

Shafston House

23 Castlebar Street, Kangaroo Point

In 1876, Shafston House was described as a brick and stone house with a roof of hardwood shingles and iron, and comprising a drawing room, dining room, 5 bedrooms, closets, dressing and bathrooms, kitchen and about 6 servants' apartments, a large brick stable with 2 stalls, coach house, man's room and hay house. It is the third oldest house in Brisbane.

Navigational hint: look for Shafston House and its expansive green lawns opposite the Sydney Street ferry terminal.

Shafston House reportedly began as a single storeyed house known as Ravenscott, constructed by the Reverend Robert Creyke in the early 1850s on the stunning Brisbane River frontage at Kangaroo Point. In 1852, pastoralist and politician Henry Stuart Russell acquired the property along with several neighbouring blocks, and completed the house, naming it Shafston.

Some remodelling of the house carried out in the 1880s included replacing the verandahs to the present form, adding the entry portico and likely the bay windows, and more elaborate and picturesque Gothic detailing. The architect for this work is thought to be former Queensland Colonial Architect, Francis Drummond Greville Stanley.

Shafston House was acquired by the Commonwealth Government of Australia in 1919 and extensive alterations undertaken to convert it into the Shafston House Anzac Hostel for the care and treatment of First World War ex-servicemen. When the Prince of Wales (later, King Edward VIII) visited the facility in 1920, The Telegraph newspaper noted that the government's Repatriation Department did well to secure Shafston House, with its expansive views of the beautiful river.

From 1969, the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) occupied Shafston House, described in the RAAF Newsas, "a gracious edifice redolent of the elegance of an earlier era." It ended its lease with a flag lowering ceremony held on the Ides of March (15 March), 1988, and the property was sold to a private buyer.