Gallivant through

ASCOT & HAMILTON

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

Entrance to the residence, Windermere in the Brisbane suburb of Hamilton, ca 1890, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 61715

BRISBANE CITY

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

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Access for people with limited mobility:

>>> Gradient between 1:20-1:14

>>> Gradient in excess of 1:14

MAP

ALEXANDRA ROAD

YABBA STREET

ORIEL ROAD

KITCHENER ROAD

ASCOT STATION

McGILL AVENUE

LANCASTER ROAD

HENRY STREET

ABBOTT STREET

MAYFIELD STREET

KITCHENER ROAD

RUPERT TERRACE

BEATRICE TERRACE

RACECOURSE ROAD

LANCASTER ROAD

SUTHERLAND AVENUE

WINDERMERE ROAD

WINDERMERE ROAD

RACECOURSE ROAD

SEYMOUR ROAD

KINGSFORD SMITH DRIVE

KINGSFORD SMITH DRIVE

BEATRICE TERRACE

N

Brisbane River

INTRODUCTION

Sailing regatta, Hamilton Reach, Brisbane River, ca 1911, State Library of Queensland Negative No. 04401

The suburbs of Ascot and Hamilton are two of Brisbane's most sought-after places to live. Their rich history can be told through many of its heritage buildings and historic sites.

Before European settlement, the area was home to many Aboriginal people. In 1825, after a failed attempt at settlement at Redcliffe, the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement was moved to the current site of the city. This heralded an era of displacement for the Aboriginal people, as the colonists encroached upon their traditional land.

The Breakfast Creek area was traversed by Europeans in the late 1820s and by 1830 a bridge had been constructed by convicts across the creek, connecting to the convict-built road that today is Kingsford Smith Drive. This road led to the Eagle Farm Women's Prison. In 1839, the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement was closed and in 1842 the area opened for free settlement.

The elevated hilly country of Hamilton offered river views and sea breezes that attracted wealthy settlers.
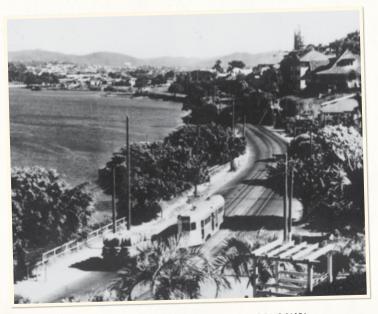
By the 1860s, several large residences were built on the tops of the hills, distinguishing the area from other parts of Brisbane.

It was the establishment of the racecourse in 1865 by the Queensland Turf Club that brought close attention to the area and further helped to define its distinctive character. The land was granted to the club by the Colonial Government in 1863 and the first race meeting was held two years later.

The name 'Ascot' was originally used in a good-humored way, making reference to the famous English racecourse. As the racecourse's attendance numbers increased, however, Ascot became more closely associated with this part of Brisbane. The rail line was extended from Eagle Junction to Racecourse Station in 1882 and by 1897 the name of the station had been changed to Ascot.

Kingsford Smith Drive, Hamilton, 1950s, Brisbane City Council, BCC-B120-31126

The development of Ascot and Hamilton followed a pattern that was common in Brisbane in the mid-to-late 19th Century. Wealthier residents bought the land on the rises and apexes of hills, ensuring breezes, views and protection from flooding and waste run-off. The less wealthy purchased land on the base of the hills.

Although a horse-drawn tram service had run along Hamilton Road (also known as River Road and now Kingsford Smith Drive) to Breakfast Creek and into the city, it was in 1899 that an electric tram service was introduced. The line extended all the way along Racecourse Road from Hamilton Road. This improvement encouraged greater numbers to the race venue and also brought a wave of residential development.

In 1891, the population of Hamilton alone was 2660 and by 1911 this doubled to 4905. With the increase of residents in the area, services and facilities were improved. For example, Hamilton State School was established in 1907, the first Anglican Church in 1895 and a reservoir was built on Bartley's Hill in 1907. There was also an increase in retail and commercial activity along Racecourse Road during this period.

Please note that some sections of the 3.5 kilometre trail are steep and may not be accessible for people with limited mobility. Rupert Terrace, Sutherland Avenue, Henry Street and a small section of Yabba Street do not include standard concrete footpaths and provide turf verges only.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

Brett's Wharf and

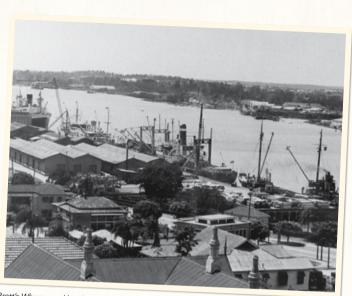# APOLLO BARGE

Assembly Depot

Hamilton, Ascot and Eagle Farm experienced some of the most intense war-time activity seen in Australia during World War II.

As a consequence of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941, the US forces were re-directed to Australia. On 22 December 1941, the USS *Pensacola*, heading a convoy of American naval ships carrying troops and equipment, docked at Brett's Wharf. Up to 4600 American troops marched up Racecourse Road that day to the racecourse, where they established the first US Military camp in Australia during World War II, 'Camp Ascot'. At the height of the war, the once sleepy town of Brisbane hosted over 75,000 American troops awaiting deployment to the conflict in the Pacific.

During the war, Brett's Wharf played an important role as the receiving dock for the US Air Force's unassembled aircraft. The wharf was situated close to the strategically important Eagle Farm Airfield. Aircraft parts arrived at the wharf and were then transported to the airfield to be assembled. The planes would then be flown to the US military bases in the Pacific.

Brett's Wharves at Hamilton taken about 1953, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 43721

Directly across the river in Bulimba, the Apollo Barge Assembly Depot was constructed by the US forces. This is one of Brisbane's most intact US-built military sites remaining from the war, and the large (now yellow) warehouses can be clearly seen from this side of the river. The steel components for the military barges were delivered up the river to the depot. Once assembled, the barges were shipped out as deck cargo on US vessels headed for the conflict in the Pacific.
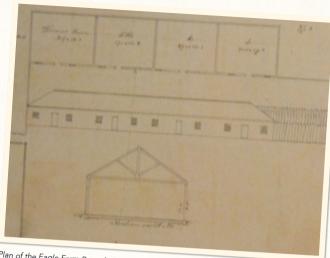
BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

EAGLE FARM

Women's Prison

Although the site of the Eagle Farm Women's Prison was about two kilometres from here, the only way to reach it overland was along the convict-hewn track we know today as Kingsford Smith Drive. In 1829, Commandant Captain Patrick Logan established a farm at Eagle Farm in an attempt to achieve self-sufficiency for the fledgling convict settlement of Moreton Bay.

Initially, the female convicts were held in the Female Factory, on the site now occupied by the General Post Office in the city on Queen Street. High stone walls were erected around the factory to limit fraternisation with men, but this proved to be futile. Authorities decided to move the female convicts to Eagle Farm, away from the attentions of the male convicts and soldiers, who were prohibited from crossing Breakfast Creek. The earliest record of female convicts at the farm dates from 1830.

At the height of the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement in 1831, there were 40 female prisoners held at Eagle Farm, which was surrounded by a 5.2 metre high timber stockade.

Plan of the Eagle Farm Barracks, Eagle Farm, 28 September 1839, Queensland State Archives, Item No. 659611

Within the walls, there were several timber slab buildings, including a four-roomed accommodation building for the prisoners, a block of six cells, a kitchen, a hospital, a store, a school, matrons' quarters and a supervisor's cottage. The female convicts worked at tasks such as laundry, needlework and assisting in the fields.

In 1839, the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement was closed and in 1842 the area opened for free settlement. None of the buildings from the prison remain but it has been recognised as an important archaeological site.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

SUBSTATION

No. 12

This brick substation was constructed in 1947 and designed by City Architect, Frank G Costello.

Electric trams had travelled to Hamilton from 1899. Following World War II, an increasing population and the accompanying increase in housing and industry through the Hamilton and Eagle Farm areas made it necessary to install extra utilities to service the area.

Substation No. 12 is one of only two substations built in Brisbane that combined the substation functions for both the electricity supply and the tramway system. The Hamilton substation was the first of this type of installation to be built in Brisbane, while the other, Substation No. 42 on Waterworks Road at Ashgrove, was built in 1948. This dual facility was an unusual but efficient use of a site, as it incorporated both types of substations within a single building.

Costello was a master at dual-purpose facilities. He had been responsible for designing the air raid shelters throughout Brisbane during World War II. A total of 235 air raid shelters were constructed in the city during wartime. The shelters were

Brisbane Tramways Tram no 81 on the West End – Breakfast Creek and Ascot Route, 1900-1910, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 78567

designed to provide immediate protection from bombing raids and were intended to be converted into park shelters and bus stops once the war ended. After the war, many of the air raid shelters were demolished but a small number of these structures survive today, fulfilling their post-war function as bus shelters, public toilets or park shelters, just as Costello had intended.

By the 1960s, Brisbane City Council viewed trams, compared with buses, as an inefficient, expensive and inflexible form of public transport and subsequently decided to discontinue the service across Brisbane. On Sunday 13 April 1969, the last Brisbane tram passed along Queen Street on its final run to the workshops at Milton. This substation, however, continues to be used by Energex for electricity.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

KINGSFORD SMITH

Drive

In 1897, Queensland's most important aviator, Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, was born in a house near the corner of Riverview Terrace and Hamilton Road (now known as Kingsford Smith Drive). In 1953, the busy road was officially renamed 'Sir Charles Kingsford Smith Drive', in honour of 'Smithy' and his notable aviation achievements.

On the announcement of the dedication Lord Mayor, Frank Roberts, stated:

"many people had said that instead of being one of the first, Brisbane had been one of the last cities to perpetuate the memory of Kingsford Smith. Because Kingsford Smith was born at Hamilton and landed at Eagle Farm after his epoch-making flight across the Pacific 25 years ago, it had been decided to rename the road"
(The Courier Mail, 3 July 1953).

To learn more about this famous Queenslander and his many achievements, please read the sign situated on this corner under the large rubber tree.

Illustrated front cover from the Queenslander, July 10, 1930, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 503755

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

HAMILTON

Hotel

Hamilton Hotel, Hamilton, ca 1929, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 1902

In 1865, Gustavus Hamilton established a hotel on this site and named it The Hamilton after himself. The hotel quickly became a reference point in the sparsely populated district and soon the area around the hotel was also being referred to as 'The Hamilton'. By the turn of the century, the area officially became known as Hamilton, when it was proclaimed a local authority under the *Divisional Boards Act*. Over the years, the hotel was run by several licensees who provided both refreshments and meals. The hotel became especially renowned for its hospitality on race days.

Being situated so close to the Brisbane River, the hotel was susceptible to flooding and in February 1893 it was badly damaged when Brisbane suffered its worst recorded flood event. Torrential rain from three successive cyclones that crossed the central Queensland coast caused the banks of the river to burst three times in one month. The first and third flood events caused the most damage.

Viewed from Hamilton's hills, the flood waters covered the entire Breakfast Creek area and the low areas of Albion.

Across the river, the entire Bulimba peninsular was submerged. The flood waters also spread to Eagle Farm. It was reported:

"From a late hour on Saturday the Hamilton Road was quite impassable, the water washing up against the cuttings and over the houses between the hills, and all communication with the city in this direction was completely cut off. Beyond the Hamilton Hotel, where the water rose to a considerable height over the bar counter, travelling by road was an impossibility" *(The Queenslander, 11 February 1893)*.

When the January 2011 flood engulfed Brisbane, the banks along this stretch of the river held. There were, however, several jetties and boats damaged by the rapidly moving water.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

TIVOLI GARDENS

Theatre

ENTERTAINMENTS.
TIVOLI THEATRE UNDER CANVAS
HAMILTON-ROAD, OPPOSITE TOOMBUL WHARF.
TO-NIGHT, BELLA SUTHERLAND'S VITAL SPARK
VAUDEVILLE COMPANY.
FIRST PART MINSTRELS, OLIO, FARCE, and Beautiful MOVING PICTURES.
Admission, 6d.; Reserved Chairs, 1s.; Children, 6d.
TRAMS TO GATES. OPEN AT 7.

The Brisbane Courier, 25 April 1907

On a clear autumn night in 1907, the Tivoli Gardens Theatre was opened on the corner of Racecourse Road and Allen Street. The 1000-seat canvas theatre was equipped with a large stage, acetylene lighting (a form of gas lighting) and decoratively painted scenery. At the time, it was said "the appointments are right up to date, the seating accommodation is splendid, and the scenery and other effects are above the ordinary" (*The Brisbane Courier*, 8 April 1907).

The theatre was established by Miss Bella Sutherland, a famous performer on the vaudevillian circuit, in Australia and internationally. Sutherland was celebrated for her singing. In Brisbane, she and her company, the Vital Spark Vaudeville Company, played at several of the large city theatres in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Under her direction, the players at the Tivoli Gardens were known as the Vaudeville Company.

"The Tivoli Gardens and Theatre was crowded last night, and the proceedings were marked by great enthusiasm. The vaudeville programme submitted was thoroughly enjoyed, and most of the artists had to respond to undeniable demands for encores" (*The Brisbane Courier,* 2 April 1907).

Vaudeville theatre was a popular form of entertainment in Brisbane in the early 1900s before the coming of cinema. The genre was characterised by the performance of a variety of acts that often included comedy performances, singers, dancers, excerpts from plays, acrobatics, ventriloquists and animal acts. The Tivoli Gardens Theatre performances proved to be very popular with both locals and other Brisbane residents, who made the pleasant trip along the riverfront to Hamilton by tram.

Outside the theatre in a pleasant garden, light refreshment was offered, "cool and refreshing drinks may be obtained on the lawn, where tables and seats are provided for the comfort of patrons" (*The Brisbane Courier,* 8 April 1907). To add to the fun, a kinetoscope, the precursor to cinema, could be viewed in the garden. This was a small timber cabinet where a series of images were conveyed over a light, creating an impression of movement. The 'moving picture' was viewed through a small window at the top of the cabinet.

By 1915, the canvas theatre was used mainly to screen movies and by 1921 the Tivoli Gardens Theatre was closed.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

HAMILTON

Town Hall

In 1890, Hamilton was proclaimed a separate local authority under the *Divisional Boards Act 1879*. Initially, the Hamilton Town Council shared board offices with the Toombul Shire Council, situated on the corner of Cooksley Street and Kingsford Smith Drive (then Hamilton Road). This situation proved inadequate and by 1920, a portion of land on Racecourse Road had been acquired for the construction of the new Hamilton Town Hall. Once completed in July 1920, the building consisted of Council chambers and the public hall, at a construction cost of more than £8800. The Hall was designed by respected Brisbane architect, MT Stanley and became the venue for Council business, community meetings and social occasions, such as dances.

In 1925, Hamilton Town Council was amalgamated into the Greater Brisbane Municipal Council, under the *City of Brisbane Act 1924* resulting in Hamilton Town Council being disbanded. Consequently, concerns were voiced by the Hamilton community as to the future of their beloved hall.

In the early years of the 1900s, several residents campaigned for a School of Arts to be established for the Hamilton area but were

Hamilton Town Council, Undated, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 27279-0001-0002

never successful. Traditionally, School of Arts buildings were established to provide adult education for the community where they could use the reading library and meeting rooms. These establishments became very popular in Australia in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

In November 1925, a delegation of former Hamilton Town Council members made a request to Brisbane's first Lord Mayor, William Jolly, to allow the hall to be used for a School of Arts. The Lord Mayor agreed with this proposal and by 1928 the building became the Hamilton School of Arts. Today, it still serves the Hamilton community as a public library.

ST AUGUSTINE'S

Anglican Church

This beautiful brick church was completed in 1920 as
St Augustine's Thank-offering and War Memorial Church,

"the new church has been erected by voluntary
contributions as a thank-offering to God for deliverance
and peace, and as a memorial to the valour, sacrifice,
and endurance of the Australian men who fought and
the women who served in the Great War"
(*The Brisbane Courier,* 18 October 1920).

The armistice that ended the war was signed in France at 11am
on 11 November 1918. On the other side of the world, Australians
were mourning those who had lost their lives while serving their
country. Almost 40% of Australian men aged between 18 and 44
had enlisted in the war. By the end of the hostilities, Australia had
the highest casualty rate of the Allied Forces, at 68.5%, with a total
of 60,000 troops killed and 152,000 wounded. Most of those killed
were buried overseas. Unable to lay their loved ones to rest at
home, Australians expressed their grief by erecting war memorials.

After World War II, a series of stained-glass windows was
installed as a memorial to those who died in that war, including

View of steps and a bell at St Augustine's Church at Hamilton, 1938, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 202772

52 parishioners. The windows were designed by prominent
Queensland artist, William Bustard, who was renowned for his
work with stained glass. Examples of his windows in Brisbane
can be seen in St John's Anglican Cathedral, St Stephen's Catholic
Cathedral and Brisbane City Hall. The set of windows
in St Augustine's are believed to be the only remaining
complete set of Bustard's windows.

The tower was added to the church in 1961 and was dedicated to
the men and women who served in World War II.

Within the church grounds is a medieval bell. It is believed to date
back to 320AD and is thought that Emperor Constantine first hung
the bell in a Romanian Church. The bell was retrieved from
a battleground in World War I by Australian servicemen
and donated to St Augustine's as a war memorial. In 1978,
the bell was stolen. After a joint operation between
US Customs and Brisbane police, the bell was recovered
in 2000 and reinstalled.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

RACECOURSE

Road

Racecourse Road, as the name implies, was the direct path from the river to the Ascot Racecourse. Today the street is a bustling commercial centre but, in the late 1800s, there were only a few houses dotted between the river and the racecourse – it was home to two sharebrokers, a cabinet maker and two horse trainers.

As more people moved into the area in the early 20th Century, Racecourse Road evolved into a busy street, lined with houses, shops and businesses, and electric trams running back and forth.

In 1930, Racecourse Road had four general stores, the Hamilton Fresh Food Supply shop, a butcher, a baker, two chemists, a confectioner, a Japanese laundry, Mrs Nash's refreshment rooms, the Arcadia Picture Gardens, the Ascot Motor Garage, four medical practices, a post office, a hairdresser, a newsagent, and approximately 60 houses.

Ascot Motor Garage in Racecourse Road, Ascot, Brisbane, 1920s, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 168774

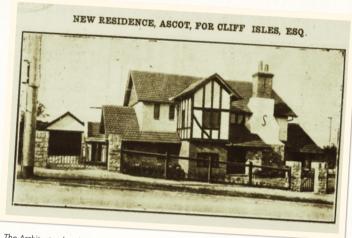*Eagle Farm Racecourse, Brisbane, Queensland, 1900, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 19086*

LYNFORD

The Architectural and Building Journal of Queensland, 10 December 1928

The interwar period saw many of the large estates with grand houses being subdivided into smaller lots in Ascot and Hamilton. The area increasingly became a desirable address for some of Brisbane's professional classes. This was clearly demonstrated along Windermere Road where, in 1928, residents included four doctors, a solicitor, four merchants, a managing director, a bank officer and a sharebroker.

Lynford was built during this era for James William Clifford Isles, son of James Isles of successful Brisbane auction company, Isles Love and Co. This fine home was designed by one of Brisbane's most notable architects from this era, EP Trewern. Trewern is renowned for his innovative designs incorporating the Spanish Mission and the Old English/Tudor Revival styles in residential and commercial architecture. Among his finest residential designs is the New Farm house, Santa Barbara, that is considered the best example of the Spanish Mission style in Brisbane. Equally, Lynford is considered one of the best examples of English/Tudor Revival houses in our city.

In 1933, Lynford was featured in the Sunday Mail's series, 'The Home', which showcased some of Brisbane's most modern and innovative architect-designed homes. Entitled 'A Picturesque Tudor Home', the article described the house as,

"Full of romance and poetic charm, the picturesque Tudor style has found expression in Lynford, the interesting home of Mr and Mrs Clifford Isles, in Windermere Road, Ascot. All that is expected in good house design is incorporated in this home" *(Sunday Mail,* 18 June 1933).

Lynford remains one of the finest examples of this style of architecture in Brisbane.

This is a private residence. Please do not enter.

WINDERMERE

"I saw Ascot and I will never forget it. The homes were distinctive, grand, inviting. The landscapes showed their wealth of plant life and attention. It is one of the prettiest knolls in Australia, comprehending as it does river, sea, land and sky" (The Architectural and Building Journal of Queensland, December 1928).

These words certainly apply to Sutherland Avenue, with its rows of mature Poinciana trees, beautiful houses and tidy gardens. The street is named after James Sutherland, who owned several acres of land in the area from the 1850s.

Behind the white picket fence, with the stately timber gates, sits Windermere. The graceful residence was built circa 1886 for James Sutherland's daughter Ruth and her husband John George Appel. Windermere was designed by Richard Gailey, who was responsible for designing some of Brisbane's most beautiful buildings, in particular, hotels – the most famous of which include the Empire Hotel in Fortitude Valley and the Regatta Hotel in Toowong.

As a prominent politician, Appel played a large role in both local and state affairs. He became a member of the Hamilton Divisional Board in 1890 and went on to become Mayor of Hamilton in 1907.

Windermere House at Ascot, 1920s, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 27279-0001-0001

From 1908, he served in the Queensland Parliament, where he was Home Secretary and Minister for Mines. When he died in March 1929 he was honoured by his fellow politicians including Premier William McCormack, who stated, "He was a broad-minded, generous man" (The Brisbane Courier, 20 March 1929).

The Leader of the Opposition at the time, Arthur Edward Moore, described him as a "big hearted, simple gentleman whom to know was to love. Honourable, generous, kindly to a fault, Mr Appel's memory will remain with all who knew him as an inspiration to private rectitude and public endeavour" (The Brisbane Courier, 20 March 1929).

Today, Windermere remains one of Brisbane's most beautiful residences.

This is a private residence. Please do not enter.

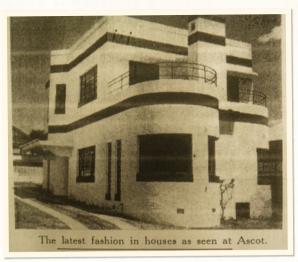BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

CHATEAU

Nous

Scenes of glamorous 1930s Hollywood parties come to mind when walking past Chateau Nous. Indeed, the house was designed by Douglas Roberts, who studied his craft in America and brought his knowledge of Functionalist architecture back to Brisbane. The house was built for the dentist, George Stewart and his wife Eileen in 1938.

At the time the design was something very new for Brisbane, where traditional 'timber and tin' housing dominated the suburbs. This Functionalist style of architecture broke with past architectural traditions and often featured clean lines, simple geometric shapes and rounded corners. In reference to the newly constructed Chateau Nous, it was stated that,

"The person who has given no conscious thought to the latest architectural trends… is likely to suffer shock to the senses when he sees "modern" architecture set down in a Brisbane suburb, where for decades old conventions have been only slightly altered" (*The Courier Mail*, 7 June 1938).

Adding to the house's ultra-modern design was an all-electric kitchen, with a white enamelled appliance range organised

The latest fashion in houses as seen at Ascot.

The Telegraph, 2 August 1939

in a line along one kitchen bench, which "matches the other kitchen furnishings, is flush with, and in line with, the sink, extension boards, storage cabinets, and refrigerator" (*The Courier Mail,* 7 June 1938). There was an electric dumb-waiter that delivered meals to the upstairs breakfast room and four full-time staff were employed by the Stewarts – a nurse, two maids and a gardener.

As the threat of Japanese air attack loomed over Brisbane during World War II, the Stewarts had an air raid shelter built in the yard to give protection to the family, the servants and the neighbours if needed.

The Stewarts lived in the house until the early 1960s.

This is a private residence. Please do not enter.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

NYRAMBLA

Front view of Nyrambla in Ascot, 1932, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 67869

Nyrambla epitomises the development of the Ascot area in the late 19th Century, when grand residences were built on the apexes of the hills. Constructed in 1885, Nyrambla was originally situated on 15 acres of land and faced what is now Yabba Street. In the early 20th Century, the land began to be divided up and sold as the Nyrambla Estate and by the 1940s, the once-imposing residence was surrounded by newer houses.

Nyrambla was built as the residence for the Australian Joint Stock Bank's manager, Henry Abbott, who resided in the house with his family until he retired and moved to Sydney in the late 19th Century. It was designed by one of Brisbane's finest architects from this era, James Cowlishaw, who was renowned for his grand houses.

In 1942, Nyrambla was requisitioned by the US Army, under General Douglas MacArthur, and became the Central Intelligence Bureau Headquarters. This joint US and Australian military organisation had a top secret task to intercept and decode Japanese intelligence.

A bank of IBM tabulators was set up in the rear garage. These very early forms of computers were run by the cryptanalysts to decipher enemy codes. In 1943, a Japanese signal containing secret information on the whereabouts of the Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Japanese Fleet, Admiral Yamamoto, was decrypted at Nyrambla. Yamamoto was responsible for the planning of the Pearl Harbour bombing. As a consequence, the US Air Force was able to locate his plane and on 18 April 1943, shot it down off Bougainville. Yamamoto's death was a decisive blow against the Japanese Forces.

A plaque was erected at Nyrambla in 1988 by a group of US ex-servicemen, "Central Bureau, an organisation comprising service personnel of Australia, USA, Britain, Canada and New Zealand, both men and women, functioned in this house from 1942 till 1945. From intercepted enemy radio messages, the organisation provided intelligence which made a decisive contribution to the Allied victory in the Pacific."

Today, Nyrambla is a private residence and retains its status as one of Ascot's grandest.

This is a private residence. Please do not enter.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

TATTERSALLS

Lodge

Yabba Street, 1922, State Library of Queensland

Tattersalls Lodge is historically important in Ascot for its links to Queensland's racing industry. Prior to the house being built circa 1890, a large training stable known as Tattersalls Stables was erected on adjacent land in 1889 by Brisbane bookmaker, Charles Burton. The stables, being so close to Eagle Farm Racecourse, were then leased to horse trainers.

In 1890, James Clark, known as the 'Pearl King', purchased the private training stables and built the house for the use of the horse trainers and their families. Clark made much of his fortune in the pearling trade in the Thursday Island area and was a keen horse-racing enthusiast, breeding and racing horses. Once the house was built, the facility became known as Tattersalls Lodge, where many prize-winning horses were trained.

Tattersalls Lodge was sold to Queensland racing identity, James McGill, in 1902 and the tradition of horse training continued. McGill was a well-known grazier and horse breeder in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries and was often referred to as the 'Squire of Blacklands', after his famous stud, Blacklands. McGill and his family moved into the Lodge in 1903 and following the

success of one of their horses, FitzGrafton, renamed the property Fitzgrafton Lodge.

James McGill was a very well respected figure in Queensland racing and his achievements were described in 1910 as, "no man in Queensland had maintained such a small stud and met with the same amount of success as Mr McGill. The squire of Blacklands had only raced horses of his own breeding, and his success had been remarkable…[he is] one of the most honourable, straight-going sportsmen in the history of racing in Queensland" *(The Queenslander, 4 June 1910).*

McGill died in 1918 and left Fitzgrafton Lodge to his son, James Charles McGill. In 1936, as a mark of respect, a new road adjacent to the Racecourse was named McGill Avenue and remains so today.

This is a private residence. Please do not enter.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

HAMILTON

Fire Station

In the late 19th Century, most of the housing stock in Brisbane was constructed from timber, and those in the suburbs of Ascot and Hamilton were no exception. As more and more houses were built in the area, the danger of fire was recognised by the community and the need for a local fire brigade became evident. In 1910, the Hamilton Volunteer Fire Brigade was formed. The fire brigade consisted of volunteers and its equipment was purchased with community donations.

The *Fire Brigades Act Amendment Act* was passed in 1902 to enable local authorities to establish their own voluntary fire brigades. The Hamilton Progress Association met in July 1910 to establish a volunteer fire brigade for the area. There,

"it was decided that the time had arrived when a really up to date and fully equipped volunteer fire brigade should be established in the district. Steps will, therefore, be taken at once with this object in view, and with the enthusiastic support now offering it is expected that it will not be long before this suburb possesses a well-equipped brigade" *(The Brisbane Courier,* 1 July 1910).

First Hamilton Fire Station, location unknown, ca 1915, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 97520

To raise money for the brigade, subscriptions were requested from the local residents.

In 1920, work began on the construction of the new station building. At the foundation stone ceremony in December of that year, the then Mayor of Hamilton, George Rees, stated that,

"the brigade, which, in point of smartness and efficiency, ranked equally with any of the stations outside the city boundaries, would soon be housed in adequate premises" *(The Brisbane Courier,* 24 December 1920).

The new brick station was designed by the same architect responsible for the Hamilton Town Hall, MT Stanley.

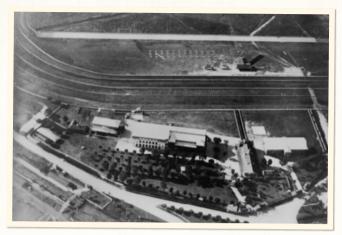When the Albion Fire Station was constructed in 1927, the Hamilton Fire Station was closed.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

ASCOT

Railway Station

The rail line from Eagle Junction to Ascot Station, originally called Racecourse Station, was opened in September 1882. The popularity of the races had flourished in the late 1880s, with some race days attended by thousands of racing enthusiasts. For example, the 1889 Queen's Birthday meeting was attended by more than 12,000 people. With Brisbane's entire population at this time only reaching 100,000 people, it was one of the major events on the social calendar. The extension of the line to the racecourse provided race-goers with an efficient way to get to and from the races, with trains running only on race days.

The name of the station changed from Racecourse Station to Ascot Station in 1897. The passenger station closest to the racecourse was constructed in 1882, when the line was first extended. As an early timber station building constructed specifically for race days, it is very rare in Queensland.

Following lobbying from the Hamilton Town Council for a second passenger station to cope with the greater numbers attending the races, another was constructed in 1914 – this is the station building closest to McGill Avenue.

Aerial View of the Queensland Turf Club, Ascot, Brisbane, ca 1925, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 168750

On its opening, the new improvements were outlined in the local paper, "A second platform has been provided for up trains and a commodious building erected on it, including a waiting room…a station-master's office…a ladies' waiting room…the building has been constructed of concrete, with a roofing of Marseilles tiles and presents a very pleasing appearance" *(The Brisbane Courier,* 21 February 1914).

This pre-cast concrete station, with its unusual decorative features, is also historically important for Queensland as the earliest example of this type of station still in service. The station continues the tradition of bringing excited race-goers to the races and, at the end of the day, starting their journey home.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

EAGLE FARM

Racecourse

"Park the dog-cart,… down the road
Lies our way to Brisbane racecourse.
Once a year dull care "be blowed".
Steady with the chestnut mare, Jim;
Mind that ginger-beer chap's cart.
Hand the reins here, let their heads go;
That's it! tick! pat! off we start."
(The Queenslander, 27 May 1876)

From as early as the 1840s, Brisbane residents have enjoyed a day out at the races. The first horse races were held at Coopers Plains in 1843 and then at New Farm in 1846. In 1863, however, the Ascot site was granted to the newly formed Queensland Turf Club by the colonial government. In 1865, the first race meeting was held at the Brisbane Racecourse; the grounds we know today as Eagle Farm Racecourse. This inaugural event was attended by 2000 racing enthusiasts.

Although the new racecourse quickly became the foremost racing venue in Queensland, it was a fairly primitive facility in its early years. There was a saddling paddock and a grandstand that could hold an audience of 350 people.

Ladies enjoying the races at Ascot Racetrack, Brisbane, October 1941, State Library of Queensland, Negative No. 194569

The track itself looped through bushland, allowing the punters only brief glances of the racing horses through the trees. Nevertheless, the popularity of the races only increased over the years and brand new stands were built to accommodate the crowds. The Paddock Stand was constructed in 1889, the St Ledger Stand in 1912, and the Members' Stand in 1924.

By 1900, the racecourse was holding 120 race meets a year, with attendance numbers surpassing 12,000 people on occasion.

Audiences on race days were a diverse crowd. The Queensland Turf Club members and social elites were accommodated in their separate members' area. The working class paid one shilling to enter and generally gathered in the middle of the racetrack known as the 'outer'. It was here that boxing tents, drinking booths, sideshows and bookies' stands added to the carnival atmosphere of a day at the races.

Today, Eagle Farm Racecourse remains Brisbane's premier racecourse and is just as popular with Brisbane race-goers.

BRISBANE HERITAGE TRAILS

CAMP ASCOT

Soldiers Camp at Ascot, 1944, Brisbane City Council, Image No. BCC – B120-29680

On 22 December 1941, over 4000 American troops marched up Racecourse Road from the river to Eagle Farm Racecourse, following the arrival in Brisbane of the US Naval convoy, headed by the USS Pensacola. The racecourse became a large military camp known as Camp Ascot and was the first US camp established in Australia during World War II. It became a temporary home for thousands of American troops, many of whom were awaiting deployment to the conflict in the Pacific.

When the military occupied the course, it was on the proviso that the existing structures and racetracks would not be damaged. The racecourse was quickly covered with rows of bell-tents, eight 'igloo' structures for stores and several temporary auxiliary buildings. The conditions for the thousands of American troops based there were very basic, with open-air showers, horse troughs for shaving basins, corrugated iron sheds for latrines and a tin shed for the kitchen. There was also a temporary movie theatre and a baseball diamond.

When the war ended, the American troops were eventually shipped home. Before the racecourse could be returned to its original purpose, a great deal of work was needed to remove all the temporary structures and recondition the track. Two public auctions were held in December 1945 and items for sale included, "large and small buildings with good wooden floors, wash tubs, piping, cisterns, bricks, hot water systems, and scrap timber" *(The Courier Mail,* 10 December 1945).

In May 1946, the first race meet after the war was held at Eagle Farm – the 'Victory Cup'. The cup celebrated the end of the war and a return to the excitement and glamour of a day at the races:

"Back to Ascot Victory Cup meeting, to be conducted on the re-opened Eagle Farm racecourse… will be for many women a symbol of the return of the lighter side of life after stern and practical war-time conditions of past years" *(The Courier Mail,* 24 April 1946).

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