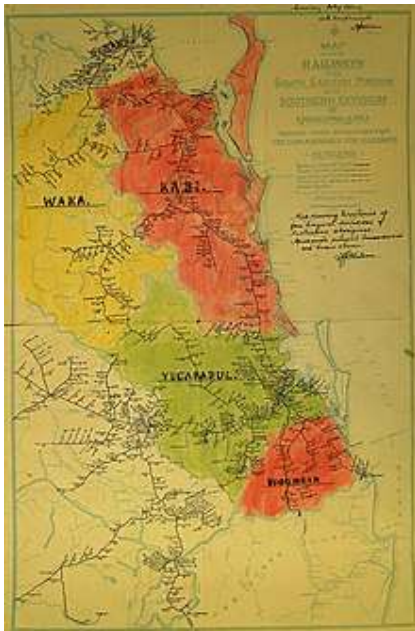


*We recognise at Brownsea we play, learn and interact with each other and the environment on the the ancestral lands of the Turrbal people. We acknowledge the First Australians as the traditional custodians of the continent, whose cultures are among the oldest living cultures in human history. We pay respect to the Elders of the community and extend our recognition to their descendants.*



Moreton Bay would have provided multiple resources to sustain many people. In 1823, the Shorncliffe Foreshore was described to have too many huts to count. In 1853, when free-people started to settle in Sandgate, they encountered strong Aboriginal resistance. In addition to the devastating conflict, other factors such as disease, loss of land, restricted access to food and water resources also made life difficult for the people in the area. A few small Aboriginal groups survived and their ancestors continue to have a strong connection to the Sandgate-Shorncliffe area.

It is recorded that the Turrbal people, who long inhabited the seashore, the creeks and lagoons, in what we know as the locality of Nudgee Beach to the Pine River, were a branch of the clan of the Yugarabul speaking people. This larger clan inhabited the area from North Brisbane and along the coastline of Nudgee, Sandgate to Caboolture. In their language the local Turrbal clan called their coastal land “Warra” – “an open sheet of water”. This land we call Shorncliffe, Sandgate and Brighton. Their existence depended upon their knowledge of the seasons and their surroundings. The higher land from the cliffs at Shorncliffe was covered with tall trees – native eucalypts, Moreton Bay Ash, Iron Bark and Blue Gums.



18. 'King' Johnny Boat (or Billy Cook) with spear and boomerangs.

King Johnny Boat, Gubbi Gubbi Indigenous Elder, fishing in the Beachmere area, ca.1890. Photo likely taken by Thomas Bancroft, sent in by Ross Cameron.

King Johnny passed away in 1892 and was buried on Dinah Island at the mouth of Cabbage Tree Creek, Shorncliffe. This was the culmination of a huge inter-tribal funeral held at Alderley and then the Shorncliffe Camp.

It seems to have been the last major traditional Aboriginal event in the Sandgate region. Presumably the island was also used for other Aboriginal Burials, as it was common for areas of dense vegetation across the water from Camps to be used for such purpose.