Yugambeh Nation

Name: _____

Date: _____

AGES 13 TO 16 · HISTORY SKILLS

Two Sources, One Story

Content note. This sheet discusses the disturbance of an Aboriginal burial ground and the return of ancestral remains. It does not show any remains.

Source A: the Reading

Did you know that every week hundreds of Gold Coasters come together to play sport, make merry, and laugh atop the graves of over 150 local Aboriginal men, women, and children from the Kombumerri clan? This is the story of one of the Gold Coast's forgotten ungazetted cemeteries...

In November 1965, human bones started appearing in people's front yards in Broadbeach, in soil a local contractor had dug up from a nearby wetland. It was soon discovered that wetland area was a significant Indigenous burial ground containing the remains of more than 150 people.

This was a proper cemetery where people had come back over generations and cared for their dead. Its usage had been dated back over 1000 years.

The remains were taken to the University of Queensland, and in 1988, after years of lobbying the university by local Kombumerri people, the excavated remains were returned to them and reinterred about 300 metres from the original site in what is now known as Kombumerri Park.

Source B: the sign



Sign at Kombumerri Park by the Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture.

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

Reading: Yugambeh Nation, 3 June 2023; sign: Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture

Yugambeh Nation

TWO SOURCES, ONE STORY

Compare the sources

Source B: what the sign says

This park has been dedicated as a memorial to the Yugambeh/Kombumerri. It is the site of the re-interment of the skeletal remains of two hundred Aborigines. The original burial ground, one of several used by the Kombumerri people, had been in continuous use for more than twelve hundred years, and was pre-dated to 700AD circa.

The Aboriginal burial ground was disturbed in 1963 by the activities of local soil contractors and was in danger of being completely destroyed by an anticipated development project. It was excavated by archaeologists and the skeletal remains contained therein were subsequently used for the purpose of scientific study by the Queensland University, Anatomy Department.

Contemporary Kombumerri descendants successfully sought custody of these ancestral remains and with the aid of the Albert Shire Council, held a private re-interment ceremony on the twenty-third of August, 1988.

Compare the sources

Question	Source A: the Reading (2023)	Source B: the sign	Same?
When was the burial ground disturbed?			
How many people were buried there?			
How long had it been used?			
Where were the remains taken?			
When were they reinterred?			

Questions

1. The sources give different dates and numbers. Suggest two reasons why.

2. Which source would you use for the exact date of the re-interment? Why?

3. How could a historian check which details are right?

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

Reading: Yugambeh Nation, 3 June 2023; sign: Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture