

THE HISTORY OF YERONGA PART 8 FURTHER COLONIAL SETTLEMENT

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In 1878, George and Samuel Grimes bought nine acres at a hill-top spot in Yeronga which was later transferred to their brother, William. Here they built a substantial dwelling, *Kadumba*; designed by a fellow Baptist and celebrated Brisbane architect, Richard Gailey. The Grimes family were staunch Baptists and in 1862 they gave land for a Mission Hall built in 1865 which later became the Fairfield Baptist Church with William Grimes the first to hold services there. Samuel went on to become a member of the Legislative Assembly and George was the second chairman of Stephens Shire - the previous local government shire which covered this area.

The opening in 1888 of the Yeronga Cricket Club added to the upper class feel of the district.¹ James Hayne was a well-placed businessman who built his new home, *Como*, in Yeronga in 1889 as did his neighbor, a prominent solicitor, Adolph Feez, who gave his name to Feez Street from his residence, *Avoca*. Adolph and James both hosted the kennels for the Brisbane Hunt Club that flourished in Yeronga in the late 1880s and 1890s with drag hunts held over those large tracts of land in Yeronga still devoid of houses but no longer used for agriculture.² A later account described Adolph Feez, Honorary Master of the Club, as always being well mounted on either of his horses *Nemo* or *Gladstone*.

In 1884, the Yerong (not Yeronga) Estate was advertised, and sales got underway. This appears to be one of the first subdivisions in the area and it took advantage of the new railway station as the lithograph from that period indicates. Clearly such developments meant that the Hunt Club was no longer able to roam free and so had to be disbanded. This occurred in 1896 with the hounds being distributed among members and other dog lovers.³

Interestingly enough for such an important project, the Yeronga railway station did not appear to have had a formal opening but simply commenced on 2 June 1884 with three trains arriving daily at Yeronga Station at 5.56 am, 11.51 am and 6.01 pm. The Yeronga station remains in its original position but other stations towards the city had to be moved as a result of the disastrous floods of 1890 and 1893 when a new line was built on higher ground in 1896. The cost of a train fare at that time from South Brisbane to Yeronga was five pence in first class and three pence in 2nd class.⁴

| DOWN.—South Brisbane Branch. | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Miles from South Brisbane Junc. | Stations. | Mixed. | Mixed. | Mixed. |
| | | a.m. | p.m. | p.m. |
| .. | SOUTH BRISBANE JUNCTION .. dep. | 8.5 | 1.10 | 7.10 |
| 2 | Logan Junction | 8.11 | 1.19 | 7.19 |
| | Yeronga | 8.19 | 1.24 | 7.24 |
| 4 | Fairfield | 8.21 | 1.29 | 7.29 |
| 5 | Woolloongabba | 8.31 | 1.39 | 7.39 |
| | STANLEY-STREET arr. | 8.40 | 1.45 | 7.45 |

* Trains meet here.
(A) Trains stop by signal to pick up passengers, and will set them down when required.

◀ Up Trains—Between Brisbane and Ipswich.

One of the stated aims of this rail extension in 1884 was to create a greater distribution of products and services and thereby assist in growing the state's economy and certainly the Stephens Division saw a jump in population reaching 3,480 by 1887. Although there had been much written about the benefits of rail, its arrival to the area was not without problems. There was even an attempt to derail a train at Yeronga in March 1887 by putting nine large stones on the rails.⁵ It seems that this may have been more than hooliganism for the following year a

large local meeting was chaired by Mr.Grimes to express concern about the new railway not serving the needs of the area both by timetable failures and high price of tickets. Time and again in the meeting, the view was expressed that the various problems did not ‘encourage settlement’ of Yeronga which appears to have been the main issue on the minds of locals.⁶

¹ ‘Yeronga Rights’, *The Telegraph*, Saturday, 24 November 1888, p. 4.

² *BC*, Saturday, 21 July 1906, p. 12.

³ ‘Brisbane’s Suburban Beauties. A World of Fair Scenes’, *BC*, Saturday, 21 July 1906, p. 12.

⁴ *Pugh’s Almanac and Queensland Directory for 1894*, Gordon & Gotch, Brisbane, p. 226.

⁵ ‘Queensland News’, *Morning Bulletin*, Wednesday, 2 March 1887, p. 5.

⁶ ‘Meeting at Yeronga’, *BC*, Saturday, 22 September 1888, p. 4.