

Graceleigh Park and Its History

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Any errors and/or omissions are unintentional. Please email Tom Blake on tombbeechmont@gmail.com for corrections and additional information.

The area of land known today as Graceleigh Park, originally an area of cultivation, formed part of the property called "Graceleigh". The park area was cultivated from about 1920 to 1950 and engaged in the production of corn and winter fodder, principally oats and cow peas. A steel and concrete silo was constructed in the North-East corner of the paddock (outside of the northern boundary of the Park – remnants of the underground silo site are still visible) and beside it a corrugated iron shed, housing machinery, was constructed. The first farm tractor to be used on the mountain worked the cultivation. It was a McCormack of circa 1935 vintage and powered by kerosene. The cultivation was abandoned after the floods of 1952.

JR Sharp owned Graceleigh until 1965/1970; ran up to Munsters and the corner above the school. McInnes bought this land and adjoining land from Jervis. McInnes went to Shiralee cattle in the 1970s.

There was a dairy in Windabout Rd(owned and run by Jervis) for a while (1960s???) and then at Sharps's dairy near road going into Acacia Court cul-de-sac. The park consists of two parcels of land bounded by Back Creek to the East and the Canungra-Beechmont Road to the South. In the early 80s, the Southern portion of land, approximately two thirds of the total area was transferred to Beaudesert Shire Council as part of stage one of the McInnes Estate development (the current Graceleigh Park?????) McInnes Estate was never a separate farm.

McInnes sold the current land which has been sub-divided (Beechmont Rise) to the Cambridge Family Trust (which is Jervis's company) who then sold it to Finn.

Finn developed stage 1 of Beechmont Rise and is currently developing stage 2. As part of this sub-division; 20??? acres immediately adjacent to the north of Graceleigh Park had to be assigned to parkland north of Graceleigh Park. This is the land BRASA has been in discussions with the Scenic Rim Regional Council.

More Detailed Information of Graceleigh Park

1970-1972

First parcel of land transferred to Beaudesert Shire Council. (As the responsible authority, Council is entrusted by the Crown to manage the land. Landscaping, tree planting, construction of toilet block (on land not included in the park at that time) and road access to the toilet block funded from developers cash contribution at that time.

1973-1978

Provision of shelter sheds, roadside fencing, bbq's and further tree planting, including the break bank below the toilet.

1979-1985

Earthwork to establish a rough playing surface, construction of concrete cricket pitch, cricket club house, district waste disposal in the form of 2 industrial waste bins placed on the edge of the oval were all funded by Beaudesert Shire Council (BSC) along with volunteer work assistance with the construction of the cricket club house. Additionally the cost of a practice wicket was donated by the Lords Taverners and constructed by BSC and club members. Playground equipment and facilities were established in the North East corner funded by BSC with assistance from volunteer labour.

The Beechmont Cricket Club (BCC) was reformed and a team entered in to the Beaudesert District Competition and later in the Hinterland Cricket Competition. A B Grade team was also formed and for a number of seasons played social matches throughout the district which included Canungra, Palin Creek Prison Farm, Numinbah Valley Prison Farm, Beechmont Old Boys (survivors of the 1950's BCC which included the late Brian Kennedy), Beaudesert Shire Council, Queensland Country Week, visiting social teams from Brisbane linked to the Rankin Family, Queensland DPI, Main Roads just to name a few.

All ground maintenance was carried out by BCC members.

1986 – 1989

BSC built the Tennis courts, the cricket pitch and cricket club-house and public toilets

Where the school is now was a separate block and was purchased by the State Govt from Tim Patch.

It was discovered that part of the area being used and intended for the construction of tennis courts, including the area containing the toilets and children's playground, did not belong to BSC.

Therefore re-alignment of the boundary was necessary. Negotiations were undertaken to regularise the errors which had occurred between 1970-73.

Soon after the acquisition of the second parcel of land was complete, the Queensland State Government decreed that all lands held by councils throughout Queensland and not in use for specific local government purpose, principally administration buildings, were to be transferred to the State.

The construction of the tennis courts and the tennis clubhouse were completed in this period and a tennis club house was formed to manage and operate the associated activities.

A plan for future development of the ground was at this time discussed which included netball courts, croquet/bowls club house and facilities and an athletics track around the main oval.

A fully serviced waste transfer station was established during this time on the eastern side of the tennis courts access road and replaced the 2 industrial bins situated on the edge of the oval. The station was serviced twice weekly and more frequently if demand required. The service was provided to the Beechmont community free of charge by BSC.

The ANZAC Memorial was designed, local materials sourced and built, all by volunteer labour. It was unveiled by the then Chairman of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, The Honourable Lance Barnard AO and former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, on Armistice Day 1989.

1990 - 2008

During this period Junior Beechmont Soccer and Cricket was formed driven largely by parent interest. Tennis coaching was established by Sue Sawyer.

Between the years of 1994 to 1998 a Rotunda was constructed adjacent to the War Memorial to accommodate the memorial stained glass windows (Glenda Birch, Loop Rd made the stained glass windows) previously provided by the Beechmont Community in memory of Keith Scott and Kent Sommerville, Beechmont lads who joined the air force and were killed in action during WWII. This construction was largely funded by the Beaudesert Shire Council.

During this period the Queensland State Government made the decision to relocate the Beechmont State School as the site in use at that time was considered too small to accommodate the growing number of students. With advice from within the school community, a new site was chosen adjacent to the community sports ground – Graceleigh Park. The land on which the current school sits was owned privately.

An arrangement was negotiated with Beaudesert Shire Council to make the sports ground and its facilities available to the new school on a needs basis during school hours. Additionally, waste water to water the oval was carried across and disposed of on the Park.

2009 onwards

A State owned School Hall (funded by a Commonwealth Government grant and available to the public through the school) was built over a section of the Reserve (marked Lease A) and the Scenic Rim Council re-gazetted the entire reserve from Sport and Recreation to Public Hall, Sport and Recreation. There were major community concerns of a lack of community consultation leading up to these land use changes and with the various ownership/responsibilities entailed. There are still major community divisions over this matter.

Club Structures

Cricket Club

The Beechmont Cricket Club, established in??? was not an incorporated association. (This is not unusual. It has only been in recent years that Councils have insisted that community groups be incorporated to ensure that the spending of funds provided by Council can be monitored and sometimes for insurance purposes when Council insurance is involved) The Club was the first group to use Graceleigh Park for sport. The club provided all of its own equipment and carried out all maintenance of its playing area. The property acquired by the club included a 13HP ride on mower, cricket mat, BBQ & gas bottle and 2 fridges. Its equipment was generally made available to other organisations at little or no cost. The club was not required to pay for electricity or for rubbish removal. Due to a lack of members, the cricket club folded in 1991.

Tennis Club

The Club (not incorporated) financed the fit-out of the club house and provided funds for the erection of a practice wall and the courts re-surfacing. Under the agreement between Beechmont Sports Association It is not required to pay for electricity including lighting, court nets or rubbish removal. Court and clubhouse hire fees are used for maintain club-house and equipment.

The courts and club-house sits on land which is the responsibility of BRASA; according to a maintenance agreement between Beaudesert Shire Council and Beechmont Sports Association

BRASA nee Beechmont Sports Association Inc (BSA)

At the request of Scenic Rim Council, a Ground Management Committee was established in???

to manage Graceleigh Park and oversee the activities of user clubs and ground hirers. BRASA is a separate entity from the P&C Committee and the School Hall Management Committee.

When did Beechmont Sports Association commence and finish and how did It evolve into BRASA???

Refer to BRASAs website for a copy of the constitution. <http://beechmontsports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Constitution-of-Beechmont-Recreation.pdf>

