

Roger Hawken

Prof. Roger Hawken



Born	12 May 1878 Darlington, New South Wales
Died	18 October 1947 (aged 69) Brisbane, Queensland
Nationality	Australian
Education	Newington College University of Sydney
Occupation	Engineer, Lecturer, Professor
Spouse(s)	Adelaide Margrette (née Mott)
Children	5 daughters
Parent(s)	Nicholas Hawken MLC and Mary Jane (née Vance)

Roger William Hercules Hawken (12 May 1878 – 18 October 1947), an Australian **engineer**, was the first lecturer in **Civil Engineering**, and then a professor, at the **University of Queensland**.^[1]



Personal life

Hawken was born at **Darlington, New South Wales**, the son of **Nicholas Hawken MLC** and Mary Jane (née Vance). He attended **Newington College** (1893–1896)^[2] and in 1895 won the Wigram Allen Scholarship, awarded by Sir **George Wigram Allen**, for mathematics.^{[3][4]} His tertiary education was at the **University of Sydney** (B.C.E., 1900; B.A., 1902).^[5] He also received a Masters of Engineering from the University of Sydney.^[6] He died on 18 October 1947 after a week's illness and was cremated at **Mt Thompson Crematorium**. He was survived by his wife and five daughters.^{[6][7]}

Professional life

Hawken's academic bent was evident by 1903 in a remarkably advanced paper to the [Sydney University Engineering Society](#) on the structural analysis of bridges.

Hawken worked as an engineer in the [Federated Malay States](#) for four years and then with local government authorities in New South Wales. In 1912 Hawken was appointed as a lecturer at the University of Queensland.^[6]

He graduated M.C.E. from Sydney in 1918 after submitting a thesis on column design, a frontier topic of the period, and appears to have had slightly the better of a lively argument with the eminent English engineer, E. H. Salmon, who had written an authoritative text on the subject.

Hawken was appointed as professor at the University of Queensland in 1919.^[6]

Professor Hawken was involved in the founding of [IEAust](#) in 1919 and was its president in 1923 and a councillor till his death. At his suggestion in 1928, [Queensland](#) became the first state to legislate for compulsory registration of consulting engineers.^[8]

In the 1920s he turned again to earth pressures and the stability of slopes; he thus was one of the pioneers of the study of [soil mechanics](#), a subject generally neglected until the 1950s. In later work on rainfall runoff and flooding potential and the economic appraisal of engineering schemes, his ideas were well ahead of his time. Professor Hawken was reserved but excessively formal, with a wry, sometimes biting sense of humour. Engineering and the University was his life. He saw the complete engineer as a combination of wide experience and wide culture, encouraged originality in his students, called himself the 'senior student' and was known as 'hanks'.^[6]

His work included design of an early version of the [Sydney Harbour Bridge](#) that did not proceed to construction, and identification of crossing points for the [Brisbane River](#). He was involved in many major Brisbane projects including an early [Victoria Bridge](#) (the [abutment](#) is still standing near [QPAC](#)) and the [Story Bridge](#). In 2006, [Brisbane City Council](#) proposed Hawken Bridge as one of 5 names for a new green bridge linking the [University of Queensland](#) to [Dutton Park](#) but ended up choosing the name [Eleanor Schonell Bridge](#). In May 1947, he was asked to participate in an inquiry into a [railway crash at Camp Mountain](#).^[9]

Named in his honour



Hawken Engineering Building

Two major engineering buildings and library at the University of Queensland have been named in his honour. The first Hawken building was built in about 1964^[10] However it was vacated by the Engineering Faculty after the construction of a new building in about the 1990s. The name Hawken Building was then assigned to the new building, and the old Hawken Building was renamed the Prentice Building, reflecting the Prentice Computer Centre which took over the building.^[11]

The annual Hawken address, presented by the Queensland division of [IEAust](#), is usually held in its Hawken Auditorium, the main lecture theatre in the Hawken Building.

Shortly after his death in 1947, a road leading to the main UQ campus at [St Lucia, Queensland](#) (then known as Coronation Drive) was renamed Hawken Drive.^[12]

References

1. [^] [Australian Dictionary of Biography](#)
2. [^] [Newington College Register of Past Students 1863–1998](#) (Sydney, 1999) pp85
3. [^] [Newington College Register of Past Students 1863–1998](#) (Sydney, 1999) Part 2 – The Lists
4. [^] *"Two Newington Students". [Australian Town and Country Journal](#). **LII**(1356). *New South Wales*. 1 February 1896. p. 20. Retrieved 6 October 2016 – via [National Library of Australia](#).*

5. [^] [Alumni Sidneienses Archived 18 July 2008 at the Wayback Machine](#)
6. [^] [Jump up to:^{a b c d e} "Prof. Hawken dead at 69; ill for week". *Sunday Mail*. Brisbane. 19 October 1947. p. 4. Retrieved 5 June 2014 – via National Library of Australia.](#)
7. [^] ["Family Notices". *The Courier-Mail*. Brisbane. 20 October 1947. p. 10. Retrieved 6 March 2011 – via National Library of Australia.](#)
8. [^] ["Hawken, Roger William Hercules \(1878–1947\)". *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Retrieved 2 February 2017.](#)
9. [^] ["JUDGE MANSFIELD TO HEAD INQUIRY INTO RAILWAY SMASH". *The Morning Bulletin*. Rockhampton, Qld. 9 May 1947. p. 1. Retrieved 6 March 2011 – via National Library of Australia.](#)
10. [^] [Photo of construction of Hawken Building, accessed 6 March 2011.](#)
11. [^] [Photo of the first Hawken Building, retrieved 6 March 2011.](#)
12. [^] ["Rename drive to honour professor". *The Courier-Mail*. Brisbane. 15 January 1949. p. 4. Retrieved 6 March 2011 – via National Library of Australia.](#)

External links

- [D. H. Trollope, Hawken, Roger William Hercules \(1878–1947\), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 9, Melbourne University Press, 1983, pp 230–231.](#)