

RHSQ

The Royal Historical Society of Queensland

THE RHSQ

Bulletin

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The newsletter of The Royal Historical Society of Queensland
President: Dr Denver Beanland AM
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A TROCHUS SHELL LUGGER



RHSQ Digital Photo P55600

A Trochus Shell Lugger in the Endeavour River, Cooktown, c. 1957.

Photographer J.D. Goss.

This is one of the last remaining luggers from the fleet which operated in the tropical waters of northern Australia from the early 1900s to the mid-1950s. Japanese and indigenous divers collected trochus shells from the deep waters in dangerous conditions that routinely affected their health. The trochus (*Trochus niloticus*) was prized for its 'mother-of-pearl' lining, used principally for making buttons, and exported in bulk for overseas markets. While the ports of Thursday Island and Cooktown were important bases for the fleet, the main export centre was Townsville. Recovering from the loss of many of the Japanese divers interned during War World Two, it was reported in October 1950 that a record harvest of 120 tons of the shell was expected in the period to Christmas. (*Daily Mercury*, 3 October, 1950) The switch to plastic buttons in the 1950s marked the end of this lucrative trade. Trochus shells can still be found, having some popularity as home décor items and in the making of craft jewellery such as beads. (See also *Awakening, Stories from the Torres Strait*. <https://awakening.qm.qld.gov.au>)

President's Report

It is great to see the RHSQs Wednesday lectures are being well attended. The next Wednesday lecture will be on 8 December 2021 between 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm. 'Year of Disaster – Brisbane 1864' by Duncan Richardson, tells the story of 1864 in Brisbane. In that year, typhoid, cyclone and three major fires combined over nine months to make the citizens seriously reassess the way they were living and change the face of the city forever. The cyclone wrecked buildings, sank ships and brought a flood that destroyed houses and farms forcing some people to abandon everything and move on. The fires destroyed more than half of the town's business centre, leaving many people homeless. But typhoid was the killer, slipping through the quarantine system and striking at the heart of the settlement. This event is free for members of The Royal Historical Society of Queensland. For non-members, the ticket price includes entry to the Commissariat Store Museum. Booking on the website under 'Events' is essential.

Separation Day Celebrations, celebrating the separation of Queensland from New South Wales in 1859 will again be held at the Commissariat Store Museum between 6.00 pm and 7.30 pm on 10 December 2021. Admission is \$45 for members and \$50 for non-members plus booking fee. Dress is smart casual. Booking on the website under 'Events' is essential. Special guest speaker is Fiona Gardiner PSM who has recently retired as the Director of the Heritage Branch of the Queensland Department of Environment. She will speak about her heritage experiences. This promises to be a great relaxing occasion to socialise, meet and greet in addition to listening to Fiona.

Our first Wednesday Lecture in 2022 is on 9 February at 12.30 pm when Heather Clarke will present her topic "Dancing in Fetters; the popular culture of early Australian convicts". It is appropriate that this lecture be given in the convict-built Museum, the Commissariat Store. Booking is essential on the RHSQ website.

As most of you will be aware the first conference next year, in 2022, is entitled "Queensland's Earliest Surveyors – who, what and where". Because of Covid-19 restrictions it had to be postponed from this year. The conference will now be held on Saturday 12 February 2022. We apologise to those who were planning to attend this year and trust that you will be able to be present on 12 February. Apart from the change of date all other arrangements will remain the same. Registrations will commence at 9.00 am for 9.30 start. Again, details are on the RHSQ website under 'Events' and booking is essential.

The RHSQs appreciation and thanks go to our many volunteers for their dedicated work in assisting and supporting the Society in a variety of roles across our many functions and activities during another year. Without our many volunteers the RHSQ could not function as all aspects of your Society rely on volunteers, which include those that are members of Council. Also, a special thanks to our Manager Sophie for her work in managing the volunteers and her many other significant duties she undertakes for the Society. Also, our appreciation goes to our members who give so much support to their Society, the RHSQ, throughout the year. In conclusion, may I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year. I look forward to meeting members at forthcoming events.

Denver Beanland,
President.

Queensland Report

(Collected by Ruth Kerr from personal Queensland contacts, Affiliated Societies, Newspapers and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection official notifications)

Cooktown Cemetery – The Cooktown Historical Society, tourists and townspeople desire that maintenance be done in the Cooktown Cemetery. The Cook Shire Council has advised that it presently does not have any funding to undertake the work. The Cooktown Historical Society has decided to approach the council with an offer to assist with the necessary work needed, like replacement of old signs, cleaning up grave sites etc. Members of the Cooktown community will be invited to assist. Costs will be covered by the Society and/or sponsors. The General Meeting of the Society resolved that several of the Society's members meet with Council officers on 8 November to discuss the project. (Historical Society Meeting Notes)

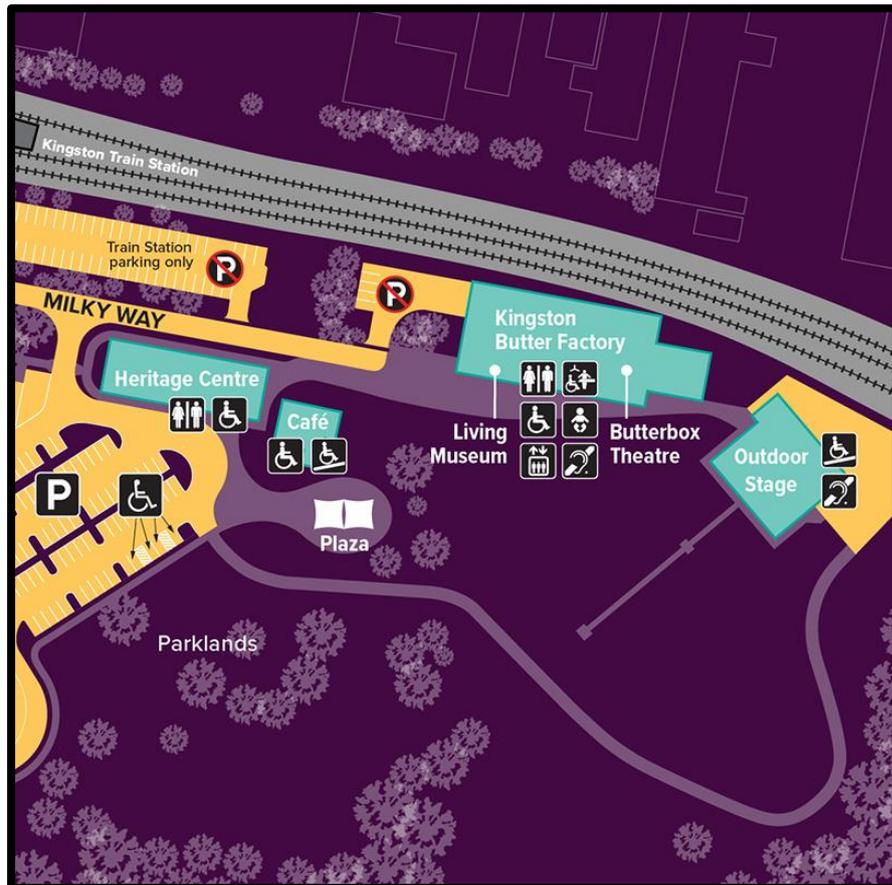
Kingston – The Logan City Historical Society has made a substantial donation of records of the Southern Queensland (Co-operative) Dairy Company Limited known as Kingston Butter Factory to the State Library of Queensland. Two members of prominent families associated with the butter factory in 1906, Robin Kleinschmidt and Lee Wendt made the presentation of the company Minutes and Ledgers. Electronic copies of company ledgers were also donated. (*My City Logan News*, 9-15 November 2021, p. 9 including photograph)



Queensland State Archives, Digital Image ID 23180

Kingston Butter factory 1952

The Kingston Butter Factory first opened in 1907, with a brick structure built around the old timber building in 1932-33.



Logan City Council Plan

Kingston Butter Factory Cultural Precinct Showing the Heritage Centre and Living Museum

Nathan – Griffith University - On 25 October 2021 the Department of Environment and Science received an application proposing entry of the Australian Environmental Studies Building, Griffith University Nathan Campus, 170 Kessels Road, Nathan in the Queensland Heritage Register as a State Heritage Place.

Roma - The original Roma burial ground from the 1860s was already established when the Queensland government constructed the railway to Roma, opened on 16 September 1880. The burial ground was located near the site for the railway station and yards in the late 1870s early 1880s. The first burial was of a George Robinson in 1863. The burial ground remained relatively undisturbed for nearly a century. There are photographs which show a small number of headstones still located there up until reasonably recent times. The Heritage and Property Sections of Queensland Rail has undertaken a ground penetrating radar study of the area recently. Correspondence in 1931 held by Queensland State Archives indicates that the District Superintendent of Railways applied to the Roma Cemetery Trustees to have the surviving tombstone near his house removed to the town cemetery. It was for a Mrs McEwen, wife of the mayor of the Roma Borough Council. The Under Secretary of the Home Affairs Department, Charles Chuter, wrote on 14 May 1931 to the Roma Cemetery Trustees that his department had no objection to the removal of the headstone to the Roma Cemetery. Maranoa Regional Council proposes to erect some signage about the burial ground and to identify the burials. The Member for Warrego, Anne Leahy MP and the Roma Family History Society are very supportive of the project. (Information supplied by Mr Greg Hallam, Historian, Queensland Rail; Peter Cummings, Queensland Rail, researched the Home Affairs Department correspondence at Queensland State Archives, ID 848449, A/3522, 31/3455)

Warra – The *Western Downs Town and Country* on 28 October 2021 at page 2 featured an article on the Western Mail train derailment accident on a bridge just east of Warra and nine kms west of Macalister on 24 July 1909. There were two fatalities, eight people were seriously injured and 100 received minor injuries. The waggon which derailed was a light four wheel one immediately behind the locomotive tender and was loaded with tents and equipment belonging to Lytton's travelling movie picture show.

The following extract from the report that was posted in the *Morning Bulletin* (Rockhampton) on 26 July 1909, p.5 shows the seriousness of the above accident:

SERIOUS RAILWAY ACCIDENT ON SOUTHERN RAILWAY.

TRAIN RUNS OFF RAILS.

TWO PASSENGERS KILLED FOURTEEN INJURED.

[BY TELEGRAPH.]

ROMA, July 25.

The mail train met with an accident five miles to the west of Macalister. Two people were killed and several injured. A special train conveying medical men and appliances has left for the scene.

BRISBANE. July 25.

Particulars with regard to the railway accident show that fortunately the train was travelling at a slow rate of speed. Had it been otherwise the result would have been disastrous. Five carriages were derailed and turned upside down alongside the permanent way, which was torn up for a distance of some yards, with the sleepers smashed and the rails twisted. The accident occurred just as the main portion of the train had passed over a low level bridge. The engine and tender and the guard's van were the only rolling stock that did not leave the rails. The impact tore the rails off the bridge and damaged the girders...

Library and Research Report

In this final Report for 2021, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to making the Library and Research services section of the RHSQ so progressive, positive and enjoyable. This includes our volunteers, researchers, and donors, as well as the Society's Office Manager, Sophie, and the *Bulletin* editor, Dr. Graeme Nicholson.

As set out in our Annual Report, the scope of the projects undertaken this year was amazingly broad given the restrictions under which we have been working. As previously indicated, the focus has been on digitising various categories of Library holdings and it is pleasing to report significant advances in this work.

A conservation survey, especially of books, has highlighted areas of concern, more photos already in the RHSQ collection have been digitized, preliminary work on assessing vertical files' content prior to digitization has begun and attention to confirming catalogue entries continues. A number of potentially valuable books have been moved to the Library from storage and will be assessed in terms of their conservation. We

have also been assisting with researching the provenance of items listed in the Museum catalogue. What to do with the 112 newspaper cutting books now in the library will be a project for 2022. All of these projects have benefitted from the installation of new computers, hardware and software, and the services of a professional technician.

Research enquiries were: history of historic home *Craigerne*; information on Caecilie Borchert/Bleck/Black, a Brisbane resident in the mid-1800s; history of pre-World War 1 Highgate Hill home and *Acacia Cottage*, Spring Hill; location of index to F.E. Lord's articles on Brisbane's historic homes; biographical information on noted Brisbane artists Percy Stanhope Hobday and his sister Augusta Hobday; access to Thomas Welsby's autobiography; Danish pioneers in the goldfields, particularly the Palmer River Goldfields. Ian Orchard and Kevin Power (longest serving conductor) visited the library to research the history of the Queensland Choir, the oldest community-based choir in Australia, founded in 1872.

Kay Cohen



Queensland Government Heritage Photo

Graigerne 1991

The Ageston Brickworks

It is not widely known, but there was a brick and tile works at Ageston as early as 1883. The following article from the *Logan Witness* of 21 July, 1883, p.3 describes the beginning:

The Ageston Brick and Tile Works.

A short time ago we mentioned in the Witness that Mr. Couldery, of the Ageston Plantation, at the mouth of the Logan River, had imported an improved brick and tile machine from England, and that he was about to commence the manufacture for sale of bricks and tiles in large quantities.

We paid a visit to the works the other day, and found Mr. Hickson, the manager for Mr. Coldery, hard at work, having got the machine fixed and making bricks of a very superior class.

The machine is the manufacture of Messrs. Clayton, Houlett, and Venables, and with a stronger engine than the one now used, would be capable of making up to 15,000 bricks or tiles per day.

The present engine is only ten horse power, and one of fourteen horse power is required to keep the clay well mixed and forced out regular...



Bricks set in the walls of the Harch Museum
BDHS Photo

Three types of bricks (common, fancy and firebricks), as well tiles and drain-pipes were manufactured. These were of sufficient quality to win prizes at exhibitions, and be sold on the Brisbane market and as far as Gympie. Ageston bricks were valued as furnace linings because of their ability to withstand 6000 degrees Fahrenheit.

Below is a photo of the Harch Museum at The Beenleigh Historical Village and Museum. Several Ageston bricks were used in its construction. The Beenleigh Historical Village and Museum is an open-air museum at 205 Main Street, Beenleigh. It preserves twenty buildings from Beenleigh's past which contain many collections related to the history of this district. Open 7.30 am to 3.00 pm, Telephone: (07) 3382 0608.



BDHS Photo

<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS</u> <u>DECEMBER</u>	<u>NEW MEMBERS</u>	
<p>Wednesday 8 December, 12.30 pm, "Year of Disaster – Brisbane 1864" by Duncan Richardson.</p> <p>Thursday 9 December, Council Meeting</p> <p>Friday 10 December, 6.00 - 7.30 pm, Separation Day Celebration at the Commissariat.</p> <p>Wednesday 15 December, <i>Bulletin</i> deadline.</p>	<p>Ronnie Thomson</p> <p>Barbara Sadowsk</p> <p>Gail Young</p> <p>Jon Douglas</p> <p>Ngairé Douglas</p> <p>Bruce Heiser</p> <p>Tracie Dornbusch</p>	<p>Brisbane City</p> <p>Urangan</p> <p>Coorparoo</p> <p>Wilston</p> <p>Bulimba</p> <p>Annerley</p> <p>Clayfield</p>

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Fax: 07 3221 4698	Fax: 07 3221 4698	Full-time Student (U25): \$ 33.00
email: info@queenslandhistory.org.au	email: info@queenslandhistory.org.au	Affiliated Society: \$ 55.00
website: www.queenslandhistory.org	The Society acknowledges financial assistance from: Commonwealth Government Heritage Grants; Qld Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund; Lord Mayor Adrian Shrinner, The Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund; Brisbane City Council; Our Honorary Auditor, Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd.	Libraries: \$ 66.00
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		Life Membership - Purchased after 10 Years as a Member \$ 5,500.00