Broadbeach history

Broadbeach Hotel, May 1967.
Bob Avery, photographer.


In 1934, the South Coast Bulletin announced a new seaside township had been surveyed fronting the Pacific Highway and adjoining Main Beach, about one mile south of Surfers Paradise.

The township had been appropriately named Broadbeach and the first section of the site had been surveyed into 70 allotments.

Timber getting

Back in the 19th century, at the junction of Little Tallebudgera Creek and the Nerang River, timber getter, Ned Harper established an assembly point for the cedar, beech, ash teal and mahogany logs which had been cut from the riverbanks upstream.

From the deep water frontage of Harpers Wharf, sailing vessels took aboard the roughly hewn timber destined for Sydney or Brisbane. Alternatively, the timber was rafted from here to Brisbane.

The Kombumerri

The area south of the original Harpers Wharf is now part of the Cascade Gardens Reserve.

The estuary area around Little Tallebudgera Creek and the superb stretch of beach to the east was a feasting ground for the aboriginal people of the area, the Kombumerri people.

Apart from moveable feasts, evident from the surviving dugout shell middens, archaeologists in the 1980s uncovered an ancient aboriginal burial ground at Broadbeach. In the 1980s, the ancestral remains from this burial ground were reinterred in a reserve known as Kombumerri Park.

Sand mining

The Broadbeach sand dunes were also a strategically important resource during World War 2.

Southport Minerals mined the mineral sand rutile from the leased reserves and exported the concentrated mineral overseas for the production of special alloy steels and welding equipment.

By the mid 1950s, mining had ceased, the dunes were reconstructed, planted with grasses and trees and the land auctioned for redevelopment.

Lennons Broadbeach Hotel

The commercial and housing development of the area was led by the construction of the Lennons Broadbeach Hotel completed in 1957.

Built on a site which had been mined for mineral sand, the hotel was often promoted as an oasis in the desert and is in fact now the site of the Oasis commercial centre in Victoria Avenue.

Information and images provided by the City of Gold Coast Local Studies Library.

Related information

- Gold Coast Local Heritage Register

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