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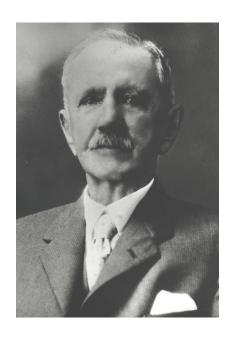
JOSEPH HODEL MLA CHAIRMAN OF THURINGOWA SHIRE

Early Life

Joseph Hodel was born on the Channel Island of Jersey in 1850. He came to Queensland with his parents and siblings in 1863. After working for a few years on a plantation on the Logan River, in 1870 he moved to Townsville with his first wife, Johanna and twin sons. Joseph joined members of his family who were already established in the area. In his early years in Townsville he pursued various trades including baker, confectioner and fruiterer, however by the 1870s he had launched into the hotel business.

Council Achievements

Joseph Hodel became a member of the Thuringowa Divisional Board in 1884. He was a member of the Board for 23 years, serving as Chairman on at least 14 occasions. During his service to the Board, improvements were undertaken in the Thuringowa area that greatly enhanced the region's economy and promoted further settlement.



In his first years on the Board, the Council focused on infrastructure development that included the completion of the causeway (1885) and the construction of the Ross River Bridge (1886). As Chairman he instigated the reconstruction of the Ross River Bridge in 1897; the building of the Stewart Creek Bridge on Alligator Creek Road in 1894; upgrading the sanitation system; and the establishment of the Thuringowa Water Board (1897).





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Once the basic infrastructure was established, he limited capital works but maintained a philosophy of pragmatism and progressivism throughout his chairmanship.

In addition to serving as Chairman, Joseph Hodel was the Thuringowa representative on a number of regional development committees. After the founding of the Townsville Harbour Board in 1895, he became the Thuringowa Divisional Board member on the Board. He remained on the board for 25 years, serving as Chairman for seven of those years. He was also Thuringowa representative on the Ayr Tramway Joint Board, serving as Chairman of the Board until 1910 when it folded.

Joseph Hodel retired from the Thuringowa Sire Council in 1916 but returned as a Councillor for the Shire from 1920 to 1922. He died in Townsville in 1943.

Business interests

Hotelier

Joseph Hodel was a successful hotelier owning numerous hotels in the city, including the *North Star* in Flinders Street (1874), the *Newmarket* 1878-82, 82-83,

89-90, the *Grand* 1886-87, and the *Cluden* 1897.

Pastoralist

Joseph Hodel also developed extensive pastoral interests in the north. By 1876 he was listed in the Squatter's Directory as a leaseholder of land in Townsville. owned and raced horses and turned his Oaklands at Cluden, properties, Clevedon. south of Townsville, into lucrative horse raising and stud farms. He was one of the original members of the Townsville Pastoral Association and the Townsville Turf Club and was appointed one of the trustees for the Cluden Racecourse. In addition to his interest in horses, Hodel had a number of cattle properties including St Helier (1893-1896), (1903-1907).

Other Business and Community Involvements

In 1914 Joseph Hodel was appointed to the Legislative Council of the Queensland Parliament and remained Townsville representative until the upper house was abolished in 1922.





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After an initial failed attempt in the newspaper business in the 1880s, his interest revived in 1908 when he acquired shares in the Townsville Newspaper Company Limited. By 1910 he was a member of the board of North Queensland Newspaper Co Ltd.

About the turn of the century Hodel became a director of the United Insurance Co. Ltd continuing in that capacity for 42 years. In 1933 he was elected honorary member of the Townsville Chamber of Commerce in recognition of his long association with them and his "many years of most useful public service to the city".

Joseph Hodel's community involvement extended to membership of the Townsville School of Arts, State Orphanage and the Townsville Voluntary Defence Force as well various other charitable and sporting committees.

Acknowledgements:

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- Lyn Henderson, More than Rates, Roads and Rubbish: A History of Local Government in Action in Thuringowa Shire 1879-1985, PhD Thesis, James Cook University, April 1992.
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