

## Newsletter of the

# TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

October 2021

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



### Special Points of Interest:

- *Vale Diana Challenor and Dr Dorothy Gibson-Wilde OAM*
- *The Republic Hotel is being revived*
- *AGM news*

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is that time of the year again when you start to think about Christmas and wonder where the rest of the year went to. 2021 has been a busy year for the Museum with lots of visitors, COVID restrictions placed on us, but we still were able to provide a good visitor experience.

Nick Shailer was a tour guide for 40 visiting Seniors from Gladstone recently. He showed them around Townsville and then did a tour of the Museum which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Sadly we lost two of our very long standing members recently. Dr. Dorothy Gibson-Wilde and Diana Challenor. Their stories are in this Newsletter. Life Members, Harvey and Dell Low have also retired from the Museum after many years of volunteering and we wish them well in their well deserved retirement.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 5<sup>th</sup> September and the committee was returned once again. New member, Elspeth Crosby joined the committee this year – welcome Elspeth. We also gave Life Membership to Wendy Simpkins. Wendy has served the Museum for more than 10 years and was Secretary for 9 years before taking on the position of Librarian. Wendy also writes our wonderful Newsletter and we sincerely thank her for the continued support to the Museum.

In the last couple of months the Museum has received a collection of Townsville Marching Girls Badges from the 1960s and a 100 year old voile Apron used by the waitresses at the Blue Bird Café in Flinders Street. More great acquisitions for the Museum's collections. A new interpretative board sponsored by Brad & Kaye Matheson of McGrath Real Estate, has been completed on the Chairmen and Mayors of Thuringowa from 1880 to 2008.

As this is the last Newsletter for 2021, I wish you all the very best for the Coming Season. The Museum will close in late December for annual leave and reopen in January 2022.

With best wishes,  
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.



This is one of a collection of Eric Rains' photos of Townsville from the 1950s onwards. In the next edition of this newsletter, these photos will be featured and should bring back some memories for many of you.

### Inside this issue:

Dean Street, South Townsville	2
Republic [Empire] Hotel	4-5
Vale Diana Challenor and Dr Dorothy Mary Gibson-Wilde OAM	6
TM&HS Members visit Ingham	7
Charters Towers turns 150	8
AGM 2021	9

### 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 \$5 Chn \$2

#### MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

Single \$ 11.00

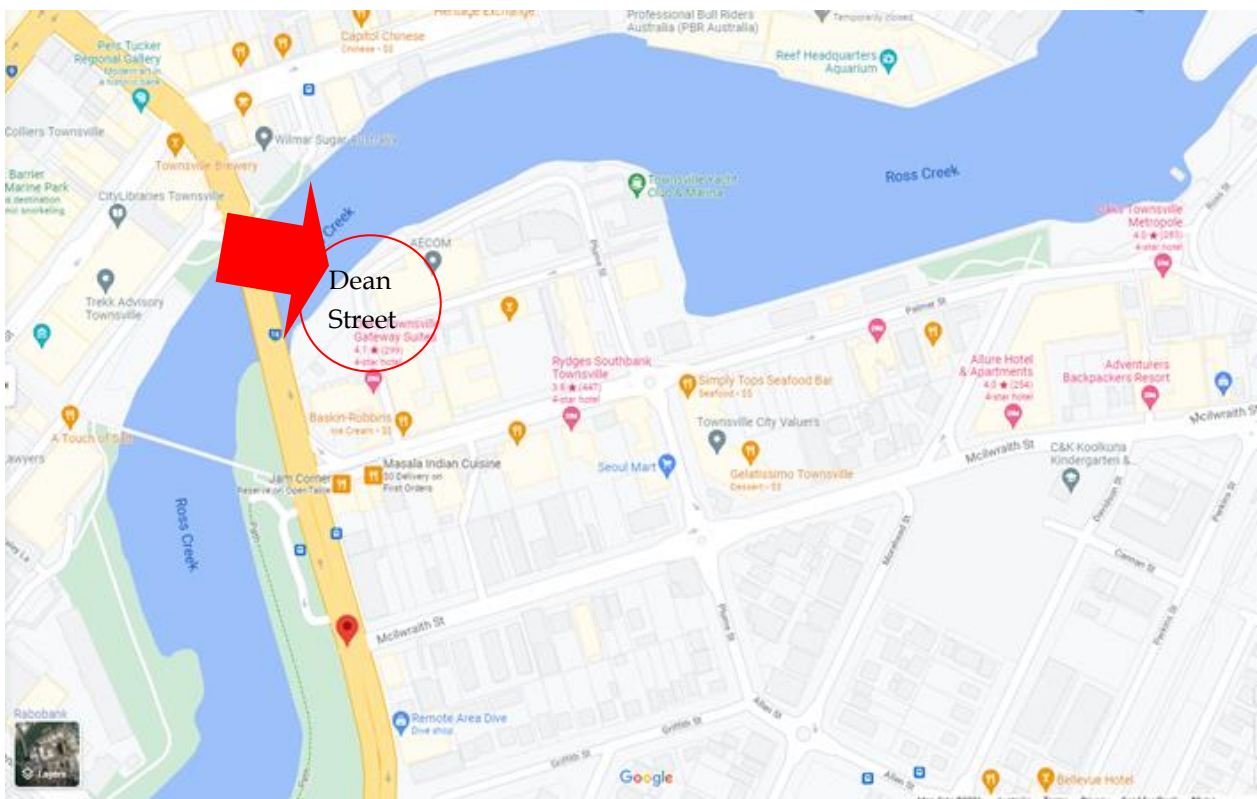
Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

## DEAN STREET, SOUTH TOWNSVILLE

Dean Street, South Townsville. William Handley Dean was born in 1826, trained for the Wesleyan ministry and spent eight years in Ceylon serving that ministry. Returning to Britain in 1863 he continued his ministerial work until 1866 when he retired and came to Queensland. When he arrived in Brisbane in 1867, he selected land in the West Moreton district and commenced growing sugar and cotton. In 1875 he received an appointment from the government as Clerk of Petty Sessions and Land Agent at Townsville. He was a member of the committee of the Townsville Aboriginal Protection Society in 1877/78 and helped select land at Stuart for use as an Aboriginal Reserve. In 1884 he was acting Police Magistrate for six months when E. Morey took leave. (Aldine's History of Queensland)

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



## HISTORIC PHOTOS OF DEAN STREET, SOUTH TOWNSVILLE



Unknown (1970). Fire at the Victoria Bridge Hotel, South Townsville.

CityLibraries



Unknown (1946). Floodwaters in Dean and McIlwraith Streets, South Townsville, 1946.

CityLibraries



Unknown (1976). Oblique aerial view of South Townsville, showing the intersection of Palmer and Dean Streets, 1976.

CityLibraries



Unknown (1930). C. Ede's premises, Dean Street, South Townsville, upstream from the Victoria Bridge, c.1930.

CityLibraries

## REPUBLIC [EMPIRE] HOTEL

As the Republic Hotel in McIlwraith Street, South Townsville is brought back to life as we write, I thought it appropriate to revisit the history of this grand old lady. For the next few editions of the newsletter, we will go on a "pub crawl" around some of the famous old pubs of this town.

This excerpt is taken from Dorothy and Bruce Gibson-Wilde's "A Pattern of Pubs: Hotels of Townsville 1864-1914".



Empire, 1980

### EMPIRE

The present hotel at the corner of McIlwraith Street and Plume Street, South Townsville.

1901-0902	Johanna Augusta Oldenburg	1907-1908	Jeannie Phillips
1902-1903	Ellen Ratzberg	1908-1909	James William Hammett
1903-1906	Margaret Eustace	1909	Johanna Augusta Oldenburg
1906-1907	John William Heatley	1909-1910	James Forbes
1907	William Jacob Laufer	1910-1905?	James Fowler

The *Empire* is a twin for the *Commonwealth*, both built in 1901. Whereas the latter celebrated the independence of the new Commonwealth of Australia, the former recalled the traditions and ties of the British Empire, then at its height. It is ironic that the *Empire* should have been built by Mrs Johanna Oldenburg, widow of Anton Oldenburg, one of Townsville's best-known Swedish settlers.

It was not the first time that the building of an hotel had been considered at the corner of Plume and McIlwraith Street. A licence was issued to Martin Julius Thomsen in 1885 for an hotel to be built there; Thomsen did not proceed with the project. Sixteen years later, Mrs Oldenburg's new hotel was built.

Designed by the architects Tunbridge & Tunbridge<sup>1</sup>, the *Empire* today retains its 1901 appearance—a substantial brick building with a timber-balustraded verandah extending to shade the footpath.

<sup>1</sup> Mr J. Mathew, private communication

Reference: Gibson-Wilde, D. & B. (1988). *A Pattern of Pubs: Hotels of Townsville 1864-1914*. History Dept, James Cook University. Townsville

## REPUBLIC [EMPIRE] HOTEL



Photo by Shae Beplate. From article by Tony Raggatt.

*Historic hotel to be brought back to life*  
Townsville Bulletin 18 September 2021

According to the article by Tony Raggatt, the hotel is being brought back to life by the new owner, Mr Brodie Jancovic. He has stated that he would like to keep the hotel as similar to the original pub as possible, cleaning it up, repairing what needs to be done and making it safe again. He is hoping to have the pub up and running before the wet season but timber supplies are in short supply due to Covid 19 disruptions. This hotel is a twin with the nearby Commonwealth Hotel, also built in 1901.

**Twins – The Empire [Cnr McIlwraith and Plume Streets]**

**and**

**the Commonwealth pubs [Cnr Allen and Macrossan Streets]**



*Commonwealth, 1980*

Bruce Gibson-Wilde

Gibson-Wilde, D. & B. (1988). *A Pattern of Pubs: Hotels of Townsville 1864-1914*. History Dept, James Cook University. Townsville

## VALE DOROTHY AND DIANA

Sadly, our Museum has recently lost two members who gave much of their time to the preservation of Townsville's history.

**Diana Challenor** contributed to the Townsville Museum by volunteering in the capacity of Vice President and President for the period 1991-1993. Under her stewardship, the idea of forming an historical society was first floated publicly in 1993 in the *Townsville Independent News*. Nothing eventuated from this first suggestion. In her last annual report as President, Diana thanked the Townsville City Council for providing financial support and the Magistrate's Court free of rent. Diana contributed to the running of the museum and accepted the position of Secretary in the 1999-2000 year. She remained as a valued volunteer and served on several management committees subsequent to her roles on the executive committee.



**Dr Dorothy Mary Gibson-Wilde (OAM)** and her husband Bruce were the driving force behind the Heritage Centre and Dorothy also became involved in establishing the Townsville Museum. In her role as the local historian, Dorothy contributed in the daily paper, writing the columns *This Month in Townsville* and later *This Month in History*. Her involvement in protecting our history and heritage was lengthy and she enriched the story of Townsville by writing and co-writing many books. She spent 27 years on the State Council of the National Trust where she was a strong advocate for preserving the heritage of North Queensland.

From an article in the Townsville Bulletin (25 September 2021), Dorothy joined the State Public Service in the Titles Office then moved to the Adult Education Office. Dorothy returned to study at the James Cook University, completing her Bachelor of Arts degree, achieving Honours in History. Her thesis was "Gateway to a Golden Land" and is a well known history of Townsville to 1884. Dorothy then completed her PhD in History in 1993, and was supervised by Professor Dalton with whom she collaborated on the book "Townsville 1888". Dorothy continued to provide written histories for organisations and the Townsville Bulletin series called "This Month in History". She was honoured in 2016 with the naming of a precinct in "The Village", Oonoonba, called Gibson-Wilde Pocket, for her role as a well-published historian and long term member of Townsville Museum and Historical Society.

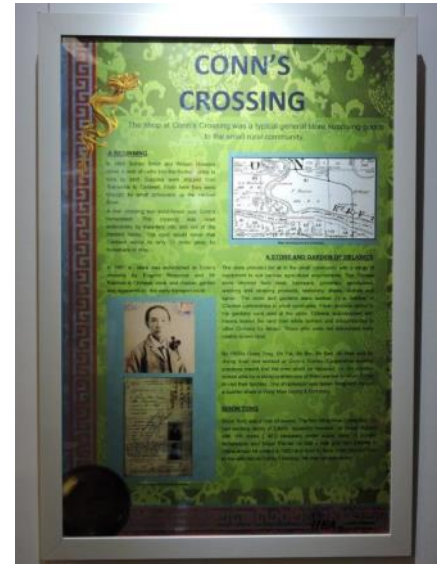


*Townsville Museum & Historical Society recognises the work of both members in establishing and assisting in the running of the museum over many years.*

Photo published in Townsville Bulletin 25 September 2021 in an article by Penny Falkenhagen.

## A VISIT TO INGHAM BY TM&HS MEMBERS 10 JULY 2021

A small group of Townsville Museum members trekked north to the Ingham area to check out the local area display at the Visitor Information Centre. Following from there, the group visited the Library to view the Chinese in Ingham display. Lunch was a tasty meal at Lee's and a visit to the Wallaman Falls completed the Ingham trip.



Row 1: The Chinese in Ingham story at the Library

Row 2: Chinese display, Wallaman Falls

Row 3: Sign for Wallaman Falls

## CHARTERS TOWERS TURNS 150 IN 2022

In 1872, the goldfield of Charters Towers was declared after the first gold discovery credited to Jupiter Mosman in December the previous year.

The Charters Towers Regional Council has proposed a launch of the celebrations in December this year with a Welcome and Launch of the 150 celebrations.

The other council sponsored events planned so far include:

- Australia Day and Great Australian Bites in January 2022
- Towers got Talent! In March 2022
- Anzac Day in April 2022
- Ten Days in the Towers in April—May 2022
- Queensland Day in June 2022
- Spirit of the Night in August 2022
- History and Heritage Fair in August 2022
- Twilight Markets and Towers Rush in October 2022

More information will be disseminated after a community meeting being held in October.



Unknown (1897). Fire Brigade competition, Townsville v. Charters Towers at Charters Towers, 1897.

CityLibraries Townsville



Allom & Bailey (1890). Views of Charters Towers, Queensland, approximately 1890.

National Library of Australia

## 2021 AGM

Our 2021 AGM was held in September and Trish presented the Annual Report to an interested group of members. The old committee then stood down and the new committee for 2021-2022 was announced.

**President:** Trish Cronin

**Secretary:** Sue Fox

**Treasurer / Vice President :** Nick Shailer

**General Committee:** Fay Jones, Elsbeth Crosby

We wish the Committee all the best for the forthcoming year.



Above and below: Sue and Trish guiding the membership through the AGM 2021.



Wendy receiving her Life membership from President Trish Cronin



Townsville Museum

&

Historical Society Inc.

PO BOX 785

HYDE PARK QLD 4812

Phone: 07 4775 7838

Email: [admin@townsvillemuseum.com.au](mailto:admin@townsvillemuseum.com.au)

Website: <http://www.townsvillemuseum.com.au>



## 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)**



## OUR SUPPORTERS

Support

The

Groups

That

Support your

Museum

