

History of Coorparoo

Aboriginal History

Coorparoo Aboriginal History

The Coorparoo Clan lived south of the Brisbane River and generally camped along creeks.

Their name comes from 'Kulpurum', which was the word for Norman Creek or a tributary of it.



They continued to occupy watercourse campsites after white settlement, but other clans from the region began to move into South Brisbane. In 1846 there were reports of Aborigines raiding produce along Norman Creek. In 1853, there was a fight between Ningy Ningy, Bribie Island, Amity Point, and Logan tribes at Norman Creek. A visitor in 1855 reported many camps and fishing spots between Stones Corner and the mouth of Norman Creek. In 1959 an eighty-year-old woman told of frequent corroborees on the banks of the creek in Norman Park.

Corroborees were also held at the little creek that crossed Norfolk Street.

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Environment

Coorparoo Environment

Coorparoo is based around several creeks, including Coorparoo and Bridgewater creeks, and Norman Creek, which forms its northern border. Lush vegetation once surrounded the creeks, which provided fish and lobbies. Near the creeks there is a large flood plain, which often floods, and near Stones Corner was known as Burnetts Swamp. To the south several hills provide breezes and views. Warner's tracing of Norman Creek in 1839 shows this area as 'open forest' with 'extensive swamp' in the south.



According to the Brisbane Wildlife Survey, there were sixty-seven species of birds, four of mammals, and four of reptiles surveyed in 1981-82. These included bearded dragons, green tree snakes, blue-tongued skinks, various wading birds, and several birds of prey, pigeons, galahs and rosellas, kingfishers, boobook owl, and tawny frogmouths, kookaburras and magpies, as well as ring and brush tailed possums, koalas, and flying foxes. There is a large colony of flying foxes in the mangroves that adjoin Norman creek near Coorparoo State High School and possums are still seen frequently.

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Urban Development

Coorparoo Urban Development

Coorparoo was named by the residents at a public meeting on 22.3.1875. The name Coorparoo comes from the Aboriginal name for Norman Creek. This had been translated as both 'place of the mosquito' and 'peaceful dove'. The Shire of Coorparoo was formally proclaimed in 1888.



On 17 June 1856, ten farms were sold from the Parish of Bulimba near Stones Corner. Investors bought all but two of them. The next year James Warner surveyed land on the other side of the road for a second land auction. On 22 March 1875, a meeting of local residents at the Wecker's house resolved that the 'name of the locality, together with the proposed primary school, should be Coorparoo'.

In 1876, the Coorparoo State School was opened and Frederick Robinson began offering public transport in a wagonette from Coorparoo Junction to Victoria Bridge. The 1880s land boom was a spur to profit from land. John Black was the first to subdivide land in the area in 1882 and later a variety of subdivisions were offered to the public. The construction of the bridge at Stanley Street (1886) and the development of the Stanley Bridge Estate made the area more attractive to purchasers. In 1887 the tramway was extended to Buranda, putting the western end of Coorparoo close to tram travel.

Coorparoo had been part of the Bulimba Divisional Boards since 1879. However, in 1888, as a result of dissatisfaction with this situation, a petition was taken and Coorparoo Shire was created. A bridge was built at Burnetts Swamp (Stones Corner) and important road improvements took place. Development was taking off. In 1889 there were 2,500 people in the shire.

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Cultural Diversity

Coorparoo Cultural Diversity

The Coorparoo area had a large number of German settlers. Old photographs show Uhlmann's butchery opposite the school. This business was sold to H. Winzloff and Frederick Salm, two other German butchers. P. J. Faust had the corner store on the corner of Old Cleveland and Cavendish roads. Hans von Lippha recounted his visits to the Jantsch family in 1889, 'I made the acquaintance of the Jantsch family from Gablonz who had lived in Queensland for some time. They owned a house with a small piece of land in the suburb of Coorparoo near Logan Road. I was very well received by them'. They were still living there when he visited twenty years later.



According to the 2001 census 20.42% of Coorparoo residents were born overseas and 12.23% speak a language other than English at home. This compares with 21.03% and 10.03% for Brisbane as a whole. 1.13% were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, compared to 1.67% for Brisbane.