

# THURINGOWA PAST AND PRESENT



Compiled by  
DIANE VANCE with GAI COPEMAN





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# FOREWORD

## to the Second Edition

Prior to 1988, very little of the kaleidoscope of Thuringowa's history had been committed to paper.

At that time, the first issue of *"Thuringowa Past and Present"* was printed. In the intervening six years many more historical facts have been researched, and indeed even in the past three years, substantial changes have occurred in the City.

This year we celebrate our 118th Birthday, and this publication provides very interesting reading of our progress over that time.

The City is a diverse mix of rural, semi-rural and urban residents, who enjoy a broad range of lifestyles.

I commend the 1997 print of *"Thuringowa Past and Present"* to you.



**CR. LES TYRELL**  
**MAYOR OF THURINGOWA**

**April 1997**



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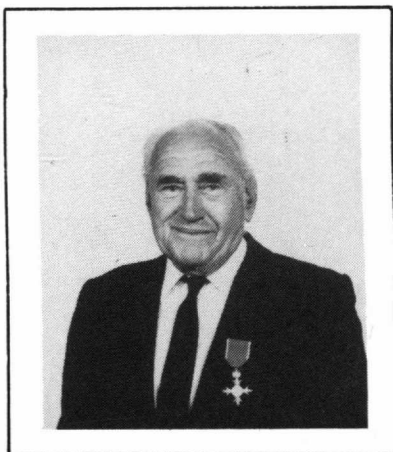
# FOREWORD

This publication is not the Official History of Thuringowa, which is still to be written. It does, however, contain some interesting facts about our City, and does give a number of historical facts about the early days after Thuringowa was created a Divisional Board, and about the lifestyle of its early residents and the part Thuringowa and its residents played in the development of the area.

As a descendent of two families that settled in the area before Thuringowa was created a Divisional Board, I can assure you that Mrs. Vance, our City Librarian, has done a good job in assembling the information contained herein. The publication is most informative and is designed to meet the needs of students attending both Primary and Secondary Schools within our City, to enable them to be more fully informed of our past and present statistics; and also to fulfil the many queries that are received by Council Staff from adults who want to know more about our City and its past.

ALD. D.T.J. GLEESON, O.B.E.  
Mayor of Thuringowa

Ald. D.T.J. Gleeson, O.B.E. served firstly as a councillor on the Thuringowa Shire Council from 1973 to 1976. In 1976 he became Chairman of the Shire and remained so until 1986. He then became Thuringowa's first mayor, serving from 1986 to 1991.



**Daniel Thomas James (Dan) Gleeson O.B.E.**  
**11.11.1914 - 21.01.1994**

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# Acknowledgments

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## CONTENTS

Foreword .....	1
Foreword to first edition .....	2
Acknowledgements .....	3
Physical Description .....	5
Climate .....	5
Rainfall .....	5
Temperature .....	5
A Brief History to 1879 .....	6
Thuringowa Division, 1879 .....	10
Thuringowa Shire, 1902 .....	14
Thuringowa City, 1986 .....	16
Statistics - Area and Population .....	16
Name - Thuringowa .....	16
Floral Emblem .....	16
Logo .....	16
Chronological List of Chairmen and Mayors .....	17
Thuringowa City Council, 1997 .....	17
"Did You Know?"-Some interesting facts about Thuringowa .....	18
"What's in a Name?"- Some Thuringowa Streets Places and People .....	19
Reading List .....	29
Index .....	30
<b>Maps</b>	
Thuringowa, 1879 .....	12
Thuringowa Boundary Changes .....	24-25
Thuringowa, 1988 .....	26-27
Thuringowa, 1997 .....	28
<b>Photographs</b>	
Alligator Creek Meatworks c.1890 .....	10
Bogged — Paluma Road c.1935 .....	13
Carting Timber for the war effort down the Mt Spec Road c.1942 .....	13
Crossing the Bohle River with a ten horse team, 1924, Tom Gleeson .....	8
First Chairman, William Aplin, Chairman of the Divisional Board, 1879 .....	6
First Mayor, D.T.J. Gleeson, O.B.E. ....	2
Greenbower, c.1948 .....	17
Invicta Mill .....	15
Laudham Park, c.1970 .....	21
Military Training Mt Spec, 1944 .....	14
Mrs Fitzpatrick .....	20
Pineapple Farming, Reid River c.1890 .....	7
Settlers Camp at Reid River, 1924 — Tom Gleeson .....	11
Surveyors — Paluma Road c.1934 .....	13
Timber brought down the Mt Spec Road to be rail freighted at Moongobulla .....	9

## COVER ILLUSTRATION

The original Shire Council Chambers at the Flinders Street end of the Causeway and first Chairman of the Thuringowa Divisional Board, William Aplin.



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# Physical Description

Thuringowa encompasses an area of 1860 square kilometres and stretches 61.5 kilometres along the coast from Crystal Creek in the north to the Bohle River in the south and from the Coral Sea in the east to the Eastern Highlands in the west.

From Crystal Creek in the north a narrow coastal plain fringed with either sand dunes or mangroves forms the coastal edge of the City, approximately five (5) kilometres wide at Crystal Creek increasing in width in the south towards the Bohle River boundary. Inland the boundary runs from the Bohle River to the Ross River to encompass the urban area of Kirwan and the Upper Ross and the coastal plain opens to a width of 40 kilometres through the Ross River Valley. This coastal plain is crossed by numerous creeks and rivers, the most important being Crystal Creek, Ollera Creek, Rollingsstone Creek, Bluewater Creek, Black River, Bohle River and Ross River. The soil of the coastal plain is largely alluvial clay and piedmont plain with areas of saline land particularly around the mouth of the Bohle River.

To the west of the coastal plain rise the Eastern Highlands consisting of the Paluma Range in the north and Hervey's Range in the south. The western boundary of the City follows the tops of these ranges from Paluma south to the headwaters of the Ross River. These rugged mountains are separated from the coastal plain by steep slopes characterised by waterfalls, deep gorges and valleys.

## Climate

Thuringowa lies wholly within the tropics. It has most of its rainfall (75 to 80%) in the six (6) warmer months, October to March. The wettest month is February when average rainfall is generally greater than the combined totals of the six (6) months from April to September with August or September being the driest month.

## Average Monthly Rainfall (mm)

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Annual Rainfall
Townsville	267	319	219	57	25	30	20	9	9	25	47	98	1130
Paluma	558	564	422	207	125	55	51	49	40	80	140	343	2662
Rollingsstone	398	343	262	117	69	22	10	17	25	55	114	210	1652
Yabulu	263	303	194	61	33	25	15	12	13	32	63	125	1136

The City mostly falls in the dry tropical coast region with low rainfall being largely caused by the north-west/south-east angle of the coastline and ranges and the low height of the ranges—generally less than about 460 metres. Rainfall ranges from 1100mm to 1600mm average with the exception of a small area of mountainous country in the north-western corner where Paluma at 920 metres above sea level receives an average of 2540mm per year.

The annual mean temperature in Thuringowa ranges from 22°C to 24°C. On average the coolest month is July with a mean temperature of 19.9°C and January the warmest with a mean temperature of 27.6°C.

## Temperature C

TOWNSVILLE	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Average Annual
Average													
Maximum	30.7	30.5	30.3	29.2	27.3	25.1	24.4	25.3	26.8	28.3	29.5	30.5	28.2
Average													
Mean	27.6	27.3	26.8	25.3	23.1	20.8	19.9	20.8	22.8	24.8	26.3	27.3	24.4
Average													
Minimum	24.5	24.2	23.2	21.4	18.5	16.6	15.4	16.3	18.7	21.3	23.2	24.2	20.6

The area is not normally subject to strong winds apart from cyclones and nine of these have caused damage since records were commenced in 1867.

The worst cyclone damage came from "Sigma"—1896; "Leonta"—1903; "Agnes"—1956 and "Althea"—1971. The prevailing wind direction is south-east during April to November with an increased possibility of winds from the north-east in the summer months of December to March.

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# A Brief History to 1879

The first recorded visit by Europeans was Captain James Cook's voyage in the barque "Endeavour". On the sixth of June, 1770, Cook wrote in his log:-

At noon we were by Observation in the Lat. of 19° I S., Long. made from Cape Gloucester 1° 30 W.; Course and distance sailed since Yesterday noon W.N.W., 28 miles. In this situation we had the Mouth of a Bay all open extending from S.½E. to S.W.½S., distance 2 Leagues. This bay, which I named Cleveland Bay, appeared to be about 5 or 6 Miles in Extent every way. The East point I named Cape Cleveland, and the West Magnetical Head or Island, as it had much the appearance of an Island; and the Compass did not traverse well when near it.

Over the succeeding 80 years the coast was surveyed by a number of expeditions, some of which were "Mermaid" 1819; "Beagle" 1839-1841; "Fly" 1842-1846; and "Rattlesnake" 1845.

But it was not until nearly a century after Cook's visit that serious efforts were made by Europeans to explore and settle the land. The earliest recorded European to live in the area was James Morrill (Morrell), one of the four (4) survivors of the wreck of the barque "Peruvian", who were washed ashore in 1846. Morrill survived with a tribe of aborigines centred on Mt. Elliot and ranging between the Black and Burdekin Rivers for seventeen (17) years. He was rescued in 1863.

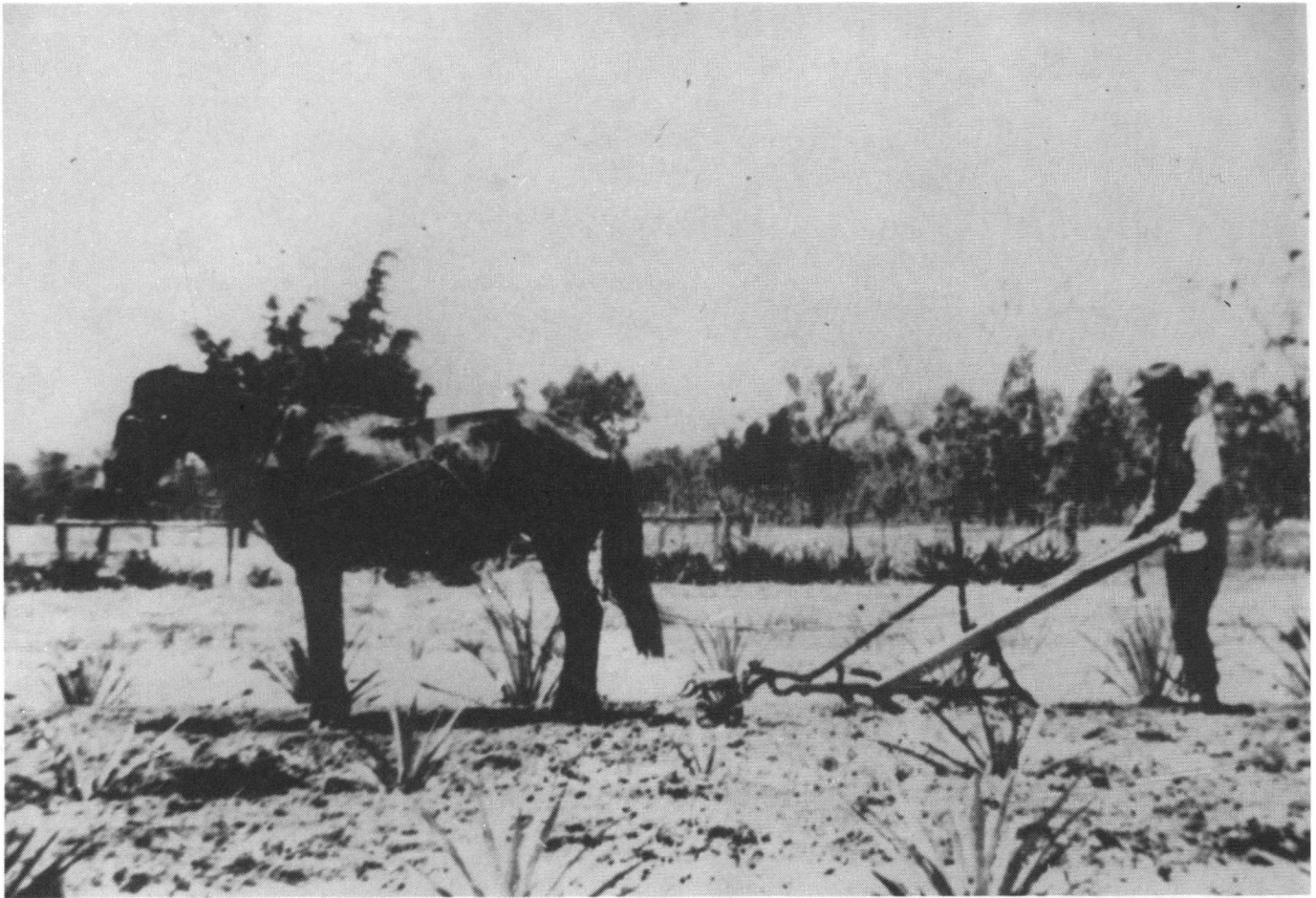
The new Queensland Government passed an Act in 1860 opening up the Kennedy District (which included present day Thuringowa) for pastoral leases. In early 1861 several runs were taken up in Thuringowa; among them Jarvisfield at the mouth of the Burdekin was taken up by E. S. Antil, and Woodhouse Station between the Haughton and the Burdekin was taken up by Captain Wickham and Edward Cunningham. John Melton Black took up or purchased a number of properties in Thuringowa, amongst them, Woodstock, Lansdowne, Halifax Plains and Repulse Plains. By 1865 he held some properties in partnership with Robert Towns, and Towns also held a number of properties in his own right. These early pastoralists ran sheep on their properties and it was not until 1864 that one grazier, Edward Cunningham, decided to graze cattle rather than sheep.



*First Chairman of Thuringowa Divisional Board 1880/1881, William Aplin (1840-1901), who was also a local businessman and pastoralist and a member of the Legislative Council.*

(Photo : Townsville Municipal Library).





*Pineapple Farming, Reid River (c. 1890).*

One of the major problems facing settlers of the new district was that of isolation from markets. There were no facilities for shipping livestock and the distances were too great to consider walking bullocks to market. J. M. Black travelled to Sydney in early 1864 and talked Robert Towns into constructing a boiling-down works to provide a market for cattlemen.

At the boiling-down works, slaughtered animals, either cattle or sheep, were placed in huge boiling vats and after lengthy rendering, the fat extract was removed to be sold as tallow for candles and soap; hoofs and horns were utilised for oil, and hides for leather.

The Burdekin River, with regular floods, was a barrier to access to the Port of Bowen. In April, 1864, Andrew Ball and Mark Watt Reid, two of Black's employees, set out from Woodstock Station together with two aborigines to look for a harbour on the shores of Cleveland Bay. Ball and Reid travelled via Alligator Creek and Cluden, crossed the Ross River above the present railway bridge, and camped on Melton Hill.

So the town and port of Townsville were established at the mouth of Ross Creek. In 1865 the boiling-down works was built in what was to become Thuringowa Division, on the banks of Ross Creek near its junction with Ross River. Black and Towns also established a cotton plantation of 190 acres in the area bounded by Charters Towers Road on the west running through Hermit Park to Ross Island. The cotton plantation, together with experimental plantations of coffee and sugar at Ross Island, were worked by South Sea Island labour. A cotton ginny to separate the cotton fibre from the seeds was built adjacent to the boiling-down works and until cotton prices fell in 1870, cotton was baled and shipped out of Townsville.

The development of reasonable roads to the hinterland from the new port of Townsville was an urgent necessity both for the survival of the town and the successful development of the surrounding district. As early as 1865, the Queensland Government gave J. M. Black a contract for £1, 500 (one Thousand Five Hundred Pounds) to survey a road from the port over Hervey's Range via Thornton's Gap to the Upper Burdekin. This road was finished in 1866 and followed the route of nowadays Dalrymple Road, passing to the south of Mount Louisa.

The district struggled for prosperity in its earliest years, but ultimately prosperity came not from agriculture or grazing but rather from mining. The discovery first of copper at the Einasleigh in 1866, then gold at the Cape River in 1867, Ravenswood in 1869 and Charters Towers in 1872 led to a great increase in population, a local market for farmers and graziers, and was responsible for the development of a flourishing transport industry.

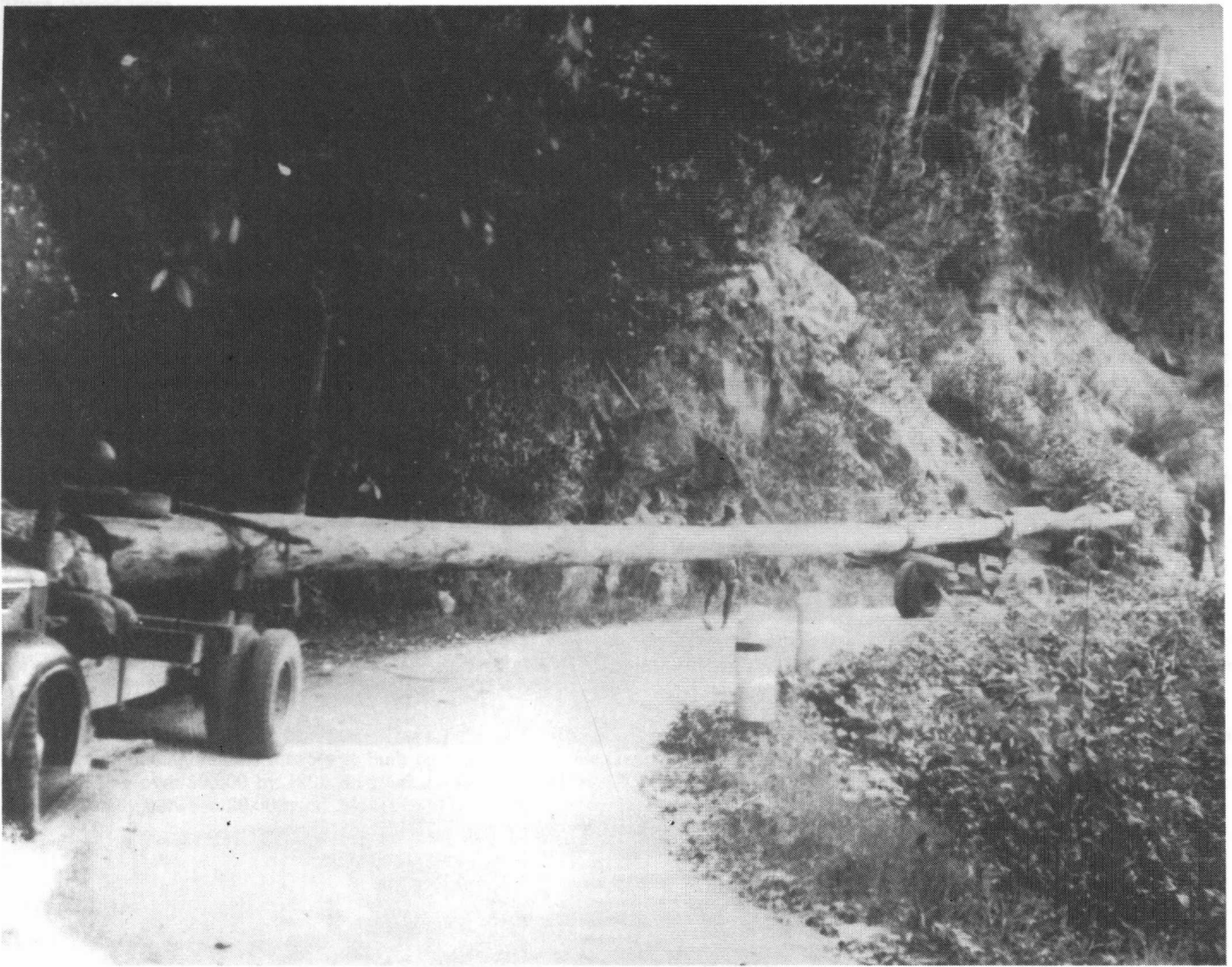
Throughout the 1870's the enterprises begun in the 1860's grew and prospered. By 1879 roads fanned out across Thuringowa from the Causeway west over Hervey's range. With the opening up of the Charters Towers and Ravenswood goldfields a new road was pioneered over the range. It roughly followed the line of Charters Towers Road and Ross River Road to the bank of Ross River near the present Gleeson's Weir, then along the river to its junction with Five Head Creek, over the river and across Antill Plains to Woodstock a road went south to the Haughton River, the Burdekin and the new sugar plantations.



*Ted Gleeson with his ten horse team crossing the Bohle River, 1924.*

(Photo : D. Gleeson)





*Carting timber for the war effort down the Mt. Spec Road (c. 1942).*

(Photo : R. McKergow)

In 1877, the State Government decided to build a railway inland from Townsville. By 1880 that line reached the Reid River. Passengers could take the train from Townsville to Reid River and then coaches to travel further west. By 1882 the train line reached Charters Towers.

Mining was labour intensive and the increased population provided a local sale for both beef and agricultural products. Production of horses also became a lucrative side line for graziers. Market gardens were established, such as the Chinese Gardens on the bank of the Ross River upstream from the site of the Ross River Dam, and F.J. Walker's 15 acre market garden at Aitkenvale where-

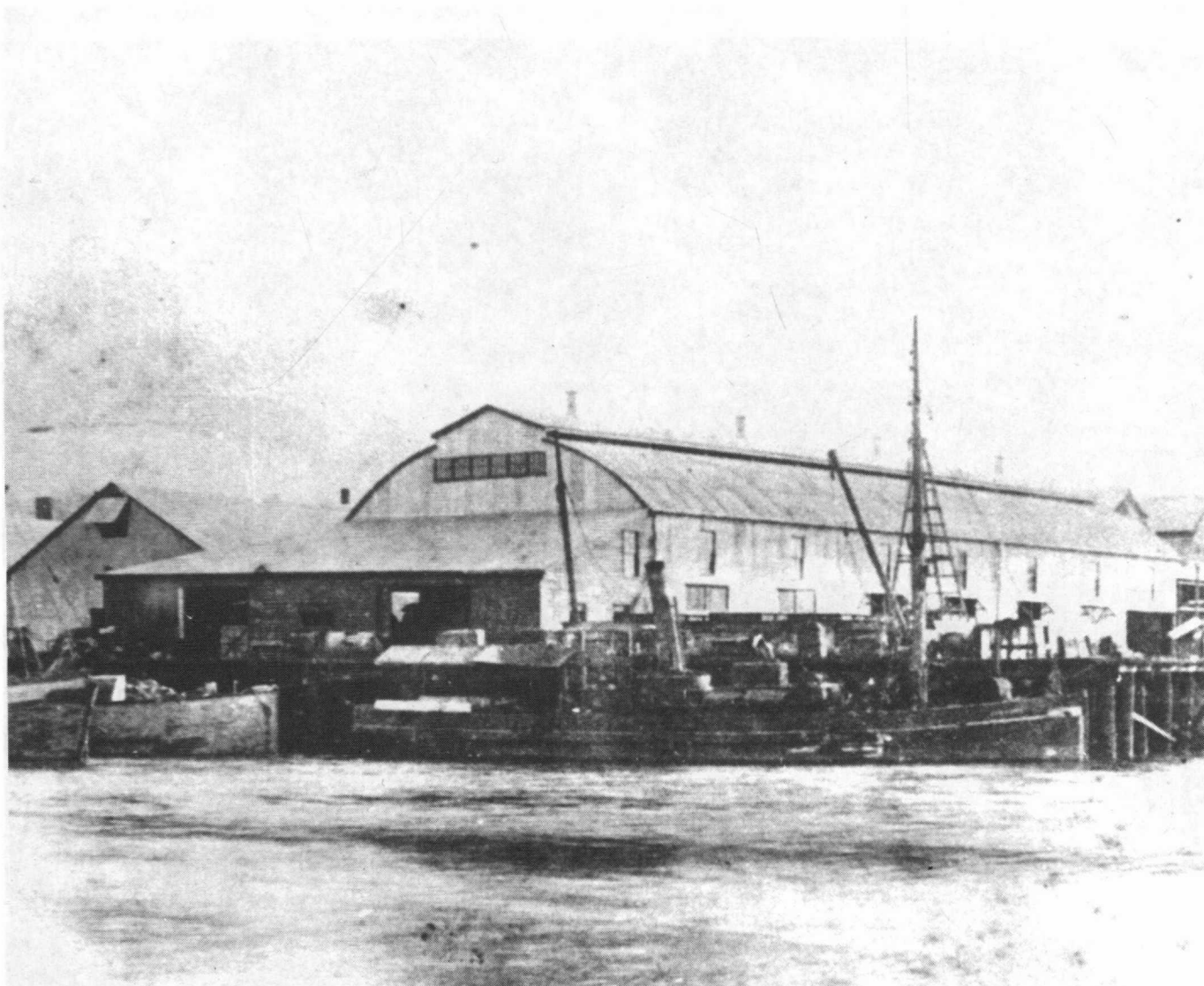
pineapples flourished exceedingly, and three acres were planted with bananas. Coffee and tapioca were also experimented with; and an orchard contained about 1,500 fruit trees of varying kinds. The place was described as a veritable paradise.

In the southern part of Thuringowa land was taken up on Alligator Creek by the Hannons and Macleans; a dairy farm was established at Toonpan Creek; tobacco and sugar cane were being grown in the lower Burdekin.

Travel was slow, the roads were hazardous, rough, potholed and crossed tidal mangrove salt pans — and in the wet season were boggy and muddy. It took a bullock team and wagon up to four (4) days to travel from the Port of Townsville to the foot of Hervey's Range; then a day to climb the range to Thornton's Gap. Hotels and wayside inns sprang up along the major routes. By the end of the 1870's there were at least fifteen (15) of these hotels in operation. As well as respite for tired thirsty travellers, they supplied water, fodder and stabling or secure pasture for horses or bullocks. Lucy Grey, travelling from Townsville to near Hughenden in 1868, has left us a description of the Alice Hotel which was located on the Alice River at the foot of Hervey's Range.

About 15 miles on our way we stopped at the "Alice Hotel" (all the inns are Hotels) a rough wooden house with the usual wide verandah where travellers arriving deposit their baggage, saddles, packs, bags, etc. A big, rough looking woman came out and after inspecting, welcomed me like a sister and took me into the house and the funniest little box of a room nearly filled up with a large four post bed.

We had ridden fast and fifteen miles seemed a long way in the dust and heat. I was glad enough to have a rest and a bath. My hostess brought me in an immense iron tub and bucket after bucket of water. (Lucy Grey).



*Alligator Creek Meatworks (c. 1890).*

(Photo : Mr. C. Cordingley)

A strategically placed hotel was the Retreat near the bank of the Ross River at the junction of the road over Thornton's Gap and the road south to Bowen near the present site of Gleeson's Weir. The Retreat was licensed in 1871 to Thomas Gleeson, and he ran it together with a blacksmithing business. As the Retreat was only about 200 metres from one of the few permanent water holes in the Ross River it was a very popular stopping place for carriers.

### **Thuringowa Division, 1879**

In 1879, the Queensland Government passed the "Act to Provide for Local Government Outside the Boundaries of Municipalities (short title, Divisional Boards Act)" and in November of that year the various Divisional Boards' Boundaries were gazetted.



On 10 January 1880, a public meeting was held for the purpose of electing nine (9) persons to form the Thuringowa Divisional Board. Those elected were-

Division 1 :     John Steiglitz, Surveyor and Selector—Mt. Stuart  
                 Robert Graham—Grazier  
                 Charles Rowe—Grazier

Division 2 :     William Aplin—Freeholder  
                 Spencer Walker—Freeholder  
                 George Saunders—Selector

Division 3 :     Edward Cunningham—Grazier—Woodstock Station  
                 William Kirk—Grazier  
                 John Carr—Manager—Woodstock Station

Those elected then chose William Aplin as Chairman of the Divisional Board.

The area incorporated into Thuringowa Division was 7,612 square kilometres and stretched from the mouth of the Burdekin River up the river to its junction with the Bowen River then by a line west to the north-east water shed of the Burdekin River, thence by that water shed north-westerly to the head of Saltwater Creek (Crystal Creek), thence by that creek to Halifax Bay and thence by the sea coast to the point of commencement — exclusive of the Municipality of Townsville.

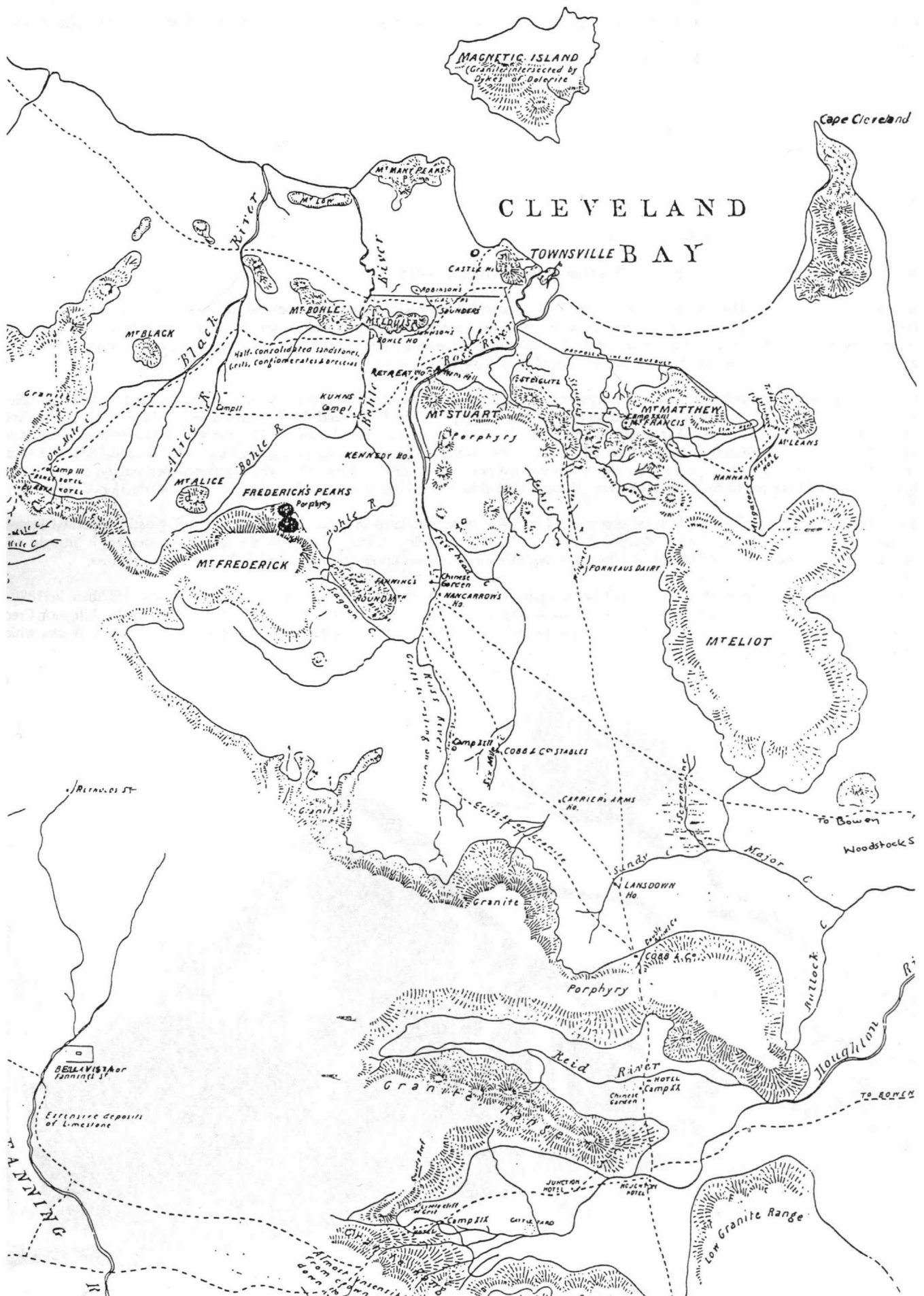
The Divisional Board immediately set about necessary works to improve the district. The Causeway was completed in 1885; the Ross River Bridge by 1886 (this bridge was washed away by flood and replaced in 1897), and the Stewart's Creek Bridge on Alligator Creek Road (subsequently the Townsville-Ayr Road) in 1894. The Divisional Board also established a toll gate which was erected across what is now Flinders Street West and through which all travellers had to pass. The toll keeper commenced duty on 15 June 1881 at a salary of £8/0/0 per calendar month. Some of the charges were one penny per horse or head of cattle, six pence per buggy, spring cart or wagon and one shilling per horse or bullock dray. The toll helped to finance the Divisional Board's works and it functioned until 1884.

Meanwhile the railway to Charters Towers, commenced in 1877, was completed in 1882. Improved transport greatly benefited farmers and graziers in speedily getting their produce to market, and as the advancing railway opened up the land for settlement it brought with it an increase in population. Land in 640 acre lots was systematically opened up in conjunction with the railway's progress.

In 1880 another boiling down works was built at Alligator Creek. This plant was to operate for five (5) years, and then in 1890 a meatworks producing canned meat, was built on the same site. Beginning with an annual intake of about 12,000 cattle, Alligator Creek was processing over 50,000 by 1898. In 1900 the Queensland Meat Export Company established the Ross River Freezing Works which treated annually between 20,000 and 30,000 head of cattle.



*Settlers' Camp of Tom Gleeson near the Reid River (1920's).*



VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1879  
SHOWS LANDFORMS, ROADS, CARRIERS CAMPS, WAYSIDE HOTELS  
AND OTHER FEATURES OF SETTLEMENT



*Compressor bogged — Construction of Mt. Spec Road (c. 1934).*

(Photo : J. Peut)



*Surveyors — Mt. Spec Road (c. 1934).* (Photo : J. Peut)

Thuringowa's population steadily increased during the later years of the nineteenth century in spite of boundary changes which reduced its size. In 1882 Ross Island which comprised the modern day suburbs of South Townsville and Railway Estate was transferred to Townsville and in 1888 the land south of the Haughton River was incorporated in the Ayr Divisional Board, to be followed in 1893 by the transfer of Woodstock, Haughton, Major Creek and the Giru area to Ayr.

The rural settlers tried many ways of making a living—dairying at Antill Plains and the Upper Ross, wood cutting, market gardening at Aitkenvale and the Upper Ross, pineapple farming at Woodstock, tobacco growing and charcoal burning. Charcoal burning was an important occupation as charcoal was necessary fuel for forges—for blacksmiths, railway builders and all bush metalwork. There were even attempts to grow wheat.

There has always been mining activity in Thuringowa. Limestone was mined by individuals or small groups and deserted lime kilns are still to be found. Today limestone is mined at Calcium on a much larger scale. Wolfram was mined at the head of Ollera Creek, the maximum periods of production being 1890-1910 and 1947-1952; and in the 1890's seven coal shafts were sunk in the Stuart area and one at Antill Plains near the railway station. All the coal mines were abandoned because of low ore quality in unpayable quantities. Tin was mined from 1892 in the Paluma Range on Crystal Creek (originally Saltwater Creek) in the vicinity of Cloudy Clearing.

1880 saw the establishment of the first school with the opening of the Provisional School at Ross River with one teacher. Today the Weir School as it is now called has in excess of 870 pupils and 118 pre-schoolers.

In 1899 the Thuringowa Divisional Board in a joint venture with Townsville Municipal Council and the Ayr Divisional Board, commenced construction of the Townsville-Ayr Railway. Thuringowa contributed one-third of the construction cost of this three foot six inch gauge railway which was opened in 1901. Competently chaired by Joseph Hodel the Chairman of the Thuringowa Divisional Board, the Ayr Tramway returned consistent yearly profits.





*Military training — Mt. Spec (1944).*

(Photo : Paluma Progress Association)

Water has always been a problem for the adjoining Townsville and Thuringowa. Wells in Thuringowa Division provided the earliest water supply, and from 1891-1896 attempts were made to form a Joint Water Authority, but this failed. In 1897, Thuringowa established the Thuringowa Water Board. Water was pumped from the mining shafts of the defunct Caledonian and Kiama Companies at Stuart and there was a well near the corner bounded today by Mundingburra State School and the Jubilee Bowling Club. Later still water came from a bore hole in Ross River.

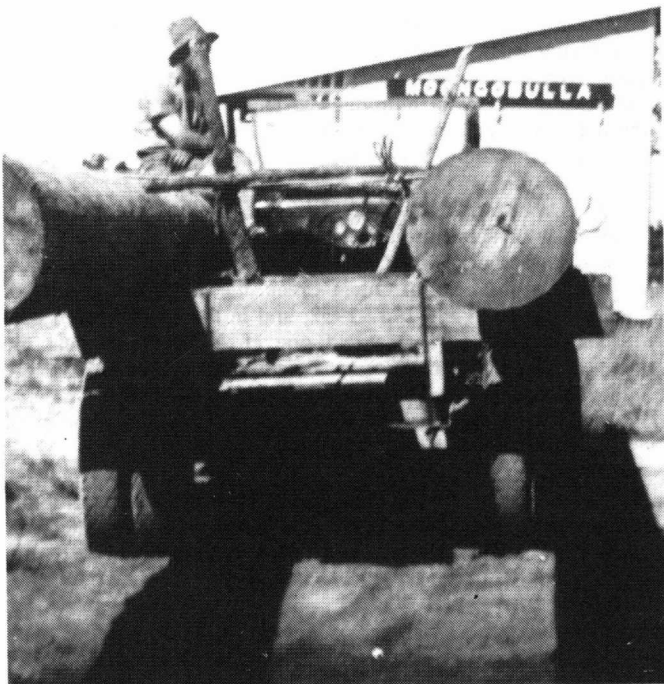
## **Thuringowa Shire, 1902**

In 1902, following a Royal Commission into Local Government in Queensland, Divisional Boards became known as Shires and so the Thuringowa Shire came into existence.

Development and settlement continued—by 1914 the railway from Townsville to Ingham had reached Kurukan on Leichhardt Creek, and it reached Rollingstone in 1915. There were already a number of selectors, miners and timber cutters in the northern section of Thuringowa. Land as far north as Bluewater Beach was taken up, a piece at a time, as pastoral lease at a yearly rental of ten shillings per acre per year.

By the end of the 1880's the coastal land as far north as Crystal Creek was settled, but until the railway was built a trip to Townsville over the rough track from Armidale (now Rollingstone) took up to four (4) days.

Between the two World Wars, Thuringowa Shire unwillingly surrendered most of its suburban areas to Townsville City. In 1918 after a ballot lost by Thuringowa, the suburbs of Hermit Park, Hyde Park, Pimlico, Mundingburra, Aitkenvale and Garbutt were transferred to Townsville. In



*Timber brought down Mt. Spec Road to be rail freighted at Moongobulla Station.*

(Photo : Paluma Progress Association)

1936 this was followed by the transfer of Oonoonba, Stuart and Idalia. Thuringowa's population and the Shire's income fell drastically and Thuringowa's population was not to exceed 1,500 until the expansion of Townsville spilled over into Thuringowa in 1958 and development of Kirwan and the Upper Ross suburbs commenced.

From its inception in 1880 until the formation of the Main Roads Commission in 1920 the Divisional Board and the then Shire Council were responsible for the roads leading north, south and west from Townsville, and ratepayers were not always in favour of loans to build roads—in 1888 a Board application for a loan of £800/0/0 (Eight Hundred Pounds) to raise and widen Charters Towers Road was withdrawn because of a petition lodged by local ratepayers who opposed "the unnecessary debt".

After the formation of the Main Roads Commission, pressure commenced for a road to be built up the Paluma Range at Mt. Spec for various purposes—to enable timber, minerals and agricultural produce access to the railway line to Townsville and southern markets and also to promote Paluma as a salubrious holiday resort. The road was finally constructed in the 1930's using a lot of unemployed men in its labour force and it was opened in 1937. The road was a great boon to the timber industry in particular as logs could now be trucked down the mountain to the railway at Moongobulla.

The sugar industry centred on Giru was given a boost with the erection of the Invicta Mill in 1921. The Mill was transported from Bundaberg, rebuilt at a cost of £120,000/0/0 and at that time had a crushing capacity of 18 tons per hour.

The coming of World War II to the Pacific brought changes to Thuringowa. Civilians had to accept control of employment by the Directorate of Manpower and rationing of food and petrol.

In Thuringowa numerous camps, airstrips, gun emplacements and ammunition dumps were constructed. Many thousands of American Military personnel were based in Thuringowa. The Americans constructed airstrips at Giru, Woodstock and Antill Plains—the airstrip at Woodstock being made with hand tools by an American Negro Engineering Unit.

The American Camps were huge. For example the U.S. Army Ordnance Depot at Kurukan (near Leichhardt Creek) occupied a site of ten (10) square miles (26 square kilometres) with 22 miles (35 kilometres) of roads. The U.S. 44th General Hospital was located at the Black River, and there was a U.S. Army Hospital at Major's Creek.

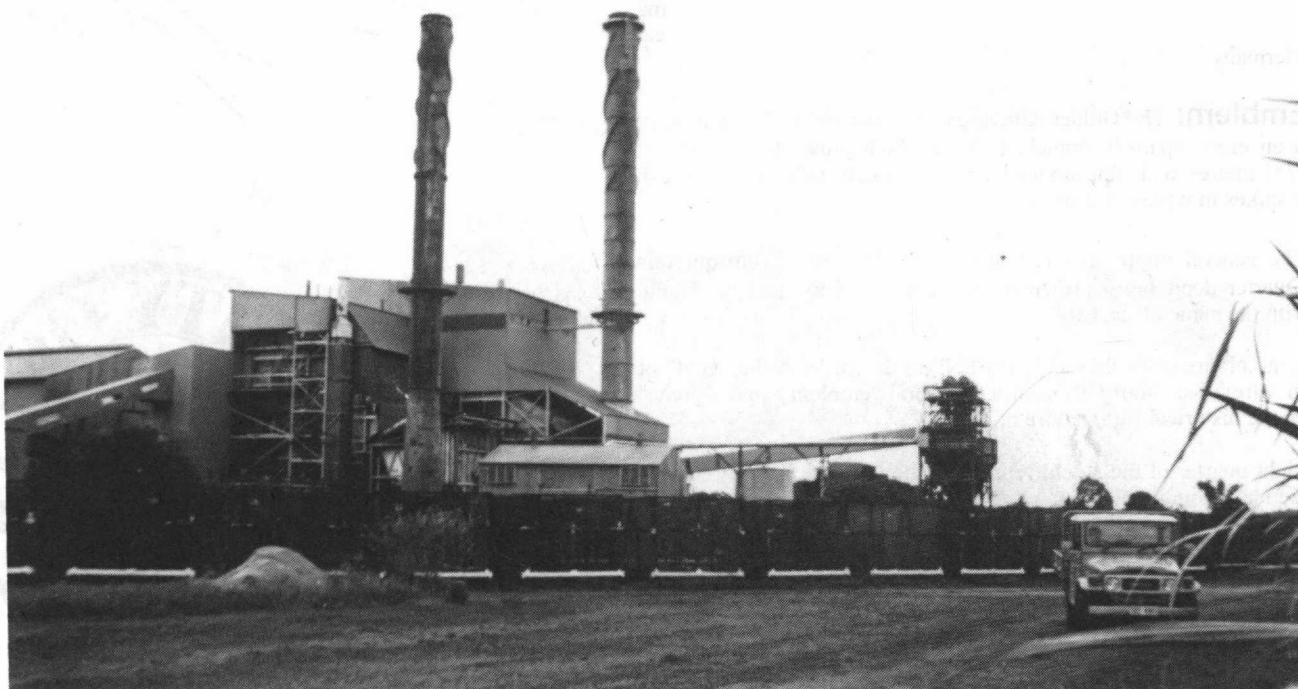
The Australian Military also had a large presence with airstrips at the Upper Ross River (opposite the Weir School), the Bohle River and Reid River. There were also radar stations at Paluma and Alligator Creek.

An unusual unit established in Thuringowa was the Remount Depot at Rocky Springs just south of Stuart. This unit obtained and trained horses for pack work in New Guinea, where vehicle transport in many cases was impossible because of the difficult terrain.

The first years after the end of World War II saw Thuringowa's citizens revert to their pastoral activities. It was the rapid post-war growth of Townsville which brought about a change. In 1958, Mr. Joe Kirwan subdivided the first lots in what was to become the suburb of Kirwan.

At that time Bamford Lane was an unconstructed dirt track with plenty of china-apple bushes and there was no residential development beyond that point.

In 1964, the original Thuringowa Divisional Headquarters in use from 1879 (see cover illustration) was demolished to be replaced by a red brick building on the same site at No. 1 Charters Towers Road, Townsville. That building is currently occupied by a number of community groups.



*Invicta Mill at Giru, 1987.*

(Photo : M. Lamont)

In 1966 residential development was commenced in Kelso and in 1968 in Condon on the Upper Ross River Road. Then followed a period of rapid development of suburban Thuringowa.

In 1980, the Council's Administration moved from the Causeway offices to a new building on Thuringowa Drive.

## Thuringowa City, 1986

On the 1st of January, 1986, Thuringowa Shire was declared a City.

Over the eight years since that declaration Thuringowa has experienced spectacular growth. The population has increased from 26,000 in 1986 to 41,000 as at 1 April 1994. Current projections for future growth of the city put the estimated population for the year 2000 at 67,000. The average growth rate of 5.8% makes Thuringowa the fastest growing area in North Queensland.

On the 31 March 1994 the shape of Thuringowa changed with a major alteration in local government boundaries. The southern areas of the city were transferred to Burdekin Shire, Dalrymple Shire and Townsville City as part of a statewide reform process; and Thuringowa's size was reduced from 4100 square kilometres to 1872 square kilometres. Most of the transferred areas had been part of Thuringowa for 115 years.

Thuringowa has been in the past predominantly a rural area; however the increase in urban population together with the major shift of boundaries will make it into an increasingly urban community in the future.

In the southern section of the City prior to the boundary change the sugar industry predominated. Of other agricultural production, perhaps the most significant is pineapples in the northern area. During the twelve month period to March 1992, 38 properties in the City were running beef cattle.

A major industrial concern is the nickel treatment plant of Queensland Nickel at Yabulu which treated 1,124,000 tonnes of ore for recovery of 14,000 tonnes of nickel in the year 1991/92. The Greenvale Mine which originally supplied the ore for the plant at Yabulu has now ceased production and ore is imported from Indonesia.

There is a total of thirty (29) schools in Thuringowa, five (5) of them secondary schools and in 1997 a total of 9131 students was enrolled.

In 1988 a pipeline from the Burdekin Falls Dam to the Ross River Dam was completed providing a backup water supply in times of drought.

## Statistics—Area and Population

Year	Area	Population
1879	7,612	2,000
1936	4,203	1,500
1971	4,100	3,432
1978	4,100	12,900
1988	4,100	32,900
1994	1,872	41,000
1997	1,872	46,500

**Name—Thuringowa:** Evidence suggests that the name is of German origin. The Town and District Surveyor at the time of the formation of the Thuringowa Divisional Board in 1879, was John Steiglitz who was of German descent. He resided at the base of Mt. Stuart and was a founding member of the Thuringowa Divisional Board. Thuringia is a historical district of Germany.

**Floral Emblem:** The Golden Grevillea, "*G. pteridifolia*", a native of the area is an erect, sparsely branched shrub which grows to a height of about five (5) metres with fine divided leaves. It bears golden tooth-brush type flower spikes in winter and spring.

**Logo:** The general impression is that of a shield divided into quarters with each quarter depicting a principal feature of the City, and the shield encircled with the name of the City.

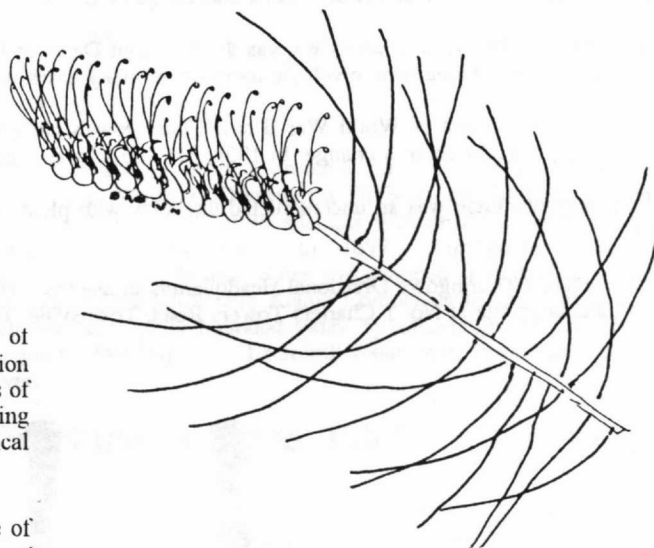
The dominant colours of GOLD and GREEN are drawn from the "gold" of the Golden Grevillea, the City's official floral emblem, and "green" representing the historical rural nature of the City.

\* The top right quarter of the shield represents the Grazing Industry, one of the City's foundation industries.

\* The lower right quarter portrays heavy industry such as the Yabulu Nickel Refinery.

\* The lower left quarter symbolises the leisure/tourism areas within the City, such as the mountains, the beaches and the sea.

\* The top left quarter represents PEOPLE, regarded as perhaps the City's most valuable asset.





## Chronological List of Chairmen and Mayors

Year	Name	Year	Name
1880	William Aplin	1916	Edward Crowder
1881	William Aplin	1917	William Ireland
1882	F. Gordon	1919	William Ireland
1883	James Miller	1920	James Cummins
	Arthur Bundock	1929	James Cummins
1884	William Clayton to August	1930	Charles Wordsworth
	Arthur Bundock	1948	Charles Wordsworth
1885	Arthur Bundock	1949	W.H.F. Wordsworth
1886	Arthur Bundock	1960	W.H.F. Wordsworth
1887	Frederick Johnson	1961	J.R. Brabon (3 year term)
1888	Frederick Johnson	1964	J.R. Brabon
1889	Joseph Hodel	1967	William de Courcey
1890	Joseph Hodel	1970	J. R. Brabon
1891	Frederick Johnson	1973	William de Courcey
1892	Joseph Hodel	1976	Dan Gleeson
1909	Joseph Hodel	1979	Dan Gleeson
1910	Henry Abbott	1982	Dan Gleeson
1911	Henry Abbott	1985	Dan Gleeson
1912	Joseph Hodel	1986	Dan Gleeson-Mayor
1913	Joseph Hodel	1988	Dan Gleeson
1914	Edward Crowder	1991	Les Tyrell
1915	Joseph Hodel	1994	Les Tyrell
		1997	Les Tyrell

# Thuringowa City Council 1997

MAYOR: Leslie Ronald Horton TYRELL

DIVISION 1: Michael James BOYS, Roger William BRABON, Sandra Winifred CHESNEY.

DIVISION 2: Neville Abby, Deanne Beryl BELL. Brian Bensley, Cecilia Gillman, Brian Allan HEWETT, Jennifer LANE, Irene STEWART.



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# DID YOU KNOW?

## Some interesting Facts about Thuringowa

1. The first European exploration and settlement of Townsville and Thuringowa came not from the sea but rather overland from the already settled Burdekin area.
2. That the Thuringowa Divisional Board erected Toll Gates across the north and south entrances to Townsville at the Carrier's Arms Hotel on Flinders Street West about opposite the Council's old Administration Offices at the Causeway. The first toll keeper commenced work on 15 June 1881 at a salary of £8/0/0 (Eight Pounds) per calendar month. The charges were 1d per horse or head of cattle, 3d per 20 head of sheep or pigs, 6d per buggy, spring cart or wagon, 1/- per horse or bullock dray and 2/- per house or bullock dray without springs. The Toll Bar was removed in 1884.
3. In 1913 the first aeroplane to land in North Queensland landed in Thuringowa at Cluden Racecourse.
4. Cotton was grown on R.E. Towns' plantation at Hermit Park and Ross Island in the 1860s using Kanaka labour.
5. Cotton was still being grown in the Upper Ross area in the 1960s on Dunlop's land. Some of the streets in that part of Kelso are named for members of the Dunlop Family, e.g. Judith Street, Deborah Street, Rosemary Street, etc.
6. When the Thuringowa Divisional Board first came into existence, only ratepayers were allowed to vote, between one (1) and three (3) votes were allowed and the more land a ratepayer owned the more votes he had. In 1920 all adult residents were given the right to vote and the extra votes of the large landholders were cancelled.
7. Townsville's first aerodrome was built in Thuringowa in 1930 by the Shire Council where the Murray Sporting Complex now stands: this aerodrome was built at a cost of £600/0/0 (Six Hundred Pounds) and remained the air terminal until 1941.
8. The first lady Councillor in Queensland was Mrs. Isabelle Fitzpatrick of Rollingstone who was appointed to Council on 15 January 1924 to fill a vacancy. Mrs. Fitzpatrick was the owner of the Rollingstone Hotel and a farmer as well.
9. The Townsville suburbs of South Townsville and Railway Estate were once known as Ross Island and were part of Thuringowa until 1883.
10. The first Europeans to live in Thuringowa were probably the four survivors of the barque "Peruvian" washed ashore on Cape Cleveland in 1846.
11. James Morrill (Morrell), a survivor of the "Peruvian" spent seventeen (17) years in the company of the Wulguru Aboriginal people and was still alive in 1863 when a European surveying party arrived. Morrell acted as an interpreter for Dalrymple's expedition to Rockingham Bay in 1864 and died in 1865.
12. Gladys van Tassell and her sister made a balloon ascent on 23 June 1890 from Gulliver's property, Acacia Vale, near where the Villa Vincent Home is situated.
13. The Townsville suburbs of Hermit Park, Hyde Park, Pinlico, Mundingburra, Aitkenvale, West End, Garbutt, Belgian Gardens, Oonoonba and Stuart were all once included in Thuringowa and were transferred to Townsville between 1918 and 1936.
14. As early as 1889 the Thuringowa Divisional Board bought land in Hermit Park to set aside as a public recreation reserve.
15. Thuringowa Divisional Board together with Townsville City Council and the Ayr Divisional Board constructed in 1899 the Townsville - Ayr railway. The 3' 6" gauge line was opened by Thuringowa Chairman and Chairman of the Tramway Board, Mr. Joseph Hodel, in 1901. Thuringowa contributed one-third of the cost of building the railway.
16. In the first year of operation of Towns' Boiling Down Works, at Hermit Park, from April to December, 1866, 1,950 cattle passed through the works producing an average of 230lbs (104-105kgs) per beast.
17. Thuringowa had a small gold rush in 1897. About 60 men rushed to the head of Reid River, but alas there was no gold.
18. Forno's at Major Creek boasted the best tomato sauce in Australia! Until washed out by floods, Forno's Tomato Sauce was supplied to many a goldfield and neighbouring town.
19. Tobacco was grown and manufactured into cigars in the Lower Burdekin in 1866; also at Barringha in 1895. Likewise tobacco flourished in the Upper Ross area in the 1890s!
20. Thuringowa had its own reticulated water supply and By-law no.1 of the Thuringowa Water Authority was printed in Townsville by T. Willmetts in 1897. The charge for water for domestic use was £1/2/6 (\$2.25) for a home of 300-350 square feet of floor area—a size exceeded by many lounge rooms in the homes of today.
21. Thuringowa was home to the north's first Ice Works and Brewery, owned by Martin and Sons and located in Bayswater Terrace.

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# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

## Some Thuringowa Streets, Places and People

<b>Ace:</b>	Lyne Phillip, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1970, 1974 resigned, sold land to move out of the district.
<b>Alice River:</b>	Believed to have been named by one of the Bell and Reid party in 1865 for a lady of his acquaintance.
<b>Allambie Lane:</b>	The McLauchlan Dairy at Kelso was called Allambie.
<b>Antill Plains:</b>	E.S. Antil was an early settler on Jarvisfield Station.
<b>Applin:</b>	William, First Chairman of Thuringowa Divisional Board 1880-1881.
<b>Balgol Beach:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 38 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Bamford Lane:</b>	Bamford Lane was the access to the Bamford family dairy farm.
<b>Beach Holm:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 16 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Beck Road:</b>	Named for the Beck Family. Land brought from the Rasmussens in the 1930s.
<b>Black River:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 14 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Bluewater:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 29 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Bluewater Park:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 29 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Bohle Plains:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 6 kilometres west of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Bohle River:</b>	Henry McKinnon Bohle (1842-1923) drove 22,000 sheep from Parramatta to Townsville to stock Fanning Downs and Victoria River Downs 1873-1875.
<b>Brabon:</b>	John Richard, Position held - Chairman, 1961-1967, 1970-1973, Councillor 1967-1970.
<b>Brabon Road:</b>	Named for the Brabon Family who settled at the Black River before the turn of the century. The first of the Brabons to settle in the district was also the first to cross Hervey's Range with a horse team. He was a carrier who took supplies to Georgetown.
<b>Brennan:</b>	Edward Thomas, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1976-1979.
<b>Bruce:</b>	Robert, Position held - Waterworks engineer, 1915.
<b>Buck:</b>	Arthur Richard, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1967-1979.
<b>Burdell:</b>	Frederick, Position held - Councillor, Division 1 (previously #2), 1918.
<b>Burdell:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 7 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Burdell Road:</b>	Named for Fred Burdell, early owner of Bohlevale Station.
<b>Cape Cleveland:</b>	Named by Captain James Cook on 6 June 1770.
<b>Clemant:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 28 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Condon:</b>	For the Condon Family - early settlers. William Condon was a carrier. He settled on the Ross and worked his property as a dairy.
<b>Cooper:</b>	Joy Valerie, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1982-1991.
<b>Crabbe:</b>	William Wilson, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, Rollingstone, 1942-1943.
<b>Crossland:</b>	Christopher John, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, Condon, 1976
<b>Crowder:</b>	Edward, Position held - Chairman, Division 1, 1914, 1916, Councillor Division 1, 1915 and member of Waterworks and works committee, 1918.
<b>Crystal Creek:</b>	Originally called Saltwater Creek also a suburb of Thuringowa City, 60 kilometres north of Thuringowa



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Central.

<b>Cummins:</b>	James Edward Patrick, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1915 nominated for council, Division 2 (previously #3), 1918. Chairman 1920-1929.
<b>Cummins:</b>	B M (Mrs), Position held - Senior Clerical Staff, longest serving Thuringowa Shire Council Staff member retired after 27 years 1982.
<b>Cunningham:</b>	E, Position held - Councillor, 1964.
<b>Dalrymple Road:</b>	For George Elphinstone Dalrymple (1826-1876), explorer, squatter, Government Official.
<b>De Courcey:</b>	William Charles, Position held - Chairman, 1967-1970, 1973-1976
<b>Deeragun:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 9 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Duckworth:</b>	Terence, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1964-1976
<b>Dunlop Street:</b>	Named for the Dunlop Family.
<b>Ellis:</b>	K C, Position held - Councillor, Division, 1964.
<b>Farrell:</b>	Gary Alfred, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1979-1988.
<b>Fitzpatrick:</b>	Isabelle, Position held - First woman Councillor in Queensland, appointed 1924.
<b>Forno:</b>	William James, Position held - Councillor replacing retired councillor F G Hughes, Division 3, 1946.
<b>Framara Drive:</b>	Acronym for christian names of various members of the Hammond family.
<b>Francis:</b>	William, Position held - Councillor, Division, 1943.
<b>Gill:</b>	J S, Position held - Shire Clerk, 1915.
<b>Gillman:</b>	Cecilia Joy, Position held - Alderman, Division 3, 1991-1994, Chairman of the Finance Committee. Councilor 1997-
<b>Giru:</b>	Aboriginal name - land of many waters.
<b>Gleeson:</b>	Thomas, Position held - Councillor, 1915 Died, previously a member of the Divisional Board.
<b>Gleeson:</b>	.Daniel Thomas James, O.B.E., 1914-1994. Position held - Councillor, Division 4, 1976-1991. Chairman 1976-1985, first Mayor of Thuringowa City 1986-1991
<b>Granite Vale:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City named after grazing property.
<b>Guldbransen:</b>	Henry Charles, Position held - Councillor, Division, 1964-1970.
<b>Gulliver:</b>	Thomas Allan, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1915 and member of Waterworks and works committee.
<b>Gumlow:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 7 Kilometres south-west from Thuringowa Central.
<b>Halifax Bay:</b>	Named after the town of Halifax in Yorkshire, England by Captain James Cook.
<b>Hammond:</b>	Francis Stanley, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, 1970-1976.

*Mrs Fitzpatrick*



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<b>Hammond way:</b>	Named for the Hammond Family. Stan Hammond served on the Council from 1970 to 1979.
<b>Hannon:</b>	Percy John, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1973-1991.
<b>Haughton River:</b>	Named for Richard Haughton - a member of Dalrymple's exploring party and early settler.
<b>Henderson:</b>	Harold Thompson, Position held - Councillor, 1964-1967. Position held - Foreman in Charge of Works, 1967.
<b>Hervey Range:</b>	Probably named for Matthew Hervey of Dotswood Station, 1862.
<b>Hodel:</b>	Joseph, Position held - Chairman many times from 1889-1915; retired after 28 years on the council in 1915.
<b>Hogan:</b>	Richard, Position held - Councillor, Antil Plains, 1942-1943.
<b>Hughes:</b>	Francis Goodwin, Position held - Councillor, Giru, 1942-1943.
<b>Hulley:</b>	Reynold Wilfred, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1970-1973
<b>Innes:</b>	Allan Henry, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, Bohle, member of council 21 years, to 1976.
<b>Ireland:</b>	William, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1915-1917, Chairman 1917-1920.
<b>Ives:</b>	R J, Position held - Shire Clerk, 1961-1965.
<b>Jensen:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 11 kilometres north from Thuringowa Central. Named after an early settler
<b>Kelso:</b>	James, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, Ross River, 1942-1943.
<b>Kelso:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City named for the Kelso Family - early settlers. Agnes and James Kelso took up a selection at Five Head Creek on the Ross in 1878. "Laudham Park" was developed as a cattle property, stocking Shorthorn and Herefords. Some milkers were kept and a dairy developed. The men took up carrying to supplement the income during the dry season. "Laudham Park" has been inundated by the Five Head Creek Dam.



*Kelso homestead, "Laudham Park"*

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<b>Kerry:</b>	J. Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1915.
<b>Kirwan:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, Joe Kirwan owned the land and began sub-dividing it in 1958.
<b>Le Roy:</b>	Curivan George Dickenson. Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1943.
<b>Lynam:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 30 kilometres west from Thuringowa Central. Named after an early settler
<b>McAlister:</b>	Colin, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1915.
<b>McCloskey:</b>	J D, Position held - Councillor, 1942-1943.
<b>McCloskey:</b>	William David, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, Giru, 1943.
<b>McLauchlan Crescent:</b>	After the McLauchlan Family who purchased the Rasmussen Dairy in 1918. Frank McLauchlan made the first subdivision on the Upper Ross which became part of the suburbs of Kelso and Rasmussen.
<b>Meehan:</b>	Daniel Patrick, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1979-1988
<b>Meehan:</b>	Daniel Patrick, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1915-1918.
<b>Meehan:</b>	William Francis, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, Cromarty, 1943-1946.
<b>Mellick:</b>	Anna, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1973-1976, 1979-1982.
<b>Moroney:</b>	Charles, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, Kelso, 1979-1982.
<b>Mount Low:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 14 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Mt. Stuart:</b>	Clarendon Stuart was the Government Surveyor sent to check the site of Townsville in 1865.
<b>Mt. Spec:</b>	Probably named for the boat "Spec" owned by Robert Towns.
<b>Murther:</b>	Graham George, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, Kelso, 1976-1979.
<b>Mutarnee:</b>	Aboriginal word for "Food".
<b>Neville:</b>	John Joseph, Position held - Councillor from Woodstock, 1943.
<b>Nome:</b>	Rail siding for North Queensland Meat Export (N.Q.M.E.).
<b>O'Connor:</b>	Denis John, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1970-1973.
<b>Ollera Creek:</b>	Originally called Clerk Creek after the first owner of the Armidale Holding.
<b>Pace:</b>	Roy, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 10 02 68 replaces Mr H T Henderson councillor for 6 1/2 years, who sold his Rollingstone property and went to live in the city.
<b>Page:</b>	Frederick Leonard, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1967-1985.
<b>Page:</b>	Harry, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1916.
<b>Paluma:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 65 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Paluma Range:</b>	Named for the Survey Vessel "Paluma". The township was originally known as Cloudy Clearing.
<b>Percival:</b>	Peter Frank, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1976-1985.
<b>Pinnacle Drive:</b>	Named after the spectacular mountain of the same name.
<b>Rasmussen:</b>	For the Rasmussen Family - early settlers. Jorgen Rasmussen developed a dairy farm on the Ross. It was a favourite destination for Sunday drives, afternoon tea at the Danish Dairy was a treat for town dwellers.
<b>Reid River:</b>	After Mark Watt Reid who, together with Andrew Ball, found a route from the stations on the Burdekin to the site of Townsville in 1864.
<b>Rollingstone:</b>	Originally called Armidale after the name of the selection taken up in the area. The name Rollingstone first appeared on a map in 1915.
<b>Ross River:</b>	Named for W.A Ross, one of John Melton Black's station managers.
<b>Rowe:</b>	C S, Position held - Councillor, 1964.
<b>Ryan:</b>	Thomas, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1915 to fill vacancy left by Colin McAllister.

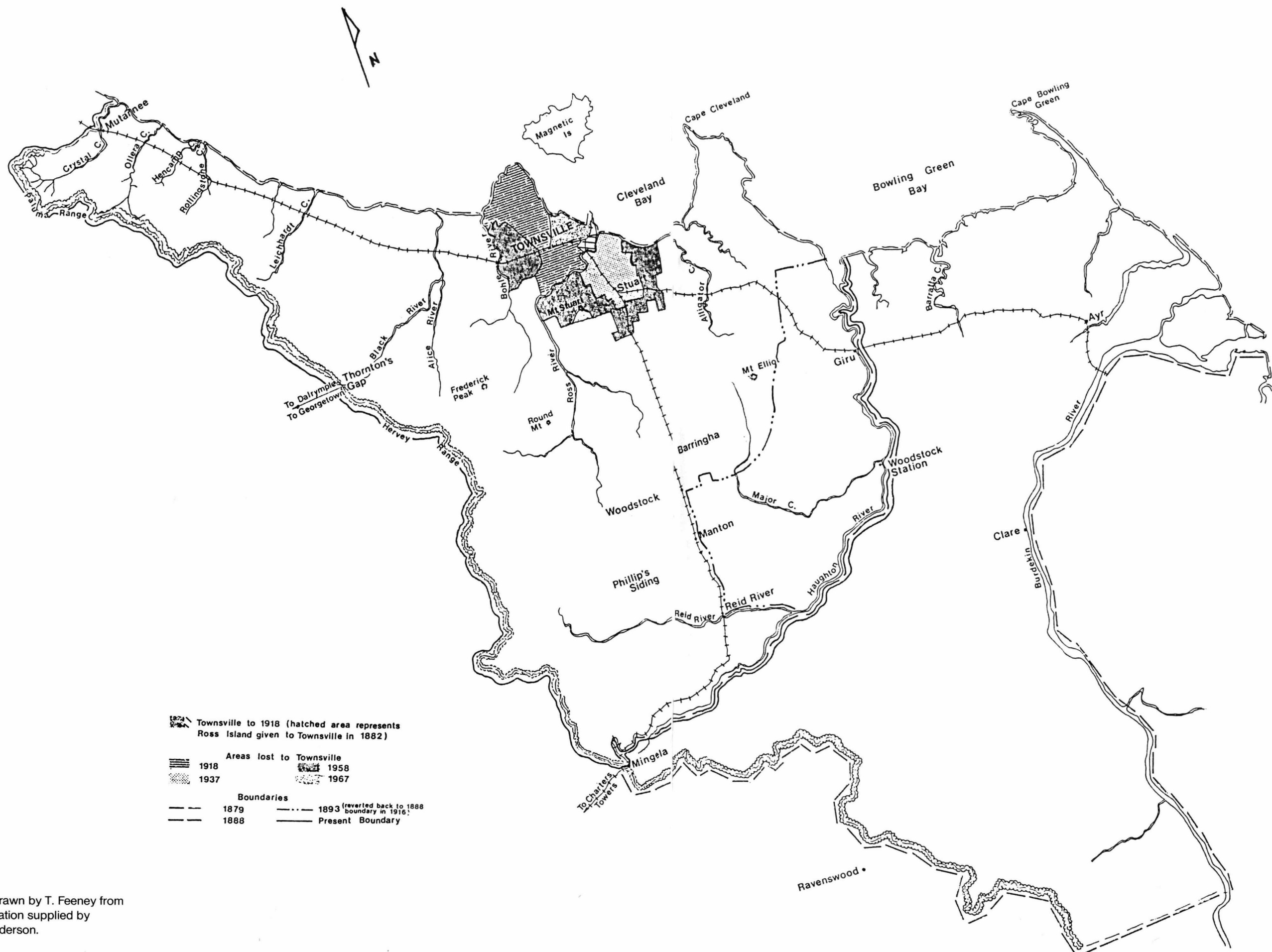
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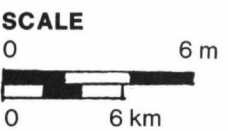
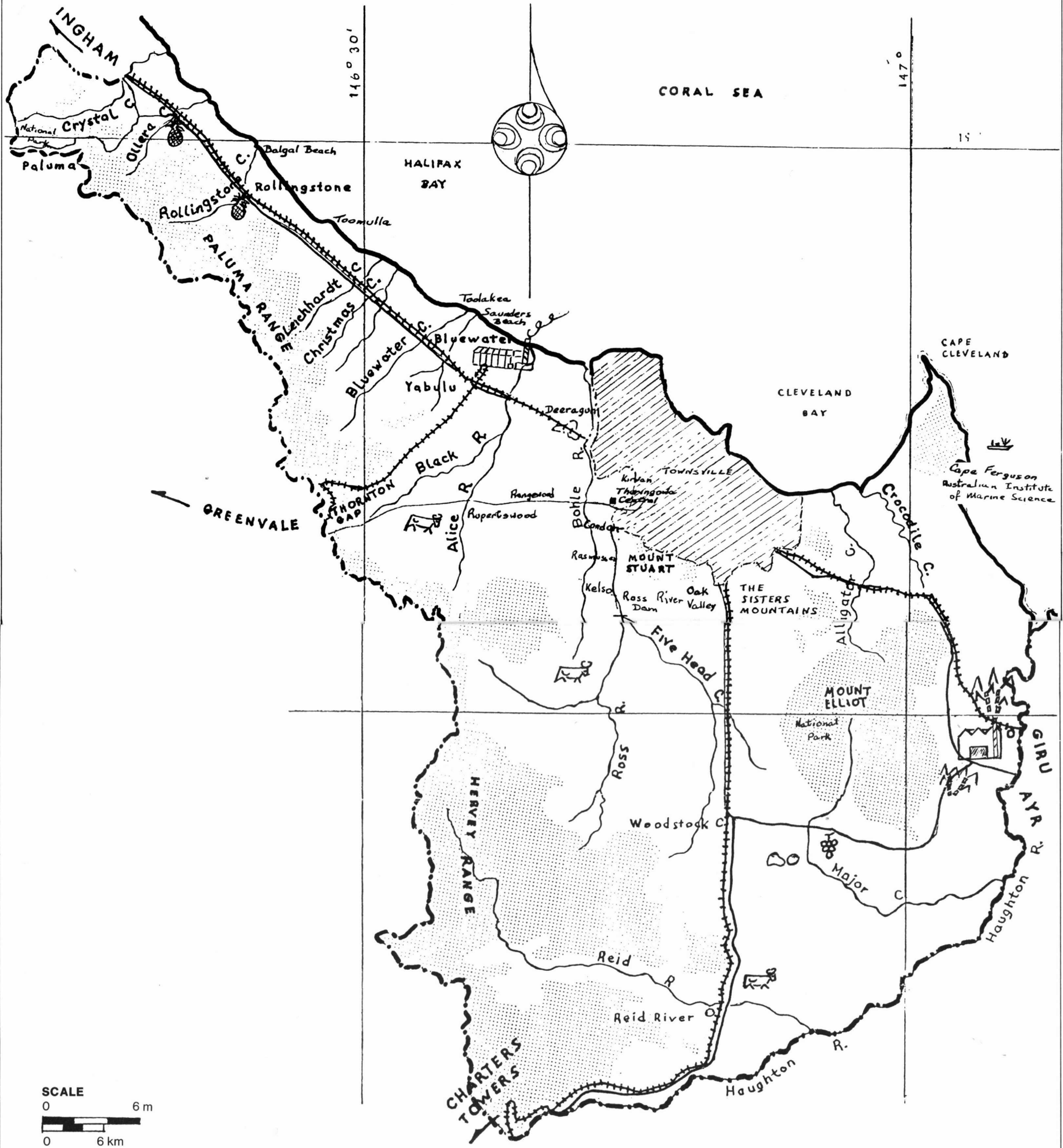
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<b>Ryan:</b>	Laurence Kenneth, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1967-1973.
<b>Sandilands:</b>	George William, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, 1979-1980.
<b>Saunders:</b>	G, Position held - Councillor, 1964-1967.
<b>Saunders Beach:</b>	Named for George Saunders, first owner of Springvale Station, which was slightly north of the present Nickel refinery - Saunders was a member of the first Divisional Board.
<b>Sinnott:</b>	Henry, Position held - Foreman of Works and Engineer for 26 years, to 1915. Councillor, Division 1, 1915. Elected to Townsville Council after 1918 boundary change.
<b>Slaney:</b>	H R, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1974, replaced Councillor Laurie Ryan.
<b>Sohn:</b>	Hong Keun, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, Kelso, 1979-1982.
<b>Spotswood:</b>	Frederick Ernest Llewellyn, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1916-1918.
<b>Talbot:</b>	Robert Arthur, Position held - Councillor, Division 3, 1910-1915.
<b>Thuringowa:</b>	It is believed that the name comes from German origins - from the historical German province of Thuringia. Early resident and founding member of the Thuringowa Divisional Board was John Stieglitz (or Steiglitz), a German who was Town and District Surveyor during the 1870's.
<b>Toolakea:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 24 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Toomulla:</b>	Suburb of Thuringowa City, 35 kilometres north of Thuringowa Central.
<b>Turner:</b>	Lionel Joseph James, Position held - Councillor, Division 1, 1976-1979.
<b>Tyrell:</b>	Leslie Ronald, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, 1979-1991, Mayor 1991—
<b>Vickers Road:</b>	Named after the Vickers Family.
<b>Wagner:</b>	A, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1915
<b>Walters:</b>	Joseph Charles, Position held - Councillor, Division 4, 1976-1979.
<b>Ward:</b>	D A, Position held - Shire Clerk, 1970-1985.
<b>Webb:</b>	A T, Position held - Councillor, 1964
<b>Willison:</b>	William, Position held - Councillor, 1943
<b>Woodstock:</b>	For Woodstock Station, the original head-quarters in North Queensland of J.M. Black.
<b>Wordsworth:</b>	Charles Wallace, Position held - Chairman, Division 1, Manton, 1930-1948.
<b>Yabulu:</b>	Aboriginal word for "Grass".
<b>Young:</b>	William, Position held - Councillor, Division 2, 1917-1918.

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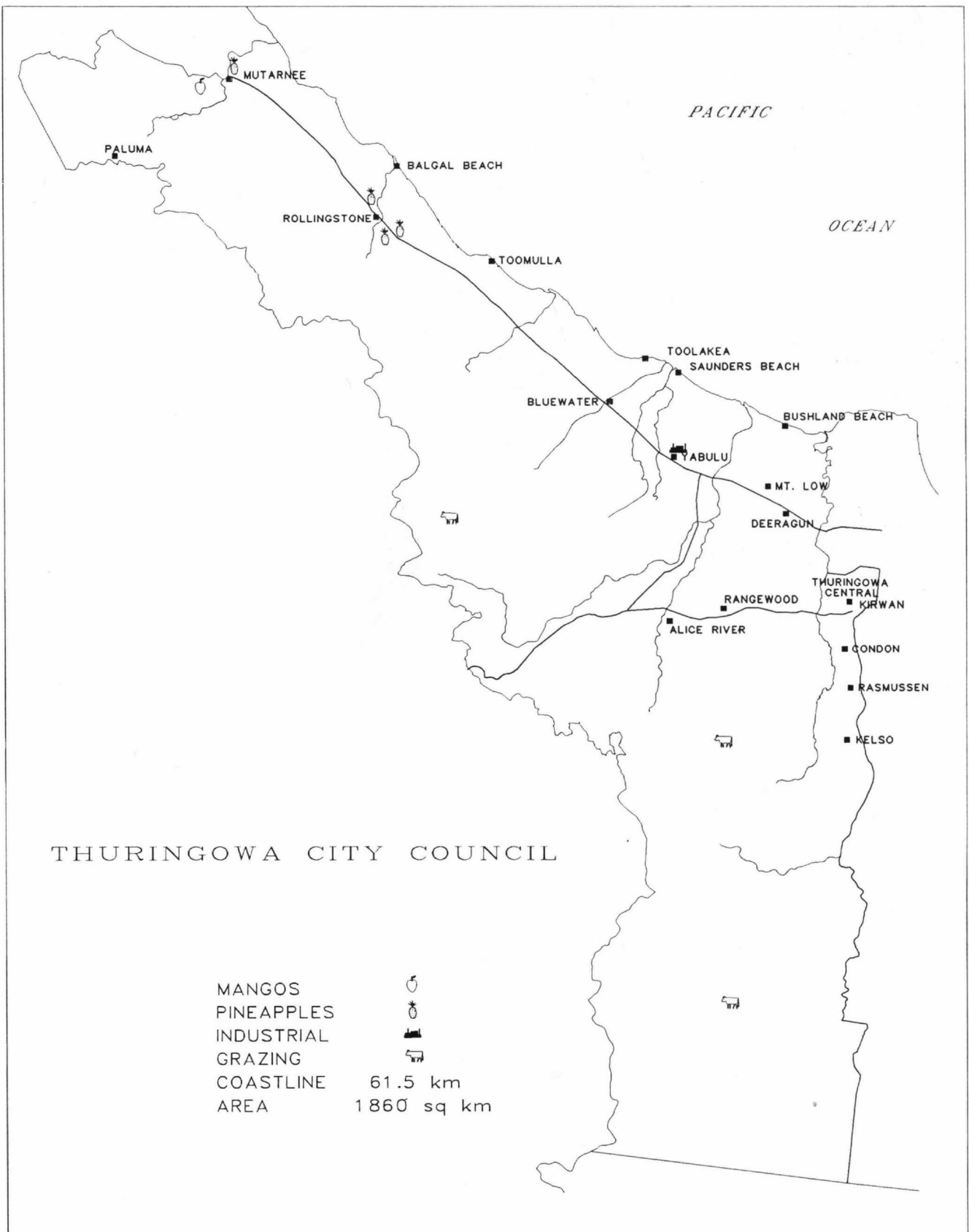
Map drawn by T. Feeney from information supplied by L. Henderson.



	Pineapples
	Potatoes
	Sugar Cane
	Cattle
	Grapes

THURINGOWA CITY AREA 4100 km²





*Thuringowa 1994*

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## Index

Acacia Vale 18  
aerodrome 18  
aeroplane 18  
Agnes 5, 21  
agricultural 9, 15, 16  
agriculture 7  
airstrip 15  
airstrips 15  
Aitkenvale 9, 13, 14, 18  
Alice Hotel 9  
Alice River 9, 19  
Alligator Creek 4, 7, 9, 11, 15  
Althea 5  
American 15  
American Military 15  
American Negro 15  
Americans 15  
ammunition dumps 15  
Andrew Ball 7, 22  
Antill Plains 7, 13, 15, 19  
Aplin 4, 11, 17, 19  
Armidale 14, 22  
Australian 15, 29  
Australian Military 15  
Ayr 11, 13, 18  
Ayr Divisional Board 13, 18  
Ball 7, 22  
balloon 18  
Bamford 15, 19  
Bamford Lane 15, 19  
bananas 9  
Bayswater Terrace 18  
Beagle 6  
Beck Road 19  
beef 9, 16  
beef cattle 16  
Belgian Gardens 18  
Bell 17, 19  
Black 5-7, 15, 19, 22, 23  
Black River 5, 15, 19  
blacksmithing 10  
Bluewater Creek 5  
Bohle River 4, 5, 15, 19  
boiling-down 7  
Bowen 7, 10, 11  
Boys 17  
Brabon 17, 19  
Brewery 18  
bullock team 9  
bullocks 7, 9  
Burdekin 6, 7, 9, 11, 16, 18, 22, 29  
Burdekin Falls Dam 16  
Burdekin River 7, 11  
Calcium 13  
Caledonian 14  
camp 4  
camps 15  
Cape Cleveland 6, 18, 19  
Cape River 7  
Carrier's Arms Hotel 18  
cattle 6, 7, 11, 16, 18, 21  
Causeway 4, 7, 11, 16, 18  
Chairman 2, 4, 11, 13, 18-21, 23  
charcoal 13  
Charles Rowe 11  
Charters Towers 7, 9, 11, 15  
Charters Towers Road 7, 15  
Chesney 17  
Chinese Gardens 9  
cigars 18  
Climate 4, 5, 29  
Cluden 7, 18  
coffee 7, 9

Companies 14  
Condon 16, 19  
copper 7  
Coral Sea 5  
cotton 7, 18  
Crystal Creek 5, 11, 13, 14, 20  
Cutler 17  
Cyclone 5, 29  
dairy farm 9, 19, 22  
dairying 13  
Dalrymple 7, 16, 18, 20, 21  
Dalrymple Road 7, 20  
Deborah Street 18  
Divisional Boards 10, 14  
Dunlop Street 20  
Dunlop's 18  
Eastern Highlands 5  
Edward Cunningham 6, 11  
Einiasleigh 7  
Endeavour 6  
Engineering Unit 15  
Facts 1, 2, 18  
farmer 18  
Fitzpatrick 4, 18, 20, 21  
Five Head Creek 7, 21  
Flinders Street 4, 11, 18  
Floral Emblem 4, 16  
Forno's 18  
Framara Drive 20  
Freeholder 11  
freezing 11  
fruit trees 9  
Garbutt 14, 18  
garden 9  
gardens 9, 18  
George Saunders 11, 23  
Gillman 20  
Giru 13, 15, 20-22  
Gladys van Tassell 18  
Gleeson 2-4, 7, 10, 17, 20  
Gleeson's Weir 7, 10  
gold rush 18  
Grazier 6, 11  
graziers 7, 9, 11  
Greenbower 4  
Greenvale 16  
Gulliver 18, 20  
Gulliver's 18  
gun emplacements 15  
Halifax 6, 11, 20  
Halifax Bay 11, 20  
Halifax Plains 6  
Hammond Way 21  
Hannons 9  
Haughton River 7, 13, 21  
Hermit Park 7, 14, 18  
Hervey's Range 5, 7, 9, 19  
Hewett 17  
Hodson 17  
horses 9, 15  
Hyde Park 14, 18  
Ice Works 18  
Idalia 15  
industries 16  
industry 7, 15, 16  
Invicta Mill 4, 15  
J. M. Black 7  
James Cook 6, 19, 20, 29  
Jarvisfield 6, 19  
Joe Kirwan 15, 22  
John Carr 11  
John Melton Black 6, 22  
Joint Water Authority 14  
Joseph Hodel 13, 17, 18  
Jubilee 14



---

Jubilee Bowling Club 14  
 Judith Street 18  
 Kanaka 18  
 Kelso 3, 16, 18, 19, 21-23  
 Kennedy District 6  
 Kiama 14  
 Kirwan 5, 15, 22  
 labour 7, 9, 15, 18  
 Lane 15, 17, 19  
 Lansdowne 6  
 Laudham Park 4, 21  
 Leonta 5  
 limestone 13  
 Logo 4, 16  
 Lucy Grey 9  
 MacLeans 9  
 Main Roads Commission 15  
 Major Creek 13, 18  
 Manager 11  
 Mark Watt Reid 7, 22  
 market 7, 9, 11, 13  
 market gardening 13  
 Market gardens 9  
 Martin and Sons 18  
 Melton Hill 7  
 Mermaid 6  
 mining 7, 9, 13, 14  
 Moongobulla 4, 15  
 Morrell 6, 18  
 Morrill 6, 18  
 Mt. Elliot 6  
 Mt. Spec 15, 22  
 Mt. Stuart 11, 16, 22  
 Mundingburra 14, 18  
 Mundingburra State School 14  
 Murray Sporting Complex 18  
 Mutamee 22  
 New Guinea 15  
 Nome 22  
 Ollera Creek 5, 13, 22  
 Oonoonba 15, 18  
 Paluma 3-5, 13, 15, 22  
 Paluma Range 5, 13, 15, 22  
 Peruvian 6, 18  
 Physical Description 4, 5  
 Pimlico 14, 18  
 pineapples 9, 16  
 Pinnacle Drive 22  
 population 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16  
 primary 2  
 Queensland Meat Export Company 11  
 Queensland Nickel 16  
 railway 7, 9, 11, 13-15, 18  
 Railway Estate 13, 18  
 Rainfall 4, 5  
 Rasmussen 22  
 ratepayers 15, 18  
 Rattlesnake 6  
 Ravenswood 7  
 recreation reserve 18  
 Reid 4, 7, 9, 15, 18, 19, 22  
 Reid River 4, 9, 15, 18, 22  
 Remount Depot 15  
 rendering 7  
 Repulse Plains 6  
 reticulated water 18  
 Retreat 10  
 Ringuet 17  
 road 4, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23  
 Robert Graham 11  
 Robert Towns 6, 7, 22  
 Rocky Springs 15  
 Rollingstone 5, 14, 18, 19, 22, 29  
 Rollingstone Creek 5  
 Rollingstone Hotel 18  
 Rosemary Street 18

Ross Creek 7  
 Ross Island 7, 13, 18  
 Ross River 5, 7, 9-11, 13-16, 21, 22  
 Ross River Dam 9, 16  
 Ross River Freezing Works 11  
 Ross River Road 7, 16  
 Saltwater Creek 11, 13, 20  
 Saunders Beach 23  
 School 13-15  
 Schools 2, 16  
 secondary 2, 16  
 Selector 11  
 Selectors 14  
 Shire 2, 4, 14-16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 29  
 Shire Council 2, 4, 15, 18, 20, 29  
 Shires 14  
 Sigma 5  
 South Townsville 13, 18  
 Spencer Walker 11  
 Springvale Station 23  
 Stan Hammond 21  
 Statistics 2, 4, 16, 29  
 Stieglitz 23  
 Stuart 11, 13-16, 18, 22  
 sugar 7, 9, 15, 16  
 sugar cane 9  
 survey 7, 22  
 Surveyor 11, 16, 22, 23  
 tapioca 9  
 Temperature 4, 5  
 Thomas Gleeson 10  
 Thornton's Gap 7, 9, 10  
 Thuringowa 1-7, 9-11, 13-23, 28, 29  
 Thuringowa City 3, 4, 16, 17, 19-23  
 Thuringowa Divisional Headquarters 15  
 Thuringowa Water Board 14  
 tobacco 9, 13, 18  
 toll 11, 18  
 Toonpan 9  
 Toonpan Creek 9  
 Towns 6, 7, 18, 22  
 Townsville 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 29  
 Townsville-Ayr Road 11  
 Tyrell 1, 17, 23  
 U.S. 44th General Hospital 15  
 Upper Ross 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 22  
 urban 1, 5, 16  
 Vickers Road 23  
 Villa Vincent 18  
 vote 18  
 wagon 9, 11, 18  
 Water 9-11, 14, 16, 18, 29  
 Weir 7, 10, 13, 15  
 Wells 14  
 West End 18  
 wet season 9  
 Wickham 6  
 William Aplin 4, 11, 17  
 William Kirk 11  
 Wolfram 13  
 wood cutting 13  
 Woodhouse 6  
 Woodstock 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 22, 23  
 World War II 15, 29  
 Yabulu 5, 16, 23

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