

Newsletter of the

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

October 2020

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



Special Points of Interest:

- *Fryer Street, North Ward*
- *Dr Jon Stephenson Display and Rossi Boots*
- *Launch of "Townsville in War and Peace 1942-1946 75th Anniversary End of WWII"*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The month of October already and 2020 has been a year of disasters, massive changes to the way we live and work but thankfully North Queensland has come through this all in typical NQ fashion – *always positive, tomorrow will be a better day and let's carry on.* The Museum certainly has had its share of challenges since reopening ensuring distancing with the visitors is observed, sanitiser used and names taken before entering, but so far we have managed and I thank the volunteers for their co-operation.

Since re-opening the Museum has seen a huge increase in visitors. Some from out of town who had been "stranded" in the North with border closures, so it has been a great opportunity to showcase the Museum to these visitors as well as the locals.

Our AGM was held in August and the committee was returned with the addition of Gary Mann as committee member. Our support from Council has also changed and we will only be receiving financial support for 12 months to 30th June 2021. Consultation meetings will be held at a later date to plan for the future direction for the Museum. My plans for a new location over the last 8 years may come true. We will wait and see.

We have added a couple of new displays, one being the story of the first Australian to reach the South Pole and he was a Townsville man, Dr. Phillip Jon Stephensen. His incredible story is on display along with the Thermal Pot he used during his expeditions. The other display is the Railway Refreshment Rooms crockery, when silver service was provided in the Dining Cars and the Refreshment Rooms at certain Railway Stations throughout Queensland.

Friday 18th September, 2020 our latest book "*Townsville in War and Peace 1942-1946 – the 75th Anniversary edition commemorating the end of World War Two*" was officially launched by the Federal Member for Herbert, Mr. Phillip Thompson, OAM at the Army Museum, Jezzine Barracks. The book was originally produced in 2005 with new chapters added in this latest edition with the story on the Forts on Magnetic Island and the story of Townsville's highest decorated soldier, Captain Bill MacIntosh. His daughter Helen was in attendance along with the Mayor, and Commanders of the Army and RAAF bases and other guests. On behalf of the Museum I would like to thank Major John Lavery and his team at the Army Museum for making the venue available for the book launch. The book is available from the Museum.

As this is the last Newsletter for 2020, I wish everyone all the best for the Coming Season and hope no more disasters for 2021. Take care and stay safe.

Regards,
Trish Cronin

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.



Trish greets Aunty Gail Mabo who visited the Museum recently.

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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 Adults \$2 Chn 50c

MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

Single \$ 11.00

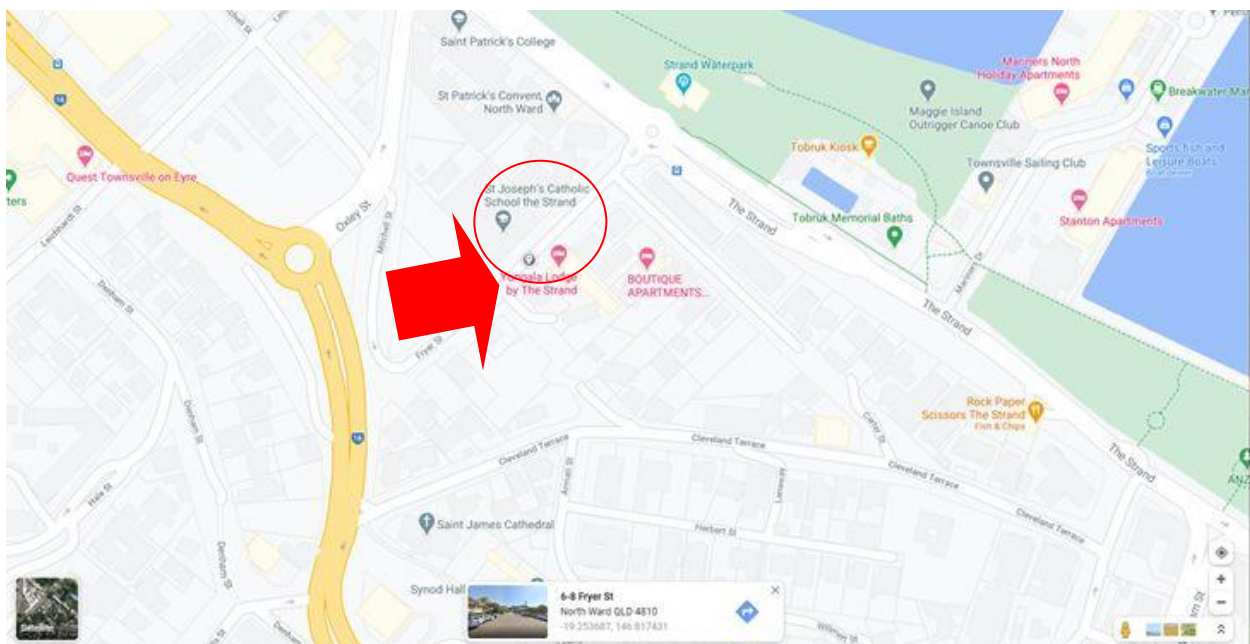
Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

FRYER STREET

Fryer Street, North Ward. Frederick Augustus Fryer, merchant, was one of the earliest settlers at Bowen and one of the first to arrive at Cleveland Bay, where he went into partnership with Thomas Roe Carter. They rented premises, built by Towns and Company, at the corner of Wickham and Flinders Street, (the site is now occupied by the North Queensland Insurance Building). In 1867, Mr Fryer was a shareholder and a director of the Cleveland Bay Express Newspaper Company and was also as Alderman. He was licensee of the Townsville Hotel on the corner of Denham and Flinders Streets in 1877. Later that year he announced his retirement from business and selected land at Five Head Creek and later at Humpybong.

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



Fryer Street, North Ward

In Dorothy and Bruce Gibson Wilde's "A Pattern of Pubs", *Hotels of Townsville 1864—1914*, there is an entry for Frederick Augustus Fryer and his wife, Elizabeth Fryer, that reads:

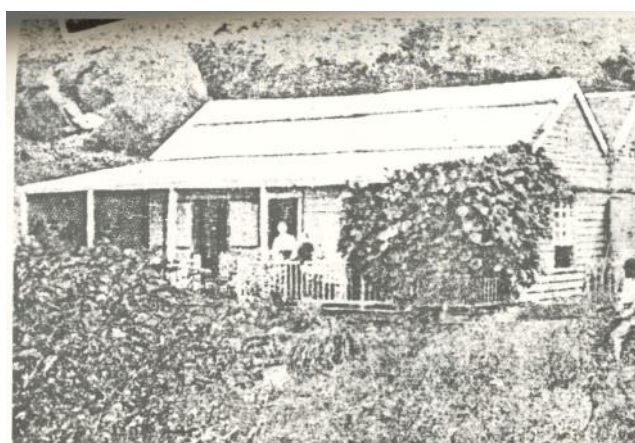
FRYER, Frederick Augustus *Townsville* (Flinders Street and Denham Street) 1877?

Arrived at Townsville, 1865; partner in Carter, Fryer & Co., merchants, involved in the 'Yankee flag' incident with newspaper proprietor J. T. Brown, Townsville, 1866; son-in-law of James Evans (q.v.); died 1885.

FRYER, Elizabeth (widow of Frederick) *Royal Oak* Sept. 1890– May 1898: daughter of James Evans (q.v.); died, 1930.

FRYER STREET, NORTH WARD

In Helga Griffin's book, "Frontier Town", Helga describes the development of the settlement in its first years. In 1865, the first arrival of ten kanakas from Tanna (Vanuatu) arrived in January 1865, to address a labour shortage in the new settlement. The *Uncle Tom* also brought to the town building materials and the builder, Francis Hodel. Captain Moran had difficulty finding the new town which at this stage was just a camp in the mangroves. Moran noted that the only "building" visible was a structure that was made from sheets of iron tied to poles with rawhide strips. Hidden by shrubs but close by was a store which was managed by Peter Lauder, whose wife cooked and waited upon the rest of the settlement. The only other structure was a small hut near the lagoon belonging to Messrs Carter & Fryer, who brought more supplies for the settlement on the *Emile Desmond* towards the end of February 1865. Carter & Fryer paid Black for a wharf site, and opened a small store. The *Amy* then returned from Brisbane with a large quantity of illegal liquor which when distributed, "quite upset the community for three days."



F. A. Fryer's House,
Melton Hill

F.A. Fryer's house, Melton Hill

Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, June 1931

Dorothy Gibson-Wilde describes the incident involving Fred Fryer and the Yankee flag in her book, *Gateway to a Golden Land*, page 65.

"On 3 March 1866 the first number of the weekly *Cleveland Bay Herald and Northern Pioneer*, referred to familiarly as 'The Snorter' or 'The Weekly Rag', was published at a cost of sixpence (five cents) per paper. The editor was an American, James Thorburn Brown, of unamiable manners and of neglected education who not only spells badly but writes ungrammatically." Brown's addition to the landscape, besides his "marine residence" on Melton Hill, was a flagpole in front of his office from which he insisted on flying the American flag. Since the American Civil War was of recent memory and British sympathies had been largely with the South, the flying of a 'Yankee' flag was much resented and eventually F.A. Fryer cut it down, an action which resulted in a hilarious court case with Fryer being fined 40 shillings (\$4) and costs and Brown losing what little respect the community may have had for him. He left soon after, having first attempted to sell off the printing press which was mortgaged to Black & Co., and the town was without a paper without for some weeks until a group of townsmen formed a company and started the *Cleveland Bay Express*, which was to last considerably longer."

FRYER STREET, NORTH WARD

Fred Fryer figured in the early Municipal Council elections too. In Helga Griffin's book *Frontier Town*, Helga writes:

Nominations to the first Municipal Council in mid-April 1866 revealed that merchants, professional men and publicans were leaders in civic affairs. Among those who competed for office were: professionals George Johnson (architect), Alfred Cooper (chemist), Thomas Rowden (surgeon and dentist), Wynford Grimaldi and Spencer Walker (accountants); merchants were represented by John Black, Thomas Carter, William Aplin and William Clifton; publicans by William Ross and Frederick Hamilton. James Gordon was the returning officer. Candidates for the six vacancies were invited to express their views at a public meeting held at the Criterion Hotel. Residents of the town registered 72 votes, and non-residents 45, a total of 117 votes. Although Carter proved to be marginally more popular, Black's pioneering role and his *de facto* leadership till then made it a matter of course that he should become the first mayor. This did not prevent him from heaping scorn on the election procedures of his competitors, referring to the meeting as the most mismanaged one he had ever witnessed. The newly elected council included Messrs Black, Aplin, Fryer, Carter, Johnson, Hannum (later the town architect, Roberts (surveyor), Cowan (solicitor), and Grimaldi (later a Town Clerk). A week before the council elections, and after several delays, Black's tallow-rendering plant began operations – a neat conjunction of his pastoral, business and urban roles.

Frederick married Elizabeth on 26 May 1869. From looking at Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages information, it appears that Frederick and Elizabeth had 5 or 6 children. I think that 6 may be the accurate number, as I suspect the surname of Elizabeth has been interpreted as "WANS" instead of "Evans".

Frederick Rolles Fryer	Born 14/07/1869
Lizzie Florence Fryer	Born 01/03/1871
Edward James Gulliver Fryer	Born 25/07/1873
Herbert Reginald Fryer	Born 21/05/1875
Maude Mary Fryer	Born 24/02/1882
Emily Constance Fryer	Born 12/12/1884

Frederick Augustus Fryer passed away on 04/09/1885 but Elizabeth lived on into the twentieth century, passing in 1930. She held a licence for the Royal Oak hotel in Townsville from 1890 –1898.

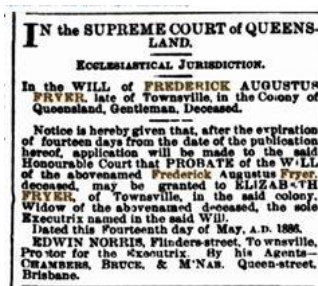
Descendants of the Fryer family still live in the Townsville and North Queensland area today, residing in the town, Hervey Range and Charters Towers districts.



Probate notice for
the will of
Frederick
Augustus Fryer
Brisbane Courier
Sat 22 May 1886



Fred Fryer. He was one of Townsville's first merchants. When his partner Carter retired, Fryer went into partnership with S.F. Walker. (T.B./S.)



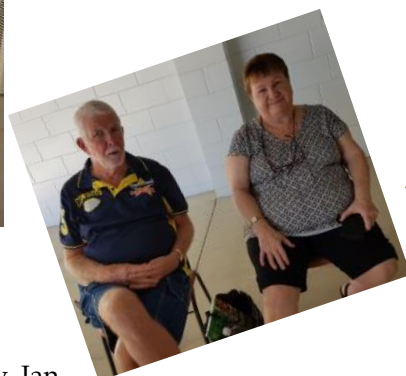
2020 AGM TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Our 2020 AGM was held on the 23rd August and we had many members come to support the museum and its projects.

After the Annual and audit reports were shared, the nominations and positions were declared.

President:	Trish Cronin
Vice President:	Geoff Hansen
Treasurer:	Nick Shailer
Secretary:	Sue Fox
Committee:	Fay Jones
	John McDonald
	Gary Mann

We were pleased to see some new and old faces at the meeting this year and we wish the new committee every success for 2020-2021.



Top row: Nick, Trish, Sue

Bottom row: Fay, Petra, Gary, Jan,
John, Lyn, John, Noel, Arthur.



THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN TO REACH THE SOUTH POLE DR. PHILIP JOHN STEPHENSON 1930-2011

Source: Australian Antarctic Magazine—Issue 21—2011

Dr Philip Jon Stephenson, known as Jon, was an energetic adventurer with a thirst for life.

In 1956, Jon Stephenson a 25 year old Geologist from Queensland was appointed the only Australian member of the Sir Vivian Fuch's Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, the first expedition to cross the Antarctic Continent. Despite having no polar experience, Jon was employed as Geologist, Glaciologist and dog sled driver. In November 1956, he embarked on the journey south and he reached the Antarctic ahead of the main party. He spent the winter of 1957 conducting glaciological research with surveyor Ken Blaiklock and Glaciologist Hal Lister in a small hut buried in ice 500 miles from the South Pole. During the expedition's journey across Antarctica, Ken and Jon became the first men to drive dog teams to the South Pole since Amundsen in 1911.



Jon Stephenson earned the lasting respect of all his colleagues, and worthily upheld Australia's international reputation in Antarctic exploration and science. The Stephenson Bastion in the Shackleton Mountains has been named for him. From 1958 to 1960 Jon worked with UNESCO at the University of Punjab in Lahore, West Pakistan where he lectured in geology and undertook field research with students in the Himalayan Mountains.



Insulated thermal pot used by Jon Stephenson in the Antarctic.

Jon Stephenson established the Department of Earth Sciences at James Cook University in Townsville in 1961. In 1963, with two fellow members of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition, Warwick Deacock and Grahame Budd, Jon undertook an ambitious investigation of glaciology, geology and volcanology of the unexplored summit region of Big Ben (2745m), the heavily glaciated active volcano that forms the bulk of Heard Island. They discovered, and comprehensively documented massive glacier retreat, some of the earliest evidence of climate change in the South Indian Ocean. Jon collected rocks for later studies of their age, petrology and paleomagnetism, and as the first Geologist to transverse those parts of the island, two prominent landmarks on Heard Island—Stephenson Glacier and the Stephenson Lagoon (see below) were named for him. From 1979 to 1982 he was the Dean of the Faculty of Science. He organized and led many research expeditions in North Queensland and the South-West Pacific, investigating active volcanoes in the New Hebrides as well as extensive pioneering research in North Queensland on old volcanoes, long lava flows, the Undara lava tubes and the Toomba lava flow.

After his retirement in 1995, Jon held honorary research positions at James Cook University and the Museum of Tropical Queensland. Dr Philip Jon Stephenson was recognized for his work by the naming of three prominent topographic features in the Antarctic, he received the Queen's Polar Medal award and the Australian Geographic Society's 'Lifetime Adventure' Award. Dr. Philip Jon Stephenson died in Townsville in 2011, age 80 years.

Display is in Hall 1.



FROM THE COLLECTION—ROSSI FOOTBALL BOOTS

While sorting through items from the Museum Collections, this pair of Rossi football boots from the 1930s was uncovered like buried treasure!

The boots are in excellent condition and are a great example of the workmanship which went into making a sturdy boot for the rough and tumble of a football game. And sturdy they are! The soles are made from a good amount of leather hide and the spikes are made from leather glued into spikes.



Left: Rossi Boots—
Townsville Museum



Right: Football boot
evolution obtained
from Wikipedia 13
October 2020.

This history was obtained from <https://rossiboots.com.au/our-story/> on 13 October 2020.

OUR FOUNDER, ARTHUR ROSSITER

In 1908 Arthur “Possie” (short for Possum) Rossiter began making boots in his back shed, unaware he’d be creating a business which would span 4 generations.

It’s hard to imagine a more Australian guy. An Aussie rules footballer, a professional lawn bowler who represented Australia and a horse owner, who liked to back a horse or two in the races.

But what we love the most about him is his conviction. In 1910, after 20 years’ experience working for others in the shoe trade, he went out on his own. So confident was he, that he quit his job, sold his house and used the capital to set up his first shop in Adelaide.

His Cricket boots, footy boots and elastic sided boots quickly built the Rossiter’s name. Successive generations have continued to grow this same name by innovating and creating hard-wearing footwear designed to do the job, drawing their inspiration from Arthur in those early days.

In 1915, to do his bit for the war, Possie designed a combat boot “fit for our boys”. The success of that boot in WWI lead to a decades long association with the Australian defence force and an enduring legacy that a Rossi Boot must be tough, comfortable and ready for action.

Arthur laid the foundation that the business still operates on today, a love for life and genuine passion for boots that do the job.

When you wear a Rossi Boot, you wear a little piece of Australian history and little piece of Arthur’s passion from 110 years ago.



TOWNSVILLE IN WAR AND PEACE 1942-1946 75TH ANNIVERSARY END OF WWII—BOOK LAUNCH

Townsville Museum hosted the launch of the revised edition of *Townsville in War and Peace 1942-1946 75th Anniversary End of WWII*. Geoff Hansen added new chapters into the revised edition, and the book is much bigger than the first edition. The cover is similar in colour but an added badge with the 75th anniversary information is included.

Invited guests, limited because of Covid 19 restrictions, assembled at Army Museum at Jezzine Park on 18th September, to listen to Mr Phillip Thompson OAM MP launch the new edition. Geoff Hansen also spoke about the new chapters which include a short chapter on the forts on Magnetic Island, and another outlines the memories of a local boy during the war. The third and largest addition to the book is about Townsville's most decorated soldier, Captain Bill MacIntosh, MC MM. Mrs Trish Cronin, on behalf of the Museum, handed some copies to the various representatives of the military services.

See the back page for ordering details.



Phillip Thompson MP, Geoff Hansen and Trish Cronin of Townsville Museum at the launch.



TOWNSVILLE IN WAR AND PEACE 1942-1946 75TH ANNIVERSARY END OF WWII—BOOK LAUNCH

The Launch and Book Presentations





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&

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TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEW PUBLICATION

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