

# Street Name Honour

the people behind the names of a selection of Bundaberg streets

Many of Bundaberg's streets are named after pioneer individuals or families. These people helped settle, build and develop Bundaberg into a town. They paved the way in business, public service, health care, law enforcement, etc, and gave rise to the Bundaberg we know today. Their efforts, often in very trying circumstances which are difficult to comprehend today, have enabled Bundaberg's growth into a modern city.

This article takes a look at four of Bundaberg's streets and the men in whose honour they were named - Horace Burkitt, John Houston Cathcart, George Fermann, and Henry John Ford.



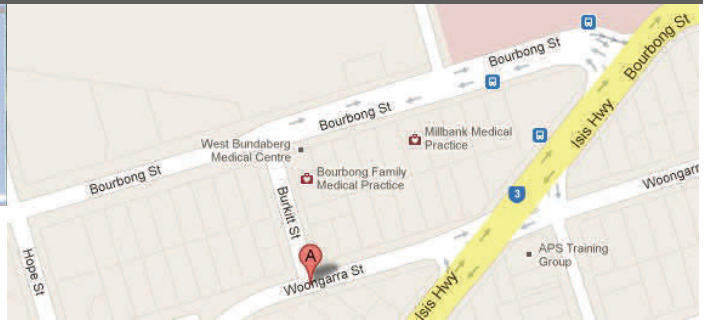
*bun02060: Bourbon (Bourbon) Street, c1879.  
Picture Bundaberg: Bundaberg Library Collection*



*bun02076: Bourbon (Bourbon) Street, looking East  
c1909. Picture Bundaberg: Bundaberg Library Collection*



*bun02078: Bourbon (Bourbon) Street, Bundaberg,  
looking east... c1930. Picture Bundaberg: Bundaberg  
Library Collection*



Google Maps - <http://maps.google.com.au>

## In honour of: Horace Burkitt

Bundaberg's second Police Magistrate and Land Commissioner

When named: as of 27 May 1940

Previous name: Adams Street

Horace Burkitt is best known for being Bundaberg's second Police Magistrate. He was born 2 March 1836 in Clapham, Surrey, England, and came to Australia (Victoria) on the *SS Arundel* in 1852 aged 16. He moved to Queensland in 1862, briefly to Rockhampton, before moving on to Mackay. After a visit to England for family business, during which time he also married and qualified as a dentist, he returned to Australia, to Ipswich, with his wife and first child. Unfortunately Ipswich could not support him as a full time dentist and Horace decided dentistry was not for him. He joined the Queensland Public Service in 1865 and was posted to Broadsound (St Lawrence) with the Queensland Colonial Customs Department.

During his service in Broadsound the family would holiday in Burnett Heads. When Horace received notice he would be transferred to Bundaberg in April 1875, the family, although sad to move, were at least familiar with the area they would be moving to. Horace took over the role of Police Magistrate from Bundaberg's first Magistrate Mr Joseph Hughes. Horace also became the Sub-Collector of Customs and Lands Commissioner, in addition to holding a variety of other positions.

The family lived on the north bank of the Burnett River where the Burnett Club now sits (7 Quay Street) for ten years until Horace was transferred to Cooktown in 1885. After retiring from the public service Horace settled in Oxley, Brisbane, where he passed away on 21 August 1919.

Horace's son Basil would follow in his father's footsteps as a dentist and become Bundaberg's first dentist in 1892, despite being under 21 years of age. He had to practice under the guarantorship of Dr T.H. May until he reached the legal age to practice privately.

Note: The Love article referred to in the References below is a fascinating account of the Burkitt family in Queensland, including Bundaberg.

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*Bundaberg Daily News*, 22 Aug 1919, p4.

*Bundaberg and District Pioneers: a biographical index to 1901*. Comp. Bundaberg Genealogical Association Inc., 1988. pp15, 134.

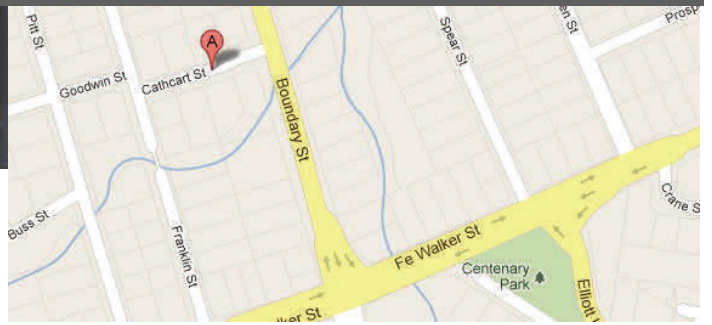
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# CATHCART ST

5-1



Google Maps - <http://maps.google.com.au>

## In honour of: A. Cathcart\* and his son J.H. Cathcart

One of Bundaberg's pioneer storekeepers

When named: as of 27 May 1940

Previous name: Goodwin Street (between Franklin & Boundary Sts)

Although Council's records indicate this street was named after A. Cathcart\*, Bundaberg's first<sup>^</sup> storekeeper and his son J.H. Cathcart, it is actually J.H. (John Houston) who was Bundaberg's first<sup>^</sup> storekeeper – at least on the south side of the river.

John Houston Cathcart was born approximately 1838 in Scotland. He arrived in Australia (Port Phillip, Victoria), aboard the *Catherine Glen*, on 14 August 1853. John Houston worked for the Southerden's store in Maryborough and from there was sent to Bundaberg to open a branch on Quay Street (approximately where Sunshine House, former home of Meals on Wheels was sited - cnr Quay & Targo Streets, opposite Midtown Marina where there are public toilets now situated). This he did on 10 March 1870.

In 1871 Cathcart dedicated a small section of his store to the function of a post office, thus becoming Bundaberg's first postmaster. He then named his store Post Office Stores. The space housing this 'post office' was so small that the joke was that if he "...wanted to lace his boots, he had to go outside."<sup>1</sup> He ceased being postmaster on 4 October 1875.

On 21 November 1872 Cathcart and Henry John Ford<sup>^</sup> advertised that they had entered into a partnership as storekeepers and station agents for north and south Bundaberg, purchasing the Quay Street business from Southerden. Their partnership dissolved amicably in 1875 and both went on to operate as storekeepers in separate businesses.

Due to "...following too generous a credit business and bad times coming on..."<sup>2</sup> Cathcart's own business was purchased in July 1876 by Buss and Williams after creditors moved in. Very active in the community and in his church John Houston Cathcart died of cancer on 16 July 1877, at the age of 39.

\* John Houston Cathcart's father is listed in both the Queensland Births, Deaths & Marriages Index, and Ancestry Library Edition, as John Cathcart (not A. Cathcart).

<sup>^</sup> See also: 'Ford Street' entry in this article.

### References:

Ancestry Library Edition – available on Library PCs only, or via personal subscription at <http://www.ancestry.com.au>  
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<sup>2</sup> *Bundaberg Star*, 21 Jul 1877, p2.

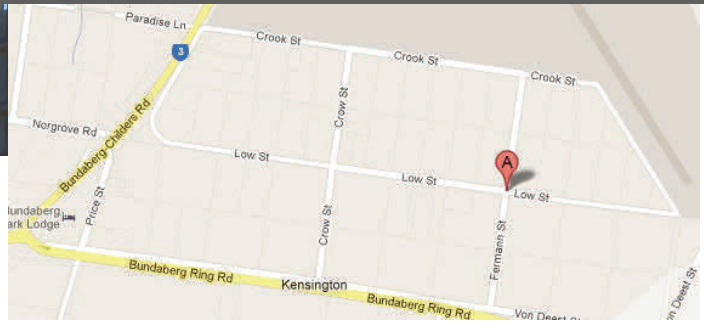
*Mount Perry Mail*, 21 Nov 1872, p3.

<sup>1</sup> Nolan, Janette. 1978. *Bundaberg: history & people*. UQP, St Lucia.

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# FERMANN ST



Google Maps - <http://maps.google.com.au>

## In honour of: George Fermann

One of Bundaberg's first chemists

When named: as of 16 May 1977

Previous name: n/a

George Fermann was born approximately 1849, probably in Norway (his father is listed as Dr N.P. Fermann of Thronhjem, Norway). It is not known exactly when he came to Australia, but it was most likely aboard the *Alardus* from Hamburg, Germany to Maryborough in either 1872 or 1873. He married Johanne[a] Sophie[a] Rasmussen on 2 June 1875.

Fermann was one of Bundaberg's first pharmaceutical chemists and also was in business as a wholesale and retail bookseller and stationer. Originally operating out of premises on the corner of Targo and Woongarra Streets, which he purchased from Mr T. Baker, he then commissioned the building of Bundaberg's first two-storey building (his new chemist shop). This was erected in early 1879 in Bourbong Street, next to Mr. McConville's. It apparently "...reflect[ed] infinite credit on its enterprising owner, and [took] considerable off the value of other 'fine' buildings adjacent."<sup>3</sup> Full descriptions of this exciting new building appear in both the *Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail* (16 May 1879, p2), and the *Bundaberg Star* (17 May 1879, p2).

In February 1881, however, he disposed of this business to Mr. Pearse/Pearce and moved to Warwick to operate as a chemist there. About eight months later on 4 October 1881, his Bundaberg building was destroyed by a fire which also destroyed other nearby businesses. Three days later, when the *Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail* reported the fire, Mr Fermann was announcing his intention to rebuild, this time three two-storey buildings on his land. An application for tenders went out on 18 November 1881. Then in December 1881 the *Warwick Argus* reported that George Fermann retired from his business in Warwick with the intention of returning to Bundaberg where his new premises, which would replace those recently destroyed by fire, were in the process of construction.

It is not known exactly what happened to George Fermann in the years after rebuilding his store in Bundaberg, but the local newspaper announced his death on 26 August 1886 at the young age of 37 years. They further announced that he had "...linger[ed] for two years a victim to the worst of all diseases, insanity...".<sup>4</sup> He had been housed at the Woogaroo Asylum (Goodna/Wolston Park, outside Ipswich).

### References:

Ancestry Library Edition – available on Library PCs only, or via personal subscription at <http://www.ancestry.com.au>

<sup>3</sup> *The Brisbane Courier*, 1 Feb 1879, p7. Available: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>

*The Brisbane Courier*, 2 Oct 1886, p7. Available: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>

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*Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, 20 Jul 1877, p3.

*Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, 16 May 1879, p2, 3.

*Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, 25 Feb 1881, p2.

*Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, 7 Oct 1881, p2.

*Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, 18 Nov 1881, p2.

<sup>4</sup> *Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, 27 Aug 1886, p2.

*Bundaberg Star*, 17 May 1879, p2.

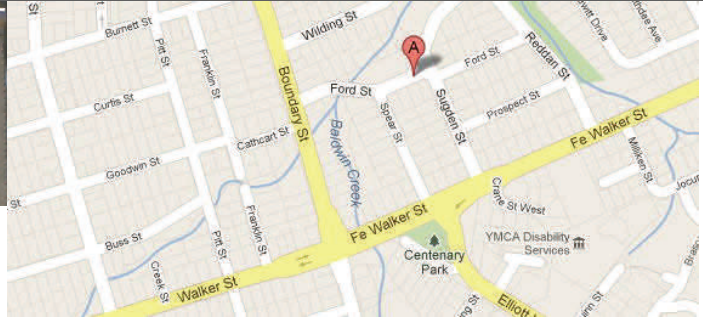
*The Northern Miner* (Charters Towers), 6 Oct 1881, p2. Available: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>

The Park – Centre for Mental Health, Qld. Govt., [http://www.health.qld.gov.au/the\\_park/about.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/the_park/about.asp)

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*Warwick Argus*, 8 Oct 1881, p2. Available: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>

*Warwick Argus*, 24 Dec 1881, p2. Available: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>



Google Maps - <http://maps.google.com.au>

## In honour of: H. J. Ford

Bundaberg's first storekeeper

When named: as of 27 May 1940

Previous name: Goodwin Street (between Boundary & Boomerang Sts)

By all accounts Henry John Ford was lucky to live as long as he did. He almost came to grief on his way to Australia, and again in Bundaberg in 1870. However, he went on to live to 70 years of age, and became Bundaberg's first storekeeper, opening his shop on 12 February 1870 - beating John Cathcart, who opened his store on Quay Street on 10 March 1870, by almost a month. Ford's store was opened in "...a little slab humpy..."<sup>5</sup> in North Bundaberg, possibly near the western end of what is now Edina Street.

Henry John Ford was born in England on 24 October 1843. He immigrated to Australia aboard the *Queen of the Colonies*, landing in early April 1863. Before they'd even left British waters, and en route to Ireland to pick up more passengers, the ship was apparently fired at by the American steamer *Alabama*. No account exists from the day (including in Ford's diary\* of the trip - he apparently began his diary on 26 December; this incident occurred on 13 December 1862). However, an account is published in Brisbane's *Courier Mail* in 1933.

Ford didn't fare any better upon anchoring off Cape Moreton in April 1863. A Mrs Barnfield had died on board from childbirth in the preceding few days. Her wish was to not be buried at sea, so a party including Henry Ford, set off for shore near the Cape Moreton lighthouse to bury Mrs Barnfield. Upon their return to ship a sudden squall prevented them from boarding. They eventually made it to shore and stayed there for a week before deciding to row for civilisation. A large wave capsized the boat and all but Mr Barnfield (husband of the deceased Mrs Barnfield) made it back to shore. Mr Barnfield had drowned or, as *The Courier* speculated, "... must have been instantly devoured by the sharks..."<sup>6</sup>. A couple of days later three of the party decided to try and reach Brisbane by land. Those who stayed were rescued on 18 April, the three on foot were rescued approximately 4 days later. A full account is published in *The Courier*, 21 Apr 1863, p2.

Having finally made Australian shores Henry Ford settled in Brisbane for approximately 6 years before making his way to Bundaberg. He opened his store in February 1870 and less than a month later lost it to flooding. Bundaberg experienced heavy rain and then flooding during the latter part of February 1870. Henry began moving stock onto higher shelves but then became trapped in his store, unable to open the door against the floodwaters. The Stuart/Stewart brothers and James Ellwood came in a boat to the rescue, and after bashing a hole in the roof with an axe were able to extract a relieved Henry Ford. The store itself still stood once the waters receded, but most of the stock was ruined. The Stuart/Stewart brothers built him a new store on higher ground shortly after, possibly on what would become Perry Street.

As seen under 'Cathcart Street' in this article, Ford entered into partnership with John Houston Cathcart in November 1872. They dissolved their partnership in 1875, and the Pioneer Store (Ford's North Bundaberg store) was purchased by J.C. Walker from Cathcart and Ford in October

1875. Ford operated a business on his own for a while before moving to Childers at some stage to manage a store for Buss and Turner.

Henry John Ford eventually retired to Brisbane and passed away at his Kelvin Grove home on 18 January 1914.

\* Diary held in State Library of Queensland. May be viewed on Library premises only (not for loan).

See also: 'Cathcart Street' entry in this article.

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*Bundaberg Mail*, 23 Jan 1914, p3.

<sup>5</sup> *Bundaberg Star*, 26 Feb 1875, p4.

*Bundaberg Star*, 1 Oct 1875, p1.

*Bundaberg Star*, 15 Oct 1875, p1.

<sup>6</sup> *The Courier* (Brisbane), 21 Apr 1863, p2.

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