

Newsletter of the

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

October 2017

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



Special Points of Interest:

- *Coronation Medallion*
- *Articles by Nick Shailer, Museum Member and Collector*
- *From the Townsville Museum's Collections—Coronation Medallion & Receipts*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Here it is almost the end of 2017. The Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday 17th September and the committee was returned once again. We celebrated Geoff & Lyn Hansen's 70th birthdays with a cake at the AGM afternoon tea. In my Annual Report to the members I strongly recommended that next year I would like to see positive action taken by Council to support a move to better premises. The saga has been ongoing for far too long and it is now time something was done. Cairns, Mareeba, Rockhampton, Proserpine and the Outback museums all have wonderful Museums and are a real attraction for visitors to those areas. History and heritage are just as important to visitors as man-made attractions. There has been overwhelming financial support for the proposed "underwater museum" from the business sector and Council and it is very disappointing Townsville Museum does not even receive consideration for such support.

In July, an ideas proposal was given to Council for a move by the Museum to the old Parcels & Goods Office at the Railway Station. The original heritage building, 104 years old, just standing idle, with the exception of the Travel Centre and a few occupied offices, would be a great attraction for visitors. It was also suggested that other groups such as the Arts and Railway Heritage be offered space as well. At the meeting, Member for Townsville, Scott Stewart advised he would talk with Queensland Rail and provide feedback to us. Queensland Rail is reviewing its business strategies including property but this process will not be completed until mid December at the earliest. If the relocation did take place it would provide easier access for visitors to come to the Museum.

In the meantime, we have made a few changes to displays. A display board with the history of the Short family has been placed behind the Cash Registers donated by Max Short. An upgrade of the Printing equipment display in Hall 2 is also underway. A recent acquisition from Eleanor Chun Tie of china plates and chopsticks from her parents restaurant, the Hong Kong Restaurant has gone on display in Hall 1. Staff photos and the history of the restaurant compliment the display.

Just a couple of weeks ago, one of our very special Life Members and supporter of the Museum, Harvey Low was taken ill. We wish Harvey a full recovery and look forward to his return to the Thursday group (they miss your cakes, Harvey).

Until next time,
Trish Cronin

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

MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

Single \$ 11.00

Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

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.



(1920). Portrait of Sir Matthew Nathan, Governor of Queensland, 1925. Queensland State Archives

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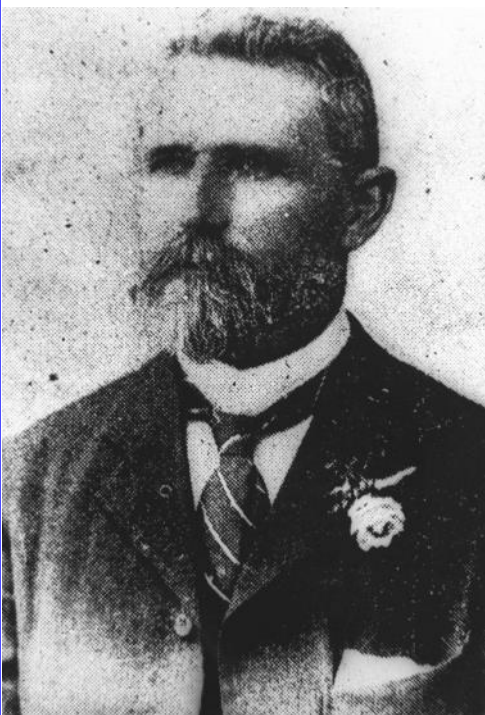
APLIN STREET, CITY

Aplin Street, City. William Aplin (1840-1901), businessman, pastoralist and politician arrived in Brisbane aboard the *Wanata* in December 1862. The following year he went to Bowen and arrived at Cleveland Bay shortly after the establishment of the settlement. Here, he went into partnership in 1865 with William Clifton trading as Clifton and Aplin, storekeepers and agents. He married Mary Jane Bristol at Bowen on 27th October 1865. They lived at "Edgecliffe", Cleveland Terrace, Melton Hill. Their home was destroyed during the 1867 cyclone but they rebuilt on the same allotment. Aplin was a founding member of the Townsville Municipal Council and served two terms as Mayor. He also served on the Thuringowa Divisional Board being the first chairman of the board following its incorporation in 1880. He held many public positions and in 1866 was Townsville's first (unofficial) postmaster. In 1880 he was appointed a member of the Legislative Council and retained his seat until his death. He retired from business in 1881 and purchased Southwick Station. He died suddenly at Warwick on 18th January 1901.

Aplin Street, Acacia Vale. The street was renamed Rogers Street in 1919 after George Sandilands Rogers, 15th Battalion 4th Brigade AIF, who was killed at Gallipoli on 27 April 1915.

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

William Aplin (1840-1901), businessman, pastoralist and parliamentarian, was born on 27 April 1840 at Combe St Nicholas, Somerset, England, one of the three sons of William Aplin, farmer, and his wife Ann, née Tuck. He was educated at Bourton Academy, Dorset. He migrated to Brisbane in 1862, arriving in the *Wanata* in December. He went to Bowen next year and as a representative of Seaward, Marsh & Co., merchants, moved to Cleveland Bay soon after a settlement there was proposed. In June 1865 with W. Clifton, manager of Burns, Basset & Co., he formed the firm, Clifton & Aplin, store-keepers and agents, when Townsville was founded. At Bowen on 27 October he married Mary Jane (b. Wiltshire, 1837), daughter of Henry Bristol, farmer, and his wife Mary, née Gray. They lived at Edgecliffe, Melton Hill, Townsville, next door to Clifton. Their first home was blown away by a cyclone but they rebuilt on the same site.



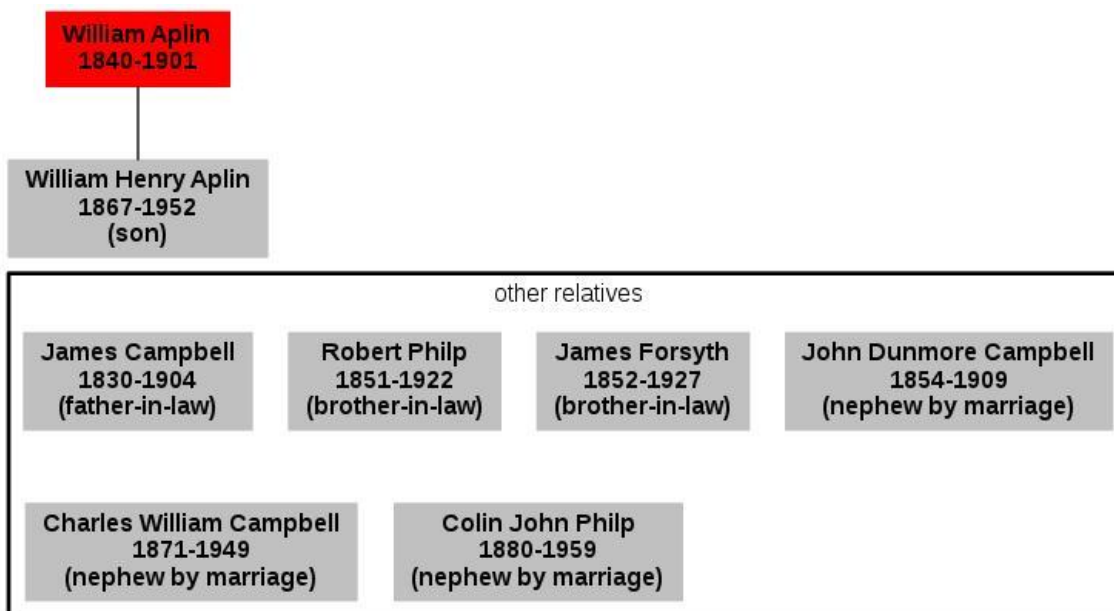
Aplin's activity in local administration made him a public figure. He was a founding member of the Townsville Municipal Council and twice mayor, and a member of Thuringowa Divisional Board in 1879, 1886, 1889 and 1894-96, serving as chairman in 1882. Elected to the Dalrymple Divisional Board on 26 April 1883, he remained a member, except in 1887, until 1901. He was also a member of the first board of trustees of Townsville Grammar School in 1888, the Flinders District Hospital Committee, a vice-president of the North Queensland Pastoral and Agricultural Association and a trustee of the Townsville cemetery. He was appointed a member of the Legislative Council on 19 October 1880; although often absent, he gave much useful help in debates affecting 'the more distant parts of the colony', and retained his seat until 1901.

Unidentified. *Portrait of the Honourable William Aplin*. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland

WILLIAM APLIN

Aplin continued his mercantile pursuits successfully until 1881 when he bought Southwick on the Fletcher River from Robert Stewart, and became a pastoralist. His homestead became a centre of hospitality but the station did not run smoothly. In 1895 his cattle were infested by tick and died in large numbers from redwater fever. His wife died at Southwick on 20 November; of their five sons and four daughters, two children predeceased him. On 3 November 1897 he married Isabella Annie, daughter of [James Campbell](#) and his wife Isabella, née Mitchell, who was a sister-in-law of [Sir Robert Philp](#). They lived briefly at Southwick as lessees of the Bank of New South Wales, and then moved to Invermay, Herston Road, Brisbane; they had no children. After leaving a friend's death-bed Aplin died suddenly at Warwick on 18 February 1901. He was buried in the Anglican section of the Toowong cemetery. His wife died on 31 October 1927, aged 65.

Of Aplin's two brothers, John migrated to North Queensland where he tried gold-mining and then bought an hotel at the mining centre of Cumberland. Later with two sons he turned to raising cattle at Huonfels near Georgetown.



Bibliography

E. M. Allingham, 'Aplin, William (1840–1901)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/aplin-william-2893/text4147>, published first in hardcopy 1969, accessed online 25 September 2017.

This article was first published in hardcopy in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 3, (MUP), 1969

CORONATION MEDALLION

To celebrate the Coronation of the new King George VI in 1937, every Queensland school child received a silver medallion with red, white and blue ribbon attached. Recently we received some papers which included the original letter from the Town Clerk requesting the Principal to provide the number of medals required for his school. Also in the collection is a handwritten list of the schools and number of medals delivered. Delivery was made on the 6th May 1937.



Heads side:

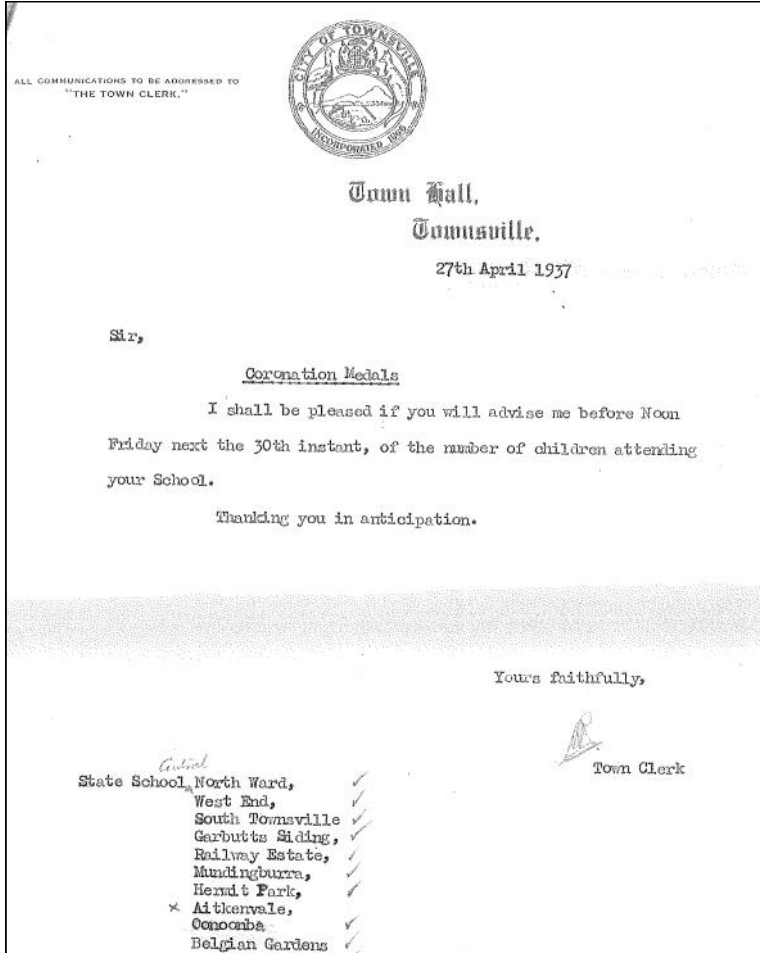
King George VI * Queen Elizabeth



Tails side:

**Queensland Coronation Celebrations
12th May 1937**

CORONATION MEDALLION



Left : Letter written by Town Clerk on 27th April 1937 to School Principals in the Townsville area.

Right : A handwritten list of Townsville Schools recording the number of medallions delivered on 6th May 1937. Interestingly this gives a list of eligible students and the names of a few schools which no longer exist.

** Coronation Medals (delivered 4/5/37)*

1	Technical College - ✓	219 ✓
2	State School - Conocaba - ✓	79 ✓
3	" " - Hemdt Park - ✓	470 ✓
4	" " - Belgian Gardens - ✓	185 ✓
5	" " - Mundingburra - ✓	392 ✓
6	" " - Rly Estate - ✓	524 ✓
7	" " - North Ward - ✓	500 ✓
8	" " - Grammas School - ✓	136 ✓
9	" " - South Townsville ✓	473 ✓
10	" " - Steuarts Creek ✓	105 ✓
11	" " - West End - ✓	730 ✓
12	" " - Steuarts Creek ✓	125 ✓
13	Chondrair Prather - ✓	270 ✓
14	St Patricks - ✓	262 ✓
15	St Marys West End - ✓	230 ✓
16	St Francis Rf Estate - ✓	130 ✓
17	Mundingburra - ✓	150 ✓
18	St Patricks Stville - ✓	170 ✓
19	St Botolphs Bt Gardens - ✓	84 ✓
20	Woodlands, Hyde Park - ✓	150 ✓
21	St Josephs Strained - ✓	136 ✓
22	St Josephs Strained - ✓	5 ✓
23	Children in Hospital - ✓	22 ✓
24	St Pauls Induery School - ✓	70 ✓
25	State School Aitkenvale - ✓	81 ✓
		178
		5700
		21
		80

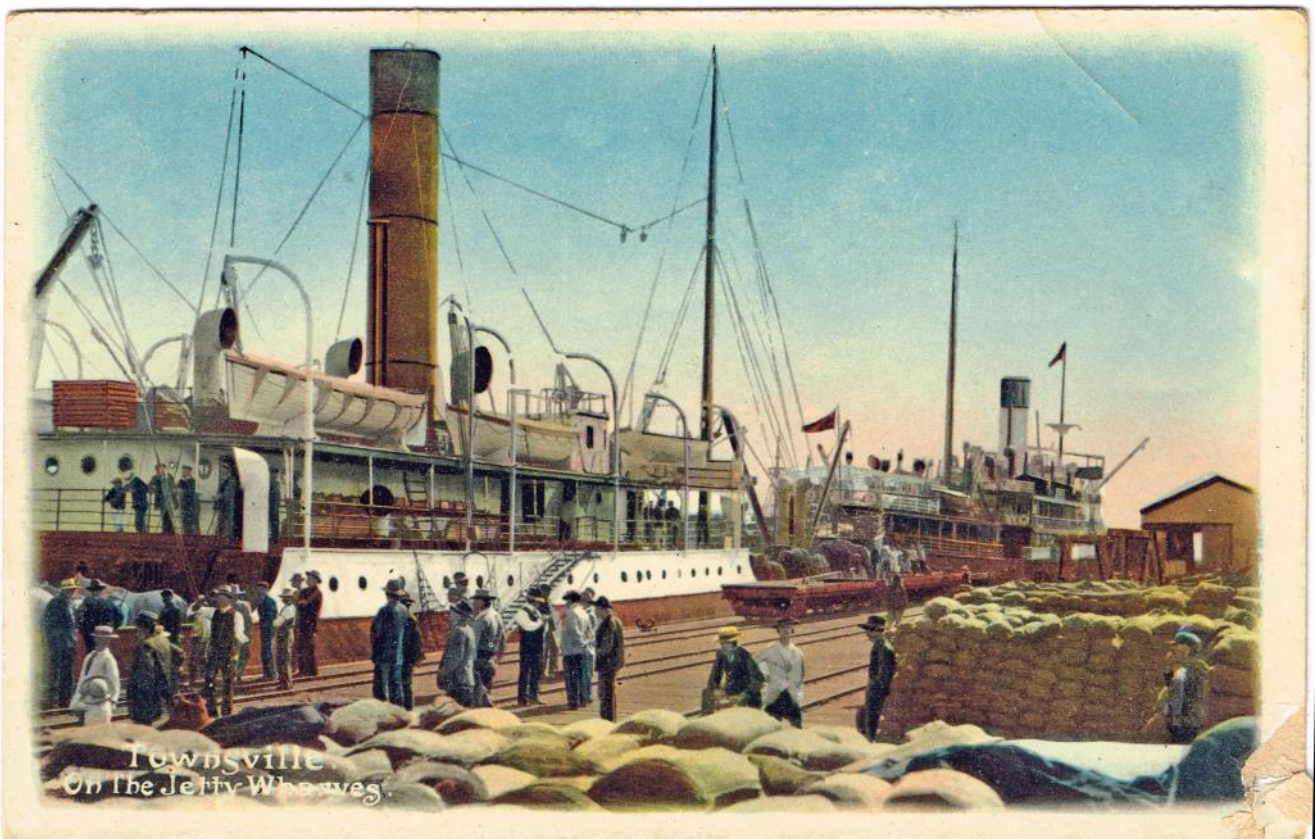
*Black School
Newly Bury do Pierre Bay 20*

THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN! POSTCARDS BY NICK SHAILER

One of the postcards in my collection is of a ship on the Townsville wharf. It is unusual in that it has been taken in close to the ship and shows a group of well dressed men and a couple of children standing around looking at the cargo on the decks. To the left on the aft deck are several white horses and on the fore deck is what looks like several elephants, although these are not very clear. This must be a Circus Boat and in the years before the railway lines were developed, this was the only way circuses could travel.

Only recently was I able to find on Trove Newspapers online, from Townsville Daily Bulletin in 1908, two adds which mention the arrival of Wirth Bros Circus on a specially chartered boat, *The S.S. Buninyong*, and the article also gives a reason why the photographer and crowd were there on the wharf. Amongst the animals on the ship was the first giraffe ever to come to Australia and Townsville. It's such a pity it is not seen in the postcard.

Named Commonwealth, it had only arrived in Australia in May 1908. The adds for the Circus's Townsville visit date from July 1908. It was only a young animal of 2 years and 9 months and was purchased from Hamburg. Sadly Commonwealth died on a return voyage from New Zealand in January 1909. Its body was preserved and mounted and continued to travel with the circus.



OLD ARTEFACTS TELL AN INTERESTING STORY — NICK SHAILER

This item is not in my collection but is owned by a friend.

It is a small wooden box with a leather handle and it would have been made to be carried by a child. On opening, you see two more pieces of timber again with a leather handle. You slide the two pieces out and see a curved shape cut into them. Open them out, as they are hinged, and you find you have a child's size overseat for a thunder box toilet.



Can a dunny can from a thunder box tell much of a story apart from the sights it's seen?

If you can read it, this one in my collection can!

It has on the side of it : **9995 / State School / Helens Hill / Pombell**

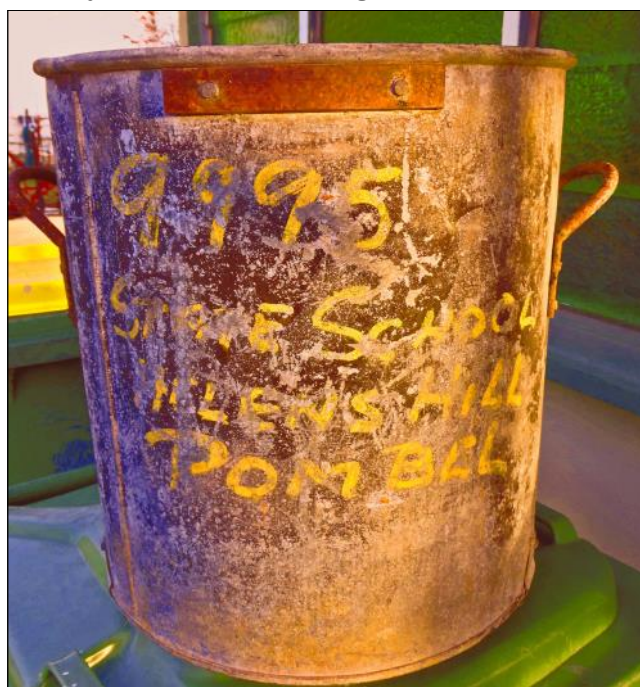
This tells us that some 50 years ago, the teacher at the small school at Helens Hill ordered from the Education Department some new cans for the school toilet. Don't forget it would have been up to him or a parent or older children to empty them!

9995 is the Education Department railway invoice number.

State School Helens Hill is, of course, who it was sent to.

Pombell was the closest railway station to the Helens Hill State School.

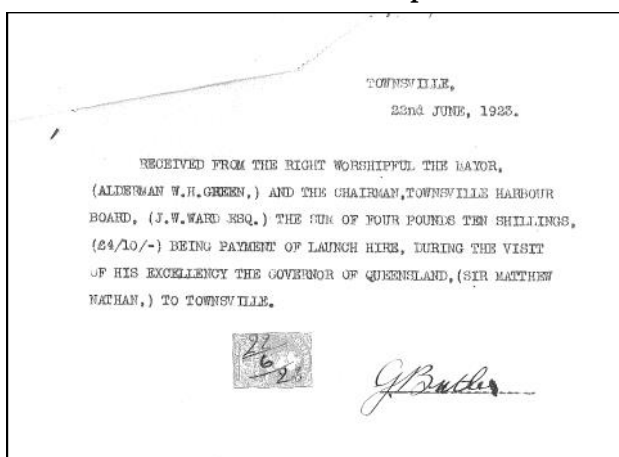
Whilst the school is still there and in use, Pombell Station has long since gone and is now only a railway crossing loop.



VISIT TO TOWNSVILLE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND, SIR MATTHEW NATHAN

In our collection, we have some receipts, two of which are featured on this page. The story behind these receipts was uncovered in the Townsville Daily Bulletin on Tuesday 15th May 1923, where an article appeared reporting upon the visit of His Excellency, The Governor of Queensland, Sir Matthew Nathan to Townsville on Monday 14th May 1923.

The article is transcribed as best as possible here.



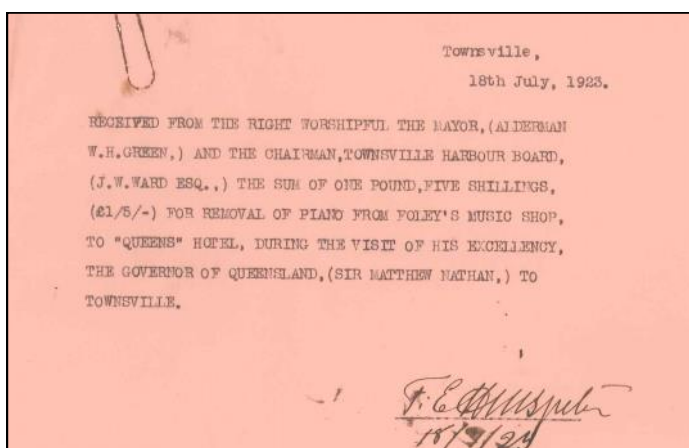
A Harbor Trip

In the afternoon, Sir Matthew Nathan was the guest of the Chairman of the Harbor Board (Mr J. W. Ward) on a harbor trip on the Nellbay. Others present included Mr Justice Mcnaughton, the Mayor (Alderman W. H. Green), Mr J. Dash M.L.A., Alderman R. Thomson, W. H. Morison, Sinnott, Lowth and Melrose, Messrs R. D. Arida, and J. R. Chisholm, (members of the Harbor Board), Councillors J. E. P. Cummins, D. Meehan, W. Patterson, W. Wordsworth, Hughes and Cordingly (Thuringowa Shire Council), Captain Fullerton, Captain Romer, Messrs V. J. Lalor, J. Stein,

J. F. Loxton, R. P. Kirke, E. Aldous, E. P. Molloy, J.J. Dunedon, and Alexander. The Nellbay cruised around the outer harbor wharves, and then to Nell's – partly obscured) Bay where the party were entertained at afternoon tea at Mandalay.

The Civic Dinner

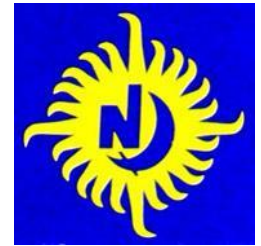
In the evening His Excellency was entertained at a civic dinner at the Queen's Hotel. The dinner was held in the Writing Room, the walls of which were hung with flags, and the table was beautifully decorated, the Governor's colours, red and dark blue being prominent. The Mayor (W.H. Green) was in the chair, having on his right the guest of the evening (Sir Matthew Nathan), and on his left, Mr. J. W. Ward, (the chairman of the Harbor Board). There was a large attendance, the invited guests including the following: - Ald. T. Lowth, T. G. Melrose, S. A. Anderson, J. E. Clegg, G. V. Roberts, H. Sinnott, W. H. Morison, A. Ogden, R. Thomson, S. M. Hopkins, J. Pease, Cllrs J. E. P. Cummins,.....(a very lengthy list of guests not included in this article.)



The toast of "The King" being duly honored, the Mayor proposed the toast of "His Excellency the Governor", which was supported by Mr. J. W. Ward, chairman of the Harbor Board.

His Excellency, in reply, said, "I greatly appreciate the kind way in which my health has been proposed by Mr. Green and seconded by Mr. Ward and the musical honors with which the toast was honored. Townsville keeps up its pristine reputation of looking with a kindly eye on the Governor of the State, and for welcoming guests with musical tones. In an account I recently read of the first Governor's first

visit in October 1865 to the town called after Robert Towns, I find it stated that "The speeches were all of the eulogistic variety and everything passed off with eclat."



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