

## Would these have been your top twelve choices?

DURING 2004 the National Trust of Queensland invited all of the people of Queensland to nominate a favourite Queensland icon for inclusion in this initial List of Queensland Heritage Icons. The plan was to establish eight items each year. The response, however, has led to a listing of twelve.

The further plan is to add another twelve icons to the list each year, thus building for all time

a comprehensive list of familiar items of significance in the cultural history of the State of Queensland.

Items listed will inherently represent an important part of our history or will have contributed to our cultural identity and will have won a lasting place in our memories. The list of icons may include objects or places or traditions but will not include people.

You may not agree with all of those items chosen from nominations in 2004. You may feel that there are other items more deserving of an early listing. Happily, you have the opportunity in 2005 to suggest your own first choices.

Simply follow the directions we have included on the last page of this paper. The National Trust of Queensland values your participation.

QUEENSLAND ICON

## The backyard mango tree

Peter Maxwell

ONCE, when almost every Queensland home had a backyard, there were many more backyard mango trees.

The mango tree usually grew “down the back” past the clothesline. It stayed green and gave us shade through every season. A good mango tree flowered every year in time to let us know that summer was on its way. Soon it would carry little green mangos. Some mums made them into jam or chutney.

Then the mangos went from green through pink to golden yellow. And they were delicious.

Under a good mango tree there were lots of ripe mangos lying around on the ground. Birds loved them but left there they did smell a bit. If you were a kid it was your job to rake them up. You never ate them. They were too squishy. Instead, you threw a stick at that perfect mango still hanging in the tree. The trick was to catch it as it fell.

As long as there are Queensland summers the backyard mango tree will have its place in any list of Queensland icons.



QUEENSLAND ICON

**Acknowledgement:  
Mr Fourex website**

MR FOUREX appeared on the scene in the mid-1920s, not long after the launch of the revamped XXXX Bitter Ale in 1924.

There are many theories surrounding his true origins.

One suggestion is that Mr. Fourex was modelled on a well-known dwarf who sold newspapers in the inner city suburb of Fortitude Valley in the late 1920's.

Others say he is actually the canny Paddy Fitzgerald who was the General Manager of the Castlemaine Perkins Brewery during a period of great growth. There certainly seems to be a degree



## Mr Fourex

of similarity, however, our little man was on the scene long before Paddy became a force at Milton, so his true identity remains a mystery.

Mr. Fourex quickly became the face of the XXXX brand, the cheeky little bloke who could always be found at the front bar of a hotel, spinning a yarn and sharing a laugh with his mates.

In the earliest newspaper advertising, he appeared without a hat, but the XXXX Boater arrived quickly, helping marry up the beer with the man.

The newspaper ads depicted the little fellow's wide range of interests - and expertise!

Whether it was picking a winner at the races, behind the cricket stumps, at the footy, or even predicting the weekend weather, Mr Fourex was full of good ideas and knowledge.

But one thing was for certain - Queenslanders loved their XXXX. As Mr Fourex said, “XXXX,

the Popular Beer.”

He remained a central character in XXXX newspaper advertising right through until the late 60s and early 70s, when Television became a more popular and powerful advertising medium.

In the late 1970s, a full beer glass was permanently added to the Mr Fourex caricature, to add to his sociability and sense of fun.

His popularity prompted Castlemaine Perkins management in the mid 1980s to erect a Mr Fourex neon on the side of the brewery. Late every afternoon, the little fellow winks at the tens of thousands of motorists, departing the city along Milton Road towards their homes in the western suburbs.

***Mr Fourex. A very recognisable  
Queensland icon.***



# Queensland's Bundy Rum

**Acknowledgement:**  
Bundaberg Rum website

QUEENSLANDERS are very proud of Bundaberg Rum. Deeply rooted in the history of Queensland and regional Australia, Bundaberg Rum has become an important part of Australian folklore. Bearing the name of the town where it is made, this extremely popular drink dates back over 100 years to when the Bundaberg Distilling Company was first formed by a consortium of local sugar millers.

In the early days of Australia's history, Bundaberg Rum was popular amongst drovers and people on the land because it was portable and didn't have to be chilled to be enjoyed at the end of a long hard day.

Australian diggers also loved the spirit. In the First and Second World Wars, the manufacture of rum was a preferred industry, viewed as essential to the war effort. Almost the entire Bundaberg Rum production was commandeered by the armed services.

Back in those days, Queensland's favourite drink was recognised more by its taste than by its packaging. Bottled by agents all over Australia, it was the full bodied, rich and distinctive flavour of Bundaberg Rum that distinguished it from any other. To gain more control of their precious product, in 1961 the Bundaberg Distilling Company decided to award the sole rights for the marketing of Bundaberg Rum outside Queensland to Australian Rum Distillers Pty Ltd.

## THE POLAR BEAR

Australian Rum Distillers Pty Ltd was owned 54% by Millaquin Sugar Company (of Bundaberg) and 46% by Samuel McMahon. This proved to be an excellent move and the present day look of Bundaberg Rum owes a great deal to Sam McMahon, the brother of former Prime Minister Billy McMahon. Sam designed the distinctive square bottle and the memorable three-piece label. The polar bear, which is featured on the top label, was also Sam's idea.

To many, the polar bear seemed a strange choice for a product from tropical Bundaberg, but Sam McMahon believed it implied that Bundaberg Rum could ward off even the wickedest chill! It has stood the test of time and the Bundaberg Rum polar bear is one of Australia's most recognisable trademarks.

## QUEENSLAND'S GIFT TO AUSTRALIA

Originating in Queensland, Bundaberg Rum has been embraced by all Australians. It receives passionate support from "yachties" across the country, jackaroos in the Victorian Highland Country, miners in Kalgoorlie, Barramundi fishermen in the Northern Territory and university students, to name but a few.

Today, the popularity of Bundaberg Rum continues to grow with people all over Australia



travelling to Bundaberg to visit the famous distillery and sample its product.

Most Bundaberg Rum drinkers credit the popularity of their drink to its full, rich and distinctive taste. Nothing else tastes like it.

Born out of the burning sugar cane fields of tropical Queensland it is a product determined by climatic and maturation factors. Only the finest sugar cane, grown in Queensland's rich and volcanic soil, is used to give Bundaberg Rum its unique flavour.

# Condamine Bell

QUEENSLAND ICON



## Penny Cook

During the early pioneering days of the last century, when vast areas of land were unfenced, the bullock team was the only means of heavy transport to the newly settled areas.

Bullock bells were therefore a necessity in those times, to enable the teamster to find his team when they had strayed from camp or the homestead after having been unyoked overnight. The greater the sound carry of the bell, the better it was.



The most successful and popular bell was first made in Condamine by Mr Samuel Williams Jones, who had a Smithy by the Condamine River from early 1866 to late 1878. The 'Bull-frog' or 'Jones' bell, as it was first known, became famous under its better known title of the 'Condamine Bell'. The sound of this bell had great carrying power and claims that it had been heard six and even seven mile away were common in those days.

His first bells were made out of pit-saw or cross-cut saw blades, which were formed, riveted and brazed. This bell tapered into a mouth, instead of the normal bell shape which flares outward at the rim.

The true Jones bell was stamped with a Registered Trade Mark, Lion above SWJ monogram, and the bell tongue was stamped while hot with S.W. Jones. These bells today are greatly prized relics of an era which can never come again.

The bells became so well known that orders came from as far afield as Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Christy Andersen was never a resident at Condamine, nor was he taught bell making by S. W. Jones. At about the time Christy Andersen came to Miles in 1878 from Dalby, S.W. Jones had left Condamine for Brisbane. Another blacksmith who made Condamine type bells at Surat in the late 1880's to 1890's and later in Brisbane was Mr Thomas Beckett, who stamped the bell tongue while hot with his initials T.B. He, too, had lived in Dalby but he was never an assistant to S.W. Jones and was not taught bell making by him either. Many early blacksmiths copied the original Condamine Bell, but their bells were untuned.

Mr C Andersen became well known as maker of Condamine Bells at Miles from 1896. The bell tongue only was stamped with C. ANDERSEN. The true Jones and early Andersen bells are few to find now in good condition. Authenticity of an Andersen bell is, of course, doubtful if it does not have the original bell tongue intact.

The biography of these two pioneers makes interesting reading.



# Queensland's Famous Ekka

Helen Gregory

QUEENSLANDERS mark early August every year as 'Ekka' time. That popular name for the largest agricultural show in Queensland also celebrates our love of abbreviation. The Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland's Exhibition to give the Show its correct title - has had several name changes since the first show in 1876, but the site in Gregory Terrace, just outside Brisbane's central business district, has remained the same.

Smaller regional shows had been held since 1854, but this was the first exhibition for all of Queensland. August was chosen to avoid clashes with the smaller shows, and because the weather was usually fine at that time of the year. In the past 128 years, the Ekka has been cancelled only twice – in 1919, during the Spanish flu pandemic, when some of the exhibition buildings were used as an emergency hospital, and in 1942, at the beginning of the Pacific War, when the grounds were a huge Army camp. Although soldiers remained camped at the grounds until 1944, sufficient space was available to hold the Ekka in every year of the War, apart from 1942.

The National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland was formed in 1875 to organise the first exhibition to trumpet proudly Queensland's prosperity, progress and produce to the other Australian colonies. The exhibition grounds were originally a five hectare section of the land of the Queensland Acclimatisation Society, formed to promote the acclimatisation of economically useful plants, but have grown more than fourfold to their present size, twenty-two hectares.



Over the years, a wide range of buildings, show rings and other structures have evolved on the site. Some of Queensland's most notable architects designed the main buildings. GHM Addison designed the decorative main exhibition building on the Bowen Bridge Road and Gregory Street corner (1891), Claude Chambers designed the John MacDonald Stand (1906), Richard Gailey, Junior, designed the Industrial Pavilion (1938-39) and the Ernest Baynes stand. In 1920, the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, visited the Exhibition and 'Royal' was incorporated into the name of the National Agricultural and Agricultural Association. Sideshow alley became a venue for famous Australian showmen and, from the second half of the twentieth century, increasingly sophisticated rides and entertainment.

After World War II, a number of new buildings were constructed to accommodate the growing exhibition, including the Beef Cattle Pavilion (1950), the Dairy Industry Hall, a range of buildings to house cars, machinery and the ever-popular sample bags, the RNA's administration building (1970), the Agricultural Hall and Douglas Wadley Pavilion and, in 1972, a purpose built animal nursery, extremely popular with young city children. Business, industry and government show their wares in increasing numbers at each annual Ekka.

The Show grounds have also been an important venue for cricket, football, athletics and speedcar racing.



The legendary cricketer, Sir Donald Bradman, made his test debut at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds in 1928-29. Much more controversially, the 1971 Rugby Union test match between Australia and South Africa was held at the Exhibition Grounds during a state of emergency declared by the Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, as a means of controlling demonstrations against apartheid. The Rugby test was played with police ringing the field to protect the players. The Exhibition grounds also host a wide variety of popular events at other times of the year from garden shows to boat shows and, in the 1960s and 1970s, annual University of Queensland examinations. On 3 July 1989, it was the venue for the first public airing of the report of the Fitzgerald Inquiry into corruption in Queensland.

The Ekka has been very important in bringing city and country people together, helping city people to understand the challenge country people face in producing meat, wool and cheese, and crops ranging from pineapples to cut flowers. It is also a lively time for socialising – families in sideshow alley, country and city people at the Cattleman's Bar and the annual Show balls, and competitors showing their prize animals in the main ring.

# Hugh Lunn's port causes storm

Hugh Lunn



THE FIRST TIME I realised that the word "port" was a Queensland Icon was at Adelaide Airport in the 1970s.

After seven years working as a journalist overseas, I had returned to my hometown of Brisbane and was working as a journalist on The Australian in its Brisbane bureau.

It was the last flight into Adelaide and so it was late at night by the time everyone had collected their luggage from the carousel.

Except me.

Finally, I went to the Inquiries desk and said angrily: "I can't find my port. I need my port tonight or I can't operate."

The man behind the counter looked at me strangely.

"My port," I said. "It never arrived on the plane from Brisbane. You've lost my port."

He picked up the phone, and shortly two security men arrived: "This gentleman's looking for some Port. He reckons he had some, but someone took it."

It was a case of be arrested for creating a disturbance, or explain that – to a Queenslander – a port was not an alcoholic drink, but the thing you carried your baggage in.

A suitcase.

They wanted to know where we got such a word?

That was like asking where the word "butter" came from. Though when I got home I made inquiries and was told it was short for portmanteau.

A very upper crust word indeed. In fact, it's a wonder down south they don't accuse us of putting on airs, because Portmanteau is from the French word for a "cloak-carrier". In Paris it means a leather case which divides into two halves.

But to me, and anyone else in Queensland, a port is – and hopefully always will be -- just a bag you carried things in: whether on your back or by your side. Just like in Queensland a duchess is a dressing table with a mirror, and togs are things you wear when swimming.

Not cossies or swimmers.

At primary school at Mary Immaculate Convent, Annerley, I wore my port on my back with squashed tomato sandwiches and a damp Queensland Reader inside. At secondary school we carried our Globite ports in one hand with football or cricket boots tied to the handle and hanging down the outside.

At bus or tram stops all the schoolboys sat on their port with one leg on either side.

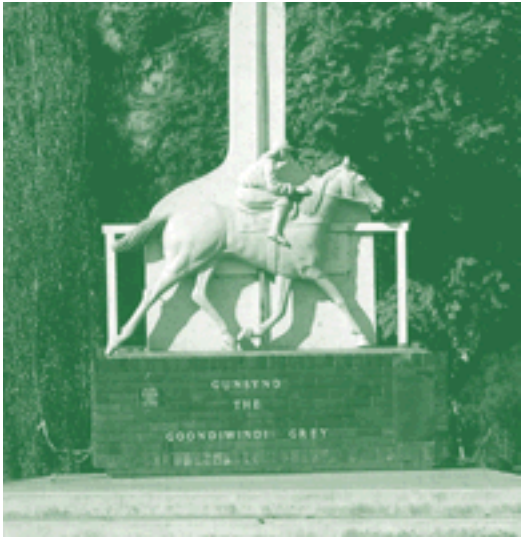
It's what made us Queenslanders.



# Gunsynd

## The Goondiwindi Grey

Peter Maxwell



MAKE NO MISTAKE, Gunsynd was a Queenslander. He may have been bred across the border but he was Queensland’s champion of the turf. He raced his way into our hearts from his first start, making up a dozen places to beat the 5 to 2 on favourite Instantor in the Hopeful Stakes at Eagle Farm in October of 1969. He wrote his first record in this his first run.

“That Goondoowindi syndicate” of George Pippas, Bill Bishop, Jim Coorey and “Winks” McMicking paid \$1300 for the grey at the Brisbane sales. Joe McNamara, who bred him, didn’t expect him to fetch more than \$400. The Queenslanders must have known something.

### THE DARLING OF THE PUNTERS.

Gunsynd had 55 races for 29 wins, 6 second places, a dead heat for another second, and six thirds. He won a total of \$280,455 in stakes and was sold to stud for another \$270,000. But no statistics can hope to tell the story of The Goondiwindi Grey.

Why did punters love him so? Why did even non-punters adore him? Was it that he was unfashionably grey and came from humble beginnings? Was it that we’d waited 26 years since Bernborough for a true champion of our own? Well, none of these reasons alone.

### A TRUE HERO.

The real reason for the extraordinary popularity of Gunsynd was his raw courage. This very special horse had a fierce desire always to win. The blistering finish was his trade mark.

Any punter would tell you that this mighty grey was a “goer”. A battler all the way, and a winner too, he won the hearts of battlers and winners alike. He was one of their own.

Gunsynd was also, it must be said, a bit of a show-off. He lapped up the attention and delighted crowds all over the country by standing to attention to receive their applause both before and after a race. He loved every moment of it and in turn he was truly loved.

Gunsynd died in 1983 and is buried at Scone in New South Wales at a place with a New Zealand name - Kia Ora Stud. But make no mistake, he is a Queensland icon.



# Goanna Oil & Salve

Helen Gregory

Goanna Oil and Salve, those pungent remedies for all that aches, were generated in the romance of late nineteenth century Australia. Their inventor, Cornelius Joseph Marconi, was an Irish immigrant who took his chances as a puppeteer with a traveling vaudeville troupe. At various points along the troupe’s route through the outback, Joe Marconi went on bush expeditions with ‘Professor’ Morrissey, a likeable charlatan, who claimed to have invented an antidote for snakebite made from indigenous plants and herbs.

Joe noticed that many bushies had adopted the Aboriginal custom of using goanna fat to dress wounds and, in its liquefied form, to soothe their aches and pains. In southern Queensland, Aboriginal people frequently mixed goanna oil with dugong oil to rub on their tired limbs and bodies, a practice noted by the Queensland Protector of Aborigines, Archibald Meston. Meston used goanna oil and wrote: ‘the effect on the skin and muscles is particularly beneficial at all times. For athletes it eclipses any other known oil ... It is also an excellent oil for guns, knives or razors’. In this period, bush remedies often came with the highest medical endorsement. Dr William Hobbs, a pioneering Brisbane physician, advocated dugong oil processed to make stearine, a substitute for that early doctors’ cure-all, cod liver oil.

Joe Marconi went into business in 1910 at his home in Kennedy Terrace, Paddington. He used a network of contacts throughout the bush to supply him with goanna oil. Joe filtered the

oil to purify it and added the ingredients from the snake bite ‘cure’ as well as eucalyptus oil. Business boomed. Joe moved the business twice, first to Gotha Street, Fortitude Valley and then to a big new house, ‘Astra’, in Duke Street, Bulimba where he converted the space under the house to his factory.

His flair for showmanship generated clever and amusing advertising campaigns. All advertisements had clear references to the Australian bush. Joe linked forces with that icon of Queensland writing, Steele Rudd, and advertised regularly in the Steele Rudd Annual. It is likely that the illustrator of the annuals, Ashton Murphy, who was also a contributor to the Bulletin, was responsible for the art work in the Goanna Oil and Salve advertisements. Joe Marconi burst into print in his own publication, Modern Nursery Rhymes.

Modern concerns finally caught up with Joe Marconi. The Queensland government placed the goanna on the list of protected species in 1918, but Joe was not vanquished. He acquired his goannas from New South Wales, and kept them in his ‘goannery’ on vacant land opposite his house at Bulimba. After Joe’s sudden death in 1922, the business was continued by his sons, Joe Junior and Norman, a celebrated Australian aviator. The Goanna logo was always painted somewhere on Norman’s planes, particularly on his seaplanes which he moored on the Brisbane River, close to the family home at Bulimba. During World War II, when Joe and Norman



were in the armed forces, the business was continued by their youngest brother, Con, and their three sisters.

American soldiers in Brisbane during the War adopted Goanna products as enthusiastically as Australia’s fighting forces in both world wars. Testimonials flowed in from all over the world, positioning the business for a booming post-war export trade. The next generation of the Marconi family continued the business in the post-war era until 1982 – their 70th anniversary – when they sold the business to another Queensland company, Herron Pharmaceuticals.

No goannas have been used in manufacture for many years – but the recipe remains a dead secret!

# Alvey fishing reels

Helen Gregory



FISHING is an enormously popular recreation all over the world. In Queensland, and increasingly throughout Australia and overseas, Alvey fishing reels have been essential items of equipment for sport and recreational fishing. The Alvey company is a Queensland success story and has been owned by the same family for almost 85 years.

In 1920, Charles Alvey, an immigrant from England, was a keen fisherman who saw the need for a reel which was easy to use, easy to cast, simple to maintain and solidly made. Working on the principle of the Scottish Mallock reel, Charles Alvey designed a reel which allowed the body of the reel to be turned sideways when casting so that the line ran freely from the edge of a specially shaped spool and, when the reel was snapped back into fishing position, easy control and forceful rewinding. Charles Alvey's original 'factory' was a small shed without electric power on the banks of the Brisbane River in Macquarie Street, St Lucia. Using a treadle lathe, he was able to produce twenty reels each week.

Success came quickly. By 1923, demand had grown to the extent that Charles Alvey's son, Ken, a pattern maker and draftsman, joined the business. The business grew, even in the tough climate of the 1930s depression, and by the time World War II began, 25,000 Alvey reels were produced annually. War interrupted the reel manufacture, and the machinery was converted to producing vehicle and aircraft parts, essential to Australia's fighting forces.

Sadly, Charles Alvey died in 1945, but his business was carried on by his family, firstly Ken Alvey's son, Jack, who joined the business in 1946. Jack Alvey was a keen fisherman and champion distance caster and was able to strengthen the

growing liaison between the family business and top anglers, a tradition maintained by his son, Bruce. In this way, the Alvey firm has been able to keep up with changing trends and has often adapted their reels using suggestions from their clients. In return, the Alvey company has been a strong promoter and sponsor of sport fishing at national, state and local levels, including the Junior Anglers Association.

Soon after the War, the factory was expanded many times to keep up with demand and the staff at St Lucia grew to fifty people. Overseas orders started to flood in during the 1960s, and the Alvey firm earned the nation valuable export dollars. It was clear that a larger site would be needed. Before that could happen, tragedy struck. Ken Alvey died in 1973 and, shortly afterwards, the enormous Australia Day floods in January 1974 wreaked their havoc on the riverside factory. Somehow, after enormous efforts, the business was up and running again two months later.

The firm continued to expand as a family business. Jack Alvey's son Bruce, an engineering graduate, became the first of the fourth generation to develop the business. In 1978, the expansion postponed by the flood became possible when the firm acquired land at Carole Park and built a factory which opened in September 1978. Only ten years later, the new factory was expanded and Jack's youngest son, Glenn, joined the firm. The latest materials and technology allowed fibreglass, carbon and graphite materials to be used in Alvey reels. The range of Alvey products broadened to include accessories such as hand casters, bait traps, bait buckets and tackle boxes. During the 1990s, a number of new reels were added to the Alvey range, which by 2004 had grown to fifty different reels. In the 1990s, Alvey's started selling rods and rod and reel



combinations. Jack Alvey, OAM, was able to see this expansion before his death in 2001.

From the very beginning, quality and workmanship have been hallmarks of Alvey reels which last for years. This has been no bar to growing local and overseas markets – just as the Alvey family has passed its business from generation to generation, its devoted customers pass the Alvey habit down to their succeeding generations. The Alvey business remains a Queensland-owned family firm with a loyal, competent staff who have frequently stayed for forty or fifty years.

# Southern Cross Windmills

Acknowledgement: Southern Cross website

SOUTHERN CROSS WINDMILLS are an icon in the Queensland countryside. They are an integral part of the cultural landscape from the coast to the outback. And they have been so for over 100 years.

## THE NEED FOR WATER

Southern Cross Pumps and Irrigation was started by Mr George Griffiths with his Ironmongery and Agricultural Equipment repair shop in Toowoomba in the 1870s. The first windmills were made around 1876. They were wooden, and were generally 'made to order'. The Griffiths factory was constantly improving on windmill designs, resulting in the "Economy Windmill" (1876-1884), the "Simplex Economy Mills" (1886-1892) and then the "Little Wonder Windmill" (1889-1893). Even in those days, marketing was obviously important.

The famous marketing began in 1903. After other various improvements (including other names such as "Zephyr" and "Eureka") "Southern Cross" came into being. These were the first geared windmills and thousands of them were produced over the next decade or so. The company continued to improve their windmills, including much larger wheels, over many decades. A detailed technical history is available on Tyco web site.

The company formed by Mr Griffiths is in itself a Queensland success story – a 19th century version of the 'Smart State'. By early in the 20th century he was also manufacturing well drilling equipment, kerosene engines, pumps and milking machine systems. By 1911 the company had a number of branches throughout the State. Further new products were later made – diesel

engines, generators and irrigation systems – and the company also had large orders during World War II for the army for engines and generators. By the 1950s power generation for rural towns and properties in Australia was synonymous with the name Southern Cross.

Various company changes occurred in recent decades resulting in Tyco Flow Control Pacific now producing Southern Cross windmills for distribution not only in Australian but across the world.





# The Royal Flying Doctors

Acknowledgement: RFDS website



THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE (RFDS) was established in 1928 at Cloncurry in Queensland on a year’s trial. The driving force behind its establishment was the Rev John Flynn of the Australian Inland Mission.

In 1912 John Flynn was appointed as the first Superintendent of the Australian Inland Mission, the bush department, of the Presbyterian Church. Its operational headquarters was at Beltana Station, South Australia. Flynn quickly became particularly interested in the problem of lack of medical assistance for bush people. He did a lot of work in the Northern Territory in those early

years, establishing mission hospitals in a number of places in the Territory. Of importance to his later achievements, he was also interested in early radio communication.

The idea of an aerial medical service came from a young medical student called Clifford Peel. He wrote to John Flynn in 1917 while on the boat taking him to the war in France. Peel sadly never returned, but John Flynn was a man of profound honour and he ensured that Clifford Peel’s idea was always acknowledged. It was to be ten years after the end of the war in 1918 that the first trial of what was to become the RFDS started in Cloncurry.

The first vital part of establishing an aerial medical service was radio communication. Flynn saw the value of radio in the outback in about 1920. At that stage the technology was cumbersome and expensive, and unreliable in harsh conditions. Flynn became involved in more robust wireless, sets and in 1925 the Mission employed an engineer called Alf Traeger. They worked together and sent their first message to each other between Alice Springs and Hermannsburg, a distance of 140 kilometres. A big advance was Traeger’s invention of a hand-cranked generator able to supply enough power to work the radio.

A successful demonstration of the new machine was staged at Cloncurry on Melbourne Cup Day 1927. There was, however, still one problem. If one person in a remote area had to operate the radio to call for help by themselves, hand-cranking and operating the Morse code radio was almost physically impossible. The clever Traeger simply attached foot pedals to the generator, and hence the famous peddle radio, that served on outback stations for many decades.

The Aerial Medical Service was then established on 15 May 1928 in Cloncurry. Although the trial period was a success, the Service struggled financially through the 1930s depression years. The Presbyterian Church created a new organisation in 1934, called the Australian Aerial Medical Service, and new bases sprang up around the country. In the 1940s it was renamed the Flying Doctor Service, with the Royal prefix being granted by the Queen in the same decade.

Although the RFDS then went on from strength to strength, it still relies heavily on fund raising and volunteers. And many Australians support this icon that commenced in Queensland as it continues to operate from 20 bases, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year across a huge area of the country.

# She’s a real icon, Hey?

Peter Maxwell

THEY don’t say it down south. It’s just a Queensland thing. It’s an iconic expression. **Hey?**

You wouldn’t spell it Eh? That’s what they say in the Islands. The Kiwis say it that way, too. It sounds a bit like a very short “air”.

We say Hey? A long drawn out Hey? It rhymes with “G’day”. The “H”, of course, is silent.

So where does it come from? Nobody really seems to know, so here’s a theory that’ll do until a better one comes along.

You hear Eh? in the Pacific. You hear Eh? in New Zealand. In Queensland you hear Hey? (In New South Wales they’ll end a sentence in “but”. But that’s another story.)

If you follow the migration of the people of the Pacific you’ll find them in New Zealand, of course, and in Queensland. Especially North Queensland, where they came in to work years ago.

Could it be that they brought Eh? with them and, given an Aussie accent, it became Hey? A sort of

Melanesian Micronesian Polynesian contribution to our Queensland language?

***It’s just a guess but not a bad one. Hey?***

***Any thoughts?***



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## Have your say...

To nominate an item for inclusion in **The List of Queensland Heritage Icons: 2005** simply copy or tear out this form, fill it in and send it to National Trust of Queensland. GPO Box 538. BRISBANE 4001. Or drop in at 95 William Street in Brisbane. Or go to [www.nationaltrustqld.org](http://www.nationaltrustqld.org)

I nominate .....

(If the item is not familiar, tell us more about it here. What it is, where it is, and why you consider it an icon. Attach a separate sheet if you need more space.)

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