

Newsletter



Opening hours: Every Sunday 10am – 2pm
Or by appointment.

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(Mudgeeraba Heritage Centre)

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Committee formed June 2001; Incorporated November 2001;
Dedication and official opening 9 October 2004

President's Patter

Hello everyone

On 20th August we had our AGM. I would like to thank everyone for the hard work they have put in over the past 12 months and the wonderful things that have been achieved during that time. I would like to thank Anne, our secretary, for the wonderful work she does in organising all the school and group visits to the museum as well as the other admin work that is required. Thanks to Sue for keeping the finances in order and for keeping the records for donations etc. up to date. To the rest of our committee thanks for everything that you do – organising displays, dusting, mowing, gardening, repairs to name a few of the ongoing work needed. Myself, Anne and Sue were once again re-elected into the executive roles. Thank you to everyone for your trust in us to continue these roles.

Joan

We are on Facebook and Instagram -
GC Hinterland Heritage Museum - please like us
and spread the word.

What's been happening at the Museum



The Sheila's Shack enjoyed morning tea and a tour of the Museum.

Below: Changes have been made to the railway station display.





Urban Sketchers enjoyed a return visit to the Museum.



New display coming soon in the costume room, Okey House.



The costume room is having a makeover. Keep up to date on our Facebook page to see what is coming. Stay tuned.

MERRIMAC BUNYIP

MERRIMAC BUNYIP (1938, July 12). The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1933 - 1954), p. 11 (Second Section.). Retrieved August 22, 2023, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40993729>

Crocodile Theory Supported

BURLEIGH HEADS, Monday. – Although many people scoff at reports of the presence of some animal likened to a so-called bunyip in the Miami and Merrimac swamps, pioneers of the South Coast tell interesting stories of their experiences.

Mr. S. Pratt of Surfers Paradise, who is well known in the fishing industry, said that about four years ago he and his mates were fishing in the Nerang River, near Harper's Wharf, where the Little Tallebudgera Creek empties into the river, when they saw what they believed to be a crocodile

or alligator, about 6ft. long, waddle off the banks into the river, within a few feet of where they were fishing.

Mr Pratt contends that as Harper's Wharf is only two miles from where a strange animal was seen recently, and Little Tallebudgera Creek is an outlet of the swamp it is possible that a crocodile was encountered.

BOOMING NOISES. One of the pioneers of the South Coast, Mr J Dennis, owner of the West Burleigh sawmill, said that some years ago he bought all the standing timber on the Brakes Estate. Most of it was on the high land towards the Merrimac drain.

Mr Dennis employed two local men to fell the timber, and built a hut for them to camp on the spot.

The men camped for a couple of nights and were awakened at intervals by loud booming noises from the swamp, 50 yards away.

'One night a terrifying noise, which appeared to be from some animal within a few feet of the hut – was heard and frightened the men so much that they refused to camp on the spot and returned to their homes,' said Mr Dennis.

A man named Resson who lived in the district and who had been in the alligator country, told Mr Dennis at the time that when he heard the booming noises coming from the swamp he was sure they were caused by a bull crocodile.

Bunyip-Crocodile Found at Merrimac Swamp

Bunyip-Crocodile Found At Merrimac Swamp (1938, July 5). *The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1933 - 1954)*, p. 3. Retrieved August 22, 2023, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article41004362>

Has the bunyip, which, according to some accounts, for more than 25 years has lent an air of mystery to the swamp between Miami and Merrimac, been tracked to its lair?

Many people in the South Coast district are not even aware that the place boasts a real, live bunyip, and are frankly incredulous. Others tell of an expedition into the Merrimac swamp to trace the author of a nocturnal booming noise, and of the expedition's horses bolting and its dogs refusing to forage.

Now comes what seems like an explanation from the Burleigh Heads correspondent of The Courier Mail, who writes that Mr Charles Finamor, sanitary contractor to the Nerang Shire Council, last week encountered a crocodile 10 feet long lying in the long grass close to the rubbish tip at the depot, at the northern end of the Merrimac swamp.

Mr Finamor followed the crocodile into the undergrowth and came upon the remains of a cow, the bones of which were scattered in all directions. The correspondent adds that Mr Finamor now keeps a long spear handy when working in the grass at the rubbish depot.

The Director of the Queensland Museum (Mr H A Longman) said last night that if there was a crocodile in the Merrimac district it was probably an escapee from captivity. He remembered a case of a crocodile escaping south of Brisbane about 30 years ago. The Mary River was regarded as the most southerly point where crocodiles were found.

Wizard of Merrimac

Wizard of Merrimac (1929, June 21). South Coast Bulletin (Southport, Qld. : 1929 - 1954), p. 8. Retrieved August 22, 2023, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article136472777>

VIEWS OF OWNERS AND HEIRS

By J.M. Goodwin

On Sunday a special command meeting, convened by Lord Bunyip, was held at the head of the Big Swamp, midway between Merrimac and Mudgeeraba, at which a full attendance of the furred and feathered inhabitants of the above-mentioned districts attended.

Heated discussion took place with reference to the gigantic proposal to settle 600 English families and their encumbrances on 1200 acres of Merrimac flats.

Mr Paddy Melon proposed that Lord Bunyip take the stump. – Carried, with a great fluttering of wing; and stamping of feet; but a mighty woop from his Lordship silenced the assembly.

His Lordship: Worthy brethren, as the supreme ruler of all that you see, and a lot that you cannot see, I wish all of you to open your side flaps and hear, my warning:

And it came to pass that in the year 1929 the name of one, H. Moreton Frewen, appeared in a wicked newspaper called the South Coast Bulletin, the said, H. Moreton Frewen being the Boss wizard of a scheme to settle 600 English farming families on 1200 acres of our fertile land, which has provided us with our daily rations from long before Captain Cook discovered this country.

Do you realise the hardships before us if they settle all those boss cockies on our land – our birthright?

Mr Jacky Kookaburra: Excuse my hilarity; but who's paying the piper?

His Lordship: The blokes from Wall street and Petticoat Lane; and perhaps the Nerang Shire Council will act in conjunction, if funds are available.

Mr White Ant: Is it a fact your Lordship that the British Government are prepared to fork out 1,000,000 to finance the scheme?

His Lordship: Yes, provided it has an open go to get the money back and also a bit over in case of necessity.

Mr Opossum: In your Lordship's remarks you mentioned that these farmers would have everything free; does that include free air too?

His Lordship: That's right; and with a free farm on which they will grow two crops of rice in one year and also a goodly patch of lettuce for poor old Sydney and dismal little Victoria. They can't grow them there, it's too cold. These cockies will be right on the pig's back.

Mr Bandicoot: That's the stuff to give 'em.

His Lordship: Order, order, please.

Mr Bandicoot: Order, my oath; order a ton of rice and a quarter of lettuce.

His Lordship: Silence ---.

Mr Magpie: Is it true your Lordship, that if they settle the brave 600 in this centre mentioned, that Jimmy Hardy, Jacky Lawton and Gough Rudd will have to hump Matilda?

His Lordship: Sit down you uncouth scavenger, when you refer to those gentlemen you must give them their proper handles, Messrs., or Chairman, etc.

At this stage Mr Cockatoo, who had a commanding view from a tall gum tree, was rudely awakened by the rattle of Brother Symond's Lizzie, and casting his weather eye towards the Southport Jubilee Bridge and the Southport Show Ground, screeched out: - 'There's another car Desottoed'.

Mr Crow: That's Cronk, and it will have to stop before our oversea friends arrive; otherwise we will be Griceless.

The Pelican: You mean riceless; you old idiot.

His Lordship: I'll have you all understand that you must confine your remarks entirely on the matter under discussion, viz. the settling of the gallant 600.

Mr Willy Wagtail: Are there any pretty lassies amongst the 600?

His Lordship: You bet, my friend, dozens of them; in fact, some of my rich relations.

The Lovable Bear: Book a dozen of two for me and me cobbors – Lancashire dames preferred.

Mr 'Roo: Not for mine; the Aussies will do me.

His Lordship: It is getting near grub time and this is frivolous. I move that we, the rightful owners of all the fertile land in the parishes of Merrimac

and Mudgeeraba cable to the Home Department protesting against the invasion of the 600 gallants, at the same time stating that the land in question is at present under perpetual lease, to we, the furred and feathered inhabitants.

Seconded by Mr Fox and carried unanimously.

His Lordship: Brethren, we will all join in singing the closing Ode.

Chorus: Fogland or sunshine – There's no place like home.

The next meeting will be held when the 600 arrive, and the member for 'Rooland will propose that his Lordship the Bunyip display by manifestations and unearthly growls his strong disapproval of the presence of the invaders.

Is it a Seal, Crocodile, or Bunyip

Is It Seal, Crocodile, Or Bunyip? (1938, July 7). *The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1933 - 1954)*, p. 1. Retrieved August 23, 2023, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article41015423>

Since Mr C Finamor reported seeing what he believed to be a 10ft crocodile in the swamp between Miami and Merrimac, district residents are speculating whether the creature is a seal, sealion, crocodile – or bunyip.

Old inhabitants recall a number of 'bunyip' stories, several of them exploded in the last 35 years.

Mr Walter Lawty, one of the first settlers., said that about 30 years ago wailing noises were heard from the rocks near the bathing area, but a search revealed nothing. Subsequently a boy saw a big grey animal near the rocks at dusk. He ran home, and Mr Lawty and others searched and shot the animal, which proved to be a common grey seal, 9ft 6in long. Mr Lawty confirms the reports that booming noises have been heard in the Miami swamp and thinks the animal making them may be another seal, a sea lion, or an escaped crocodile.

Mr W R Clarke, of Geebeegimba, Burleigh Heads, said that many years ago he and Mr 'Dick' Robinson, a cattleman, were near the beach at Surfers Paradise, when they heard a deep booming sound and saw the tracks of a big animal in the sand. Both were convinced that the tracks were those of a seal or sea lion, which could easily have crossed into the Nerang River.

Mr Clarke thinks there is a seal or a sea lion in the deep hole in the swamp at the Merrimac end.

Mrs Clarke, who has lived on the South Coast nearly all her life, says that many years ago blacks, who camped midway between Burleigh and West Burleigh, would become uneasy when they heard the booming noise and

within a few hours would set off to another camping ground at Murwillumbah to get away from the 'debil-debil'.

Mr Joe Cagnacci, of Burleigh Heads, says the booming noises are not made by an animal, but by birds standing more than 3ft high. He saw and heard two of them in the swamp when mustering cattle.

THE BUNYIP by Campbell Duncan

Some ninety years, it first was heard
Was it reptile, beast or bird –
A combination of all three?
A monster resting from the sea
Come to feast or else to romp
In lagoons and in the swamp.

There was speculation of the most,
By folk who dwelt upon this Coast –
The early pioneering stock
Tough as nails and hard as rock,
Who cleared the land of scrub and trees –
No 'Beatle flower-people' these.

But, in the very still of night
With bated breath and full of fright,
They'd hear the Bunyip's roaring sound.
The blankets o'er their heads they'd pull,
Or stuff their ears with cotton wool.

Aborigines, camping west of Burleigh,
Shrank further back, within their wurley.
Or built the fire, big and bright,
To keep them safe. Throughout the night
Dogs barked and whined with mortal fear
When Bunyip called, for all to hear.

The lonesome traveller on the track –
You'd find him, often glancing back
Seeking, but hoping not to find,
Self preservation in his mind.
Crack a twig and you would see
Him, up the very tallest tree.

The museum would pay a price 'twas thought'
If it could be trapped or caught.
What makes this loud and fearful noise –
This question's asked among the boys.
Some said a 'gater, some a drum
Some, lack of water with the rum.

For long periods, it went away
We'd think, 'hurrah, it's gone to stay'.
Then would come a lot of rain -
Ah-ha the old boy's back again!
The old familiar sound was there –
Pear fires would start up everywhere.

Smogs so thick, just like a wall,
Motorists slowed down to a crawl,
Swearing much about delay -
Broken vehicles by the way.
Imagine how it made them wild.
They didn't know that 'something' smiled.

There's great development on this Coast.
As much as anywhere can boast,
But, still some swampland tall with reeds
A place to fill a Bunyip's needs
Which will win? It's hard to say
One will go and one will stay.

When bulldozers start to disappear,
To local folk it will be clear,
That fire and brimstone has begun –
And they will take it, on the run
The fastest route along the track –
Don't know about you, I'm moving back.

Management Committee 2023

Joan Rudd [President], Anne Panitz [Secretary]. Sue Mills [Treasurer, Registrar, Newsletter] Jack Rudd, Brian Cox, George O'Brien, Lenore Crouch, Mariette Buckingham, Neil Sands, Pam Sands, Peter Jones, Carol Jones, Warren Davis, Tom Cowper, Lloyd Mills, Beatrice Booth, Odette Dalton.

Meetings held 3rd Sunday of each month on site.

Our aim is to collect and preserve historical and heritage material illustrating the growth and development of the Hinterland Region of the Gold Coast from the original pioneering days until today. We plan to arrange and describe these materials and make them accessible to the general public on a regular basis as well as providing educational programs where possible to increase public awareness and appreciation of the Gold Coast Hinterland region's history and development. Members of the Management Committee have connections with pioneering families in the district.

"Friends of the Museum" is for anyone who shares our same interest in preserving the history of our region and is interested in assisting with the set-up and operation of the museum.

Further details on the 'Friends' and application form may be obtained from the secretary.

Diary Dates - subject to change without notice

September 2023

- 3 – Musuem open 10am-2pm
- 4 – Somerset College
- 5 – Somerset College
- 10 – Museum open 10am-2pm
- 17 – Museum open 10am-2pm
- 17 – Ford XR7 & XR8 Car club
- 17 – Museum meeting 2pm
- 24 – Museum open 10am-2pm

October 2023

- 1 – Museum open 10am-2pm
- 4 – Ashmore S S
- 5 – Ashmore S S
- 8 – Museum open 10am- 2pm
- 9 – Emmanuel College
- 10 – Visit to William Duncan S S
- 10 – Kings College
- 12 – Kings College
- 13 – Emmanuel College
- 15 – Museum open 10am-2pm

October 2023 cont....

- 15 – Museum meeting 2pm
- 17 – Kings College
- 18 – Runaway Bay Retirement Community
- 19 – Seniors Day
- 22 – Museum open 10am-2pm
- 29 – Museum open 10am-2pm

November 2023

- 5– Museum open 10am-2pm
- 7– A B Paterson College
- 9 – A B Paterson College
- 12 – Museum open 10am-2pm
- 15 – Coffs Harbour Bible Church School
- 19 – Museum open 10am-2pm
- 19 – Museum meeting 2pm
- 26 Museum open 10am-2pm

December 2023

- 3 – Museum open 10am-2pm

The Museum Committee would like to thank the Council of the City of Gold Coast for their continued support of the Museum through Whole of City Funding and rate reduction.