

Story Bridge

Bradfield Highway, Kangaroo Point

Designed to harmonise with Brisbane's natural skyline, the Story Bridge is the largest span metal truss bridge designed and built mostly by Australians from materials manufactured in Australia. Approximately 12,000 ton (12,192 tonne) of steelwork was manufactured in the Evans Deakin & Co Ltd workshop for the bridge construction, undertaken as a relief work scheme by Evans Deakin-Hornibrook for the Queensland Government.

Navigational hint: the massive span metal-trussed Story Bridge is an unmistakable landmark crossing the Brisbane River near the Howard Smith Wharves.

Dr J. C. C. Bradfield, designer of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, was appointed consulting engineer in January 1934 and James A. Holt as supervising engineer for the bridge design and contract supervision. The bridge was named for John Douglas Story who was the Public Service Commissioner and a member of the Bridge Board. He was also influential in the development of the University of Queensland, and was the first full-time Vice-Chancellor, serving in an honorary capacity from 1938 to 1959.

Construction of the Story Bridge was a technical achievement, built from both sides of the river simultaneously. Excavations for the southern pier required men to work in watertight airlock chambers within steel caissons up to 40 m below ground level. This was the deepest airlock work done in Australia at the time and, at the completion of the bridge, the airlock was given to the University of Queensland to be used for experimental purposes.

The Story Bridge is 1,072 m long and has the largest spanning metal truss in Australia at 281.7 m. It required 1.25 million rivets and more than 30,000 L of zinc paint. Over the course of construction, 450 men had been employed and there were 3 fatal accidents.

While the Story Bridge was seen as premature in terms of traffic needs, it proved to be an important piece of the city's infrastructure when American troops arrived during the Second World War in 1942. The bridge is now an integral part of the Brisbane River landscape and an iconic city landmark.