Yugambeh Nation

Name: _____

Date: _____

AGES 13 TO 16 · HISTORY

Life Under the Protection Act

The Aboriginal Protection Act (1897) forced many of our people onto Missions, such as those established at Deebing Creek and Woodenbong, and Reserves/Aboriginal settlements, like Ugerabagh island and the Fingal Peninsula, while others went to the mountainous, hard-to-reach areas of our country around the MacPherson Range near the Tamrookum, Hillview and Running Creek areas.

By the 1920s, Yugambeh people had established small villages at Beaudesert, Southport, Hillview, South Tweed, and Fingal. In these places, many survived via traditional bush foods and intermittent work with Europeans, many living in gunyahs (some with modern changes, like tin sides), while others built small European style homes; in many cases a property would be a mixture, containing one or two houses and a number of gunyahs behind.

Here, Yugambeh countrymen were able to live in relative peace, raising their large families under the ever-present eye of the Aboriginal Protector. This oppressive system overseeing the lives of Aboriginal people was dismantled throughout the 1950s to 70s, partly thanks to a strong movement of Aboriginal people throughout the area advocating for their rights, and through the 80s, Yugambeh people began to mingle more widely with the European community.

Questions

1. Name two missions and two reserves or settlements that people were forced onto under the Act.

2. Why do you think some families went to the mountainous, hard-to-reach areas of the MacPherson Range?

3. Where were the Yugambeh villages of the 1920s, and how did people survive there?

4. What is a gunyah? How did some people change their gunyahs?

5. What helped bring the Protector system to an end?

LIFE UNDER THE PROTECTION ACT

Diary entry

Diary entry

Imagine you are a young person living in a Yugambeh village in the 1920s. Write a diary entry about one day: your home, your family, and the eye of the Protector.

© Yugambeh Nation · yugam.be · Free to print and share for learning