Birth of Clermont
Clermont was born after the discovery of gold in 1861, not far from where the township stands today. Sweeney, a shepherd and station hand, Masthead and fellow strike-caller George Wyllie rode in a galloping horse to nearby Sidney Creek, now known as Clermont’s Creek.

The risotto served to Blackheathmen to buy equipment and provisions, hopeful of making their fortune in gold. Word had spread of the discovery by the end of 1862 and more than 1,000 miners were flocking to the gold rush. This followed a gold rush in 1860 with the discovery of deposits known as Mission Ridge.

Foundation of Clermont
The discovery of gold brought people and development to the Clermont area. A town evolved on the lagoon, which became known as the Lagoons Mission and later as Clermont. In 1860, one hundred acres of town lots were sold by tender, with a deposit of five pounds for every three hundred pounds for the guarantee.

The Clermont Municipal Council was incorporated January 1867 and John Willson was Clermont’s first Mayor. In 1870, the Clermont Town Council amalgamated with the Bellavista Shire Council, Clermont and Nebo districts amalgamated with Broadford and Redridge in 1908 to form a new Isaac Regional Council.

The French Connection
Copperfield
Copperfield was discovered at Copperfield in 1846, by Jack Mollard. It was reported that the first find was almost pure copper and the first development of the copper mine was in 1861. A total of 7,200 tons of refined copper was extracted over 15 years.

Copperfield’s population was 1,480 in 1876, producing 370 tonnes a year and nearly 1,100 men, among other things. But with the declining fortunes of the mine its population declined to 15.

Shearer’s Strike
Sheep were first introduced to Banbury Station in 1868 by John MacArthur.

By January 1891, the shearer’s strike was in its early beginnings on Logan Station, then Bald Hill Station. The strike was then owned by George Fairbairn, there was very little standing industrial tension between graziers and sheepowners as long as there was ‘more politically organised’, securing higher wages for shearer, and that there was still a small, unregistered pound kept by long term shearer.

Copperfield’s sawmill was shut down and a shearer strike was called in 1888, the same year the mine closed. The strike ended on January 22, 1891.

Rumours had spread that the miners were going on strike to protest against the Blackheath strike in which the miners were successfully able to negotiate a better wage.

By late January 1917, Clermont had begun the recovery process after the 1916 flood. A meeting of the Clermont Shire Council was held on January 16, 1917 to consider the strike and the strike was declared illegal.

The mill was shifted once to the site of Arlberg and in 1919 approximately 360 men were working on the site. The mill was shifted again in 1946 to Clermont where a continuous operation was started and 1970, the last large scale mill opened in Queensland. The mill was driven by a steam engine.

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