DISCOVER TORQUAY

Torquay is the start of a line of beautiful coral fringing reefs which stretch for over 7kms north to Gatakers Bay. Over 120 species of coral can be found less than a couple of hundred metres from the beach.

Torquay's name is a result of an unusual "twist" in pronunciation. Local Butchulla Aborigines called the area Djoggi meaning 'short place of stones' due to a rocky reef that runs seaward from the beach, the only rocks along Hervey Bay's 16km coastline. They pronounced it "dhokki", which sounded very similar to Torquay, the well known English resort town. The English spelling was adopted, leading to a general belief the name derived from there.

WHALE TALES – Our wonderful sea creatures

It is not just the whales that like to put on a show in Hervey Bay's calm, clear waters.

Look out to sea from the beach and you are likely to spot a pod of dolphins frolicking off shore. Like our humpback whale, Hervey Bay and its surrounding waters are possibly the only place in the world you can see the rare Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin up close. Two other species of dolphin live here – the highly inquisitive Bottlenose Dolphin and the Common Dolphin.

MY COUNTRY STORIES

Dolphins are the native totem of the Hervey Bay Butchulla People and were called Boothu or Yul'u or Djamarmee.

The clans are not permitted to hunt, harm or eat the dolphins and the dolphins repaid this respect by assisting the indigenous people with their fishing. Dolphins would round up schools of mullet, confusing them into a huddle and steering them towards the land - towards waiting nets or spears. The Butchulla and the dolphins then shared the tucker – creating a trusting relationship.

WAY BACK WHEN...

The Australian Handbook in 1903 sang the praises of the small township of Torquay-by-the-sea and its "magnificent beach". Like the nearby villages of Scarness and Urangan, Torquay started with just a scattering of holiday houses along its foreshore during the 1880s. When the rail line extended through Torquay in 1913 more people began to settle in the area and at holiday times its population would swell from a few hundred to thousands.

Many of Torquay's street names come from towns and villages in the Devon region, including Tavistock, Bideford and Totness.

Hervey Bay's first hotel opened in 1875 and while some existing hotels, like the Torquay Hotel (c. 1890) can trace their roots back to the late 1800s, little remains of the original buildings. First cyclone then a fire led to the demise of the original the Torquay Hotel in 1921.

Did you know? The publican of one of Hervey Bay's early hotels decided to change it to a boarding house after being confronted by wives of patrons who claimed his hotel was responsible for their husbands drinking too much.

The indigenous stories and legends on Hervey Bay Esplanade Trail signs were based on the writings of Moonie Jarl and Olga Miller and the oral histories of past and present Butchulla elders. Historical information and images were provided by the Hervey Bay Historical Village and Museum.

Torquay Esplanade - c.1920's

Torquay Hotel - c.1925