



HSNT Newsletter

No 23/February 2009

Historical Society of the Northern Territory
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Patron: Hon Austin Asche, AO QC

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome all to the new year for the Society. Whilst the national news is bleak, the awful and tragic bushfires in Victoria and floods in Queensland and the persisting economic downturn, it looks like an exciting year for the Society. We plan to return to the Fort Wellington site in Raffles Bay. We will now be equipped with a contemporary site plan thanks to the NSW Archives which will enable a more comprehensive assessment of the physical remains. We have also had approval to visit the Bradshaw Field Training Area of the Department of Defence. It is a beautiful area rich in Northern Territory history. As well in September, in conjunction with the Darwin200 commemorations on the birth of Charles Darwin we will be conducting a cruise on Darwin Harbour following the trail of the *Beagle*.

Lastly, the Annual General Meeting of the Society is in March and we are always interested to learn of people who have an interest in history who would like to join the Society's Council and get involved with these interesting activities.

Brian Reid

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 27 FEBRUARY:** National Trust lecture: Burnett House, 6pm: Kath De La Rue: *Goyder, the Unsung Hero*. Gold coin donation
- 18 MARCH;** HSNT Council meeting. 7.30pm: 55 Ross Smith Avenue, Parap
- 25 MARCH:** HSNT lecture, MAGNT theatre, 7.30pm
- 29 MARCH, Sunday:** HSNT Annual General Meeting, Guide House, 55 Ross Smith Avenue, Parap, 3pm - 5pm: Nibbles and Drinks on the official opening of our Office space.
- 26 APRIL, Sunday:** BBQ Fundraiser at Harvey Norman Store, Stuart Highway, Berrimah 9am-3pm
- 10 MAY, Sunday:** HSNT: Pearl Ogden meeting: *So You Want to Self Publish*. 1pm - 4pm, 55 Ross Smith Avenue, Bookings essential Cost \$10pp. [8982 4235]
- 13 JUNE, Saturday:** HSNT/FNAR fundraising at the Adelaide River Races.
- 7-10 JULY, Sydney:** ICOMOS conference (*Un*)loved Modern - conserving 20 Century heritage.
- 22-24 SEPTEMBER:** CDU conference on Charles Darwin. \$

EDITORIAL

Things are, thankfully, back to normal however your Society is investing in a new computer system and now has a printer that will do lots of marvellous things - so watch out for photos in future newsletters.

A most successful quiz afternoon was held at the RSL, Cavenagh Street. Winners were all people we had not met before so welcome to the Society Eddie Josephs, Paris Lord, Erica Sims, Peter Thomas and Darlene Wright. I am told that a number are ex police officers so perhaps we can arrange a lecture or two or even an Occasional Paper from them. We raised almost \$900 after the expenses and thank our sponsors for their wonderful prizes: Angus & Robertson, Darwin Central Hotel, Airport Inn, Comfort Inn Asti, NT General Store, Calvi Boutique, PeeWees on the Point, The Hub, Holiday Inn on the Esplanade, Coles, Bakers Delight, McDonalds, Bunnings, Colemans and Shenanigans. Particular thanks goes to our Master of Ceremonies, Tony Pickering and to Committee Member Bev Phelts who arranged all the goodies.

The Society also was represented at the East Point Military Museum on their open day celebrating the Bombing of Darwin. A most interesting day was had and we met a number of members. We were also selling our ACCU Lottery tickets - we have 100 books to sell and the prizes are many and wonderful - again the money will go towards paying the rent for our office at Ross Smith Avenue so it is most essential that we sell all. Tickets are \$2 each and we receive all the monies from our books. Please call Yvonne Forrest (8982 42354) if you can help sell them. We really need to sell them otherwise the Society has to buy the books - which rather defeats the purpose!

Your Society will be arranging a cruise on the Darwin Harbour to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin. This will be on the Saturday following the conference to be arranged by the CDU. and invitations and bookings will be made through the University for those attending the conference who will join members on the trip.

It would appear that we have a Government grant to assist us with this. More on this closer to the date.

Reg Wilson has very kindly donated a very special plaque to the Society. Showing *H.M. Bark Endeavour*, with a small profile of Captain Cook in the left corner, denomination 25 Francs and legal tender in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 140mm in diameter and acrylic, we have been given limited edition number 79 of only 100 available throughout the world and produced by Mappin & Webb, it comes set in blue velvet with its certificate of Authenticity - quite something to acquire. Reg (a former surveyor) has also donated the book *Surveying, Queensland 1839-1945, a pictorial history* by Bill Kitson and Judith McKay. We thank him very much for both gifts.

The FAHS has issued information on the insurance scheme for local historical societies available through the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. It covers public liability, voluntary workers, personal accident and asset protection. This eliminates minimum premiums being payable by individual societies and ensures that each society has a standardised cover under one master policy. It improves negotiating ability for premium costing and when arranging cover - the age limit for Voluntary Workers Person Accident is increased to 90 years of age (!!!!) This policy also provides information for participating societies that may not currently be available Rates are specific to each State or Territory.

Please consider standing for the Council of the Society - new 'blood' is always needed to keep the organization relevant and in tune with what members want. Forms that went out with the last newsletter can be filled in and sent to the Secretary at our Post Office address to be there by 24 March. Please also remember that any business you want mentioned at the AGM must be put in writing and in the hands of the Secretary by 24 March. It is a decision by the President whether or not this information is presented at the AGM.

Yvonne Forrest

NEWS FROM THE FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Media Release:

FIRES, FLOODS, DROUGHTS AND OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE.

The President of the FAHS, Associate Professor Don Garden, expressed his profound concern for the recent damage to our cultural heritage through the devastating bushfires in Victoria and the floods in Queensland. At the same time, fresh hope is offered by the \$60 million component of the Federal Government's economic stimulus package that is devoted to projects for the natural and built environment.

Speaking on behalf of the nearly 1000 historical societies in Australia and their 100,000 members, Dr Garden expressed great sorrow at the loss of life and the damage to so many communities.

The FAHS is profoundly concerned that many of Australia's cultural heritage elements are deteriorating or being destroyed by the extremities of weather that appear to be linked to climate change. Buildings are deteriorating and, under extreme events, the built environment, heritage documents and objects are being lost. There are three circumstances in which these matters are most apparent:

1. the devastating bushfires in Victoria have destroyed thousands of buildings and other property. We are still evaluating the impact on historical societies - their members, premises and collections;
2. floods in Queensland and New South Wales in recent months have impacted widely on towns, rural properties and infrastructure;
3. in the last decade or more, long-term rainfall decline in the Murray-Darling Basin, combined with over-exploitation of water resources, has brought a decline in natural systems and the human economy. For both financial and physical reasons cultural heritage, particularly structures, is deteriorating and there is a lack of resources for preservation.

Such events make doubly welcome the government's contribution of \$60 million to cultural heritage. However the FAHS fears that much more will be needed, both to save and to conserv those elements of our cultural heritage that

have been damaged rather than destroyed and, in the future, to advance protection of our cultural heritage.

Dr Garden went on to propose on behalf of the FAHS the need for a project to evaluate the impact of climate change and climate extremes on cultural heritage elements across Australia - both past losses and future threats. This evaluation should make recommendations for remedial, restorative, replacement and preventative measures as appropriate.

Dr Garden represents the FAHS on the Federal Cultural Minister's Heritage Working Group and is suggesting also that part of the money should go in small grants to small community groups giving immediate economic stimulus, employment boost and grass roots cultural heritage benefits. The Working Group is, needless to say, dominated by the much larger and better resourced groups representing the built environment - ACNT, ICOMOS and AHC who are mainly interested in a small number of big iconic projects. He pointed out that cultural heritage is not just buildings - it includes natural, indigenous and things that are often in the buildings - documents, images, objects. etc.

There is a concern that small grant schemes may have high administration costs and can cause problems if there are large numbers of disappointed applicants. The suggestion was made that perhaps other groups could administer these. It was proposed that the grants be around \$50,000 to \$100,000 which would reduce the number of applications. They need also to be closely in accord with general criteria covering a clear heritage outcome, nearly ready to go (a need to be undertaken within a short time frame), have economic and employment benefit and to contribute to the public awareness of heritage - hopefully they would have tourism benefits also.

Australian Historical Associations national conference will be held at the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, 30 June - 3 July 2009.

Topics will include how museums, other institutions and communities construct and present history; the sites at which history is created and presented; tangible and intangible heritage

JOURNALS RECEIVED:

Australian Association for Marine History
newsletter (2008) 112/December
Australian Mining History newsletter (2008)
55/December
Australian Society for Sports History (2008)
48/August
Boab Bulletin (2008) 89/December; (2009)
90/February
Canberra & District Historical Society
newsletter (2008/9) 420/December-
January; 421/February-March
Citation (2008) November
Dispatch (2008) vol.23,no.11/November;
12/December; (2009) vol.24,no.1,
January
FAHS newsletter (2008) 28/August
History News (2008) 277/September-October
History SA (2008) 197/September-October
Larrakeyah News (2009) February
Manning Clark House newsletter (2008)
23/November
Medical History newsletter (2008)
23/November
Memento (2008) 35/August; (2009)
36/January
National Library of Australia News (2008)
vol.19,no.2/November; 3/December
Placenames Australia (2008) December
Powerline (2008/9) 92/December-February
Progenitor (2008) vol.27,no.3/September;
4/December
Public History News (2008) vol.29, no.1/
December
RHSQ bulletin (2008) 724/October; 725/
November; 726/December (2009)
727/January
Signals (2008) 84/September-November
Territory quarterly (2008) 4th Quarter.

The Northern Territory Police Museum and Historical Society are to be congratulated on their November issue of Citation. A new format with colour pictures and most interesting historical articles - Mounted Constable Tom Turner and his postcards; the Case of the disappearing bibles; an article on the North Australian Monthly magazine and the Anatomy of a Territory remittance man (Donald Duncan) ...and there's more!!

DID YOU KNOW:

In July 1941 the Governor-General of Australia, Brigadier-General Lord Gowrie inspected a portion of the Alice Springs to Darwin road and recommended that the road be called the 'Stuart Highway' in recognition of John McDouall Stuart's explorations. Previously it had been declared a military road. Following the route of the Overland Telegraph Line, the road had been defined during the construction of the Line between 1870 and 1872 and was known as 'The Track'.

NEW BOOKS

HINKSON, Melinda & Jeremy Beckett (eds) (2008).n *An Appreciation of Difference: WEH Stanner and Aboriginal Australia*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held on

SUNDAY, 29 MARCH 2009

at our office at

55 ROSS SMITH AVENUE, PARAP

at 3PM.

This will be the official opening of our new office and nibbles and drinks will be provided.

We also say thank you to Reg Wilson for his generous donation of the 'Endeavour' plaque.

Richard Bigwood is looking for information on an Army inquiry held around August 1978 by a Major Pound. It would seem that a former soldier, Robert (Bob) Enright made allegations on Darwin media about certain events that occurred in South Vietnam in May 1996. Can anyone help? We have directed him to the Defence Forces Public relations office and perhaps the Archives may be able to assist. However the information may not be available under the 30 year law. His email is ricb@bigpond.net.au if you can help.