

Welcome to The Proston Heritage Trail



c. 1930 Proston, Blake Street



Terminus Hotel, Proston in the 1940s



Levitt & Smith, Butcher, Rodney Street, Proston

A Brief History of Proston

Proston was originally part of the historic grazing station 'Wigton' one of Queensland's earliest squattages. Settlement of the Proston area followed the 1910 Wondai Land Court Ballot, primarily by English and German migrants. Life was extremely hard for these inexperienced people, relying on their neighbours and their own resourcefulness to deal with the ongoing hardships and tragedies. The Proston Progress association made representations to the minister for Railways during 1922, when Mr G.T.M. Boynton (who had selected a farm at Speedwell), built Proston's first commercial building, a café opposite the proposed railway station, in anticipation of the arrival of the first train in February 1923. Next came French the Butcher and Boynton's Garage in Blake Street, a drapery Messrs Thorne

and Walker general store, the erection of a public hall in Rodney Street, and the very grand Terminus Hotel etc. G.T.M. Boynton indubitably the town's founding father, went on to construct a movie theatre hall, plus other central commercial buildings, then installed two Lister Generators to supply Proston's first electricity. Soon the tiny community was growing and continued to grow, by the late 1930s Proston boasted two stores, two garages, two bakeries, two butcher shops, a butter factory, School, blacksmith, picture theatre, public hall, hairdresser, chemist, two banks, hotel, doctor, clinic and hospital and rail services etc. The Heritage Trail reflects this period of Proston's history, and hopes to draw a picture of this time in visitors' minds.



Left: Proston's first commercial building, Proston Tea Rooms and Post Office, Rodney Street.



Right: Two of Proston's first buildings in Blake Street: JF French Butcher and Boynton Seng Ford Dealers

Proston Heritage Trail

1. Boondooma Private Hospital, opened in mid 1930s; Dr Rundle was first doctor, followed by Dr Terry Ellecoate. During the war years, 1939 to 1945, it was a boys home, later converting to a boarding house, then a motel, and currently is a private residence.
2. Heritage listed, Saint Peter's Anglican Church was built in 1936 with the generous bequest of Mr Charles Shepherd, owner of the cattle property 'Ashton'. Dedicated by Archbishop Wand on 4 July 1938. First vicar was Rev. Dence. The Tingoorra Anglican Church was moved to Proston in 1969 to become the Anglican Hall.
3. Bakery, original building was erected by the McGovern Bros of Abbeywood in 1935. During 1969 the building became the BP Service Station and in December 2001 was destroyed by fire.
4. Golf club was formed in 1936, first president Desmond O'Rourke, then owner of 'Old Proston'. The golf course was previously a race track and used for campdrafts.
5. Jim Reidy's Truck shed is now Ardrey's Proston Bus Service depot.
6. John Ciezeolka, blacksmith, previously operated on the site of the old clinic (later moved to behind the butter factory).
7. Bob Burns soft drink and cordial factory, also saddlery.
8. Plumber/plumbing supplies, Harry Duff. The building is now the Poultry Pavilion in the Showgrounds.
9. Doctor's residence and surgery.
10. Terminus Hotel, a grand building built in 1924, comprising two storeys. The clinic, dentist and Bank of New South Wales operated in this building. The hotel was destroyed by fire 1966, and replaced by the current Golden Spurs Hotel.
11. Railways Fettlers Cottage. Built circa 1925
12. Railway Station Master's residence, built 1922.
13. First Post Office, built 1924. Post Office was transferred to present location, Collingwood Street, 1935.
14. Proston Tea Rooms were built in 1922 by G.T.M. Boynton commencing the township of Proston in readiness for the commencement of rail services to Proston in February 1923.
15. School of Arts (public hall) was built 1924, pictures were regularly shown here until approximately 1960, building was sold to Fred Heit, and removed to the Heit Farm.
16. Thorne & Walker Emporium, together with the Commercial Bank (first manager Reg Watts), circa 1923.
17. Drapery, building erected by Hughie Welch in 1922, and operated by Mrs Nairne who also supervised the first allowance post office agency. Later became Mrs Reid's Café.
18. Doug Smith's Grocery Shop (later moved to Blake Street). Fred Doesell then opened a bicycle and radio shop. Building burnt down during the 1970s.
19. Butcher, Mr Jim French (first opened in Blake Street 1923, moving to this location 1926).
20. Mr Neilson Bakery, 1923.
21. Proston Railway Station - large crowd welcomed the first train on 24 February 1923, Mrs Lily Slinger cut the ribbon to allow the train into the station. First station mistress was Mrs Beatrice Tooth (Grandmother of Mrs Dorrie Hedges). The Commercial Bank of Sydney operated a savings bank in the same building for a short time. Three trains a week were operating by the mid to late 1930s (Tues/Thurs/Sat carrying out the cream) plus trains for extra loadings such as pigs, cattle, and later timber. The railway into Proston was instrumental in the settlement of areas west of Proston.
22. South Burnett dairy was constructed in 1934 and commenced manufacturing butter from 1935 (the butter winning many awards for excellence) until its closure in 1966. A piggery opened in 1935 on the other side of the golf course, for disposal of the dairy's unwanted by-products. First manager of the dairy was Mr Jack Fergusson. In 1967 the building was converted to an animal feed mill, supplying daily many tons of feed to local piggeries and cattle properties.
23. Bowls Club, formed and was operating in 1946, first president was Claude Murphy.
24. QCWA rooms were built in 1926 opening on 12 April 1928. First members included Mesdames Alice Blanch, Chesterton, Lindley, Perkins, Slinger, Wardill and others, all original pioneers.
25. Catholic Church, built in 1935.
26. Proston State School opened 24 July 1924. First head teacher was Mr Jack Moore.
27. Cattle/pig rail loading yards.
28. Railway sleeper mill.
29. First police station in Proston. The first police officer was Terry Sweeney. Now private residence.
30. Police residence.
31. John Ciezeolka, Blacksmith operated here until moving to Rodney Street. The Proston Outpatients Clinic was built 1959/60. During the late 1990s the building became a residence when the clinic was relocated to the Proston Ambulance Station.
32. Doug Smith's Cash & Carry (later purchased by Perrin & Day).
33. Tennis courts 1930s (later moved to Wondai Road).
34. Drapery and Agency, 1934 Jack Azar.
35. Olympia Café, 1934, Bert Cahill.
36. Butcher, 1934/1935 Levitt & Smith (Alf Smith was the father of well known local cattleman Robert Smith).
37. Kewpie Pictures, 1926, Tim Boynton built the hall initially to show movies, then boxing matches and for a short time was used for skating. The building was converted to an office and garage, where he conducted a Ford & Essex Agency. The building was eventually demolished making way for the new brick Commercial Bank of Australia; it later became Westpac bank until the bank withdrew its services from Proston. Wondai Shire Council acquired the building for use as the Proston Public Library.
38. Arthur Dauth, blacksmith operated on the site prior to 1937. The current town hall was built by Albert Reinke in 1937 as a picture theatre at the rear with retail shops in the front, which included hardware store, billiards saloon, and sports shop.
39. Mr Miham's Drapery.
40. Billiard Saloon.
41. Mr Nikol the Chemist.
42. Ladies & Gents Hairdresser (with spate entrances).
43. Newsagency.
44. National Bank & Dentist, Steve Gom.
45. Dressmaker 1937, Mrs Audrey Postlethwaite.
46. Fuel Storage Shed, until 1948 when John Slinger and Tom Bartlett converted it to a garage.
47. First School residence, 1924, now a private residence.
48. Methodist Church 1934. First church built in Proston, and later became the Uniting Church.

