

NAMBOUR & DISTRICT HISTORICAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION INC.

History of the Nambour Museum

1. The Land and Building

The land on which the Nambour & District Museum stands is a small part of Portion 21 Parish of Maroochy Selection Number 914. This was selected on 30 March 1870 by William Samwell. He applied to have the area of 3000 acres reduced to 1625 acres, claiming that the area north of present day Tuckers Creek was unsuitable for pastoral or any other purpose.

The local district was known as Naamba which refers to the willow bottlebrush *Callistemon salignus*, a small tree with a beautiful useful bark. Samwell however called his property Nambour from whence the town later acquired its name. Samwell's selection was initially transferred to Andrew Corbett in October 1872 and later to Lawrence Cusack in April 1875.



In 1892 after protracted negotiations, the South Australian Land and Mortgage Co. Ltd. agreed to transfer one acre to the Department of Public Instruction for the sum of four pounds. These were allotments 47 and 48, part of the land mortgaged to the company by Lawrence Cusack whose estate was being liquidated.

Here the Nambour Provisional School was built in the approximate position where the Museum now stands. Nambour children previously had been educated at the Maroochy Provisional School situated between Nambour and Yandina from 1879 and then in temporary accommodation in a building belonging to Carroll's Hotel near Showgrounds Hill.

With Nambour's growth, a larger school building was needed. Land to the north of the school was purchased from the Moreton Central Sugar Mill and on 31 October 1898 Nambour State School opened with 51 children. The old provisional school was converted into a residence for the head teacher.

A new school residence was built in 1908. This residence forms the nucleus of the present Nambour Museum. It is hoped that in the future, these rooms might be restored to their original use. After a new school was built in Carroll Avenue, the Nambour Rural School closed its doors for the last time on 12 December 1930. The school itself was in use for some time as a venue for dances called "Bob Hops". In May 1932, the buildings were used as isolation quarters during a diphtheria outbreak in the district.

2. Establishment of the Museum



On 22 April 1992, a public meeting was held at St John's Anglican Church Hall to gauge the support for the establishment of a Museum in Nambour. Twenty-seven people attended and a steering committee was formed of Bob King, David Smart and Claire Joliffe. Monthly meetings followed in the

Church Hall and then at the residence of Gwen and Reuel Street.

A generous donation from a local citizen, Mrs Bolton, enabled the Museum Committee to sign a lease in November 1995 for a few rooms in this building and thus the Nambour Museum became a reality with an opening ceremony on 20 April 1996.

However the large annual rental proved an almost impossible task for such a small group of people, so the news that Peter Wellington had negotiated to have the entire building transferred to the museum for the peppercorn rent for \$1.00 ensured that the Museum Association would be able to continue.

The Nambour Museum building stands on Mitchell Street named after David Mitchell, a prominent Nambour businessman and a member of the Divisional Board Committee chosen to name the streets of Nambour in 1896. The property extends through to Bury Street at the rear with the street named after G.L. Bury, another local businessman and Councillor.

Mitchell Street (below)



Bury Street (above)



Bury Street (rear entrance)