



# Housing Style

## Introduction

### Queensland's Early Homes

Upon settlement Queensland's isolation from the popular building trends of the southern colonies combined with its lack of materials such as stone, mortar, claybricks, plaster and stucco led to the use of timber as a local available building material.

Distinctive Queensland houses evolved with a dominant tradition of timber building. Designed to be kept open as a solution to the heat and humidity of Queensland, these homes featured wide doorways and full height windows.

Architect Ron Tanton says, to cope with the rising humidity, flash floods on river flats, termites, vermin and steep hillsides, large timber logs known as 'stumps' were used to support and elevate the houses. These homes, raised up high above the ground on sturdy round stumps, became an important visible structural element in Queensland's urban and country landscape. Some of the individual decorative features of the homes may be found in homes in other states of Australia.

However the huge popularity of the use of timber and corrugated iron, the elevation of homes on tall stumps and the open nature of verandahs, doors and windows, provide Queensland's early homes with a truly distinct Queensland signature – often referred to as 'timber and tin' and which houses became known as 'Queenslanders' as the various housing forms developed from pre Federation Colonial homes to the bungalows of the 1930's and early 1940's.

This history of isolation and heritage in Queensland informed the lightweight timber construction of Queensland's homes, and demanded less faithful adherence to British and European housing forms delivering a housing vernacular of less heavy less solid appearance than houses in Australia's southern zones.

Queensland Architects of the past 20<sup>th</sup> and present 21<sup>st</sup> Century have continued to evolve and develop with modern materials this 'light-weight' form of construction.

It is necessary for any scholar or person interested in the styles of housing in Australia to become conversant with the regional differences in this country's housing heritage. Accordingly it has been important to record in these 'snap shots' the main differences in Queensland housing as it relates to heritage housing periods in southern cities so as to also to record the basic skeletal departures in design forms and styles that evolved during the same historical periods.