

Kangaroo Point Cliffs

77 Lower River Terrace, Kangaroo Point

Kangaroo Point Cliffs was originally a prominent rocky ridge where, around 1826, Commandant of Moreton Bay penal settlement Captain Patrick Logan opened a quarry to supply local volcanic stone, Brisbane Tuff, for building the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement that shifted from Redcliffe to North Brisbane the previous year. Located near the later Naval Stores, the quarry punted stone across the river for construction of government buildings, including the Commissariat Store (1828–29) and its retaining wall on William Street. At the northern end of Kangaroo Point, river flats were cleared and planted with wheat and maize to supply food for the new settlement.

Navigational hint: Kangaroo Point Cliffs opposite the city and Botanic Gardens is an unmistakable sheer cliff of Brisbane Tuff, a local volcanic stone.

After the penal colony was closed, Kangaroo Point was surveyed into allotments and became Brisbane's first suburb in 1842. The lower areas once used for farmland attracted various early industries, including a boiling down works, a soap and candle factory, ship building, foundries and sawmills.

From 1842, the Kangaroo Point quarry was rented to private builders, including John Petrie, until 1860 when it was placed under control of the newly established (September 1859) Brisbane Municipal Council. The Council continued to sub-lease the quarry to private builders who mainly supplied stone ballast to ships. But during the 1880s the site was extensively developed for quarrying, railway and wharfage, including construction of new coal wharves at the southern end of the Kangaroo Point Cliffs, adjacent to the South Brisbane Dry Dock. The wharves facilitated the export of coal mined at Ipswich and railed to South Brisbane.

In 1886–88 as part of Queensland's marine defence strategy, the colonial government constructed a depot for the Queensland Marine Defence Force at the northern end of the Kangaroo Point Cliffs, on the floor of the early Kangaroo Point Quarry.

In 1898, the government's Marine Department opened a new quarry south of the Naval Depot and about halfway along River Terrace, to supply rock

for river walls at Hamilton. This was the start of a scheme of dredging and training walls undertaken by the Department of Harbours and Rivers (later the Department of Harbours and Marine) to complete development of the Brisbane River Port. Extensive quarrying by the Marine Department opened the rock face of the Kangaroo Point Cliffs between the Naval Stores at the northern end of the site and the coal wharves at the southern end, creating the dramatic cliff face seen today. By 1976, when control of the Brisbane River passed to the Port of Brisbane Authority, most of the available Brisbane Tuff from Kangaroo Point had been exploited and the quarry was closed.

The Kangaroo Point quarry floors and ridge are now important public park reserves, while its cliffs are popular for abseiling, rock climbing, and enjoying the views.