

## Newsletter of the

# TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

June 2022

1/27 Barbeler Street Currajong Q 4812

PO Box 785 Hyde Park Q 4812



### Special Points of Interest:

- *Vale Arthur Rains*
- *Pub Crawl—Queen's Hotel'*
- *Photos from Dorothy Gibson-Wilde Collection*

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The year seems to be moving fast and it is almost June and therefore time to renew memberships. Our Secretary Sue is away visiting family in England so reminders have not been sent. I look forward to the continued support of members as without you the Museum would not exist. It is also not long before our Annual General Meeting which is scheduled for the end of August and as a member, if you would like to be part of the committee you would be most welcome.

The book Trisha Fielding is writing based on the diary of Elizabeth O'Brien is now complete and will be printed soon. The title is "*Asleep in the Deep*", which is what Elizabeth wrote on the bottom of Clifford's photo. Trisha has done such a wonderful job on the book which I sincerely thank her for and will be launched as soon as we can.

The Museum has been successful with another Grant, this time from CHARTS which enabled us to purchase a new photo scanner. We have also applied for a Grant to purchase a laptop computer to be used with the scanner. When the scanning of the photo collection is complete it will allow researchers to look at what the Museum has in its collections.

Of course we are always looking for new volunteers, so if you are retired and have time to spare, have a keen interest in history and would like to join us, please call the Museum on 4775 7838 to arrange a time.

Regards for now,  
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.



Nick dressed up as a chemist for the Pioneer weekend at the Historic Village in Herberton

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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 \$5 Chn \$2

#### MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

Single \$ 11.00

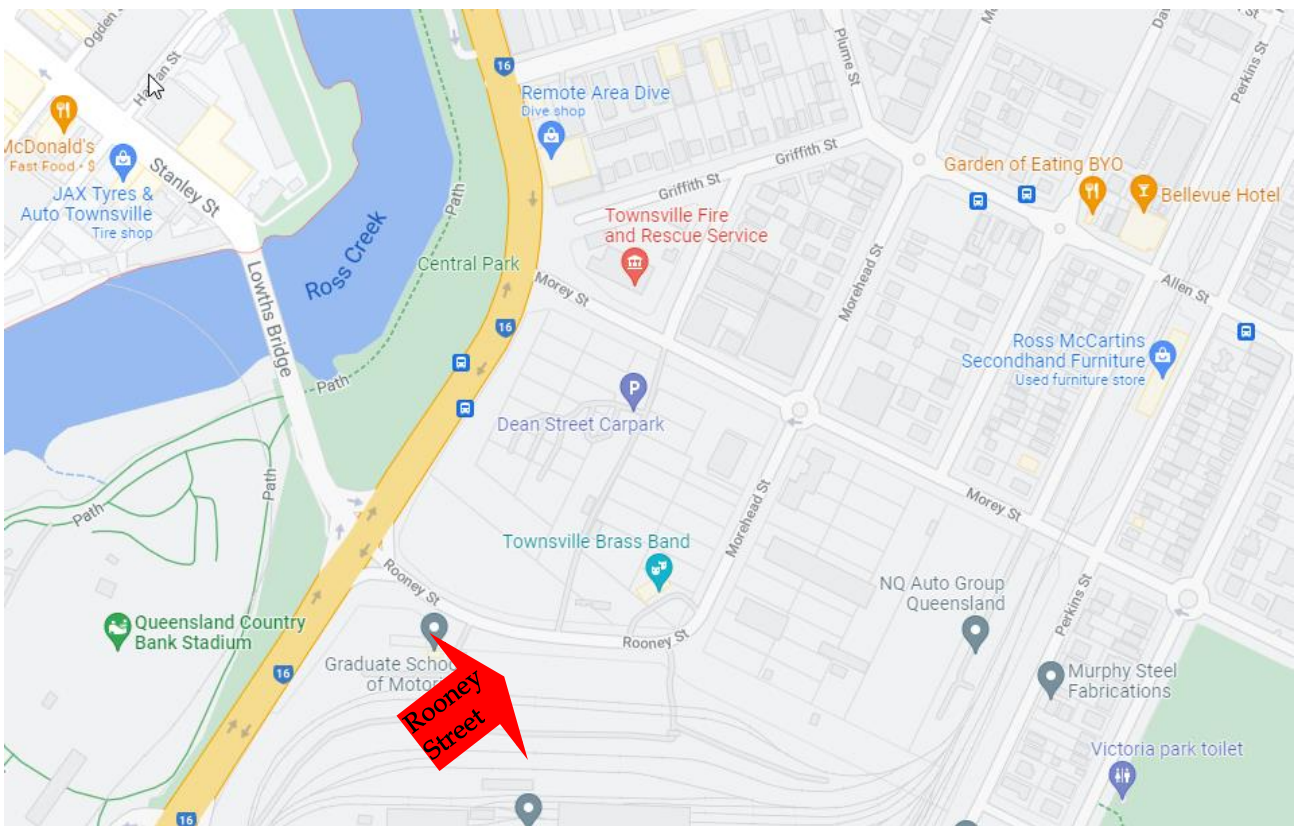
Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

## ROONEY STREET, SOUTH TOWNSVILLE

Rooney Street, South Townsville. The street was named in 1963 after the pioneering family who, as builders, contractors and sawmillers, were associated with the development of Townsville from the mid 1870s. Amongst the many contracts the firm completed were the Magistrate's Courthouse, the North Ward goal and Bartlam's building at the corner of Flinders and Denham Streets.

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



**An excerpt from Helga Griffin's "Frontier Town" (page 91) explains the early involvement of the Rooney family in Townsville's very early years.**

In early 1875, the Colonial Architect, F. D. G. Stanley, announced plans for the proposed new Court House, in which the dimension of rooms and the height of the ceilings would take the hot climate into account. The building was designed in brick with part of the external walls faced in cement. The roof was to be of galvanized iron. Wide verandahs were to give shade and protects the court and offices. John and Jacob Rooney of Maryborough secured the contract for the provision of materials and construction of the Court House.<sup>62</sup> The design was a harmonious blend of neoclassical symmetry and simple materials, its tin roof designed to deal with the run-off of heavy rains and easily replaceable if destroyed by cyclones. The new Gaol was planned to meet requirements for ten to twelve years.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 February 1875.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 May 1875.

## ROONEY STREET, SOUTH TOWNSVILLE

Gaols at Rockhampton and Toowoomba, which were too small, provided an example of the difficulty and expense of extending the existing facilities to meet the needs of a growing population and increasing crime. A radiating plan was adopted, making it easy to extend living space as the number of inmates increased with the growth of population. The Magistrate's Court House still stands today while the remnants of the Gaol Commandant's house have been incorporated into the Central State School. For both buildings, Stanley was the architect and the Rooney's were the builders.



### ***Vale Arthur Rains***

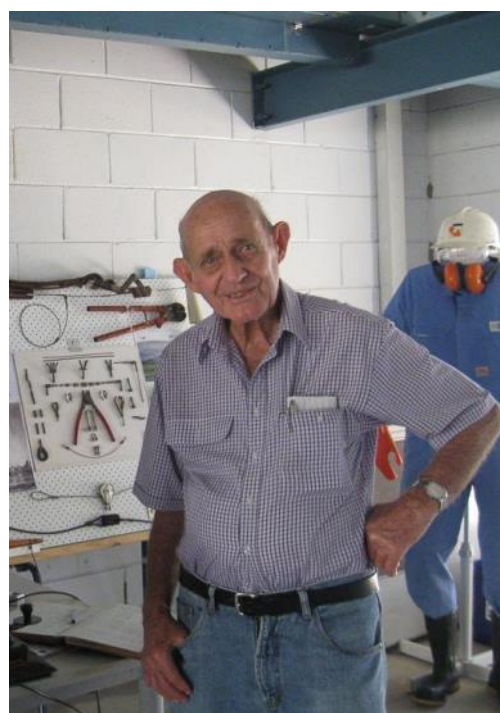
Sadly, our longstanding member, Arthur Rains, has passed away recently. Arthur was a great supporter of the museum and would call in to the museum from time to time to bring in some of his collection to share or photos to reminisce.

Arthur shared his memories of Cyclone Althea in the February edition of this newsletter and would often share stories of his youth. He certainly had a wealth of knowledge and many skills. His love of photography and movie making was well known and he shared with me recently a movie he had made of the first rodeo held at Hervey Range in the 1960s. His brother Eric shared his love of photography and Arthur showed us some of his black and white photography which was very impressive.

Arthur grew up in Belgian Gardens and lived very close to Belgian Gardens school, which he attended and to which he would arrive late, almost every day. He loved all things mechanical and grew up to qualify as a mechanic. But his interests were varied and he did some time working as a saddler in the west, where he grew to love the open country.

After marrying, Arthur and Anne settled in Pallarenda where they remained for many years. Arthur's memories of Cyclone Althea remained vivid over the many years and they were shared at the public gathering recently at the Thuringowa Library on the 50th anniversary of the cyclone.

Arthur will be missed.



## A PUB CRAWL THROUGH TOWNSVILLE— QUEEN'S HOTEL

From "A Pattern of Pubs: Hotels of Townsville 1864-1914" by Dorothy and Bruce Gibson-Wilde.

### QUEEN'S

Corner of The Strand and Wickham Street, now the headquarters of Telecasters North Queensland.

1872-1876	James Evans	1891-1895	Jessie W. Cran
1876	William Monteith	1895-1899	Donald Maclurcan
1876-1879	James Evans	1899-1913	John Henry Tyack (d. Aug. 1913)
1879-1884	Henry Rinkmore Boulton	1913-1914	Jessie Tyack
1884	Sydney S. Seldon	1914-?	Ester Fanny Gauvin
1885-1891	James Walker Cran (d. Mar. 1891)		

In 1887 the *Townsville Herald* could truthfully state:

Years ago the Queen's was "ages ahead of the fashion" of North Queensland hotels, and it still maintains the right to be considered one of the most roomy, comfortable, well-appointed and convenient hotels outside Melbourne.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Townsville Herald* Supplement, 24 December 1887.

The reputation of the *Queen's* has become legendary. It was the only Townsville hotel to maintain the high standards that placed it in the category of a 'grand hotel' in the period for 1864 to 1914. James Evans, for whom it was built in 1872, had taken over the first *Townsville* in 1868, renaming it *Tattersall's*. Under his direction, *Tattersall's* was doubled in size and its reputation enhanced. It was, however, on a site close to the increasingly busy and noisy wharves along Ross Creek, with horse and bullock teams constantly passing outside. As property values rose following gold discoveries in the hinterland, Evans sold his hotel, purchasing the block of land at the corner of The Strand and Wickham Street, where an old building (the temporary Telegraph Office in 1869) stood next door to the Australian Joint Stock Bank and the *North Australian*.

Evans's new hotel was the third built on The Strand. It was a two storeyed timber building with verandahs shading the facades. The upper floor was enclosed with timber balustrading in a common cross pattern, while the lower verandah was open. Considering the later outstanding reputation of the hotel, it was a very modest structure. Evans took the licence himself for the next three years, handing over to William Monteith in 1876. By then at least six new hotels had opened and Townsville was over-supplied with hotel accommodation; Monteith was soon bankrupt, so Evans resumed the licence.

In the following years its reputation was firmly established as E. J. Banfield confirmed:

When other hotels in Townsville were almost unknown to the outside world; when the place was regarded as the *Ultima Thule* of civilization in Queensland; and when people almost demanded premiums for residing here, there was one source of bliss and consolation to which the unwilling exile to these parts turned in the sure and certain hope of ever present compensation. It was "the Queen's"—a name as well known among the travelling public of Australia as "Menzies" of Melbourne among the squatters.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*



## QUEEN'S HOTEL

The success of the *Queen's* lay with a remarkable series of landlords who 'thought no expense nor trouble too great as long as the wants and wishes of their guests have been anticipated'.<sup>2</sup> Evans in 1879 transferred the licence to Henry 'Harry' Boulton, who had gained an excellent reputation as landlord of the *Mining Exchange* in Charters Towers.<sup>3</sup> When he took over the *Queen's* it was described as containing three sitting rooms and twenty bedrooms; it cost him £5000 but even then it was regarded as 'probably the best in the colony'.<sup>4</sup>

While the building gave the visitors a magnificent view of the shimmering waters of Cleveland Bay, alive with shipping, the immediate surroundings were less attractive; the road in front was unformed and the beach, covered with creepers, encroached upon it. Nevertheless, it became a favoured retreat for visiting Governors, politicians and other dignitaries, and a popular meeting place for north Queenslanders.

In 1879 the North Queensland Meat Preserving and Boiling Down Company, founders of the meatworks at Alligator Creek, was formed at the *Queen's*. Afterwards the members formed the Townsville Pastoral and Agricultural & Industrial Association which has held the annual Townsville Show in the city ever since.<sup>5</sup> In 1882 the *Queen's* was the setting for the "Champagne Supper – a most glittering affair', to celebrate the opening by the Premier of the Northern Railway.<sup>6</sup> A. W. Stirling, visiting soon after wrote:

All over the colonies, the hotels as a rule are bad, but most fortunately at Townsville one finds a brilliant exception to this fact. The *Queen's* Hotel is really most comfortable and would certainly rank far above anything of its kind in Brisbane and Sydney.<sup>7</sup>

Boulton ensured that his hotel was always up-to-date with every convenience possible. In 1882, it was the second building in Townsville, and the first hotel, to be supplied with reticulated water. Similarly, 1883 the *Queen's* was the first hotel to be connected to the town's gas supply system, though gas was then only for lighting, not cooking.<sup>8</sup>

While catering mainly to the upper echelons of the travelling public, such as the Duke of Manchester, the *Queen's* always provided comfortable accommodation for respectable permanent boarders but discouraged 'the ordinary public-house loafer...his room being always considered more desirable than his company'.<sup>1</sup>

2.       ibid.

3.       *Northern Miner*, 23 June 1877.

4.       *Townsville Herald*, 15 March 1879, *Queenslander*, 25 February 1882.

5.       *Townsville Herald*, 3 May 1879.

6.       *Queenslander*, 16 December, 1882.

7.       A. W. Stirling, op. cit., p.78.

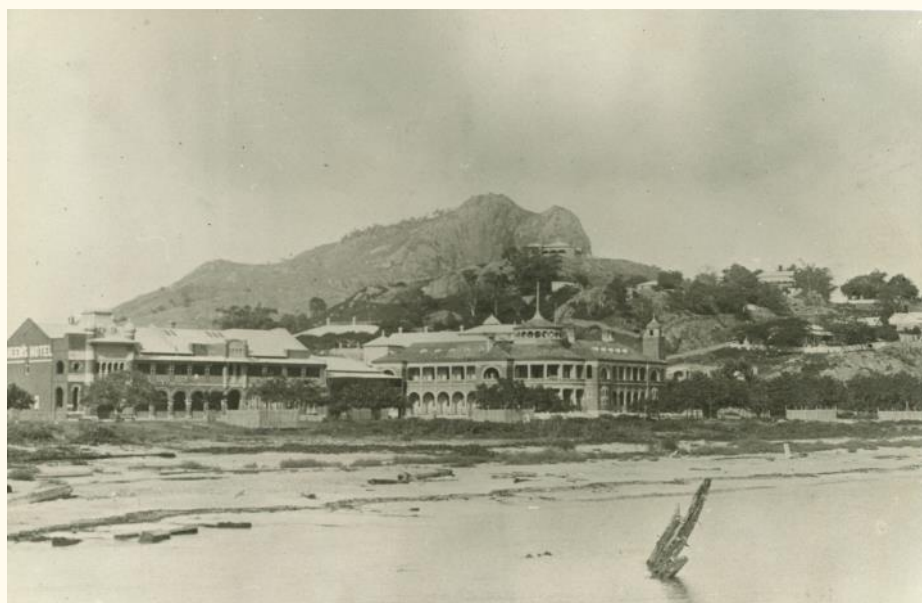
8.       Gibson-Wilde, op. cit., p. 129.

1.       *Queenslander*, 23 August 1884; *Townsville Herald* Supplement, 24 December 1887.

## QUEEN'S HOTEL

In 1885, Boulton sold out to James Cran, also well known throughout the north. A member of the Cran family of Yengarie, he had arrived in Queensland about 1863 spending the next thirteen years in meat and sugar ventures. Believing that the sugar industry would not thrive without cheap labour, and disagreeing with moves to abandon Pacific Islands labour, he turned to hotel keeping. He was an outstanding success.

[This article will be completed in the October edition.]



Queen's Hotel and  
Customs House c1910

Photo from TM&HS  
Photograph Collection

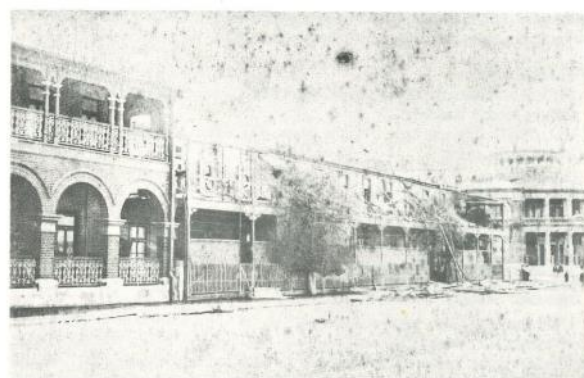


64 *Queen's* (architect's sketch), c. 1901.  
The design for the corner section was simplified in the final design.

Left and Below: All photos are from  
Gibson-Wilde, Dorothy & Bruce. (1988). *A  
Pattern of Pubs: Hotels of Townsville 1864-  
1914*. Townsville, Queensland: History Dept  
James Cook University.



65 *Queen's*, c. 1920.



106 *Queen's*, 1903.  
Showing damage to the old corner section after cyclone Leonta.

## RECENT ACQUISITION—WILLIAM HERBERT GREEN'S SILK ADDRESS. [THIS IS THE WORDING]

On the eve of your departure from this City, the Members and Adherents of the Methodist Church in Townsville desire to place on record their deep sense of appreciation of the faithful and devoted services rendered by you to the cause of Methodism for many years.

During your long residence amongst us you have occupied the most responsible offices in connection with the Churches throughout the Circuit, discharging the duties appertaining thereto in a worthy and conscientious manner.

We recall with special pride the splendid record of your work in the West End Sunday School as its Superintendent, for fifteen years. This is indeed a notable achievement.

We remember, too, with gratitude your large-hearted generosity and self-sacrificing labours in placing the various properties of the Circuit on such a sound financial basis.

You have also been our Senior Circuit Steward, and have filled our Pulpits as a Local Preacher, with much acceptance and marked ability; besides having on many occasions been the Circuit Representative to Annual Synod and Conferences. Indeed it is impossible to tabulate all you have done for the Methodist Community; there is no part of the Church's activities where your beneficent influence has not been felt. And the high standing of Methodism in Townsville to-day is, we feel, in large measure due to your splendid personality, your untiring energy, your wise counsels, your shrewd judgment and broad vision; and by no means least, your kindness.

Your example and help have been a source of inspiration to us all, and you leave behind a monument of labour, which is imperishable.

This address would be lacking did it not contain some reference to the loyal manner in which your efforts have been seconded and supported by Mrs Green, particularly recognizing her unfailing devotion in the work of the Ladies Church Help Society at West end.

It is with profound regret that we contemplate your departure from our midst. We assure you, not only of our appreciation and admiration for your work, but also of our sincere and warm-hearted esteem and affection for yourselves, and you carry with you our best wishes and united prayers the God will richly bless you and yours, and prosper you, both in the things of this world and in the things of the Kingdom.

For and on behalf of the Townsville Circuit of the Methodist Church of Australasia, its Office-Bearers, Churches and Adherents,

F. J. Harris

Ministers

J. Phillips

Circuit Stewards

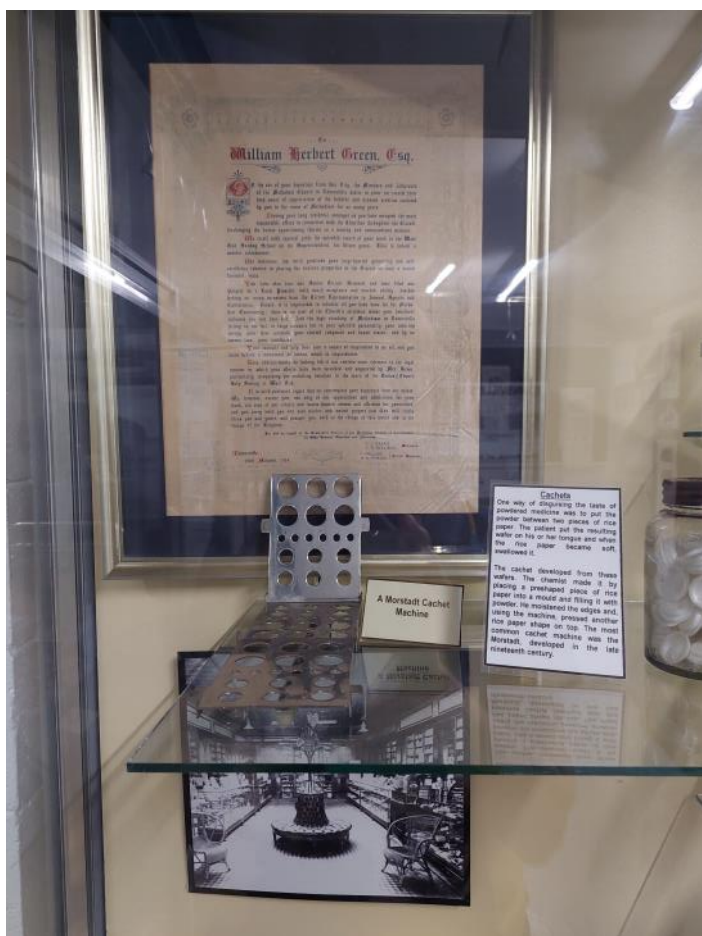
G. E. Holland

W.R. Howard

Townsville

22 August, 1924

## WILLIAM HERBERT GREEN'S SILK ADDRESS



Nick found William Herbert Green's silk address in an antique shop in Rockhampton. Luckily it was wrapped in silk and Nick thinks most probably it had been like that for many years. It now has a place in our Chemist display cabinet, where it rightfully deserves to be.

## NICK SPEAKS AT THE LAUNCH OF "GREETINGS FROM MAGNETIC ISLAND"



Nick was invited to speak at the opening of a new display at the *Magnetic Island History and Craft Centre* recently.

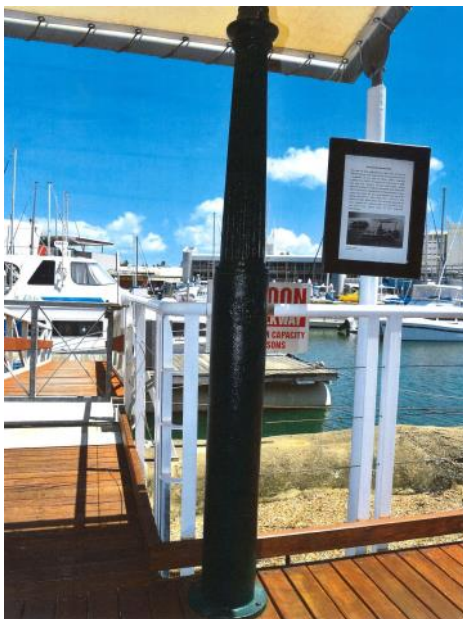
Nick spoke about the souvenirs which have dotted the history pages of many a book and postcard collection over many years. This island was a destination of choice for holidaying in the local area from the early 1890s and it prospered into the twentieth century.

There was a good show of support for this new display.



## MORE ON THE PENNY FERRY FROM THE MARITIME MUSEUM

This cast iron post supported a gas light at the entrance to the Penny Ferry, which used to be on the creek bank near the roundabout at the end of Palmer Street. Originally established in 1876 and moved to its present site in 1884, this ferry was initially a row-boat (main photo below) which operated a service as a short-cut, connecting South Townsville with the then main business and entertainment part of town across Ross Creek. The fare varied between one and three pennies per person. After World War II the ferry was motorized (inset photo below). The increased popularity of motor vehicles saw a decline in the use of the Penny Ferry and other ferry services, which were all eventually discontinued.



Acquisition 992.126  
Donated by Kell Keech 1992

*Thanks to the Maritime Museum for this additional  
information on the Penny Ferry.*



A very special visitor called into our Museum recently. **David Irvine** sought out our museum because of a very special man who is featured in Hall 1. That person was John Godschall Johnson. John gave David his first violin as a child and helped David begin on his pathway in life. John made violins and his belief was that every opportunity should be given to any child who wanted to learn music. His gift to the child was made on the understanding that the violin could not be sold on, but given to another child to begin them on a musical pathway.



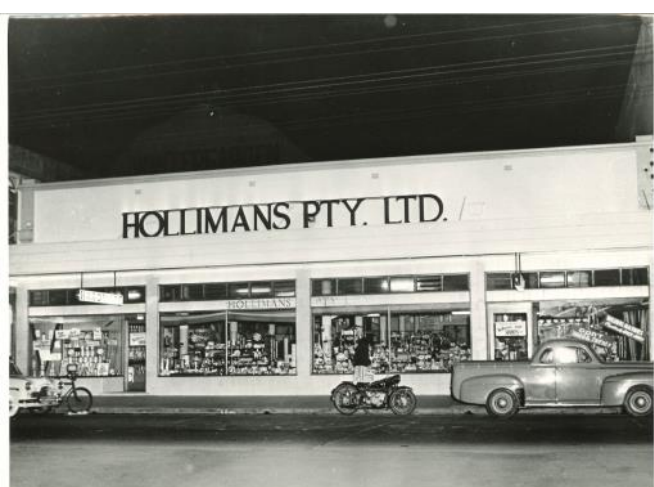
David studied at Griffith University and the University of Queensland and undertook doctoral studies at the University of Cambridge. He currently resides in Barcelona and became an ICREA Research professor.

John Godschall Johnson Accessed 3 May 2022 <https://www.printsandprintmaking.gov.au/artists/11025/>

## RECENT ACQUISITION—DOROTHY GIBSON-WILDE COLLECTION



These are some of the photos from the Tunbridge Collection in Dorothy's collection and many of them are of businesses in the central city area.



Row 1: The Hollis Hopkins building in Sturt Street, and its demolition.

Row 2: D.W. Hastings & Samuel Allen & Sons Ltd

Row 3: Hollimans Pty Ltd, and Samuel Allen & Sons Shipping Travel

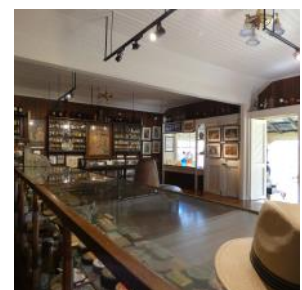


## HISTORIC VILLAGE HERBERTON PIONEER WEEKEND

Nick was asked to help out in the Chemist Shop at the Historic Village in Herberton over the Pioneers weekend 7-8th May 2022. He dressed as a chemist and conducted talks on the pharmacy equipment from the old days. It was a very successful weekend with 1200 visitors enjoying a step back in time. Many of the visitors were dressed in period costume and added to the wonderful atmosphere. The weather was fabulous, unlike the rainy weather that was occurring along the coast. Perhaps even more visitors may have made the trek to the tablelands if the coastal weather had been finer. Enjoy a step back in time when you view Nick's photos here.



Above: Inside the Chemist Shop Below: Out and about the site





Townsville Museum

&

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## TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Memberships are now due.**

**Email reminders to renew memberships have been sent out but if you haven't received yours, please contact us.**

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



## OUR SUPPORTERS

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