CAIRNS

City of the South Pacific

A History 1770-1995

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements Engage de la Harrie Daniel de	xi
Foreword by Henry Reynolds	xiii
Preface by Rob Pyne (MP for Cairns)	XV
Introduction	xvii
Chapter 1: Not A Virgin Land - The Bulmba of the Bama (1770-1875)	
1.1 European Expansion - North Queensland	21
1.2 'Queensland' Created	28
1.3 The Green Island Tragedies	34
1.4 Inland and Coastal Explorations of the early 1870s	36
1.5 Reflection	47
Chapter 2: Trinity Bay Country (1876 - 1882)	51
2.1 Growing European Interest in the Region	53
2.2 Early European Exploration of the Future Cairns District	55
2.3 The Sachs Party	56
2.4 Explorations From the Coast	62
2.5 From the Hodgkinson to the Coast	65
2.6 The Founding of Cairns	66
2.7 'Dray Roads' to the Hodgkinson?	72
2.8 The Tentative years	73
2.9 'The Natives Are Growing Restless'	75
2.10 Timber, Tin, Resistance & Early Selection	78
2.11 Cyclone, Floods and 'Expeditioning'	81
2.12 Chinese Faith in the District	84
2.13 Realities On the Frontier	85
2.14 Changing Fortunes	89
2.15 Reflection	95
Chapter 3: Frontier Cairns (1883-1887)	97
3.1 Colonial Settlers & Selections	97
3.2 Cairns & District 1886 Population	101
3.3 Health & Lifestyle	103
3.4 The New Guinea Annexation	106
3.5 The Impact of the First Griffith Ministry	108
3.6 The Railway Surveys	116
3.7 Frontier Conflict	118
3.8 Loyal Colonial Subjects	134
3.9 Local Government	137
3.10 Cairns Fortune Enhanced by the Railway	139
3.11 Attitudes of the Times and Continued Resistance	141
3.12 Agricultural Endeavours	144
3.13 The First Section of the Kuranda Railway	149

	3.14 Reflection	151
Chapter 4:	Turning of the Tide (1888 - 1893)	155
	4.1 The Second Section of the Kuranda Railway	156
	4.2 Coaching Days	164
	4.3 The 1888 Elections in Cairns	167
	4.4 Hambledon Plantation	169
	4.5 South Sea Islander (Kanaka) Labour	173
	4.6 Other Contracted Labour	177
	4.7 Population Diversity	179
	4.8 Changing Patterns on the Frontier	181
	4.9 Beche-de-Mer Fishing	192
	4.10 Cairns Chinese	193
	4.11 Working Conditions and the 1890s Depression	199
	4.12 J.B. Gribble and the Establishment of the Bellenden Ker Mission	204
	4.13 Reflection	208
Chapter 5:	The New Century (1894 - 1907)	213
	5.1 Firm Footing for the Sugar Cane Industry	218
	5.2 The Cairns-Mulgrave Tramway	222
	5.3 Continuing Population Diversity	230
	5.4 Rabelaisian Cairns?	230
	5.5 The Fading Frontier	236
	5.6 Bellenden Ker to Yarrabah Mission	244
	5.7 Contracted Labour	250
	5.8 Federation	255
	5.9 Impact of Federation in the Cairns District	258
	5.10 Local Government	266
	5.11 Turn of the Century Developments	268
	5.12 Town & Country	275
	5.13 Health	285
	5.14 Reflection	289
Chapter 6:	The Advancing Century (1908 - 1919)	293
	6.1 A Silent Fall from Grace	302
	6.2 Population	306
	6.3 A Calamitous Year - 1911	310
	6.4 The Pre-War Years	315
	6.5 Back O'Cairns	319
	6.6 Cane and Labour	321
	6.7 Schooling	327
	6.8 Flying	328
	6.9 World War I & the First Australian Expeditionary Force	330
	6.10 Wartime Cairns	335
	6.11 Wars End & Health	343
	6.12 Tramway to Railway	348
	6.13 Local Government	350
	6.14 Reflection	351
Chapter 7:	The Nineteen Twenties (1920-1929)	353
	7.1 Health	357
	7.2 Mt Mulligan 1921 Mining Disaster	360
	7.3 Expansion of Transport Links	364
	7.4 Strikes: Man-made & the 1927 Cyclone	367
	7.5 The Post War Decade	375
	7.6 'Smoothing the pillow'?	382

Cairns,	City of	the S	South I	Pacific,	A F	History	1770-	1995

	7.7 Cane Farming	385
	7.8 Local Government	387
	7.9 Reflection	391
Chapter 8: D	epression & Recovery (1930-1939)	397
	8.1 Unemployment & the Depression	398
	8.2 Opportunities	404
	8.3 The Battle of Parramatta Park	406
	8.4 Economic Recovery & Infrastructure Developments	417
	8.4.1 Reclamation & Roads	417
	8.4.2 The First Barron Falls Hydro-Electricity Scheme	423
	8.5 Shipping	429
	8.6 Aviation	430
	8.7 Cane	436
	8.8 Aspects of North Queensland Society in the 1930s	439
	8.9 Yarrabah & 'Outside' Bama	445
	8.10 Reflection	452
Chapter 9: Fr	ront-line Cairns (1940 - 1946)	455
	9.1 The Cairns-Kuranda Range Road	455
	9.2 The Coming of War to FNQ	458
	9.3 Evacuation & Internment	464
	9.4 'The Lull Before the Storm' – Cairns, 1942	469
	9.5 Front-line Cairns	475
	9.6 Public Health During the War	488
	9.7 Women at War	492
	9.8 War-time Cairns	496
	9.9 Riots and Redlights	499
	9.10 Local Authorities	508
	9.11 Reflection	511
Chapter 10: 1	Post War & Changes (1947 - 1995)	516
	10.1 Cane: Manual Labour to Machinery	519
	10.2 Waterfront, Coastal Shipping & Railways	525
	10.3 Post-war: Changes and the 1950s	530
	10.4 Cyclone 'Agnes', 1956	536
	10.5 Yarrabah: From Mission to State to Autonomous Community	539
	10.6 'Old-Style' Cairns	545
	10.7 Population & Health to the early 1970s	551
	10.8 The Fourth Quarter of the Twentieth Century	555
	10.9 The Technological Revolution & Social Change	566
	10.10 Reflection	569
Conclusion:	The Inheritance	574
Bibliography s	see www.cairnshistory.com.au	
Chronology		578
Index		597

Maps

Maj	o No.	Page No.
1	Cairns & District Shoreline	xxii
2	Tribal Locations	6
3	Cook's Sea Route – Fitzroy-Cape Grafton, 1770	10
4	Bama Bulmba c.1770 to 1875 (a) English (b)Ngirrma	13
5	Cairns Bama	23
6	Dalrymples' Map	38
7	Exploration in Far North Queensland 1872-1876	48
8	Cairns Swamps	58
9	Smithfield	82
10	Hap Wah Sugar Mill & Plantation 1882	85
11	1886 Land Selection	129
12	Sketch Redbank	145
13	Railway Survey Plans, Cairns, 1886	152
14	Cairns Kuranda Railway	161
15	Mulgrave Tramway 1897-1911	222
16	South Sea Island Recruitment Routes	250
17	Cairns & District 1899	256
18	Far North Queensland Roads & Railway, 1913	299
19	Location Map - Cairns Cooktown Region	396
20	Road/Railway Map of the District, 1935 to 1941	416
20(a) Barron Falls Hydro-Electric Power Site 1935	426
21	Cairns in relation to the Pacific War & the Battle of the Coral Sea	479
22	Cairns 1950	517
23	Cairns 1967	549
	Figures	
3.1	Cairns Settler Population, 1886.	102
3.2	Cairns District Population, 1886.	102
4.1	Cairns District Non-Indigenous Population, 1891.	181
4.2	Hap Wah Enterprise 1878-86 - Chronology	197
5.1	Cairns & District 1901 Population Census.	229
5 2	Development of Local Government Authorities in the Cairns District	265

6. 1 (Cairns & Shire Population, 1901-1921.			
7.1	Cairns & Shire Population, 1921-1947.			
10.1	Cairns & Mulgrave Population, 1947-1971.			
10.2	Cairns & Mulgrave Census Population, 1976-2000.			
	Abbreviations			
ABM	Australian Board of Missions			
AIAS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, which changed	d to:		
AIATS	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
BDioA	Brisbane Diocese Archives.			
BOHO	C Black Oral History Collection (JCU, School of History 8	ℜ Politics)		
COHI	P Cairns Oral History Program			
CPP	Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers			
CUP	Cambridge University Press			
EHS	Eacham Historical Society			
HSC	Historical Society of Cairns			
JCU	James Cook University			
JOL	John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland			
JRHS0	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •			
ML	Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW			
MSHS	S			
MUP	Melbourne University Press	CII		
NQOI		of History)		
OUP OSA	Oxford University Press			
QSA QV&1	Queensland Votes & Proceedings			
QV&1 QPP	P Queensland Votes & Proceedings Queensland Parliamentary Papers			
QPD	Queensland Parliamentary Debates			
UQ	University of Queensland			
υQ				
	Common Abbreviations			
с.	'circa' – about (in dating)			
et.al.	'and others'			
facs.	'Facsimile' (a modern reproduction of an original work)			
n. 'note': footnote				
n.d.	'no date'			
ibid.	'in the same place' (i.e. as cited in the previous footnote)			
op.cit.	'in the work cited' (i.e. as in an earlier footnote)			
pers.co	*			
rpt. 'reprint'				
[sic]	thus, to show that an obvious error is an exact reproduction of th	· ·		
£	Australian pound [doubling the £, does NOT equate with the cu	rrent \$ value]		
/- (or 's.') shilling [i.e. $3/-=3$ shillings, $3/3=3$ shillings and threepence]				
d.	penny (pence)			

A Guide to Djabugay/Yidiny (& Gunggay) Pronunciation

Vowel Sounds

For simplicity, the linguistic approach of using [:] which indicates a lengthened vowel sound, such as [a:], [i:], or [u:], has been disregarded and the doubling of the letter has been adopted. For example - [a:] is pronounced as [aa], [i:] as [ii], and [u:] as [uu].

- [a] is pronounced like the vowel in come, some.
- [i] is pronounced like the vowel in lit, bit, bin.
- [u] is pronounced the vowel in look, took or book.

Consonants

- [b], [d], [l], [m], [n], [w] and [y] are pronounced as in English
- [g] is pronounced as in gas, gun or gate.
- [r] is pronounced as in \underline{r} ing.
- [rr] is rolled like the scottish 'r'.
- [dj] is pronounced as a 'd' and a 'j' at the same time, but sharper, as in the 'j' sound in judge or jury.
- [ay] like 'eye' in Djabugay, Gunggay.
- [ng] like singer, if you omit the first and last two letters.
- [ny] like o<u>ni</u>on, or bu<u>ny</u>ip.
- [.] separates two consonants and indicates that one should pronounce both consonants individually. e.g. *Giyin.garra* [pronounced gi**ng** garra].

Please Note: There is a difference in pronunciation between Djabugay and Yidiny (and Gunggay). For a more precise approach, reference should be made to M. Quinn's work, in particular, *Djabugay Ngirrma Gulu*, Cairns, 1989, pp.110-111; and R.M. Dixon, *A Grammar of Yidiny*, CUP, Melbourne, 1977, p.xxiii.

¹ Contact with Bama communities suggests this is the preferred approach, similarly with retaining the 'dj' sound, as in Djarrugan or Djabugay.