

History of Kentville State School

Establishing the school

On 9th April, 1906 a meeting of parents was held at One Mile Lagoon, near 7 Mile Swamp, Tarampa Estate, for the purpose of establishing a provisional school. The following were elected members of a building committee: Andrew O'Brien, H. Schroder (chairman), M. H. Porter (secretary), H. Urmson, John Brewer and P. Pomeranke. Porter informed the Department of Education of this meeting and requested that appropriate application forms be sent. Then on 15th October, 1906, the District Inspector, R. N. Ross, wrote the following report for the department, following his visit to the district: "I have the honor to submit my report of the inquiry in reference to the application for a new Provisional School at the 7 Mile Swamp Reserve. Nobody seemed to know why the place is known by that name as it is not 7 miles from anywhere. It is nearly midway between Forest Hill on the Southern and Western and Coominya on the Brisbane Valley Line. It is quite a new settlement being part of the Repurchased Tarampa Estate.

The acquisition of land

The nearest existing schools are Glenore Grove State and Lockrose Provisional School, but both are on the southern side of the Lockyer Creek, and the Reserve on which it is proposed to place the school is on the northern side of it. The inquiry was held on the first instant on the reserve from which the proposed site is to be taken. At the inquiry, I met all the members of the building committee and all the children for whose benefit the school is desired excepting those of Mr. Logan. He has a farm about one mile from Gatton on which he built a new house only a couple of years ago. His children attend the Gatton State School and will, I have no doubt, continue to attend there.

Not counting Mr. Logan's, there are 18 children five years and upwards, and 6 under five. One or two families have not yet come to reside on their land, but they will, by the terms of their contract, be compelled to do so or to forfeit their land. There is, therefore, a reasonable probability that if a school be granted, an average attendance of at least 12 will be maintained. Reg. 7(a) this reserve is for the most part of it, a rounded ridge with a gentle slope in all directions. It has been reserved for township purposes and to furnish building sites for those who have taken up selection on the lowest lying portions of the Estate.

The part I recommended as a school site was the Crown of the ridge - high, dry and easily accessible. The survey has not yet been completed. It is intended to cut up the ridge into five acre blocks with the necessary roads. Before making application to the Department, the secretary to the building committee waited on member for the Lockyer, Mr. O'Keefe and asked him to get a site on the Reserve granted to the settlers for a school. Mr. O'Keefe told the secretary that the first step for the committee to take was to get the promise of a school, and when the school was promised he would get the site. They should first have fixed on a site and submitted it for approval. Not having done so may lead to delay.

Site approval

Were it not for the fact that both the existing schools in the neighborhood are on the other side of the Lockyer, I would not recommend a school being granted. But this Creek is, and, in the absence of bridges always, will be a source of danger to children crossing it. The roads being mostly new and of black soil are very heavy travelling after wet weather. These taken in connection with the Creek make it desirable that a school be granted to the applicants and I recommend accordingly. When the Reserve is cut up into 5 acre blocks, and

before the school is finally granted, the building committee might be requested to supply a surveyor's tracing of the blocks and roads with the proposed site marked on it."

Two acres of the land recommended for a school reserve was secured and plans were drawn up for a provisional school 21' x 14', with a 7' wide front veranda. The building committee paid the necessary 1/5 local contribution towards the total cost of the building. This school building was sealed but not lined inside. It was sheeted on the outside with weather boards. The school was not lined until 1930. Railings for the verandahs and stairs were not added until 1951.

School's opening date

The school opened on 7th October, 1907 as One Mile Lagoon Provisional School. The first head teacher was Edith Whiteway. The school committee fenced the school grounds early in 1908. In 1911, the head teacher, Susan Lonergan, became a receiving officer for the mail service because the school was a convenient mail center.

In the same year more effective fencing was done to keep out sheep, goats and turkeys from straying into the school grounds and on to the school building. In 1914, a verandah was added to the back of the school and the school grounds were increased in size from 2 acres to 10 acres. The additional area was required for a school horse paddock. The school committee requested the department to re-fence the school grounds but funds for fencing were not available at that time.

During the 1920's there were several schools within walking distance of One Mile Lagoon: Lockrose- 2 ½ miles, Mount Tarampa - 4 miles, Glenore Grove -3 miles and Moreton Vale - 3 miles. When the pupils did not like the teacher, they shifted to another school.

Buildings

In 1927, the school committee built a play shed to provide shade for the pupils. Prior to that, a temporary structure covered with bushes had served that purpose. In 1929, it was reported that one of the desks was an improvised one made out of kerosene cases. When the District Inspector, James Jeffrey, visited the school on 7th March, 1934, there were thirty two pupils on the roll and thirty one present. It is not surprising, then, that Jeffrey found the accommodation rather cramped and so he recommended that the school be enlarged. Later in the same year, an addition of 9' x 14' was made to the school. A major part of one of the verandahs was enclosed in 1962 to provide a library room.

Change of name

The name of the school was changed from One Mile Lagoon to Kentville in 1944 because the district had been known as Kentville for some time and the name of the post office had changed several years earlier. Furthermore there were two other districts in Queensland known as One Mile or One Mile Lagoon.