

Redbank Then & Now



1 **Brisbane Road, Redbank:** This street was once part of the main road to Brisbane. It leads from the highway into Redbank village, makes a sharp turn across the railway bridge and continues into Brisbane Terrace.

2 **Redbank State Primary School:** The Catholic priest Fr Henry Brun first opened a school at Redbank in 1865. The Department of Public Instruction took over in 1881. The school now consists of two older buildings dating from about 1915 and some newer buildings.



3 **Commercial Hotel:** An historic two-storey timber hotel. The main entry has a gable and attractive timber decoration on the upper level. The bottle shop is a recent addition.

4 **School of Arts:** Opened in 1914, architect T. R. Hall of Brisbane, builder Thiene and Blackhardt of Goodna. It initially included a hall, a library of 700 volumes and a shop at the front. The School of Arts has remained an important centre for the community and has been used for picture shows, dances, debutante balls and official dinners.



5 **Kerwick Hotel:** Named after its first owner Nicholas Kerwick, born in Kilkenny Ireland.

6 **Redbank Railway Station:** This section of line was completed in 1874. The current passenger station was constructed in 1914 and renovated in 1994. The station has always been busy with traffic generated by the coalmines and meatworks. During World War II, it was the departure point for soldiers from Redbank Army Camp.



7 **Redbank Highway Distance Marker:** The wording on the plaque near the marker reads: "This Historic Mileage Marker, which is erected adjacent to its original location marked the first main road from Brisbane to Ipswich. The original main road followed the alignment of Brisbane Terrace through Goodna, the overhead railway bridge and Brisbane Road through Redbank. The route of the original main road was altered in 1955 to the present location of the Cunningham Highway. The marker is the last of the original markers situated within the City of Ipswich

8 **Army Stores Depot, River Road:** The stores depot is the only surviving part of a huge World War II army camp at Redbank. It consists of hangar-like corrugated iron storage buildings, a nissen hut and several store sheds in weatherboard and fibro.



9 **Redbank Meatworks/Woollen Mills site:** This site has had a long and varied industrial history. It was initially opened as boiling-down works to convert surplus sheep carcasses into tallow.

It later became a major meat canning works and then a meat freezing works. In 1934, the buildings re-opened as Morris Woollen Mills which eventually had a maximum workforce of 700.

During World War II, the mill worked non-stop to produce blankets and uniform materials. After the war, it returned to domestic production and earned gold medals for high fashion fabrics.

Reduction of tariffs in 1973 affected the mill's viability. It was bought by Primac in 1980 but was progressively closed.



10 **First coal mine:** On the riverbank near the old Morris Mill is the site of the first recorded coal mine in Queensland. It was started by John Williams in 1843 to supply the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company with coal for its paddle steamers.

11 **Redbank Railway Workshops:** This additional site was opened in 1958 to ease pressure on the busy Ipswich Railway Workshops. It was first used as a centre for the newly-introduced diesel locomotives. It is now Queensland's major railway workshops and is known as the "Redbank Centre of Excellence" while the Ipswich site has become a working railway museum.

12 **Queensland Potteries:** The double-chamber kiln with a distinctive bottle-shaped top can be seen from the highway. William Milner senior began Refractory Industries at Enoggera, making tableware and later industrial porcelain. The firm purchased the Redbank site in 1933 and built the existing kiln. The business was later taken over by Mr Bill Milner to make specialist products including electric jugs and industrial ceramics.

13 **Goupong Park:** This park is dedicated to champion athlete Robert Anderson. The nearby area along the creek was once an Aboriginal camping ground. Small artefacts such as flaked stone pieces were found on the site.

14 **Strike Monument, Goupong Park:** The first strike in Queensland took place at the Redbank Mine owned by Campbell and Towns. On 7 June 1861, a deputation of miners confronted Robert Campbell with demands including a pay rise of one shilling a ton. Campbell rejected the claims, the miners went on strike and were later arrested and tried for illegally conspiring to injure Campbell's interests. The jury found them not guilty.

15 Redbank Rifle Range: Under the Defence Act of 1903, the Commonwealth developed rifle ranges to assist in creating a reserve defence force.

The Redbank site opened in 1912. It was also used for military camps and during World War II, was a training area. It closed about 1980.



Historical Facts

- ☞ Goodna and Redbank are now part of a large urban area which extends between Ipswich and Brisbane, but they were once separate villages with their own distinct character.
- ☞ Redbank was a centre for industrial enterprises including coal mining, brickworks, food processing and a woollen mill. Military training camps were held at the Redbank Rifle Range and during World War II, a large army camp was established in the area.
- ☞ Redbank is one of the oldest settlements in Queensland. It began as a small convict outpost for breeding sheep and cattle. Free settlement was allowed in 1842.
- ☞ The first known coal mine in Queensland was opened on the riverbank at Redbank in 1843 to supply coal for paddle steamers.
- ☞ The first documented strike in Queensland took place at the Redbank Mine on 7 June 1861.
- ☞ John Campbell established a boiling-down works on the riverbank at Redbank to make tallow. He later produced tinned meats and soups. In 1867, a testimonial was published from a Captain Cooper who said he had served Mr Campbell's preserved soups on a voyage to London and they were as good as any he had ever had at sea.
- ☞ In 1968, Morris Woollen Mills at Redbank was selected to provide the furnishing fabrics for the Australian Pavilion at the World Expo in Montreal. At this time, the mill was employing about 900 people.