

Newsletter of the

# TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

June 2017

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



## Special Points of Interest:

- *Stokes Street*
- *Jim Manion Papers—Research on William Rowe—Photographer*
- *Nick Shailer “reads” photographs*
- *Steam Train Journey to Cloncurry*

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

In 1886, a man named Albert Short moved his family from South Australia and set up a General Store in North Ward. The name “Short” was well known in Townsville from Grocery and General stores to Drapers. Two years ago Max Short, great-grandson of Albert, donated three antique Cash Registers circa 1910 and 1913 to the Museum and unfortunately since then, Townsville lost one of its great supporters and businessmen with the passing of Max Short. Townsville Museum has now received photographic and artefact history of the Short dynasty and in the coming months a display will feature the history of the family. The Museum has so many wonderful collections of early Townsville from artefacts, photographs and business records and if we were able to display these collections in better premises, visitors would certainly be able to experience and appreciate the history of Townsville over the last 150 years.

The Cairns Museum & Historical Society has just re-opened its refurbished School of Arts buildings in the city centre, which houses their Museum and is a great attraction for visitors to Cairns City. Townsville needs to promote its history in more attractive and easily accessible premises. Townsville Museum has changed the way in which we promote the Museum to visitors. We have engaged the services of Local Attractions to distribute our brochures and they can now be found in over 30 tourist accommodation locations. This new service is working already.

Heritage Day was cancelled in May due to wet weather, but will be held on Sunday 23 July at West End Park, so tell your friends and family and come along and support the Museum.

Also a reminder that annual fees are due and nominations for the committee will also close in August. I look forward to your continued support.

Cheers,  
Trish Cronin  
President



**Fire Box on the Steam Train Visiting Townville 12 June 2017.**

## 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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## STOKES STREET

Stokes Street, City: Captain John Lort Stokes (1812-1885), naval officer and marine surveyor, joined H M sloop *Beagle* as a midshipman in 1825 and, over the next eighteen years, rose to the command of the ship on the resignation of Commander J. C. Wickham, because of ill health. Stokes continued the surveys which completed the geographical knowledge of the Australian coast. During his explorations he landed on Magnetic Island in June 1841.

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

### *Biography of John Lort Stokes (1812-1885)*

John Lort Stokes (1812-1885), explorer and hydrographer, was the son of Henry Stokes. He entered the navy in the *Prince Regent* in 1824 and was soon transferred to the brig *Beagle*, in which he served for eighteen years, becoming midshipman in 1825, mate and assistant surveyor in 1831, lieutenant in 1837 and commander in 1841.

After marine surveys of South America in 1826-32 and the voyage around the world described by [Charles Darwin](#) in 1833-36, the *Beagle* was sent under Commander [John Wickham](#) to survey Australian waters, arriving in December 1837. During the survey of the Timor Sea in 1839 Stokes was several times entrusted with the closer examination of what is now the Northern Territory coast. He was the first to discover and name the Victoria River and Port Darwin, commemorating his old shipmate. While examining Point Pearce in December 1839 Stokes was speared in the shoulder by Aboriginals, but recovered from his wound and in March 1841 succeeded Wickham in command of the *Beagle*. Between June and August of that year he surveyed part of the Gulf of Carpentaria, indulging whenever possible 'the exquisite enjoyment of discovery' by making excursions inland. He named the Flinders and Albert Rivers, and between them the Plains of Promise, whose pleasing appearance prompted him to foretell the spread of 'many christian hamlets' throughout the area. Stokes had not allowed for the fluctuation in northern seasons, and 120 years later the area was still largely unoccupied but for cattle stations. A later piece of prophecy was no more fortunate. In December 1841, while the *Beagle* was off the coast of Western Australia, Stokes was requested to inspect Port Grey, a site proposed for the Australian settlement on the basis of enthusiastic reports by Captain [\(Sir\) George Grey](#).



Egley, William (1864). *Portrait of Admiral J. Lort Stokes*. National Library of Australia digitised item. Bib Id: 1825555

## JOHN LORT STOKES

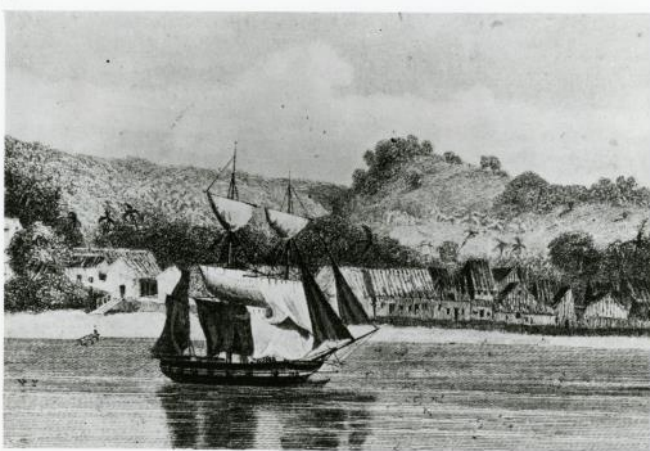
Arriving in midsummer, Stokes was not impressed, and the Western Australian Co. accordingly decided to retain the site near Bunbury originally proposed for its settlement. Within ten years the Port Grey-Champion Bay area was settled and later became one of the earliest successful wheat-growing areas in Western Australia. Stokes's doubtful judgment as a land explorer could not obscure his merits as a marine surveyor. Many of the hydrographic maps prepared by Wickham and Stokes during their North Australian cruises, and later while Stokes was examining Bass Strait in 1842, were still in use during World War II.

After returning to England he published in two volumes *Discoveries in Australia* (London, 1846). He rose high in the service of the Admiralty, ending as admiral on the retired list in 1877. He



spent his retirement on an estate at Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, and died on 11 June 1885. An enterprising and efficient officer, Stokes was a man of genial personality, with considerable ability as a vivacious writer.

Photograph of a bureau/chest used by John Lort Stokes on *The Beagle*. Item held by National Library of Australia. Accessed 31/5/17



He was married twice, first to Fanny Jane, née Marlay, and second to Louisa French, née Partridge, widow of H. J. Garratt.

Photographic reproduction of a sketch of *HMS Beagle* anchored at Timor. Accessed online 31/5/17 from Fryer Library Pictorial Collection.

G. C. Bolton, 'Stokes, John Lort (1812–1885)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/stokes-john-lort-2703/text3793>, published first in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 29 May 2017.

**This article was first published in hardcopy in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 2, (MUP), 1967.**

## FROM THE PAPERS OF JIM MANION, PAST MANAGER OF NORTH QUEENSLAND NEWSPAPER COMPANY

Our Museum holds a few papers which belonged to Jim Manion, manager of the North Queensland Newspaper Company in the 1980s. Jim loved history and researched the history of print in Queensland. He presented the Clem Lack Memorial Oration in March 1983 where he demonstrated his historical knowledge of the press throughout the early years of the state of Queensland.



**Mr Jim Manion**

The article below was found as a type written copy and it appeared in “The Townsville Herald” publication which was published in 1987 to celebrate the centenary of the Saturday 24 December 1887 edition.

This is the article found in Jim’s papers.

### **WILLIAM ROWE**

The photographer for this supplement was William Rowe, born at Ipswich, Queensland in 1866, the son of John and Elizabeth Rowe. The family came north, attracted by gold discoveries, while William was a child; the father eventually found employment as a miner at Charters Towers.

About 1883 William entered the employment of Deazeley and Blake, Photographers in Townsville and Charters Towers. In 1886 he took over the business. The Townsville shop was in Flinders Street between Stokes Street and Stanley Street, roughly on the site of the present Katies Store. By 1887 he was well established as one of Townsville’s leading photographers, his main rivals being John Tilse & Co. and the Elite Photographic Gallery. The *Aldine History of Queensland (1888)* described him as ‘an excellent photographer, his work being in point of artistic excellence equal to anything of the kind turned out of the best establishments in Sydney and Brisbane’.

By 1888, Rowe had also purchased the business of one of his rivals, John Tilse & Co. though Tilse appears to have continued in business in partnership with A. B. Clinton and later formed the Imperial Photographic Company.

In 1890 he married Lizzie Elsner (called Elsie on Rowe’s death certificate). She was the daughter of one of Townsville’s early German settlers; her sister married Robert McKimmin, one of the founders of the retailing business McKimmin & Richardson, later McKimmin’s and now David Jones.

Within four months of their marriage, Lizzie died suddenly aged only nineteen; Rowe did not marry again. He remained in Townsville for three more years. Perhaps he suffered financial difficulties during the 1893 depression. Whatever the cause, he appears never to have returned to Townsville. After working in Hughenden for a time he seems to have returned to Charters Towers where he died in June 1904 at the home of his brother, Walter Richard Rowe.

**WILLIAM ROWE** *Continued*

A number of Rowe's photographs are still in existence. All are of excellent quality, revealing the photographer's keen eye for composition. In an introduction to the supplement and elsewhere in the *Townsville Herald* of 24 December, 1887, the problems confronting him in producing good quality photographs in bright sunlight at that time are discussed. Clearly he met the challenge admirably.



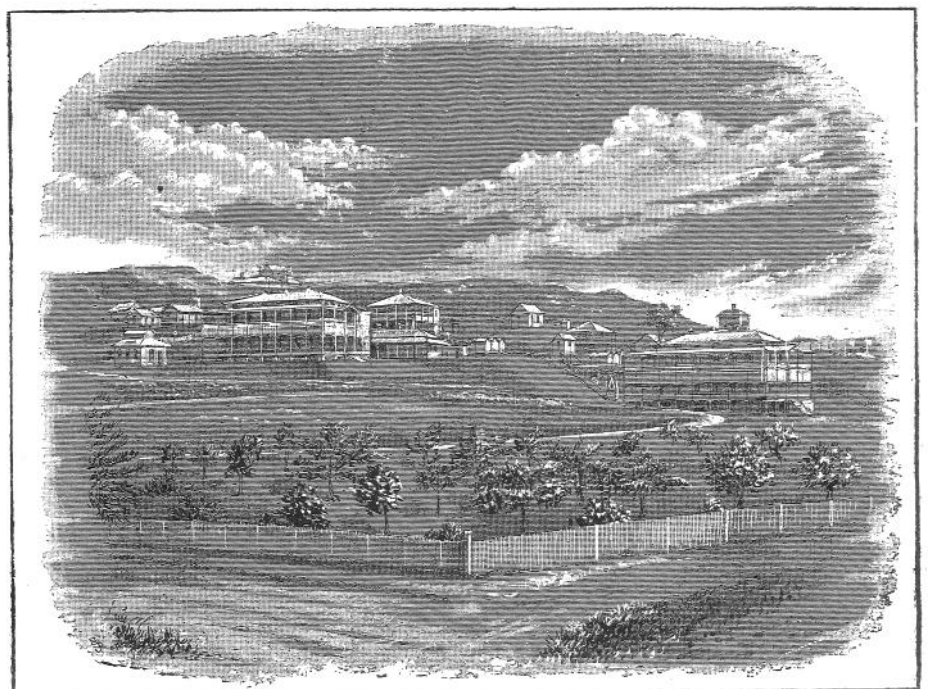
MESSRS. BURNS, PHILP AND CO.'S WHARVES.—From a photograph by William Rowe.

Messrs Burns, Philp & Co's Wharves from a photograph by William Rowe.

Published in *The Townsville Herald*, 1987.

The Townsville Hospital—  
From a photograph by  
William Rowe.

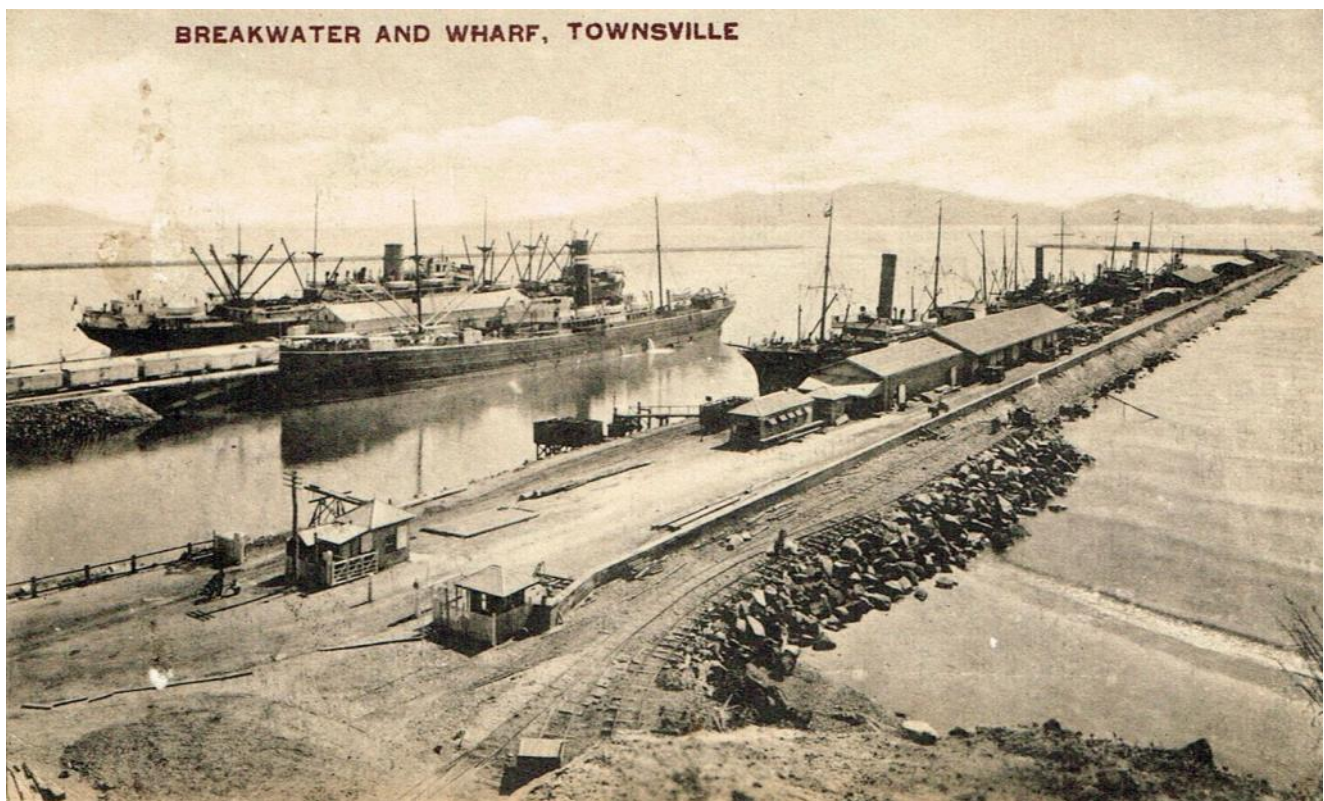
Published in *The Townsville Herald*, 1987.



THE TOWNSVILLE HOSPITAL (See Page 60).—From a photograph by William Rowe.

## NICK SHAILER TALKS ABOUT “READING” PHOTOGRAPHS

Most of you at some time would have seen my postcard collection and no doubt looked at old photos of Townsville. But have you ever looked into the photo or card to see what other information can be seen? For some scenes a series of views can be found taken from the one location, as with these two cards taken about 30 years apart from the forts on Magazine Island.



The first card is from the early 1900s and as you can see, in the foreground are two gate houses and gates. The railway lines already run down both sides of the wharf and on the left side of the first building there is a railway cattle wagon and the only vehicle that can be made out is a horse drawn dray. To the left side of the second building you can see the first of 4 ships which are docked along this wharf. They all look to be freighters as is the one on the wharf to the left. The partly obscured ship on this wharf looks to be a passenger ship. On this wharf is also a rack of white painted railway box wagons. These types of wagons were used to move refrigerated meat (packed in ice) from the meat works to the ships for sending overseas.

## NICK SHAILER TALKS ABOUT “READING” PHOTOGRAPHS



The second photo dates from the 1930s. The gate houses have gone, and cars and trucks can be seen all along the wharf. On the left side of the sheds, several railway wagons used to move timber and logs can also be seen. The three ships in the foreground are all coastal passenger liners. Alongside the one on the front right you can see one of the island boats just having picked up passengers who are off for a day trip to Magnetic Island. Just behind the dark coloured shed on the edge of the wharf (lower centre of the photo) you can see one of the Ross Creek ferries pulling away taking passengers into town, stopping at the end of the Strand and then onto behind the old post office. Also of note is the pile driver in the swing basin which shows up moored in this location in quite a few postcards over the years.



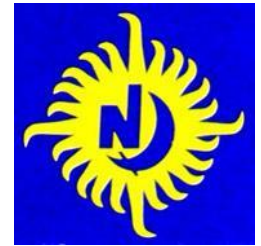
## CLONCURRY 150 YEARS—STEAM TRAIN VISITS TOWNSVILLE

### From Queensland Rail Travel website:

All aboard for an authentic steam train journey heading to north-west Queensland to celebrate Cloncurry's momentous milestone of 150 years and the 38th annual Cloncurry and District Show in June 2017. Come and spend a couple of days, visit some of the area's most popular attractions and enjoy the 38th Cloncurry and District show. Sample the best of the region from handicraft, cooking and art to trade stalls. There will be plenty of fun and fabulous entertainment for the whole family. Step back in time and travel by steam train with Queensland Rail's beautifully preserved historic wooden carriages hauled by historic steam locomotives. The journey will take you along the once known Great Northern Railway Line, with stops along the way at Charters Towers, Hughenden, Richmond and Cloncurry. This historic steam train journey will be one not to be missed and will recreate the romance of the great steam train era once more, almost a century since it first connected these great regional towns.

Cloncurry is celebrating its 150th birthday and one of the special events is the steam train journey from Townsville to Cloncurry and return in June 2017. The rail journey is coinciding with the 38th Annual Cloncurry Show. The steam train is taking several days to make the journey to Cloncurry, stopping at Charter Towers, Hughenden, Richmond then Cloncurry. Leaving Townsville on 12 June, the train will arrive in Cloncurry on June 15. The return journey leaves the "Curry" on June 20 and arrives back in Townsville on 23 June 2017. Below are a couple of photos from the train at Townsville Station, leaving on Monday 12 June 2017.

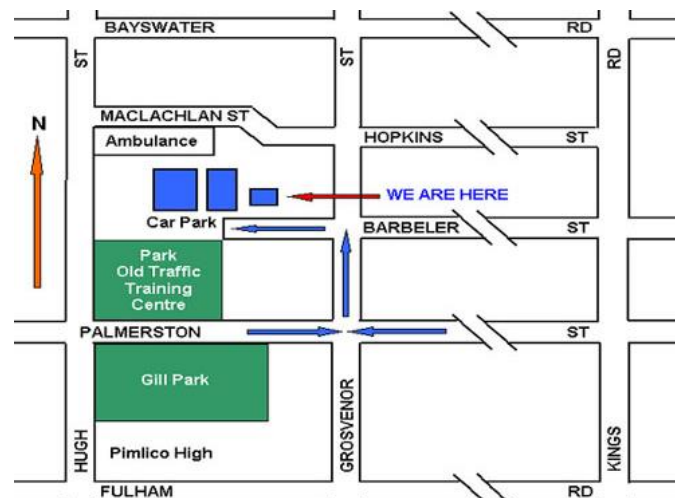




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## MEMBERSHIP OF TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM RENEWAL TIME

We encourage you to renew your membership of Townsville Museum and extend the invitation of joining our museum to a friend. Preserving history is our passion.

### OUR SUPPORTERS



Support  
 The  
 Groups  
 That  
 Support your  
 Museum

