This brochure covers the first in a series of walking trails, designed to reveal Townsville’s rich heritage. The walks are “must do” activities for anybody who wants to experience the city’s diversity of historical architecture, lush tropical gardens and impressive array of natural attractions. The walks are filled with interpretive information and hundreds of pictorial opportunities to get to know the real Townsville. 

Townsville’s first European contact occurred in 1819 when Allan Cunningham, aboard the survey vessel Mermaid, landed on Cape Cleveland. A further 45 years elapsed before John Melton Black and his partner Robert Towns, after whom the city was named, founded Townsville in November 1864. Originally Townsville was a slowly developing seaport with pastoralists settling in the hinterland. Following the discovery of gold in 1867 it developed rapidly and by 1880 was the port for five major goldfields and the main supply centre of northern Australia. Later it became the centre for rich sugar growing districts to the north and south.

Today, Townsville is a vibrant modern city and the administrative centre of North Queensland, but still preserves a rich heritage from its golden past.
07. OLD TOWNSVILLE RAILWAY STATION
A splendid example of Edwardian Gothic architecture with Art Nouveau decoration. Note the asymmetric design and the ornate iron brackets supporting the awning. A railway station with an imposing façade and civic presence.

08. NEWMARKET HOTEL
The original Newmarket Hotel was built in 1872 and with expansion out from the city centre it became one of the leading establishments in Townsville. The present building was erected in 1932 in the style of earlier hotels with wide verandahs shading the street.

09. STURTS STREET RETAIL PRECINCT
This building was contiguous with the building next door. It is a fine example of a 1920s bank building although its current use has altered.

10. STANLEY STREET RETAIL Precinct
This small precinct was erected around the 1930s and is an example of typical medium size retail buildings erected in the inter-war period.

11. FORMER TOWNSVILLE SCHOOL OF ARTS
This building was erected in 1873. The School of Arts provided classes in cooking, drawing, singing and woodwork, among others. The theatre was host to many leading performers, including Dame Nellie Melba in 1909.

12. FORMER TOWNSVILLE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
 Constructed in 1921, this building was originally the first state high school in Townsville. It held 63 students but by the mid 1930s the Stanley Street wing was extended to provide extra classrooms.

13. FORMER TOWNSVILLE MAGISTRATES COURT
Built in 1872 to house Townsville’s Magistrates Court. It is a rare example of 19th century masonry courthouse. The concrete used in the foundation of the building was made from coral quarried on Magnetic Island.

14. FORMER SCOTT, DAWSON & STEWART WAREHOUSE
This is the only remaining warehouse of its kind in north Queensland. The lower storey was built in 1884 and is supported by enormous timber pillars and beams. The upper storeys were added in 1889. The crest adorning the façade represents the first logo of the Townsville City Council. During World War II the building was the RAAF headquarters for the North Eastern Area.

15. OSLER HOUSE
An elegant building erected in 1889 for Charters Towers mining magnate and politician John Deane for rental as a doctor’s surgery. For some years after 1901 it was used as a commercial travellers club, but for most of its life has been occupied by some of Townsville’s medical practitioners. It is believed that the first X-rays in Townsville were taken here.

16. FORMER DALGETY & CO.
Built in 1924, this building served as the offices of Dalgety & Co., one of the most successful pastoral companies in Australia. The building was constructed from reinforced masonry during the period where concrete construction dominated the building industry in Far North Queensland. It was the last of the substantial warehouses to be built in Townsville.

17. DENHAM CHAMBERS
Sympathetically restored, this building has housed members of the Townsville legal fraternity since it was built in 1901.

18. ROBERTS, LEU & NORTH BUILDING
This building originally had a balcony with elaborate cast iron balustrades. Its removal has emphasised the elegant classical line of the façade and the attractive parapet.

19. PERC TUCKER REGIONAL GALLERY
This was originally a single-storeyed building erected in 1885 for the Union Bank of Australia. The second storey was added in 1905. Note the arcaded verandahs and high ceilings designed deliberately to allow for the tropical climate. This building is now a regional art gallery.

20. FORMER TOWNSVILLE POST OFFICE
This building was erected in three stages from 1887 to 1890. It was designed by J.J. Clarke who was regarded as one of the leading 19th century architects in Australia and demonstrated the principal characteristics of a provincial post office. In early 2002 the post office moved out and was replaced by The Brewery.

21. W.H. GREEN BUILDING
The central shop was one of Townsville’s first brick stores, built for the early merchants Brodziak & Rodgers in 1878. The shops on either side date from 1887. Later, the chemist W.H. Green acquired the building and occupied the entire shopfront.

22. FORMER WILLMETT’S STATIONERY SHOP
With its timber balustrade, verandah and striking parapet, this is the last surviving building of its kind in the city. It was built in 1920.

23. FORMER KODAK BUILDING
The Kodak building was erected in 1920 with second storey extensions in 1929. The upper level consisted of workshops, printing and developing facilities. The ground floor was retail.

24. FORMER QUEENSLAND NATIONAL BANK
Built in 1879, this pleasantly symmetrical building was Townsville’s first two-storeyed brick commercial building. It is notable for its wide verandahs, fine decorative detail and ornate cast-iron balustrades. The Queensland National Bank dominated the banking industry in Queensland during the 19th century.