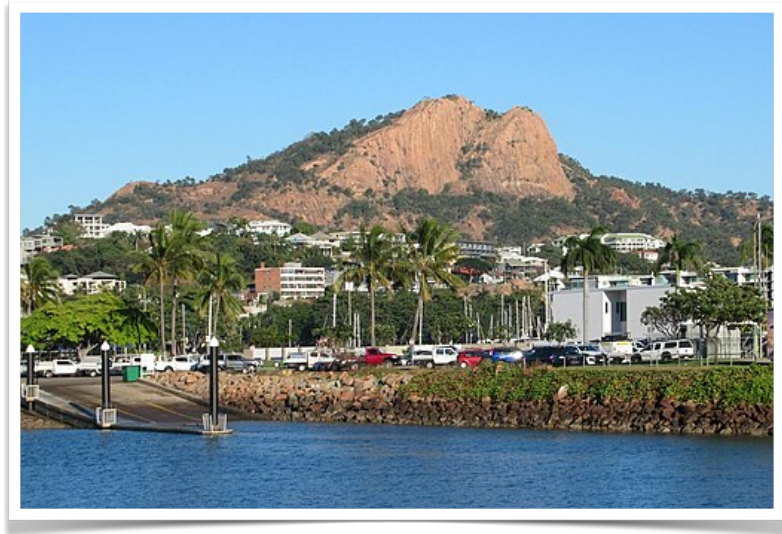




Townsville

Sources:

G. C. Bolton, **A Thousand Miles Away: A History of North Queensland to 1920.**

Queensland Places [*Townsville*](#)

Queensland State Archives:
[*Townsville's Bulk Sugar Terminal: Stories From The Archives*](#)

Wikipedia: [*Townsville*](#).

Located 1150 kilometres north-northwest of Brisbane on the shores of Cleveland Bay in Wulgurukaba and Bindal country. Townsville is the largest settlement in the North and its unofficial capital. As such, the city hosts many administrative offices whose jurisdictions cover the northern half of Queensland. The red rock monolith the Wulgurukaba people call Cutheringa (Castle Hill) overlooks a flat landscape that accommodated significant growth in the latter half of the 20th century.

The city's population grew from 51,143 in 1961 to 68,591 (1971), 80,365 in 1976, and 164,008 thirty years later. While the 2008 amalgamation of Townsville and Thuringowa City inflated those figures, the city's urban sprawl began spreading into Thuringowa in the mid-1970s.

After James Cook named Cape Cleveland and 'Magnetical' (Magnetic) Island when he passed the area in 1770, Phillip Parker King charted Cleveland Bay in 1819.

George Elphinstone Dalrymple conducted a closer survey in 1861 as the new Queensland government sought a port for the new Kennedy pastoral district.

Although the government followed Dalrymple's advice and established the port at Bowen, 170 kilometres to the south, distance, freight costs, and wet-season flooding in the Burdekin River made a new port somewhere between Bowen and Cardwell desirable.

In 1862, a new partnership between John Melton Black and Robert Towns established a boiling-down works to handle unwanted livestock at the mouth of Ross Creek, which was adequate for light coastal vessels. Black marked out a route from the upper Burdekin to the coast, and the fledgling settlement was surveyed, with town lots and market gardens established by 1864.

Two years later, the boiling down works were operational. Townsville was gazetted as a port of entry, with monthly steamer services to Bowen, its own local government, and a newspaper (Cleveland Bay Herald, later replaced by the Cleveland Bay Express).

After gold discoveries on the Cape River (1867), Ravenswood (1868), and Charters Towers (1872), Townsville, rather than Bowen, became the port for the goldfields and the region's pastoral industry. Local interests and the miners in the hinterland agitated for a railway; work on the Great Northern Railway began in 1875.

The line to Charters Towers opened in 1882, with a branch to Ravenswood (1884) and extensions to Hughenden (1887) and Cloncurry (1908). At the same time, a program of works developed an outer harbour with breakwaters largely formed from stones quarried from the lower slopes of Melton Hill.

By the 1880s, Townsville was already a significant port, with export meatworks at Alligator Creek (1890). replacing an



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