

Newsletter of the

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

October 2018

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



Special Points of Interest:

- *Rockhampton Heritage Village*
- *Townsville Shunting*
- *Vic Park Hotel and Vic Leg—Railway History*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Since the last Newsletter in June, so much has happened. On Wednesday 29th August, the latest book in the North Queensland History Series, Goldfields that made Townsville, was officially launched by the Mayor, Councillor Jenny Hill at the Mayoral Reception room. The launch was very well attended and book sales have been very successful. I must congratulate Geoff Hansen for his work in bringing together the papers on the goldfields of Cape River, Ravenswood and Charters Towers, which were completed by Geoff, Lyndon Megarrrity and the late Diane Menghetti.

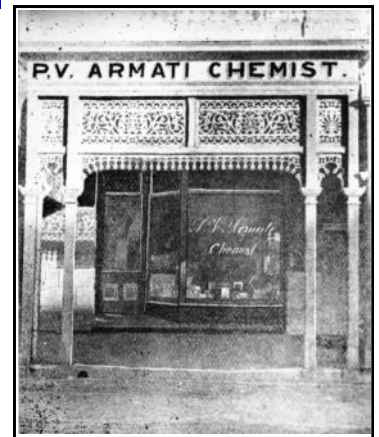
The AGM was held on 30th September and this year our committee has been reduced to 7 members. I welcome Nick Shailer as Vice President, Wendy Simpkins as Secretary, Lydia Morton as Treasurer and members Geoff Hansen, John McDonald and Fay Jones. Our membership is slowly decreasing and without the support of a strong membership base, each year is becoming increasingly harder to find the support of the members, particularly at the AGM. This is my 7th continuous year as President, which makes me the longest serving President in the 33 year history of Townsville Museum. I must have "rocks in my head".

On a lighter note. The Museum has welcomed recently 2 new volunteers, Ray Plozza and Michelle Pylant, both are great assets to the Museum. The collections audit is continuing, thanks to Fay and Petra with assistance from Ray. Council has recently installed new air conditioners in both Halls, the office and storeroom, for which we are really grateful as the artifacts and collections need to be housed in air conditioned premises 24/7. The Museum building has recently been painted by TM&HS also, which is a requirement of our Lease, and the presentation of the building to the visitors is more pleasant.

The year is fast drawing to a close and this year the Museum will close for its annual break on Thursday 20th December and re-open on Monday 7th January 2019 and as this is the last Newsletter for the year, I wish you all a happy Festive Season and look forward to your support in 2019.

My best wishes,
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.



Unknown (1906). Premises of P.V. Armati, chemist, Flinders Street, Townsville, 1906. Held in Local History Collection, CityLibraries.

Inside this issue:

Armati Street	2
Museums in Regional Queensland— Rockhampton Heritage Village	4
Victoria Leg and Victoria Park Hotel	5
Photographs—Right Place Right Time	6
Townsville Shunting Part I	7
New Acquisitions	9

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BUSINESS HOURS

Monday to Friday

9:00 am to 2:30 pm

First and Third Sundays of the month

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

ENTRY Adults \$2 Chn 50c

MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

Single \$ 11.00

Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

ARMATI STREET

Armati Street, Melton Hill. Pio Vica Armati (18?-1923) was born at Marino near Rome and arrived in Australia in 1874. He settled at Bowen but moved to Townsville in 1875 following his registration as a pharmaceutical chemist on 5th March, 1874. Naturalised in 1876, he married Francis Abigail Norris and they had five children. He sold his Flinders Street chemist shop to G.J. Atkinson in 1881 and in the following year he entered into partnership with Chiaffredo Venevano Fraire, another Italian. They traded as Armati Fraire and Company, drapers, ironmongers, wine and general merchants until 1889 when the partnership dissolved.

A keen gardener and an agent for Samuel Purchase's Somerset Nursery, near Sydney, his advice was sought by the Townsville Municipal Council in 1878 on the design and layout of the Townsville Botanical Gardens (later Queens Gardens), North Ward. In 1888, he was appointed one of the first trustees of the Queens Park Trust. Apart from his horticultural interest, Mr Armati was a life-long student of phrenology.

Armati retired to Burwood, Sydney but became insolvent as a result of the 1890 bank crash. Returning to Townsville he opened another chemist shop in Flinders Street west, opposite the railway station in 1891. Some years later he moved to other premises in Flinders Street between Stokes and Denham Street.

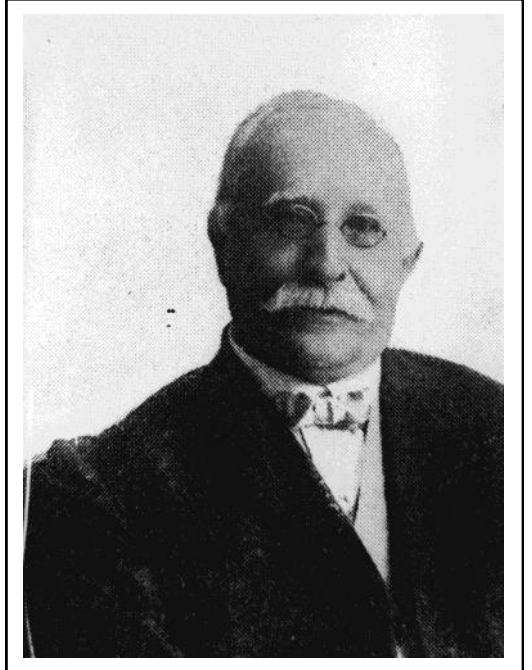
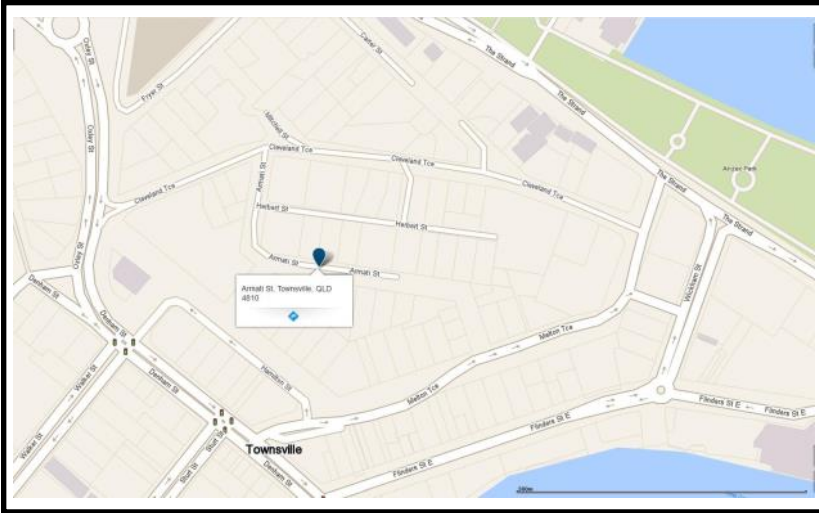
For many years he was actively engaged with his former partner Mr C. V. Fraire in encouraging and promoting Italian migration during the early expansion of the sugar industry in North Queensland.

Mathew, J. (1995). *Highways and Byways*. Townsville, Queensland: Townsville City Council.

This article was published in the "Townsville Daily Bulletin" on Friday, 7th December 1923, page 4. Retrieved from Trove 14 October 2018.

The death of **Mr P. V. Armati** has removed one who was connected with Townsville from its earliest days. Born in Rome 77 years ago, Mr Armati had a particularly brilliant scholastic career. He was very young when he graduated to the University of Rome, and long before he attained his majority Mr Armati had gained the following very creditable list of degrees: Bachelor and Licentiate of Law, Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Arts, Bachelor of Law (civil and ecclesiastical), Bachelor of Arts and Licentiate of Arts. Those were the days when Garibaldi was a powerful figure in Italian affairs and the young collegiate joined the ranks of the great soldier and after a stirring period he left the country. He proceeded to Ireland and studied for a little time at St. Mary's College, Dublin and here he met Bishop Quinn, who was about to sail for Australia. The long voyage to this country appealed to his daring spirit and he threw in his lot with the bishop and soon found himself outward bound seeking fortune. Almost immediately after landing Mr. Armati found his way to Townsville — just 54 years ago — and here he saw an opening which he lost no time in grasping. Big of heart and with rare ability it was not surprising that he prospered and he soon had a flourishing chemist's business and this continued to grow. Then he saw possibilities in the mercantile world and it was not long before the firm of Armati and Fraire was a very prosperous one. Their business premises stood on the site of Burns, Philp and Co's big warehouse of today. Mr Armati left the north to live at Burwood, Sydney, but those were eventful days in Australia. The big bank crash came, the smash which affected so many of the sturdy pioneers, and Mr. Armati came back to the scene of his earlier success, back to Townsville to his old calling as a pharmaceutical chemist and he had remained here since. Ten years ago his son Clive was taken in as a partner in the firm but right to the end the senior partner took an active interest in the business and on the day before his death, he spent a couple of hours in the shop in the afternoon as usual. Death was due to heart failure, the old gentleman passing out in his sleep. Deceased leaves many friends who will ever have a kindly thought for a sympathetic adviser and a courteous gentleman. He leaves a widow, one daughter, Mrs Shepherd, and four sons, Messrs Clive V Lee, who is attached to the literary staff of Melbourne 'Sun', Percy, who is practicing as chemist in Mackay, and Rex.

ARMATI STREET CONTINUED



Above: Armati Street, Melton Hill, Townsville.

Right: Unidentified (1887). Portrait of Pio V. Armati, Townsville, Queensland, ca. 1887. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland

Below: Unknown (1888). Flinders Street East, Ross Creek and Ross Island from Cleveland Street, 1888. Retrieved Trove 17/10/18. Copy held in Local History Collection, CityLibraries.

On far bank of creek, in Palmer Street, are from left, Immigration Depot, ... Hotel, Crown Hotel and Ross Island lower ferry landing. Premises of Armati and Fraire & Co. are at the lower right of the photograph.



MUSEUMS IN REGIONAL QUEENSLAND—NICK SHAILER

Rockhampton Heritage Village

Have you ever visited the Rocky Heritage Village? If not, and you're heading south, it's well worth a visit. The village was set up when the Gangalook Museum (a private collection) which was near the Caves, north of Rocky, was left to the Rockhampton City Council in 1989. It moved to the new village site in 1997.

Once on the northern outskirts of Rocky, it is now several suburbs in but still on the main road. I've been a regular visitor since the start and have watched it grow to the size it is now, showing most aspects of life in a country town to the 1950s.

A new addition for this year is a small post office which has been moved from the hospital.

They have several workshops where restoration is carried out by their own teams of restorers, historical cars drive around the site giving rides to visitors and old machinery can be found running in the machinery shed.

You can also find livestock around the site, toilets are located about the site and tea, coffee, cold drinks and light snacks can be purchased from Arnold's Store.

Buildings on site are a mix of original and reproduction. Those that are reproduction are copies of ones that were located in the Rockhampton area.

The collection is housed throughout the village and in the Information and Village Entry building, there is a fantastic collection of clocks and watches collected by the Gomersall brothers who were local watch makers, along with other small items.

There is a large reproduction shearing shed on site which is rented out as a function centre, the historical church on the site is used for weddings, and the school is used by school groups.

Entry fee is at present \$15 and you would need several hours for a decent visit, so stop and have a look next time you head south.



Left: Entry Building, Rockhampton Heritage Village

Right: Fire Station Rockhampton Heritage Village

VICTORIA PARK LEG AND VICTORIA PARK HOTEL—NICK SHAILER

With the recent loss of the Victoria Park Hotel to a ravaging fire, have you ever wondered why it was built there at the end of what was then Main Street, later to become Boundary Street?

Built in 1896, South Townsville and Railway Estate had grown into well populated suburbs and Victoria Park (the park not the pub), was one of Townsville's main sporting fields, and also in 1893, William Robertson had opened his Victoria Foundry just down the road so there were plenty of thirsty men at the end of the day who had to pass by on their way home.

Also, it was not unusual to find steam and later diesel shunt locos and wagons parked nearby while the crews had a quick drink. At this time there was a railway line from South Yard to the iron foundry, and in later years, the site was used by BP fuels.

For shunt crews to get onto the Vic Park leg as it was known, the shunt came out of South Yard on the Morey Street end, past the Morey Street signal cabin and stopped clear of the Morey Street road crossing on what was known as the red side on a shunt signal. Originally there was a single line to the jetty but as traffic increased, it became a double line. Work on these lines were operated by electronic staffs painted blue and red, blue ran down the Bellevue Hotel side, and red on the other.

Once clear of the shunt signal, the cabin set the points and the shunt crossed Morey Street on to the Vic Park leg. The shunt was now pushing any loading it had on so the shunters would ride on the lead wagon to protect the road crossings. The line ran down the right hand side of Morey Street and curved around the small park near the Vic Park Hotel, across Boundary Street and on to the left hand side of Seventh Avenue, and down through the gates into the foundry, and later, the fuel terminal.

On the way in or out, it was not uncommon for the shunt crews to stow the loco near the park and duck in for a drink. Shunting the Vic Park leg could take quite a time!

On the return towards South Yard, the shunt would pull up clear of the Morey and Perkins Street intersection until the cabin pulled the signal, so the loco could again return to the red side and shunt back into South Yard.

The Vic Park was not the only pub that had a lot of railway trade. If you were working in the North Yard

or at the station, lunch time was spent in the Great Northern or the Newmarket. Staff from the loco shed and the North Yard workshops visited the Mansfield and the Sovereign. In earlier years, there were also the Family, Railway, Paragon and the Carriers Arms Hotels.

From South Yard, shunters visited the National, now called the Ross Island. Those from the workshops visited the Bellevue. Crews running loading from South Yard to the Jetty were also known to pop into there on a hot day.

Unknown (1986). *Sketch, Victoria Park Hotel, Townsville.*
 Accessed Trove NLA; 15 October 2018.
 Local History Collection, CityLibraries Townsville



PHOTOGRAPHS—RIGHT PLACE RIGHT TIME

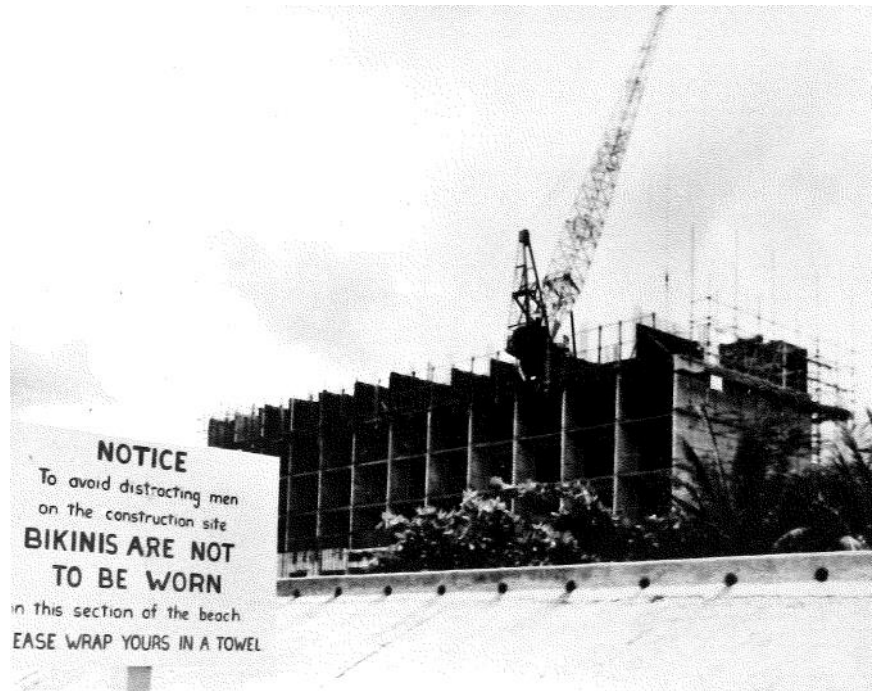


The photographer was perfectly positioned to take this one. A nasty accident in Flinders Street in the late 1920s happened right in front of the camera here.
Photo courtesy of Nick Shailer.

A different age and a different standard!

One of the few clippings we have of the building of the "Travelodge" just prior to 1972.

TM&HS Collection



North Queensland Tattersall's Club, Osler house in Sturt Street. This is a float in the 8 Hour Parade, 1912.

TM&HS Collection

TOWNSVILLE SHUNTING—PART I

NICK SHAILER

The railway around Townsville today is a poor shadow of what it once was. The original station for Townsville was near the intersection of Flinders and Jones Streets and it was here that the steam loco shed, goods shed and work shops developed. By the early 1900s the station was outgrowing its old site and in 1910 a new 3 storey red brick building was started, and it was opened on the 24th December 1913. The workshops which were to employ some 500 men at any time, remained where they were along with the loco shed. The main line to the north originally ran through the workshops but was later changed to run alongside the shops and Flinders Street. A curve took the line over the Causeway and along beside Ingham Road on the way north to Cairns.

At West End near the northern end of the showgrounds, there was a railmotor stop and shelter shed, and a spur line which ran down into Brown and Broad's timber yard (later Foxwood), and through to the Townsville Gas and Coke works. On this spur line Circus and Show trains would be unloaded. There was also another short line which ran into a small livestock yard, mainly used at show time for show livestock to be unloaded. In later years, Parkside timber would also unload wagons here.

The next stop was Garbutt which was a manned station and had its own shunt. Loading would be assembled in town in the North Yard and run out each morning. There were a lot of company sidings in the area. Malanda Milk had one at the back of its factory, and it was from the Garbutt siding that the spur line to the old Power House and water pumping station ran. Off this line was another, which ran into Garbutt Brothers slaughter yard for their butcher shops. This area was to see a lot of military traffic in WW2. In the afternoon the shunt would return with empty or reloaded wagons. All sidings in the area have now gone except the one that runs into the Bohle Industrial area.

In the 1920s there was a major upgrade of the railway infrastructure in the Townsville area. The original site around the main station could no longer handle the increased work load so work started on constructing what was to become known as the South Yard. A larger shunting yard was built, along with large workshops and a new goods shed. The old goods shed next to the station was removed and the railway station was extended with the construction of major refreshment rooms. This section became the parcels office and later was converted to office space after the railway decided to stop handling small parcels. A servicing ramp for passenger coaches was built and the platform extended with 3 dock lines.

The next major lot of works was in the 1960s which saw the construction of a new four storey brick extension for more offices. This became known as the new building and in fact, it still is. Fuel tanks were placed on what had been a garden at the western end of the then parcels offices, for the new loco shed built to handle the growing fleet of diesel locos.

TOWNSVILLE SHUNTING—PART I NICK SHAILER



Above: The original Townsville Railway Station

Below: Overhead walkway, North Yard shops



NEW ACQUISITIONS—VAL HEATON MEMORABILIA

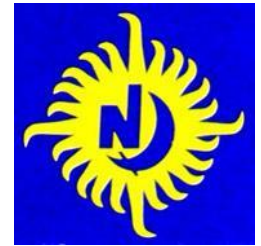
Townsville born and bred, Val Heaton who was known as the Townsville Flash, started running when she was 6 years old at the Mundingburra State School and won all the races she competed in. She then attended St. Anne's School, (now the Cathedral School of St Anne & St. James) and continued her success as a runner. She had no coach or sponsor just the burning desire to be a runner. Val left school at age 15 and worked as a dressmaker in Townsville. After work she would put on her running shoes and go to the Townsville Golf Club at Rosslea to run as there were no athletic tracks to train on. Val saved her money to pay for airfares to Brisbane. At age 16 years, Val started running for the Bardon Athletics Club in Brisbane. Her dream was to compete in the Olympic Games.

From 1951 to 1956, Val was the Queensland Country State Champion for 100 yards sprint, the 220 yards and the 440 yards. In 1951, Val competed in the Commonwealth of Australia 50th Anniversary Festival of Sport in Brisbane and in 1955 was awarded "Miss Sportswoman". She trialled for the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne but was beaten by Betty Cuthbert, who became an Olympic legend. There was no encouragement offered to Val Heaton by the organising officials in Brisbane but instead they turned their backs on a young girl from Townsville who deserved better. Due to family circumstances, Val returned home from Brisbane to look after the family.

At Val's request, the family donated her medals, trophies, certificates and albums of numerous newspaper articles and photographs to the Townsville Museum in 2017.

Below: The Val Heaton Display in Hall 2.

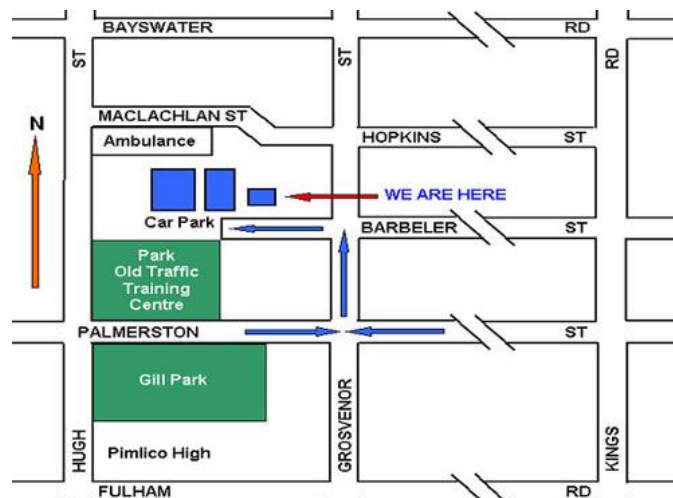




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Magnetic Island History and Craft Centre & Magnetic Museum

Calendar Fundraiser 2019 Calendar—\$30

Holding Our Past

Contact Zanita 0488050145

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 Museum

