July 2026 Vol. 22 No. 3

Newsletter

Gold Coast Hinterland Heritage Museum Inc.

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

238 Mudgeeraba Road, Mudgeeraba
(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

Well, the year is nearly half over and it has been a busy few months with school visits. Thank you to everyone involved.

We have had a visit from the Robina View Club for morning tea. We attended the Mudgeeraba Street Party. Thank you to all the helpers on the day.

We have also been visited by members of the Royal Queensland Art Society who spent a morning in the sun painting. Country singer Kerrie Perrett did a photo shoot for her upcoming album as well.

Maintenance wise we are in the process of painting Franklin House.
We repaired the steps and fence of Okey House. Thank you Lloyd for all your hard work.
Thank you to all our hard-working volunteers for your tireless efforts.

Neil





Our volunteers have been busy cleaning, painting, rearranging items for a fresh new look. You need to come on a Sunday to see all the changes that have been made to our displays.

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Do you know where this is? To find out you will need to visit the Museum on a Sunday between 10am and 2pm.



Replacing the Museum sign on Franklin House after it was painted.





Country singer Kerrie Perrett came to the Museum recently for a photo shoot for her upcoming album.



A visit by a local family enjoying morning tea on our verandah.



A morning of painting by the Gold Coast branch of the Royal Queensland Arts Society.



Nerang State School

125th Anniversary; 1875 – 2000 Nerang State School . p. 9.

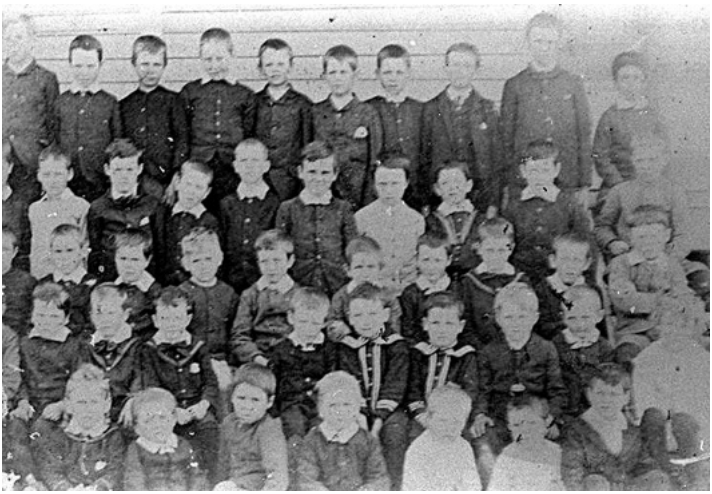
In 1875 the township of Nerang had in Price Street, a store, butcher's shop, a bakery and Ben Cockerill's Royal Mail Hotel.

The Queensland State Education Act provided for a Department of Public Instruction under a minister and a system of state primary schools.

A new school and teacher's residence were at the northern end of the town; there was also a wharf.

The first school master was Thomas Junius Johnson, and the total enrolment was 47. Surnames of Cooper, Browne, Page, Batten, Glass, Cockerill, Warples, Johnson, Karkow, Thompson, Hope, Veivers, Berg, Gooding, Muir and Mitchell made up the inaugural roll call. At the end of 1875 the Coomera and Nerang State Schools were the only schools between Beenleigh and New South Wales.

Below: Boys of Nerang State School, 1886



Gilston State School

Gilston State School Centenary 1881-198. p. 3,5,6.

Many of the first schools in Australia began in primitive surroundings – some were little more that lean-tos, but few parents cared as long as there was a chance for their children to learn to read and write and even add up an occasional sum.

Gilston was no exception, or, as the forested area was known in the early days, Upper Nerang. By 1880, there were enough families at Upper Nerang to warrant the building of the district's own school. Many children were travelling long distances to Nerang State School.

Then providence stepped in, as it often does.

One day, two men arrived at the Duncan home and of course they were invited to stay. Over a meal of hand ground porridge, one of the men, Daniel Walters, revealed that he had ability as a tutor and he was persuaded to teach the Duncan children. Here was a ready-made teacher for the parent's dream of a proper school.

In those days, the wheels of progress turned slowly and it wasn't until May 14, 1881, that district inspector Mr James Platt visited Upper Nerang. He talked to Messrs Black, Duncan and Zimmerman about a school but was unable to have consultations with residents on the south side because the Nerang River was in full flood.

Proposed was a two-acre site on the south side of the river. This had been offered by a selector named Lord (selection no. 942 parish of Gilston). It was adjacent to 10 acres of Crown land which the committee hoped the government would add to the two acres. Residents were unanimous in their approval of the Lord site with one exception and that was Mr Turner who lived a long way up the river.

While negotiations continued the little bush school continued with an average enrolment of about 17 children and that impressed the district inspector.

There was another reason Mr Platt's enthusiasm for a bigger school at Upper Nerang and that was a night school, specially conducted for five boys who worked by day.

By June 1, 1882, it was all official and the Upper Nerang Provisional School opened under the control of the Education Department, with Daniel Walters as head teacher. The roll call at the first official school was dominated by a few families – Burg, Duncan, Lentz, Neinert, Thompson, and Zimmerman. Enrolment was 26 but average attendance was 12. In 1882 however, attendance increased and a bigger school was built and for the shingle roofed building the government gave £2, for every £1 raised by local residents.

By 1909 the school was classed as a class 10 State School and the Education granted £45 for extensions. But these extensions didn't last long, because the school disintegrated and in 1910 it was decided that a new building was needed. For it the committee agreed to raise one-fifth of

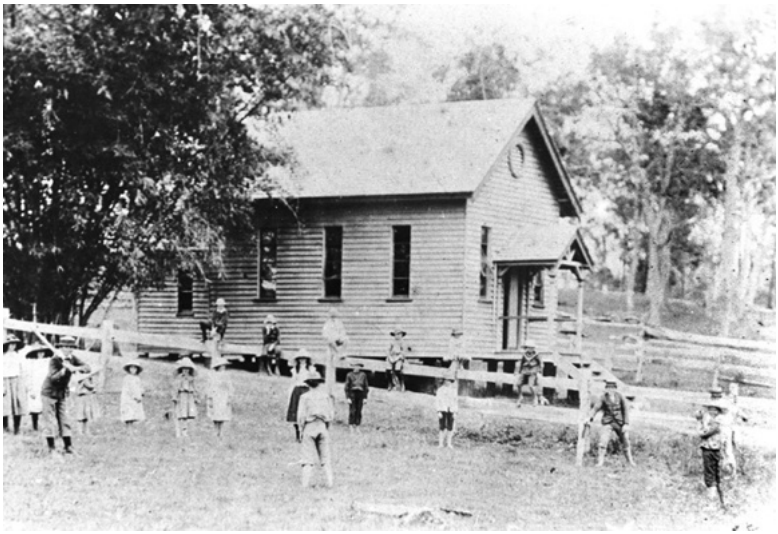


Left: Gilston State School, 1897 [Image courtesy City of Gold Coast Local Studies Collection]

the cost. While the school was being constructed, the Gilston Lutheran Church committeepermitted school to carry on in the church hall. The old school was bought for removal by Mr A Batten for £25.
The new school was opened on July 31, 1911, with teacher James Adam. Another teacher's house was built in 1915.

Mudgeeraba State School

Bush Schools and Golden Rules – The Spirit of Mudgeeraba State School by Robyn Burrows. Pp.3,.
As the selections were gradually taken up, there came a sufficient number of potential pupils to start a provisional school in the central Mudgeeraba area. An official application was made to the Department of Public Instruction in May 1877; however, it was to be several years before a new school eventuated. Finding a suitable building to house the school proved to be a problem. The Presbyterian Church was built in 1890, and it was in this building that Mudgeeraba Lower Provisional School opened to received pupils on March 31, 1892. Thirteen children were enrolled on the inaugural day, twelve pupils being the minimum number of children for which a provisional school may be opened. The first three children on the roll were members of the Andrews family, children of Isaac and Grace Andrews who were a prominent local family. The Ferguson children were next; their father was the manager of the Mudgeeraba Hotel, which was owned by William Laver, another renowned citizen. Members of the Laver and Rudd families completed the initial enrolment.
Clifford Curtis was the first head teacher. As the only teacher at the school, Clifford Curtis taught all classes. His position commandeered an annual salary of £, with an additional special allowance of £2 plus a princely sum of six shillings per annum for postage. His wife, Charlotte, taught needlework at the school as was the custom. She received no recompense for her duties as they were regarded as part of her husband's condition of employment.
After 1912, as the outlying village slowly relocated to the present commercial site of



Left: Mudgeeraba Presbyterian Church was the school during the week, 1902 [Image courtesy of City of Gold Coast Local Studies collection]

Mudgeeraba, moves were under way for the establishment of a state school.
An application was made, sometime between February and July 1912, to the Department of Public Instruction for the construction of a state school in central Mudgeeraba. Isaac Andrews offered a two-acre site for the purpose. The land adjoined the first residential subdivision in Mudgeeraba, known as Mudgeeraba Station Estate, which comprised parts of Portions 1b and 51.
The school was originally known as Mudgeraba Lower.
It became a State School in 1915 and the name was changed to Mudgeraba. In 1925 the name was changed again to Mudgeeraba.

Neranwood Provisional School (#1818) 1925 – 1928
Bush Schools and Golden Rules – The Spirit of Mudgeeraba State School by Robyn Burrows. Pp.95, 96

In the early 1920s, the Nerang Hardwood Company began construction on a large mill in an area that was known as Little Nerang. The land on which the mill was constructed was a one-hundred-acre subdivision from Portion 19V, which was being purchased on terms from George Trapp, the original owner of the land. The area became known as Neranwood by both Postal and Lands Departments and by late 1923 the building of the tram line was under way. A report by the school Inspector in December 1924 reveals the Nerang Hardwood Company was said to have spent £80,000 on the construction of the Neranwood to Mudgeeraba tramway. Priority for attracting families to the area became the establishment of a school. The nearest school was located at Upper Mudgeeraba, five miles away by road and over mountainous country and two creek crossings.
A formal application for the Establishment of a State School was made on October 11, 1924, by the Building Committee. It was established the school would cater for a prospective number of sixty to seventy pupils, mainly children of the mill hands employed by the Neranwood Hardwood Company and a few local farmers.
From a list of twenty-three prospective pupils, fifteen were verified. Known as Neranwood Provisional School, the building opened to receive the first pupils on June 15, 1925. Edward Henry Rosin was the head teacher. Ten pupils enrolled on the first day.

Austinville State School (#1131) 1934 - 1939
Bush Schools and Golden Rules – The Spirit of Mudgeeraba State School by Robyn Burrows. Pp.100,

A Depression Relief Scheme was introduced in Queensland during the early 1930s to increase land productivity and decentralise unemployed families. Sections of Portions 82 and 83, Parish of Mudgeeraba, were chosen for the site of the new community. With the impending arrival of fifty families also came the need for a school. On November 3, 1933 the Department of Labour and Industry advised the Department of Public Instruction that a school would be soon needed in the area.
In its planning stage, the school was referred to by the Department as ‘Mudgeeraba Banana Settlement State School’. The Shire Clerk, Mr Arthur Gibbs, recommended before the opening of the school that the Department of Public Instruction officially recognise the establishment as

Austinville State School. The school opened in June 1934, The school building was a two-roomed sectional structure, situated on the slope of a hill about the centre of the settlement. William Goodsall was appointed acting head teacher, and he was assisted in his duties by Charles Mervyn Nellie, aged twenty. School commenced on 25th June 1934 with an enrolment of thirty-five pupils aged between fourteen and five years. By April 1939, there was only an average daily attendance of six pupils; the required number of students that was required to keep a school open was nine. The Department sent notification of the impending closure of the school and Eric Wallis Lane ceased duty at Austinville on June 9, 1939. There were only two or three families left at Austinville when the school closed.



Austinville State School. [Image courtesy City of Gold Coast Local Studies Collection]

Management Committee 2025

Joan Rudd [Patron], Neil Sands [President], Anne Panitz [Secretary]. Sue Mills [Treasurer, Registrar, Newsletter] Jack Rudd, Brian Cox, Lenore Crouch, Pam Sands, Peter Jones, Carol Jones, Warren Davis, Tom Cowper, Lloyd Mills, Odette Dalton.

Meetings held 3rd Sunday of the month.

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 including an application form may be obtained from the secretary.

Diary Dates – subject to change without notice

JULY 2026

4 - Photo shoot
5 – Museum open 10am-2pm
12– Museum open 10am-2pm
14 – Benowa SS
15 – Benowa SS
16 – Benowa SS
19 – Museum open 10am-2pm
20 – Heritage Connect meeting 9.30
20 – Grant information night 7.30
23 – Royal Qld Arts Society 9am
26 – Museum open 10am-2pm
27 – Clover Hill SS
28 – Clover Hill SS
30 – Clover Hill SS
31 – Estina Health

AUGUST 2026

2 – Museum open 10am-2pm
9 – Museum open 10am-2pm
10 – Hillcrest College
11 – St Vincents
13 – St Vincents
16 – Museum open 10am-2pm
16 – AGM
18 – Silkwood school
19 – 22 Filming
23 – Museum open 10am-2pm
30 – Museum meeting 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.