

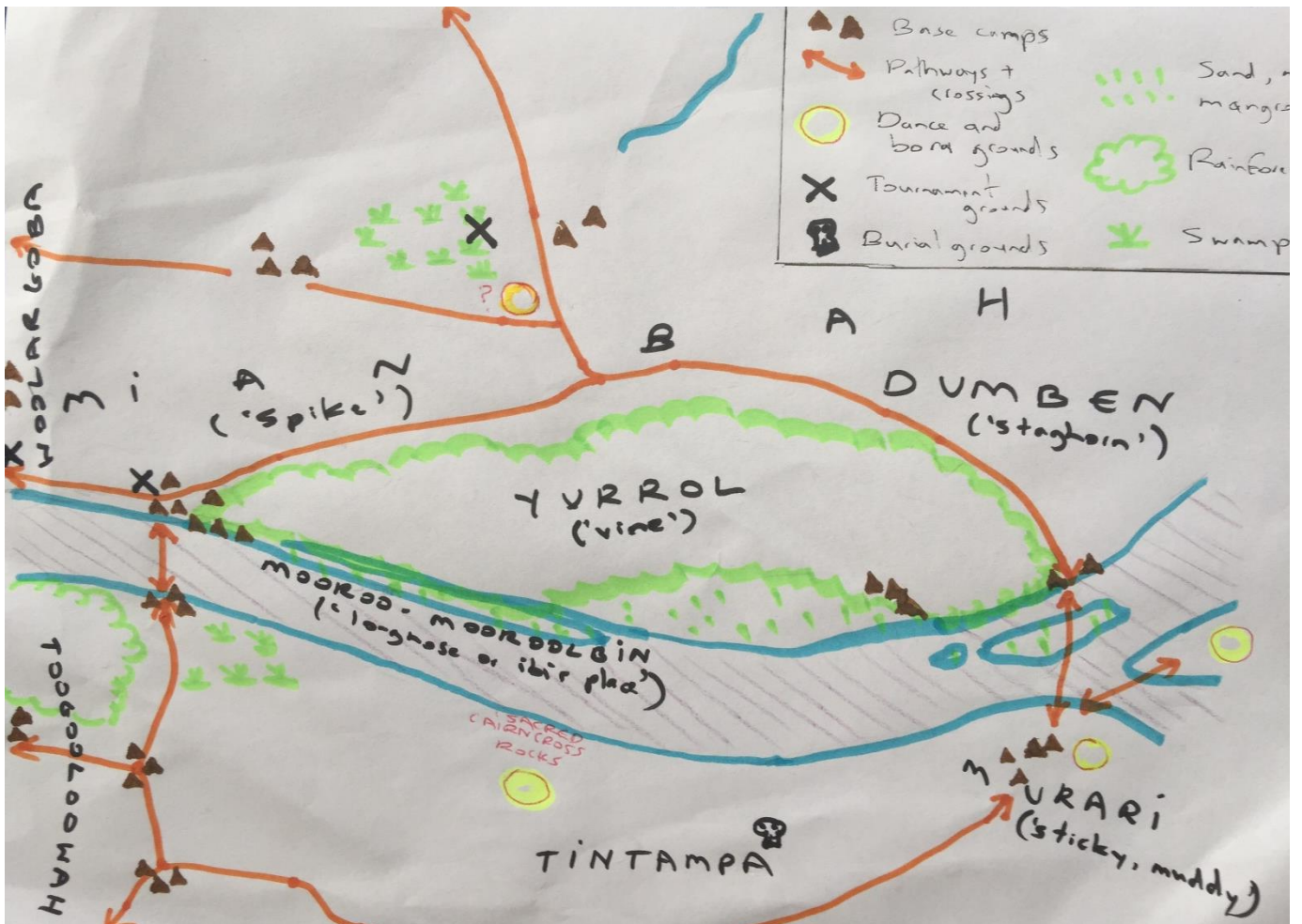
Report & Recommendations:

Northshore Indigenous History

For: Economic Development Queensland (Dept of State Development)

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3 May 2021



CONTENTS

Yerrol: Hamilton’s pocket of rainforest.....	3
Ancient Pathway – Kingsford Smith Drive.....	7
Ancient Crossings and Aboriginal Waterways.....	8
Aboriginal Origins of Queensland’s First Regattas.....	11
Fishing at the Ibis Beak (sand spit).....	14
Breakfast Creek Aboriginal Fishery.....	18
Basket Weavers of Doomben and Ascot.....	19
Bungwall Bashing in the Swamps.....	21
Many Camps in Open Woodland.....	22
Hamilton as a Battle Line.....	25
Dalaipi’s Indictments.....	29
The Last Hostels: Incarceration.....	30
Broad timeline.....	31
Narrative thesmes/ recommendations.....	32

Yerrol: Hamilton's pocket of rainforest – a rich *towrie*

Much of what is now the North Shore Hamilton area was known to Aboriginal people as Yerrol or Yurrol, which referred to rainforest vine, used in hut-building and as a general fibre or rope.¹ Nearby Doomben similarly referred to rainforest, meaning 'a species of tree fern' or 'staghorn fern.'²

Yerrol was what in the 19th Century was referred to as a 'scrub' – a riverine rainforest pocket. It and the fishery below it and towards Breakfast Creek was the *towrie* – the main hunting or resource area – of one of Brisbane's largest cluster of Aboriginal camps. It was also the area that northern groups, such as the Kabi of Bribie Island and the Sunshine Coast, were permitted to use as their 'hunting ground' when staying in Brisbane. Consequently, many early settler interactions were with Kabi people staying in this area.



Figure 1: an inset of Baker's 1843 map of Brisbane, showing the original 'scrub' and the pathway that curved around it, which later became Kingsford Smith Drive.

The 'scrub' extended all along the Hamilton Reach,³ forming dense patches bordering the river between Breakfast Creek and Eagle Farm.⁴ It was described as 'very thick'⁵ and as almost isolating the Women's factory (Eagle Farm).⁶ Another, smaller patch ran roughly from Breakfast Creek Hotel to Argyle Street on the east bank and below Newstead House on

¹ Archibald Meston, Aboriginal Place Names, *Brisbane Courier*, 25 August 1923

² JOL (John Oxley Library), OM Box 5625 Brisbane Suburbs and Localities: Information from the Place Names Board Research, Qld Place Names Board

³ *Brisbane Courier*, 22 February 1919, p 3.

⁴ *Random Sketches by a Traveller through the District of East Moreton Jan – March 1859* Colonial Columns No 1 Apr 1999 Fairfield Gardens 2009 Inside History: 14

⁵ '53 Years Ago', *Courier*, 7 July 1923.

⁶ Clem Lack *Courier Mail* 16 Sept 1950.

the west bank, but the largest patch was the area that is now directly south of Kingsford Smith Drive. It ran from Brett's Wharf east to the Royal Brisbane Golf Club.



Figure 2: bush rat in a rainforest

Yerrol towrie was important for many diverse foods. Wallabies, pigeons and Australian bush rats (*rattus fuscipes*) are described here and in Eagle Farm.⁷ Black snakes were also often encountered in the area.⁸ Originally, large numbers of native bush rats lived in the vine forests.⁹ The area was also favoured by grey-headed flying foxes, bush turkeys, wompoo fruit-doves and topknot pigeons.¹⁰ The last few species rely on the fruit of the cabbage tree palm for sustenance, which suggest there were plentiful cabbage palms here.

Flying fox and bush rat were especially important foods, and the work of catching and cooking these was done by women. They used special pronged spears to impale the bats, and nets to entangle the rats.



Figure 3: red cedar

On early maps, the Hamilton district of Yerrol (or Yurrol) was described as 'thick vine bush' which suggests it was, to a large degree, seasonally dry rainforest or subtropical rainforest typified by much vine growth. The vegetation is described as including vines, palms, cedars, pines, orchids and figs. Some of the more useful and important species for Aboriginal people are listed here:



Figure 4: black bean pod

Black bean (Moreton bay chestnut – *castanosperum austale*). This grew towards Breakfast Creek,¹¹ near the Brisbane River, and within 'Hamilton Scrub'. It was probably the main reason Yerrol was a towrie, as black bean was a very important tree in providing a staple food – *mai* – a kind of nutritious 'bread' made by extensively processing (grinding, roasting and leaching) the toxic beans. The tree's bark fibre was

also used for fish and animal traps; the wood was used to make woomeras; and the empty bean pods were children's toy canoes.



Figure 5: large old black bean trees

⁷ 'Old Blacks at the Hamilton. Memories of Mr C.W. Phillips', *Brisbane Courier*, 30 March 1929, p 18; 'Hamilton and Ascot', *Brisbane Courier*, 27 September 1930, p. 21.

⁸ Ald C M Jenkinson, 'The Garden Suburb,' *Daily Mail*, 27 March 1922, p.9.

⁹ Old Blacks at the Hamilton. Memories of Mr C.W. Phillips, *The Brisbane Courier* 30 March 1929 p 18.

¹⁰ Old Blacks at the Hamilton. Memories of Mr C.W. Phillips, *The Brisbane Courier* 30 March 1929 p 18.

¹¹ 'Strange but True', *Sunday Mail* (Brisbane), 8 December 1940, p. 10.



Figure 6: moreton bay figs and leaves

‘Giant figs’ are described growing towards Breakfast Creek¹² and along the river.¹³ These were probably mostly **Moreton Bay figs**. A grove of Moreton Bay figs stood opposite the women’s stockade (Eagle Farm),¹⁴ and some native figs served as a burial area just below Newstead House.¹⁵ The fruit was eaten and attracted many birds, which were hunted.



Figure 7: large moreton bay fig



Figure 9: 1912 photo of Hamilton showing likely emergent hoop pine.



Figure 8: typical SE Qld rainforest with ‘emergent’ hoop pine at crest

Hoop pine (auracaria cunninghamii) were reported by Oxley and likely dominated the Hamilton scrub, growing both near Breakfast Creek¹⁶ and along the

river.¹⁷ Its wood was used for boomerangs and coolamons, but it was mostly important for its gum, which was used in binding (e.g sealing canoe leaks or to haft axe heads to wooden handles).

¹² ‘Strange but True’, *Sunday Mail* (Brisbane), 8 December 1940, p. 10

¹³ ‘Brisbane’s Suburban Beauties – No, XIII Hamilton,’ *Brisbane Courier*, 29 September 1906, p.12.

¹⁴ ‘The Garden Suburb – Charms of Hamilton – Points of Historical Interest,’ *Daily Mail* (Brisbane), 27 March 1922, p. 9.

¹⁵ Robert Lane (Captain Wickham’s Assistant) quoted in Beres McCallum, *Windsor Wakens*, p. 32

¹⁶ ‘Strange but True’, *Sunday Mail* (Brisbane), 8 December 1940, p. 10.

¹⁷ ‘Brisbane’s Suburban Beauties – No, XIII Hamilton,’ *Brisbane Courier*, 29 September 1906, p.12.



Figure 11: yellowwood fruit

Yellowwood (or long jack - flindersia xanthoxyla) – grew along the riverine ‘jungle’ and was notable at Hamilton.¹⁸ The wood was used for tool handles.

Silky oak (grevillea robusta) – occupies drier rainforest areas. Its presence along the river¹⁹ and near Breakfast Creek²⁰ indicates Yerrol scrub was most likely subtropical vine forest rather than classic rainforest. A sugary drink was made from its flowers (by dipping the nectar-filled blooms into containers of water). The tree’s flowers attract parrots and other birds, which were netted for food.



Figure 10: silky oak flowers



Figure 12: ironwood

Giant ironwood (backhousia subargentea)
This tree is now quite rare. It grew in the Hamilton scrub.²¹

Australian Tulipwood & Yellow Tulipwood (lancewood – harpullia pendula and drypetes deplanchei) grew in patches, including near Breakfast Creek.²² Dense tulipwood groves characterised low-lying areas of the rainforest pockets along the Brisbane River (for instance at what is now the Botanic Gardens). It was mostly valued as ‘lancewood’ – the stalks being used to make spears. The fruit of the yellow tulipwood was eaten; the leaves used in cooking and the wood



Figure 13: tulipwood fruit

used in carving. As yellow tulipwood fruit was favoured by the emerald dove, topknot pigeon and woompoo pigeon, tulipwood groves were places to net pigeons. Australian tulipwood was used as a fish poison, medicine and for carving. Its fruit attracted various parrots thus was likewise important in netting birds.

Liana – large thick vines - probably **giant pepper vine (piper hederaceum or piper novae-hollandia)** are mentioned in the Breakfast Creek/ Hamilton area. The rainforest patch closest to the mouth of Breakfast Creek was noted for its tangled vine growth.

¹⁸ ‘Old Chum,’ ‘Oxley Creek in ’62,’ *Brisbane Courier*, 1 January 1891, p. 6.

¹⁹ ‘Old Chum,’ ‘Oxley Creek in ’62,’ *Brisbane Courier*, 1 January 1891, p. 6.

²⁰ ‘Strange but True’, *Sunday Mail* (Brisbane), 8 December 1940, p. 10

²¹ ‘Old Chum,’ ‘Oxley Creek in ’62,’ *Brisbane Courier*, 1 January 1891, p. 6.

²² ‘Strange but True’, *Sunday Mail* (Brisbane), 8 December 1940, p. 10

Birds' nest fern/ crow's nest (asplenium species). This grew in rainforest pockets along the river.²³ The young fronds were used as vegetable food.

Staghorn and elkhorn fern (platycerium - polypodiaceae species) grew in Hamilton and in other rainforest pockets along the river.²⁴ As noted, Doomben means 'staghorn fern.'

Cabbage tree palm young fronds were eaten, dipped in honey, but the main value of the tree was for making fibre and matting.



Figure 15: swamp orchid

Ground orchids were brought by Aboriginal people to Albion Park camp to trade or sell to whites.²⁵ These were probably the **swamp orchid (phaius australis)** but may have included other rainforest species.



Figure 14: cabbage tree palm

Ancient Pathway: Kingsford Smith Drive

Another distinguishing quality of the North Shore area even today is its importance as a travel route. As early as 1865, a horse bus ran between Brisbane town and this area. In 1886, horse drawn wagons were added as "feeders" between the horse tram terminus at Breakfast Creek and the Hamilton Hotel. The area was one of the first few places in Queensland to be serviced by horse trams.

Hamilton and Breakfast Creek were recorded by Oxley as being riddled with many Aboriginal pathways, indicating it was frequently traversed.²⁶ One route known to be used by Aboriginal people went through what is now Fortitude Valley, crossing Breakfast Creek (roughly by the Abbotsford Road Bridge).



Figure 16: 1888 painting of Kingsford Smith Drive. Note how tightly the road passes between the hills and the river. This frequent traffic was one reason for conflict with Aboriginal camps that once dotted the area.

²³ 'Old Chum,' 'Oxley Creek in '62,' *Brisbane Courier*, 1 January 1891, p. 6.

²⁴ 'Old Chum,' 'Oxley Creek in '62,' *Brisbane Courier*, 1 January 1891, p. 6.

²⁵ Beres McCallum, *Windsor Wakens*, Lutwyche: Windsor and Districts Historical Society, 2004, p.4.

²⁶ John Steele, *The Explorers of Moreton Bay 1770-1830*, St.Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983, pp. 127, 152.

Here, Aboriginal people were recorded often swimming over. It then proceeded east and north along Old Sandgate road.²⁷

Kingsford Smith Drive follows the exact same track as an important, ancient Aboriginal pathway, amended by convict labour and upgraded over the centuries for stage coaches and cars. The reason the route is identical is because the hills run tight against the river, forcing any roadway into a narrow area of flat low land close by the river. The reason the road runs significantly northeast after Bretts Wharf is that it once curved over the top of the rainforests and swamps that once existed here.

Ancient Crossings and Aboriginal Waterways

Moving by water was one of the quickest means of transport in pre-settlement Brisbane, and most pathways ran parallel to waterways. The North Shore area was important to Aboriginal people for its crossing points and its access to waterways. One was between the corner of Bulimba and Newstead; another from Bretts Wharf area, on one end of the Yerrol scrub, but the main crossing was a bit east of today's Gateway Bridge. Here the river became quite shallow

(now much deepened by dredging), to the point that people could wade across on some days. The sand flats across the mouth thus assisted easy crossing, making this a popular spot for anyone wanting to get to either side. An early settler recalled how, opposite the mouth of Bulimba Creek, lay:

....a fair sized island, with a growth of timber on it, called Egg Island. The alteration of currents and the Hamilton scouring wall have now swept every vestige of the island away. The greatest obstacle to the river [boat] traffic was the Eagle Farm flats—a sand bank that extended from one bank to the other.²⁸

Directly north of this crossing was a thoroughfare of Aboriginal pathways, one skirting the east boundary of

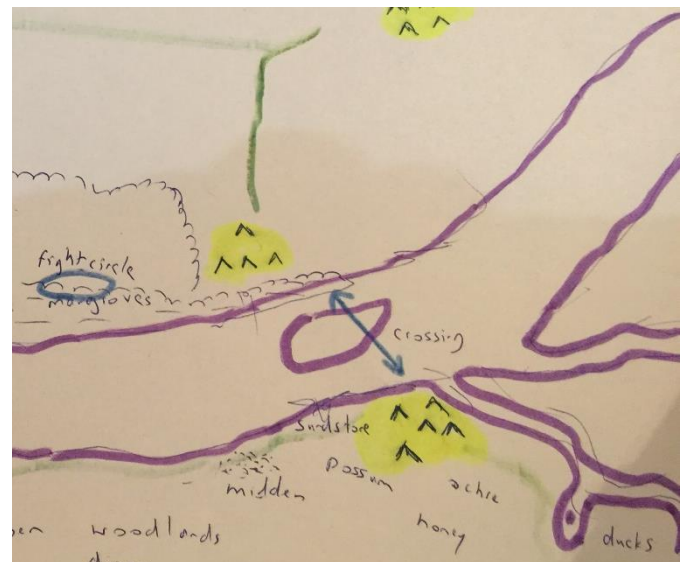


Figure 17: the former crossing point



Figure 18: some of the waterways Aboriginal people travelled along in SE Queensland.

²⁷ Where Once the Savage Roamed: Nundah, *Brisbane Courier*. 19 Jul 1930: 20; F E Lord, 'Brisbane's Historic Homes.' *The Queenslander* 12 May 1932 p. 35; Queensland, *The Brisbane Courier*, 20 October 1868, p 3.

²⁸ "The Brisbane River Seventy Years Ago," *The Queenslander*, 19 May 1917, 41.

Doomben racecourse across Gerley Road at Nudgee Road and along what is now the East-West Arterial Road. It was this conjunction of pathways that attracted German Missionaries to the area in 1838, and impelled them to establish their Mission towards the crossroads at Nundah.

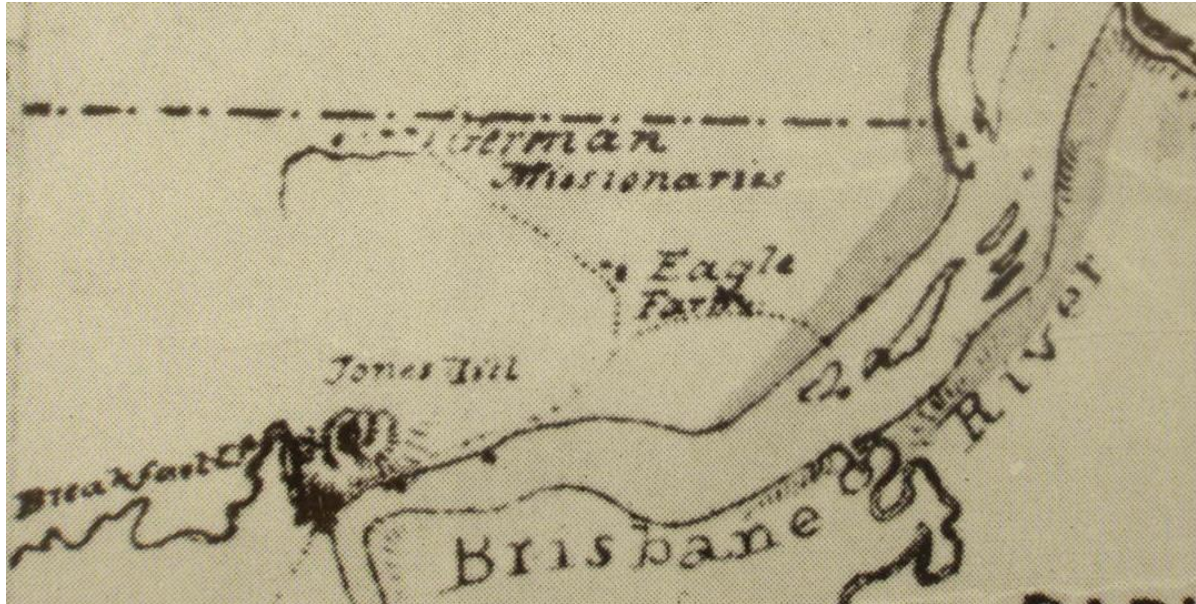


Figure 19: Dixon map of 1842 showing former sand banks (crossing point) and early tracks (pathways) around Eagle Farm.

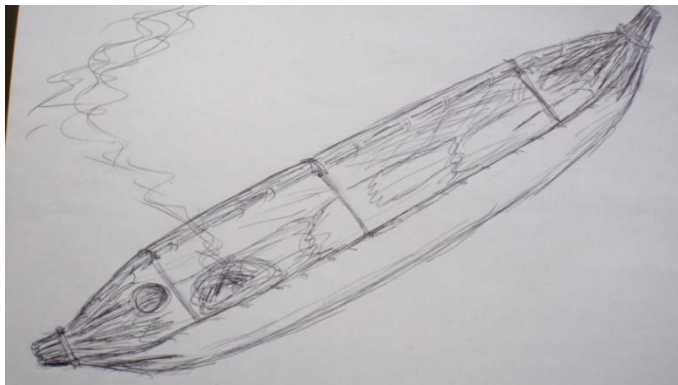


Figure 21: reconstruction of general appearance of a 'tied bark' canoe of SE Queensland.

which they went down the river”.²⁹ They report paddling one vessel only until they “found another canoe” near Bulimba. They even used two ‘finds’ concurrently.³⁰ By the time the castaways reached the crossing point between Hamilton and Lytton, they were frustrated if they did not encounter a canoe ‘on hand’:

(We found) a place where it is evident the natives use to cross

Canoes were sometimes positioned where pathways ran down to good crossing points. This was for the benefit of travellers (presumably one canoe on each side). ‘Canoe River’ (today’s Oxley Creek) and ‘Canoe Reach’ on the Brisbane River were named after a major canoe-crossing place, as Oxley explains: “(this) being the spot where (the castaway) Parsons and his companions found a canoe in



Figure 20: Aboriginal people using canoes at Hervey Bay - others on shore emptying a tow-row net (1855).

²⁹ Oxley 1823 in Steele *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, p. 69.

³⁰ Pamphlet in Steele *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, p. 71.

over... we could not find a canoe; we therefore resolved to go up river until we should find some means of crossing it.³¹

Indigenous groups also moored canoes (and rafts) close to camping grounds. For instance, when vigilante settlers attacked the Aboriginal camp that covered a ridge at the junction of the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers (Moggill area) they knew the location because “a canoe and a small raft (were) fastened to the bank”.³² Such details imply a fairly well-organised system of ‘water routes.

A variety of different-sized canoes, all from tied bark, were used on the Brisbane River, though Petrie insists that canoes of the region were all *identical* in design, whether for “fresh or salt water”.³³ The strongest and largest ones could hold up to 10 people and be over 30 feet (10 metres) long, but there were also very small versions, for zipping between mangrove areas to gather oysters and crabs.³⁴

Swamp mahogany (*eucalyptus robusta*) was the usual tree used for making canoes, and it is notable that it grew in the Hamilton-Breakfast Creek swamps,³⁵ and that other trees whose bark was sometimes used: stringy bark³⁶ and iron bark (presumably *eucalyptus fibrosa* or *eucalyptus creba*) also occurred here.



Figure 22: swamp mahogany

There were also rafts:



Figure 23: Pettigrew's sketch of a Brisbane River raft.

...the aborigines made small rafts with dead, dry sticks bound together with bark string. These rafts were covered with sheets of tea-tree bark, young children and other belongings placed upon them, and then the men and women going into the water, swam alongside, pushing the raft.³⁷

Another form of raft was a small log - more as a swimming aid - especially “in swimming any distance”.³⁸ More remarkably, William Pettigrew describes a raft made on the Brisbane River that consisted of “a large sheet of bark

tied up at the four corners”.³⁹ His accompanying sketch makes it clear that he meant a flat

³¹ Pamphlet in Steele *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, p. 69.

³² *Moreton Bay Courier*, 1846, p. 2.

³³ Constance Petrie, *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences* Brisbane: Watson & Ferguson, 1904, p. 98.

³⁴ Petrie *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, p.98; Pamphlet in Steele *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, p. 71.

³⁵ Archaeo Cultural Heritage Services, June 2004, *Cultural Heritage Survey and Assessment for the proposed Brisbane Gateway Upgrade Project, Southeast Queensland: Report for the Department of Main Roads and Connell Wagner*, Ashgrove: Archaeo Cultural Heritage Services, 24

³⁶ Petrie *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, p.97; Flinders 1799 in Steele *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, p. 36.

³⁷ Petrie *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, p.99.

³⁸ Petrie *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, p.99.

³⁹ William Pettigrew Diaries, 1849 RHSQ (Welsby Library) MSS.

sheet with four separately tied corners. This is a complete departure from the two-pointed tied bark canoe. Presumably such a construction suited a calm, relatively shallow body of water such as the Brisbane River.

Aboriginal Origins of Queensland's First Regattas (1848–1860s)

Given the connection between this district and canoeing it is perhaps unsurprising that Brisbane's first regattas were held along the river at Newstead in 1848, with the races running up the river to Kangaroo Point. The contest was started as an 'act of friendship' to the Aboriginal community, celebrating the first 25 years of white settlement. It pitted European rowers against Aboriginal rowers and remained an annual event until the 1860s.



Figure 24: Aboriginal pilot crew rowing to the 'Rattlesnake' 1840s.

Since the 1830s, many of the Aboriginal families around Moreton Bay had become involved in the navigational needs of the new colony. They worked as ferrymen, as 'wharvies' loading and unloading ships; supplied and assisted at lighthouses and pilot stations, and most of all worked as 'boat pilots' - leading ships and boats through treacherous waters, preventing shipwrecks and saving those already marooned and wrecked. In fact, they were often most of such staff.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Wreck of the Sovereign, *The Telegraph*, 20 March 1933 p 1; Queensland Department of Harbours and Marine, *Harbours and Marine*, p. 38; *Moreton Bay Courier*, 17 March 1847, p. 2. See Murray Johnson, 'Whose guilt? What reward? The loss of the 'Sovereign' 1847,' in Murray Johnson., ed, 2002, *Brisbane: Moreton Bay Matters* Kelvin Grove: Brisbane History Group Papers No. 19, 11, 15; *Moreton Bay Courier*, 16 March 1857, p. 1

In Brisbane, many of these Aboriginal boatmen camped above Petrie’s Bight and at the

Breakfast Creek and Hamilton camps, to be near the naval office, and because the Hamilton and Newstead areas had important wharves.

Despite such professions, few Aborigines actually *owned* a boat. The tiny fees or trade goods Aboriginal boatmen received for their services placed European boats far beyond their purchasing power. Boats were therefore highly prized items in Aboriginal society, leading to considerable theft. Newspapers of the 1840s and 1850s carry various accounts of Aborigines stealing or trying to steal European vessels ⁴¹

One “legal” means for an Aboriginal person to acquire a boat was through a shipwreck. Shipwrecks occurred quite frequently in 19th century Queensland – there were about over a



Figure 25: model of a typical whaleboat.

hundred in Moreton Bay – and Aboriginal people were the usual ones rescuing shipwreck victims. The usual reward for their heroism was the presentation of a boat – often a whaleboat.⁴² The “shipwreck heroes” then applied their vessels in ferrying kin and conducting more boating and fishing work.

They also brought their boats over to Brisbane to compete in yearly regattas. Indeed, rowing became the favourite pastime of the Moreton Bay groups.



Figure 26: 1890s regatta at Hamilton

The Aboriginal men who had earlier saved the shipwreck victims of the *Sovereign* on Stradbroke Island brought over the boat they had been gifted and promptly won the Brisbane’s first ever regatta. Intriguingly, they named their boat “Pirate” and it even featured skull and crossbones under a

⁴¹ *Moreton Bay Courier*, 6 March 1847, p. 2; *Moreton Bay Courier*, 17 February 1849, p. 2.

⁴² *Empire*, 18 April 1863:5; *Moreton Bay Courier*, 7 August 1852, p.2.

pirate flag. Second place was an Aboriginal team manning the *Swiftsure*.⁴³ In 1853, Aboriginal boatmen who helped victims of the shipwrecked *Argyle* similarly raced their gifted vessel at the Brisbane regatta.⁴⁴

Sadly, the inter-racial tolerance embedded in this sporting event was neither wholehearted nor enduring. From its inception, the prize for Aboriginal contestants was simply clothes whereas white contestants received a significant monetary sum. By 1855, there were calls to end Aboriginal participation in the regattas on the grounds that the Aboriginal boatmen were “more like professionals.”⁴⁵



Figure 27: watching a regatta from Hamilton, 1890s

The “problem” for white competitors was that the Aboriginal teams always won! By the 1860s, it was decided to create a separate Aboriginal regatta to give the white rowers a fighting chance⁴⁶ Very soon after, the Aboriginal regatta died out completely. Obviously the contestants saw no point in competing amongst themselves.

⁴³ *Moreton Bay Courier*, 29 January 1848, op.2..

⁴⁴ *Moreton Bat Courier*, 28 May 1853, p. 21.

⁴⁵ *Moreton Bay Courier*, 26 January 1855.

⁴⁶ William Clark, ‘Aboriginal Reminiscences,’ 1905?, 29 in Melton’s Cutting Book (mss, Royal Qld Historical Society), 21.

Fishing at the Ibis beak (sand spit)

All along the shore of Hamilton Reach⁴⁷ but especially around the sandy, ‘nose’-like (*mooroo*) spit - *Mooroo-Mooroolbin*⁴⁸ – that once extended the length of Hamilton Reach – Aboriginal men would seasonally scoop up large quantities of mullet in hand nets (*tow-rows*) and set nets. Meston described how ‘a band of dark fishermen with the heart-shaped tow row net surrounds a shoal

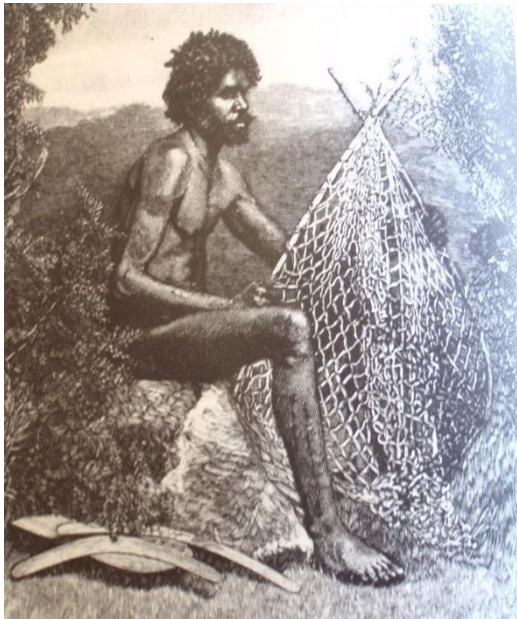


Figure 30: fisher with tow-row (north NSW).

Tow-rows were a means of catching hundreds of fish. They were made of a fine-meshed net of fibre of ‘native hibiscus/ native rosella’ (*hibiscus hetrophyllus*) or cottontree, tied to acacia (wattle) or cane frames.⁵⁰ The nets had a wooden ‘mouth’ that could be shut, and a long sock with a tie at the end to allow caught fish to be gathered. Women made the tow-rows although the men were the main ones to use them. After a brush weir was created, or sufficient people had driven fish in from the river with their canoes, a line of fishers would



Figure 28: 1842 Baker map showing the position of Mooroo-Mooroolbin

of mullet.⁴⁹ The ‘nose’ reference described the shape of the spit and was also a reference to Ibis (‘long nose’ – long beak) – which may mean it was an Ibis Dreaming site.



Figure 29: using tow-rows at Deception Bay

⁴⁷ Archibald Meston, ‘Genesis of the Park’, *Queenslander*, 31 January 1921; Archibald Meston, ‘Morton Bay and Islands’, *Queenslander*, 10 October 1903, p. 42

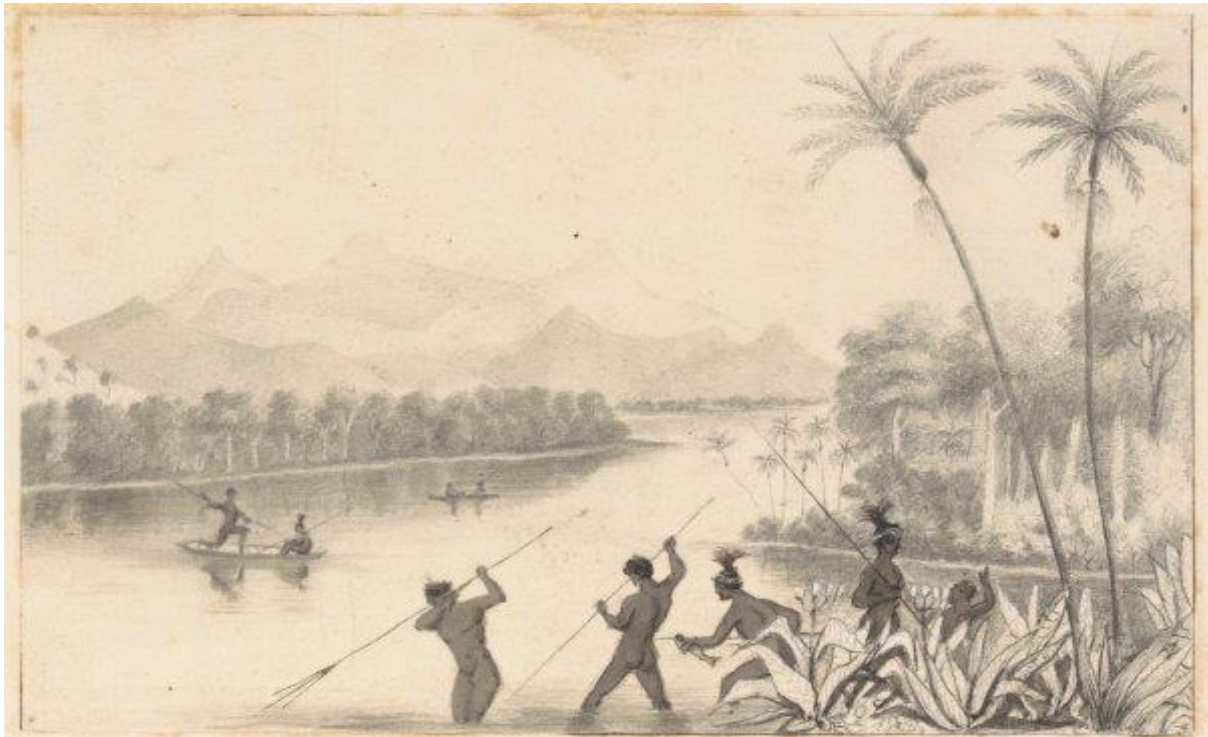
⁴⁸ JOL (John Oxley Library) OM64-17/11.

⁴⁹ Archibald Meston, Morton Bay and Islands, *The Queenslander*, 10 Oct 1903, 42

⁵⁰ Petrie, *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences* 108.

stand with one tow-row at each arm at the only outlets, shutting and hauling up the traps when he had caught sufficient fish.⁵¹

The whole Breakfast Creek- Hamilton area saw intensive fishing. A visitor as early as 1836 described the entire road from Brisbane to Eagle Farm as an Aboriginal “fishing ground” where large numbers of Aboriginal people gathered. With lines and four-pronged spears, Aboriginal women and men could be spotted trying their luck in their canoes on the river, or at rocky outcrops such as such as Garranbinbilla (Newstead Point) and Cameron Rocks. The catch included swans, pelicans, eel, bream, whiting, bream, jewfish, flathead, mullet, eel, dolphin, river mussel and prawns.⁵²



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Figure 31: canoe and spear-fishing in north NSW, showing a scene similar to what was once common along North Shore.

The fishers regularly camped above the sand spit and around what is now Brett’s Wharf, making that area the biggest, most strung-out camp of the area, and regularly came out in large numbers with nets to fish at this spot. The small inlet in-between here and the Brett’s Wharf gave the area the name of Meeandah or Meanjin (‘spike’) like the Brisbane CBD.⁵³ As in the CBD, this probably also referenced the tulipwood that grew abundantly in the Yurrol rainforest pocket. Tulipwood was used to make spears (hence ‘spike’).

⁵¹ C. C. Petrie, Various Fishing Methods, *The Queenslander*, 9 August 1902, p. 291.

⁵² A. Meston, Genesis of the Park, *The Queenslander*, 31 Jan 1921; Archibald Meston, Morton Bay and Islands, *The Queenslander*, 10 Oct 1903, 42; McCallum, *Windsor Wakens*, p.33. A Chinese Camp Canker, *Truth* (Brisbane) 26 February 1905 p.5.

⁵³ Fred Watson, JOL (John Oxley Collection) Collection, Sydney May, Nov 1957, Queensland Place Names, p 50.

Before it was reclaimed and built over, a large portion of the Hamilton North Shore area was an expanse of mud and mangrove. It was under water at high tide.



Figure 31: 1910 map showing the former sand spit and inlet.

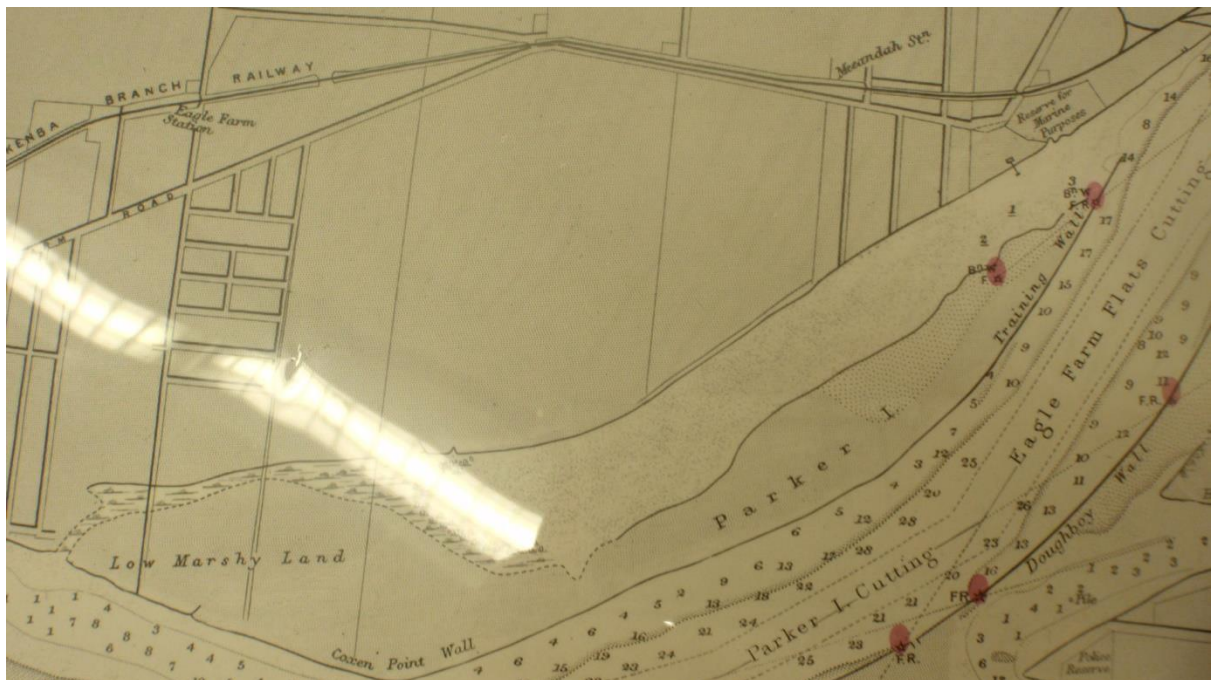


Figure 32: 1910 map showing the rest of the former mud flats/ sand banks of North Shore.



Figure 35: Dixon 1843 map showing the area of mangroves and mud directly below the Yerrol rainforest. The shape of the area resembled an ibis head, which may explain the name of the nearby sandspit.

The area probably contained some salt marsh and samphire communities,⁵⁴ with **grey mangrove (*avicennia marina*)** and **river mangrove (*aegiceras corniculatum*)**. The latter is a small scrub-sized bush, and may have been the dominant species, as the area seems to have only had sparse and short vegetation. Grey mangrove were valued as places of native bees' nests. Their seeds were processed and baked as food and the ash used as a scabies



Figure 34: river mangrove showing its shrub-like form



Figure 33: 1912 view of Hamilton Reach with sand spit in distance.

rub. The leaves were used as flavouring, the wood was used for shields, and the inner bark was used to treat stonefish stings. River mangrove wood was used as firewood and in hut building, with the sap being used for ear infections.

⁵⁴ Archaeo Cultural Heritage Services, June 2004, *Cultural Heritage Survey and Assessment for the proposed Brisbane Gateway Upgrade Project, Southeast Queensland: Report for the Department of Main Roads and Connell Wagner*, Ashgrove: Archaeo Cultural Heritage Services, 24

Breakfast Creek Aboriginal Fishery

To the west of North Shore, on Breakfast Creek - near what is now the Abbotsford Road Bridge - lay a complex of weirs and traps. This was central to the economic life of the Hamilton-Breakfast Creek camps. It was even marked on early maps. Observers described it as 'formed of stakes, saplings, and boughs,'⁵⁵ or as 'big bough fences (which) formed traps, into which the fish got at high tide, and were easily caught when the waters ebbed.'⁵⁶ This suggests large structures similar to those used across northern Australia.

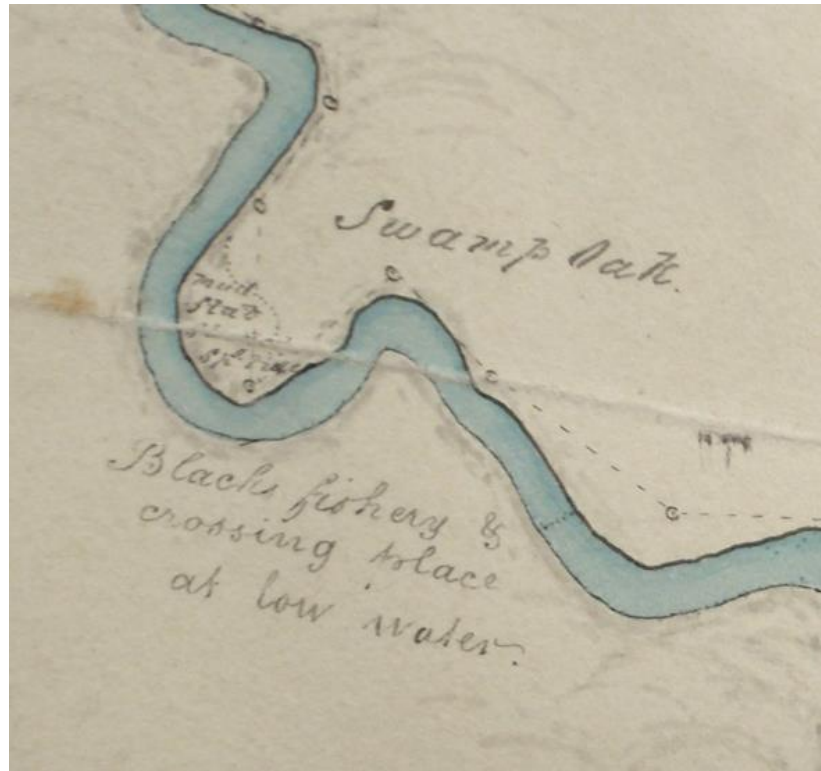


Figure 36: 1840s map showing the position of the fishery.



Figure 37: a stake weir.

The location was excellently placed. Apart from the abundance created by the confluence of Breakfast Creek and Brisbane River, lagoons of York's Hollow sometimes (after very heavy rain) drained towards Breakfast Creek, bringing even more fish.⁵⁷ Thus 'large quantities of fish were regularly caught.'⁵⁸ Chas Melton describes how, 'in a few minutes.... (they catch) hundreds of bream, garfish, flatfish.'⁵⁹

What is worth noting is that Aboriginal people – not under any boss but as sole traders - used the fishery to supply Brisbane town. In fact, they dominated the fish trade in the 1830s to 1860s:

Until very recently the inhabitants of Brisbane depended mostly for a supply of fish upon the aborigines of this locality (Breakfast Creek), very much, no doubt, to the profit... of these sable sons of the soil.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ William Clark, The Brisbane River Seventy Years Ago, *The Queenslander* 19 May 1917 p 41 .

⁵⁶ Brisbane Seventy Years Ago. *The Brisbane Courier* 31 July 1924 p 18

⁵⁷ *Booroodabin*, op.cit., pp.8-9.

⁵⁸ William Clark, The Brisbane River Seventy Years Ago, *The Queenslander* 19 May 1917 p 41 .

⁵⁹ Chas Melton, When Woolloongabba was Wattle-scented, *Melton Cuttings Book mss* (RHSQ), 20 March 1915, p.47.

⁶⁰ *Moreton Bay Courier*, 17th Aug 1861, p.2.

(At) Breakfast Creek (they) made a very excellent haul of mullet, and at once commenced to trade with their fishy spoil, asking and obtaining for every fish sold, three pence sterling in cash - I repeat: cash!⁶¹

(At) Norman and Breakfast creeks an abundance of fish ...were caught in tow-rows by the blacks and sold to the townspeople.⁶²

The usual process was that men hauled and killed, whilst women stacked and sold: '(they) bite the heads off their catches, and throw them over to the bank, where the gins (women) were waiting to collect them and sell them in the town.'⁶³ To passers-by at the Breakfast Creek Bridge, or on city streets, door-to-door, or sitting with fish displays at wharves or along main routes – such as the road to and from The Valley – the women hawked their produce.⁶⁴

Basket weavers of Doomben and Ascot



Figure 40: flat dilly typical of SE Qld.



Figure 39: a Brisbane-region basket.

Doomben Racecourse and the parks at Albion (Crosby Park etc) were occupied by large swamps.⁶⁵ The swamps were home to the **cabbage-tree palm**, which was used for baskets, bags, fishing nets and lines. In fact, this area was lush with many native trees, reeds, grasses and vines important for making baskets and nets: **kurrajong and bush kurrajong, native hibiscus (the cotton tree), native rosella, macaranga, rice flower, peanut tree, flat-stemmed wattle, stringybark eucalypt, and dodder laurel.**



Figure 38: typical male dilly worn over one shoulder.

⁶¹ Moreton Bay, *Empire* (Sydney) 12 June 1858, p 5.

⁶² Brisbane in the mid Fifties. *The Queenslander* 7 August 1909 p 20

⁶³ Old Brisbane, *Courier Mail*, 30 October 1937, p 22.

⁶⁴ T. J. M'Mahon, Brisbane 70 Years Ago. *The Brisbane Courier* p.18 t

⁶⁵ McCallum, *Windsor Wakens*, p.3.

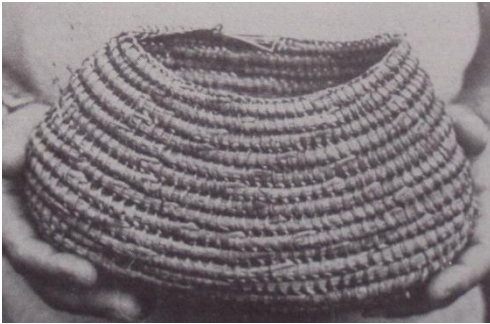


Figure 41: basket made by Kitty Noble, Caboolture - typical of the smaller pots produced in the region.

On account of the local abundance of vines, rushes, palm leaves and paperbark, it seems much of the activity at and around the local camps was concerned with harvesting the raw materials of basketry, housing and cane work and turning these into utensils. It was reportedly where much of the wickerwork for the fishery at Breakfast Creek was constructed.⁶⁶ This made it a hive of ‘women’s work’, as all these industries were typically carried out by women. The baskets were also sold and traded to settlers. Some of the prominent species used in this work included:

Paperbarks *melaleuca quinquenervia*

The swamps were dominated by ti-trees (paperbarks)⁶⁷ – probably *melaleuca quinquenervia*.

The paperbark was highly valued by Aboriginal people. Its leaves were used to treat colds; the papery bark was used for ‘dishes,’ water-carriers, roofing (cladding), bandaging, flooring and containers (in ground cooking). The nectar was consumed both from the flowers and in a sweet drink.



Figure 42: broad-leaved paperbark



Figure 43: the Natoue run aground on the Eagle Farm flats, 1893. Note rushes in front.

Rushes: the swamps provided many rushes, probably (to judge from early photos) the dominant species being **bare twig-rush (*machaerina juncea*)**.

⁶⁶ Daphne Dux & Stan Tutt *The Story of Kal-Ma-Kuta: Last of the Joondoburri Tribe* Daphne Dux, 2001 p.7

⁶⁷ Old Blacks at the Hamilton. Memories of Mr C.W. Phillips, *The Brisbane Courier* 30 March 1929 p 18

Bungwall bashing in the swamps (Doomben, Ascot and Albion)

Bungwall fern (*blechnum indicum*) once grew as an understory to the ti-tree swamps at Albion, Ascot and Doomben. It was much valued for its tuber, which was turned into edible damper that was a staple food for Aboriginal groups of southern Queensland. Bungwall swamps were maintained as quasi-farms through controlled burning of swamp edges and other maintenance. The thin, very long roots contained numerous fibres, thus requiring a process that simultaneously stripped off and smashed the roots. The meal was then pounded and baked as damper. Special thin-edged pounders ('bungwall bashers') were invented for this purpose.



Figure 44: bungwall bashers (Stan Tutt, Caboolture Country)

A large portion of women's daily work was spent extracting, pounding and baking bungwall cakes. In 1841, the missionary Christopher Eipper (1813–1894) provided a vivid description of an evening meal of bungwall and the work involved in preparing it:



Figure 45: bungwall fern

...it is the daily occupation of the women to dig [the root] out of the swamps... They are found in pieces the size of a man's thumb. When the root is roasted in the fire and the black skin pulled off, it is not unpalatable, but to increase its relish, the good housewife has a smooth stone with which she pounds it into small cakes, and then hands them to different members of her family, or to a guest if he should fancy the dish. It is a homely sight, when you proceed in a clear evening to a camp of the black natives, to behold them occupied in taking their frugal, or it may be even plenteous meal... As you approach, you will hear a noise of so many small hammers, but on coming close up to them, you find it is the busy wife or mother pounding cakes for the family. Every other eatable is then produced,

according as the good luck of the day in fishing or in the chase, or from their labour otherwise, may have filled their dillies... what they are not able to eat is given away to such as have not been so fortunate in their exercises.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Christopher Eipper, *The Origins, Conditions and Prospects of the German Mission to the Aborigines in Moreton Bay* (Sydney: James Reading, 1841), 6.

Many Campsites in open woodland

Traditional Aboriginal base camps were permanent spots that could persist for centuries or even millennia. They might be inhabited for weeks to months at a time, and even when not inhabited, they might be the home of passing visitors.

The Hamilton-Breakfast Creek area was privileged to have some of the most important traditional camping grounds of the lower Brisbane valley.⁶⁹ In 1823 and 1824, Oxley noted the area was ‘numerously inhabited’.⁷⁰ Early residents remembered ‘six or seven camps’⁷¹ with between 20 to 300 residents each, depending on the season. This density was supported by an extensive fishery, many resources, and proximity to important



Figure 46: camp at Kangaroo Point, sketched by Conrad Martens.

pathways such as the major crossing point on the eastern side (past Hamilton). The camps continued well into settlement times, being mentioned repeatedly from the 1820s to 1870s, but declining after that. One camping ground at Ascot remained into the 1890s. The area of one cluster of camps – Eldernell Hill – was known as Woolargoba,⁷²



Figure 47: view of Hamilton in 1880s, showing eucalypt areas.

⁶⁹ Kath Ballard *Geebong Story* Geebung: AEBIS Publishing 1995, p.10.

⁷⁰ John Steele, *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, pp. 127, 152.

⁷¹ Old Blacks at the Hamilton, *The Brisbane Courier* 30 March 1929 p 18

⁷² Archibald Meston files, JOL (John Oxley Library) OM64-17/11

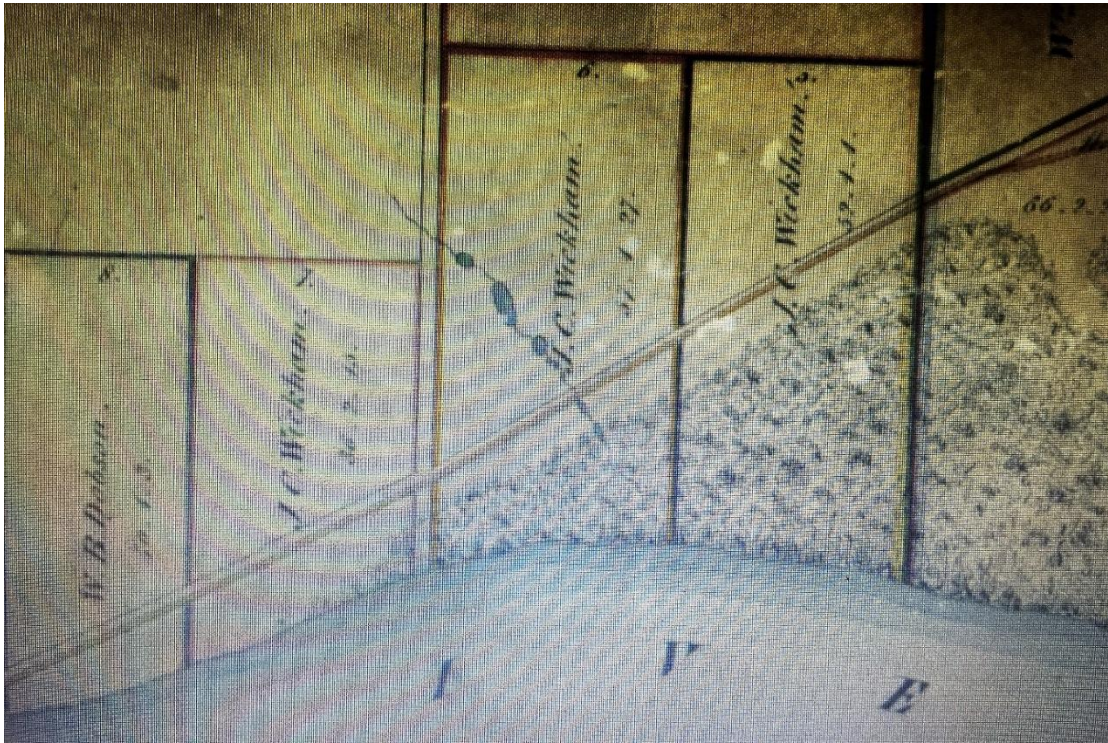


Figure 48: detail of Dixon's map, showing the Brett's Wharf area where the rainforest patch starts. The waterholes were close to the campsite.

The Breakfast Creek/ Hamilton camps had various distinctive features: a dozen or so 'native wells' (rock wells),⁷³ deposits of clay (under St Margaret's School),⁷⁴ hills for signalling or surveillance (Bartley Hill, Newstead Point, Edernell Hill), deep lagoons, sizable waterholes (e.g. Oriel waterhole),⁷⁵ and pockets of swamp and rainforest handy to their living areas.

Open woodland, a somewhat elevated position, loamy (soft but not muddy) soil, a situation close to water, swamps or rainforest constituted the usual choice of camping ground all over SE Queensland. The known campsites of the area were mostly on ridges and knolls in areas described in the maps as 'poor forested' land, with other parts 'iron bark and gum, good open forest land.' This referred to open woodland, usually with a grassy understorey – a mix of dry eucalypt and casuarina (she-oak, forest oak) groves. This included pockets of more subtropical growth and was dominated by ironbarks, Moreton bay ash, pink bloodwood and blue gum.⁷⁶ Kangaroos and wallabies were remembered hopping around Albion,⁷⁷ which means they would have also likely occurred around these camping areas, providing additional

⁷³ John Steele, *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, p.125

⁷⁴ Diana Hacker (ed) *A Look Back in Time: A History of Bowen Hills – Newstead and 'The Creek'* 1996 Qld Women's Historical Association Bowen Hills, p.94

⁷⁵ Booroodabin Committee, *Booroodabin A Sesquicentenary History of Breakfast Creek, Bowen Hills, Newstead and Teneriffe 1823-2009* 2nd Rev Edition 2009 Bowen Hills: Queensland History, p.4

⁷⁶ Archaeo Cultural Heritage Services, June 2004, *Cultural Heritage Survey and Assessment for the proposed Brisbane Gateway Upgrade Project, Southeast Queensland: Report for the Department of Main Roads and Connell Wagner*, Ashgrove: Archaeo Cultural Heritage Services, 24

⁷⁷ 'Personal,' *Brisbane Courier*, 29 July 1913, p 9

food. The swamps by the camps were similarly important for foods such as wild geese and ducks.⁷⁸

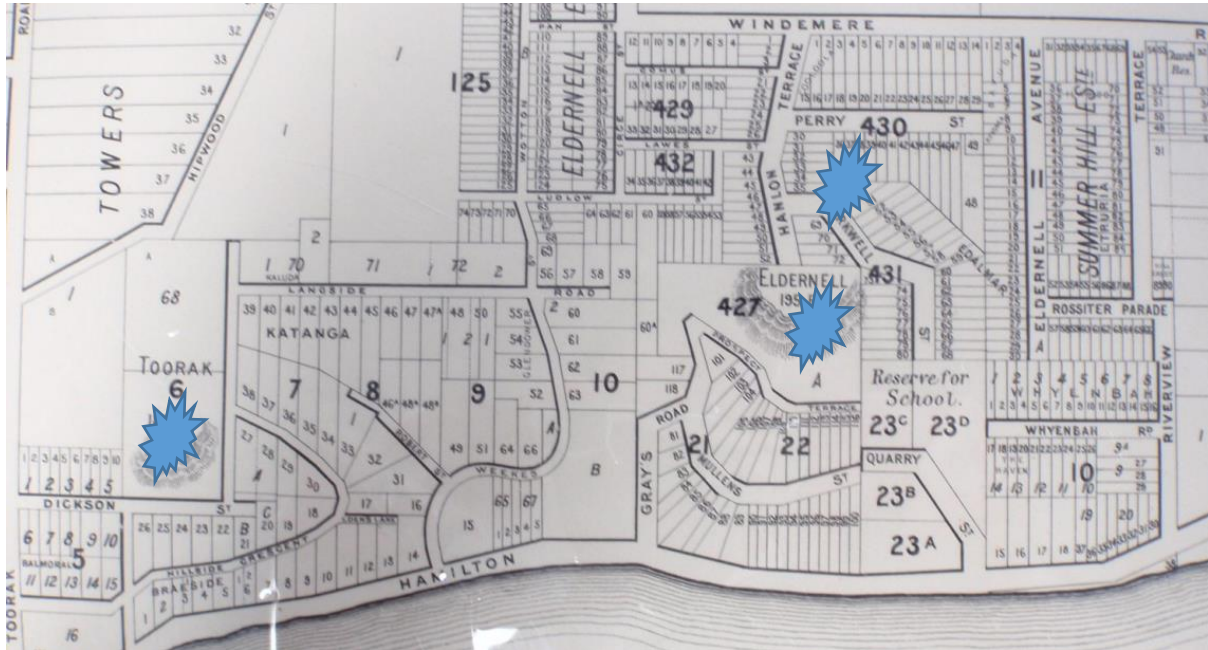


Figure 50: campsite locations on Toorak and Eldernell hills.

The base camps were located as follows:

1. End of Oriel Street, not far from the Oriel waterhole (Oriel Park).⁷⁹
2. “Many hundreds” along the southern part (east bank) of Breakfast Creek/ Bowen Bridge (Abbotsford Street) close to road.⁸⁰ –This included the Fiveways Albion,⁸¹ and the ‘Ti Trees’ area of the Albion Park Raceway.⁸² = Crosby Park.⁸³ This is probably the same came that Oxley describes as being “not a half mile” from his breakfasting stop at what became Newstead House.⁸⁴
3. “Hamilton Heights” (Toorak Hill, also called Albion Hill).⁸⁵

⁷⁸ McCallum, *Windsor Wakens*, p.3.

⁷⁹ Fred Colliver & Woolston, *Aborigines in the Brisbane Area*, 1978 Brisbane: Archaeology Branch, p. 61.

⁸⁰ Local Intelligence *The Courier* 29 Jan 1863 p. 2; Queensland, *The Mercury (Hobart)*, i24 October 1860, p 3; Nut Quad, Some Features of the Fifties, *Courier Mail*, 24 August 1907 Brisbane Courier p 12.

⁸¹ Beres McCallum, 2004, *Windsor Wakens*, Brisbane: Windsor and Districts Historical Society, p.3

⁸² McCallum, *Windsor Wakens*, op.cit.,p 3.

⁸³ Diana Hacker (ed), *A Look Back in Time: A History of Bowen Hills, Newstead, and ‘The Creek’ Bowen Hills*: Queensland Women’s Historical Association, 1996, p.4; *The Brisbane Courier* 12 Jan 1888, p.4. Death of an Albion Pioneer’. *The Week (Brisbane)* 15 May 1925 p 27

⁸⁴ Oxley & Cunningham 1823 & 1824, in John Steele, *The Explorers of Moreton Bay*, pp.127, 152

⁸⁵ Hamilton and Ascot, *The Brisbane Courier* 27 September 1930 p 21; Clem Lack, Hamilton Heights was popular native camp, *Courier Mail* 16 Sept 1950; Old Blacks at the Hamilton, *The Brisbane Courier* 30 March 1929 p 18; Personal, *Brisbane Courier* 29 July 1912, 9

4. Eldernell Hill (Prospect Terrace) across Kingsford Smith Drive (= Loudons Hill)⁸⁶
5. Another (adjoined?) camp on the ridges directly north of Eldernell Hill (Eldernell Terrace/ Markwell Street?) but part way down side⁸⁷



Figure 51: Hamilton in 1920s showing dense eucalypt growth

6. The largest camp: along the river bank between the Brisbane River and Kingsford Smith Drive stretching east to Hamilton; ⁸⁸ near the Hamilton ('Bulimba' or today Bretts') Wharf, ⁸⁹ 'towards Eagle Farm.'⁹⁰ From early maps, and descriptions of the camp being adjacent to the rainforest patch, we can place this between Hamilton Hotel and the Nudgee Road/ Kingsford Smith Drive corner.
7. Former Meeandah Railway Station area.⁹¹
8. Other camps at Doomben and Eagle Farm, and near the Gateway Bridge, for which we have no precise accounts but some archaeological evidence.

⁸⁶ Ray Evans, 'Wanton Outrage – Police and Aborigines at Breakfast Creek 1860,' in Rod Fisher (ed), 1992, *Brisbane: The Aboriginal presence - 1824- 1860* (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group), p. 81.

⁸⁷ Ray Evans, 'Wanton Outrage, op.cit., p.81.

⁸⁸ Supposed Murder at the German Station *Empire (Sydney)* 27 March 1869, p 3

⁸⁹ Old Blacks at the Hamilton. *The Brisbane Courier* 30 March 1929 p 18; Queensland *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* 7 March 1863 p 2

⁹⁰ Queensland *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* 7 March 1863 p 2

⁹¹ Frank Colliver & Wolston, *Aborigines of the Brisbane Area*, p.5.

Hamilton as a Battle line (1840s-1860s)

During the 1830s to 1870s, this area's Aboriginal camps featured more frequently in Brisbane news than any other camps. This was because the creek was considered a boundary between two worlds, with the Hamilton area being left for Aboriginal use.

It needs to be remembered that this same area had been noted by Oxley as having many camps and pathways, and in fact was where Oxley preferred settlement to be organised. Thus in other words, this set of camps continued the traditional land use of thousands of years.

Aboriginal groups were at first permitted to continue living in this area. Even so, by the 1850s, every evening all Aboriginal people – especially those selling in the streets of Brisbane - were chased across the creek by police, if they did not leave of their own accord.⁹² This effectively made Breakfast Creek a battle line, and this indeed is how it is remembered in the Indigenous community to this day.⁹³

A problem for the Indigenous community was that by the late 1840s, the area was attracting European farmers and their pathways were increasingly used as busy roads. This impinged on Aboriginal living areas, privacy and economic use of the area. The track from Brisbane to Eagle Farm and the mouth of the river went right past (in fact right through) the main Aboriginal camp at Bretts Wharf (Hamilton).

Aboriginal groups became increasingly hostile to any Europeans who ventured to their side of the creek, and therefore threatened, attacked, insulted, raided and robbed both travellers and settlers.

This is how the Hamilton (North Shore) rainforest west of the camp near what is now Portside Wharf frequently came to be used to launch robberies. The scrub gave a perfect cover for ambushing European travellers, so there were often some sort of harassment along what is now Kingsford Smith Drive. Resistance leaders such as Dundalli, Yilbung and Billy (“Doctor”) Barlow regularly stayed at the camps, inciting further actions. The great orator-headman Dalaiipi also stayed here to issue his powerful “Indictments” criticising European settlers.

Names	Places of Residence
James Dunlop	of Eagle Farm
William Barcock	do
John Fielding	do
David Gage	Mount Pleasant Breakfast Creek
Thomas the Farmer	do
Mr. Heumay	Breakfast Creek
Richard Jones	Breakfast Creek
John Westaway	Eagle Farm
S. P. Nequest.	German Station
do	do
W. Martenstein.	do
L. Lillman	do
do	do
S. G. Neumann	do
M. Gerick.	do
James (Ballou)	do
Madam Pealy	Breakfast Creek
Andrew Bailey	
George Abbott	

Figure 52: part of the 1850 petition (NSW State Archives)

⁹² F. E. Lord, 'Brisbane's Historic Homes,' *The Queenslander* 12 May 1932, p 35.

⁹³ Alex Bond, per. commun, 2009.

The hostility reached such a crescendo that in 1850, all Breakfast Creek settlers combined to send a written petition demanding police protection. Over the next two decades, the area's camps were burnt down several times, only to be re-built. The whole area was considered 'dangerous', and European women visiting Newstead House often required a military or police escort.⁹⁴ Some of the recorded skirmishes between settlers and Aboriginal people in or near the Breakfast Creek camps are as follows:

1 June 1848

- 20-30 warriors raid Mathew Croly's (Martin Frawley's?) maize & potato fields (in front of him)
- strip much of field & stores (15 bushels and over 15 bushels potatoes)
- pack in possum rugs and blankets.⁹⁵

20 April 1852

- 40 warriors threaten Mr Bullock @ Eagle Farm
- 2 mounted constables called in to fend off
- Constables chase warriors over towards camp
- Constables halted by wet and boggy conditions (impassable for horses) and deep creek
- warriors brandish spears and show defiance

1852 (April to July) ⁹⁶

- Warrior-leaders Billy Barlow and Tinkabed head 40 warriors in raiding Mr Bullock's home (Eagle Farm) and destroy/ take almost all potato crop; break open Salisbury's home with group of 12 – rob, throw tomahawk
- Increasing their force to 200, warriors leave Eagle Farm and march on Cash's property (South Pine River)
- Warriors rob Mrs Mary Cash's home (Cash's Crossing) - she locks up hut but they attack back of hut, club her with waddy, *and* plunder house; 3 remain to guard and insult/ taunt her.
- In retribution, 'a large number of inhabitants' (20-50? Europeans) and 8 mounted police from two divisions (including Constables Sneyd, McAllister, Swinburne and Murphy) mount an expedition.
- The European party ambush and arrest Tinkabed
- Proceed to Breakfast Creek camps, led by party of 5 police (District Constable Murphy & 4 other constables)
- Boggy path and high waters prevent attack: Breakfast Creek warriors defiantly shout abuse at the police and brandish weapons from other side of creek.
- .Eventually, the white party storms camp but by then it has been abandoned.
- The police and settlers destroy and burn down all huts, weapons, utensils

⁹⁴ Booroodabin Committee, 2009, p. 8

⁹⁵ *Bathurst Advocate* 3 June 1848 p 1

⁹⁶ *Bathurst Free Press & Mining* 9 October 1852, 4.

1856 (May)

- 5-6 warriors enter premises and help self to garden led by Sambo (formerly of Native Police)
- Terrorize women – spit in face and insult⁹⁷

1859 (Aug)

- Second destruction of camps: five police shoot into camps, killing one woman, and injuring several others including children.
- Destroy and burn down huts (including all food and utensils) and evict the inhabitants (over 100) despite many being ‘harmless’ employees
- Considerable media outcry (across Australia)
- Capt Wickham offers reward to apprehend guilty parties.

1861 (Dec)

- Breakfast Creek camp reported as ‘riotous’ - continually insult, stone and rob white travelers and drive off drays (bullock teams)
- Three police (Constable Griffin and two mounted police) raid camp and arrest Harry Pring.
- Pring threatens to tomahawk judge and prosecutors.

1862

- Breakfast Creek camp residents harass and rob travelers
- Constable Griffin and one mounted trooper visit camps several times
- Police disperse inhabitants, but they return each night.

1865

- Two Constables attacked by an Aboriginal group in Valley
- Third destruction of Breakfast Creek camps as retribution. .⁹⁸

1867 (Feb)

- Aboriginal campers reported as ‘very troublesome’ and ‘annoying’
- Fourth destruction of camps by several Mounted Police under Sub-Inspector Gough – inhabitants dispersed.

1873 (August)

- Fight between ‘Ben’ and Punch’ at Bulimba continues across river at Breakfast Creek camps.⁹⁹

1873 (Nov)

- Returning from corroboree on Pine Rivers, a sizable party of Aboriginals attempt robbery of a laden dray towards Bowen Bridge.

⁹⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 20 May 1856 p. 5.

⁹⁸ *The Brisbane Courier*, 18 November 1865 p 3

⁹⁹ *Queensland Police Gazette*, 30 Aug 1873, Report of Person to Her Majesty.

- Abattoir workers fight with the attackers and capture two
- Mounted police disperse the group and take the two prisoners into custody

1885 (September)

- Three Europeans conduct an attack on an Aboriginal family.
- Aboriginal family take refuge in yard at Ascot.¹⁰⁰

An exciting if somber find during the Kingsford Smith Drive extension work was a sliding barrel Sharps carbine probably dated to 1859, under what had been a car park near Brett's Wharf. It was an American Civil War issue – surplus had been sold in Australia and were very popular with people on the frontier. The gun was near the former Hamilton Aboriginal camp and also not far from the original Hamilton Hotel, that had hosted an early hunting club, so it remains unclear whether the gun had some connection with the violence that marred the region, but it was certainly the 'typical weapon' of the frontier.



Figure 53: a sharps carbine



Figure 54: the carbine found at Hamilton.

Dalaipi's Indictments (1858–1859)

Between 1858 and 1859, an important Indigenous elder called Dalaipi (c. 1795–c. 1863) based himself at the Breakfast Creek camps. This was during Queensland's push for self-government, which culminated in separation from New South Wales on 6 June 1859. The camps were directly opposite Newstead House, home of the government resident and police magistrate Captain Wickham. Newstead House was also host to the Governor during the separation debate. Thus, it seems that Dalaipi believed this an opportune moment to have his people's plight considered, as Captain Wickham had initiated regular blanket-gifting to Indigenous groups at this time and was trying to monitor injustice to Indigenous groups. Describing themselves as 'delegates for all blackfellows,' Dalaipi along with Dalinkua, who seems to have been his relative, launched a series of accusations or indictments against Europeans. These were written up by someone sympathetic to their cause and printed as six instalments in the *Moreton Bay Courier* between November 1858 and January 1859. The pieces represent possibly the earliest written appeal for justice from an Aboriginal leader.

¹⁰⁰ Jim Barron III-using Blacks. *The Telegraph* 30 September 1885 p 2

Dalaipi and Dalinkua’s first indictment discussed Christian hypocrisy: “these Anglo-Saxons have not behaved towards us as if they believed that His eye was on them”.¹⁰¹ The second indictment emphasised how Europeans had taken Indigenous lands, chased the people away, and reduced them to starvation with no provision for their welfare. The third to fifth indictments continued on the theme of Christian hypocrisy. The last indictment ended by asserting that Christians “must see that our blood lies at their door”.¹⁰² The indictments attracted interest around Australia, but sadly did not produce the changes Dalaipi hoped for.

The Last Hostels: Incarceration

By the end of the 19th century, there was drive to contain all remaining remnants of Aboriginal populations within institutions. Apart from removing them to reserves and missions remote from urban centres, Aboriginal people were regularly incarcerated in leper colonies, hostels, prisons, orphanages, mental asylums, women’s refuges, and maternity homes, among other places. Sometimes this reflected their problems and disabilities, but quite often it served as a convenient means of housing Aboriginal people and controlling their activities, even if they were regularly employed in and around Brisbane. Life in these institutes was Spartan and highly regulated, with considerable comings and goings.

These institutes effectively ‘swept up’ the last Indigenous men and women still connected with the dwindling former camps in and around Brisbane. In the vicinity of Kingsford Smith Drive—and not far from the former camps—were institutes such as Tuffnell House (230 Buckland Road, Nundah), Holy Cross (Magdalen) Asylum (Chalk Street, Windsor) and the Salvation Army Maternity Home. Each of these were places wherein Aboriginal people were incarcerated, along with other inmates.

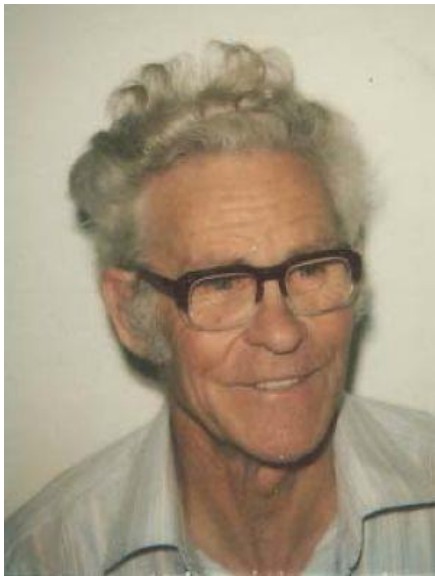


Figure 56: Des Donley

The Salvation Army Maternity Home was the last institute to be strongly connected to the Aboriginal history of Kingsford Smith Drive. It stood at what is now Cameron Rocks. It was important in the family history of many Indigenous families associated with the Brisbane area. The most famous Aboriginal person to be born here was the unionist Des Donley (1914–2011).



Figure 55: tile find from hostel site (Converge Archaeology)

¹⁰¹ *Moreton Bay Courier*, 17 November 1858, 2.

¹⁰² *Moreton Bay Courier*, 26 January 1859, 3.

BROAD TIMELINE

c. 4000 BC: sea levels rise and Brisbane River broadens from a rapid, Ice Age stream to its current form.

c.2000 BC – AD: Brisbane delta form – broad river mouth (extending to Nundah) reduced and Hamilton-Eagle Farm area formed.

AD-1823: North Shore area becomes major camping, basketry and fishing area, and important crossing point.

1823-4: Exploration by Oxley and Cunningham: large camps and pathways noted in area.

1825-1842: camps continue, with some visits by whites; convict period – Eagle Farm women’s prison; pathway of Kingsford Smith Drive becomes road through convict labour.

1842-1870s: Period of conflict – repeated razing of Hamilton and Breakfast Creek camps; resistance activities including robberies and skirmishes with police and settlers; Aboriginal fishers supplying Brisbane.

1880s-1910s: rapid decline of local Aboriginal population; removals and incarceration to Reserves and local hostels; camps disappear.

1910s-1960s: limited presence of Aboriginal people (mostly for work purposes) due to Reserve restrictions.

1960s- Now: improved legal rights; cultural revival; end of Reserve systems; Aboriginal families moving back into area; Native Title claims.

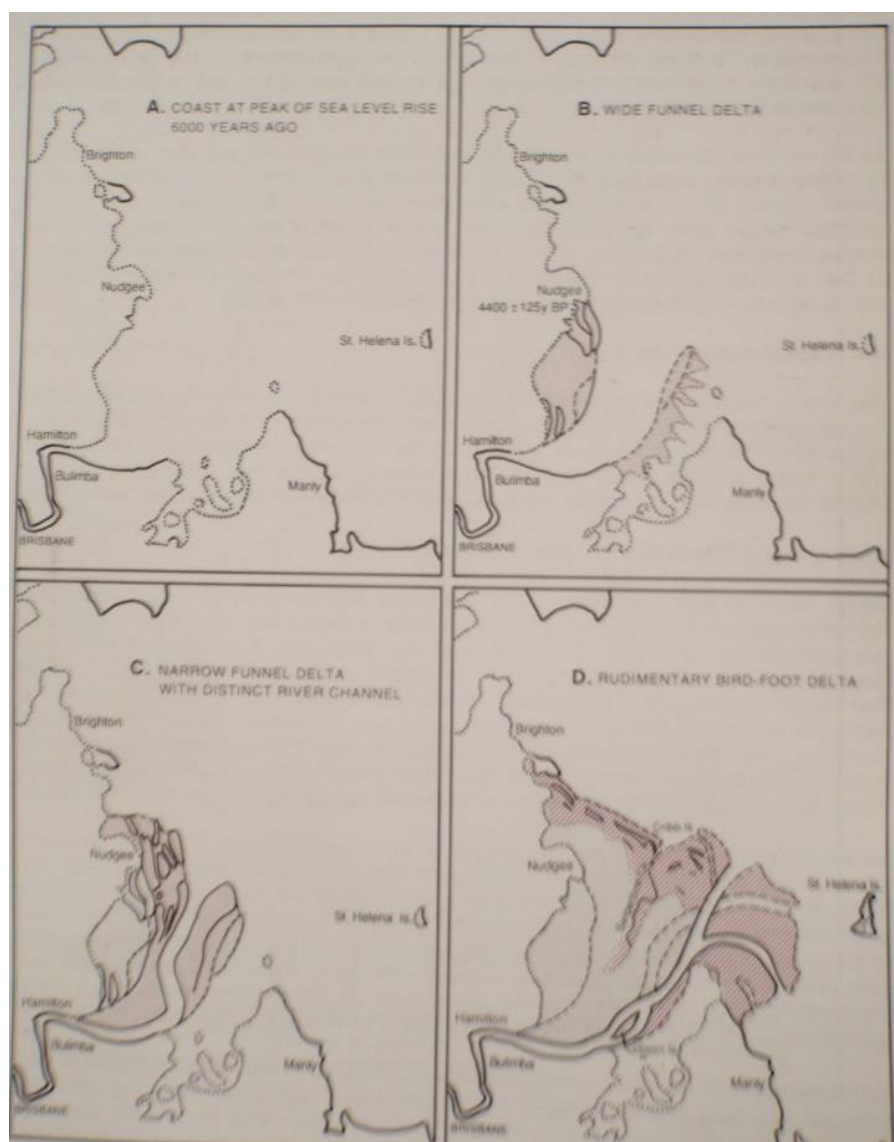


Figure 57: formation of Brisbane delta 4000 BC - AD showing creation of North Shore area.

Narrative themes/ Recommendations

- **Hamilton rainforest Pocket:** revegetation, floral/ vegetation designs, bush foods.
- **Pathways and waterways:** canoeing, transport, Kingsford Smith Drive, crossing points, regatta stories, boat types, canoe designs.
- **Fishing and fishery:** sea foods, netting designs.
- **Basketry and swamps:** revegetation, basketry designs/ examples.
- **Conflict:** Breakfast Creek as a 'border line'; commemorating frontier wars; camp sites; Aboriginal tournaments; displays.