HERITAGE TRAIL 2.  EARLY TOWNSVILLE  Reveals the city’s earliest port-related commercial precinct in the original ‘heart of the city’. The walk traces the 1880s transformation of the Flinders Street East precinct from single storey timber structures into one and two storey masonry buildings. Reflected in the fabric and function of these buildings are glimpses of Townsville’s early character and development. The walk also includes regional attractions, Reef HQ and the Museum of Tropical Queensland.

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, 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 it still preserves a rich heritage from its golden past.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON TOWNSVILLE’S HISTORY PLEASE CONTACT TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL ON 13 48 10.

TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL
01. Former Samuel Allen & Sons
The building was constructed in 1881 for Samuel Allen & Sons, a leading mercantile company founded in Townsville in 1872 and closely associated with the development of Townsville as the commercial capital of North Queensland.

02. Former Rooney’s Building
In 1883 these purpose built shops and stores were erected for mining magnate E.H.T. Plant who sought to capitalise on the rich classical detail of F.D.G. Stanley’s design, and the inclusion of an open-sided gallery in response to the tropical climate.

03. Former Apothecaries’ Hall
Designed by W.G. Smith, this building was erected for the chemist William Clayton in 1885. The rock cliffs at the rear of the site were blasted to accommodate the two story rendered brick building.

04. Former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney
The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney purchased and renovated this building in 1896. Originally erected around 1890 it is an interesting example of a commercial building designed to suit the tropics.

05. Stanton House
J.F. Hoff, one of Townsville’s first butchers, originally constructed a two-storey commercial building on this site in 1886. The Anglican Diocesan Synod of North Queensland added a third storey closely mirroring the second in 1942. The building is named in honor of the Anglican Bishop of North Queensland, George Stanton.

06. Former Willmott’s Building
Willmott’s Printery, Bookshop and Stationery Warehouse started in Townsville on this site in 1873. Founder Thankful Willmott was active in civic affairs and contributed greatly to the development of the city.

07. Former North Queensland Mortgage & Investment Co.
The existing tenancy occupies two separate buildings dated c1886 and 1906: note the parapet comprising two sections. Together these buildings demonstrate the commercial focus of Fлиндерс Street East during the late 19th century and early 20th century.

08. Former Atkinson & Powell Building
This commercial building erected in the 1880s for chemists Atkinson & Powell replaced an earlier timber building. Note the beautiful classical elements of the façade.

09. Queens Building
Constructed in 1887, this building was erected for the early Italian settler P.V. Armati. The building is of the classic style with the parapet topped by a draped urn. The building’s name commemorates the jubilee of Queen Victoria.

10. Former Australian Joint Stock Bank
The Australian Joint Stock Bank was the first bank to open in Townsville (1866). This building was their second premises. Note the rich classical detail of F.D.G. Stanley’s design, and the inclusion of an open-sided gallery in response to the tropical climate.

11. Exchange Hotel
Erected for publicans Andrew and Rose Ball in 1882, this hotel replaced an earlier hotel (1869) destroyed by fire. Andrew Ball is credited with being the first European to explore the land on which Townsville was founded. The Exchange is Townsville’s oldest remaining brick hotel.

12. Magnetic House (Former AMP Building)
Famous Australian architect Sir John Sulman designed this building as the North Queensland headquarters of the AMP Society. Note the beautiful plasterwork and splendid cast iron awning on this elegant Victorian building.

13. Former Commercial Hotel
Built for publicans John and Edward Hanran in 1887, this building replaced an earlier single storey hotel (1869). Hanran’s hotel has undergone many changes over the years, including the construction of a front verandah extending over the footpath.

14. Former Bank of New South Wales (Amieu Building)
Constructed in 1887, this handsome and imposing building housed the second bank to open in Townsville, the Bank of New South Wales. In 1941, the property was sold to the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union, a prominent union movement in the North. The air raid shelter at the rear of the property is a reminder of the building’s military occupation during World War II.

15. State Government Offices
This attractive brick building erected during the 1930s was the second multi-department government office built in Townsville. The construction of this building demonstrates Townsville’s importance as a centre for government and administration in the north.

16. Former Customs House
Completed in 1902, this stately building with grand circular entrance and lookout for approaching vessels was part of a network of federation era customs houses.

17. ANZAC Memorial Park
Anzac Park has a long association with recreational and leisure activities in Townsville. Initially the park developed in association with adjacent sea baths becoming a popular place for picnics, open-air concerts and regattas. Later Anzac Park became a focus for community commemorative activities with the erection of memorials to events and persons of significance in Townsville’s history.

18. Former Queens Hotel
As the Queens Hotel, this building was renowned throughout the world as a ‘grand hotel’. Construction occurred in three stages between 1902 and the late 1920s. Queens Hotel played an important role in the lives of the local community as a popular venue for weddings and functions.

19. Former Criterion Hotel
The original hotel, built on this site in 1865, was one of the first buildings in Townsville. The Criterion Hotel was an important community place for memorial and accommodation. The current building constructed in 1904 replaced an earlier hotel destroyed by Cyclone Leonta.

20. Former Tattersall’s Hotel
The log hotel, ‘Townsville’, built on this site in 1865 was demolished by a cyclone in 1876. It was replaced in 1868, and re-named Tattersall’s. In 1899 owner and Mayor, Thomas Enright replaced the 1868 hotel with the existing brick building. The cast-iron balustrading is a unique feature of northern hotels.

21. Queensland Building
This three storey building was designed by M.C. Day of Sydney in 1892 as offices for the North Queensland Insurance Company, a subsidiary of Burns Philp & Co. Ltd.

22. Former Burns Philp & Co.
This building was once the headquarters of the Burns Philp & Co. empire founded in Townsville in 1873. Erected in 1895, the cupola-topped tower was originally a lookout for observing the arrival of the company’s ships into port. This building is important as the only surviving example of a federation era warehouse along Ross Creek.

23. Former Howard Smith & Co.
Erected in 1912 for the coastal shipping firm Howard Smith & Co., an early contributor to Townsville’s development as a major regional port, this building is an attractive example of an early 20th century commercial building.

24. Former Adelaide Steamship Co.
General merchants Aplin Brown & Co. Constructed this building in 1899 for lease to the shipping firm Howard Smith & Co. The building was later purchased by rival shipping firm, Adelaide Steamship Company, and extensively renovated.

25. Former Aplin Brown and Co.
Local construction company Rooney & Co. erected this building in 1887 at the request of Aplin Brown and Co., one of the town’s leading merchants. While extensive alterations have resulted in the verandah arches being enclosed, the building remains a fine example of an 1880s office building.