

# Brisbane's history

**Before European arrival – Aboriginal people from various tribal groups, including the Jagera and Turrbal people, lived around the present area of Brisbane.**

The city was named after New South Wales governor Sir Thomas Brisbane.



The 1893 floods caused the 'Paluma' to run aground in the City Botanic Gardens.

1800-1850 → 1850-1900 → 1900-1930 →

<p><b>1823</b> Three runaway convicts discovered the Brisbane River. Explorer John Oxley found the river a few months later, naming it after the New South Wales Governor, Major-General Sir Thomas Brisbane.</p> <p><b>1824</b> Convict colony established at Redcliffe Point, moving in 1825 to where North Quay now stands.</p> <p><b>1838</b> First free settlers arrived.</p> <p><b>1842</b> Moreton Bay penal settlement closed as the number of convicts being sent from England was decreasing.</p>	<p><b>1855</b> City Botanic Gardens opened on the site of the first official vegetable farm for the Moreton Bay penal settlement.</p> <p><b>1859</b> Queensland became a separate colony from New South Wales, maintaining its own local government.</p> <p><b>1866</b> Enoggera Dam built to provide the first reticulated water supply for Brisbane.</p> <p><b>1874</b> Victoria Bridge, linking the CBD with South Brisbane, opened as a toll bridge.</p> <p><b>1893</b> Flood destroyed the Victoria Bridge and ferries were used to cross the river until it was rebuilt four years later.</p> <p><b>1897</b> Electric tramways introduced.</p>	<p><b>1902</b> Brisbane officially declared a city.</p> <p><b>1920</b> <i>Local Authorities Act Amendment Act</i> introduced, meaning all eligible voters (not just land-owners) elected local government representatives in Queensland.</p> <p><b>1924</b> <i>City of Brisbane Act</i> passed.</p> <p><b>1925</b> Brisbane City Council established, replacing 20 local authorities and reducing the number of aldermen and councillors from 205 to 26. Brisbane was one of the first cities to have all its local government services under a single administration and its municipal area is still one of the largest in the world.</p> <p><b>1925</b> Brisbane became the first local authority in Australia to establish a town planning department.</p>
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## Symbols of Brisbane

- Brisbane's City Hall is the basis of the corporate logo of Brisbane City Council. For many Brisbane people, City Hall is the community and cultural centre of Brisbane – a place of stability that has weathered the years of development around it. The logo is in the city colours of blue and gold, and also includes a palm tree, which represents Brisbane's subtropical climate.
- Brisbane's official coat of arms features two gryphons (pronounced 'griffons'), chosen for their spirited and animated nature, which hold the city shield. The shield's design pays tribute to Sir Thomas Brisbane, the prominent astronomer and New South Wales governor after whom the city is named. The shield's symbols represent commercial activity and peace, while the motto *Meliora Sequimur* means 'We aim for the best'. The colours of the city, blue and gold, are reflected in the wreath at the top.

1. Logo
2. Coat of arms
3. Flag
4. Floral emblem: the red poinsettia
5. Faunal emblem: the graceful tree frog



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

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Tram in Grey Street, South Brisbane in 1940.



---> 1930-1950 ---> 1950-1982 ---> 1982-2003

<p><b>1930</b> City Hall, a grand landmark and then the city's tallest building, opened.</p> <p><b>1931</b> Free Council immunisation service introduced.</p> <p><b>1932</b> William Jolly Bridge, linking North Quay and South Brisbane, opened.</p> <p><b>1936</b> Walter Taylor Bridge, linking Indooroopilly and Chelmer, opened.</p> <p><b>1940</b> Story Bridge completed.</p> <p><b>1940</b> Council bus service introduced, with 12 diesel buses travelling on four routes.</p> <p><b>1941</b> World War II – Brisbane became headquarters for General Douglas Macarthur and United States troops, playing a key role in the Allied war effort in the Pacific region.</p>	<p><b>1962</b> Council embarked on a 12-year works program to sewer the entire city.</p> <p><b>1965</b> Brisbane's first statutory town plan introduced.</p> <p><b>1969</b> Electric tramway system closed down.</p> <p><b>1974</b> Flood seriously damaged the City Botanic Gardens and many CBD buildings.</p> <p><b>1976</b> Riverside Expressway and first sections of the South East Freeway completed.</p> <p><b>1977</b> Sir Thomas Brisbane Planetarium at Mt Coot-tha opened.</p> <p><b>1982</b> Brisbane hosted the Commonwealth Games.</p> <p><b>1982</b> Queen Street Mall opened.</p>	<p><b>1986</b> Gateway Bridge and arterial road system opened.</p> <p><b>1988</b> Brisbane hosted World Expo 88.</p> <p><b>1996</b> CityCat ferry service began.</p> <p><b>2000</b> Brisbane Powerhouse arts facility opened on the site of Brisbane's first municipal power station.</p> <p><b>2002</b> Inner City Bypass opened.</p> <p><b>2003</b> Museum of Brisbane opened in City Hall.</p> <p><b>2003</b> Brisbane's largest new park in a generation, the 26-hectare Rocks Riverside Park at Seventeen Mile Rocks, opened.</p>
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Construction of the Story Bridge in 1930.

- Brisbane's official flag is based on the coat of arms and is flown daily in King George Square outside City Hall. It features gold caducei (winged staffs entwined by serpents), gold Stafford knots, white stars and white navy lines on a blue background. The flag's distinctive edging has become a familiar feature on all Council publications (the 'cleat').
- When greater Brisbane became an entity on 1 October 1925, the red poinsettia was chosen by the people as the floral emblem. Although indigenous to Mexico, the poinsettia grows perfectly in Brisbane, bringing a glorious splash of colour to winter gardens.
- In 1996, the graceful tree frog became the city's faunal emblem. This frog grows to about 4.5cm in length and is noted throughout the region for its beautiful colours and distinctive 'rain song', which can be heard from thick vegetation, creeks, wetlands and Brisbane backyards, especially during rain in spring and summer.



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