



HERITAGE SERVICES INFORMATION SHEET NUMBER 7

THE CHANGING SHAPE OF THURINGOWA

Within the original boundary of Thuringowa was much of what is now part of other local authorities.

Under the *Divisional Boards Act* of 1879 the Thuringowa Division was formed. It covered an area which extended 170 kms along the coast from the mouth of the Burdekin River to Crystal Creek and inland to the coastal ranges. The Burdekin River formed the eastern boundary while the Leichhardt Range and Hervey and Paluma Ranges formed the inland boundary. In the north the boundary extended from the Paluma Range down Crystal Creek past Mutarnee to the coast. The municipality of Townsville was located within this area and consisted of the small area around the foot of Castle Hill.

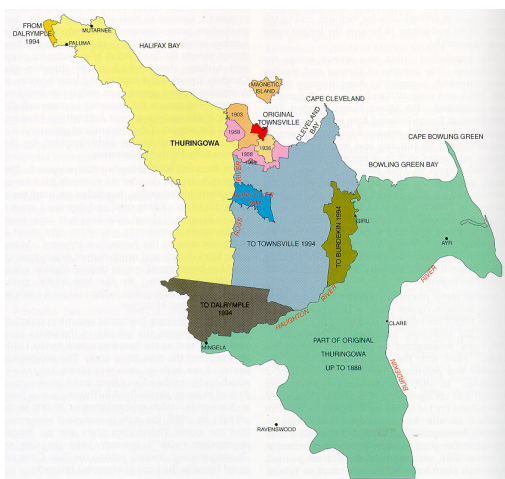
Over the past 125 years the Thuringowa area has changed considerably, not the least of which has been the shifting boundary through which Thuringowa has gained and lost land to adjoining local authorities. Today the Thuringowa City area covers roughly the western third of the division's original area.

The chronology of these changes is as follows:

In 1881 the residential subdivision of Ross Island (South Townsville) was annexed to the municipality of Townsville unopposed by Thuringowa.

Later in the decade, in 1888, the Ayr Divisional Board was created by the Queensland Government after petitions from local residents. The process granted the Ayr Divisional Board all the land in Thuringowa east of the Haughton River.

The Ayr Divisional Board gained more land in 1893 when land on the Haughton River plains and in the Major Creek to





citylibraries

Woodstock area was excided from the Thuringowa area. Although Thuringowa protested earnestly against the proposal, the annexation continued, as the boundary change was driven by the North Australian Pastoral Company. It came to light that members of the company, many distinguished like then premier of Queensland, Sir Thomas Mcllwraith, wanted to take advantage of the lower rates in the Ayr Division. However, by 1916 the land reverted back to Thuringowa after property owners petitioned the government due to the inaction of the Ayr Divisional Board to their concerns.

Thuringowa gained a small area near Cromarty in 1896 after a Royal Commission into boundary changes.

Under the 1902 *Local Authorities Act*, divisional areas were renamed shires. Thus, in 1903 the Thuringowa Divisional Board became the Thuringowa Shire Council.

In 1918 the Queensland Government transferred most of the urban area of Thuringowa to Townsville. The foreshore north as far as Cape Pallarenda and all

the land north of the Ross River as far west as what is now Bamford Lane was lost. The population of Thuringowa dropped to 2,500, losing the suburbs of Belgian Gardens, West End, Pimlico, Hyde Park and Hermit Park, and the riverside farming areas of Mundingburra and Aitkenvale. As a result of this boundary change the Thuringowa Shire Office became located within the Townsville City Council area.

In 1936, the Department of Health and Home Affairs representing the farmers between Little and Big Saltwater Creeks petitioned the Government to have land from Saltwater Creek to Paluma transferred to Thuringowa from Hinchinbrook Shire.

Also in 1936, Townsville City gained the land south of the Ross River and east of Mount Stuart, which included the suburbs of Oonoonba, Cluden and the railway south to beyond the junction at Stuart although there was some opposition from Thuringowa Shire Council.





citylibraries

In 1958 Townsville City acquired the land from Garbutt west to the Bohle River, Mount Stuart, and a swathe of farms and wetland encircling the Stuart industrial area all the way round to Cleveland Bay near Alligator Creek.

In 1964 Townsville City acquired part of Mt Stuart including the road and transmission area with a further area of land annexed in 1967.

The most recent boundary change occurred in 1994 when Thuringowa lost less than half its existing area. The largest area went to the City of Townsville, the whole eastern side of Thuringowa from

Cape Cleveland down through Woodstock to the Reid River, west to the line of the Ross River. The Haughton sugar land went back to the Burdekin Shire and the Dalrymple Shire gained the land around Reid River.

Acknowledgements:

- Peter Bell, *A Short History of Thuringowa*, Thuringowa City Council, Thuringowa Central, 2000
- Map, Ray Berry, Thuringowa City Council.
- Lyn Henderson, *More Than Rates, Roads and Rubbish: A History of Local Government in Action in Thuringowa Shire 1879-1985*, PhD Thesis, James Cook University, April 1992.
- Queensland Parliamentary Library, *Royal Commissions held in Queensland 1860-1966*, Brisbane, 1966.

