

## QUEENSLAND NATIONAL BANK

89 Brisbane Street, Ipswich

### Former Names

Bank of Queensland, National Bank of Australasia.

### History

The intersection of Brisbane and East Streets was once dominated by the Bank of New South Wales, the Grande Hotel, the historic Palais Royal Hotel and the former Queensland National Bank building, the only one to survive. The first building on this site was George Thorn's Queen's Arms Hotel. This hotel was demolished circa 1875, but remnants of its cellar stairs, with a central groove to allow for the lowering of wheelbarrows, is still evident in the adjacent 'Action Realty' building at 93 Brisbane Street.

Enoch Bostock, an Ipswich surveyor, built a new brick office on site. Council rates records show that a three-stall stable was built behind the new premises, and the blacksmith William Hayne operated his business at the rear facing East Street. The Bostock building was bought by the Queensland National Bank in December, 1881, for a cost of £1,485. The bank had been formed in Queensland in June 1872 by business and professional men and graziers. The Ipswich branch, which opened on 16 July 1873, was their eleventh. Initially the bank operated out of the School of Arts/Town Hall building in Brisbane Street, with the first two employees apparently living in one of the rooms at the School of Arts building. Progress of the branch in the first few years was slow but sure. Six half-yearly balances passed before the branch showed a profit. Among the earliest customers were the Queensland Woollen Company, George Thorn MLA, and saddle C Gorry. In 1877 the branch shifted to larger premises in East Street which also included living accommodation for the manager and his family. Peter Brown made alterations to the newly acquired bank premises in October 1882, in readiness for occupation by the bank in 1883.

Early photographs of the building show openings with semi-circular heads and central keystones, and decorative columns on either side. There were four window openings on the East Street alignment, and a central door, flanked by two window openings, to Brisbane Street. Alterations were made to this façade in 1935, when a pediment was added above the entrance. Other apparent alterations include the remodeling of the openings to the present square shape, and the addition of pilasters.

In 1948 the Queensland National Bank was absorbed by the National Bank of Australasia Ltd. The National Bank used the premises as a branch until 15 June, 1973, when the branch was closed and amalgamated with the branch on the corner of Brisbane and Nicholas Streets. The former bank building was then purchased by local solicitors, Kit Somers and Jim Walker, who conducted their legal practice from the premises until December, 1980. The premises then reverted to use as a bank with the lease of the property by the Bank of Queensland, which opened a branch in the building in 1981. At this time the cedar front doors were replaced by armor plate-glass, the interior paneling removed, and the timber counters replaced by plastic to give the open feeling favoured by modern bankers.

### Description

The bank occupies a site at the corner of Brisbane and East Streets. It is a single storey, rendered brick building, with a corrugated iron roof which is concealed by a parapet. Its façade, fronting Brisbane Street, has a central entry, with a vertically proportioned window either side. It is symmetrical and quite austere in its detailing. In a 1917 photograph, the entry and windows were defined by round arches with central keystones. A triangular pediment, above the entry was added in 1935. the use of a zig-zag motif beneath each of the windows is consistent with alterations being made during the 1930s.

