A HERITAGE WALK
MACKAY CEMETERY

Cemetery inscriptions have always fascinated people. They are usually brief and summarise lives in terms of beginnings and ends, but with very little information about what went on in between. This brochure aims to guide the reader in a walk through some of Mackay Cemetery’s most interesting and historic headstones.

About Mackay Cemetery

The Mackay Cemetery, believed to have been on this site as early as 1868, was not Mackay’s original burial ground. The 1863 town survey indicates an eight-acre (3.2 ha) cemetery bounded by the Pioneer River on ground situated between today’s Chain and Endeavour Streets, but it is not known if the area was ever used for burials. Graves were known to exist, however, in a location on the eastern side of Byron Street between Gordon and Park streets. As both early sites were prone to severe flooding, the cemetery was gazetted on high ground 2.5 km from the settlement along the ‘Nebo Track’.
Soon after the inception of Mackay Municipal Council on December 1, 1869, preliminary steps were taken to fence the cemetery and to organise a system of management. The Mackay Cemetery Trust was established in March, 1871. Trustees elected were: T Henry FitzGerald (planter and surveyor, Alexandra), John Spiller (planter, Pioneer), David Hay Dalrymple (chemist, Mayor of Mackay), George Smith (agent, Mackay), William McBryde (storekeeper, Mackay).

The Mackay Cemetery Trust operated until 1934, when legislation was introduced that ceded control of cemeteries to local authorities.

As part of the early development of the cemetery, Reverend E Tanner (Anglican) and Reverend PM Bucas (Catholic) were invited to offer suggestions, draw up rules and help raise funds for fencing and improvements.

The ground was surveyed and divided according to religious denominations, with an alien/heathen section at the western end and areas set aside for public burials (designated police, hospital or pauper in the registers).

Early fees adopted were £1/5s/0 for an adult burial, and 12s/6p for a child, double for Sunday burials. The cost of an eight feet by four feet private plot was £1/2s/6p extra.

In July, 1873, Mr W Clemments was appointed sexton and secretary for 12 months but was employed for much longer. He was council pound-keeper as well. His sexton’s salary was £30 per year plus 10 shillings for each grave dug. Until Mackay’s population increased, Clemments’s quarterly grave-digging allowance was meagre! Mr Sinclair became sexton in 1880 and was succeeded by William Cornford, who was in turn succeeded by his son.

Permission to erect the first headstone was granted to William Landells in April 1874, over the graves of his daughter Hannah (died January 1869) and his son Walter (died November 1873). In 1874, Benjamin Kemp was given leave to erect a headstone over his daughter Ada’s grave.

The first name in the register of burials is that of Grace Jack, who was buried on August 1, 1873. Prior to late October 1864, Mackay district deaths were recorded at Broadsound (St Lawrence) courthouse.
Commence your walk at the Shakespeare Street entrance

1 Church of England Section 2, Row 24, Plot 4
KEELEY, Charles
Born 02.06.1833, London;
Married 25.11.1861 - Mary Kelly, North Brisbane;
Died 20.04.1907 Sydney

This headstone is a memorial to one of Mackay's earliest settlers, as Charles Keeley is buried in Sydney's Waverley Cemetery. Keeley arrived in Australia in 1849 under engagement to the Burra Copper Mining Company, South Australia, as a brickmaker. He worked on the Victorian goldfields from 1851 to 1858 and in Brisbane and Rockhampton before coming to Mackay in 1863. Here he opened the first licensed hotel, the Golden Fleece, in the then wool port. While he invested extensively in town, suburban and rural land, introduced vegetable-growing and poultry production, and served for 14 years on the Municipal Council, he retained his interest in copper mining as managing director of the Mount Orange Copper Mining Company and a shareholder in the Pinevale Copper Syndicate.

2 Church of England Section 2, Row 20, Plot 43
FATNAHOONA, John
(FATANA'ONA, Kwailiu)
Died 25.03.1906

A Fataleka man, Kwailiu was blackbired from Malaita (Solomon Islands) to work in the sugar fields of Mackay. As a time-expiree, he returned home, married his fiancée Urarani and together they came back to Mackay as indentured labourers. They worked at Meadowlands and Pioneer plantations, and eventually settled at Farleigh. After 20 years, Kwailiu and Urarani and their five children chose to be returned to their homeland. They were shipwrecked and came back to Mackay once more. The Daily Mercury reported Kwailiu's funeral in eloquent terms (though not mentioning his name), indicating the esteem in which he was held. More than 250 Islanders gathered for the ceremony at the graveside. The surname is now anglicised to Fatnowna.
Gustav Muller, journeyman locksmith, arrived in Queensland from Germany in 1863 on the ‘Johan Cassar’. He travelled via Rockhampton to Peak Downs where he was engaged as a shepherd by Charles Walker at Cotherstone, before coming to Mackay to work for John Spiller at Pioneer and Charles Walker at Dumbleton. Between 1868 and 1878, he lived in Germany and in Baltimore (US) where he owned businesses. On his return to Mackay, Muller worked at Barrie (Eton), then at Marian Mill, eventually purchasing land at Hilldale for growing cane. His first two wives died in childbirth. Descendants still farm in the Mackay district.

Before migrating to Australia, Aeneas Munro trained for the law. His interests in mining and journalism were sometimes combined and between 1883 and 1894 he worked as a freelance journalist and an editor on newspapers in Mackay and in Townsville. Munro, who suffered chronic ill health, published ‘The Sugar Fields of Mackay’ in 1895 as a pamphlet, providing a valuable record of Mackay’s sugar industry at that time.

William Landells came to Mackay in February 1863 from the Clermont goldfields. He operated a butchery and from 1872 the hotel known as the ‘Ship Inn’. His slaughter yards were on the riverbank near Nelson Street and then at the western end of Shakespeare Street. After a spell as a hotelier in Mt Britton, Landells returned to farm in Paradise Street and finally at Alligator Creek. He was an original director of Racecourse Central Sugar Co Ltd.
Daniel Craine migrated to Melbourne, proceeding to the goldfields at Ballarat and Bendigo. By 1863, he was in Rockhampton and came to Mackay early in 1864 en route to Fort Cooper (Nebo). Later that year, he set up a grocery business in Port Mackay. A master baker, he established his Scrub Bakery in a belt of scrub between Sydney and Wood streets. In 1884, Craine built the Imperial Hotel in Victoria Street.

Born in Maitland, New South Wales, Edmund Dimmock followed his brother George (later Town Clerk and Mayor) to Mackay. He was a saddler for a short time before becoming a hotelier, first at the Great Northern (Eton) and later at Wills Hotel. With JA Michelmore and William Bagley, Edmund Dimmock founded the firm of J Michelmore and Co, wholesale wine and spirit merchants, grocers, general and shipping agents. Though he held no public office, Dimmock took a great interest in public affairs and in the promotion of legitimate sport. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and the Druids Lodge.

Dan Conner, a pastoralist, was establishing Collaroy Station in the Broadsound district in July 1860 when John Mackay’s exploration party passed through on their return from discovering the Pioneer River Valley. Conner had previously been in partnership with Henry Bates Fitz at Rio Station (Dawson River) from 1853 and had owned Princhester, Willangi and Marlborough
stations. In July 1862, Conner visited what was to become Port Mackay with Andrew Henderson and subsequently built one of the district’s first homes at Landsdowne.

In Mackay, he was a carrier and then Excise Officer and Inspector of Distilleries and a prominent member of the Mackay Turf Club. Connor’s Range and Connor’s River bear his surname.

English-born William Deller came to Queensland in 1873 with his wife, the former Emily Louise Smith. Arriving in Mackay, Deller was engaged as a draper in the business of John Howard Sharp, a relative of Emily. For a while, Deller was in a drapery partnership with AB Williamson, but later rejoined Sharp to establish the well-known firm, Sharp, Deller and Co. Following Sharp’s sudden death in 1894, Deller acquired the business on his own account. He was secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, the Hospital Committee, State Schools’ Committee, a Lieutenant in the Defence Force and a Church Warden of Holy Trinity Church of England.

Andrew Diehm arrived in Brisbane in 1854 as a fare-paying passenger. In 1858 and again in 1859 and 1860, Diehm joined explorer William Landsborough on inland expeditions in search of pastoral country, initially to the Burdekin, and then to Bowen Downs and finally on an inspection with the Land Commissioner. In 1862, Diehm went to Fort Cooper and brought some of the first loads of wool to Port Mackay, where he finally settled. He followed several pursuits, converting his grocery business on the corner of Victoria and Wood Streets to the Australian Hotel. Diehm was an alderman and a member of the Chamber of Commerce.
Early in 1862, Andrew Henderson was overseeing Newstead Station (Fort Cooper District) for owner Mr J Wilmott, when he realised the potential of the newly-discovered Mackay (later Pioneer) River as a port. Relinquishing his position, Henderson proceeded to Rockhampton where he arranged for the frame of a pre-fabricated building to be constructed. He overlanded from Rockhampton with his newly-arrived nephews, James and Andrew Robb, arriving at the Pioneer River in September 1862. Henderson’s prefab structure in Sydney Street was one of Mackay’s first dwellings. Henderson had grazing and sugar interests including Beaconsfield Mill, built in 1884.

Sharp received his education and business training as a draper in England, arriving in Sydney in 1858 under engagement of Farmer & Painter. In 1860, he went to the Snowy River goldfields and then was in business in Brisbane and Rockhampton before opening his drapery in Mackay in 1868. His two-storey Red Arcade, in Sydney Street, was Mackay’s first brick building. Sharp disposed of his business in 1872 to Michael Reeve, visited England and returned to recommence business in Mackay which eventually became Sharp, Deller & Co. Sharp was active in sporting and charitable organisations and the Church of England. He also chaired the Early Closing Association.

Frederick Crisp was licensee of the Riverview Hotel at Keeley’s Landing near Rockleigh, in 1874 to 1875. His death from fever left his widow and four young sons in extenuating circumstances and a subscription list was opened to provide for their needs. A fifth son was born three months after his father’s death. In September 1881, Mrs Crisp paid two pounds for Frederick’s grave and 10 shillings for the attractive headstone.
Houston Stewart Dalrymple Hay, after whom Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay are named, was Sub-Collector of Customs, Harbour Master and Pilot at Mackay from 1870. He was also secretary of the committee which worked for the establishment of the Port Mackay State School. Of naval background, he held firm opinions about the punishments that should be meted out to what he called “the worthless deadbeats who frequent the public houses of Mackay.” Hay’s sudden death from nephritis left his wife a widow with eight children aged between 13 years and 3 months.

Frederick Ehsmann trained as a cabinetmaker before migrating to Australia at the age of 19. Following his arrival in Mackay in 1864, he worked on the construction of several early sugar mills, farmed with his uncle at Silent Grove and then returned to Mackay and his trade. The family farmed at ‘Cressbrook’, North Mackay on the site now occupied by the Mater Hospital. Frederick and Harriet Ehsmann were one of the early couples married by Reverend Edward Tanner at his Lagoons residence ‘Kirkham Grange’. Five of their children, four of whom who died in infancy, are buried with them.

Charles James King, the youngest son of the Reverend Walter King, the Venerable Archdeacon of Rochester, Kent, England, was an early Mackay solicitor who, with Edward Briggs Kennedy, became a financial partner with Thomas Henry FitzGerald in developing Meadowlands Plantation and Mill in 1869. He built the first ‘Fryerne’ residence on his Lagoons’ property.
Henry Bowyer Black, of a literary and political background, came to Victoria in the early 1860s, then to Mackay to become a partner with his brothers in 'The Cedars' plantation. HB Black became a correspondent on sugar matters with southern newspapers and in December 1877, began the publication of the Mackay Standard with former government works foreman EJ Welch. Black was responsible for the draft bill of the Sugar Works Guarantee Act and the Sugar Works Association Act. Thrice Mayor of Mackay, he was the first president of Mackay Ambulance Committee, the Mackay Bowling Club and a member of Mackay Harbour Board, District Hospital and School of Arts Committees. His interest in theatre culminated in his writing and producing an operetta, Zelma. Blacks Beach commemorates his name.

Henry Lindesay Black came to Australia at 16 to gain colonial experience on cattle stations. From 1874 until 1881, he managed Hamilton Station, before entering into partnership in 1883 with HJ Wallace, an auctioneer, commission agent and proprietor of livery stables. In 1885, Wallace withdrew from the business and Black continued as HL Black. In 1914/1915 he took his sons Frank and Archie into the business. From 1882 to 1919, he was secretary of the Mackay Turf Club, advisory steward of the North Queensland Racing Association, and a noted jockey. He was a member and treasurer of the Mackay Masonic Lodge, a director of The Daily Mercury and served as Mayor of Mackay in 1888. Henry Black’s funeral was Mackay’s first motor-led funeral.
The eldest daughter of Captain G Macquarie of the 42nd Royal Highlanders (Black Watch) and great-niece of Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of NSW and Governor-General of Australia, Flora was the wife of Captain WR Goodall, Mackay’s Police Magistrate from 1871 and later Queensland’s Commissioner for Crown Lands. Goodall was remembered as a man of refined and cultured intellect and his wife as a lady of varied accomplishments, of kind and amiable disposition. Four years after Flora’s death, Captain Goodall married her sister Marianne Willison Macquarie in Mackay.

William Marsh trained in business in London and Sydney before entering partnership as Seaward, Marsh and Genge at Port Denison in 1863. After Genge’s death, Seaward returned to Sydney and Marsh bought the business of Brisbane merchant and Mayor, WS Warry, trading in Bowen as Warry and Marsh. This firm had a branch in Mackay in 1869, conducted by employee Charles Webster.

The store dispensed goods via bullock wagon as far as Clermont. In 1873, Marsh sold out to Warry and travelled to England. On his return to Australia in 1875, Marsh entered a partnership with Charles Webster, registering the firm as Marsh and Webster on 1 July 1875. Their store ‘The Corner’ occupied a prime position at the corner of Sydney and Victoria streets, trading until 1963 when it was sold to David Jones.
Both men were prominent in the life of the town. William Marsh was influential in establishing the Fire Brigade and the Mackay Chamber of Commerce, was Mayor of Mackay in 1878 and a prominent member of Kennedy Royal Arch Chapter and Mackay Masonic Lodge. Charles Webster was a member of the Pioneer Divisional Board, School of Arts, District Hospital Committee and president of the Chamber of Commerce. He was a Holy Trinity Churchwarden at the time of his death. Business partners and neighbours at the Lagoons, Marsh and Webster lie side by side in death.

Charles Walker became the partner with Alfred Hart Lloyd in Dumbleton Plantation in 1869. Lloyd was the owner of Blue Mountain Station, while Walker had come from the Darling Downs to manage Cotherstone Station near Clermont for J Thorn. Dumbleton was managed as a plantation from 1871 to 1887, with the first crushing in late 1872. Walker drowned in the Pioneer River while taking a short cut home from Mackay. He had intended bringing his family to town for a theatrical performance. Charles Walker was survived by his wife Emma and their 10 children.
Daniel Shepherd migrated to Victoria at 18 and first visited Mackay in 1864 but moved further north to Bowen as he was unimpressed with the settlement. After several years in Bowen, he returned to Mackay where he opened a hardware and general store in 1873 on the corner of River and Brisbane streets. Shepherd’s Anvil Stores expanded, prospered and traded for over a century. Daniel Shepherd was a foundation member of the Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows, an alderman on Mackay Municipal Council, a member of Mackay Harbour Board and the first Chairman of the Mackay Chamber of Commerce.

Robert Fleming arrived in Mackay from Rockhampton on the small steamer ‘Murray’ (Captain Till) in February 1863. He worked as a blacksmith with George Voysey in Sydney Street on the site now occupied by Penny Arcade. Afterwards he moved into his own business where the Mackay Police Station now stands. In 1872, Fleming bought a small sugar mill and erected it on land he owned which later became the site of the Racecourse Mill. The venture was short-lived and Fleming disposed of his blacksmithing business to HP Thomsen to concentrate on grocery and hardware interests, working until 1911 when he sold out to HA Webster and AF Williams.
Ludwig and Albertine Lemberg arrived in Townsville from Pommern, Germany in February 1874. They walked from Townsville to Mackay, living off the land and charity from settlers and working as labourers. In Mackay, they joined other German settlers near the Town Common in an area known as ‘German Town’. They lived at Woodlands farm in the Chelona area and purchased land in 1878 from Patrick McKenney, saddler. The Lemberg family home still stands at 11 Graffunder Street.

George and Roseni Hess arrived in the Mackay hinterland in 1867 and had pastoral interests at Lake Elphinstone and then at Suttor Creek. George Hess also operated bullock teams transporting wool and copper from Peak Downs to Port Mackay. After a short time in Proserpine, George Hess and his brother purchased a butchery in Mackay.

August Schipke farmed in the Racecourse Mill area and was twice a Mill Director (1898 to 1900 and 1903 to 1914). The Lemberg, Hess and Schipke families were typical of the solid German settlers who overcame language difficulties and extreme poverty to play an important role in the establishment of Mackay.

Williams arrived in Rockhampton in 1861 at age 19 and came to Mackay the following year. He worked as a stockman at Greenmount for John Mackay before moving to Scrubby Creek (Walkerston) with his wife Helen, the niece of Mackay’s first storekeeper Andrew Henderson. They took up dairying and sugar growing on Lorne Plantation and later engaged in general business at Mackay, Grasstree and Sarina. The Williams family eventually settled in Sarina in a general store business.
Samuel Dunn migrated to Australia as a free passenger on the ‘Chyebassa’, arriving on March 9, 1882. He and his wife Susan raised 13 children on their farm at Sandy Creek, near Chelona School. Susan had migrated to Australia with her brothers Jack and Tom Howard. Samuel’s sister Mary Dunn, who had followed him to Australia with another brother and sister, married Levi Windsor. The Dunn and Windsor family farms adjoined.

James and Ann Carey arrived in Bowen in 1865 and worked on Bloomsbury, St Helens, and Jolimont Stations for Sir John and William Macartney and Robert Graham before coming to Mackay in 1869. James worked with Joseph Holmes at Pleystowe and in 1872 purchased land in Archibald Street (Carey’s Road) where the family observed skirmishes between local aboriginal clans. James was one of the first shareholders and directors of Racecourse Mill and eventually farmed at Alligator Creek. Four Carey daughters died in childhood and a son, Luke, was killed in a fall from a horse at the age of 16.

Albert Ball, son of Captain George Palmer Ball of the East India Co Service, was educated in England before returning to Australia in 1856. He joined the Union Bank, but his interest was in pastoral pursuits, firstly on the Boyne River. In 1859, he led a party with 14 men, 500 cattle and 60 – 70 horses to stock Wandoo and Haslewood Stations. He later owned Bolingbroke,
Tierowoomba, Blue Mountain and Colston Park, but after 16 years, disposed of his pastoral interests to Peri Plantation in 1874. The sugar cane rust disease struck the following year and the mill never crushed. Ball was a keen jockey and a member of the Mackay Turf Club. He and his wife Hannah were killed at Thomas’s Crossing (now Webberley Street level crossing) when their buggy and the Eton train collided. Hannah was a daughter of James Boyle, an early Fortitude Valley (Brisbane) settler.

Michael Fay arrived in Sydney in 1860 and proceeded to Brisbane where he joined CA Kerr’s exploration party to the Peak Downs. Fay settled in Mackay in 1863, opening a general store before becoming a carrier. He was engaged by John Ewen Davidson at Alexandra Plantation, distilling Mackay’s first gallon of rum on October 1, 1868. In 1869, he was appointed Sheriff’s Officer, but resigned in 1881. Fay served as acting Town Clerk, an alderman and Mayor of Mackay. He had been a hotel licensee in the mid 1870s and in 1883 opened the first Metropolitan Hotel, which was later carried on by his family.

Father Pierre-Marie Bucas was appointed to Mackay in May 1869 and spent a total of 36 years in two terms as parish priest (1869-1880 and 1887-1912). Bucas studied for priesthood in Rome where he served in the Papal Army of Pope Pius IX, but was ordained in New Zealand, where he had become a missionary. A zealous priest of far-ranging interests including botany and medicine, Father Bucas always had at heart the well-being of Mackay people,
irrespective of creed, race or class, and in turn, had the overwhelming respect of all. He had particular empathy with the aboriginal people and established an orphanage at Seaview (now Bucasia - named in his honour) for Aboriginal and European children. At the instigation of Mackay citizens, his remains were re-interred at Mackay cemetery.
James Ready worked on pastoral properties in northern New South Wales and southern Queensland before joining Richard Spencer’s party on its journey to the Fort Cooper district as bullock driver, with his wife as cook. The Ready’s daughter Kate was born at Connor’s River on January 28, 1862 and is believed to have been the first European child born in the Mackay region. James Ready was a teamster, the first licensee of the Traveller’s Rest Hotel at Hazledean on the Eton Range (1864), engaged in pastoral pursuits and a butchery with his brother Michael and farmed near Racecourse at Garryowen (now Cowley’s) Road.
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