

Naval Stores (former)

34 Amesbury Street, Kangaroo Point

The former Naval Stores comprise a pair of 2-storey iron-clad, stud-framed buildings and a wharf. Constructed between 1886 and 1888, the buildings have been used for more than 130 years as a military storage depot and for training. The Naval Stores were built at a time of heightened tension between Great Britain and the Russian Empire, and consequent fears of a Russian invasion of Queensland.

Navigational hint: at the base of the cliffs opposite the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, look for the 2-storey white Naval Stores building on the river's edge.

In 1884, the Colony of Queensland commissioned the Gayundah and Paluma gunboats. In 1885, the gunboats arrived from Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, and with the acquisition of other vessels, a naval depot for storage, repairs and training became necessary. The government established the Naval Stores on the site of a former Kangaroo Point quarry and trained a naval force of several hundred officers and crew, mainly part-time volunteers.

Store No. 1 contained a ground floor battery and lecture rooms used for training. Its first floor originally had 4 rooms used for stores and carpenters' shops. Store No. 2 originally consisted of 2 large rooms on each floor. Workshops were on the ground floor and its torpedo storeroom was on the first floor. Since then, various modifications to this layout have occurred.

This Kangaroo Point depot was the base of the Queensland Navy until the formation of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) after Federation, and Australia had become a nation. As the Queensland Naval Brigade developed, depots were also built at Maryborough, Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns and Cooktown.

In 1903, the Naval Stores became part of radio communication history after receiving signals from the Gayundah, the first Australian ship to use wireless telegraphy. The Naval Reserves occupied the site through the Second World War and vacated in 1959, when the Australian Army took over until 1984.