

About the editors

The editors of this book bring significantly different generational perspectives to their task. This is deliberate on our part. We seek to have our readers, of whatever age, come to understand the when, why and how of the building of the city of the Gold Coast. The how and its consequences are at the centre of the story: from wilderness to an urban ecosystem.

The senior editor, Tor Hundloe, was born on the Gold Coast in the ‘baby boomer’ era. His early childhood was spent on a dairy farm in the Gold Coast hinterland. He attended primary school at both Numinbah Valley State School, a one-teacher school with only a handful of students, and Burleigh Heads State School. He was witness to the sand mining of Gold Coast beaches, the construction of the first high-rise and the dredging of the first canal estates.

A generation-plus younger is Craig Page. Craig was also born on the Gold Coast. He attended school at Elanora State High School and then studied at the Gold Coast’s Bond University. Between Tor’s birth and Craig’s, much happened in terms of city building and environmental change. The Gold Coast developed from a scattering of small coastal villages and tiny hinterland towns into a linear city with dominating groupings of high-rise apartments, extensive canal estates and sea-walls doing their best to protect the property of those who unwisely built on sand. Craig understands the Gold Coast of Tor’s youth via photos.

Neither Tor nor Craig can view the Gold Coast through the eyes of a newcomer to the city. This brings us to our third editor, Bridgette McDougall. Bridgette brings to the editorial team both youth and an ‘outsider’s’ perspective. Growing up in country Victoria, she left Bendigo and moved to the Gold Coast to study at Bond University. She views the city as it is today, without the nostalgia that would come from personal experiences of an earlier Gold Coast. That the Gold Coast includes a western borderline of pristine rainforest was an initial surprise for Bridgette.

We came to the idea for the book after taking field trips to degraded beaches and into forested catchments (taking water samples), making boat trips along the Nerang River and canal estates, visiting koala habitat and spending time interviewing residents. When we found little published literature that might have helped us with the knowledge we sought from forays into the field, we decided to gather a group of experts who would assist in documenting the Gold Coast story.

We did not have to look far. All of the contributors to this book are, or have been, associated with environmental science, environmental management or town planning in Australia’s first school of sustainable development.