

Newsletter of the

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

June 2023

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 284 Garbutt East LPO 4814



Special Points of Interest:

- *The Commonwealth Hotel*
- *Lord Kitchener visits Magazine Island*
- *QCWA Townsville Division celebrates 100 years*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

When you were a young child, the start of a new year meant return to school, catching up with your friends and exchanging stories about the holidays and the year never seemed to move quickly. Turn the clock forward to middle age and there is never enough time to do what you want. Here we are with half of 2023 over and not having achieved what we planned to do.

In February we told you the story of Margaret Wilson, a remarkable lady who had been a long time supporter of the Museum and she was turning 100 years old. Sadly, Margaret passed away on 28th April—RIP Margaret. Long time member and Life Member of the Museum, Harvey Low also passed away. Harvey being a retired school teacher was always available for school visits to the Museum. Some of the teachers even remembered “Mr. Low” from their school days. He would pass on his wealth of knowledge of the early days to the children, having their undivided attention during his talks. Which brings me back to “when you were a child...”. Life is too short and unless the history is documented and preserved for future generations, it will be lost forever.

Farewells are never easy and we said “farewell” to Gary and Jan Mann recently. Gary has worked at the Museum for 21 years and was always there doing displays, talking to visitors and being a great supporter to everyone. He was Museum Manager for a number of years. He is going to be greatly missed but I’m sure he and Jan will be regular visitors for the odd morning tea. Enjoy retirement.

On the 7th June, the QCWA Townsville branch celebrated their 100th Birthday with the official launch of the display by the Mayor of Townsville, Councillor Jenny Hill. Morning tea of scones, jam and cream, the signature dish of the QCWA was served. The 100 year history will be on display in the Museum until early next year.

Our AGM will be held at the end of August. If you would like to be part of the management committee, your nomination will be more than welcome to ensure the future of the Museum.

Until next time,
Trish Cronin
President

Monthly committee meetings are held at the Museum on the third Monday of the month at ten o'clock. All committee members are notified a week prior to the meeting.



RIP Margaret Wilson, a long time supporter of Townsville Museum. She passed away soon after celebrating her 100th birthday.

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TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BUSINESS HOURS

Monday to Friday

9:00 am to 2:30 pm

ENTRY Adults \$5 Chn \$2

MEMBERSHIP FEES

(12 months from 1st July to 30th June)

Single \$ 11.00

Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

A PUB CRAWL THROUGH TOWNSVILLE— COMMONWEALTH HOTEL

Text from: *“A Pattern of Pubs: Hotels of Townsville 1864-1914”* by Dorothy and Bruce Gibson-Wilde.



78 Commonwealth, 1980.

(B. Gibson-Wilde)

The present Hotel at the corner of Allen and Macrossan Street, South Townsville.

1901	John Edward Clegg	1901	1904-1907	Robert Hall
1901-1902	Mary Anne Flynn		1907-1909	William Reid
1902	Minnie Clancy		1909-1915?	Elizabeth Clarke Haylock
1902-1904	Edward Francis Donnelly			

The *Commonwealth* was one of a number of hotels erected in Townsville at the turn of the century, whose names – *Federal*, *Empire*, *National* and *Commonwealth* – celebrated Federation and the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia. Federation was strongly supported in north Queensland by many who had previously viewed Separation and the formation of the new north Queensland colony as the solution to the problem of Brisbane rule. They were wrong of course, since north Queensland’s isolation and the domination by Brisbane has worsened, if anything, since Federation.

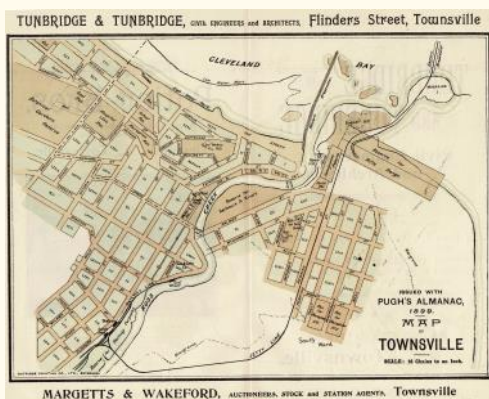
However, when John Clegg built his new hotel in 1901, he named it patriotically the *Commonwealth*.¹ By then the population of South Townsville had grown sufficiently to attract local patrons to the new hotel as well as workers from the wharves and nearby warehouses.

Today the exterior appearance remains substantially the same as it was in 1901. Together with its ‘twin’, the *Empire*, it is regarded as a typical Australian corner ‘pub’. Two-storeyed, with timber balustraded verandahs shading the streets, it is one of the admirable collection of historic hotels in South Townsville.

¹ North Queensland Herald,
11 February 1901



LORD KITCHENER VISITS MAGAZINE ISLAND



An article for the newsletter by Nick Shailer.

Left: An early map showing the location of Magazine island.

Prior to 1891, Magazine Island was known by a number of different names including Redcliff Island, Darling Island and Inch Gordon. After an explosive magazine was built on the island in 1870, it popularly became known as Magazine Island.

Construction of the original fort commenced in 1890 and it was originally fitted out with two 6-inch Armstrong breech lading (B.L.) 80 pounder guns on traversing slides in about 1891. These were later removed between June and August 1896 with one being sent to Brisbane where it was mounted on the Victoria Barrack Square and the other was mounted in the armoury below the Supreme Court and used for drill purposes. A single ten-barreled 0.45 Nordenfelt machine gun was also installed at Magazine Battery.

Two 4.7inch Q.F. Mark IV guns (Serial Nos. 794 and 795) arrived from England in December 1900 to replace the 80 pounder guns. The old emplacements for the 80 pounder guns were removed and new emplacements installed along with an ammunition lift to the underground magazine. The fort was also fitted out with a Nordenfelt machine gun (Serial No.188).

Two 155mm M1917 Grande Puissance Filloux (GPF) French made guns on Carriage M3 on Panama Mounts were in use at Magazine Battery during WWII. "D" Australian Heavy Battery left Skirmish Battery on Bribie Island and on 3 May 1943 they boarded a train at Wynnum and travelled to Kalinga Staging Camp in Brisbane, where they boarded buses to move to the railway station to board a troop train to Townsville. They arrived at the Townsville railway station at 10pm on 5 May 1943 and moved to the Magazine Battery overlooking the Townsville Harbour. Magazine Hill was originally on what was known at Magazine Island.

An article from The Telegraph (Brisbane Qld 1872-1947) Thursday 30 December 1909.

RECEPTION AT TOWNSVILLE

Townsville, December 30

H.M.S. Encounter anchored outside at 1.30p.m. yesterday. Unfortunately, however, the party did not arrive at the jetty until 3.15pm, instead of 2 o'clock. Lord Kitchener, accompanied by Major-general Hoad, Colonel Fitzpatrick, and Captain Fitzgerald, landed from the Government

LORD KITCHENER VISITS MAGAZINE ISLAND

launch Teal, and was met by the Mayor (Ald. Smyth), Messrs Caraddock (Harbour Board), Croder (Shire Council of Wakeford), Henlein, McCrae, and Dr Parkinson. Major-general Hoad introduced the visitor to the Mayor, who spoke a few words of welcome, and as the party moved to cabs the large crowd cheered lustily. The party then drove straight to the fort at Magazine Island, and after an inspection lasting 15 minutes, proceeded to the town hall. The streets were lined with spectators, who cheered loudly, Lord Kitchener graciously acknowledging the compliments. On entering the town hall they were met by the Mayor, who escorted the party to the council chamber, where there was a very large gathering, representative of the commercial, industrial, ecclesiastical, and legal life of the city. The toast of "The King" having been honoured, the Mayor proposed the health of "Lord Kitchener". He felt greatly honoured, he said, to be asked, on behalf of the citizens of Townsville, to extend a civic welcome to so distinguished a visitor. They all felt exceedingly proud and honoured to have so illustrious a soldier in their midst, one of whom they had read and heard so much in regard to deeds of bravery and valour. (Applause.)

The people had welcomed many prominent personages before, Ministers of the Crown and others, but had never been honoured by such an illustrious man as their guest. Australia had a large area of country, with a population of only 4,000,000, and the time had arrived when the defence of its vast coastline called for prompt attention Great Britain had shown consideration for Australia by allowing so illustrious a warrior to visit its shores to give the naval and military authorities here to benefit by his vast knowledge in matters of defence. Australia was one of the outposts of the Empire, and the thoughtfulness of Great Britain in sending its ablest general to give advice on matters of defence called for their warmest commendation. He felt sure that Lord Kitchener's mission would be attended with good results, and that Australia would be placed in possession of the best military knowledge. It gave him very great pleasure to propose the health of their distinguished guest. (Loud applause.) The toast was enthusiastically honoured, to the accompaniment of musical honours.

Lord Kitchener received an ovation on rising to respond. At the outset he stated that he did not want to make a speech. He thanked the Mayor and citizens of Townsville for the very cordial and flattering reception which they had extended to him. It pleased him a great deal to make their acquaintance, and to visit their fine commercial city, which appeared to have a big future. Concluding, he again thanked the company very heartily on behalf of himself and staff for their very cordial reception. (Applause)

Accompanied by the Mayor and members of the reception committee, Lord Kitchener and his staff then left the town hall. On reaching the street, the crowd assembled broke into cheers, which continued for some time. The party proceeded to the fort at Kissing Point, where the troops were inspected. Subsequently the party was entertained at a public reception in the Botanical Gardens, where a very large crowd of people had assembled.

The Encounter sailed south at 8.30 pm, and is expected to reach Brisbane on Saturday morning.



LORD KITCHENER VISITS MAGAZINE ISLAND



Magazine Island from Pilot Station.



Clockwise: Magazine Island from Pilot Station, From Strand to Magazine Is., Next 5 photos of installation on Magazine Is, Looking from Magazine Island to Pilot Hill.

ABC VISITS TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM

On 6th June 2023, Queensland celebrates Queensland Day and ABC North Queensland Breakfast Show with host Michael Clarke, decided to do an outside broadcast from the breezeway area of Townsville Museum. Invited guest speakers included Trish Cronin, President of Townsville Museum, Fay Lambert, President of Northern Division QCWA, Sue Cole from Mary Who Book Store, Teresa Hudson, Community Information Centre and Nick Shailer, longest serving volunteer at Townsville Museum.



Michael Clarke, Trish Cronin and Nick Shailer in front of the Short Family display of old cash registers.



Vale Harvey Low

A very long time and committed member of Townsville Museum & Historical Society, Harvey Low, passed away recently. His last collaboration was with member Geoff Hansen, on a book about Harvey's brother Larry who was killed in Korea just 55 days after arriving there with 3 RAR.

Harvey and his wife Dell have been wonderful supporters of Townsville Museum and have been associated with us for decades of service.

Always one to volunteer, Harvey will be missed but his contributions will continue on with all of us.

THANKS GARY and JAN!

Long time volunteers, Gary & Jan Mann, have decided to spend some time with family and friends both near and far. Gary has held the position of Museum Manager for many years and he has been a stalwart of keeping the museum open and functioning in all sorts of weather conditions. We have used Gary's skills to mount displays and keep the museum in tip top shape over a long period. Jan has always supported us too, and they have both contributed to manning the museum at Heritage Days and on Sundays opening hours.

Townsville Museum thanks you both for your commitment and hard work over such a long period- over twenty years, and we will miss your wicked sense of humour immensely.



TOWNSVILLE QCWA DIVISION 100TH ANNIVERSARY

The Townsville Division of QCWA celebrated 100 years of service to the Townsville community recently on June 7th. An anniversary ceremony was conducted at Townsville Museum to open the QCWA museum display which is housed in Hall 1 and will remain there on display for a year.

In attendance, the invited guests included the Mayor Jenny Hill, descendants of two of the early members of the founding QCWA in Townsville as well as other dignitaries. The ceremony was held in the breezeway between the two buildings, and after the welcome, the Invited dignitaries were given a private viewing of the display. A delicious morning tea of scones and jam and birthday cake was enjoyed by the guests, who stayed to view the display and tour the other museum exhibits.



Left: Part of the display in Hall 1.
Row 2:: Kaylene O'Rourke, Mayor Jenny Hill and Sheila Morrison (compere), The Anniversary cake.

Row 3: Trish's address, and Viewing the display.



PIONEER WEEKEND AT HISTORIC VILLAGE, HERBERTON

The Pioneer weekend at the Historic Village in Herberton is always a well attended weekend, with visitors coming from all over the north to participate in the festivities. Many visitors go to extraordinary lengths to dress to an 'era' and the weekend includes a fashion parade for participants to show off all their finery.

Nick has been attending the weekend for quite a few years and dresses up for his role as chemist, looking every bit a time traveller from the early 20th century.

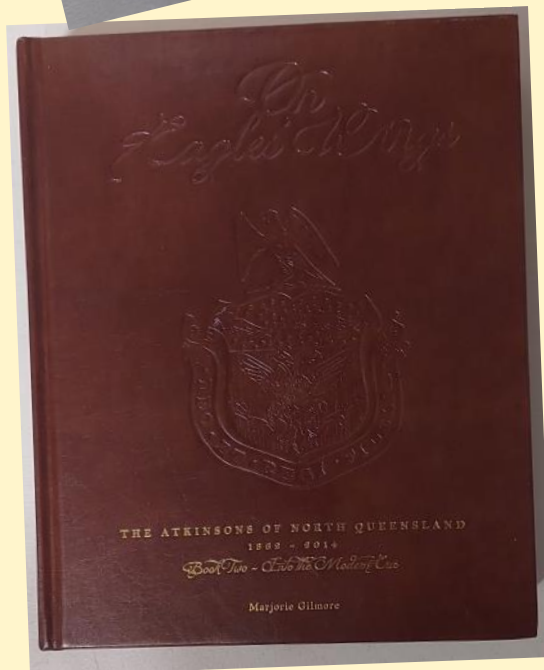
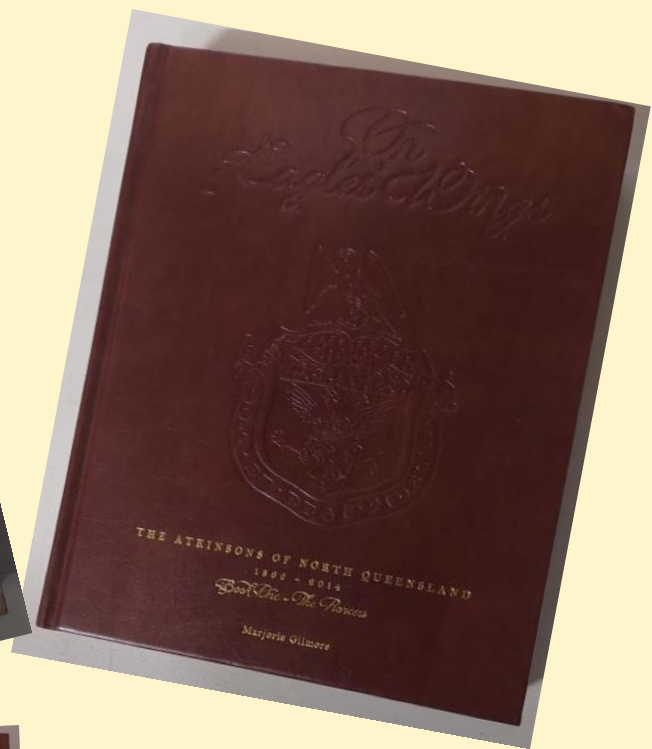
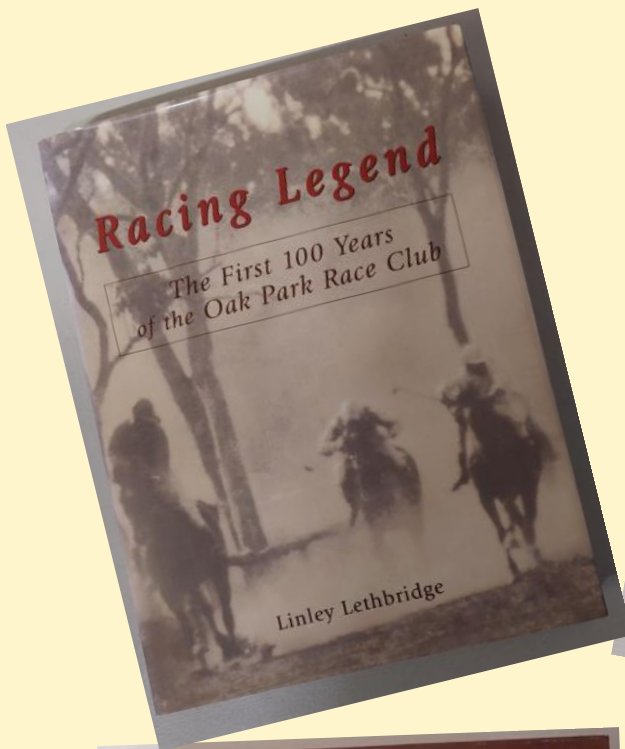
Here are some of Nick's photos of the weekend. It really is a special atmosphere created by the management of this authentic looking little village tucked away in Herberton on the Atherton Tablelands.



Top: Nick in his Chemist Shop and scenes from around the village on the Pioneer Weekend.

RECENT ACQUISITION TO THE MUSEUM

Our museum was the fortunate recipient of a donation to the our collection of a beautifully leather bound set of two books on the family history of the Atkinson Family, land holders throughout north Queensland. Also donated was a copy of "Racing Legend: the First 100 Years of the Oak Park Race Club". Oak Park Race Club is at Oak Park Station at the junction of Lynd Highway and Hughenden Road. These books will be added to our preserved collection.



Top left: Racing Legend: The First Hundred Years – The Oak Park Race Club

Top right: The Atkinsons of North Queensland 1862-2014 Book One- The Pioneers

Left: The Atkinsons of North Queensland 1862-2014 Book Two- Into the Modern Era

FROM THE PHOTO COLLECTION - FROM "THE BOWLY PAPERS"



"Bimbah' Mt Cornish 1874?

This small house is similar to Ambo, structurally it may be identical, but it is photographed from the other side. The fully hipped roof is of iron, but there is no gutter visible despite the tall water tank at the left. The verandah posts are square and stop chamfered. A wall of lapped weatherboards divides the front verandah into two.

This, together with the twin stove pipes rising through the roof ridge from the centre of the house, suggests it has been divided into two after construction.

Below: "Drafting Yards at Mt Cornish C.Q. about 1875" The massive strength needed in yards for drafting cattle, and the huge quantity of timber in country where timber was always scarce, are obvious. The nearest fence, the only one fully visible, has six rails, and a gate at either end. On the third rail in the bay nearest the right hand gate there is a saddle. In the middle of the yards towards the right



margin is a particularly heavy structure of whole logs. It may be the crush and bail.

The yards are holding a large number of cattle; there is too much movement for it to be clear, but two small calves can be made out jammed against the rails in the right foreground.



Townsville Museum

&

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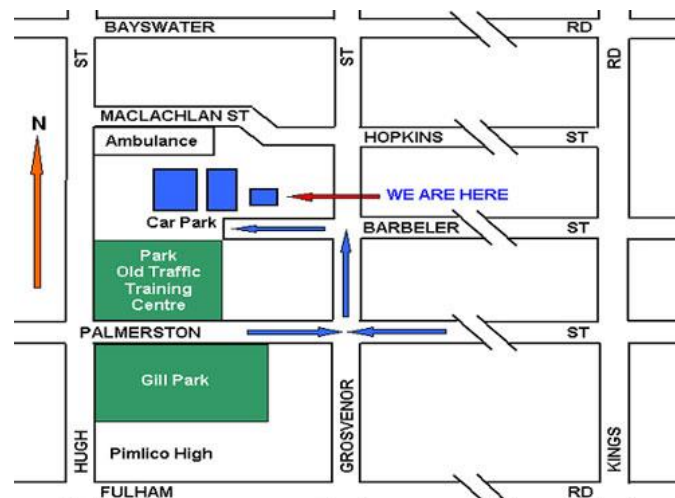
PO Box 284

GARBUTT EAST LPO, Qld 4814

Phone: 07 4775 7838

Email: admin@townsvillemuseum.com.au

Website: <http://www.townsvillemuseum.com.au>



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New and Older Publications available now, including
55 Days in Korea: Letters Home from Larry Low, 3RAR
By Geoff Hansen and Harvey Low—\$20

Contact Townsville Museum 47757838 or admin@townsvillemuseum.com.au

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McGrath Estate Agents
 71 Eyre Street
 NORTH WARD Qld 4810