

Cliffside Apartments

76 Lower River Terrace, Kangaroo Point

In 1937 the Cliffside Apartments, built on a sheer cliff of Brisbane Tuff, were described by The Courier-Mail as, “the newest, the best and the most attractive offering in Brisbane”. The building is also an example of the independence and business acumen of Australian women in the interwar period (1919-1939), particularly Doris Regina Booth and her sister Selma Dore.

Navigational hint: on the downstream side of the Captain Cook Bridge, look for the red brick and cream coloured Cliffside Apartments with its distinctive bay windows.

Doris was a successful mine manager and company director and, amongst other achievements, was appointed as the sole woman member of the first and second Legislative Council of Papua New Guinea in 1951–57. She was awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for her humanitarian work in Papua New Guinea. When she undertook the Cliffside Apartments project, her sister, Selma, capably handled the design and construction process to completion.

Designed by architect and engineer R. Martin Wilson in the English Revival or Tudor Revival style, the Cliffside Apartments were touted as the most advanced flat design in Australia and represented the dramatic growth of apartment buildings in the years after the First World War.

The Cliffside Apartments is a 5-storey building of 8 flats with strong architectural accents, including striking hexagonal bay windows and prominent northern views to the river from its balconies. It also offered security and freedom for unmarried women and young couples, and showed Brisbane that flats and apartment living could be both comfortable and stylish.