

Brisbane temple opens to visitor tours

Rotary president accepts invitation

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Published: Saturday, June 7, 2003



Photo by Stewart Glass

The [Brisbane Australia Temple](#), perched prominently atop Kangaroo Point Cliffs, is clad in gray-toned granite and landscaped in stepped gardens, with parking for 130 cars below the temple.

BRISBANE, Australia — An estimated 50,000 visitors — including Rotary International World President, Bhichai Rattakul of Thailand — toured the new [Brisbane Australia Temple](#) May 29. He made the visit during a public open house May 10 through June 7.

The temple, perched prominently on the Kangaroo Point Cliffs overlooking Brisbane, will be dedicated by President [Gordon B. Hinckley](#) June 15.

Mr. Rattakul, a friend of President Hinckley's, accepted the Church leaders' personal invitation to tour the new temple while in Brisbane for the Annual Rotary International Convention 2003.

Mr. Rattakul has served as a Member of Thailand's Parliament for nine terms and has served as Foreign Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Speaker of the House of Representatives and President of the Thailand Parliament. Mr. Rattakul is Honorary Vice President of the Thai Scout Council and has been decorated with Special Class Honor from the King of Thailand and honors from the emperor of Japan, and presidents of the Philippines, Korea, Austria and Nicaragua.

Elder Kenneth Johnson of the Seventy and president of the Australia/New Zealand Area gave Mr. Rattakul a tour of the temple, noting that Mr. Rattakul and his party expressed warm feelings about their experience.



The Brisbane Australia Temple, perched prominently atop Kangaroo Point Cliffs, is clad in gray-toned granite and Elder Kenneth Johnson of the Seventy, right, presents Bhichai Rattakul with gift following temple tour.

The Rotary president has been a friend of the Church for a long time, even sending one of his sons to study at, and graduate from, Brigham Young University.

"Mr. Rattakul was very impressed by the temple, and he made special mention of the craftsmanship, windows and paintings," said Grant Pitman, multi-stake director of public affairs for Queensland. "He expressed that he has always been impressed with the spiritual nature of the Church and that he felt that spirit when walking through the temple today."

The temple and adjoining meetinghouse are clad in light gray-toned finish granite and set in landscaped stepped gardens, with underground parking for 130 cars. The Brisbane temple was the first of the small temples to be announced for Australia in July 1998. But planning approval for the temple and adjacent two-ward meetinghouse was not obtained until February 2001.

There are more than 23,500 members in the six stakes and four mission districts in the temple district of Queensland and northern New South Wales, which has a total population of more than 3.5 million.

Members in Queensland currently travel to the [Sydney Australia Temple](#), which is 600 miles from Brisbane and 1,600 miles from the Cairns District in north Queensland.