

Wellington Point – history

by Mary Howells

Surveying and Early Settlement

Wellington Point was surveyed and named by Robert Dixon in 1842. His survey of Moreton Bay was dedicated to the Duke of Cleveland. Waterloo Bay, King Island, Raby Bay, Cleveland Point, Hilliards and Tingalpa Creeks were also named.¹ A more detailed survey of the area was undertaken by James Warner in 1861 and a further survey in 1864 marked out subdivisions on the point and back to the Birkdale Road.² This land was sold to Brisbane business people.

One of the first settlers in the area was Gilbert Burnett. He arrived in Australia from England with his family in 1866 and after spending some time at the Gympie Goldfields, married Martha Dawson in 1869. Her father John ran a sugar mill at Manly in the vicinity of the old Edgell Factory. John Dawson became ill and Gilbert then managed his mill. When he died the property was sold and Gilbert went to work at Richard Newton's sugar mill at Redland Bay. Louis Hope was the leading sugar grower in the region and he then hired Burnett as manager. Burnett worked for Hope for some years and ultimately bought much of his milling equipment when Hope's mill was dismantled in 1874. In 1875 Burnett took out a seven year lease on all of Hope's land on the western side of Hilliards Creek. He established his home on the current site of *Whepstead*. The estate was known as *Trafalgar Vale*. Burnett carried on in the sugar industry with the assistance of kanaka labourers.³

Establishment of Local Government

In November 1879 the government passed the Divisional Boards Act, which required new municipal boundaries comprising 72 divisions in Queensland. The Tingalpa Divisional Board boundaries were immense and covered all of the current Redland Shire, the Brisbane suburbs of Burbank, Rochedale and Eight Mile Plains and Logan City suburbs to the east of Kingston Road down to the Logan River. The first meeting of the Tingalpa Divisional Board was held at Heinemann's house at Mt Cotton on 5 February 1880. Early councillors included Gilbert Burnett, James Willard of Capalaba and Michael Ryan of Cleveland. Robert Grieve (of what is now Rochedale) was the first chairman. In 1881 Gilbert Burnett was elected chairman. By that time the Board had established itself at Mt Cotton and had built an office/hall known as the Board's House. The size of the administration area was cumbersome and in April 1885, William Thorne of Mooroodu Point who was chairman at the time, wrote to the Colonial Secretary asking that a separate division be formed.⁴

The first meeting of the Cleveland Divisional Board was held at William Ross's house at Cleveland in July 1885. Subsequent meetings were held at Chairman Gilbert Burnett's house *Trafalgar Vale*.⁵ Burnett was keen to establish the headquarters of the Divisional Board in Wellington Point. At that time he had moved from sugar milling into saw milling and had begun subdividing land at Wellington Point. Initial subdivisions were adjoining the mill, which was in Fernbourne Road, and the adjacent area, which included Station and Harris Streets, Valley Road, Roberts, Musgrave, Apsley, Arthur and Wellesley Streets. Unfortunately for Burnett, the other councillors chose to locate the Divisional

Board office in Cleveland. ⁶ Land was allocated on the corner of Middle and Bloomfield Streets in late 1885. ⁷ Both Burnett and the clerk of the council Richard Rogers (who was also clerk at Burnett's mill) resigned when this decision was made, citing business reasons. ⁸

Establishing infrastructure

The first mail service to the region was established in 1882, with the receiving office operating from Gilbert Burnett's residence. Once the railway arrived in 1889, the mail was collected from the railway station. ⁹

From 1884 the promise of a railway to Cleveland led to the inevitable meetings and deputations concerning the most suitable route. Initial speculation suggested that a direct route along Old Cleveland Road would be chosen as the most direct one. However the initial survey revealed poor quality soil along this route. The government wanted to open up the best agricultural land so that the railway would be used to transport produce to market. It was desirable to service the fort at Lytton and as well. Ultimately the coastal route via Wynnum and Manly was chosen. The route from Birkdale through Wellington Point was initially marked out much further south. A Select Committee of Inquiry was called in November 1886. One of the key witnesses was Gilbert Burnett. He indicated that at that time only about one quarter of the agricultural land in the district was under cultivation. The potential existed for much expansion in this industry. A railway would allow more people to access this land and to get their produce to markets. Burnett was already transporting timber by dray to Bulimba, Coorparoo and Wynnum. Following this inquiry the route was changed so that the railway station at Wellington Point was quite close to Burnett's mill. ¹⁰

The children of this growing area generally attended the Cleveland West (Ormiston) School. They could cross Hilliards Creek at the end of what is now Edith Street via a timber road bridge to Hilliards Street on the Ormiston side or via a log footbridge, which roughly links Duncan Road and Oak Street. Both bridges date back to the days of Louis Hope's sugar plantation and it is likely that they were built by kanaka labour.

Local residents of Wellington Point wanted a local school and on 14 March 1885 a public meeting was held and a committee formed aimed at establishing a school in Wellington Point. After much deliberation land was purchased from James Davidson in mid 1886 and tenders were called for the construction of the school house and teacher's residence in July 1886. The successful tenderer was local builder Pat Horisk. ¹¹ He had completed construction of the Redland Bay School in December 1885. The Wellington Point School opened in May 1887 with Joseph Wedd as the first teacher.

Occupations

During the mid 1880s the region was developing rapidly. Permanent residents included engineer Thomas McGovern and oysterman Frederick Schultz who lived on either side of the Point, Davidsons and Ziegenfusz on either side of Douro Road, and the many workers at Burnett's Mill. These included Gilbert's brother George, who was the mill manager and sawyer, who lived on the northern corner of Station Street, their father John who lived nearby on the main road, gardener Richard (Dicky) Dart, clerk Richard Rogers, carpenter Joseph Clark and fireman William Lovett, who lived in the house now known as *Casuarina Cottage*. ¹² By 1888 John C Wilson opened the Wellington Point

Family Hotel and store.¹³ William Cross established a butcher shop on the corner of Valley Road and the main road at that time also. (His father James had a butchery business in Cleveland.) By 1889, William Birgan was running a store on a site opposite the current BP Service Station. The store burnt down in October 1890.¹⁴

Mr Helmholtz lived next door and at that time had extensive vineyards planted down towards the bay. An agricultural reporter who visited Wellington Point in 1885 noted the importance of Helmholtz's vineyards, which were planted chiefly with Isabella grapes which produced 300 gallons of wine each year. Helmholtz sold the wine for 15 shillings a dozen. It would seem that the market for wine was not a viable one and he was destined to follow other local farmers and turn to banana growing. Those involved in banana culture in 1885 included Messrs Wendt jnr, Ziegenfusz, Helmholtz Snr and Jnr, Gothelfstackel, Eichenloff, Johnstone Bros and Woodgate and sons of Birkdale. The other major property in the area was Peter Binger's orchard (on the current site of the Mary McKillop School and Church) and the adjoining orchard of James Pink's (in the vicinity of Collingwood, Hardy, Pitt and Badgen Roads) which was managed by Edward Vorweg. This property was known as *The Badgens*. At that time there were over 600 orange trees on Pink's plantation.¹⁵ Pink, in partnership with Alf Nightingale, subdivided his estate in 1885. When James Pink left his post as curator of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens in 1886 he then lived on the land bordered by Collingwood and Pitt Roads. Grape growing remained important to the region in the late 1800s with farmers being given instructions on pruning grapes at Laing's vineyard at Wellington Point in November 1898.¹⁶ James Baron and Peter Binger were listed as vigneron from 1894 until Baron's death in 1907.

Other residents included John Kock who was managing oyster leases along the Point, and retired engineer Percival Hiley who had established his home *Seaview* on the Point. He sold some of his land in the vicinity of Marshall Lane to retired businessman John McMahan. Farmer William Wendt owned the land now occupied by the Christina Street and Oceanic Street estate and into the new Sovereign Waters Estate, which in the 1880s was known as Wendt's Swamp. Police constable Thomas Dawes was in residence in the area in the late 1880s and early 1890s. He lived in a house owned by Mrs Catherine Quaile in Valley Road. (The Divisional Board regularly asked for a police presence to oversee the Christmas holidays in Wellington Point.) The Quaile's built a home at 6 Harris Street in 1890/1 with the intention of supplying refreshments to visitors to Wellington Point and also running a horse and wagon from the station to the beach and back.¹⁷

Community activities

A Methodist Church was established in Wellington Point in 1888 adjacent to the hotel.¹⁸ Most public meetings at that time were held in the hotel which also dates from about 1888. Other community activities included the Wellington Point Athletics Club, which asked for the road in front of the hotel to be cleared as a running track in June 1890. The Agricultural Horticultural and Industrial Association was formed in November 1890. Those attending the initial meeting included Gilbert Burnett, James Davidson, James Pink, Alex Cowan, Percival Hiley, William Ross, Carl Ziegenfusz, W Gray, C Daveson, P Hanlon, James Baron, C Johnson, George Randall, John Cameron and John Hargreave.¹⁹

The committee was originally known as the Wellington Point and Cleveland A H and I and following the success of their first show in May 1890 it was suggested that the name

Cleveland be dropped from the title due to the lack of support from the Cleveland district.²⁰ (The first show in Cleveland was not held until 1904.) A Progress Association formed in 1896.²¹ In 1897 the Wellington Point School of Arts and Agricultural Museum Committee merged with the A H and I committee. Musical groups in the area included the Wellington Point Christy Minstrels, which operated from about 1891. The A H and I Association had land adjacent to the school. A hall was transported to this site from Coorparoo in 1897.²² It was used for local shows and community activities for many years. It survived until the early 1970s when it fell into disrepair and was demolished to make way for the pre-school, which began operation in 1975.

The rivalry between Cleveland and Wellington Point was not limited to the running of the annual agricultural show. Perhaps Wellington Point residents saw themselves as the economic backbone of the region given that Cleveland was subdivided for housing rather than agriculture. While the disappointment in not gaining the seat of local government in Wellington Point was evident from 1885, by 1886 residents were lobbying for a separate division of the Cleveland Divisional Board for Wellington Point. The rivalry was so intense that in 1887 James Pink accused Cleveland residents of being jealous of Wellington Point and of inducing the postmaster to stop the mail coach from taking the mail to Wellington Point.²³ Ultimately a financial division was created rather than a political one. By June 1887 the Wellington Point accounts were kept separately and the area was named Division II in December 1890.

Recreation

Recreation was also on the agenda with the Cleveland Divisional Board writing to the Minister for Lands in October 1886 requesting that King Island be vested in the hands of the board as a reserve. At that time the island comprised about 2 acres.²⁴ This process was formalised in 1887.²⁵ By 1888 local residents petitioned the council to allocate a sum of money to cut a road through the end of the bluff on Wellington Point to allow access down to the beach and out to King Island. It does not appear to have been done at this time. By 1897 the council had purchased land at the end of the point to be included in the area for public recreation. It was a popular picnic and camping spot with tourists and the boating fraternity.²⁶ Interestingly, a newspaper report of the day indicated that King Island could be accessed via the spit at any stage of the tide except half an hour before and after high tide.²⁷

King Island became the home of the Phillips family from December 1904 until April 1906. One of the children in the family suffered from polio and medical advice of the day recommended salt water bathing and sea air. King Island was the ideal place. Mr Phillips could still commute to his bank job in the city. At that time there was half an acre of thick vine scrub with possums, bandicoots and abundant birdlife on the island.²⁸

In later years it was reported that many poultry farmers were taking sand from the beach and King Island to provide shell grit. This may partially explain the depletion of the island and the sand spit,²⁹ although erosion was also a problem. In 1917 the Manly Sailing Club agreed to clear the island of prickly pear, lantana, and 'all useless timber and undergrowth' in order to build two toilets on the island.

The other recreation reserve declared at this time was the area now known as the Geoff Skinner Reserve. It was declared a reserve for public recreation in 1888. This site again has links with Gilbert Burnett. In 1885 the area was surveyed into lots of roughly 10

acres. The area of salt pans was traversed by a tramway on a causeway between Burnett's mill and a jetty which, stretched from the mangroves to the low water mark. This causeway was constructed in 1884 when Burnett had kanakas still working for him. It was designed to transport sugar and/or timber, but it seems that it was never used for this purpose as Burnett had the mouth of Hilliards Creek deepened and he used his wharf in the creek instead. Burnett then promoted the use of this jetty as an entry point to the district.

As well as enabling prospective purchasers of his land to access the region, it was planned for the salt pans to be drained and protected by a sea wall, so that sporting activities could be carried out on weekends. A group of locals put the proposal to the Under Secretary of Public Lands in 1888. They included F T Brentnall, Gilbert Burnett, Percival Hiley, Thomas Watson Thomason, John Wilson, William Helmholtz, John Woodgate, Frederick Wendt, and Carl Ziegenfusz.³⁰ While this proposal did not proceed, a further proposal was put forward in 1900 to use the area as a rifle range.³¹ The region remained a popular tourist destination with a boarding house established by John Hine in 1890. The Waverley Boarding House was on the western side of the Point, just to the south of Marshall Lane.³² The property was auctioned in 1897 along with other choice Wellington Point properties.³³

The rise and fall of Gilbert Burnett

The railway to Cleveland was completed in late 1889. It was hoped that it would lead to further development in the region. Much of the activity in the preceding few years had been in anticipation of the railway. Probably the most enduring testament to the optimism at that time was the construction of Burnett's house *Fernbourne* (currently known as *Whepstead*). This house was designed by architect Claude Chambers and built by Cleveland builder Pat Horisk in 1889. It is of massive proportions comprising three storeys. The ground floor included a large dining room, drawing room with marble mantle piece over the fireplace, a breakfast room, study, pantry and bathroom. A staircase leads to the next floor in which there are bedrooms opening out to the verandahs and further bedrooms were on the upper floor³⁴ as well as a ship's tank for the water supply. The Burnett family, which by that time included 10 children, only lived in the house for two years, although they had lived on the site in the original home *Trafalgar Vale* since 1875.

In August 1891 Burnett was declared insolvent. He managed to avoid bankruptcy by negotiating with his creditors to have his affairs liquidated. His debts amounted to over £10,000 and his assets amounted to £3,4000. He had to sell *Fernbourne* and most of his other property. He tried to sell the sawmill, but given that the down turn in the timber industry was the reason for his demise, no buyers came forward. *Fernbourne* was purchased by the manager of the Queensland National Bank Edward Drury, who also only owned the property for a short time. He died in 1896 amid speculation that he had faked his own death to avoid prosecution over his cavalier lending practices. Burnett continued to run the sawmill for a few more years. He built a new home for his family in late 1891 or early 1892, which he also named *Fernbourne*. It was built on the only land that he still owned, behind the sawmill. That house remains today in Fernbourne Road.³⁵

Further Subdivisions and Settlers

Further land development activities by Gilbert Burnett included the floating of the Wellington Point Land Company Ltd in July 1887. Land bounded by Station Street and Duncan Road was subdivided and shareholders shared in the profits (or losses) of the venture. Land in the vicinity of Kefford Street was also subdivided and offered for sale in 1888.

Other subdivisions undertaken at the time of the construction of the Cleveland Railway included the Rolica estate adjacent to the hotel, which was subdivided by James Henry Davidson in partnership with Sir Patrick Alfred Jennings of Sydney (former Premier of New South Wales),³⁶ and the Wellesley Estate which included Thomas, Cavell and Murray Streets on the border of Birkdale and Wellington Point.³⁷ In 1889 it was promoted as being between the Wellington Point and Birkdale Stations and that there were plans to put in a siding nearby.³⁸ (Badgen Siding was established on Badgen Road in 1916.) This land was divided into 16 perch allotments. By the time the siding opened at Badgen, most of this estate on either side of Thomas Street was owned by Eliza and Pauline Hansen. The estate was run as a nursery by the Hansen family, who tried to have the roads closed on the estate in 1917.³⁹

During 1891 another significant home was built in the area by James Pink, who was Chairman of the Cleveland Divisional Board at the time. The house is now known as *The Palms* although it is likely that this name came from subsequent owners the McDonald family. The house was purchased by Peter James McDonald in 1896. He had been postmaster for South Brisbane from 1886. His sons Arthur and James are credited with starting the Bengal Chutney Company from *The Palms* at the turn of the century. A factory was established in East Brisbane in the early 1900s and the product became known as Palms Chutney.

Mr William French settled in Wellington Point in the early 1900s when he purchased part of the nursery established by James Pink. It was situated in Collingwood Road opposite Hardy Road. French had worked for Pink at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens from 1881-1885, where Pink was curator. French was appointed propagator of the Botanic Gardens at that time and remained in that position until his retirement in 1902. During his last year of service he lectured in horticulture and plant propagation at the Gatton Agricultural College.⁴⁰

20th Century Growth and Development

The first mention of the name *Whepstead* occurs in the Cleveland Shire Council's minutes of March 1909 when John O'Connell asked for the lantana to be cleared from in front of his home.⁴¹ However when the home was sold by the public trustees to the O'Connells in 1903 it was called *Whipstead* in the Queensland National Bank's Property Register at that time.⁴² Presumably the name came either from Edward Drury or from James Vincent Chataway. Chataway occupied the home following Edward Drury's death until his own death in 1901. While Chataway was in Wellington Point he was Minister for Agriculture. He maintained the gardens and orchards established by the Burnetts. It is also likely that he was instrumental in Gilbert Burnett being appointed a forest ranger in 1899.

During the 1910s the population in the area grew rapidly with a greater diversity in occupations of the residents. While farming remained the principle industry, many

retirees and commuters settled in Wellington Point. Wealthy grazier Edgar Parnell and his family moved into *Whepstead* in 1911 where he maintained interest in grazing properties in central Queensland and the Kimberleys.

Businessman Alexander James Lamont began subdivision of his property at the end of Wellington Point in 1911 which included Marshall and Champion Lanes. (Marshall was one of the first purchasers of the land and a Shire Councillor and licensee of the hotel. The Champion family lived there in the 1930s and initially ran the Station Store in partnership with Pooleys.) Lamont had a holiday home on the point at that time, most likely situated on Sub 7. He also owned land in the next section of Wellington Point, Portion 67 and then was involved in the subdivision of an estate known as Torres Vedras Estate. It was first submitted to council for approval by Blocksidge and Ferguson in mid 1912. It included Douro Road, Beachcrest, Bayview, Jellico and Acacia Streets. Little public interest was taken in the estate at that time. The main house on the estate, *Torres Vedras House* was apparently initially occupied by James Henry Davidson, who had been in the area since 1880 and was president of the AH & I Association. He had orange groves on the estate during the late 1800s.⁴³ Davidson had moved from Westbrook Station near Toowoomba which was jointly owned by John Shanahan and his brother-in-law Sir Patrick Alfred Jennings, former Premier of New South Wales. (Davidson was related to Shanahan by marriage.)

Another house built soon after the subdivision was *Talavera* which was built by Tom Morrow for his daughter Mary in about 1915. Morrow was a principal in the business of Rankin and Morrow, initially established in Mary Street Brisbane, which specialised in the importation and manufacture of condiments and confectionery. Interestingly AJ Lamont was manager for Webster and Co, a company with similar business interests, also located in Mary Street. Websters had wharves at South Brisbane and Lamont had a home in Edmonstone Street. Lamont also had interest in the Bengal Chutney Company (Palms) and his son Harry Lamont was manager of the company from 1905. Lamont purchased land in the Torres Vedras Estate in 1918. He and his second wife Ellen moved to a home in Douro Road (Resubs 150 –155, 170-175) in 1926. The house burnt down shortly thereafter due to Ellen leaving common mosquito repellent burning. The bucket of cow manure caught alight and subsequently destroyed the house.⁴⁴ Ellen and Alexander purchased *Talavera* from Mary Morrow in January 1926.⁴⁵ It is thought that Tom Morrow lived in Douro Road, possibly the house now known as *Moonie*.

Tourism

The importance of Wellington Point as a tourist destination is evidenced the proposal by the Railways Department to run a tramway from the Wellington Point station to the Point and round the loop and back in December 1913.⁴⁶ This was followed by the drive to establish a kiosk and jetty during the 1920s. The initial proposal came from Mr A Wemborn in February 1924, who later ran the hotel. He proposed a simple kiosk on land to be leased from the council on the reserve. Tenders were also to be called for the construction of a kiosk. In June proposals were received from Mr Wemborn for a kiosk and from local storekeeper Mr Robertson to simply provide hot water to weekend picnickers. (His shop was on the corner of Champion Lane and in more recent years was the Erobob Post Office.) Mr Robertson then proposed to council that he be given an exclusive bus license to run a service from the Wellington Point railway station down to the point for one year.⁴⁷

A bathing enclosure was erected on the western beach in 1922 and was constructed by the school committee to enable the children to learn to swim. A swimming carnival was held in conjunction with the opening of the enclosure, which was held in November that year.⁴⁸ In December 1923 Wellington Point ratepayers proposed the erection of a shelter shed tanks and seating on the reserve with a fence around the circular enclosure to exclude cattle horses and vehicles. Council agreed to erect the fence and local residents again lobbied for a shelter shed in March 1924, presenting the council with a petition on behalf of 94 residents. Councillors were instructed to inspect the site and provide plans at the next meeting. Approval was given to plant 6 large leaf Moreton Bay figs in the ring at the point in June 1927.

The first kiosk was established on land below the gracious home of the Johns family. It was initially built as a simple rotunda by the Johns family around May 1925. At that time others in the area were applying to council for permission to build on council land near the reserve. However the construction by the Johns on private land put paid to that notion initially.⁴⁹ The following year, the Wellington Point Progress Association proposed constructing a jetty and bathing enclosure on the south east side of the reserve, while the Wellington Point Refreshment Co. Ltd wanted to build another kiosk and jetty on the western side of the reserve. This proposal included rooms for smoking fish and an ice works.⁵⁰ The latter application was amended and lodged again in 1927 but disagreements over the lease agreement quashed the proposal. It would appear that the kiosk built by Johns was run by local shopkeeper John Robertson. He built an unofficial extension to the rotunda to include a hall. In 1929 he declined requests to licence the hall stating that it was for private functions. He continually held dances in the hall on Sundays, which was illegal.

Business premises in Wellington Point during the late 19th and early 20th centuries stretched from the railway station to the hotel, and there were a couple of shops at the top of the hill leading down to the point. Bob Laing had a blacksmith shop under the fig tree in Harris Street, although he lived in Wellesley Street. (his house remains on site) and John Wilson ran the first store from near the hotel. William Cross was listed as the Wellington Point butcher from the late 1880s. His premises were on the corner of Valley Road and Main Road. John and James Hurst operated a produce business in the area from about 1895. By 1903, John Hurst had established a store, which at some point in time was apparently run from the home known as *Coogee* in Arthur Street.⁵¹ He built a store on the corner of Apsley Street and Main Road in about 1909 (Subs 184-188, 211-215 Portion 63) which until recently, was run as a general store by Fred and Olive Kratzmann.⁵² It is currently a motor mower shop. A bakery was established between the home of the Haimes family (originally Quaile's home at No 6) and Slater's house in Harris Street⁵³. It was most likely run by W Warren from about 1917. As was customary in the Cleveland district, the bakery and the house was eventually purchased by Cleveland Baker G J Walter. It has been said that the best way to make money in the district was to start up a bakery because GJ was sure to buy you out.⁵⁴ He purchased the property in 1922.

Interwar development

Another store was run by Henry Cowie on the corner of Harris Street and Main Road. He began operation in the early 1930s. At that time it was known as the Station Store and in the late 30s was transferred to Messrs Pooley and Champion. Most of the adjoining land was owned either by Shire Chairman, baker and speculator, G J Walter, or local

butcher John Slater.⁵⁵ It is likely that both men were hoping that the close proximity to the station would make this land an ideal investment for future businesses or housing. Closer to the hotel, John Hurst sold some of his land to Mr Lintott to establish a bakery in October 1931. By 1934 Lintotts had built a home adjacent to the bakery which was described in the local paper as an 'artistic villa of concrete with a tiled roof.'⁵⁶ C J McDonald was running the Bakery at the time (usure if it is the same as Lintotts) Lintott's house was demolished around 1990 to make was for a shopping centre. The only remaining feature is one panel of the concrete fence between Kratzmann's store and the new shops. On the point, John Robertson continued to run his store and Jack Dragovitch also ran a shop at the top of the hill above the beach. (It remains today as a craft shop)

During the interwar years the Burnett family, under the direction of step-son George Thomason, established a modern dairy to the south of the old sawmill. Two silos (one underground) were constructed on the property in which to store fodder for the cattle. The Burnett's sold high quality milk to the region and sons Len and Robbie delivered the milk to Wellington Point and Cleveland. Another dairy in Wellington Point was established by Charles Tester much earlier. Tester bought land on the point in 1908, part of which is now occupied by the 3 storey unit block. The dairy house remains, although it has been set back from the road and bricked in underneath. The milking sheds were once on the site of the modern 3 storey house which now spills down the embankment to the shore. The original house was most likely built by Joseph McMaha.

The reserve around Burnett's old jetty was locally known as 'the piles' and was utilised as a swimming area Locals requested that the area be cleared of mangroves and bathing shed be provided in 1919. In December 1926 locals requested council approve of a plan for a working bee to remove mangroves from the area and in 1928 a bathing enclosure was proposed. Mangrove removal was funded and by January 1929 thirty chain of mangroves had been removed and sand was forming to make a beach, remnants of which are still visible, as are the jetty piles.

Old Ormiston Bridge

During the early 1920s there were moves afoot to re-open the bridge at the end of Edith Street across to Hilliards Street Ormiston. Gilbert Burnett was consulted but at that time was too ill to assist.⁵⁷ The matter was again raised in June 1930 by J Morris of Ormiston, whose children attended the Wellington Point School. This was a common shortcut for children from the northern end of Ormiston, making the Wellington Point School a lot closer to home. In April 1937 the Forestry Department requested an inspection of the bridge to ascertain its age and the life expectancy of bridge timber generally. They estimated that it had been built by Captain Hope in the mid 1860s.⁵⁸ (Given this time frame it is highly likely that it was built by Kanaka labour.) (An archaeological report on the bridge was completed at the time of the construction of a sewerage main in the vicinity in My 1991⁵⁹)

Methodist Church

The Wellington Point Methodist Church was hit by lightning in November 1920.⁶⁰ It was sited adjacent to the hotel. A new site was chosen next to the railway crossing and a stump capping ceremony¹ was held on 9 December 1922⁶¹ and opened in 1923. This church was burnt down in May 1983⁶² and replaced by a new brick structure in Marlborough Road the following year.

Wellington Point Oil Wells

During the early 1930s attempts were made to extract oil in the Birkdale and Wellington Point areas. The Wellington Point Oil Wells Limited was formed and shares offered for sale in 1931 and the company mounted a display at the Cleveland Show in 1932. Drilling on a site in Birkdale went to a depth of 3500 in March 1933 but the amount of gas found led to a temporary capping of the bore. By November they reached 4000 feet but the amount of oil found was not commercially viable.⁶³

Relief Work

During the 1930s the removal of shell grit from King Island was still a problem. Various means were devised to police the problem including appointing honorary inspectors and eventually the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron agreed to police the practice. Other activities on the reserve at this time included a proposal for relief workers to cut down the hill adjoining Mrs John's house in order to extend the useable land on the eastern side of the reserve.⁶⁴ It would seem that the workers were over enthusiastic in their efforts here as they were endangering the Johns house by encroaching within the fence line and damaging the fences on the property. The roof of the kiosk was also damaged and some underground pipes were dislodged.⁶⁵

The issue of a jetty for Wellington Point was still on the agenda. In March 1933 Councillor Augustus Marshall proposed borrowing £500 for the purpose of building a jetty and also to borrow further to build a kiosk as well. Relief workers also constructed log retaining walls in 1933 from plans specified by the Department of Harbours and Marine.⁶⁶

Other relief work in the area included the planting of the Norfolk pine trees along the eastern side of the reserve. The COD offered seeds for the pines at 2/- per pound in 1938. At that time they were on the shoreline. But reclamation work in 1979 has left them along the roadway. Local men including Harry Mick senior, shopkeeper Jack Dragivich and local fisherman J Rudan planted the trees. The relief workers also built retaining walls on the western side along the beach. In December 1938 relief workers constructed steps at the end of Douro Road. In December 1939 a rubbish dump was opened at the end of Douro Road.

¹ Stump capping involves people placing cash under the stump caps of a new building to assist with the cost of construction. This was quite common in the Redlands and was done for other church buildings as well as the construction of the Cleveland RSL.

Tourism on the point

The *Courier Mail* began holding sand garden competitions on the beach during the Christmas school holidays, from 1935. In December 1935 Councillor Marshall proposed that relief workers be employed to erect a jetty at Wellington Point. This proposal was successful and quotes for the supply of timber were requested from the Victoria Point sawmills and others in south east Queensland. Construction was well underway by November 1936 when some fishermen complained that fishing boats were being tied to the jetty and damaging it. The jetty was still not completed by June 1937 and Councillor Apps expressed his dissatisfaction with the prolonged nature of the project. At this time the Royal Queensland Yacht squadron proposed to build a jetty of their own.⁶⁷

The issue of Sunday dancing in the hall attached to the Wellington Point Kiosk was a controversial one which had been the subject of complaints from 1929. In October 1938 the proprietor of the Kiosk, Mr Conway sought council permission to hold the dances (which he was already holding) on a Sunday. Council did not give permission and in December he was prosecuted for continuously holding dances on a Sunday. In December 1939 two Ministers of Religion, Rev. Stirling and Rev. Stewart addressed the council meeting warning that Sunday dancing was against the moral improvements that the church sought to bring to the community. The minister insisted that the council enforce the law on the issue.⁶⁸

Wellington Point was a popular camping place, particularly over the Christmas holidays. Again the council was asking for a permanent police officer to be stationed there because of the population influx. The Wellington Point beach improvement committee was established and in 1937 the proprietor of the local picture show agreed to show pictures in the hall to help fund a slippery slide for the beach. This was finally completed in March 1941 and handed over to the council by the Committee.⁶⁹ Council insisted that the committed still retain responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of the slide, which was a popular addition to the beach through to the 1960s.

School House

In 1937, the old school residence was removed to a site on the point (The Esplanade) and a new house was constructed closer to the main road than the site of the original house.⁷⁰

American occupation during WWII

American Navy occupation of Wellington Point from June 1943 put paid to any camping on the site in the holiday periods. Locals could only access the kiosk and the jetty. They established a gunnery school on the site and regular shooting practice was held including attempts at 'bombing' King Island. A series of gun pits were built along the north east shoreline. A plane towing a silk drogue target would fly over. The target was dropped into the sea when the shooting finished and the local women would row out to fetch the silk targets. (Many Wellington Point homes boasted new silk bedspreads at that time) In June 1944 US Navy fenced off the reserve on the eastern side although access to the jetty was still available. The American camp was a large one comprising about 1500 men and the council well could not supply enough water. Further water supplies came from Apps' farm between Christina Street and Douro Road.⁷¹ The Australian Women's Land Army established a camp at the Birkdale School of Arts hall in August 1942. The girls worked

at many local farms from Wellington Point to Cleveland. Further camps were located at Victoria Point and Redland Bay.

Whepstead transformed into Bayview Hospital

Whepstead remained an important part of community activities in Wellington Point. The Parnell family lived in the house for over 20 years and during that time annual garden parties were held in the gracious lawns. Edgar Parnell died in 1933 and the family stayed on for a few more years before selling to nurse Ethel Dolley who established a hospital on site. Nurse Dolley had taken over the Bayview Hospital in Cleveland in February 1934 and the first reference to her moving her establishment to Wellington Point was made in June 1937.⁷² By 1939 she was advertising this new hospital in the *Redland Times*. It was also called Bay View. The operating theatre was located on the ground floor adjacent to the spacious dining room and it was equipped with the 'very latest design in operating tables'. The first floor held one four bed ward and four single bed rooms and the verandahs could be utilised in hot weather. The nurses quarters were located on the top floor. The hospital also boasted hot and cold water in the bathrooms, a septic toilet system, electric lights, a piano and a refrigerator. Fresh milk was available from the 3 jersey cows kept on the property. Matron Dolley specialised in the treatment of Neurasthenia (nervous exhaustion) and utilised the latest infra red ray equipment under doctor's supervision.⁷³

Bay View was later taken over by sisters Margaret Barr and Grace Beare who ran the property as a nursing home from about 1965 until 1973. These women were instrumental in establishing Meals on Wheels in the district, which was initially run from the hospital. With the help of the local CWA and other community groups, Meals on Wheels was set up in the old Birkdale railway station and later a kitchen and office was built in Chermerside Street. The sisters continued the Parnell's tradition of holding garden parties in the gracious gardens to raise funds. Cleveland and Victoria Point later followed. Both sisters were later recognised for their contribution to the community, with Grace Beare being the first Redland Shire Citizen of the Year in 1981 and Merle Barr receiving the same honour in 1985.

Loma Linda Hospital

In the post war era, Dr Boyd from Wynnum established a sanatorium in an old home in Allenby Road. This property had been occupied by the Kefford family plantation during the late 1800s,⁷⁴ and prior to the purchase by Dr Boyd, was the farm of the Moylan family. In September 1946 Dr Boyd requested that the council make Allenby Road trafficable for the new private hospital. The Hospital was called Loma Linda (Spanish for Hill beautiful) and was advertised as a sanatorium and hospital. It was equipped with 'hydrotherapy and electrical apparatus for giving tonic and invigorating treatments with particular attention given to diets.'⁷⁵

Ongoing Development

During the war years, Mr Hope took over the bakery at Wellington Point and ran it for many years. (Hope apparently resisted any moves from GJ Walter to take over his bakery.) After the war the owner of the kiosk on the point, Mr A Fites sought permission to build flats, presumably in the section previously used as a dance hall. John Wilson was busy undertaking repairs to the jetty during 1945 and in September 1946 the council

decided to call for tenders for a new beach stall on the point. The successful tenderer was Clara Galloway who ran the Lighthouse Restaurant on Cleveland Point. Her tender was on behalf of her son-in-law Fred Kratzmann who had returned from service in New Guinea during the war.⁷⁶ She tendered \$52 per annum rental. Tom Galloway and Fred Kratzmann built Wellington Point's second kiosk from old army huts which they moved from Canungra and attached to a building left behind by the American Navy right on the tip of the Point. The Kratzmanns ran the kiosk until about August 1947 they took over Hurst and Simmons old store on the corner of Apsley Street and Main Road, which they ran until the late 1990s.² Their kiosk on the Point continued to operate for few more years and was finally pulled down in the early-mid 1950s.³

Other business established after the war included Becker and Barr's garage and workshop (now the BP garage) which was established in September 1946. In April 1947 Ivan Barr sought permission to install petrol bowsers at the garage. Other services to the area included the establishment of the ES& A bank on Simon Vela's property adjacent to the railway level crossing. A new post office was established in the Bayview Store run by John Cook known on the point in July 1946. The locals wanted to name the Post Office 'Beach End', but another PO of that name existed in Tasmania, so the Aboriginal name of Erobin was adopted.⁷⁷ The old ti-tree jetty was falling into disrepair despite the work to repair it. Council were lobbying the state Works Department to finance a new one in 1947. In October 1949, the Commonwealth Government resumed land from G Patti for a telephone exchange on the main road to the south of Station Street.

Out with the old and in with the new

During the 1950s new businesses sprang up including a garage operated by W Mitchell. Mr Curran applied to build a fish and chip shop adjacent to the hotel. The old AH&I Hall was reopened as the Royal Theatre in October 1953. This operated until 1971 and the old hall was demolished soon after to make way for the pre-school. The Birkdale-Wellington Point Progress Association was established in 1955. In 1959 Mr Hugh Lissimore was congratulated by council for clearing land and setting up a chemist, doctor's surgery, butcher, garage and fish shop at Wellington Point. The old jetty on the point was finally removed in April 1959 because it was unsafe. The old bathing enclosure had fallen in to disrepair during the 50s also, having suffered damage from moored boats. The Queensland Government allocated money in the 1959-60 budget for a new jetty. In April 1959 the Council obtained quotes for children's swings etc.. to be located on the point and partially funded by the Progress Association. Dredging was carried out at the end of the Wellington Point jetty in 1963/4 to improve boating access to the area.⁷⁸ The railway closed in November 1960 not long after the Wellington Point railway overbridge was constructed. It was nearing completion in March 1959 and at that time the Methodist Church was lobbying to purchase the land adjoining the church on which the old level crossing was located. More shops were built in April 1964 by Cec Dahl.

In 1968 the old Shire Health Office was offered to the Girl Guides. This was relocated and opened the following year in Chermiside Street. In September 1969 the shire's first restaurant/art gallery, *Das Kunsteir Heim*, opened in a house on the corner of Edith and Main Road, run by John and Gloria Belitz. It operated until about 1977 when there was competition from the new *Whepstead* restaurant, established in the old Bayview Hospital

² Fred and Olive Kratzmann, interview with Mary Howells, Redland Shire Council Oral History Project.

³ Information provided by Olive Kratzmann to Tracy Ryan, October 2003.

by the Knight and Creamer families.⁷⁹ Koros hardware store on the corner of Birkdale Road and the Main Road was destroyed by fire in 1970 and soon after a new supermarket opened further along on that block. The 90 year old hotel was demolished in 1971 to make way for the new brick structure. Similarly the old kiosk on the beach was replaced in 1979. In 1981 the Wellington Point goods shed was moved to Roberts Street to be used by the Scouts.

Work commenced on the cricketers club complex in 1982, although the club had been in operation since 1905. The old Methodist Church was demolished in 1984 after it had been destroyed by fire. A new brick church was constructed in Marlborough Road which was opened in April 1985. By 1982 the Railway Department had reconstructed the rail link between Lota and Thorneside. The section between Thorneside and Wellington Point was opened in July 1986 and the final section to Cleveland was completed in October 1987. The line was electrified shortly after that.

Tourism and industry

The tourism potential of the area again came to the fore in the post war era. In 1947 the Department of Harbours and Marine examined the possibilities of establishing a boat harbour at both Wellington Point and Toondah Harbour. In 1958 local resident H Lancaster revisited that proposal by writing to the Minister for Lands suggesting that the reserve (now known as the Geoff Skinner Reserve) could be reclaimed and utilised for housing and general tourism activities incorporating a boat harbour. (It appeared that his motives lay in the destruction of the mangroves and the accompanying mosquito pests.) The suggestion was taken up by local resident Reg Fairman who owned the adjoining land. He eventually prepared plans which included 2,500 house sites, shops, a picture show and a hotel. By 1960 the proposal had evolved into a canal estate, which mirrored the development patterns of the Gold Coast of that time. This proposal included a drive-in shopping centre, community centre, churches, school reserve, marina, Olympic pool, and sporting facilities. At that time the reserve was subject to a petroleum lease and a lease to a cement company seeking coral deposits. When the urban development proposal was not taken up, Fairman then proposed that the reclaimed land be used for an oil refinery and heavy industry site. However in 1966 the Portland Cement Company were given permission to mine for coral on the reserve. Various combinations and permutations of these proposals were discussed through to the mid 1970s. The state government, however, was loath to rescind the category of recreation reserve. By 1988 the reserve was named the Geoff Skinner Environmental Reserve.

By 1986 Wellington Point was fully sewered. This led to further development. Merv Mckell's family property was resumed to make way for the Wellington Point High School. His father Ralph had been a carrier in the district and had also farmed the land. Ironically Merv then got a job as groundsman at the new Alexandra Hills Senior College.⁸⁰ Both Wellington Point High School and Redlands College opened in January 1988.

The old Wellington Point Caravan Park which had opened in 1975, was closed down in the late 1980s to make way for a housing estate. This was initially to have been a canal estate, but environmental concerns led to the establishment of Sovereign Waters lake estate which began selling late in 1998.

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- ¹ Robert Dixon, 1842 Map of Moreton Bay, Redland Shire Local History Collection.
 - ² Survey Plans M31.11, M31.21, RP 14172
 - ³ Mary Howells 'A History of Fernbourne Precinct' PG Diploma Thesis, UQ 1997 p.p. 13-15.
 - ⁴ Mary Howells, *Living on the Edge: Along Tingalpa Creek, a history of Upper Tingalpa Capalaba and Birkdale*, 2000
 - ⁵ Cleveland Divisional Board Minutes 1885.
 - ⁶ Mary Howells 'A History of Fernbourne Precinct' PG Diploma Thesis, UQ 1997 p.p.19, 40.
 - ⁷ Government Gazette 1885.2.2173.
 - ⁸ Cleveland Divisional Board Minutes, 7 Jan 1886.
 - ⁹ Joan Frew *Queensland Post Offices 1842-1980 and Receiving Offices 1869-1927* self published 1981.
 - ¹⁰ HB 84:99-195, File A/8297, Report of the Select Committee on the Proposal for the Cleveland Branch Railway, Railway Department, QSA.
 - ¹¹ EDU/Z 2883 Wellington Point School File, Queensland State Archives.
 - ¹² EDU/Z 2883 Wellington Point School File, Queensland State Archives.
 - ¹³ Cleveland Divisional Board Rate Book 1888, Queensland Post Office Directories 1889.
 - ¹⁴ *Southern World* Sat 18 Oct 1890.
 - ¹⁵ *The Queenslander* 4 July 1885 p 32.
 - ¹⁶ *Southern World*, Nov 1898
 - ¹⁷ *Southern World* 8 November 1890.
 - ¹⁸ RSC Dingle (ed) *Annals of Achievement: a review of Queensland Methodism 1847-1947*, Brisbane: Queensland Book Depot, 1947 p 233.
 - ¹⁹ *Southern World* 15 November 1890
 - ²⁰ *Southern World* 7 March 1891, 4 July 1891.
 - ²¹ *Brisbane Courier* 8 March 1896 p.5
 - ²² *Brisbane Courier* 1 March 1897 p.2.
 - ²³ Cleveland Divisional Board Minutes April 1887.
 - ²⁴ Cleveland Divisional Board Minutes, 2 Oct 1886.
 - ²⁵ Government Gazette 1887. 1. 602
 - ²⁶ *Brisbane Courier*, 13 December 1897 p.4.
 - ²⁷ *Brisbane Courier*, 19 May 1888 p. 9.
 - ²⁸ Clarrie Phillips, 'King Island' typescript, 1980, Redland Shire Council Local History Collection.
 - ²⁹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes September, October, November 1918, July 1924.
 - ³⁰ Mary Howells 'A History of Fernbourne Precinct' PG Diploma Thesis, UQ 1997 p.p. 43,44.
 - ³¹ *Ibid.* p.p.46-47
 - ³² Cleveland Divisional Board Rate Book 1890.
 - ³³ *Brisbane Courier* 4 Dec 1897.
 - ³⁴ *Courier Mail*, 26 October 1891.
 - ³⁵ Mary Howells 'A History of Fernbourne Precinct' PG Diploma Thesis, UQ 1997 p.p.30-32.
 - ³⁶ *Brisbane Courier*, 31 December 1889 p10.
 - ³⁷ RP 14114 Department of Natural Resources.
 - ³⁸ *Brisbane Courier* 9 Nov 1889 p 10.
 - ³⁹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes 5 June 1917, Cleveland Shire Rate Books.
 - ⁴⁰ M J Fox *A history of Queensland its people and industries*, Brisbane: States Publishing Company 1919, p. 848.
 - ⁴¹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes March 1909.
 - ⁴² Queensland National Bank Properties register 1903, National Bank Archives.
 - ⁴³ Lt Owens Military Map of Country West of Cleveland, circa 1889, Department of Natural Resources.
 - ⁴⁴ Information supplied by grandson Ross Lamont, UNE History Department.
 - ⁴⁵ Certificate of Title Vol 1301 Fol 72 No 11301072, Department of Natural Resources.
 - ⁴⁶ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, December 1913.
 - ⁴⁷ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 5 Aug 1924.
 - ⁴⁸ Wellington Point State School History, 1887 – 1987, self published 1987.
 - ⁴⁹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 5 May 1925.
 - ⁵⁰ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 6 Oct, 9 Nov, 1926.
 - ⁵¹ Neil Close, interview with Pam Tickner, Redland Shire Council Oral History Project.

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- ⁵² Fred and Olive Kratzmann interviewed by Mary Howells, Redland Shire Council Oral History Collection.
- ⁵³ Mildred Mander interview with Mary Howells, Redland Shire Council Oral History project. See also QPOD 1917.
- ⁵⁴ Stan Albrecht (former baker's delivery man) interviewed by M and E Whitby, Redland Shire Council Oral History Project.
- ⁵⁵ Cleveland Shire Council Rate Book 1931-1935.
- ⁵⁶ Redland Times 10 May 1934
- ⁵⁷ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 6 Nov 1923.
- ⁵⁸ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, April 1937
- ⁵⁹ Gillian Alfredson Consulting, (for John Wilson and Partners) 'Report on an archaeological inspection of a closed road between Hilliard and Lang Streets Wellington Point', May 1991.
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- ⁶¹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 5 December 1922.
- ⁶² Redland Times, 21 August 1924
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- ⁶⁴ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 4 Feb 1931.
- ⁶⁵ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 3 August 1932.
- ⁶⁶ Department of Harbours and Marine, *Harbours and Marine, port and harbor development in Queensland from 1824 to 1985*, 1986p. 546.
- ⁶⁷ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 8 March 1933, 10 Dec 1935, 14 April 1936, 12 Nov 1936, 10 June 1937
- ⁶⁸ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes 13 Jan 1938, 13 Oct 1938, Jan 1939, 14 December 1939.
- ⁶⁹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes 14 Oct 1937, 13 March 1941.
- ⁷⁰ *Wellington Point State School History 1887-1897* p.65
- ⁷¹ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, Dec 1938, Dec 1939, June 1943, June 1944; Ray Rudan interviewed by Mary Howells, Redland Shire Council Oral History Project.
- ⁷² Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, 10 June 1937.
- ⁷³ Redland Times 9 February 1939.
- ⁷⁴ Lt Owens Military Map of Country West of Cleveland, circa 1889, Department of Natural Resources.
- ⁷⁵ Redlands Centenary Souvenir, 1850 –1950 p 54, see also Rose Miller interview with Mary Howells, Redland Shire Council Oral History Project.
- ⁷⁶ Cleveland Shire Council Minutes, October 1946.
- ⁷⁷ Joan Frew, *Queensland Post Offices 1842-1980 and Receiving Offices 1869-1927*, self published 1981.
- ⁷⁸ Department of Harbours and Marine, *Harbours and Marine, port and harbor development in Queensland from 1824 to 1985*, 1986 p. 718
- ⁷⁹ Redland Times 7 December 1977 p 6.
- ⁸⁰ Redland-Wynnum Times Nov 26 1986 p 2.