

Historical snapshot: Wacol

Wacol today is known for its diverse community, historic 'Wolston House', semi-industrial areas and correctional centres. The origin of the name Wacol is linked to the local weighbridge which was used to 'weigh coal'.

Escaped convicts Parsons, Pamphlet and Finnegan found two canoes at Oxley creek in 1823 and were the first white people to observe the Yerongpan clan of Oxley Creek, the original inhabitants of the Wacol area.

Wolston House

In 1851, Dr Stephan Simpson bought the first property in the area then known as Woogaroo. By 1853 he had built Wolston House and by 1855 he owned 2000 acres of land in Wacol and surrounding areas.

Dr Simpson's nephew J.M.Ommaney was set to inherit Wolston House but was killed in a horse riding accident one day after he arrived at the estate.

The death of Dr Simpson's nephew is said to have broken his spirit and he eventually returned to England.

Wolston House was later:

- » acquired by the Goggs family from 1860
- » damaged by flood in 1893
- » used as a dairy farm by the Grindle family from about 1907 to 1956
- » saved from demolition in 1960's by a group of concerned locals
- » purchased by the Department of Agriculture and Stock in 1960
- » given to the National Trust of Queensland
- » fully restored and opened to the public.



State Library of Queensland, image 21943

The historical Wolston House in Wacol.

Ipswich Motorway Upgrade Wacol to Darra

Camp Columbia

Established in 1942, Camp Columbia at Wacol was the main local camp for US troops. The Camp Columbia site was:

- » built to accommodate up to 5000 troops
- » also served as a recovery hospital for wounded Americans
- » vacated by the Americans by 1944
- » taken over by Australian troops at the end of World War II
- » used by regular and reserve troops who occupied part of the camp until 2000
- » used as a training centre for high school Army Cadets for some years
- » also used as a migrant centre from 1949 to 1987.

Correction centres of Wacol

After the closure of the Wacol Migrant Centre in 1987 the area was cleared in 1990. The Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre was built on the site in 1992. Other correctional centres in the Wacol area include:

- » the Wolston Correctional Centre commissioned in 1999
- » the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre commissioned in 1999
- » the Brisbane Correction Centre opened in 2007 – formerly Sir David Longland Correctional Centre – first commissioned in 1988.

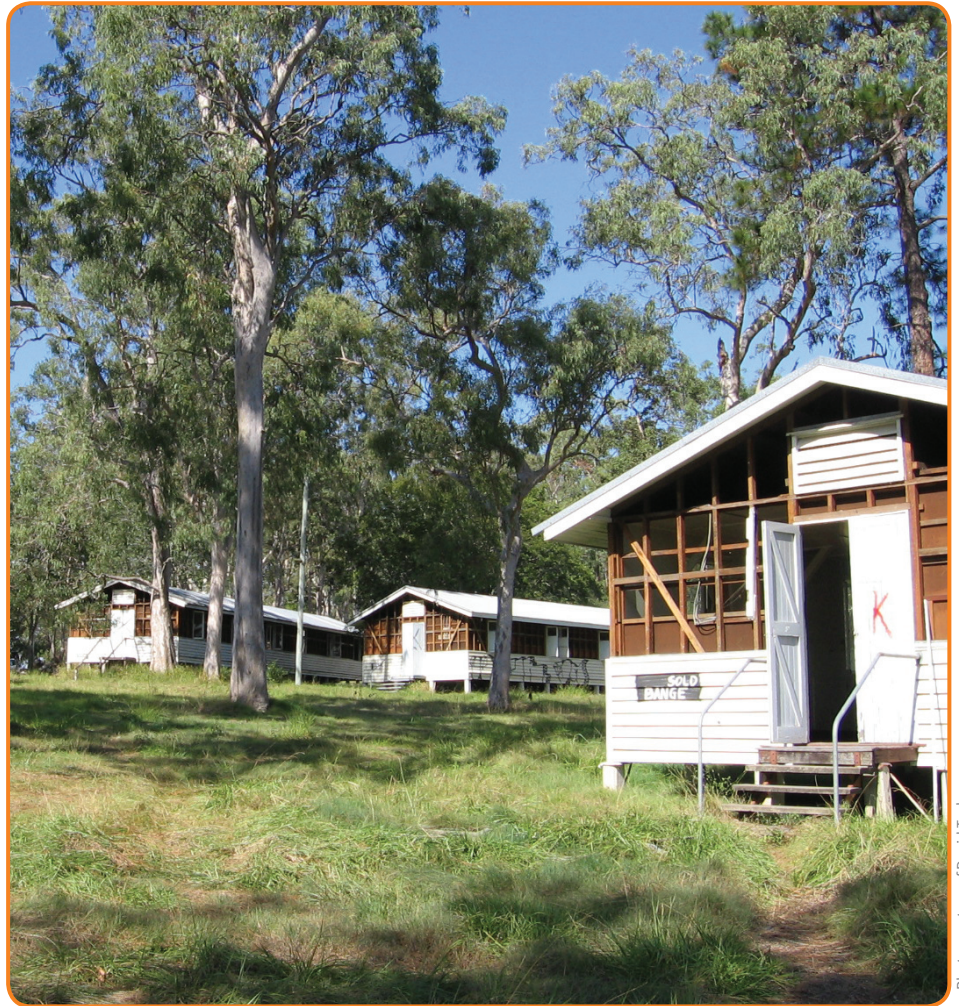


Photo courtesy of David Taylor

The Wacol Army Barracks used during World War II.

Contact us

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