

Donnybrook and Bankfoot House Tour



Our last trip of the year was to Donnybrook and Glasshouse Mountains. First port of call on a lovely, sunny day was Noela's Garden.

Noela and John Bishop have created their "little piece of Paradise" on the Beerburrum/Donnybrook Road, not far inland from the Bribie Passage. The 10 acre, beautifully cared for garden is a delight of colourful shrubs, flower gardens and palm trees, set in a manicured lawn. Noela loves to cook and we were greeted with a sumptuous morning tea in their large, airy tearoom. The array of cream cakes, slices, fruit cakes, hot pumpkin scones and more has to be seen to be believed! Believe me, when we had eaten our fill, we really needed the stroll around the lovely garden to give us any chance of enjoying our lunch.



On leaving Noela's, our driver made a detour into the little seaside village of Donnybrook before heading to the RSL Club in Beerwah for lunch. We did our best to do justice to the tasty meal there before heading to Glasshouse Mountains to inspect heritage listed Bankfoot House, the oldest surviving building in the district.

Sitting under a spreading tree, with a refreshing breeze blowing, we were given a potted history of the house and of the Grigor, Burgess and Ferris families (all related) who lived in and cared for the house for 132 years. The original house was constructed in 1868 as a stopover for travellers to and from the Gympie goldfields. Modifications and extensions over the years now have the oldest part of the house dating from 1878.



Following the talk, we were able to tour the house, which still contains photographs, furniture and effects left by the family. We were delighted to have on hand some descendants of the original families to pass on their memories of earlier days. On the death of Jack Ferris in 2002 the house was purchased by the Sunshine Coast Council, which is now responsible for its preservation. They are aided in this endeavour by the "Friends of Bankfoot House," a community group dedicated to caring for this piece of Queensland's history.

Thank you, Valerie, for once again providing us all with a very enjoyable day.

June James

Noela's Garden <http://www.noelagardenweddings.com/>
Bankfoot House <http://www.bankfoothouse.org/>

