



A Guide To Gubbi Gubbi Culture

The Gubbi Gubbi people have cared for the land for over 18,000 years. Our history is one of peace and welcome to our visitors as the land has provided ample sustenance for all. Over the last 160 years changes to our lives have been severe and our population has diminished. 3,000 men, women and children were killed after the British arrived in Queensland and established their first penal colony in Redcliffe in 1824 which moved to Brisbane in 1825.

But we are resilient and our land continues to sustain us. The Gubbi Gubbi has stood with all those concerned for the life of the Mary River, a river with special significance to our people. Not all indigenous people followed our lead. What is important to understand is that Gubbi Gubbi is an integral part of Australian history. Our history belongs to all Australians. We, the Gubbi Gubbi people, under the guidance of the elders have developed this brochure to provide understanding of our culture, history and traditions. It is a guide for proper recognition and therefore understanding among our people. It is based, wherever possible, on proven fact. It allows all who respect our traditional lands to assist us learn of our heritage.



Dr. Eve Mumewa Fesi, OAM, CM, PhD



**Noosa Museum, Pomona Home of
The Gubbi Gubbi Keeping Place**



Island of Reconciliation, Noosa Museum



Gubbi Gubbi Traditional Lands

Gubbi Gubbi Traditional Lands

“Native title is the recognition by Australian law that some Indigenous people have rights and interests to their land that come from their traditional laws and customs.”

Native title rights and interests differ from Indigenous land rights in that the source of land rights is a grant of title from government. The source of native title rights and interests is the system of traditional laws and customs of the native title holders themselves”.

Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth) Section 223

This means that should you wish to refer to, or offer, your respects to the traditional custodians of the land, within the red boundaries then you may refer to the Gubbi Gubbi people.

Gubbi Gubbi welcome visitors and residents to our land. We especially welcome indigenous friends from other areas and look forward to their co-operation to develop the spirit of years gone, through meetings, exchange of respects and activities.

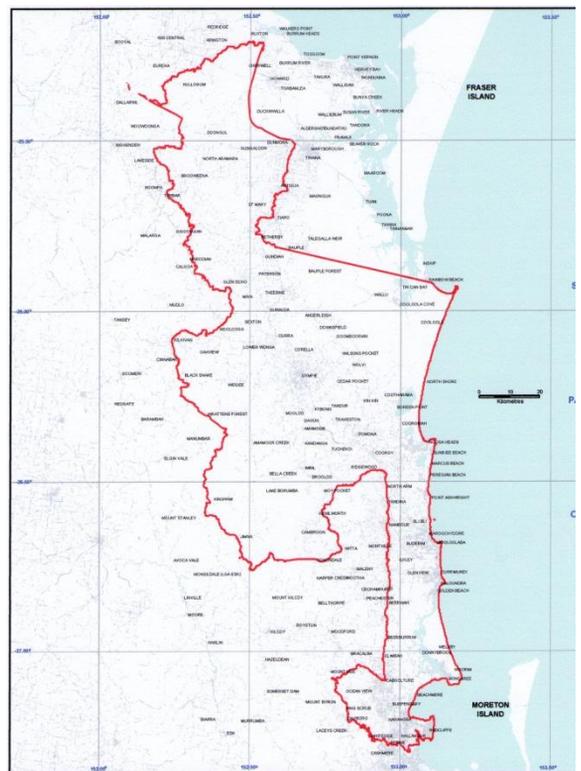
Gubbi Gubbi families, the traditional owners are listed as the people who have lodged a Native Title claim over their area, thence the Queensland Cultural Heritage Act of 2003 they became the legal Aboriginal Party” for the area shown on the map.

In indigenous society the position of Elder is earned through understanding of culture, experience, age and wisdom. It is earned and respected. However the term “Elder” or “Sunshine Coast Elder” or “Moreton Bay Elder” or “Council of Elders or like does not mean Gubbi Gubbi Elder. For welcomes to traditional lands traditional custodians and their Elders should be used. In this region that is Gubbi Gubbi.

To be sure of correct protocol check with the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) for clarification and to avoid misunderstandings.

Gubbi Gubbi registered cultural heritage land, as determined under the 2003 Queensland Culture and Heritage Act is contained within the red marked boundaries. This land is under Gubbi Gubbi title and the term Kabi Kabi has no relevance other than it is an orthographic pronunciation of the Gubbi Gubbi name.

The full map is available from the website http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/cultural_heritage/pdf/chbodygubbigubbi.pdf Questions on this should be directed to The Director General, Locked Bag 40, Coorparoo Delivery Centre, 4151 Queensland Australia.



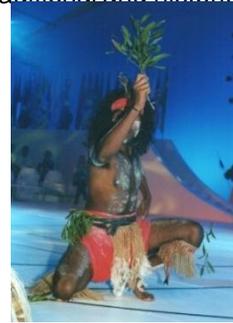


Gubbi Gubbi Cultural Heritage

A major problem facing our people centres around the activities of a few “historical” Aborigines who are disenfranchising our rights as traditional owners. Many non-indigenous are unable to recognize these people who “trick” them into giving them status (and often money).

Most indigenous people are proud of their heritage and will very quickly advise of that heritage. Others, for a variety of reasons, might not reveal, or know, their true lineage or even choose not to reveal it. So it is important to understand the difference between traditional and historical claims.

Descriptions such as “Sunshine Coast Elder” or other non clear description does not mean that that person has any traditional rights on our land or understanding and knowledge of our traditional laws, customs and languages. Living in the culture is inherited from our Elders.



Gubbi Gubbi Dancer at CHOGM
Shannon Chilly

To clarify the distinction between traditional and historical **David Edelman**, Senior Research Officer said in a paper delivered to AIATSIS Native Title Conference, Melbourne 4 June 2009 which was held to specifically address the confusion and problems caused by historical residents in claiming to be traditional owners. The conclusion noted at the Conference was:

“Further According to David Martin, the ‘traditional’ people of a particular region *... are recognised as members of the ‘tribal’ groups whose lands lie within the region; that is, they are accepted as belonging to one of the relevant ‘families’, primarily though socially validated genealogical connections. They are the ones who can legitimately ‘talk for country’, and thus should be consulted about its use. The ‘historical’ people include those who are living in a particular area now, but who are from elsewhere in this region, and those who have moved here from outside the region entirely ...*

“Historical people”, in other words, ‘are living where they are because of historical factors such as migration and deportation, ... usually assert themselves to be ‘traditional owners’ of country elsewhere, and assert only contingent rights in the country of current residence’. The native title process highlights this distinction between traditional people and historical people, as it is usually the former who lodge native title claims. Consequently, many broader native title settlement negotiations are carried out, first and foremost, with people who might generally be categorised as ‘traditional’, as opposed to ‘historical’, people.”

A historical claim does not legitimise a person to claim or represent themselves under our native title. Gubbi Gubbi families have been identified on our Native Title Grant and the Gubbi Gubbi Elders are best placed to advise you of any claimant’s status. Acceptance of non Gubbi Gubbi people may well divert our historical understanding and lead to confusion.



We Are Gubbi Gubbi

Gubbi Gubbi Environment

Traditionally Gubbi Gubbi people obtained their totems from animals, birds and rocks and other entities within their culture.

As a result each member felt a definite kinship with the totem. The totem, if it were a bird or animal, was never hunted or killed for food by the person whose totem it was.

The dyungungoo, or territory of the Gubbi Gubbi is a typically-sized area of the south coast and its hinterland. The seasonal nature of food resources meant that groups travelled over what seemed to non-indigenous people as a vast area.

During their journeys food sources were never totally exhausted so that there would be food available in coming seasons.

Weather and seasonal variations affected shellfish supplies. Cyclones, particularly, affected coastal supplies therefore inland resources needed to be sought and utilised. The seasonal availability of fruits, berries and vegetables meant that groups travelled to these locations when necessary. Throughout a cyclical period, therefore, this seasonal migration was a form of conservation.

Gubbi Gubbi Economy

Both men and women shared in the task of obtaining and supplying food and fashioning utensils.

Across the Gubbi Gubbi dyungungoo, apart from fish, they gathered shellfish, lobster, pipis and crabs along the coast; and freshwater mussels and yabbies in freshwater streams.

Women were adept at climbing trees and helping men capture small-tree dwelling animals, birds and their eggs. On the coast and in the waterways women and men shared the work of gathering shellfish and fishing. The use of nets was common in Gubbi Gubbi country.

The basic work of men in the task of gathering food was as hunters and fishermen. When hunting, men used their knowledge of bush lore, their agility and their tracking skills, as they hunted their prey. When fishing, they used their strength, their ability to stay underwater for long periods and their deftness to good effect. At times men hunted alone, but mainly they hunted as a team often with men of the Waka Waka, their neighbors on the western side of the Connondale Ranges..