Places of the Redlands: Victoria Point

By Mary Howells

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**Victoria Point - a brief history**

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The Aboriginal name for Victoria Point was Warra Warra (possibly meaning mussels) Coochiemudlo means red rock.

During the 1850s, when Queensland was still part of New South Wales, all of the area from Ormiston to the Logan River was leased to Joseph Clark. He ran cattle on the land. Victoria Point was first surveyed in 1859 after Queensland became a separate state, and the first portions were sold in 1860. Coochiemudlo was surveyed and called Innes Island, after Lieutenant Innes of the 57th Regiment of Moreton Bay who was keen on exploring the surrounding countryside.

The earliest settlers in Victoria Point were John and Maria Dawson and Joseph Scragg, who were farmers, and bullock driver William Nutt. John Dawson died in 1865 and Maria married William Nutt. The house now situated near Wilson Street and Wilson Lane overlooking the water is on the site of the first cottage built by John and Maria. A more substantial house was built by Maria and William, probably in the late 1880s, and this was extended by the Wilson family who lived there from 1916.

*Wilson House, Victoria Point, circa 1916. (Graeme Wilson)*
Other early settlers were the Colburn Family who were in the district in the 1860s also. They had a slab cottage which was later moved by bullock dray to a site on what is now Colburn Avenue. Daniel Colburn married Mary Clark, daughter of original landholder Joseph Clark, in 1864.

Land in the Point Halloran area was originally bought by cotton grower Henry Scott, who owned all of the land we now know as Redland Bay, where he grew cotton and later established a sugar plantation. During the 1870s Point Halloran was owned by Messrs Raff and Nuttall. They built a small cottage on the land which they named ‘Nura’ which was a combination of both names. This cottage was used as the school house when the first school was established in 1877. It was situated along Point Halloran Road in the vicinity of Tern Street. This school was jointly run with the Mt Cotton School and the first full time teacher in Victoria Point was Thomas Daly who taught there from 1880.

Thomas Daly is indirectly responsible for the school being named Victoria Point. When schools were being established in the district, the Redland Bay, Mount Cotton, and Victoria Point Schools were all interrelated, sometimes sharing a teacher. When the school opened at Point Halloran it was called the Redland Bay school, and so Thomas Daly’s pay cheque was sent to Redland Bay. He asked the Department to send his mail to Eprapah Creek instead, and by 1882 the name of the school was changed to Victoria Point. The Eprapah Post Office was in Holzapfel’s store which was situated along Boundary Road near the creek in the vicinity of Mango Place.

*Holzapfel home, Boundary Road, Eprapah Creek, turn of the century.*
*(Herman Holzapfel)*
Most of the people who lived in this area were farmers, although timbergetting was an important industry in the early days. The name Eprapah continued to be used for the district until about 1915. The Crompton family, who lived between Bunker Road and the creek, were all involved in timbergetting, and Bunker Road was opened for timbergetters in 1875. The area along Eprapah Creek at the end of Link Road was reserved as a rafting ground, to allow timbergetters to float their logs along the creek to the mills in either Cleveland, Wellington Point or up to Brisbane.

During the 1800s, people from the South Pacific Islands were taken from their homelands to work on the sugar plantations in Queensland. These people were known as Kanakas. Most were sent home by 1905, but many chose to remain and a large group of Kanakas continued to live on this rafting ground. During the 1930s some were employed by Mr Walter Yeo. Many lived in the area until the late 1960s when their houses at the end of Link Road were condemned.

More people moved to the area after World War I and farmers of this era included the Wilsons who purchased Maria (Dawson) and William Nutt's old home in 1916. The Wilsons took over the pineapple plantation on the site and planted custard apple trees, and carried on farming small crops including tomatoes, cabbages, cucumbers, carrots and beetroot. The Wilsons were typical of the farming families in the area.

*Roy Wilson with drummer the horse and a cart load of pineapples, 1920s.*

*(Graeme Wilson)*
The school was relocated to its current site in 1916. During the late 1920s, headmaster George Dreveson instigated a School Club where the children learnt the basics of plant management and crop marketability.

The telephone was connected to the Victoria Point Post Office which was situated at the home of William Yeo in 1918. Electricity was connected to the area in the early 1930s and the school then requested a power point for an electric wireless (radio).

Victoria Point was a popular holiday destination and campers would spend their holidays there from year to year. A small kiosk operated to serve campers and day trippers. The Jetty was used initially for transporting produce by boat to the Brisbane Markets, by John Burke Ltd, the Gibson Brothers, and later by George Pointon and George Jackson who lived on Russell Island. By 1931 a new jetty was built by Doug Morton who lived on Coochie.

Victoria Point east beach, 1929. (Doug Hucker)

Victoria Point jetties, 1940s. (Jack Trede)
In 1934, the boy scouts removed the old scout hall from Redland Bay and transported it to the land they had at Eprapah Creek. This was the Queensland training camp from 1928 until 1953.

*Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, Governor of Queensland, President, Secretary and Chairman of the Boy Scouts Executive, at Eprapah, 1930s. (Jessie Hucker)*

During World War II the Victoria Point area was home to Land Army Girls who worked the farms while the men were away at war. They had a camp in Colburn Avenue. In 1943 the Water Transport Division of the Royal Australian Engineers occupied the southern end of Victoria Point and had a training camp at Coochie.

After the war Victoria Point continued in importance as a tourist destination, although farming remained the main industry. Small businesses sprang up to serve the increasing population. These included holiday flats, new shops, an electrician, service station, and carrying businesses. Farms were gradually subdivided into smaller housing lots, which at that time tended to be purchased by retirees, rather than city commuters.

In October 1958 the first Strawberry Festival was held at Victoria Point to assist the local Progress Association, and ran there for some years. The event was revived in 1965 by the chairman of the Cleveland Ambulance Committee to raise funds for the Ambulance. It was moved to the Cleveland Showgrounds at that time.

During the 1970s farmers gradually turned to growing flowers rather than the traditional small crops. Flowers could be grown all year round in shade-houses. Sometimes the seedlings were kept in cold rooms to artificially acclimatise them to cooler temperatures so that they would flower in the Queensland winter once they were removed from the cold rooms. Artificial lighting is also used to control flowering times.

The Seventh Day Adventist Church built its first aged person units in Victoria Point in 1974 and in 1976, plans were launched for extensive subdivisions between Redland Bay Road, Colburn Avenue, Benfer Road and Link Road. Point Halloran was booming in the 1980s and the urban subdivision have been ongoing since that time with Victoria Point now one of the fastest growing areas in the shire.