



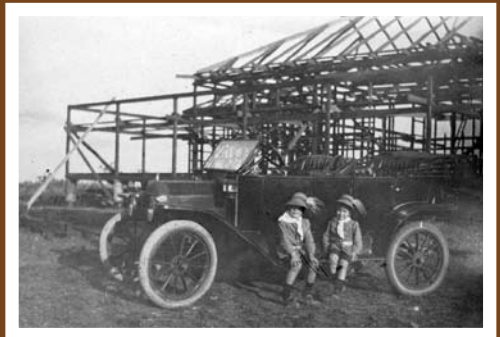
Welcome to
Greenmount Homestead
Self-guided tour





Left: Vida Althea Cook (nee Atherton). Vida married Albert Cook April 11, 1908. She was the 'first lady of the house' at Greenmount Homestead, passing away in 1955.

Below: Tom and John Cook in their Sunday best.



Left and below: The building of Greenmount Homestead, July 1915.



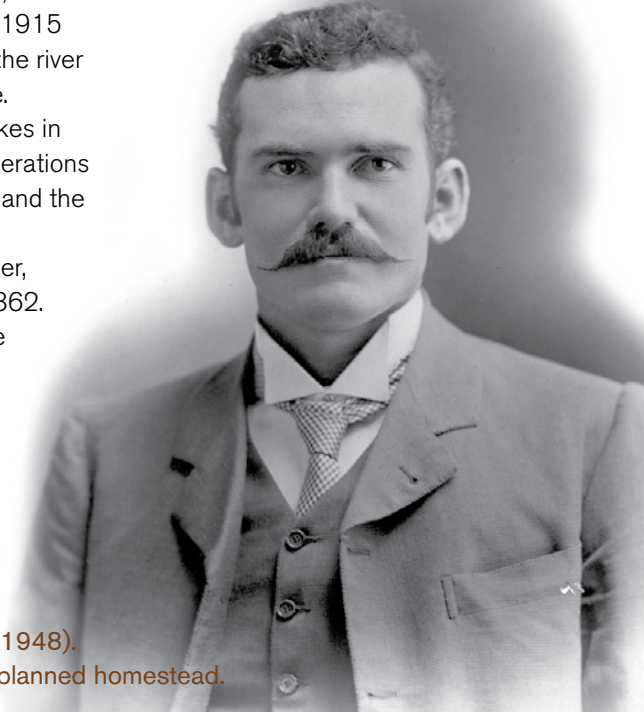
In 1912 Albert Cook bought the Greenmount lands to breed cattle.

Albert built Greenmount Homestead, the first permanent house on the property, in 1915 and moved his young family across the river from Balnagowan to their new home.

The vista from the front verandah takes in Pleystowe Mill, with which three generations of the Cook family were associated, and the area known as Greenknoll (formerly Greenmount) where Mackay's founder, John Mackay, first took up land in 1862.

Located at reputedly 200 feet above sea level, Greenmount Homestead affords views right across Mackay and as far afield as the harbour.

At night, the bright lights of Mackay and the movement of traffic are clearly visible.



Right: Albert Alfred Cook (1875 - 1948).

Below: An original drawing of the planned homestead.

Drawings of Residence Proposed to be

Erected at Greenmount

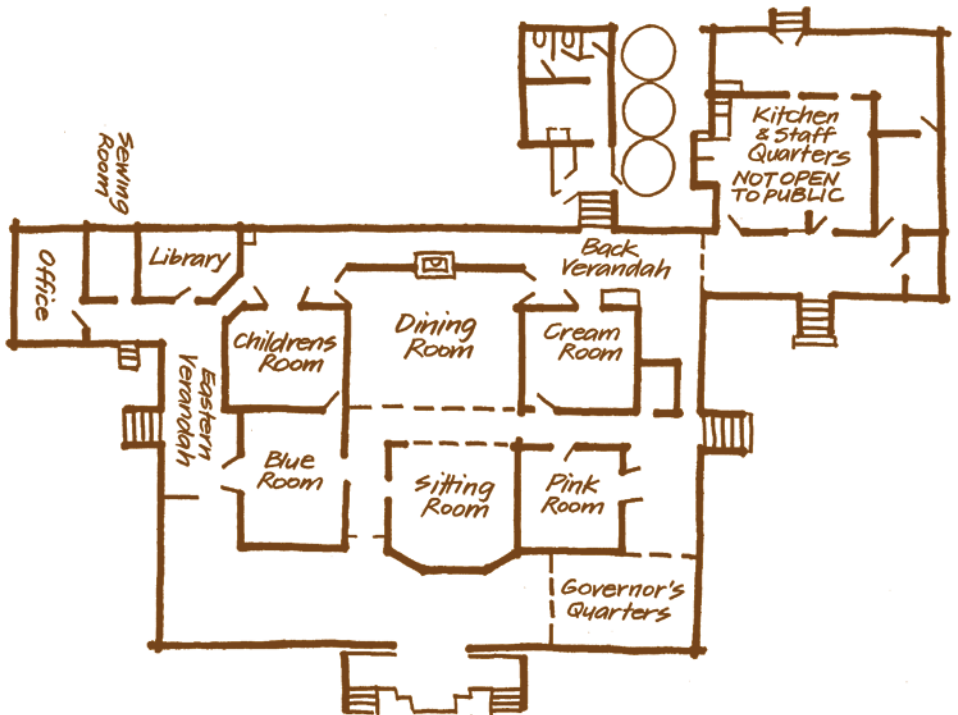
Elevation to North

for *Albert Cook Esq.*





Albert Alfred Cook with sons
Tom and John, 1914.



Greenmount Homestead floor plan.

Welcome...

The entrance hall

As you enter Greenmount Homestead through its namesake lead-lit front door, give yourself a few moments to adjust to the lighting in here. It's time to experience Greenmount as it was in the days of Tom and Dorothy Cook. Note the pressed metal ceiling of the entrance hall. In fact all the ceilings within the homestead are made of pressed metal, with each room displaying a different pattern. The family's visitors' book normally resided on the narrow marble-topped table. The medallions housed in the wall-mounted case were won by John Cook (of Balnagowan), Thomas Cook (of Turanville) and Albert Alfred Cook (of Balnagowan and Greenmount).

The blue room

This was Tom and Dorothy Cook's bedroom for the duration of their married years. The furniture in here was bought around the time of their marriage in 1950. During Albert and Vida Cook's time within the home, this was the nanny's room.

The dining room

The dominant feature of this room is the English Oak dining suite, which was used at the Cooks' Balnagowan home at the turn of the last century. It's believed to have come from England in 1837 when the original family members immigrated to Australia. Also previously

in use at Balnagowan was the Australian Bentwood rocking chair. Notice the impressive pair of silver ice buckets - these were won in 1886 at the Narrabri Jockey Club (NSW) by Tom Cook's imposingly monikered horse, 'Invader'.

Large oil paintings of Samuel Wellington Cook and his wife Elizabeth (nee Dangar) hang on the eastern and western walls of this room. Samuel and Elizabeth were the founding members of the Cook family in Australia, moving here from Cornwall in 1837. Photographs of subsequent generations of the family are also displayed, including those of John and Elizabeth Cook and their son Thomas (who founded Balnagowan in 1862), Albert Alfred and Vida Althea Cook (who built Greenmount Homestead in 1915), and Tom Albert and Dorothy (nee Drysdale) Cook, who were the last owners of the property. The Silky Oak mantelpiece was relocated from Balnagowan.

Along the western wall of the room resides a grandfather clock that is estimated to be 280 years old. It was originally owned by the Drysdale family. The chiffonier (or sideboard) was a wedding present from Albert to his bride Vida in 1908.

The sitting room

There was a practical purpose for the vertical matchstick blinds in this area of the home. On more formal dining occasions, the blinds were drawn to

'close off' the room after dinner, allowing the men to retire to the dining room with their cheeses and port while the ladies remained in the sitting room. The pianola in here was Tom's wedding present to wife Dorothy and the couple acquired many pianola rolls in their time. The table lamps were handily fashioned by Tom from a candelabra and a flower vase.

The hall

The wall-mounted case in the central hallway of the home holds souvenirs from various family trips. The photographs are of Greenmount in 1921.



Tom and Dorothy Cook's wedding day, January 1950.

The pink room

This was originally Albert and Vida Cook's bedroom. The combined chest of drawers and writing desk - known as 'campaign furniture' - was brought across from England in 1837. It now holds photographs of Sir Henry Abel Smith, then Governor of Queensland, and his wife Lady May, who stayed at the homestead in 1962.

The cream room

Originally this was the bedroom of Albert and Vida's daughter, Althea. Later Tom and Dorothy Cook used it as a 'family room' - a guest bedroom for the children of guests. The crocheted valance on the bed was made by Tom's grandmother, Elizabeth, of Balnagowan.

The western verandah

Originally an open verandah, this area was enclosed in the early 1960s as living quarters for Dorothy Cook's mother, Mrs Drysdale. Together with the adjoining (pink) bedroom, it became known as the 'Governor's Suite' after the 1962 visit of the then Queensland Governor. In order to accommodate Sir Abel Smith's stay, Mrs Drysdale was relocated to another house on the Greenmount property. The bathroom (not open to the public) was installed when the verandah was enclosed. The piano in here, made by the American Stodart Piano Company, was originally owned by Vida Cook and was returned to the homestead in 1986. Mrs Drysdale owned the leadlight cabinet and its contents, including the Coalport China at the bottom of the cupboard.

The kitchen and staff quarters

The original homestead kitchen and staff quarters are not open to the public. This area is still occupied by Gloria Arrow, who served as housekeeper and friend to Tom and Dorothy Cook since she was 17. A living legacy of Greenmount Homestead's enduring history, Gloria has lived here for more than 50 years.

The back verandah

The clock you can see on the wall in here (now missing one of its hands) was used by Albert Cook to teach his children to tell the time. The large table and Bentwood chairs were often used when there were extra people for meals. Lunch was often served here. The matching drinks cabinet

is nearby. The stairs lead to the semi-detached wing containing the whip room, bathroom and toilet. At the eastern end of the verandah, behind the screen, is the area set up as Tom Cook's washroom. It contains a handbasin and chest of drawers which held his personal grooming gear and some first aid supplies.

The children's room

Also referred to as the dressing room, this was originally the bedroom occupied by Albert Cook's two young sons, Tom and John. A doorway links this room with the blue room - then the nanny's room. When Tom and Dorothy took over the homestead, the children's room became Tom's dressing room.



Tom, Albert and John Cook at the Mackay Show on June 6, 1923.

The library

Described on the original house plans as the smoking room, the library houses the writing desk of both Vida and Dorothy Cook. The 1932 STC five-valve radio in the corner has been restored.

The sewing room

Not just a place for sewing, this room was also used for the storage of luggage, medicines and first-aid remedies (for both humans and animals). The Cooks' original Singer sewing machine remains in place.



John Cook sent this photo of himself to Grandma (Elizabeth Cook) in May 1920

The office

The administrative centre of the property, this room contained a desk each for Tom and Dorothy Cook. The family's stud records outgrew available storage facilities and were subsequently housed in the grey file drawers stacked on the floor. The long light positioned high up on the eastern wall has the only fluorescent light in the house during the Cook's residency.

The eastern verandah

This area and the front verandah were used extensively by the Cooks and their guests. Newspapers and magazines were stacked here, close to the day bed and the comfy squatters' chairs, for relaxed reading in the fresh air.

Tom and John Cook used the lift-top desk to complete their school work, while the wardrobe (with centre mirror panel) and the chest of drawers located adjacent to the side door were both retrieved from the Cooks' former seaside cottage, 'Sea Brae'. A refurbishment program carried out as part of Australia's Centenary of Federation celebrations saw the installation of a disabled access lift in this wing of the home.

From here you can wander down the front stairs to explore the formal gardens and extensive grounds surrounding Greenmount Homestead.

Explore a garden of history...

The formal front garden, with its distinctive red-gravel circular driveway, once sported a small fountain in the central bed. The light pole in this garden was originally a gas streetlight that Tom Cook purchased at Charters Towers and had converted to electricity when it was installed in the garden.

A fernery is located at the western side of the homestead. The original bush timber fernery - dismantled and relocated from Balnagowan in 1916 - was replaced with a similar structure in 1928. After this fell into ruin, it was restored by Mackay West Rotary Club in 1988. The small courtyard

between the fernery and the staff quarters was often the morning tea venue for staff and family.

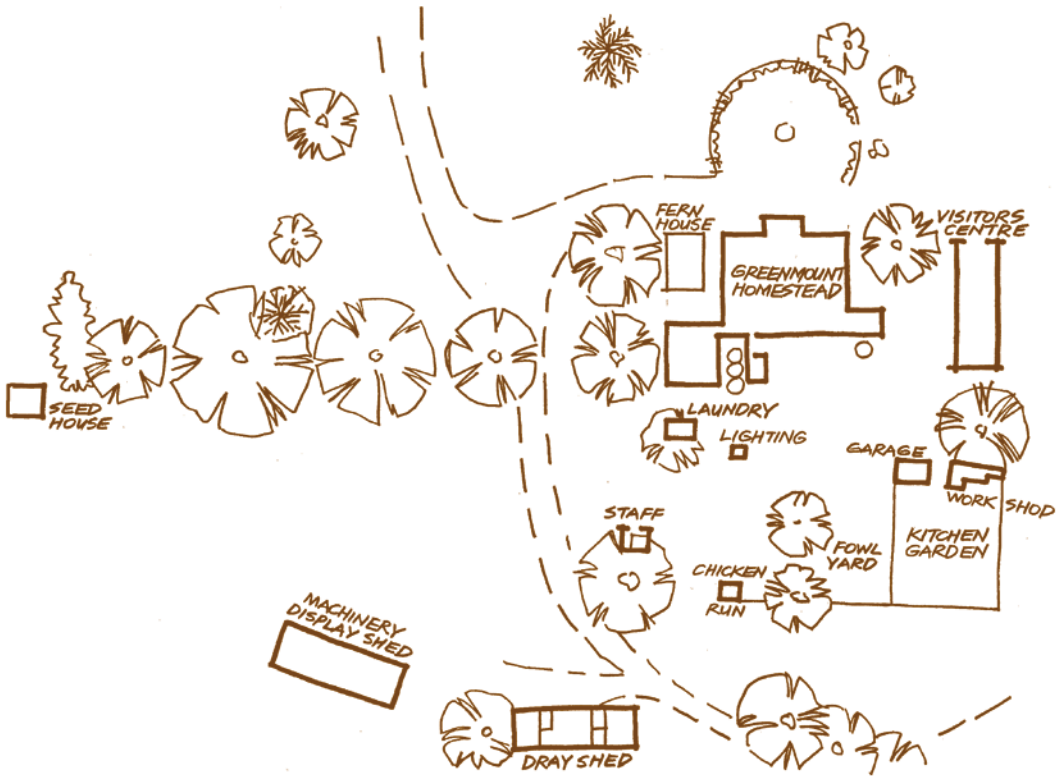
Off the north-eastern corner of the house is an arbour which housed the existing table and a few casual chairs. Tom and his men often has morning tea here while they discussed the day's work.

Exotic trees were planted throughout the grounds, particularly in the 1930s. These included longans, elephant apples, avocados, jackfruit, cluster figs, cork trees and mangoes.



Albert with daughter Althea and sons John and Tom at Christmas, 1920.
The tricycle pictured is on display at the homestead today.

Below: An aerial perspective of the Greenmount Homestead grounds.



Gloria Arrow (pictured left) came to Greenmount in 1958 at the age of 17 to work for Tom and Dorothy Cook as a live-in housemaid.

Later on she became housekeeper and continued to work for them until 1983 when the property closed.

The visitors' centre

Follow the concrete path east from the homestead to the visitors' centre. Here you will find a series of displays relating to Greenmount Homestead, the Cook families and their various interests and associations. Public toilets are located at the end of the building.

The workshop

Built in 1926, this was young John Cook's favourite spot to build toys and indulge in other mechanical projects. The small area on the eastern side once housed a generator, while the area on the western side of the building was used as a car shed.

The garage

This was once the storage place for the 1965 Wolseley sedan owned by Mrs Drysdale and generally driven by her daughter, Dorothy Cook. The vehicle is now stored in the new shed along with a Ford Model T.

Below: Original drawing of Greenmount's western elevation.



Chicken run and fowl yard

Once used to house chickens, ducks and geese, this area of the property ensured a good supply of eggs for the kitchen.

The generator shed

First used in 1916 to house a gas-lighting plant, this shed later housed a generator after conversion to 32-volt electricity in 1925.

The laundry

This area is not open to the public. Originally the brick-lined fireplace was used to heat the copper for washing. The eastern side of the building originally housed dairy equipment.

Maggie's room

These staff quarters were occupied in the 1920s by Peter and Maggie Darwin, an Aboriginal/Islander couple who were employed at the homestead. Subsequently, it was used as married quarters for other staff. All rooms originally had antbed floors. The concrete-floor bathroom area was set up in the 1950s for the workers living in the single quarters in the seed house.

The dray shed

Built in 1918, this shed housed working farm and workshop machinery. The MK1 LandRover was used on the property until 1983. This structure also housed the blacksmith's shop. If you cast your eye across the fence line to the neighbouring property (once part of Greenmount Homestead), some original Greenmount structures are still visible.

The school house

The cottage located across the paddock was the Greenmount school house, originally located in front of the fowl yard near the existing lemon tree. Albert Cook's three children received their primary schooling in this building before going off to boarding school. The school house was moved in the early 1950s and converted to married men's quarters.

The cattleyards

The site of the Cooks' original cattleyards can be spotted under the tamarind trees beyond the hay shed.

The seed house

On the rise at the western boundary of the present grounds, the seed house was built in about 1955 as single staff quarters. This was used by a variety of people who worked on the property over the years, including canecutters.

One room in the building was used to store seed for the pastures.

As you wander through the park back to your transport, be sure to take the time to enjoy the birds and the views.



Vida Cook, circa 1900s.

**Thank you for visiting
Greenmount Homestead
today. We look forward
to your company again in
the future.**



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