



Special Points of Interest:

- *Townsville Museum 30 years of preserving Townsville's history*
- *Walker Street*
- *Last instalment of the James Morrill story*

A MESSAGE FROM TRISH

Our 30 year celebration was held on Monday 28 September at the Museum and what a wonderful morning it was. Mike Reynolds, the Mayor of Townsville who officially opened the Museum in 1985 attended as a special guest. Other guests included Mr. Scott Stewart MP, the Member for Townsville, former Mayor of Townsville and Thuringowa, Mr. Les Tyrell and his wife Pat, Councillors Sue Blom, Colleen Doyle and Ray Gartrell. The Director of Museum of Tropical Queensland, Mr. Peter McLeod also attended.

One of the original founding committee members, Mrs. May Abernethy attended and it was lovely to catch up with May on this occasion. The morning tea was well attended by members and volunteers from early days and invited guests. From those early days 30 years ago, the Museum has grown and changed in some areas but I sincerely hope it continues on for many many years into the future. This is Townsville's history being preserved for future generations to enjoy and is a very important part of our City's history. Geoff Hansen is working on a 30th anniversary book, which will be available to members very soon. I must thank Geoff for all the work he has done on this book with photographs and writing the history of Townsville Museum. It is very much appreciated.

Our AGM was held on Sunday 27 September and the committee was returned once again. All committee members work hard to ensure the efficient management of the Museum, new displays are done to keep it interesting for the visiting public. So far this year we have seen more visitors, which is encouraging. The entry fee of gold coin donation does not deter and this money assists with expenses for new displays. Four new displays have been done recently and soon another display featuring the early Telegraph and Telecom story will be completed, thanks to a generous donation from Telstra Alumina Townsville. On Wednesday the 28 October, another celebration will be held at the Museum for all the people who worked in the Townsville Telephone Exchange. This celebration is being organised by John McDonald.

2016 is officially Townsville's 150th anniversary and we have applied for a T150 grant through Townsville City Council to update the Timeline to reflect the 150 years of history. When this is completed it will be another asset for the Museum.

Enjoy the rest of the year.

Regards,

Trish Cronin

President

TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BUSINESS HOURS

Monday to Friday

9:00 am to 2:30 pm

First and Third Sundays of the month

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

ENTRY BY GOLD COIN DONATION

MEMBERSHIP FEES

(12 months from 1st July to 30th June)

Single \$ 11.00

Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

Monthly committee meetings are held at the Museum on the third Monday of the month at ten o'clock. All committee members are notified a week prior to the meeting.



Unidentified. Portrait of Frederick Walker. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland

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WALKER STREET, CITY

Named after Frederick Walker, the leader of the Rockhampton search party for Burke and Wills in 1861-62. The party on its return reached the Lower Burdekin starving and well nigh horseless. In 1864 he examined the country inland from Rockingham Bay and marked a telegraph line from the bay to the mouth of the Norman River.

WALKER, FREDERICK (1820–1866) BY DAVID DENHOLM

THIS ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED IN *AUSTRALIAN DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY*, VOLUME 6, (MUP), 1976

Frederick Walker (1820?-1866), pastoral superintendent, police officer and squatter, was born probably at Dawlish, Devon, England. His widowed mother reared six children in genteel poverty, one invalided and one mentally retarded. Soon after his arrival in New South Wales in the *Ceylon* in August 1844, Frederick became superintendent on William Charles Wentworth's Tala station on the Murrumbidgee River. He was big and commanding; his fine singing, heavy drinking, courage and easy acceptance of Aborigines soon made him popular.

Walker became clerk of Petty Sessions at Tumut on 12 April 1847 and at Wagga Wagga on 12 June. His views on racial harmony won him command of the native police force. He recruited and trained Aborigines, and in May 1848 led them to the disturbed Macintyre River district. Based first at Boggabri and then at Callandoon, the force soon impressed warlike tribes and some squatters, two of whom enlisted as senior subalterns; another, Augustus Morris, supported and advised Walker. Despite government objection to 'the Battle of Carbucky' in 1849 and his outspoken criticism of many squatters, the force was widely acclaimed in 1848-49. He declared that if white settlers broke the law protecting Aborigines, the latter had a reciprocal 'right'. He even proposed that protection be denied to settlers who took the law into their own hands.

In 1851 Walker's men were welcomed in Wide Bay and the Burnett. He stayed at Callandoon but some Burnett squatters joined William Forster and William Walsh to denigrate and oppose him. When he began to drink to excess in 1852 his incapacity seemed proven to all but close friends. Factions accentuated discipline problems in the force. Money was short and distance made it difficult to obtain authority for payments. He muddled through 1852 and 1853 by withholding some or all of his officers' salaries, but angry victims found the sympathetic ears of his critics, and he was accused of defalcations. Humanitarians like the missionary William Ridley, noting Walker's intemperance, began to accept hearsay reports of native police outrages; his view of race relations became discredited. The government supported him and rejected demands that control of the police be handed over to local benches of squatter magistrates. At Christmas 1854 Walker arrived drunk at a Brisbane Court of Inquiry. Summarily dismissed, he was vilified for two more years by Forster and Walsh.

In mid-1857, seeking self-respect, he joined Arthur Wiggins and two ex-troopers in search of new pastoral land. On the night of 27-28 October some of the Aborigines responsible for the Hornetbank massacre attacked the party. An Aboriginal trooper saved them but Walker and Wiggins were injured. He soon recovered and raised a force of ex-troopers; probably paid by squatters, it patrolled the disturbed Dawson River area until disbanded on instructions from Sydney. The new commandant of the native police, Edric Morisset, complained to the government that Walker was calling him 'the boy Commandant'. With peace restored and his ego on the mend, Walker joined in speculative tenders for thirty-one runs, comprising almost 800 sq. miles (2072 km²). Most were soon sold.

Walker's protests against the methods of the new native police were disregarded, but he remained a respected bushman, commissioned in 1861 to search for Robert O'Hara Burke and William Wills, and in 1866 to find a route for a telegraph line from Cardwell to the Gulf of Carpentaria. He arrived at the Gulf ill, and on the return journey on 19 November 1866 he died at Floraville on the Leichhardt River, and was buried there. The calumnies of Walsh and Forster obliterated all memory of his dream.

Mathew, J. (1995). *Highways and Byways*. Townsville, Queensland: Townsville City Council.

David Denholm, 'Walker, Frederick (1820-1866)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/walker-frederick-4784/text7965>, published first in hardcopy 1976, accessed online 22 September 2015.

THE GROWN-TOGETHER CHILDREN

BY NICK SHAILER, COLLECTOR

Amongst the postcards I recently purchased, there were two advertising postcards. The cards were advertising what would then be referred to as a freak show. The cards are of Daisy and Violet (5 years old), The Pretty Grown Together Children.

As one of the cards was sent to someone in Charters Towers this meant they must have been seen locally. I then searched Trove and found an ad for shows in Charters Towers and one for Townsville. I then searched the Townsville Daily Bulletin for 28th June 1913.

I then set out to find out any further information, and this was far simpler than I thought it would be. I found quite a useful amount of information on the internet.

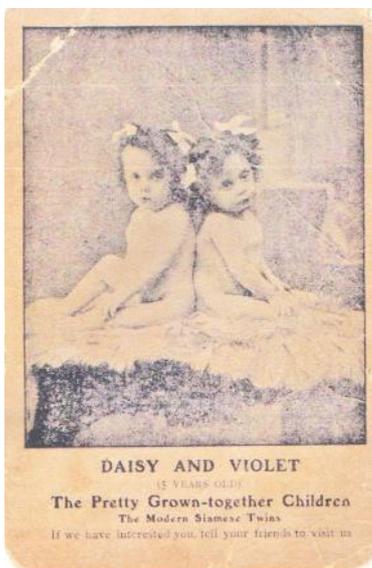
Daisy and Violet Hilton were born on the 5th February 1908 in Brighton, England to an unmarried barmaid and purchased by Mary Hilton, who it is said, could see value in showing them to the public. Mary Hilton first toured them around England in 1911 (the girls being just three years old) then through Germany, on to Australia, then to the USA where they remained for the rest of their lives. On the death of Mary Hilton in 1926, they were left to Mary's daughter Edith and her husband. In 1931, the girls sued Edith and her husband and gained their freedom for the first time in their lives. The girls were both very talented, having been trained in singing and dancing at an early age. Daisy could play the violin and Violet the saxophone. In the 1930s they went into vaudeville as "The Hilton Sisters Revue" and later performed in burlesque shows and a few movies.

By the late 1940s, their popularity faded and they struggled to make a living. In their vaudeville days they were recorded as making as much as £700 a week. In fact, the US Government took them to court as it wanted to tax them as two people at which the twins objected. The Government won.

On their deaths in January 1969, they were working in a grocery store in North Carolina, and they became victims of the Hong Kong flu.

When they were born, the attending doctor recorded that they were joined at the hips and buttocks and fused at the pelvis, shared blood circulation but no major organs. It was thought then that if they were to be separated, then one or both of them would die.

If you are interested in further information, just type in Daisy and Violet Hilton into your search bar. You'll find plenty of photos of them over the years too.



Below two articles from the Northern Miner 16th July 1913

THE MODERN SIAMESE TWINS

The grown-together children, Daisy and Violet, were exhibited on the Show Grounds yesterday for the first time in Charters Towers, and a large number of people availed themselves of the opportunity of seeing this wonderful curiosity. They will be on the Show Grounds again to-day, and will also be on view at night after 7 o'clock in the shop next door to the Excelsior Hotel.

SHOW GROUNDS TO-DAY.
TO-NIGHT IN SHOP NEXT
EXCELSIOR HOTEL.

EXTRAORDINARY ATTRACTION.
ALIVE! ALIVE!
THE GROWN TOGETHER CHILDREN
**DAISY
AND
VIOLET**
VISITED AT SYDNEY ROYAL
SHOW BY 40,000 PEOPLE.

The Sensation of this year's Rockhampton Carnival and Townsville Show.

THE GREATEST ATTRACTION
EVER SEEN IN AUSTRALIA.

THE GREATEST SENSATION EVER SEEN HERE.
DIRECT FROM THE ROYAL SHOW, SYDNEY.

THE GROWN TOGETHER CHILDREN.
THE GROWN TOGETHER CHILDREN.

ALIVE ALIVE ALIVE ALIVE ALIVE

DAISY AND VIOLET
Five Years Old
SEE THIS SENSATION
Opposite OLYMPIA PICTURES

Commence, Monday Night, at 7 p.m. Also on Show Ground.

RECENT EVENTS—CONGRATULATIONS TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM! 30 YEARS ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2015

In the early 1980s, a newly formed northern chapter of the Museums Association of Australia drew attention to the fact that artefacts from Townsville's past were being lost, destroyed or simply rotted away. Interested people were invited to a meeting to create a support group with the long term aim of establishing a museum in Townsville. Professor Barry Reynolds at JCU Material Culture Unit and President of the National Museums Australia Association attended and said that "he works in a city with no museum of its own and finding a suitable site was the main barrier".

Momentum built in late 1982 with a very supportive piece written by the Townsville Bulletin editor who concluded that what was needed were objects that tell the story of how people lived and worked through the decades since 1864. Such a museum could draw on the riches of the region too, for without the agricultural and mineral histories north, south and west, there would be no Townsville.

On the 14th June 1984 the foundation meeting of Townsville Museum was held. Townsville City Council offered the old Magistrate Court building as a site and the foundation committee accepted the offer. The group decided to incorporate and at the first AGM in August 1985, Terry Hurlock was elected President. The museum was officially opened on 28th September 1985 by Mayor Mike Reynolds.

Over the years, a few issues stand out. We received a substantial pharmaceutical collection from Mr Ralph Martin in 1989, and in 2000 we received the Dr Aubrey Bennett medical collection and a large doll collection bequeathed to us from Millie McLachlan. In 2003, we moved to our present site in Currajong at the request of the Council and reopened on 19th November. In 2004, we formally changed our role and name to Townsville Museum & Historical Society, taking on the role of researching and publishing historical documents. For VP 60, Geoff Hansen and Diane Menghetti wrote and edited a book entitled "War and Peace 1942-1946" which was a sell out. Recent publications are "Random Recollections", the memories of Don McDonald, and "Frontier Town" by Helga Griffin.

Our target in recent times is to secure our future with larger premises and better storage space. As President Trish says, "For this museum to be successful and ensure the artefacts and collections are housed in the right environment, new premises must be a priority so the history of the last 150 years of Townsville can be maintained, preserved and enjoyed by residents and visitors to our city."

Townsville Museum held a morning tea for invited guests to celebrate our 30 years of existence. Here are some photographs of this event.



President Trish delivering her speech in the outside breezeway at our premises in Currajong.



30TH ANNIVERSARY OF TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM—28TH SEPTEMBER 2015



Cr Colleen Doyle representing the Mayor, addressing the guests.



Cr Sue Blom, Chair of Community and Cultural Committee, speaking at the ceremony.



Mike Reynolds, Mayor of Townsville 1980-1989, one of the special guests at the celebration.



Geoff Hansen presenting May Abernathy with her Life Membership of Townsville Museum.



President Trish Cronin with Scott Stewart Member for Townsville.



Peter McLeod and Lorelle Schluter from the Museum of Tropical Queensland.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM—28TH SEPTEMBER 2015



Museum members Lyn McDonald and Dell Low.



Gordon Hodgson, Harvey Low and May Abernathy, Foundation and Life Member.



President Trish Cronin cutting the cake with Scott Stewart MP, Cr Sue Blom, Mike Reynolds, Cr Ray Gartrell and Cr Colleen Doyle .
Below: Cr Sue Blom, Julie Jones, Phyllis Rainford, Lydia Morton, Arthur Rains, Mary Bendall.



Bruce and Dorothy Gibson-Wilde signing the register for Noel Cronin.



Above: Colin Dempster with Ian Frazer. Sandra Sampson and Cr Ray Gartrell.



Left: Nick Shailer, Zanita Davies, Judith Jensen and Geoff Jensen.



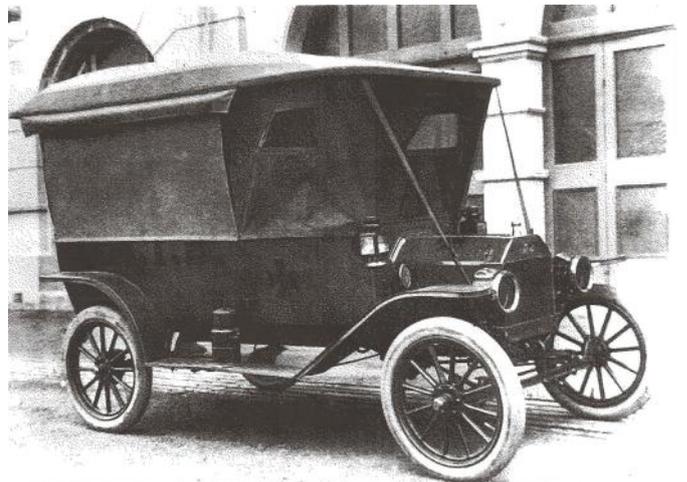
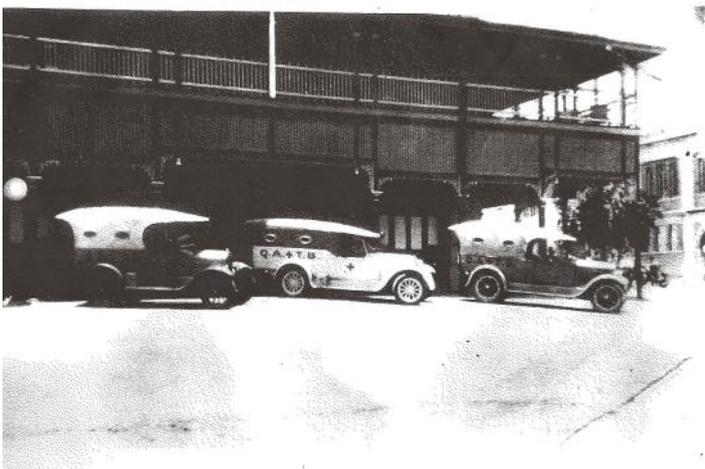
Right: Trish Cronin welcoming Former Mayor Les Tyrell and Pat Tyrell.

NEW DISPLAY ON TOWNSVILLE AMBULANCE SERVICE—HALL 1

Townsville's first ambulance service evolved from a meeting of concerned citizens at the Town Hall on 19th October 1900. Mr G. R. King was appointed Superintendent.

A local butcher donated a horse and buggy to the brigade and stables were built in Sturt Street to accommodate them.

"The bearers worked out an ingenious method to have the horse ready for action in the shortest possible time. By means of ropes and hooks they had all the necessary harness suspended above the buggy. When a call was received, the horse was backed into the buggy, a string was cut, and the harness fell down over the horse's head. All the bearer had to do was tighten the girth and he was ready to go. Later another horse and buggy were acquired and then in 1914 the Brigade received its first ambulance vehicle. However the horse remained active for quite some time after this."



Tales From the Night Soil Cart

retold by Nick Shailer

This second story also involves a train and took place at the Queens Road railway intersection. The night soil cart driver had tried to get across the line in front of an on-coming train and had not made it. The driver and horses were ok but the cart was a mess and there was sh.. and sh.. cans everywhere. The local policeman arrived on the scene to find the cart driver poking about in the mess with a long stick. On enquiring what the driver was doing, he was informed by the driver that he was looking for his coat.

The policeman then said that he did not think the coat would be worth wearing, having been in the mess. The reply from the driver was that he too wasn't worried about the coat but that his sandwiches were in the pocket.



AMAZING ADVENTURES OF JAMES MORRILL—PART 4—CONCLUSION

In recent weeks, we were given a range of items which once belonged to a long time resident of Townsville, Miss Grace Mills. One of the items was a book on the history of Townsville, called "The Townsville Story", written by Rapier [Mr Les Watson], and published in 1952.

Continued from June 2015

FATE'S STRANGE TRICKS

His new friends promised to see him back to civilization, but first Morrill returned to his tribesmen for one more day. He told them of his intentions. They begged him not to leave them, but when he proved adamant, asked him to tell the white men not to shoot aboriginals, because they meant no harm.... a rather pathetic touch.

When Fate selects a man and decides to weave into his life a fantastic and sometimes incomprehensible pattern of circumstances, it undertakes the task with gusto. Thus it was with James Morrill.

He was taken to Bowen. After a short stay there Mr James Gordon, local Sub-Collector of Customs, took him to Brisbane.

Here the pattern showed a definite flash of fantasy.

The man who, a few months before, had been a naked "white aboriginal", hunting with spears and fighting tribal wars, was presented to the Governor of the day, Sir George Ferguson Bowen.

Morrill returned to Bowen, became a member of the crew of the pilot boat, and in 1864 (the year Townsville was discovered) was married.

But he was made aware that his old mate, Fate, was still around, through two extraordinary sequels.

For Morrill, Castle Hill, Townsville, had been the Hill of Hope. On countless occasions he had laboriously climbed to its summit to burn smoke signals, and at night, beacons into which he had built all his hopes and yearnings and fears. What a crushing burden of loneliness must have sat upon the heart of that man as he maintained his forlorn vigil during the night.

DRAMATIC RETURN

It was in 1865 that Morrill again saw Castle Hill.

On a sparkling winter's morning, the schooner "Ariel" nosed into Cleveland Bay to deliver at Townsville the first bonded goods ever to enter the port.

The captain was at the helm, and he divided his time between navigating and gazing with thoughtful, sombre eyes at the huge bulk of Castle Hill as it towered over the little settlement and loomed nearer and nearer.

The captain's name was James Morrill.

In June, 1866, at the first sale of Townsville land, held in Bowen, Morrill purchased a quarter acre of land in the area where, only three years before, he had hunted as a "white aboriginal"!

He actually lived in Townsville for a little while, but his dramatic and colourful saga was swiftly drifting to a close. Perhaps Fate had exhausted her ideas or was tiring of the sport.

Having survived more perils and missed a violent ending on more occasions than 1000 men will in a lifetime, Morrill eventually came to terms with Death in peaceful circumstances. He died at Bowen in October, 1867, leaving a wife and posthumous son.

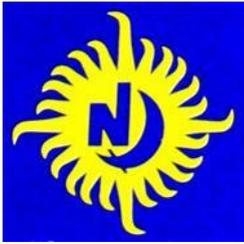
Despite his astonishing career, Morrill's grave in the Bowen Cemetery carries "no stone to tell his story". Perhaps one day it will be duly honoured.

Not that it matters. Whether his soul was claimed by the aborigines for their celestial happy hunting grounds, or whether he went to the white man's heaven, is a moot point. But it is to be hoped that, wherever he dwells, he walks with kindred spirits; with others who have also known the unusual, for James Morrill's life produced one of the most adventurous stories to be found in Australia's early history.



DEATH OF MR JAMES MORRILL—NEWSPAPER REPORT

It is our mournful duty to record the death of the pioneer white man in the North—James Morrill—which took place Monday last. For some time he had been suffering from the effects of a wound received in the knee during his sojourn among the aborigines, which had been attacked with rheumatism, and ultimately brought on inflammation and fever; and resulted in his death. It will be a satisfaction to his numerous friends to hear that during his last illness he was unceasingly attended by Dr W. S. Smith, and that Drs Borck and Storch were frequently summoned to the sick-bed in consultation. The history of the deceased was most extraordinary, and could only be paralleled by that of the "Wild white man" in Victoria. Owing to his reticence on the subject but little is known of his exile among the blacks. When he was first discovered, a pamphlet was issued by Mr. Gregory of Brisbane; but this account was very meagre. Mr. E. J. Byrne was engaged compiling a more extensive history of his life among the blacks when Morrill died. He was a native of Abridge near Maldon, a village in the County of Essex. At an early age he was appointed to his father's trade as a millwright, but the dull routine of the workshop soon disgusted him, and—although much against the wish of his parents— he was allowed to go to sea. In the capacity of a sailor he remained for some years in the small coasting vessels, and ultimately shipped for Australia in H. M. S. *Ramalea*, then employed conveying troops. At Sydney he was paid off, and then shipped for a trip to New Zealand and back in the *Terror*. On the termination of this voyage he was engaged on board the *Peruvian*, of Dundee, bound for China; and left Sydney in this ill-fated vessel on the 27th February, 1846. Soon after leaving port they encountered very severe weather, and on the ninth day struck on the Horse-shoe Reef. The jolly and long boats were lost in endeavouring to launch them; but at last a raft was made from the spars of the vessel, and the passengers and crew left the doomed ship on this frail contrivance. For forty-two days they were buffeted about by the un pitying waves; every day witnessing the loss of some of the party, and suffering a misery that cannot be imagined or described. On the 11th day of April the raft was cast on the southern point of Cape Cleveland, and of the twenty-one souls who left the vessel, but seven remained to tell the appalling tale of suffering. The succeeding fourteen days were devoted by the party to obtaining shellfish, with which to preserve life. At the end of that time they were discovered by a party of natives, and taken to their camp at Mount Elliott. As time rolled on the exposed life which the castaways were compelled to lead brought on sickness, and one by one the survivors perished, till Jemmy—whose iron frame had been proof against all hardships— alone survived. Gradually he became accustomed to their mode of living and inured to all hardships; and for 17 years he succeeded in accommodating himself to the manner of the people. He grew to be the favourite and the envy of the surrounding tribes, and gradually he forgot the use of his mother tongue. Frequently word was brought into the camp that a sail had been seen, or a party of whites were on the coast; and then how breathlessly must Jemmy have listened to these stories, calculating his chance of escape, but not daring to make known in the camp that he wished to desert his friends and join the palefaces. At last he communicated his wish to his sable friends, and they, although at first very reluctant, allowed themselves to be persuaded, and on his promising to return, with tomahawks, blankets, etc, allowed him to go. Cautiously he had to approach the hut of the white man for fear of being shot, and when he was discovered the only words he could remember were "What cheer, shipmates?" and "I am a British object!" By the kindness of this party he was forwarded to Bowen and thence to Brisbane, where he gradually regained the use of his native language and was appointed by the Government to the situation of bonded warehouse-keeper at Port Denison. In this situation he remained till his death, always (sic) being remarkable for his abstemiousness and orderly conduct. Since his settlement in this town he had taken unto himself a wife by whom he had one son who survives him. Although Jemmy never expressed a wish to return to the haunts of his black friends, his sympathies continued with them. He always maintained that the aborigines might be better managed by kindness than by harsh treatment, and would willingly have accepted office in the police where he could have acted as mediator between the whites and the blacks, but the Government appear to have been afraid he might again join the natives, and act, perhaps, in union with them to the injury of the flocks. Morrill believed in the existence of some of Leichhardt's party, and when the project of the search party was mooted, he volunteered, through our columns, to join the expedition. Jemmy was devotedly attached to his wife and child, and during his late illness, when his mind passed, as in a dream, through the scenes of misery and care of his exile, he always returned to his wife and child, and his only care seemed to be, how they should in future be provided for. He was a general favourite throughout the district and when his death became known in the town on Monday, the whole of the flags of the ships in harbour, and at the various stores throughout the town were lowered to half-mast. The funeral took place yesterday, and was attended by a large number of mourners, including many of our influential citizens. The men belonging to the pilot station had asked and obtained permission to act as bearers to their old comrade's remains; the police also attended and moved in the procession next the hearse; then came the Mayor, the Police Magistrate, followed by a long string of vehicles, horsemen and pedestrians. During the reading of the solemn and beautiful service of the Church of England by the Rev. E. Griffiths many an eye glistened with the unbidden tear as some act of kindness of the departed was recalled. James Morrill was by no means an old man, his age being only 41, but he was rendered prematurely aged by the troubles and hardships he had encountered during his adventurous life.

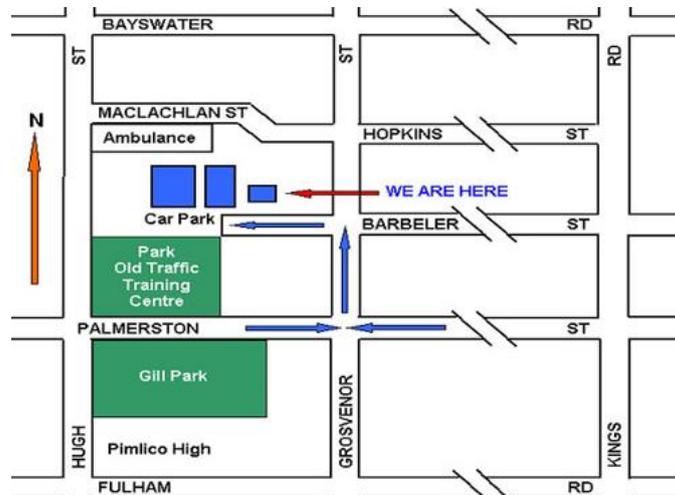


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Website: <http://www.townsvillemuseum.com.au>



—CONGRATULATIONS TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM—
30 YEARS OF PRESERVING TOWNSVILLE’S
HISTORY 1985-2015

OUR SUPPORTERS



Support
 The
 Groups
 That
 Support your
 Museum

