

Thanks for the memories

Booringa shire was born as such in 1903 but this wasn't really the beginning.

The Maranoa Pastoral District of which this area was a part, was first proclaimed in November 1848 and with Moreton and Darling Downs were the first pastoral districts in what we now know as Queensland. Maranoa was one of the sixteen original electorates proclaimed when Queensland was separated for NSW in 1859. Our first Local Government was the Wallumbilla Provisional Board, which took over charge of local administration, official services & public works and in 1880 called for elected members to sit on the Board. It stretched from Yuleba to Mungallala and Dunkeld to the Carnarvon Range and excluded Roma. The Board had 3 subdivisions 1. Eastern portion and 2 & 3 around Mitchell. There were supposed to be 3 reps from each Division. Here comes the sense of deja vue. A public meeting was held in Mitchell & selected nine reps for the Board. A similar meeting was held at the Roma Courthouse (WHO OF COURSE WERE NOT IN THE DIVISIONAL BOARD) who chose another group of reps. Sound familiar? Well a right old ding dong ensued at the cheek of The 'Romans' having a say. However after much tooting and froing with the eastern portion claiming they'd have no say because even though they had bigger towns of Yuleba and Blythedale, divisions 2 & 3 had more electors. In May the Division Boundaries were changed and it became two divisions called Bungil & Wallumbilla with six representatives each. While this was going on the first board of nine reps (3 from each division) was elected but at their first meeting they agreed to the revised boundaries and six were elected to the new board. In August 1891 the divisional board name was changed from Wallumbilla to Booringa. Three other names were considered including Mitchell, Fitzroy Downs, and Maranoa before the aboriginal name being the native name for the country in the vicinity was chosen. In 1903 the Divisional Boards throughout Qld became Shires and members of the Board members became Councillors.

The Shire includes the entire catchments of the Maranoa and Merivale Rivers and the upper reaches of the Mungallala and Wallum Creeks

European Population of the Maranoa P.D. in 1851 was 85 and 110 by 1856 and 1241 by 1861 and the Maranoa River was its western boundary. By 1880 at the first elections to the Wallumbilla Divisional Board, it was 3,217 and the Boundary was further west. Booringa population at 2007 is 1820.

During its lifetime the Shire has seen regular droughts and floods, population ebb and flow, great pastoral runs and small holdings, & townships. Explorers, Bushrangers, local Aboriginal tribe and cultural area, generations born within its boundaries. I seem to remember that we celebrated the centenary of Local Government in 1979. We've got wonderful natural resources and hopefully a great resilient local spirit that is not going to let what we have built decline.

So the Shire was born with another name and we're going to move on with another name horror of horrors The Roma Regional Council. But hopefully they'll change it from that but I hope not back to Wallumbilla.

Note: It finally became the Maranoa Regional Council. Maranoa is an aboriginal word meaning 'the hand' and related to the rise of the Maranoa river in the Carnarvon Ranges from a lot of small watercourses resembling the fingers of the hand.

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