

Newsletter of the

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

February 2017

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

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Special Points of Interest:

- *Hale Street*
- *Biography of Tom Aikens, well known Townsville Politician*
- *Harvey Low, nominated by Townsville Museum for Australia Day Award 2017*
- *Articles by Nick Shailer, museum member*

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

Welcome to 2017, I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas/New Year break. I would like to extend a big "Thank you" to Ken and Harvey who looked after the gardens twice weekly during the holidays so that our plants didn't wither up until we got some rain. Your support is really appreciated. This year will see the completion of work on the preserved books, artefacts and important papers relating to the City's early history. Fay and Robyn have done a wonderful job and in the future, access to these preserved articles will be so easy. I would also like to welcome our newest volunteer, Maree who has just recently joined us and also Krista who is providing assistance to our secretary, Wendy. Without the support of volunteers and members, the Museum would not function and each and everyone is very much appreciated.

One of our longest volunteers and Life Member, Harvey Low was nominated for an Australia Day Award and received a nomination in two categories. We are sorry you didn't receive an Award Harvey, but your long standing support to the Museum and also Dell's is very much appreciated.

New Display: With the successful and popular display last year provided by Magnetic Island History & Craft Association, it was decided to offer this group a permanent display in the Museum. The new display will be open in late February featuring the history of Magnetic Island.

It's only just the beginning of 2017 and I know this year is going to be another busy one for the Museum, so until next time.

Cheers,
Trish Cronin
President



(1890). *Mathew Blagden Hale*

Photo held by State Library of South Australia. B-7005

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

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HALE STREET, CITY

Possibly named after Rev. Mathew Blagden (Blagden) Hale (1811-1895), who became Bishop of Queensland in 1875.

He re-arranged the division of his huge diocese in 1878 with the appointment of Rev. George Henry Stanton as Bishop of North Queensland.

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

Mathew Blagden Hale (1811-1895), Anglican bishop, was born on 18 June 1811 at the manor of Alderley, Gloucester, England, son of Robert Hale Blagden Hale and his wife Lady Theodosia Eleanor, youngest daughter of Joseph Bourke, third Earl of Mayo and archbishop of Tuam. His father was a direct descendant of Sir Mathew Hale, lord chief justice of the King's Bench in 1671-76.

Hale was educated at Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucester School and Trinity College, Cambridge (B.A., 1835; M.A., 1838; D.D., 1857). After six months in Lausanne he read theology for a term at Cambridge and was made deacon by the bishop of Gloucester on 5 June 1836 and ordained priest in June 1837. His family dissuaded him from going to the West Indies on missionary service, and in Gloucester he was curate at Tresham with Kilcott in 1836, Wotton-under-Edge in 1838 and permanent curate of Stroud in 1839. In 1840 he married Sophia Clode by whom he had two surviving daughters, Amy and Mary. His wife's and his mother's deaths in 1845 severely affected his health. He resigned from Stroud, was rector of Alderley for a year and then curate of Atworth, living with his father in Wiltshire.

Soon after [Augustus Short](#) was consecrated bishop of Adelaide in 1847 he invited Hale to become archdeacon and examining chaplain in South Australia. Eager for missionary work among the Aborigines, Hale accepted and sailed in the *Derwent* with his daughters and Short's party. On arrival in December he was given charge of St Matthew's, Kensington, and soon afterwards of St John's, Adelaide. When Short visited the Western Australian section of his diocese in October 1848, Hale went with him and on the Vasse at [John Molloy](#)'s home found five daughters 'who although being in the most complete seclusion, possess a grace and dignity and ease of manner which would do honour to the most refined society'. At St Mary's, Busselton, on 30 December 1848 Hale married the eldest daughter, Sabina Dunlop.

Hale's observation of work among Aborigines and half-castes in Western Australia spurred his intention to help the natives in South Australia. In 1850 he persuaded Lieutenant-Governor [Sir Henry Young](#) to grant him £200 and a year's rations to found an institution where Aborigines from Adelaide could receive practical training in isolation from corrupting influences. Boston Island was chosen as the site, but it lacked fresh water, so Hale bought the lease of Poonindie run, twelve miles (19 km) from Port Lincoln, and had it declared a native reserve. There natives were brought after schooling in Adelaide to be taught farming and to receive further instruction in Christianity. So successful was the venture that in 1853 Hale took over Pastor C. W. Schurmann's Aboriginal school in Port Lincoln and in exchange for a government grant of £1000 a year he agreed to receive any natives or half-castes sent to Poonindie by the protector of Aborigines. Sharply rising costs in the gold rushes and the failure of the crops in 1854 proved formidable challenges, but once through the first decade the institution managed to become self-supporting. By 1856 the residents at Poonindie had risen from 19 to 62, a total of 110 natives had been received and the buildings and stock were worth £4700. Many material difficulties had been solved by Hale's personal generosity and by 1860, despite criticism of the high incidence of deaths from lung complaints, the institution had demonstrated the capacities of the Aborigines in useful employment. After his father died in December 1855 Hale returned to England on family business. He visited Western Australia *en route* and from observations in that colony published *The Transportation Question* (Cambridge, 1857), advocating 'a Reformatory Colony' instead of 'a Penal Settlement'.

Recommended by Short, Hale was appointed the first bishop of Western Australia and on 25 July 1857 was consecrated at Lambeth by the archbishop of Canterbury and by the bishops of London and Ripon. His episcopate was most notable for his attempts to introduce secondary education. In Perth on 28 June 1858 he opened a boys' college founded on the model of the Collegiate School of St Peter, Adelaide, but seven years elapsed before he could vest the property in trustees and obtain a grant from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge to reimburse his initial private outlay. Known as 'the Bishop's School', it trained many community leaders but the indifference of the colonists to education and the trustees to management as well as the scarcity of suitable permanent staff combined to defeat his efforts. In 1872 he wrote, 'There is no such thing as convincing the people that education pays.'

MATHEW BLAZDEN HALE (1811-1895) CONTINUED

Making their sons messengers on a sheep station pays, and that settles the question ... Parents won't use the school so it's no use to keep it struggling on'. The school passed out of church control when the trustees arranged for it to be taken over by governors appointed by the government. Hale's attempt to found a girls' boarding school in 1860 suffered similar lack of response and cost him the return fares of the schoolmistress whom he had brought from England.

As a member of the Board of Education Hale believed that Governor [\(Sir\) Arthur Kennedy](#)'s introduction of the Irish National system in government schools was in the interests of the colony. In 1871 he vigorously opposed an attempt to give Roman Catholic schools a separate grant, but later saved sectarian division by proposing state aid for all private schools. Hale wanted the government to treat every denomination alike but would tolerate no state interference in church affairs. When Governor [John Hampton](#) interfered with the duties of convict chaplains and attacked Hale for alleged lack of efficient supervision of his clergy, the bishop's representation to the Colonial Office was a major factor in Hampton's recall.

Hale had consulted with his clergy since 1860 and because of the size and isolation of his diocese he appeared to sense no urgency in settling the mode of church government. Just before the meeting in Sydney to found a general synod for the Australian Church in 1872, he introduced synodical government to his diocese, following the constitutional model of consensual compact devised in Adelaide by Bishop Short in 1855. The population of Western Australia rose in 1857-75 from 13,368 to 26,709, while the Anglican clergy increased from 8 to 17 and the number of churches from 14 to 28 with 9 new rectories. Although 59 per cent of the population claimed Anglican allegiance in 1875, more than three-quarters of clerical stipends was paid by the government. Hale's liberality in building the Bishop's House at his own expense was a fine gesture to the diocese struggling in poverty. Constant travelling in his huge diocese had brought on repeated attacks of lumbago and in 1875 when it was suggested that he should succeed Bishop [Edward Tufnell](#) in Brisbane Hale protested against 'putting a man of sixty-four in such a position'. Somewhat typically he added, 'Nevertheless as I have always professed to go by duty and not by choice [and] if the bishops should unanimously say that ... I should go, I should consider that a sufficient indication of my duty'.

The Australian bishops were unanimous and Hale was installed in Brisbane on 15 December. His concern for the more remote parishes was a feature of his work in Queensland and by 1878 he had arranged the division of his huge diocese, with [George Stanton](#) taking charge of North Queensland. Another sign of progress was the increase of clergy; in 1875 he found 25 clergy ministering in the whole colony and in 1885 had 35 in the subdivided diocese of Brisbane. His introduction of a Clergy Widow and Orphan's Fund to the diocese in 1877 showed his concern for the welfare of his priests but his attempts to improve the lot of the Aboriginals and the Chinese had little effect. Hale always struggled against the congregational spirit of a diocese in which established parishes prospered whilst isolated centres were neglected. He tried to create a strong central fund to assist these centres but the response was so meagre that he registered his protest by resigning in 1876. Only after Bishop [Frederic Barker](#) intervened and the Diocesan Council promised greater efforts did Hale withdraw the resignation; yet by 1878 only £2200 had been collected, most of it by the bishop's personal efforts and his own private gift of £300. When Barker went to England in 1881, Hale as senior bishop presided over the General Synod of the Church of England in Australia until [Alfred Barry](#) was appointed bishop of Sydney and metropolitan bishop of Australia in 1884.

Hale retired in March 1885 and returned to England where he continued to promote the Church's mission to the Australian Aboriginals by his writings. He died at Bristol on 3 April 1895, survived by his second wife and by five sons and three daughters. [Last paragraph not included.]



A. De Q. Robin, 'Hale, Mathew Blagden (1811–1895)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hale-mathew-blagden-3689/text5771>, published first in hardcopy 1972, accessed online 27 February 2017.

This article was first published in hardcopy in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 4, (MUP), 1972 [Photograph included with article.]

THOMAS AIKENS—TOWNSVILLE POLITICIAN



Unidentified (8334). *Townsville Politician Tom Aikens.*
John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland

Thomas (Tom) Aikens (1900-1985), politician, was born on 28 April 1900 at Hughenden station, Queensland, second of three children of John Aikens, an itinerant labourer, and his wife Emily, née Wilkinson, both born in Queensland. After Tom's father deserted the family in 1904, his mother moved with the children to Charters Towers, where she took in washing. In 1910 she went west to work in hotels, returning to visit each Christmas. Tom lodged with a friend and attended local state primary and high schools. He started work in 1915, first with the post office, and then as a roustabout in the Julia Creek area. In January 1916 he joined Queensland Railways at Cloncurry as a locomotive cleaner. He progressed to fireman and, in 1925, to engine driver. On 16 February 1921 at St Andrew's Church of England, Cloncurry, he married Margaret Ann Myers, a barmaid.

A large man, 6 ft (183 cm) tall and weighing approximately 16 stone (102 kg), Aikens was a keen Rugby League footballer, a gifted bass singer and a drinker. He was an avid reader with a remarkable memory, eagerly consuming Voltaire, Daniel Defoe, Charles Dickens, Robert Ingersoll and Eugene Debs. Less enthusiastic about his paid employment, he earned the nickname 'Energy' or 'Enjo'. He held various sub-branch positions in the Australian Railways Union from 1918 and was secretary of the local branch of the Australian Labor Party. In 1924 he was elected to the Cloncurry Shire Council and three years later became deputy-chairman. Transferred by the railways to Townsville in 1930 because of his 'political activism', he joined the newly formed Hermit Park ALP branch. He stood unsuccessfully at the 1933 Townsville municipal elections, but won a seat in 1936. At the 1939 election Labor won control of the council and Aikens was elected deputy-mayor.

Despite his electoral popularity, in October 1940 Aikens was expelled from the ALP, ostensibly for his drinking, which had reached epic proportions, but really because the Queensland party's dominant Australian Workers' Union faction opposed his brand of socialism. He was saved from political oblivion when the State branch's central executive expelled the entire Hermit Park membership in September 1942, because of its connection with a local 'aid to Russia' committee. The ousted branch formed itself into a new party, the 'Hermit Park ALP', and welcomed back Aikens. In 1943 it won seven of the ten aldermanic positions (with Aikens topping the poll), and in loose coalition with the Communist Party of Australia ran the Townsville City Council for three years.

The council instituted an extensive program of municipal ownership of facilities – an electrical appliance store, a wood depot, a fruit and vegetable mart, an ice-works and a child-care centre – which was more a response to the exigencies of wartime than to ideology. These circumstances, coupled with Aikens's ability to articulate northern resentment of remote government, saw him elected to the Legislative Assembly as Hermit Park Labour member for Mundingburra on 15 April 1944. He resigned as deputy-mayor and gave up drinking for good.

In 1949 the party became the North Queensland Labour Party, and in 1960 Mundingburra was renamed Townsville South. By then the party name (from which 'Labour' was dropped in 1974) was merely a medium for Aikens's political career. He was re-elected continuously until 1974, winning an absolute majority in eight successive elections from 1953 to 1972. Moving progressively to the Right, 'Tory Tom' was the 'perfect provincial populist', reflecting the views and prejudices of his electorate. He travelled around his electorate on his bicycle and worked hard advising and representing his constituents. As an Independent he did not exert much influence on government – although this did not prevent him from claiming responsibility for several legislative amendments.

Speaking often in parliament, usually without notes but with scattered literary references, he was fluent and loud, frequently humorous, but sometimes ponderous and verbose. He could be vicious and vindictive: he regularly denounced the ALP, and sharply criticised the medical and legal professions and, increasingly, the 'bludgers, parasites and time-servers' of the universities. Railing against the evil of pornography, he called for the castration of rapists and provided graphic descriptions of their crimes. In 1974 he was a member of the select committee on punishment of crimes of violence in Queensland.

By 1977 his views attracted fewer voters. Narrowly defeated by the ALP candidate in the election on 12 November, Aikens retired from politics. As president and later patron of the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society, he continued to enjoy singing. He died on 30 November 1985 at Townsville and, although religion had played little part in his life, was cremated with Catholic rites. His wife and their daughter survived him.

D. W. Hunt, 'Aikens, Thomas (Tom) (1900–1985)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/aikens-thomas-tom-12124/text21719>, published first in hardcopy 2007, accessed online 6 March 2017. **This article was first published in hardcopy in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 17, (MUP), 2007**

Trotter, Alex (1970). *Tom Aikens, MLA*. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland



AUSTRALIA DAY NOMINEE — HARVEY LOW

Nominated for Citizen of the Year and Cultural Citizen of the Year.

In recognition of Harvey Low's commitment to the Townsville Museum, he was nominated by the Townsville Museum for the 2017 Townsville Citizen of the Year. His nomination was accepted and on Australia Day, a group of Townsville Museum volunteers went along with Harvey and Dell to the ceremony at Jezzine Park to wish him well with his nomination.



Harvey and Dell Low at the Citizenship Ceremony 26 January 2017.

Harvey may not have won the Citizen of the Year award or the Cultural Person of the Year, but he has won the admiration of the many volunteers who work with him and the many school children who have enjoyed his presentations at our Museum in recent years. Congratulations on your recognition for your dedication to our museum, Harvey!



FOOD AND PRODUCE IN THE EARLY YEARS BY NICK SHAILER

Ever wondered what it was like for the early settlers on their arrival here in Townsville? Food products and drinks (all types) had to be imported to start with. You might have a block of ground and intend to grow your vegetables but first the ground has to be prepared and water could be a problem. Fresh milk – you need a cow or goat. Both have to be imported by sea. Fresh meat – you have no way of keeping it fresh. The first day it's ok, 2nd day....well it's ageing, and the 3rd you might find it's a bit ripe!



Luckily shop keepers soon followed the first settlers with good stocks of bottled products, tinned and packaged goods, but even then a non-arrival of a ship meant everyday things soon ran out.



As most members know, as well as collecting items from Townsville's past, I started out as a bottle collector which gives you a good insight into what people ate and drank. The earliest dump I've ever dug was from the mid 1870s. Finding bottles from the first 10 years has been very hard. Goods would have come from overseas (mostly England) or from the south.



In the Cleveland Bay Express for Saturday October 27th 1866, Carter and Co. have a list of stock available which shows that if you have the money (or good credit) you could have had quite a choice of food items though most were dried or preserved in

some form, flour from three different makers, pickles, chutney, sauces, preserved potatoes and vegetables, potted meats and jams, and they also list salmon, oysters and lobsters.



For the next article we will look at the great taste enhancers used to liven up that bit of dried or salted meat, or to hide the tang in that 3 day old special from the butchers, these being the pickles, sauces and vinegars.

It would be several years before any of these products were produced locally and some of those imported products came in fancy bottles.



LOOKING AT PHOTOS BY NICK SHAILER

We handle them everyday at the museum, photos of street scenes, people, places of work. For most photos, we can give an approximate date of publication and a location but for some you cannot. This photo could be one of the latter. It's a great photo of a boy with his goat team. There is nothing in the photo to give a clue to the location. When my family moved into Harold Street in the mid 1960s, 3 doors down from us lived a lovely old lady named Bella Brabon who became friends with our family. In the 1970s, knowing that I was collecting local history she gave me a copy of the Cummins & Campbell Limited monthly magazine for October 1940 and a copy of a Dawson's Whisky Advertising diary which her family had kept as they showed her older brother and his goat team.

The photo shows Richard Brabon and his ten goat team, taken in Cutheringa Park looking towards Percy Street. His wagon is loaded with Peter Dawson Whisky boxes, sourced from the Royal Hotel in Stagpole Street, and were all empty. Most interestingly, the photo was taken by Peter Dawson (of Dawson's Whisky) during his tour of Australia in 1908 and a copy of the photo was said to have hung in the distillery for many years.

I have also found a mention from the Townsville Daily Bulletin for the 4th of July 1907 that Richard won 15/- first prize at the Townsville Show for Best Goat Team. His team pulled the wagon around the ring easily with 6 boys sitting in it.



Of the street scene, only one house remains, it being the one just to the left of the top row of boxes though it's hard to view. Nowadays it is named Leonta, and it is one of several houses built to try and withstand cyclones, having a brick core and piers.



RECENT NEW DISPLAYS AT TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM



Townsville's First Bank



Townsville Hotels



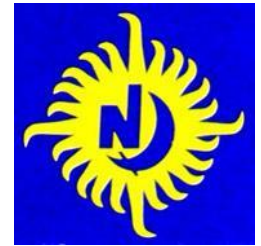
NRL North Queensland Cowboys



1950's Clothing



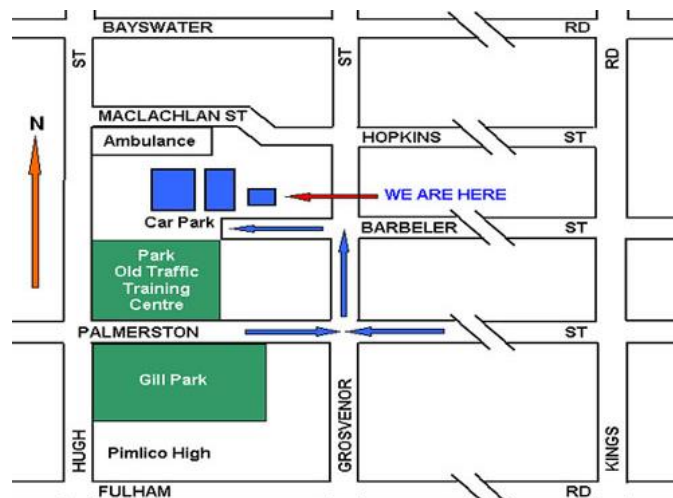
This is just a sample of what we have here. Come and view for yourself!



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BOOKS FOR SALE
RECENT PUBLICATIONS
 Random Recollections
 Frontier Town
 Queen City of the North

Look for us at Heritage Day on
Sunday 21 May 2017 at West
 End Park and Cemetery on
 Ingham Road, West End



OUR SUPPORTERS

Support
 The
 Groups
 That
 Support your
 Museum

