



## Historical Society of the Northern Territory

# NEWSLETTER JULY 2010

NO: 39

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### From the President

The HSNT's third excursion to Raffles Bay and the Fort Wellington site Friday 11 to 14 June was a great success. Thanks to all those involved in its organisation and those who participated.

A HSNT working group met on Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the HSNT archives. The HSNT has maintained an archive since 1964 preceding any Northern Territory Government collecting institutions by many years. (HSNT was formed at a public meeting in Darwin on 23 March 1964) Maintaining archives is a major task and the archives working group considered the archives current status and future development.

A significant issue that arose in the discussions of the working group was the continuity of HSNT business over many years. As with all volunteer organisations there have been many changes in council resulting in a loss of corporate memory and some discontinuity in the implementation of its decisions. Previous decisions and actions of the HSNT council have not been monitored over the years resulting in a backlog of work that now needs to be done in various areas. Council will need to consider how it monitors its decisions to ensure that the membership is constantly up to date with all our activities.

The working group will put its recommendations to the HSNT council to consider at the August meeting. Without wishing to pre-empt any decisions made by the council it is clear that any future work on the HSNT archives will require considerable time and resources. Yvonne Forrest, the HSNT archivist continues to do great work with the archives. Archives by their nature are a long term proposition so it is important that HSNT supports Yvonne and her small group of volunteers and consider how the archives can be sustained into the future.

Any HSNT members who think they may be able to devote some time to assist the HSNT with work on the archives or other aspects of our activities please do not hesitate to contact Janie Mason our secretary so that we know who we can call upon as tasks arise.

Matthew Stephen

### Coming Events

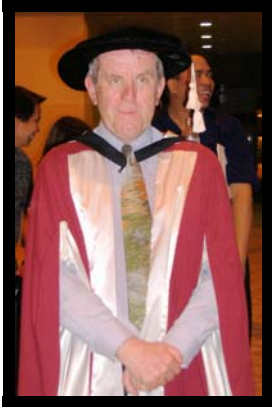
- 26 June – 3 July - the NT Writers Centre presents Desert Writers with Jan Cornall. A 2 day walk and write along the Larrapinta Trail to the newly opened Larrapinta Indigenous centre. Meet with traditional owners and Arrente guides. Workshops will be held on and off track with Jan. Camping and walking will be supported. Medium fitness required. Bring an existing writing project or start a new one. For information phone: 0414929768 or 0415921303 or [www.intotheblue.com.au](http://www.intotheblue.com.au)
- 28 June - 3 September Exhibition - '*Spirit of Arnhem Land*' - Exhibition by Penny Tweedie  
Northern Territory Library - Parliament House. Penny's books, 'This is My Country - A View of Arnhem Land', '*Spirit of Arnhem Land*' and 'Standing Strong' provide dynamic documentation in photographs. She has worked in 70 countries for international magazines and charities and her work has been exhibited worldwide. Free exhibition, open to the public.
- 7 July NAIDOC Week Celebrations, Wednesday 10:00am, Northern Territory Library, Parliament House  
Come in to the Library and see the 'One Mob, Different Country' Dancers, followed by a welcome to country. Then stay and hear the Minibena Larrakia Women Rangers talk about their group and current projects, and their advice to the next generation. The 2010 theme for NAIDOC Week is 'Unsung Heroes - Closing the Gap'

by Leading Their Way'. Free event, open to the public. Bookings preferred 1800 019 155 or Email: : libraryevents@nt.gov.au

- 8 July – U3A talk at Casuarina Library at 10am. Jacinta Stanford on a history of the Environmental Protection Agency and a look at its future role.
- 23 (Alice Springs) & 26 (Darwin) July 9am-4pm “New Year of Edit Workshop: Editing for Business & Government” by Shelley Kenigsberg. A practical editing workshop for people writing (or interested in writing) for government departments and businesses. Held in Alice Springs and Darwin. NT Writers Centre Members \$125/\$110 concession, non members \$140/\$120 concession. Bookings phone 89523810 or 89412651
- 24 (Alice Springs) & 25 (Darwin) July 9am-4pm “New Year of Edit Workshop: Structural Editing” by Shelley Kenigsberg. While copy editing looks at words and sentences, structural editing looks at the big picture to find the best shape. This workshop presents practical techniques for identifying problems and developing the logic and flow of text. Held in Alice Springs and Darwin. NT Writers Centre Members \$125/\$110 concession, non members \$140/\$120 concession. Bookings phone 89523810 or 89412651
- 23-24 July - Darwin Show Day long weekend – Camping trip to Longreach Waterhole and Powell Creek Telegraph Station. Information below
- 18-25 July 2010 - NSW Professional Historians Association Conference “Islands of History” on Norfolk Island. Topics: writing convict history, South Pacific maritime history, history for heritage, Polynesian migration, issues and practice of public history. Includes site visits & island orientation. See [www.phansw.org.au/documents/conference2010.htm](http://www.phansw.org.au/documents/conference2010.htm).
- 31 July, Saturday at Frog Hollow Conference room, NT Writers Centre Workshop “Poetry Masterclass” by Chris Mansell. Cost TBA. Bookings [info@ntwriters.com.au](mailto:info@ntwriters.com.au) or 89412651
- 6-8 August 2010 – SA State History Conference “Cross-Currents: History, People and the Environment” in Murray Bridge, SA. The conference will focus on the relationship between history and other research fields. Email: [jmackenzie@history.sa.gov.au](mailto:jmackenzie@history.sa.gov.au)
- 20-22 August – Camping trip to Bradshaw Defence Force Base (near Timber Creek)
- 27 & 28 August – Open days at Government House - 3-7pm both days.
- 27 September Monday 12:10pm at the NT Library - Professor Steve Larkin - new Pro Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership at CDU. Professor Larkin is the highest ranking Indigenous person in an Australian university, and has extensive leadership experience in Indigenous organisations including the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, the Aboriginal Health Strategy Unit in the NT Health Services and the Community Development and Social Health Branch of the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care. He holds a Bachelor of Social Work, a Master of Social Science (Welfare and Social Policy) and is completing his PhD on the topic “*Race matters? Indigenous employment in the Australian Public Service*”. Free event, open to the public. Bookings preferred 1800 019 155 or Email: libraryevents@nt.gov.au
- 6 November - ANU/CDU History Colloquium, Saturday 6 November at the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT Theatrette. Organised by the Professional Historian Association and History Council of the NT. The Colloquium will be an all day event and everyone is welcome to attend.
- 28 Sept-2 October 2010 – Museums Australia National Conference “Interesting Times: New Roles for Collections” in Melbourne, Early bird registration closes 15 July. Contact [www.ma2010.com.au](http://www.ma2010.com.au)

### **The Federated Australian Historical Societies (FAHS)**

The FAHS lobbies the Federal Government on behalf of Australian historical societies on history issues. The FAHS will be holding its AGM in Albany on 10 September 2010. The AGM will be held in conjunction with the Western Australia History Society’s State History Conference which will be held at the Albany Methodist Wesleyan Church. Historical tours hosted by the Albany Historical Society will follow the Conference. Yvonne Forrest is the Territory’s representative (HSNT) and she will be attending the AGM and Conference.



Congratulations to Dr Ted Ling who was presented his PhD at the Charles Darwin University Ceremony in May.

### **The Australian Central Credit Union Lottery**

The HSNT Council thanks everybody who assisted in selling tickets and also buying them. The lottery was a huge success making HSNT \$880 which will go towards maintaining our office and archives.

### **VISIT TO THE LONGREACH WATERHOLE AND POWELL CREEK TELEGRAPH STATION**

(Newcastle Waters Station region) Darwin Show-day weekend Friday 23 July to Monday 26 July

The trip to Longreach Waterhole and Powell Creek telegraph station remains as detailed in the June newsletter. We muster at the Warlock Rest Area, 37km south of Mataranka on the left at 10.00 am. For those intending to come, please let Bev know vehicle and numbers if you have not already done so as we will need to let Newcastle Waters station know.

We have two ladies (separate) looking for rides who are willing to shares costs. If you have a spare seat please contact Bev Phelts on 0417 868 827 or 89818236 AH or by email: ntresearchservices@yahoo.com.au Field notes with some detail of the historic sites will be available to those coming along.

Robin McIntyre & Barry Leithhead are doing a biographical project on Robin's father, Dr E C Cook. Barry will be traveling from Sydney to Darwin and retracing the route of Dr Cook who travelled between central Queensland and Darwin twice in 1925. Barry will be joining this field trip as it takes in part of Cook's route. During the trip and around the campfire, Barry will talk about the Cook project and his traveling adventures.

### **VISIT TO BRADSHAW DEFENCE BASE**

This visit, in conjunction with the Kununurra Historical Society, to look more closely at a few of the historic sites, continues as planned for the weekend 20-23 August. We are still uncertain whether or not we will be able to camp on site. For those wishing to be involved, please let Bev know (with email) by 15 July and we will communicate direct as the programme develops. We will also need to let Defence know numbers and vehicles.

### **New Publications**

The Journal of Professional Historians *Circa* by the Victorian Professional Historians Association 2010. It is divided into three sections: Exploration, Discoveries and Reflections. Cost \$25 which includes postage, Contact Katherine Sheedy Email: ksheedy@waybackwhen.com.au

*Gold & Silversmithing in Western Australia: A History* by Dorothy Erickson 2010, 410 pages. Cost \$89.95

*In Territory in Trust*, vol 26, no 2, 2009 – articles 'Raising, Kids, Goats and Merry Hell' by Noel Padgham; 'The Darwin Rebellion 1918-1919' by Austin Asche; 'Burnett House High Tea' by Robyn Smith; 'The Last Word' by Elizabeth Close & 'Where Did He Live?' by Mr RMG Stevens, Auditor General 1949-53.

The Society recent acquired *Doors and Windows of Darwin* by Tony Pickering - It is a photographic collection of Darwin's doors and windows. Darwin's physical character is ever changing but many old doorways and windows still remain. Some in plain view, others hidden or never noticed, or just cringing from redevelopment Cost \$10.00 plus Postage \$1.50

### **Interesting Internet Sites**

- If you are interested in American history visit the American Association for State and Local History site [www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)

- National Library of Australia. *Trove* is a new research tool focused on items located in Australian collecting institutions. Search for books, journals, newspapers, pictures, photos, maps, diaries, letters, archives, people at [www.trove.nla.gov.au](http://www.trove.nla.gov.au)
- International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Newsletters can be found at <http://australia.icomos.org>. ICOMOS news covers a variety of topics on Australian history/archeological conferences, courses, awards, vacant positions and current projects.

**FIELD TRIP TO FORT WELLINGTON, RAFFLES BAY**

Story and photographs courtesy Brian Reid

At 10 am on Friday 11 June, 6 4WD vehicles mustered at Cahills Crossing and then set off in convoy for the Cobourg Peninsula. With the support of the Cobourg Peninsula Sanctuary and Marine Park Board we camped at Meriah on the western side of Raffles Bay. For the next two days the Park Rangers kindly shuttled us across the Bay by boat to the settlement site on the eastern side. The 2008 Society visit was a general exploration of the site, the 2009 visit, now with a contemporary map, was to find the site of the fort and the 2010 visit was to confirm that site with some archaeological investigations. Richard Woolfe kindly agreed to take charge of the investigations and Society members provided slave services. The dig was very successful. The shallow excavations and the surface artifact scatter provided strong evidence for the fort site. There were entertaining wrap-ups of the day's events around the campfire at night. Most of the artifacts were returned to the found sites after recording and photographing. A few of the more significant ones were retained and we are currently negotiating with MAGNT to hold and conserve these.

The finding of Fort Wellington has been an interesting, constructive and very entertaining project for the Society some 45 years after the Society rediscovered the settlement site.



Fort Wellington beach where we camped



The convoy



The dig at of Fort Wellington



Society members Bev Phelts, Sandra Lenz & Yvonne Forrest took time out at the Adelaide River Races in June. It was also an opportune time to visit the Railway Museum and acquaint ourselves with Adelaide River Show Society volunteers who do a wonderful job organising the annual racing event.

## **News from the Kununurra Historical Society (KHS) by President Andrew Barker**

I have been flat out with KHS research in preparation for the AGM Annual Report, and have discovered that the Society has many anniversaries about to happen as follows -

Looking back 50 years ago, to June 1960, which was a year when the town of Kununurra was in an embryonic stage, because work contracts were being finalised. Bandicoot Bar, was just that, still the rocky bar, that held back the splendid miles of water, that was Carlton Reach. The bar was being surveyed to hold back the Ord River Diversion Dam and preparation work was to start in October that year. By June, work had started on building the first house in the bushland of Kununurra.

Here and now, as we begin a period of many 50th Anniversaries approaching, the KHS plans to be ready with a timeline to know in advance as these dates approach. We will be producing new displays that help document, and make accessible, the significance of these approaching events to show the incremental development of the commercial Ord River Irrigation Area (ORIA).

In the coming year, KHS will be calling on government departments, businesses, organisations, associations, and individuals to provide us a history of their Kununurra and ORIA associations. We especially hope to find people out there, who have previously lived here in the East Kimberley to do the same. These would become an interesting snapshot of our history 50 years "down the track". It will be preserved in the KHS archives for future generations. We believe these histories could be looked upon with great interest in 2060 and on into the future, as well as during the intervening years.

If you know anyone who has had something to do with the Ord, please get them to email [KununurraHistoricalSociety@gmail.com](mailto:KununurraHistoricalSociety@gmail.com) We will email a guidelines form.

or contact us at -  
the Kununurra Archives & Museum, Coolibah Drive, Kununurra  
PO Box 77 Kununurra, WA 6743.  
Phone 08 9169 3331 (10.30am - 4pm) or contact me after hours on 08 9169 1600