centennial Care owes its existence to the generosity of William Paling, a Dutch-born music retailer and entrepreneur who, to celebrate Australia's centennial in 1888, donated his 182 ha (450 acre) farm and £10,000 (over \$1.3m today) for the establishment of a convalescent hospital.

That hospital is now Carrington House, part of an extensive campus of integrated residential care facilities catering for independent living, low and high care, and dementia care. The site owner/operator is Carrington Centennial Care, a non-profit benevolent organisation founded in 1889.

Paling's generosity is now commemorated in Paling Court, a new state-of-the-art facility accommodating 132 residents and associated facilities.

The designers chose to clad the building in coloured concrete masonry, selected for its residential associations and as a sympathetic reference to the adjacent heritage Grasmere Cottages and Carrington House.

Grasmere is a suburb of Camden, about 60 km south-west of the Sydney CBD. The district has a rich masonry heritage including Camelot, the John Horbury Hunt-designed mansion which is the bricks-and-mortar star of the hit television series *A Place to Call Home*. (The legacy of the radical colonial-era architect is celebrated in the Horbury Hunt Awards conducted annually by Think Brick Australia.)

Aside from the everyday practicalities of accommodating and caring for residents with a variety of needs and abilities, a key consideration for the architect of such a facility is avoiding that institutional look and feel.

"We want to allow the building to settle into the landscape as if it is a conventional apartment building," says Damian Barker, Jackson Teece's design director and the design architect for this project. He was assisted by a team including project architects Connie Argyrou and Dana Hutchinson.



The former building on this site, a 50-bed facility constructed in the 1980s, typified the approach of its time: few single rooms; small, shared rooms and wards off long, double-loaded corridors leading to poor oversight and difficult wayfinding.

The new building plan is basically two wings, each with a large internal courtyard, linked by the central open courtyard which has the reception, cafe, hairdresser, pharmacy, meeting rooms and apartment-style accommodation for visiting family, staff and students. The cloister design of the central courtyard frames a natural amphitheatre overlooking the historic cottages below. "Think of the building as a microcosm of a small village," Barker explains.

The internal design of the assisted-care and low-care areas encourages residents to see themselves as part of a series of small communities via the use of single-loaded corridors with breakout spaces, lounges, decks and balconies. High-care and dementia-care residents are more internalised, while retaining good access to views and sunlight.

In keeping with contemporary demands, most residents have single rooms, promoting a sense of independence. "We are not building a hospital or institution," Damian Barker contends, "we are building homes for people in the latter part of their lives."

The building structure is conventional with a concrete frame, steel framed roof and loadbearing concrete blockwork. Why masonry, we asked Barker? "The masonry came out of a desire to reinforce the residential character of the building."

Two colours and finishes were chosen: a polished block in Alabaster for the central, public areas, and a honed-finish block in Pewter for the residential wings. This creates what he describes as a "hierarchy of materials between the residential spaces and the public spaces."

The designers didn't want to directly reference the predominating brickwork of Carrington House. They chose the polished Alabaster-colour blocks for the central section of Paling Court to pick up the sandstone of the imposing heritage building.

"The Alabaster masonry has the consistency and colour qualities typical of the sandstone but is much lighter in colour," Barker explains. "Paling Court is clearly a contemporary building. We didn't want to mimic or reflect the old building but we wanted to have some of its grandness and clarity for these public areas."

The honed Pewter-colour masonry strings along the curved wings to the left and right of the central area. "The darker, Pewter blocks are calmer, less dramatic and lower key and they add a residential character to these residential wings."

Having to cut some of the blocks to create splayed features and corners provided an unexpected bonus. "The cutting polished the blocks so nicely that is actually was a bit more accentuated than we anticipated but we were delighted with the result." This quoining effect (use of masonry blocks at the corners) has become a feature of the building.

The facade design comes out of the building's functional requirements and the hierarchy of uses of the space. Barker describes it as having "simple yet graceful, relaxed and calm geometric forms." The lineal quality of the wings nestles comfortably into the landscape while the Pewter colour of their masonry also references the eucalyptus trees that nestle around the edge of the building.

Damian Barker was very pleased with the builder and blocklayers "who did an excellent job. They paid particular attention to the details, particularly in the internal courtyards which have quite thick masonry walls, referencing the strength and solidity of Carrington House with its heavily articulated entrances and masonry work." This was confirmed by Grindley Constructions site supervisor, Glen Wood, who said JR Brick and Blocklaying "did an excellent job."

Paling Court was officially opened in mid-2015 by the Prime Minister who praised it as a "a splendid new facility - not just a state-of-the-art facility, but quite possibly the best in the country - [which] testifies to the care, compassion and love of all associated with it"