

## **Kenilworth Show – Rodeo – Bushmen’s Carnival – Show & Rodeo**

From its humble beginnings in 1919 annual exhibitions of local produce and livestock has worn many faces. The first Kenilworth Show continued on the river flats at Gheerulla from 1919 until 1935 when the Nambour Chronicle published on February 14, 1936 reported on page 10:-

### **Kenilworth Show Abandoned Funds Divided Between Two Public Halls Possible Re-Establishment at Township.**

The committee, at a meeting on Monday, decided to abandon the show and to divide the funds in hand between the two public halls. These will benefit to the extent of £35 each. While many regret the passing of the show, the small number of enthusiastic workers feel that they are not justified in shouldering the responsibility any longer.

*Historic Note:- The two halls referred to are the Kenilworth Farmer’s Assembly Hall (now Gheerulla Hall) and the Kenilworth Upper Hall (now Kenilworth Public Hall). The township land was not subdivided until 1921, the first store opening in 1924*

*On May 12, 1928 the following minutes were recorded:-*

#### **Public Meeting held at Kenilworth Hall A.P. Myers Chairman.**

G.B. Sutton moved and W. Engles seconded that a committee be formed in connection with purchasing Recreation ground, comprising the following:- G.B. (Gilbert) Sutton, A.E. (Arthur) Tanner, W (Will) Sims, C. (Charles) Cole, G (George) Hassall, A.P. Myers (Chairman) , H. (Harry) Rowe (Secretary). Gilbert Sutton moved the motion, seconded by Will Sims that W. Sims, H. Fritz, A.E. Tanner, W. Purdon and A.A. McGinn act as trustees.

The Kenilworth Hall was originally sited where the Police Station now stands, moving to its present location in 1932. *Official Opening Celebrations of the New Kenilworth Hall* was reported in the Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser October 14, 1932 edition. The article continued:-

*One of the largest gatherings at a social function of its kind attended the opening of the new Kenilworth Hall on Saturday last. Nearly five hundred persons, including visitors from Gympie, Eumundi, Mary Valley and Obi Obi were in attendance. The spacious new hall, which is conveniently situated on the beautiful recreation ground, was a blaze of electric light, which showed to advantage the striking decorations of green and orange streamers and palms.*

*Just when the show began operating in Kenilworth is a little unclear but in a newspaper report on the farewell to Mr Burley, the head master at Kenilworth Lower School in March 1939 Mr. A.P. Myers, spoke as the President of the Kenilworth Show Society.*

The Nambour Chronicle report on page 9 of the September 5, 1941 edition recorded what is believed to be the first Rodeo in the township:-

#### **KENILWORTH’S RECORD DAY FOR PATRIOTIC FUNDS. More Than 1,000 Patrons Entertained at Rodeo and Sports**

Although heavy cloud formation threatened to dampen the spirits of the Kenilworth Rodeo Committee, by mid-day conditions improved, and allowed patrons numbering

over one thousand to be entertained at possibly the best outdoors events ever presented between the centres of Gympie and the metropolis. The gate takings were approximately £80 , and the campfire ball was responsible for £63/4/-.

Weeks of industrious labour under the organisation of the secretary, Mr. L. Beattie, had converted an open space into a show ground, with an attractive sawn fence enclosing the arena, whilst provision had been made to hold and work hundred of bullocks for carnival purposes. The ladies of the district, under the careful guidance of Mrs. Chas Cole and Mrs Geo. Hassall, were in charge of a very high standard.

The earliest record of the Bushmen's Carnival is an advertisement inviting tenders for a Licensed Victuallers' Booth on the Kenilworth Recreation Ground on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1948 signed by W.E. Sims, Hon. Sec. Kenilworth Bushmen's Carnival Committee. Copies of the programme for 1949 reveal 17 horse events, 3 Axemen's events, 11 Foot events with a £1 first prize for the men's open 100 yards, 20 sections for farm and garden produce, 10 classes for horticulture and 15 for Cookery. Entrance to the grounds cost adults 3 shillings, children 6 pence and car parking cost two shillings.

The September 10 issue of the Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser in 1954 ran the headline *ENLARGED MODERN KENILWORTH HALL OFFICIALLY OPENED*. The hall extensions were officially opened by Mr G.F.R. Nicklin, MLA, member for Landsborough who, in his speech remarked that *it was gratifying to see that the district people were willing to help themselves by subscribing so freely to the interest-free loans that had made possible the extensive and modern alterations. An undertaking such as this, he said, is further evidence that the sturdy spirit of the pioneers, who have accomplished so much in this country of Australia, still exists today....Too many people and organisations looked to a benevolent government for financial aid instead of seeking ways and means to help themselves.*

The December 15, 1966 edition of the Nambour Chronicle reported :-*KENILWORTH HALL FREE OF DEBT – Mr W.E. Sims, secretary of the Kenilworth Hall Committee, reported to the committee's annual meeting that the hall was now free of debt....* It took just 12 years to repay the previously mentioned loans.

In 2010 Kenilworth was acknowledged by the Caravan and Motorhome Club of Australia as an RV Friendly Location.

In March 2015 a disabled lift was installed at the Kenilworth Hall.