

Other Names	N/A	
Street Address	Cnr Main Street and Herbert Street	Proserpine
Title Details/ GPS Coordinates	6RP718842	(E: 665404 N: 7743252)

Historical Context

The Proserpine district was first settled by European pastoralists in the 1870s. One property, Glen Isla, was set aside for a 3000 acre sugar plantation in 1882. Although land was cleared by Pacific Islander and Chinese labour, and machinery and a mill was ordered for crushing, the Crystal Brook Sugar Company Limited was not successful (due to the Pacific Island Labourers Act Amendment Act 1884, the depression and the poor seasons and sugar process). The land was subdivided under the auspices of the Crown Lands Act 1884 which provided for the resumption of larger pastoral runs and conversion to small selections. In the 1890s, part of the Glen Isla property was included in the Proserpine township. Proserpine township and district developed quickly after the establishment of the Proserpine Central Sugar Mill in 1897. The mill, which was financed under the provisions of the Sugar Works Guarantee Act 1893, was located in the centre of town, with frontage on Main and Mill Streets. Cane was transported to the mill via a tramway and then transported to a wharf on the Proserpine River. Proserpine Uniting Church was established as a Presbyterian Church on land donated by Mr. John Compton in 1899 at the time of this early, sugar related activity. The timber church officially opened on 6 August 1899 and was made with donations from a variety of local residents. Compton donated the stumps for the building, while the logs, which were donated by Mr. Renwich, were milled by Mr. James McPherson. The church was built to the drawings of Mr. A.G. Clifton as a 16ft by 30ft by 12 ft structure, with a small porch for the front door and a set of steps for the front and rear entrance doors. Mr. J Guy, who constructed the church for £12, also made the timber seats for 20 shillings each. As the community became established, the church decided to build a larger, more solid structure, one that could withstand region's harsh weather conditions. A new concrete church was constructed on the same site for the cost of £1500. The foundation stone was laid by the Queensland Premier, Hon Forgan Smith, on Sunday 3 March 1935, and the church was dedicated on 1 June 1935. St James' Presbyterian Church became St James' Uniting Church when The Uniting Church came into being on 22 June 1977. This unification of churches was the result of the coming together of the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia, and the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The church has remained largely intact. The only changes have been to replace the front fence with flower beds and replace the old timber pews inside. Further, in 1962, a brick Christian Education Centre was constructed to the rear of the church (and which faces Herbert Street).

Physical Description

St James' Uniting Church is located on a prominent corner position on Main and Herbert Streets. It is a small rendered concrete church in Gothic Revival style with a stucco/rough cast finish on the front (Main Street) elevation. The centrally located double timber entrance door is covered by a small entry porch that comprises a flat roof supported by concrete columns. All windows are arched in a modest gothic style, but some have been replaced by aluminum frames. At the north western corner there is a side entrance comprising a timber door and entry steps, as well as an iron bell attached to a timber post.

Integrity	Good	Condition	Fair
Statutory Listings	No statutory listings		
Non-Statutory Listings	No non-statutory listings		
Inspection Date	15/02/2011		

References

Historical information provided by Proserpine Historical Museum.
Townsville Daily Bulletin, Saturday 16 March 1935, p.12.

Heritage Significance

Criteria	Definition
A	<i>The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history.</i>
Statement	Located on the site of the original Presbyterian Church in Proserpine, St James' Uniting Church, constructed in 1935 as the Proserpine Presbyterian Church, demonstrates the development of the Presbyterian Church in the Whitsunday region. The construction of a concrete church during the 1930s also demonstrates the progress of Proserpine as a cane growing town.
H	<i>The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the region's history.</i>
Statement	Established as a Presbyterian Church in 1899, the site of St James Uniting Church has been in continuous use as a place of worship since this period and is significant for its enduring association with the Presbyterian (and now Uniting) Church.

Location Map

