



Special Points of Interest:

- *Herbert Street*
- *Washing, Drying and Ironing in Townsville 1920s—1930s —Don McDonald*
- *Museum News*

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.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The end of the 2016 is fast approaching and so much has happened this year with lots of functions, celebrations of T150 and two of our members reaching ‘milestones’ in their life. Harvey turned 80 and Lydia turned 70 in August and we celebrated with a morning tea.

Our AGM was held in September and the committee was returned once again. We must be doing a sterling job as no one else wants to take over - maybe next year?? During research of records of the Museum over the last 30 years, it was incredible to see the members who gave so much of their time to the Museum in those early days and still continue to support us today. One such couple was Norton and Diana Challenor, who not only served on the committee in the positions of President and Treasurer for a number of terms but still remain loyal members. In view of their continued support we have given Life Memberships to Norton and Diana as a “Thank you” for their loyalty over these 30 plus years. Members are appreciated but also our Volunteers and this year we gave Certificates of Appreciation to Petra Cartwright and Kenwyn Grau. Both work at the Museum 3 days a week and do a wonderful job taking visitors through the Museum and also ensuring the Museum is kept clean. Thank you to you both. And we said ‘farewell’ to another Life Member, May Abernethy. May and David have gone south to live closer to children and grandchildren and we wish them well in their new home.

As this will be the last newsletter for 2016, I sincerely hope you all enjoy the upcoming holidays. I must thank the committee for their support this year and the wonderful work undertaken especially by Fay with the assistance of Robyn. The re-organisation of preserved books and artefacts is long overdue. In the future it will be easier to identify the location of these “Gems” (and we have found quite a lot) with boxes marked with contents. Geoff, Gary and John are also doing an audit of the storeroom and it is planned to again re-organise and package artefacts for better preservation. It is also planned to air-condition this room to further preserve the contents. These jobs are long overdue and I appreciate the support given to these projects.

So that all the committee members and volunteers have a well deserved holiday, the Museum will close from Monday 19 December and re-open on Monday 9 January 2017. I wish everyone all the best for the Festive Season and look forward to a busy 2017.

My best wishes,
Trish Cronin
President



Unidentified (1920). *View of North Ward and Kissing Point, Townsville, 1920.*
John Oxley Library, State

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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 BY GOLD COIN DONATION

MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

Single \$ 11.00

Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

HERBERT STREET, CITY

Sir Robert George Wyndham Herbert (1831-1905), politician and public servant, arrived in Queensland as the private secretary to Sir George Bowen, the first Governor of Queensland. He was commissioned as Colonial Secretary on 12th December, 1859 and held this position until 1st February, 1866. He returned to Britain in 1870, became Permanent Under Secretary of the Colonial Office in 1871 and retired in 1892.

The street (actually a lane) was named on 10th May 1928.

Herbert Street, West End. The street was renamed Montgomery Street in 1949.

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

Sir Robert George Wyndham Herbert (1831-1905), politician and public servant, was born on 12 June 1831 in Brighton, Sussex, England, only son of Algernon Herbert and his wife Marianne, née Lempriere. His father was a barrister, author, antiquarian, sometime fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and fifth son of the first Earl of Carnarvon. Robert was thus second cousin to [Henry Herbert](#), fourth Earl of Carnarvon and his exact contemporary, a connexion of the first importance in his life. Privately tutored he went in 1844 to Rev. Edward Coleridge's house at Eton where he and Carnarvon were constant companions. Despite reputed laziness at Eton he won the Newcastle scholarship in 1849 and entered Balliol College, Oxford (B.A., 1854; B.C.L., 1856; D.C.L., 1862), taking in 1852 a first in classical moderations and in 1853 a second in *literae humaniores*; in 1854, having won literary and legal prizes, he was elected a fellow of All Souls. In December W. E. Gladstone, chancellor of the exchequer, asked Coleridge to recommend a suitable private secretary. Herbert was approached, accepted the post and held it from 1 January 1855 until either the fall of Lord Aberdeen's coalition in February or earlier after an alleged 'divergence of opinions' with his chief. Herbert turned to legal studies. After his father died in June 1855, he inherited the family house and some copyhold property in Ickleton, Cambridgeshire, but the legacy yielded little income for all his father's capital was left to his mother and two younger sisters. He lingered over his legal studies and was not called to the Bar of the Inner Temple until 30 April 1858.

Herbert's political and public had been diminished by the fall of the Aberdeen ministry, but hopes revived when the Conservatives were returned in February 1858. Prompted by Carnarvon, under-secretary at the Colonial Office, Gladstone offered Herbert a private secretaryship but it carried no salary and was refused. Herbert's career then took a decisive and unusual twist. [Sir George Bowen](#) was appointed governor of the new colony of Queensland in June 1859. In July the [Duke of Newcastle](#) authorized him to select a private secretary who could also become colonial secretary of Queensland, 'independent of local influences'. Advised by 'friends in the Colonial Office', he eventually chose Herbert who accepted because he wanted a public appointment, was not anxious to practise law and no longer had high-placed political friends. Perhaps some of his cousin's new-found interests rubbed off on him.

Herbert had been appointed to no sinecure. He was part of a Colonial Office experiment, for Queensland began as a strict Crown colony with the prospect of immediate responsible government. Commissioned as colonial secretary on 12 December 1859, Herbert was told that he would hold the post only if he secured election to the Legislative Assembly and sufficient votes in the House. He had disadvantages: he was young and book-learned, a 'new-chum' and interloper, an aristocrat and careful dresser, who had yet to prove that he could run a government. In his favour he had intellectual strength, great administrative ability and a personality which enabled him to win 'the goodwill of all persons, especially of the *ladies*'. In the brief Crown colony government he drew on Bowen's experience and personally negotiated the financial settlement with New South Wales. When parliament met on 22 May 1860 his potential rivals, such as [Arthur Macalister](#), could find no complaint against him. Since he was already in office, warmly approved by the press and known to have the governor's favour, only a candidate with outstanding claims could have challenged him. None existed in Queensland. Herbert's own political strength was shown in his unopposed return for three constituencies. He chose to sit for Leichhardt in the north. Thus Bowen's original Executive Council became the colony's first responsible ministry.

As premier, Herbert cannot be understood without reference to his political ancestry. He was a product of nineteenth-century English conservatism, and a touch of the eighteenth century was manifested in his political methods. The factions and individualism of Queensland politics and parliament and its lack of a party system help to account for Herbert's success. He made no attempt to create a party, although he sedulously fostered conservatism. He relied first on Bowen's wish to have him as premier, with the necessary corollary that he always emphasized the governor's power of decision.

SIR ROBERT GEORGE WYNDHAM HERBERT (1831-1905)

This tactic was eventually noticed and not altogether approved, yet it helped him to command votes in the Legislative Assembly. Just as pertinently, Herbert cultivated a range of groups and individuals. He was also helped by his detachment and 'appearance of polite candour and friendly frankness'. Though long unable to overcome the jealousy of [William Henry Walsh](#), he persuaded the Brisbane lawyer, Macalister, to join his ministry in July 1861, a favour which led the original treasurer, [\(Sir\) Robert Mackenzie](#), to resign in September 1862. Anxious to retain the support of squatters, Herbert filled the post first with T. de Lacy Moffat and then [\(Sir\) Joshua Bell](#). In contrast, when the first attorney-general, [Ratcliffe Pring](#), had to resign for drunkenness in the House, Herbert replaced him with [\(Sir\) Charles Lilley](#), an urban radical. Political calculation seems to have been absent from Herbert's appointments of such key civil servants as surveyor-general, police magistrates and commissioners of crown lands, but he made rather more justices of the peace than necessary and critics detected political purpose in some of his expenditure on public works. These exercises in political management matched Herbert's performance in parliament. Aware of his reserved, dry manner, he never attempted oratory and never gave anything away. He used mannerisms to disconcert opposing speakers while his own speeches carried into the legislature the administrative ability which was his main strength. Clear, concise and fluent, they persuaded by their content rather than by his slightly halting delivery.

With a secure majority Herbert favoured strong executive government promoting measures carefully planned and drawing on the warnings and examples of other places; one illustration was his comprehensive land policy of 1860. Despite his conservatism in constitutional matters, he adjusted carefully to progressive public opinion; though a staunch Anglican, he ended state aid to religion and introduced National education against the strong opposition of Bishop [Edward Tufnell](#). He was much concerned, like Peel, for national credit and for economy and efficiency in the civil service. In the absence of income tax, his main source of revenue was the tariff while loan funds were devoted to such developmental works as railways, telegraphs and harbours. His leading objects were to extend settlement especially on the north coast, encourage immigration, diversify the economy and establish a firm basis for stable government. He sought to extend Queensland's trade to Asian markets and to introduce 'Malays and other black labour' for plantation work. In all these aims he had some personal as well as public interest for he invested heavily, though not profitably, in cotton-planting and in the Valley of Lagoons, a large sheep station on the Burdekin.

Before Herbert visited England in July 1862 some of his qualities were beginning to lose effect. In June he had even withdrawn an electoral reform measure for fear of defeat. His conservatism had drawn fire from the *Courier*, Brisbane's most influential newspaper, and he was deemed too anxious to accommodate opinions in the legislature merely to stay in power. His low view of ordinary colonists caused critics to remind him that he had been appointed to office in a very special way and now had to cultivate popular opinion. His ability and integrity were respected, and in London his Australian reputation was enhanced by such things as his public remonstrance against a proposal to renew convict transportation. In his absence Macalister had acted as premier and, though the *Courier* had found Herbert's colleagues even less acceptable, it suggested to the traveller that he was no longer indispensable. On his return in April 1863 the assembly reproached him for going to England without leave and only his cool tact saved the motion from becoming a censure. Soon afterwards a popular railway bill was passed only by the Speaker's casting vote. The colony's first parliament was dissolved and at the general election in May a determined attempt was made to defeat him. He sought local credit by standing for North Brisbane and lost, but won the rural electorate of West Moreton after a bitter contest.

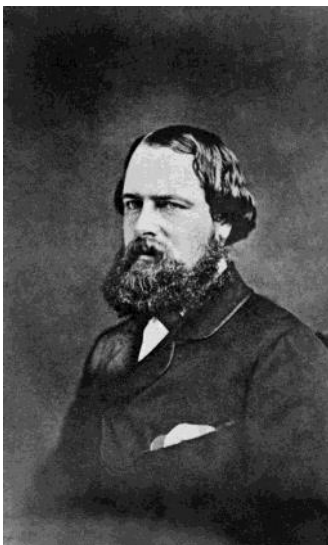
The new parliament confirmed Herbert's power. He anticipated and received better majorities than ever in the assembly, and the leadership of the Legislative Council went to his friend, [\(Sir\) John Bramston](#). To Herbert the official Opposition, led by Mackenzie and later joined by Walsh, was 'feeble'. He passed the measures he wanted and indulged his preference for the office work of government over that of parliament, but by 1865 he was 'weary and sick and disgusted with colonial politics'. For two years he had withdrawn increasingly from colonial society, except for such pastimes as horse-racing, yachting and seabathing. His circle of friends was restricted and when not at his office or Government House, where Bowen required him more often than he liked, his greatest pleasure was Herston, his and Bramston's stone house in a well-stocked seventy acres (28 ha) about three miles (4.8 km) from town. He decided that he must have another 'taste of civilization' and in November told his ministers of his decision. In February 1866 he turned the premiership over to Macalister and when parliament met in April he sat as a private member.

SIR ROBERT GEORGE WYNDHAM HERBERT (1831-1905)

The pleasure of many members at his 'political decease' and Macalister's first term in office were short. In July a crisis was precipitated by the failure of Agra & Masterman's Bank in London. To replace funds borrowed from this source, the ministry proposed to issue inconvertible government notes, 'greenbacks', but Bowen insisted that his Instructions required him to reserve any such measure for consideration by the British government. Macalister resigned as premier and Bowen instantly recalled Herbert, commissioning him on 20 July a member of the Executive Council without portfolio to avoid any ministerial re-election. In the assembly Herbert steered the legislation for securing loans from local and southern banks to tide the government over its troubles. Both Bowen's Instructions and Herbert's Peelite mind prescribed no more than these 'ordinary remedies'. Macalister had panicked and the mobs were loud in Brisbane, but the governor and his minister imposed orthodoxy with a margin of 18 votes in a House of 32. Herbert's electors in West Moreton sent him a glowing memorial but he resigned on 7 August. He sailed on the 20th with some unfriendly press but also with power of attorney from Macalister's new ministry to supervise the sale of colonial debentures in London.

A career in England was always thought in Queensland to be available to Herbert. He was now fairly done with politics and little else remained for him in the colony, even though he told Carnarvon of his probable intention to return 'to look after ... sheep and cattle'. Carnarvon, then secretary of state, tried but failed to arrange his cousin's employment in the Colonial Office. Instead, Herbert accepted an assistant secretaryship at the Board of Trade. In 1870 he became an assistant under-secretary in the Colonial Office and in May 1871 permanent under-secretary. His experience and aristocratic connexions had served him well. He brought to the Colonial Office some of the empire-mindedness which Carnarvon was issuing from the opposition side of the House of Lords. With Carnarvon's return to the Colonial Office in February 1874, there began a remarkable partnership in policy making for the colonies. By seeking to strengthen the upper echelons of the Colonial Office, by promoting co-operation between Britain and the larger colonies, by attempting to reorganize military relations with those colonies and by asserting British claims to the south-west Pacific, the cousins were responsible in the colonial sphere for earning the label of 'imperialist' for Disraeli's second ministry. Carnarvon's enthusiasms were partially discredited when he fell out with his colleagues in January 1878 and Herbert's reputation suffered also. However, he was a fixture in the office and carried through into the era when the 'scramble for Africa' transformed the nature of European imperial activity. Although this process was chiefly the concern of the Foreign Office, Herbert constantly advised his chiefs, emphasizing the need for Britain to maintain her or her colonies' supremacy especially in Africa and the Pacific. He retired in 1892.

After Carnarvon died in 1890 Herbert undertook the general editorship of his cousin's speeches and writings, including several volumes on colonial and imperial affairs. Among other duties he served in 1893-96 as agent-general for Tasmania, advised the sultan of Johore, chaired meetings of the Royal Colonial Institute and helped to found the British Empire League. He approved Joseph Chamberlain's strong policies and in 1900 he consented to return briefly to the Colonial Office as permanent under-secretary. In 1903 he accepted the chairmanship of Chamberlain's tariff 'Commission' where he exhibited the qualities which had won him the name of 'the perfect civil servant', imperturbable and efficient, with an outwardly gracious manner which, as in Queensland, was tempered by occasional acidity and intolerance of fools. He was made K.C.B. in 1882 and G.C.B. in 1892. He was also chancellor of the order of St Michael and St George. Unmarried he died on 6 May 1905 at Ickleton, his death attended by the comparative obscurity which he had chosen since 1867. Perhaps it was his dedication to the civil service which led the *Saturday Review* to proclaim him 'a solid rather than a brilliant member of a singularly interesting family'.



(1850). *Portrait of The Honourable Sir Robert George Wyndham Herbert, Premier of Queensland, c 1862.* Queensland State Archives

B. A. Knox, 'Herbert, Sir Robert George Wyndham (1831-1905)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/herbert-sir-robert-george-wyndham-3757/text5921>, published first in hardcopy 1972, accessed online 29 October 2016. **This article was first published in hardcopy in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 4, (MUP), 1972**

WASHING, DRYING AND IRONING IN TOWNSVILLE 1920S—1930S [EXTRACTED FROM NOTES MADE BY DON MCDONALD 1913-2005]

Back in the 1920s and 1930s and probably long before that, Monday was traditionally wash day. Actually, the day began on Sunday evening when the boiler was filled with water and the soap cut in slices from a large bar, added so that it would be dissolved by morning. The fire was also set ready for the match. No soap powders or detergents in those days. Mars Kerosene Soap and White Witch Soap were used in the boiler and for the dirtier washing, and Velvet Soap and Sunlight Soap for the less soiled and delicate fabrics which were usually hand washed.

Lucky was the mum who had a copper boiler, some were bricked in but most were purchased complete with stand. Those less fortunate had to manage with a galvanised iron one made by the local plumber, or even kerosene tins both of which sat on iron bars on an open fire.

The first loads were usually the bed clothes and whites, which were boiled, followed by coloureds which were put through hot water if they were colour fast, finally soiled clothes with borax and washing soda.



The washing was lifted from the boiler by means of a boiler stick made from a broom handle and put into a drainer box over a tub to catch water which was reused. The drainer was a wooden box with legs nailed on with holes bored in the bottom. Quite easy to obtain as most goods were packed in cases then, no cartons.

From the boiler the clothes were rinsed in tubs of clean water and finally in water to which Reckitt's Blue had been added to enhance whiteness. Their advertisement, printed before the days of radio or TV was "Out of the Box Comes the Whitest Wash" with a picture of a ship travelling on

a blue sea with a white wake.

The laundry was seldom more than a skillion at the back of the house with a dirt floor; a bench supported 3 or 4 round tubs in which the rinsing and bluing took place. Rarely more than one tap and after use the water had to be bucketed away until the remaining water could be carried by one person on each tub handle.

The very soapy water was used to lay the dust, while the rinsing water etc was used to water some sort of garden. One bucket of soapy water was reserved to scrub the wooden seat of the outside toilet.

The wire clothes line was strung between two posts and raised to the required height by props. Most props were made by a light sapling with a forked end. An afghan we knew as Hassan made his living by cutting and selling them. His cry of "Clothes Prop. Props Two Bob" was familiar in the Townsville of the 1920s. He lived in Rowes Bay and probably cut his props on the town common or in the mangroves of Three Mile Creek. He had no vehicle and tamped the suburbs of Belgian Gardens, South Townsville, Railway Estate, Hermit Park and West End. Naturally the props deteriorated with age and it was usually an extra heavy load of wet washing which finally caused it to break. This was a tragedy, as very few people had lawns, particularly in the back yard and many a woman has burst into tears at the sight of a hard morning's hard work lying in the dirt, needing to be rinsed and wrung out all over again.



WASHING, DRYING AND IRONING IN TOWNSVILLE 1920S—1930S
[EXTRACTED FROM NOTES MADE BY DON MCDONALD 1913-2005]

Sometime in the late 1920s an intriguing message was plastered on hoardings all over Townsville. It said "Let Dad Do It!" "Dad" turned out to be a revolutionary way to achieve a better cleaner and white wash. It came in a packet containing about a dozen white tablets about the size and shape of a domino and was to be added to the water in the boiler. It was followed eventually by Persil, then Rinso and Lux and started an avalanche of soap powders, liquids and detergents etc which today spend millions on advertising and occupy a whole wall of shelves in the Super Markets. Every home now has a washing machine selected from dozens of brands and types which does the whole job at the flick of a switch. Unfortunately, the clothes still have to be pegged out on a line which today is the competent Hills Hoist or a retractable line which folds away when not in use. Of course electric clothes driers are available in case of wet weather. Mums now go out to work because there is not enough home duties to fill their day. *Oh Yeah!!*

It's been a good drying day. The clothes have all been brought in. Some have been folded and put away in drawers and cupboards and some have been damped down ready for tomorrow's ironing.



Next day, breakfast is over, Dad has gone to work and the kids to school. Instead of letting the fire die down as usual Mum adds more wood for today and the irons must be kept hot and soon three Potts Irons are sitting on the hottest part of the stove while the ironing blanket is set up on the kitchen table. This consists of two or three thicknesses of old blanket covered by an old sheet (ironing boards came in later). The Potts Iron had a heavy iron base and the metal handle was a part of the iron. By the time the iron was hot enough to use the handle too was pretty hot and needed to be wrapped in a couple of thicknesses of toweling or something similar. As the iron became cold it was put back on the stove to reheat and one of the hot ones taken up and so on ad finitum until the ironing was done. It didn't make much sense to a mere male but very often sheets, pillow cases, tea towels etc. were also ironed. It was a primitive, uncomfortable and possible dangerous system, but it was eventually improved by irons which had a detachable wooden handle and this was how the weekly ironing was done until the advent of the self heating iron. Now for the first time Mum could do the ironing away from the hot kitchen.



WASHING, DRYING AND IRONING IN TOWNSVILLE 1920S—1930S
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Basically, the self heating iron was a fairly heavy base supporting a fuel tank and a burner which heated the iron from inside. The fuel was high grade petrol variously called White Spirit or Shellite. A similar product is still used in the Dry Cleaning trade. A measure was supplied so that the correct amount of fuel could be put into the tank. A pump was then used to pump air into the tank under pressure. Methylated spirits was then burned in the base of the iron to heat the fuel pipes and the burners. A needle valve on the base of the tank was then opened and the fuel was forced through the hot pipes around the burner where it was vaporised and burned



with a clean blue flame directed to the base of the iron. A full tank would give 1 to 1 1/2 hours of ironing with perhaps a bit of additional pumping to maintain the pressure. If all the fuel was not used it was recommended that the remainder be discarded, or at least, the tank emptied before refilling as it was essential that the tank was not overfilled. The ironing done and the iron still hot, it was rubbed down over a cloth wrapped in beeswax probably to promote a film to prevent rust on the smooth ironing surface.

Don McDonald's family published a book of Don's anecdotes about his life in and around Townsville and his experiences in the Military during World War II. It is a captivating read and is available for purchase from Townsville Museum.

Called "RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS", it is a great collection of memories of life in Townsville for most of the Twentieth Century. Don's very colourful life is on show, as is his wonderful memory of what it was like living in Townsville and it includes tales of some of the characters who he met during those years.

*Life
in
Townsville
in the
1920s*

**A Fine Set of
Flashing White Teeth**

revels a humble face. They mark the possessor as a man whose person is a person to like to want to know well. If you have teeth like that leave nothing undone to keep them so. Of if decay is robbing you teeth by tooth, give decay no quarter.

Colvil Tooth Paste

cleanses the teeth, polishes the teeth, sweetens the breath, prevents decay and gives your mouth a delightful sense of exhilaration. It is the ideal dentifrice. Have you tried it?

PRICE, 1/3; Postage, 3d extra.

A. G. NICHOLLS,
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Three stone ring with green diamonds rings from £18

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From Townsville Daily Bulletin—Friday 21st May 1920

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS

Two of our very hard working Museum Members, celebrated their milestone birthdays in August. A special morning tea was organised and a cake for each was presented. Congratulations on your birthdays, Lydia Morton and Harvey Low!



Harvey Low and Lydia Morton celebrating their birthdays with Bill Jones (centre).



Harvey, Bill and Lydia with Petra Cartwright and Dell Low. Petra received a Certificate of Appreciation at the 2016 AGM.



Ken Grau, Volunteer at Townsville Museum.

At the 2016 AGM, President Trish recognised the wonderful contribution given to our Museum by Volunteers Petra Cartwright and Ken Grau. Both volunteers work three days a week with us welcoming visitors and keeping the museum clean and tidy.

Norton and Diane Challenor were presented with Life Memberships for their contribution to our museum over very many years. Thank you Norton and Diane.



BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS MAKE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS!

Townsville Museum & Historical Society has a large range of books for sale. A full selection is listed on our website at www.townsvillemuseum.com.au but below is a list of some of our most recent best sellers.

Frontier Town - Helga Griffin \$33.95

Helga's book gives an insight into life during the first twenty years of the establishment of Townsville. It is a very informative study of the history of the town and its economy.

Random Recollections 1913–2005 - Don McDonald \$29.00

This is a book of Don's memoirs and covers his life growing up in Townsville, his working years and his time spent in the military during World War II.

Gateway to a Golden Land – Dorothy Gibson-Wilde \$25.00

This tells the story of the establishment of Townsville to 1884.

Watermelon and Custard - Joyce Higgins \$29.00

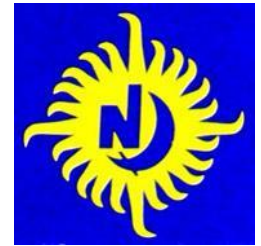
Memories of boarding school at St Bernard, Herberton.

Well Beaten Paths - Helen Brayshaw \$16.00

Aborigines of the Herbert Burdekin District, North Queensland. An anthropological and archaeological study.

The Bowly Papers - Anne Smith and B. J. Dalton (editors) \$22.00

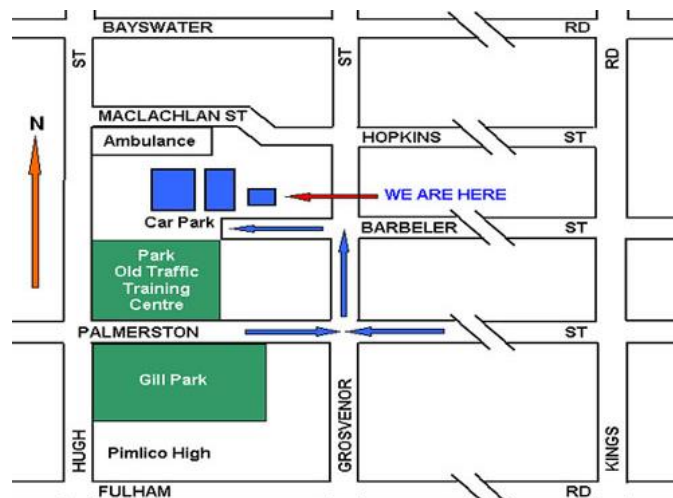
Letters 1873-1878, reminiscences and photographs 1873-1891, of C. W. Bowly in North Queensland.



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Magnetic Island History and Craft Centre Inc.
"Beyond Our Beaches" Calendar
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 Contact MIHCC 0488050145 for more information.



OUR SUPPORTERS

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 Groups
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