

GETTING STARTED

In March of 1892, Reverend E. Fuller "induced several of the Queens Park campers to go out with him and settle on the land at Deebing Creek". The means of inducement were never specified.

Incidentally, Deebing meant "mosquito or flying insect" in the local language.

The Government in the previous month agreed to provide funding for this purpose not only to acquire the land but also to pay for food rations.

Initially Reverend Fuller lived in a large tent, which had been purchased for him and his 25 companions; men, women and children camped in humpies.

At this time there was no legislation relating to Aborigines and residence at the home was purely voluntary. It was a retreat; a benevolent endeavour designed to divert Aboriginal people away from the obvious, negative influences of living in close proximity to European settlement. The residents were free to come and go as they pleased.

It was considered necessary to formalise the arrangements concerning the administration of the Aboriginal home and therefore a public meeting was held at the Presbyterian Sunday school room (situated within the present day Presbyterian Church complex in Thorn Street, Ipswich) on Friday, 1 July 1892. Reverend Robertson was appointed unanimously as President; F.W. Johnson Esquire was appointed Secretary; and Mr John Greenham was appointed as Treasurer. Mr George Thorn MLA was also present together with a number of other people.

Mr Johnson's tenure as Secretary was short lived. W.H. Foote Esquire who was Secretary of the committee for many years replaced him.

Reverend Robertson remained as President of the Aboriginal home until his death in about 1916, a period of about 24 years.