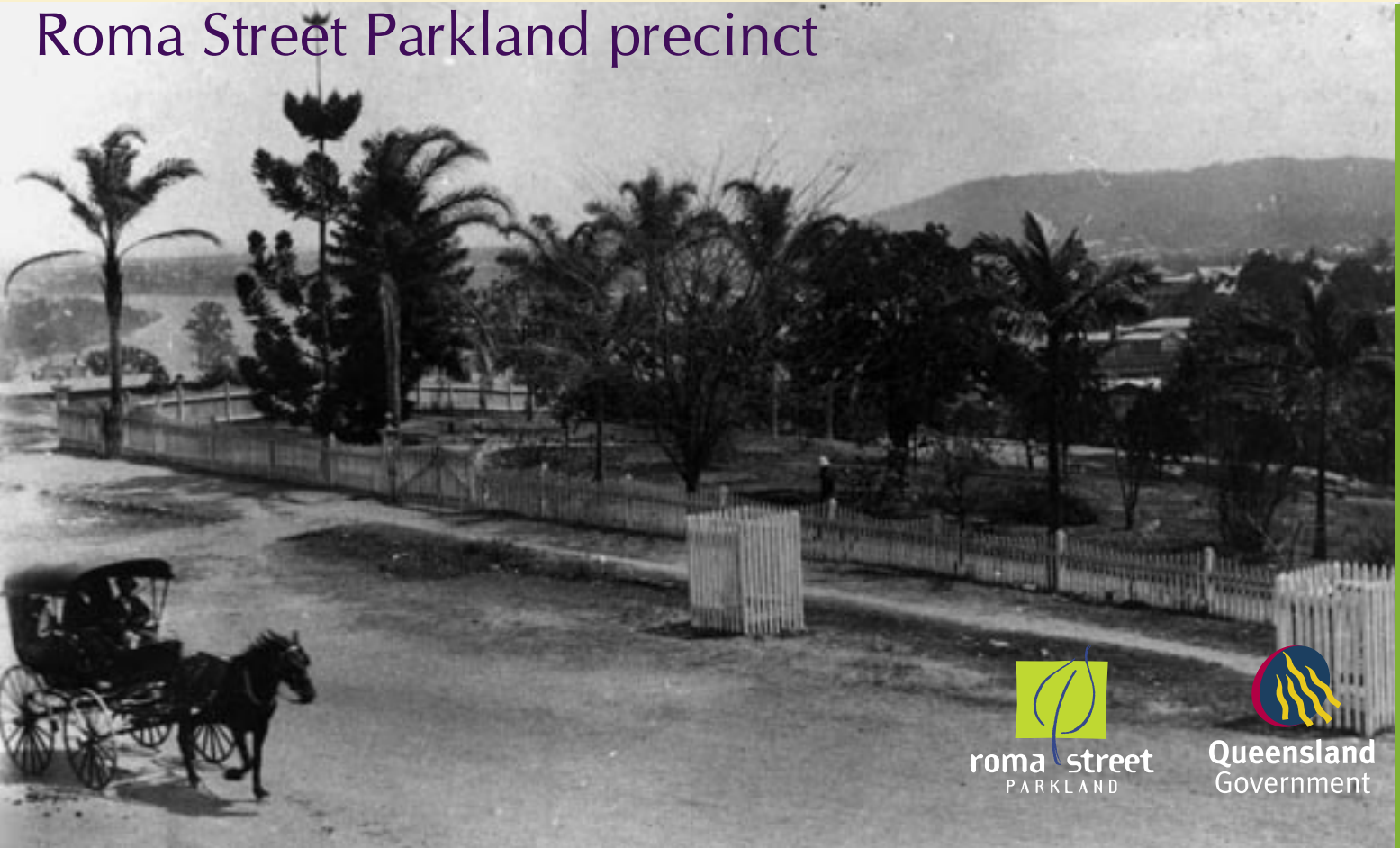


Historical overview

Roma Street Parkland precinct



INTRODUCTION

The area occupied by the Roma Street Parkland has been used for a great variety of purposes: for public gatherings and celebrations, commerce and trade, education, as a source for water, for sport and recreation, and simply as a place of leisure and enjoyment. Some of these uses have been brief, others have continued to the present.

THE LAND OF THE TURRBAL

The history of the Roma Street Parkland did not begin with the arrival of the first Europeans in 1825. For perhaps thousands of years the Turrbal people would have used the area for a variety of purposes including recreation, hunting and camping.

Early European observers noted that the Turrbal language was spoken in the Brisbane area by a number of clans or small tribes which 'each had a certain territory allotted to it.' The area immediately north of the Brisbane River belonged to the Duke of York's clan. The clan camped at various locations throughout the district. During the early years of Brisbane's development, the Duke of York's clan had a large camp at York's Hollow, now part of Victoria Park and the exhibition grounds. Given the proximity of York's Hollow to the Roma Street area, the Duke of York's

clan would have traversed and used the area regularly in the 1840s and 1850s.

The Roma Street area was used at least on one occasion in the 1840s for a major gathering of Aboriginal groups from south-east Queensland. Tom Petrie was a small boy when he observed such a gathering:

Once there was a great gathering from all parts of the country, the different tribes rolling up to witness a grand new corroboree that the Ipswich tribe had brought... Altogether there were some seven hundred blacks, and they were camped in this wise: The Brisbane, Stradbroke Island, and all from the Logan up to Brisbane had their camp at Green Hills (overlooking Roma Street Station...), the Ipswich, Rosewood and Wivenhoe tribes were on Petrie Terrace, where the barracks are and the Northern tribes camped on a site of the present Normanby Hotel.

This event was probably the last major gathering by groups from south-east Queensland in Brisbane. Brisbane's expansion accompanied by racial tensions and conflicts placed increasing pressure on the Duke of York's clan. Ultimately the clan was forced from their land and their numbers significantly diminished. By 1900, most had been forced to move away, either to reserves or missions or fringe camps outside Brisbane.

THE PENAL SETTLEMENT

The Moreton Bay penal settlement was established on the banks of the Brisbane River in 1825. The settlement accommodated at its peak more than 950 convicts. The convicts were mainly occupied erecting buildings and farming. They erected structures such as stores, barracks, and a windmill. Farming was undertaken at several locations on the outskirts of the settlement at South Brisbane, Eagle Farm and in an area immediately west of the settlement.

The area, which eventually became the Roma Street Parkland, played a modest but important role in the life of the penal settlement. Because the water in the Brisbane River was brackish and not always suitable for human consumption, alternative sources were necessary. A small watercourse known as Wheat Creek ran through the northern part of the settlement. In 1829, a small dam or tank was built on the creek and stored enough water to supply the settlement for almost 12 months. Part of the creek was fed by water running down the hill immediately to the north. This dam remained as Brisbane's main source of water for the next 30 years. Some of the land around the dam was cleared for wheat cultivation.



1881, Lithograph of Brisbane showing orphanage, Albert Park, Roma Street Railway Station and first Grammar School building. (JOL 19319)

BRISBANE TOWN

As the era of the Moreton Bay penal settlement was drawing to a close in the later 1830s, the planning for the future development of the settlement was well under way. Surveyors were sent to Moreton Bay to survey land suitable for sub-division and sale. Robert Dixon completed the first plan of Brisbane Town in 1840. The proposed streets were laid out in a grid pattern based on square blocks (ten chains in length).



*c1835, Sketch of early Brisbane attributed to Henry W. Boucher-Bowerman.
(JOL 151957)*

Dixon's plan was later modified by Henry Wade in five stages. In 1844, Henry Wade produced a detailed plan of Brisbane. Wade's plan was based on a rectangular grid pattern. In Wade's plan, the streets extended beyond the reservoir. At the end of what later became George Street was a public square. This square was intended to mirror another public square at the opposite end of George Street. The eastern square became public space as part of the Botanic Gardens, but the proposed western square did not.

The area immediately to the north and west of the township was reserved for public recreation. Part of the area was eventually used for this purpose and formed Albert Park. Today, it forms the upper part of Roma Street Parkland.

DIAMANTINA ORPHANAGE

Soon after Sir George Bowen took up his post as Governor of Queensland in December 1859, he informed his superiors in Britain that, unlike in Europe, 'distress and pauperism' was unknown in Queensland. He might also have added that problems such as orphans and abandoned children, so widespread in Britain, did not exist. A rapid increase in the population in the early 1860s altered social conditions in the colony. Orphans and neglected children became an increasingly noticeable problem. A committee was formed to establish an orphanage.

The Government was approached to assist in the establishment of the orphanage and the site of the temporary fever hospital at Green Hills (Green Hills was an early name for the area which later became Albert Park) was made available to the committee. Several buildings already existed on the site and were converted for use as part of the orphanage. The orphanage opened in January 1866 and was called the Diamantina Orphanage after the wife of the Governor, Lady Roma Diamantina Bowen.

By 1870, the orphanage accommodated more than 170 children and it included separate dormitories for boys and girls, kitchen, laundry and scullery, and workshops. The establishment of the Roma Street Railway Station in 1875 created problems for the orphanage. The close proximity of the rail yards was not an ideal situation for the orphanage. Furthermore, the orphanage was situated on only four acres and the development of the Roma Street rail yards limited possible expansion of the orphanage. The committee decided to relocate the orphanage. In 1882 a 20- acre site at South Brisbane was gazetted (now the site of the Princess Alexandra Hospital) and a new orphanage opened the following year.

The orphanage site was subsequently taken over by the Railways Department.

SALE YARDS

When the Brisbane Municipal Council was established in 1859, the main priorities were improving the conditions of streets and roads, upgrading the water supply and building a town hall. The Council was also keen to encourage local commerce and decided that it should establish municipal sale yards. Most towns and cities in Australia had sale yards and given the importance of cattle and horses in the local economy, a venue for buying and selling stock was considered a desirable local asset.

The Council persuaded the colonial government to reserve an area of land bounded by Roma and Albert streets for sale yards. The area was gazetted in 1862 and the Council proceeded to erect yards on the site. The Council then leased the operation of the yards but the lessee struggled to make the yards financially viable. By 1870 the yards were in a poor condition and the Brisbane Courier claimed the sale yards were 'the most discreditable pieces of property' owned by the Municipal Council. Some repairs were undertaken in 1874 but the yards continued to be criticised. Both the condition of the yards and the location were a problem. Privately operated sale yards in the city were better equipped and attracted more trade. The location close to the centre of the city was a source of constant complaint. The sale yards had become a liability for the Council, and it decided that the site would be more suitable as markets. The Colonial Government agreed and in 1881 the land was gazetted for market purposes.

c1910, Roma Street Markets. (JOL 187871)





c1874, Brisbane Grammar School from Wickham Terrace. (JOL 162685)

BRISBANE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

When Queensland became a separate colony in 1859, the Government was faced with many daunting tasks. Not the least of these tasks was implementing the most effective means of educating the children of the colony. For secondary education, the Government adopted a model of grammar schools. Rather than become directly involved in the provision of secondary education, it encouraged local communities to establish schools. Wherever a group of citizens was able to form a committee and raise at least £1000, the government pledged to contribute £2000 to establish a grammar school.

Efforts to establish a grammar school in Brisbane began in 1864 when Mr A J Hockings headed a subscription list. Three years later, a board of trustees was appointed and

one of their first tasks was to obtain a suitable area of land for the school. The trustees succeeded in obtaining a four-hectare site on Roma Street. Although not an extensive area, it was convenient and sufficient for a school. Local architect, Benjamin Backhouse, was commissioned to prepare plans for a school. The trustees were fortunate to enlist the services of Queensland's first royal visitor, Prince Alfred (later the Duke of Edinburgh) to lay the foundation stone. The ceremony took place on 29 February 1868 before 1000 guests.

The Brisbane Grammar School opened twelve months later on 1 February 1869. The opening ceremony was marked by some controversy. The Premier, Charles Lilley, who was also the chairman of the Board of trustees, reminded guests that the intention of the Government and the trustees was similar to the policy on primary education – to provide the best education for as many as possible. But the Governor, who opened the school, and the Head Master saw matters differently. Governor Blackall, in his opening speech, warned of the dangers of over-educating the children of the middle classes. Grammar schools should be, in Blackall's view, for the gifted and elite. Head Master Thomas Harlin supported the Governor. Despite this controversy, the school opened a week later with 88 students. The school was a single-storey Gothic revival stone building, comprising a large hall divided by three partitions and attached offices.

The Brisbane Grammar School occupied this site for a little more than a decade. Several years after the school opened, the Colonial Government decided to resume the site for the new railway station and rail yards. The school was offered a new site of 6.4 hectares less than a kilometre away fronting College Road and Gregory Terrace. On 28 November 1879, Sir Charles Lilley laid the foundation stone on the new site.

When the Railways Department took over the Grammar School building, it was converted into offices for the Commissioner for Railways. This is now the site of the Holiday Inn.

ROMA STREET RAIL YARDS

The sights and sounds of rail are never far away at the Roma Street Parkland. At the Roma Street Rail yards, electric suburban trains constantly arrive and depart, diesel locos hauling freight pass through at regular intervals day and night, and a steady stream of passengers are either waiting for the next train or departing for work or leisure in the city.

Rail has been an integral part of the Roma Street area for more than 125 years and the history of the Roma Street Rail yards is closely linked with the development of rail in Queensland. When Queensland became a separate colony in 1859, developing an effective transport system to conquer

the vast distances was a high priority for the Government. Many colonists had first-hand experience of the railway mania, which swept Britain in the 1840s and 1850s.

The first line in Queensland was not built, however, from the capital, Brisbane. Instead Ipswich was chosen as the terminus for a line to the Darling Downs, the most developed region in the colony. At the time, Ipswich still operated as a port with barges moving goods along the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers. A railway line from Brisbane to Ipswich was a low priority when barges could do the job reasonably efficiently.

But Brisbane could not be left out of the rail network indefinitely. A Royal Commission on Railway Construction in 1872 strongly recommended that a rail link from Ipswich to Brisbane should be built. Construction began in the following year. In Brisbane, the question of where the terminus should be located was hotly debated. The most appropriate location was as close as possible to the business centre and port facilities. The Government, however, was not willing to undertake costly property resumptions. The cheaper option was adopted. It was a site fronting Roma Street, which comprised a recreation reserve and the Brisbane Grammar School site. This site was not the most desirable as it was located on the edge of the business district and well away from the wharves on

the Brisbane River. Moving goods to and from the wharves to the rail yards would be an ongoing problem.

Construction of the Roma Street terminus commenced in 1873 and included a railway station, associated buildings and track. The first building completed was the railway station in 1875. Then followed a goods shed in 1876 and engine and carriage sheds in 1877. These buildings were erected in response to the varied activities that took place within the rail yards. The engine shed was used to accommodate steam locomotives and it was where they were 'fired up' and prepared for work each morning. Minor repairs to the locomotives were also undertaken in the engine shed. The carriage shed was used to protect carriages from the weather and also to undertake minor repairs.

c1931, Roma Street Goods Yards from Countess Street. (JOL 63242)



The goods shed was also an integral part of the rail yards. From the outset of the railways in Queensland, moving goods had been its primary purpose, more so than moving passengers. Roma Street soon developed into the busiest and largest goods yards in the colony with the volume of goods handled steadily increasing year by year. Goods arriving at Roma Street included wool, wheat, coal and other minerals, fruit and vegetables, butter and other farm produce. All manner of goods were despatched from Roma Street including mail, parcels, newspapers, food, books, farm machinery, haberdashery, clothes and furniture. Special trains were sometimes required to transport unusual loads such as a circus.

Queensland's rail system developed as three separate networks: the Southern and Western Railway, which terminated at Brisbane; the Central Railway with its Rockhampton terminus; and the Great Northern Railway centred in Townsville. Initially, Roma Street was the terminus and main goods depot for the Southern and Western, which extended to Cunnamulla in the south-west. By the turn of the century, the main north coastline between Rockhampton and Brisbane had been completed, linking two of the main networks. The continual expansion of the network connected Roma Street to more and more towns and cities in the state.

By the early 1900s, the Roma Street rail yards had become extremely congested. Merchants and carriers constantly experienced delays in loading and receiving goods. To alleviate some of the congestion, the former Brisbane Grammar School building, which had served as the Commissioner's office since the late 1870s, was demolished enabling some track to be extended and additional sidings built. This work only provided short-term relief. The number of trains coming and going from Roma Street continued to increase, as did the volume of goods being handled.

After lengthy investigations by the Railways Department, the Queensland Government announced in August 1911 a major reconstruction and upgrading of the Roma Street rail yards. This scheme involved relocating the locomotive and carriage depots to a new site at Mayne, extending the railway reserve into part of Albert Park and excavating sections of the hill, an improved layout of the track and the construction of new goods sheds. Premier F D Denham ambitiously claimed the work would take a little more than three years to complete.

The project was plagued with problems and delays from the outset. Part of the Albert Park reserve became railway reserve to provide additional land for the rail yards. This area, however, was quite steep and required extensive



c1918, Excavation of land for extensions to Roma Street Goods Yards. (JOL 37398)

excavation to provide a level area for railway tracks. The excavation of the hill into Albert Park was more difficult than anticipated and was not completed until 1920. A total of 554 300 cubic metres of earth was removed – the equivalent of 110 football fields one metre high! This area was used to accommodate a series of large hoppers for storing coal, which was used for the steam locomotives. The hoppers were dismantled after steam locomotives were withdrawn from service in the late 1960s.

A major part of the redevelopment was the construction of new goods sheds. Five new sheds, including one specifically for produce were progressively erected,



1940, Roma Street Goods Yards.

the last being completed in 1933. These sheds greatly improved the efficiency of the goods yards. Other works associated with the redevelopment included a new bridge at College Road to accommodate additional tracks, a new approach road from Albert Street into the goods yard, concreting of all the roadways throughout the rail yards and a subway from Roma Street to the goods sheds under the main lines. The redevelopment of the rail yards was finally completed in 1934, 23 years after work commenced in 1911.

The redevelopment had significantly increased the capacity of freight that could be handled at Roma Street but the volume of goods still continued to increase year by

year. The growth in the Queensland economy contributed generally to this increase. By 1924, the last section of the main line between Brisbane and Cairns was completed. Roma Street was linked to all trunk and branch lines in the state and became even more important as the largest goods depot in the state. Following the relocation of the Brisbane Municipal markets to Rocklea in 1964, the Railways Department erected new facilities for produce facing Countess Street. While fruit and vegetables went to the new markets, other agricultural produce such as chaff and hay were still brought to Roma Street. The new produce area was opened in 1965 and incorporated a concrete roadway, large freestanding shelters (now part of the Inner Northern Busway).



1953, Roma Street Goods Yards. (JOL 38432)

Despite these improvements, by the mid 1960s the Roma Street rail yards was again experiencing problems with congestion and lack of storage facilities. The Railways Department considered relocating the goods yards to a new site on the outskirts of Brisbane but decided instead to improve the capacity of the Roma Street facilities. This work involved relocating some of the marshalling yards to the Normanby yards and constructing additional sidings. These improvements only provided short-term relief. Major problems remained.

By the early 1980s, the Railways Department was again contemplating a major upgrading of the Roma Street rail yards. The increasing mechanisation of freight handling and use of containers required a major overhaul of the Roma Street facilities. Instead, the Department opted to develop a new freight facility at Acacia Ridge. The Roma Street goods yards were finally closed in 1991. The goods sheds, associated infrastructure and track were progressively dismantled. A small section of the goods yards were redeveloped for passenger facilities, including a new platform for country trains but a significant portion of the Roma Street yards became vacant land. Various possibilities were canvassed including a football stadium. Finally, a scheme emerged for its re-use – the Roma Street Parkland.

Looking across Roma Street rail yards today, most of the rail traffic comprises passenger trains. Only a few trains

pass through each day carrying freight, a reminder of its once important role as the main goods depot for the city and state.

ROMA STREET RAILWAY STATION

The first Roma Street Railway Station was opened in 1875. It was designed by the Colonial Architect, F D G Stanley and constructed by prominent Brisbane contractor, John Petrie and Sons. The station building was intended to be the ‘front door’ for the rail network and, by Brisbane standards in the 1870s, was an impressive structure. It was two-storeys high, and built of red brick with stone facings around the windows and doors openings. Despite the many changes at Roma Street Station, this building survives and is visible from the Roma Street Parkland.

c1880, Roma Street Railway Station. This view is now obscured by the 1986 Transet Centre. (JOL 91942)





c1880, Roma Street Railway Station, viewed from Roma Street. (JOL 712)

Initially known as the Brisbane Terminal Station, it was the focal point of Brisbane's fledging suburban network. The location of the station, however, was a problem because of the distance from the city centre. To overcome this problem, the line was extended to a new station in Ann Street. When Brisbane Central station was opened in 1887, the name of the Brisbane Terminal Station was changed to Roma Street Station. Brisbane Central Station became the main passenger station in Brisbane for both suburban and country travellers. All country services terminated at Central and all northern suburban routes passed through Central Station. This reduced Roma Street to a secondary role as a passenger terminus. The

importance of Central Station was further enhanced by the construction of a new substantial and imposing station building in 1901. At this same time, the role of Roma Street Station was downgraded, but the volume of freight handled in the goods yard continued to increase.

Roma Street's role as a major passenger terminus was revitalised in the late 1930s. The steady growth in patronage had caused severe congestion at Central Station and the Government decided to construct a new country station at Roma Street to serve as the terminus for all country services. The Roma Street Country Station was opened in 1940 and was located in front of the original 1874 building. It was described as "modern in design and construction... and with an attractive approach", but was decidedly less grand than the 1901 Central Station. Regardless, Roma Street Station again became alive with passengers arriving and departing on the various country services. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, rail travel was still the main form of travel between Brisbane and towns and cities throughout the state. In the early 1950s, new long distance passenger services were introduced including the Sunlander, which operated between Brisbane and Cairns. This service heralded a new era in passenger comfort with air-conditioned carriages and luxurious interiors hauled by diesel locomotives. The Sunlander service departed and arrived at Roma Street.

A major upgrading of the Roma Street Station was completed during the 1980s. This work was in conjunction with the electrification of Brisbane's suburban network, the relocation of the interstate terminus from South Brisbane and the construction of the Brisbane Transit Centre. The construction of the Merivale rail bridge in 1978 completed a long needed link across the Brisbane River. This bridge enabled interstate trains, which previously terminated at South Brisbane to cross the river and terminate at Roma Street. The Transit Centre was opened in 1986 and integrated long distance rail and road passenger transport with most major interstate and country bus services terminating at the Transit Centre.

BRISBANE MUNICIPAL MARKETS

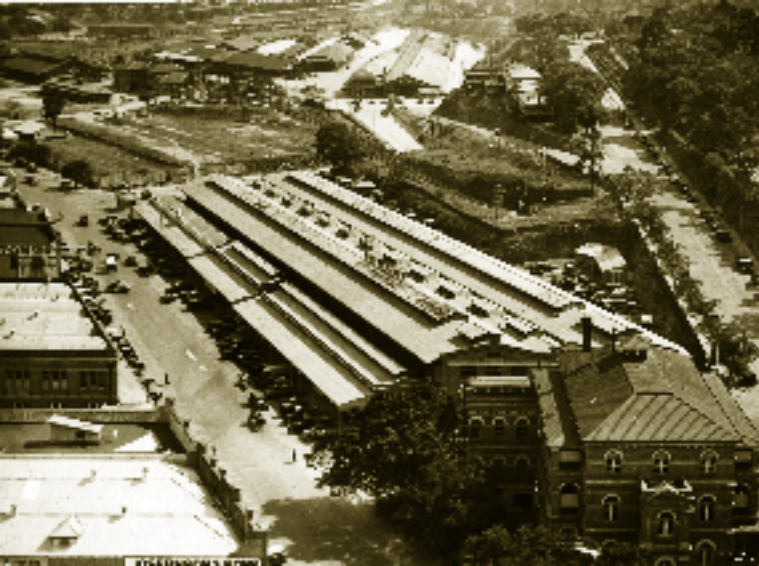
In ancient and medieval towns and cities, the market place was centrally located and the focus of daily activity. In the 19th century, the market place became less important with industrialisation and new forms of commerce and trade. Nevertheless, a place for trading agricultural produce was still regarded as necessary. When the township of Brisbane was being surveyed in the 1840s, the surveyor James Warner designated an area 'as the site for a market'. The site was bounded by Charlotte and Eagle Streets and fronted a street that gave rise to the name Market Street.

The site was not developed as a market until the Brisbane Municipal Council erected a market shed in 1867.

This market was small, located close to the wharves at Petrie Bight. After a decade of the operations, the Council decided to seek a larger and more centrally located area of land. The search for a new site coincided with the establishment of the Roma Street Railway Station and rail yards. An area close to the rail yards was considered highly desirable and in 1881, a site on the corner of Roma and Turbot Streets previously used as sale yards was reserved for markets.

The markets operated in makeshift facilities before permanent structures were completed in 1884. The location close to the city centre and rail yards proved to be most suitable and the volume of business steadily increased year by year. Extensions to the buildings were undertaken in 1905, and again in 1911, 1917-18 and 1923. The markets became a hub of activity as the Mayor described in his annual report for 1911.

There is no busier place in the City when the morning sales are in full swing. Garden, orchard and farm produce, are all dealt with, and the enormous quantity which passes through the market and the volume of business done is almost beyond belief.



c1937, Roma Street Markets, viewed from the City Hall clock tower. (JOL 33763)

Further expansion of the markets resulted in the acquisition of land in Turbot Street and the construction of an additional building.

The markets had a life and character of its own – it was like no other part of the city with its distinctive sounds, identifiable smells and odours, and the kaleidoscopic movement of people, produce, trolleys, wagons and trucks.

The markets remained as part of inner city Brisbane until the mid 1960s. The lack of space for further expansion prompted the Market Authority to relocate. More space was required to handle the continual growth in the volume

of produce. Furthermore, close proximity to rail yards was less important with the greater use of road rather than rail transport in transporting produce. A site was purchased at Rocklea and the Roma Street Markets were closed in 1964.



1950, Roma Street Markets. (BCC-B54-38059)

COUNTESS STREET POWERHOUSE

The Countess Street powerhouse was situated within the Roma Street rail yards at the southern end of Countess Street. It was built in 1897 to supply electricity for Brisbane trams.

Horse-drawn trams were introduced to Brisbane in 1885. The success of the service prompted the introduction of more efficient and quicker electric trams. The Brisbane Tramways Company was formed to take over the existing operations and to electrify the network. The Company obtained a lease from the Commissioner of Railways to erect a powerhouse on the south-western corner of the Roma Street rail yards. Construction began in 1896 and the powerhouse began generating electricity in June 1897. The Countess Street powerhouse was the principal source of power for Brisbane's trams until smaller powerhouses were built at Light Street, Fortitude Valley and at Logan Road, Woolloongabba. Electricity from the Countess Street powerhouse was also distributed to some commercial and residential customers.

1923, Countess Street Powerhouse. (BCC-B120-30922)



The Brisbane City Council took responsibility for operating Brisbane trams in 1925. As part of a major expansion, a new powerhouse was built at New Farm to supply both the tram network and consumers. The Countess Street powerhouse was no longer required and was decommissioned in 1928 after just over thirty years of service. The powerhouse and workshops were dismantled and some of the materials were recycled for use in a new office for the Tramways Department in Coronation Drive.

ALBERT PARK

When Brisbane became the capital of the colony of Queensland in 1859, it had less than 6000 residents – it was more like a moderately-sized country town. Services and amenities were few – some roads and streets but more often just rough tracks, no water supply, no sewerage, no public parks or gardens. This situation changed dramatically in the following two decades as Brisbane population increased from 5,900 in 1861 to 37,100 in 1881. As Brisbane became a city, amenities such as public parks and gardens became more urgent and necessary. Parks were considered an important asset for a variety of reasons, not the least being to counteract some of the problems of overcrowding in urban areas.

Spring Hill was one of the first 'suburbs' in Brisbane and by the mid-1870s had become densely populated. In response, the Colonial Government decided to establish a park nearby. Twenty-four acres of undeveloped sloping land, bounded in part by Wickham Terrace and Countess Street, was gazetted as a recreation reserve in 187?. Although it was customarily the responsibility of the local authority to manage parks, the Colonial Government instead appointed its own trustees: politicians Sir Charles Lilley, Hon John Douglas and Theodore Unmack, the headmaster of the Brisbane Grammar School, Reginald Roe and businessman James Hunter. The trustees were provided with £100 per year to maintain and develop the park. The park was named Albert Park and became one of the countless memorials throughout the British Empire to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband who had died tragically in 1861.

1890s, Albert Park viewed from Wickham Terrace. (JOL 25911)



1890s, Albert Park tennis courts. (JOL 35214)

The trustees made slow progress in developing the park. Walter Hill, the curator of the Botanic Gardens was responsible for the initial planting of trees. A caretaker was appointed and a cottage erected for his accommodation. Throughout the 1880s, more trees were planted and paths laid out under the supervision of the Curator of the Botanic Gardens. Some improvements occurred with outside assistance. Two tennis courts, a bathroom and dressing room were constructed in 1890, funded by the Brisbane Lawn Tennis Club.

The trustees, however, found the task of managing the park increasingly difficult. In 1892, they agreed to surrender their responsibilities and allow the Brisbane Municipal Council to take control of the park. The trustees were somewhat wary of the Council (might they one day sell off part or all the land?) and insisted that the 'land not be used for any other purpose than public recreation'. The trustees need not have worried. Reductions in the size of the park resulted from other demands and pressures. Just prior to taking over the park, the Mayor and councillors inspected the park and 'expressed themselves as being well pleased with the general appearance of the grounds'.

c1912, Albert Park viewed from Wickham Terrace. (JOL 191191)



Various attempts were made, some successful, others not, to reduce the area of the Albert Park reserve. In 1898, a small area on the south-eastern corner of the site facing the junction of Albert Street and Wickham Terrace was designated as a site for a museum. It was formally gazetted as a reserve for a technical college in 1902, but construction did not proceed. Subsequently, the land was returned to Albert Park. The most significant reduction occurred as a result of the redevelopment of the Roma Street rail yards. In 1911, three hectares was excised to provide additional space for goods sheds, shunting and coal hoppers.

The character of the park gradually changed under the management of the Brisbane Municipal Council. The appointment of Henry Moore in 1913 as the Council's first Parks' Superintendent signalled the beginning of a major upgrading of Albert Park. Moore redeveloped the park with a more formal design, manicured lawns and garden beds planted with annuals, biennials and perennials. A feature of the park was an avenue of palms (*Cocos plumosa*) but a variety of other palms were also planted. A rose garden, subdivided into twelve sections, was laid out with 250 rose bushes. Some of the more steeply sloping areas were cut and filled. Rock retaining walls incorporating garden beds were built to provide more gentle slopes. Other improvements in the park included a

bandstand and kiosk erected in 1911, and a cricket pitch in 1919. The tennis courts were demolished in 1935 and replaced by a giant draughts board and netball courts.



c1929, Albert Park showing paths and planting. (JOL 191190)

By the 1920s, Albert Park had acquired a reputation as one of the finest public parks in Brisbane with its gardens, lawns, interesting paths and mature trees. It provided a pleasurable and tranquil environment for a leisurely stroll or for relaxing on lawn or park bench. Additionally, it was a venue for a game of tennis or cricket.

World War II had an impact on Albert Park. Two brick and concrete air raid shelters were built in the park in 1942. Following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour

in December 1941, the construction of private and public air raid shelters became a matter of high priority, particularly in northern Australia. The Brisbane City Council constructed 266 air raid shelters throughout the city during 1942, most in parks or streets. Most shelters were purposely designed so they could be used for other purposes after the war. Two shelters were erected in Albert Park, one near the intersection of Upper Albert and Wickham Terrace and the other on the northeast corner of the park. After the war the brick blast walls were removed and the structures became simple park shelters. Another change in the park was the construction of the Lady Bowen Club and Cabaret in 1944. Members of the Australian Military Forces based in Brisbane used this building.

After the war, only minor improvements were undertaken in the park. In 1957, a small concrete block tower, designed by the City Architect James Birrell, was erected next to the park entrance opposite the Wickham Terrace and Albert Street intersection. More substantial improvements were undertaken in 1982 with the construction of an outdoor amphitheatre. This theatre, erected for a cost of \$600,000, was intended to revitalise the park which had become under-utilised. The amphitheatre comprised a stage with cantilevered awning, dressing rooms and tiered seating.

ROMA STREET FORUM

Prior to the closure of the Roma Street markets in 1964, various schemes were proposed for the redevelopment of the site. One ambitious scheme proposed the acquisition of an additional 16 acres of land and the construction of a cultural centre, government offices, shopping mall, transport terminal and underground car park. A more modest scheme of converting the area to parkland eventuated.

The former market reserve was gazetted as a park under the control of the Brisbane City Council. The area was landscaped with lawn, flower beds, concrete paths and an extensive rock retaining wall on the Albert Street frontage.

The area was initially known as the Roma Street Gardens but by the early 1970s became known as the Roma Street Forum. The area became well used by community groups such as civil libertarians, women's groups, pacifists, unionists Aboriginal groups and environmentalists for public rallies and demonstrations. Major demonstrations and rallies in the 1970s and 1980s usually commenced in the Roma Street Forum.

The area was formally named Emma Millar Place in 1992. Emma Millar was a leading trade unionist and campaigner for women's rights in Queensland during the late 19th and early 20th century.



1975, Roma Street Forum viewed from Suncorp Building. (BCC-C120-30518)

ROMA STREET PARKLAND

Following the relocation of the Roma Street goods yard to Acacia Ridge, a substantial part of the railway reserve became vacant. A small section was redeveloped for passenger facilities, including a new platform for country trains. Various possibilities were canvassed as to the most appropriate re-use of the vacant land, including a football stadium. Finally, a scheme emerged to convert the area into a sub-tropical garden incorporating the existing Albert Park. Redevelopment of the area began in January 2000 and the new Roma Street Parkland opened in April 2001. The area's transformation included construction of a lake, and the planting of more than 100,000 shrubs, 1,200 mature trees, 1,800 unique specimens and 350 palms.

2002, View across Roma Street Parkland and the Lake Precinct.

GLOSSARY OF STREETS AND LOCATIONS

Albert Street/ Albert Park	in honour of Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria who died tragically at the age of 42 years, in 1861.
College Road	origins uncertain but likely named after the establishment of the Brisbane Grammar School in 1879.
Countess Street	in honour of Lady Diamantina Bowen, formerly Countessa Diamantina Roma.
Roma Street	after Lady Diamantina Roma Bowen, the wife of Sir George Bowen, Queensland's first Governor.
Spring Hill	named by the early residents of Brisbane as the source of the waters which fed the streams which flowed through the town and was Brisbane's first water supply.
Wickham Terrace	after Captain John Wickham, the first government resident appointed to the Moreton Bay district after the declaration of free settlement in 1842.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE ROMA STREET PARKLAND PRECINCT

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SOURCES/REFERENCES

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