

## Newsletter of the

# TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

February 2021

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



### Special Points of Interest:

- *Generous donations from McGrath Real Estate*
- *Getting to know a Museum Member—Nick Shailer*
- *From the Museum's Collections*

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The start of 2021 has so far been rather uneventful with regards to disasters. COVID19 has not affected us too greatly in the North and the Museum has seen a surge in visitors since re-opening mid 2020. I have been working closely with Council on relocating the Museum to bigger and better premises within the City area and we have received wonderful support from the CEO of Queensland Museums and the Federal Member for Herbert, Mr. Phillip Thompson, OAM. A new Museum and Cultural Centre with Sporting and Railway history is what has been proposed and, if successful, this new Centre will be a great attraction for visitors to Townsville. Townsville is quite unique when it comes to Museums as we have 5 located in Townsville (*Townsville Museum, MTQ, Maritime, Army and RAAF*) and one on Magnetic Island. Each Museum tells a different story and of course Townsville Museum is dedicated solely to the history of Townsville.

Support for the Museum is always appreciated and late last year and again in February, 2021 Brad and Kay Mathieson, Principals of McGrath Real Estate have donated \$500.00 to the Museum to assist with new displays. This donation will be used for a new display titled, the *Mayors of Townsville 1865 – 2008*. On behalf of the members of Townsville Museum, we thank you Brad and Kay for your support.

Townsville Museum also supports students from High schools who are interested in learning about local history and how museums are managed. This year we will be again taking students from Pimlico High School and Townsville Grammar School. It is such a pleasure to work with the students and pass on our knowledge for the benefit of their future.

As always the Museum welcomes new members and volunteers and we have two new volunteers, Patricia Pickering and Helen Payne. Two wonderful ladies with so much knowledge and connection to past businesses of Townsville. Volunteers are great assets to Museums and we welcome them.

Until the next edition, take care, stay safe and tell friends and family about the Museum.

Regards,  
Trish Cronin  
President

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 receives a donation. More on page 3.

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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

## THORPE STREET, NORTH WARD

Thorpe Street, City: Named after Thomas Edward Thorpe, sharebroker and Alderman. The street was originally known as Customs House Lane.

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



### THOMAS EDWARD THORPE

From John Mathews' index, held by Townsville City Council Library

4.8.1920	Member Northern Qld Peace Loan (?) C'tee	
28.2.1924	Nominated for Alderman	MB 20
14.10.1926	Alderman	MB 20
12.1906	Member School of Arts C'tee	Tville Illustrated
16.9.1920	Secretary, North Qld Employers Association	L2329/20
1925	Alderman	MB 1925
12.3.1921	Secretary Nth Qld Employers Assocn Arranging with Lieut. Sparrow drill for cadets	654/21

## AN UNEXPECTED GIFT



Trish Cronin, on behalf of the Townsville Museum, accepted a cheque for \$250 from Brad and Kay Mathieson of McGrath Real Estate in November 2020, and another cheque for \$250 in February 2021.

***Thank you McGrath Real Estate! Your donations will be very well used to help preserve Townsville's history.***

## HARVEY LOW VISITS 3 RAR MUSEUM WITH A GIFT

### Harvey Low's Visit to Army Museum to Present Letters

On Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Harvey Low and Geoff Hansen from the Townsville Museum and Historical Society visited the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) Museum at Lavarack Barracks for Harvey to present the museum with his brother's letters from Korea. They were met at the barracks gate by Museum Curator Bob Bakkers and guided to the museum.

As they got out of their car, Harvey was welcomed by two soldiers playing bagpipes. When the pipers were finished, Harvey told them how his brother had written from Korea telling how the communist troops had run away when the Scots went into battle with bagpipes playing. They were suitably amused.



Harvey hands the letters from Laurence to Lieutenant Colonel Kearns while RSM West looks on.

**Photo: 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, *Old Faithful*.**

On entering the museum building, Harvey and Geoff were met by an officer and introduced to a soldier in full modern combat dress which weighed about 35kg. They spent time with this friendly soldier who detailed how good his body armour, helmet, night vision glasses and hearing protection were. He also showed them his modern weapon.

The museum had a display featuring a portrait of Harvey's brother, Laurence, who was killed in action in Korea in 1951. Geoff gave a short speech saying how Laurence's letters from Korea would feature in a book he was presently writing. Harvey told how he found the letters pressed between the pages of a Guinness Book of Records about four years ago. He then handed the letters to the 3 RAR's Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Kearns who thanked Harvey, gave him a 3 RAR medallion, and made him honorary member of 3 RAR.

The party then went to an open dining area for coffee and a magnificent morning tea of plain scones with jam and cream, fruit scones, sandwiches, party pies, and cupcakes. The Salvation Army officer played the bugle in honour of Laurence and then showed Harvey and Geoff his pop-in centre and library. After that, the guests met quite a few soldiers who came over for a chat.

The visit ended with a special tour of the museum where the uses of many items were explained in detail. Many of these brought up intense feelings especially the mortar type device that resulted in Laurence's death. Harvey and Geoff were made very welcome throughout their visit; they had a great time and received invitations to further 3 RAR events.

Text by Harvey Low and Geoff Hansen



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU—NICK SHAILER

Nick Shailer is one of the few members of Townsville Museum who has been involved with the Museum since its inception in 1985.

Nick's love of discovering the fascination of all things historical started in 1971 after Cyclone Althea struck Townsville. He was fascinated with the discoveries made by rummaging through the remains of an old softdrink factory and house in Stagpole Street, West End.

Once the interest in history was begun, Nick joined the National Trust Townsville branch and helped with the setting up of the Heritage Houses in Castling Street, West End. By now he was working in the Queensland Railways and was committed to do shift work which meant he was not able to commit to the National Trust group.

When a group of interested people were meeting to discuss the creation of a Townsville Museum, Nick joined them. Meeting at Paul Tonnoir's shop, this group, over a period of months, set up the Townsville Museum which opened in 1985 in the Old Courthouse in Sturt Street. He became Member Number 11 and has remained a member ever since.

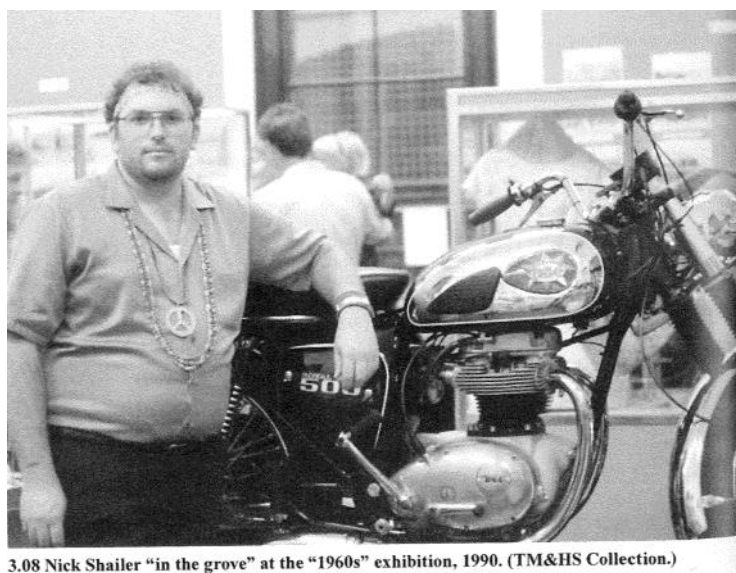
His original interest was in collecting bottles and local memorabilia, and in more recent years, he collects postcards, war history and photographs of Townsville too.

His membership has included serving many terms on the committee of Townsville Museum, from General Member, to Vice President, President, and Treasurer.

He participates too, in setting up semi-permanent displays or contributes to special displays, and his knowledge of everything local is often called upon to answer enquiries from the public.



3.06 President Nick Shailer with "The Early Chemist" exhibition, 1988. The exhibition featured artefacts primarily from Nick Shailer's private collection. Nick has served as President on three occasions and is Townsville Museum and Historical Society's longest serving committee member. (TM&HS Collection.)



3.08 Nick Shailer "in the groove" at the "1960s" exhibition, 1990. (TM&HS Collection.)

Both images are taken from "Keeping Our Heritage" by Geoff Hansen



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU—NICK SHAILER

These photos are of Nick's favourite collections.



Nick's collections include bottles and storage jars, telephones, locks and openers, toothpaste and ointment pots with lids & shoe horns.



## FROM THE MINEHAN COLLECTION

Here are a few interesting items from the Minehan Collection. It includes papers from the 1943 era in wartime Townsville.

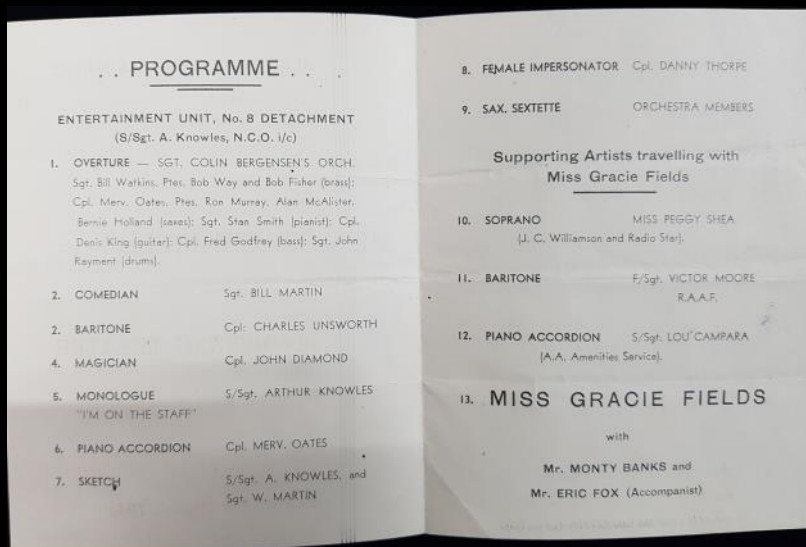
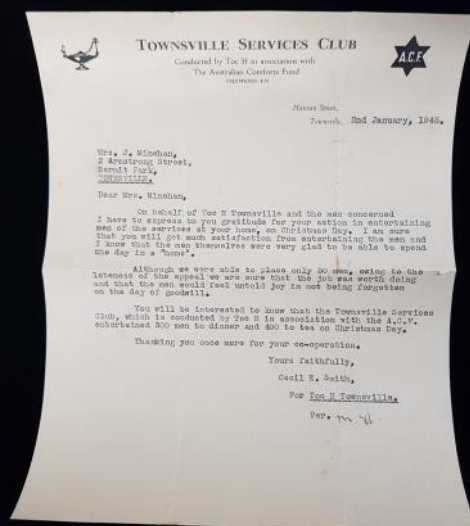
It is clear that the Minehan family contributed to their community during the war. Ellen Minehan received a certificate of recognition for her service to the Civil Defence Organisation.

Mrs J. Minehan hosted service men at her home at Christmas time in 1944. What a charitable person she must have been.

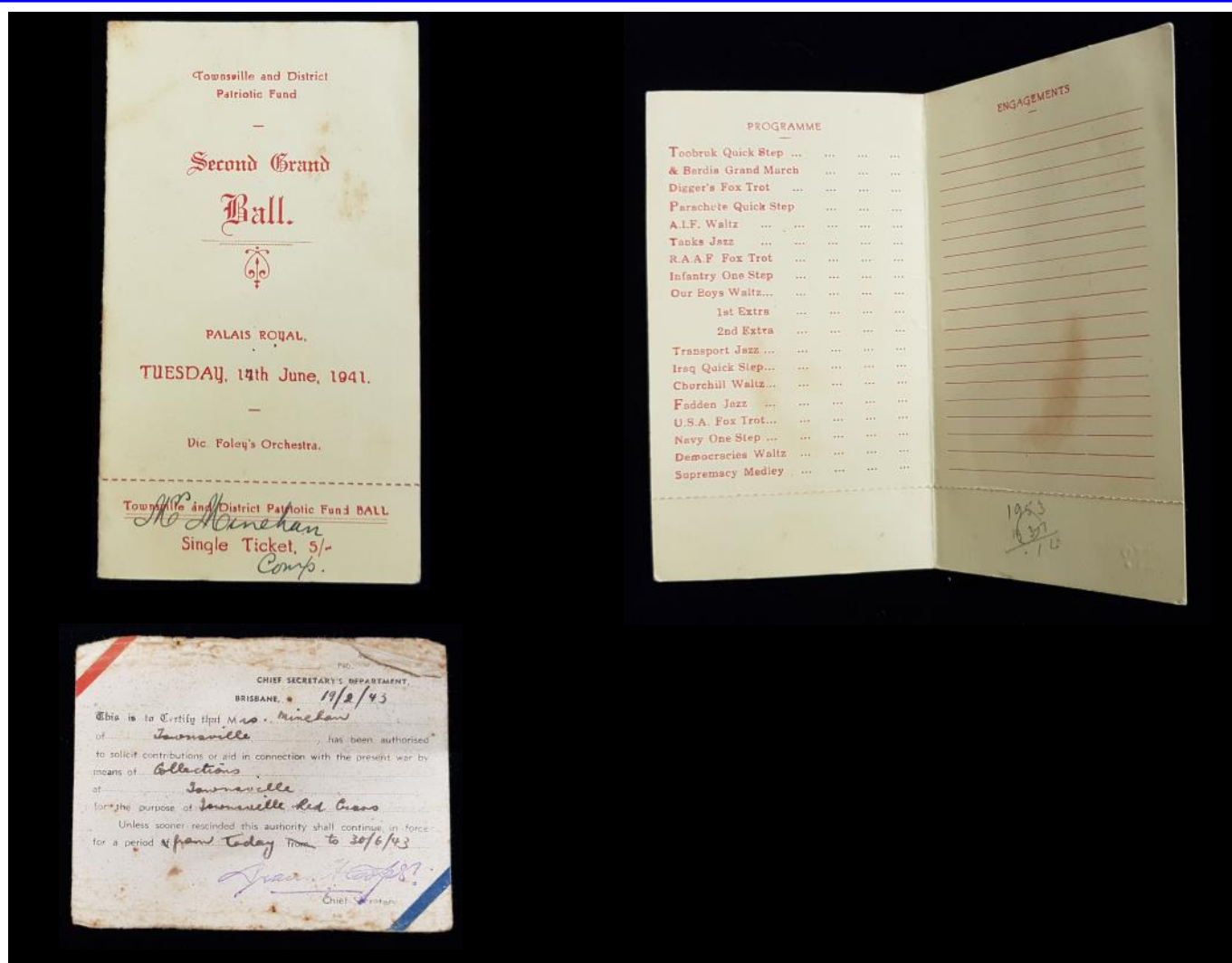
Included in the collection is the programme for a concert in Morotai, Indonesia held in August 1945, and featuring Miss Gracie Fields C.B.E.

There's a ticket to a Grand Ball held in 1941 with the music and dance programme listed inside.

Lastly, there is an authority card enabling Mrs Minehan to take collections for the Red Cross from February to June 1943.



## FROM THE COLLECTION—MINEHAN COLLECTION



### Walking stick which once belonged to Mayor of Townsville, Anthony Ogden.

In April 1891, as president of the Townsville district council of the Australian Labor Federation, Ogden contested the seat of Townsville, thus becoming the first political candidate in Queensland to run on an official Labor platform. He polled impressively, but was defeated. He served on the Townsville council as an alderman in 1891-94, 1911-18 and 1930 and as mayor from 1924 until defeated in 1927.



Brian F. Stevenson, 'Ogden, Anthony (1866-1943)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ogden-anthony-7885/text13709>, published first in hardcopy 1988, accessed online 2 March 2021.

## A VISIT TO THE MAREEBA HERITAGE MUSEUM

Recently, I visited the Mareeba Heritage Museum & Visitor Centre. As a first time visitor I was very impressed with the concept behind this place. The site brings in tourists to the town as it is the official Visitor Centre, and it is also used as a meeting place for locals as it has a rather lovely little café situated within the museum area. Other businesses are located nearby, including an indigenous art gallery.

This is a great way of promoting the area to visitors to the northern tableland area.



Some of the displays from the Mareeba Historical Museum.





Townsville Museum

&

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## TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### NEW PUBLICATION

***TOWNSVILLE IN WAR AND PEACE 1942-1946: 75TH Anniversary End of World War II***

**\$40 cash sales or by invoice**

**Contact Townsville Museum 47757838 or [admin@townsvillemuseum.com.au](mailto:admin@townsvillemuseum.com.au)**



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