



Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER September 2010

NO: 41

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From the President

Dr Matthew Stephen

The HSNT's most recent camping trip to the Bradshaw Defence Force Base was the culmination of many years preparation and patience by HSNT members. Particular thanks go to Brian Reid in organising this year's excursion. The Victoria River Region is one rich in history and the HSNT excursions to Bradshaw have provided a great opportunity to learn more about this beautiful part of the Territory.

As I mentioned in the July newsletter the HSNT is reviewing its archive. We are currently revisiting the agreements we have in place with the Northern Territory Archives Service and the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT to see how they may affect the future management of the archive.

Those of you who have attended some of the Darwin Festival events would have noticed how many of the shows have had some sort of historical theme. *Goose Lagoon* and was based upon Aboriginal lore while *Tracks Dance* embellished Aboriginal stories of Captain Cook and the Queen while the *Rondella* show and the *Sunshine Club* are based upon Darwin's entertainment of the 30s, 40s and 50s. The performing arts are an important means of understanding and interpreting our history. HSNT could consider if there a ways of becoming more engaged with the arts community and documenting its history.

The HSNT continues to seek clarification from the NT and Federal Governments on the current situation in relation to the co-location of the Northern Territory Archives Service to the National Archives of Australia building in Milner. If the HSNT is to be seen as an advocate on important matters of history and heritage in the NT we must find a means to ensure that our concerns are heard. As the campaign over the proposed closure of the NAA facility in Darwin proved we can be an effective part of a formidable alliance but it is important to ensure that decisions are monitored and decision makers held accountable.

Coming Events

Patrons Dinner – Wednesday 6 October - 7pm for 7.30pm start

The Patron's Dinner will be held in the Yum Cha Function Room, 21 Cavenagh Street (next to NT Archives). Our guest speaker will be Dr Brian Reid on the recent discoveries at Fort Wellington. If you wish to come along to our dinner, the cost will be \$30 p/p which includes a yummy Chinese banquet. Drinks are extra. If you are attending, please send your cheque for the dinner with details to PO Box 40544, Casuarina NT 0811 by Friday 1 October. For inquiries, contact Bev Phelts on 89818236ah or mobile: 0417 868 827.

Next HSNT Speaker – Wednesday 27 October 7.3pm at the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT Theatre
Ian McBean is the former owner and manager of Bradshaw Station will be speaking about the pastoral industry.

ANU/CDU History Colloquium - Saturday 6 November at the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT Theatre.
Organised by the NT Professional Historians Association. The Colloquium will be an all day event and everyone is welcome to attend. Entry is free. A program will be sent out in the October newsletter.

Biennial Conference of the Oral History Association of Australia

Melbourne 30 September to 2 October 2011 www.ohaa.net.au

If you are visiting interstate there is an exhibition at the Immigration Museum, Old Customs House, 400 Flinders Street, Melbourne, open daily 10am-5pm until 12 September. The exhibition includes *Survival of a Culture: Kurds in Australia* and *Australia's Muslim Cameleers: Pioneers of the Inland 1860s-1930s*.

What's on at the Northern Territory Library, Parliament House

Free events open to the public. Bookings preferred 1800 019 155 or Email: libraryevents@nt.gov.au

Dictionary of Anatomy - Dhäruk Mala ga Mayali' Rumbalpuy, English – Yolŋu Matha' by Marilyn McLellan PhD Tuesday 7 September 5:15pm

This is the first dictionary of its kind translating between English and an Australian Indigenous language. It contains over 130 descriptive anatomical entries with related pathology; an invaluable tool for closing the gap in health literacy and improving communication across cultures. Aboriginal Resource and Development Services (ARDS) is proud to launch what will become a vital resource for Indigenous health workers, interpreters and health professionals working with Yolŋu people who speak the Djambarrpuyŋu language.

'Listening to Country' by Ros Moriarty - Tuesday 14 September 5:15pm

Ros Moriarty was formerly a journalist with Radio Australia. She has also held senior positions in the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Ros is currently Designer and Managing Director of Balarinji Studio, an Indigenous art and design group. Balarinji is best known for covering Qantas jumbos in Aboriginal designs. Ros' new book, *Listening to Country* is the moving and personal story of her journey into the remote Tanami Desert with the matriarchs of her husband's family.

An Exhibition - 'Spirit of Arnhem Land' - Exhibition by Penny Tweedie - 28 June - 5 September

Penny's extraordinary photographs provide a unique visual celebration of Arnhem Land people as they strive to maintain their traditional beliefs and culture. Drawn from Penny's book *'Spirit of Arnhem Land'*, the stunning images chronicle aboriginal life at the end of the 20th century and offer an unparalleled story of a people connected to their country for over 50,000 years.

'Behind the Lines' Exhibition - 15 September - 7 November

The exhibition traces major events of the previous year including the Black Saturday bushfires, fighting the recession, Australia's relationship with China, debate over the Emissions Trading Scheme, as well as other hot topics including the controversial 'ute-gate' scandal, the swine flu pandemic and the arrival of refugees. Through the eyes of Australia's top cartoonists, this National Museum of Australia travelling exhibition captures the twists and turns of another eventful year in Australian politics.

The Writers Centre

Picnic Poetry at East Point - Sunday 5 September from 5pm

Join us to celebrate National Poetry Week 2010

Bring a picnic, rug and some poetry to share (written by you or someone else) or just come to be entertained. Meet on the foreshore, left of the Military Museum. Lovers and purveyors of poetry in all its forms are welcome to Picnic Poetry, an event hosted by NT Writers to mark National Poetry Week. From slam to sestinas, blank verse to bush ballads – we want to pay homage to poets and poetry. We'll have poetry games and prizes plus there'll be chapbooks on sale. For or more information: [t] 8941 2651 or [e] info@ntwriters.com.au

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

YEAR OF EDIT: THE FINAL TOUCHES workshop with Robyn McLean - Saturday September 11

How to present your work immaculately from proofreading to typography and layout. Venue: TBC

Cost: NTWC members \$125/\$110 conc., non-members \$140/\$120 conc. Contact: info@ntwriters.com.au or 8941 2651

SHORT & SWEET: HOW TO WRITE A 10 MINUTE PLAY weekend workshop with Alex Broun

Friday September 17 (evening) – Sunday September 19 (daytime)

Participants will be inspired to write a ten-minute play, by acknowledging and embracing their own inherent stories and natural creativity, then given the basic techniques and tools to write the play. Drafts of participants' plays will be

performed by actors on the Sunday afternoon. Finally, as an added bonus, at least one of the plays developed during the workshop will be staged as part of Short and Sweet Sydney, 2011.

Venue: Frog Hollow Conference Room, 56 McMinn Street

Cost: NTWC members \$160/\$140 conc., non-members \$220/\$160 conc. Contact: info@ntwriters.com.au or 8941 2651

SHUT UP, NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR YOUR POEMS with Keri Glastonbury - Sunday September 26

Keri Glastonbury, poet and lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Newcastle will be working with local poets to help develop their work in readiness for the NT Literary Awards.

Venue: NT Library in Parliament House Cost: NTWC members \$40/\$30 conc., non-members \$55/\$40 conc.

Bookings: info@ntwriters.com or 8941 2651

2011 ASIALINK ARTS RESIDENCY PROGRAM - Closing 10 September

Open to NT writers to undertake a residency for up to four months in Asia. The grant of up to \$12,000 goes towards travel, living and project expenses, and affords recipients the opportunity for in-depth research, stimulating cultural exchanges, international collaboration and uninterrupted time for creativity. More information from the website.

W: http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/our_work/arts/residency_information

ALICE SPRINGS RESIDENT – seeking a ghostwriter for memoir

Interested in writing the memoir for a long-term Alice Springs resident? Maria Diano would like her story of emigration to Australia and Alice Springs to be told. If you are interested contact Maria on 8952 1729.

DAGS – Darwin Authors' Group

Meets 2nd Thursday of the month at Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts conference room

An informal network of Darwin-based writers with a common interest in sharing and discussing the craft and business of writing. All welcome. More info: Bronwyn Mehan Email: b_mehan@bigpond.com

Fellowship of Australian Writers - Looking for new facilitator - More info: Ted Kilpatrick phone: 8948 1216

Katherine Region of Writers - More info: Jill Pettigrew E: wjip@clearnet.com.au

Palmerston Own Writers

Meets 1st Wednesday of the month at Palmerston Library community room, 5.30-7pm

All welcome. More info: Sandra Parker - T: 8988 2172 E: Sandra@parkershouse.net

Anzac Centenary

Between 2014 and 2018, Australia will commemorate the Anzac Centenary, marking 100 years since our involvement in the First World War. During this time we will remember not only the Anzacs who served at Gallipoli and the Western Front, but all Australian servicemen and women, including those who fought along the Kokoda Track and at Tobruk; those who were held as prisoners of war; those who fought on the seas and in the skies; and those who served from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Anzac Centenary provides us with an opportunity to remember those who have fought and served in all wars, conflicts and peace operations in the past hundred years and especially remember the more than 100,000 who have given their lives in service. The National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary is seeking Australia's ideas and suggestions on how to mark this important chapter in our history. Have your say in how the Australian community can be a part of the Anzac Centenary.

Public submissions will be accepted until 17 September 2010. See www.anzacentenary.gov.au or ring 1800 555 254.

History Bytes

Information from the Victorian Professional Historians Association

In 1901, with the Federation of Australia, names for new Victorian babies were definitely inspired by this great milestone in history. Thirty-two babies were given their first name of "Federal" and four others were name "Federation". Others were named "Vic Federal" and "Aust Federal".

Who'll come a-waltzing.... Did you know that Banjo Paterson's "Waltzing Matilda", the unofficial national anthem of Australia was inspired by the death of a shearer 120 years ago? In September 1894, the jolly swagman, Samuel Hoffmeister, led a group of shearers to strike at a Dagworth station in Queensland. The strike turned violent and Hoffmeister was forced to flee. Refusing to be capture alive by police, Hoffmeister shot himself at Combo Waterhole.

The Truth about Newcastle Waters and Longreach Waterhole

By Earl James

If I ask “where is Newcastle Waters?” most people would say it’s a town and a cattle station about 25 kilometres north of Elliot and just off the Stuart Highway. And until recently I would have said the same but now I know that the town and cattle station are but recent spots to receive that appellation. The original Newcastle Waters was a long reach of water at the southern end of the Newcastle Creek before it flows into Lake Woods which is normally dry. It was named by John McDouall Stuart in 1861 and is currently known as Longreach Waterhole about 12 kilometres south west of Elliot.

The Society’s August Newsletter included a review of the Society’s July trip to Powell Creek Overland Telegraph Station and a great description of this five kilometre long waterhole on which the group camped. Indeed the view of that waterhole as we approached it from a desert like landscape was something to behold. The sight of so much water, green grass and winged wildlife was beyond belief.

The reality was a complete surprise as it also was for Stuart when he first saw it on 21 May 1861. In the words of John Bailey (*Mr Stuart’s Track*, p209):

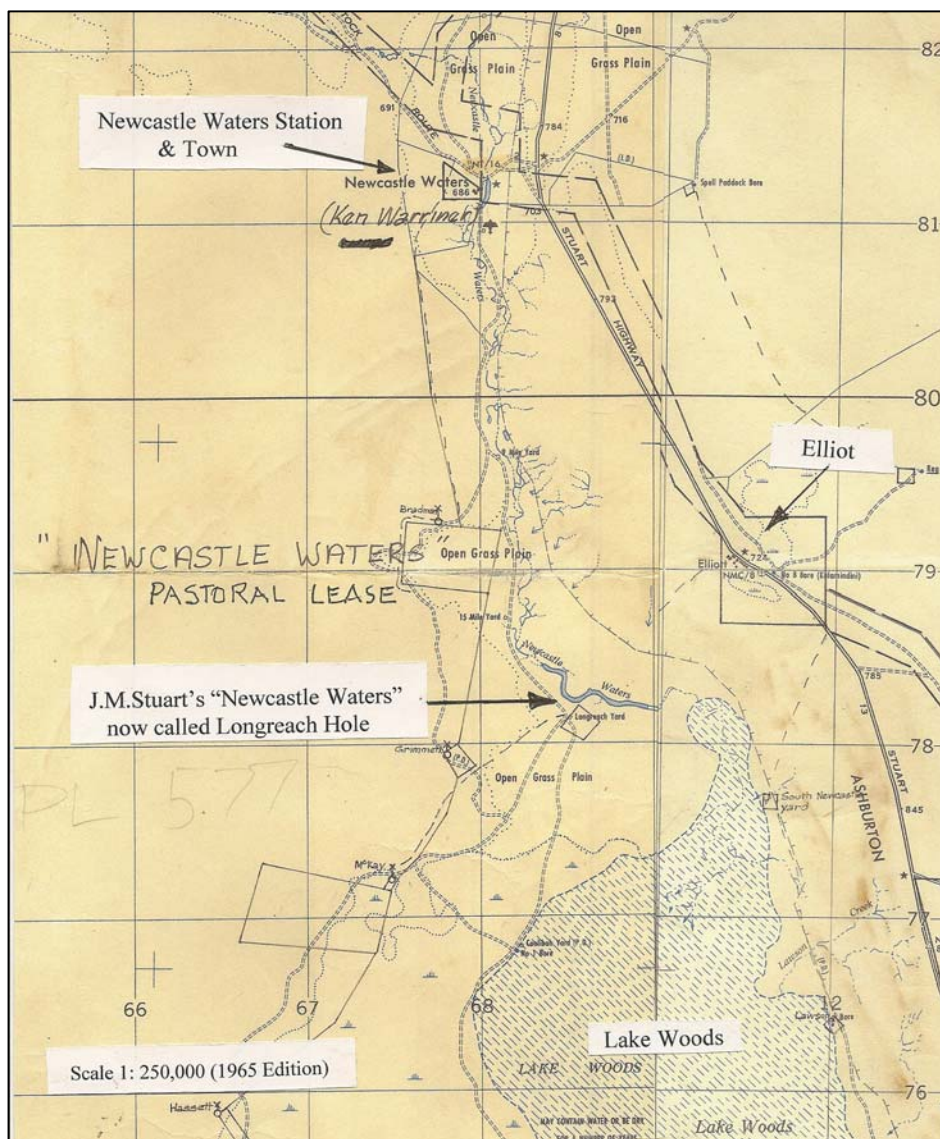
They pushed the horses through a curtain of vegetation – and then started back in amazement. They were looking across a reach or water about 150 metres wide. They saw white cranes, brolgas and sacred ibis standing on the bank. Pelicans and ducks swam on its surface. Beyond, flitting through spindly trees, were hundreds of small birds. As they approached and let their horses drink, they saw mussels and shells among the reeds.

And I can assure you that the members of our expedition were just as amazed – perhaps more so, as the far shore was black with cormorants patiently waiting for the appropriate time to take to the air and join the pelicans and other water birds in the late afternoon fishing frenzy. The bird watchers in our group claim to have identified twenty four different species. For me, the sight of this spectacle made up for the fact that I have never seen Lake Eyre in flood.

Stuart named the waterhole Glandfield Lagoon after the Mayor of Adelaide and attempted to push on both to the northwest and the Victoria River and also to the northeast and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Both attempts were unsuccessful and he was forced to return to Adelaide. On his return there his maps and charts were taken over by one of his mentors, John Chambers, who delighted in changing many of Stuart’s place names. Glandfield Lagoon was one that suffered that fate. Chambers changed the name to Newcastle Waters after the Duke of Newcastle, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Eventually the telegraph line was built and a town sprang up twenty five kilometres north of the lagoon at the start of the infamous Murrarji Stock Route, together with a cattle station. Both were named Newcastle Waters. Thus we had three entities with the same name.

Management of the cattle station eventually built a stock yard on the southern side of the lagoon which they called Longreach Yard, an admirable name for a yard situated on such a long reach of water. Through common usage the lagoon eventually took on the name of the yard. The 1:250 thousand map below, published in 1965 shows both the lagoon and the yard – both with their original names (see attached map).



Re-visit to Bradshaw Field Training Area 20-23 August
 by Dr Brian Reid

With the agreement and support of the Department of Defence Range Control (Warrant Officer Peter Watts) and the Bradshaw Liaison Committee (Greg Kimpton), 10 intrepid members of the NT and Kununurra Historical Societies returned to the splendid Victoria River country. This trip was purely to undertake more detailed observations that had been identified on last year's visit. The group stayed on site in the very comfortable Training complex and used Bradshaw Station as the day time base.

The first day was spent making detailed observations, recordings and photographs of the old Bradshaw Homestead and associated structures, of the numerous buildings and structures associated with the Bradshaw Station and of the Bradshaw Cut in the escarpment of the Yambarran Range. The Old Homestead group was also able to identify the remains of the Bradshaw jetty and locate the 1935 gravestone of Joseph Savage. The Bradshaw Cut group closely

followed the path and identified a further 'zig and zag'. The Bradshaw Station Group now consider themselves experts in fencing techniques.

The second day was spent searching for illusive marked Boab trees from explorer, Augustus Gregory's time. We had minor success. We believe we identified Finlay's Grave Boab which was about 200 metres away on the other side of a tidal creek. Unfortunately due to the creek, we were unable to reach it. The Adam's Boab still continues to elude us.

In the afternoon we reached the cataract of the Ikymbon River that we failed to reach last year. After a robust and hot trek the wonderful gorge was found. However, we were not pleased to discover that it was only 300 metres further on from where we turned back in 2009.

Over the next few weeks we will prepare our final report of observations, conservation recommendations and formal thanks for the Defence Department.



The Bradshaw Cut
Photograph courtesy Brian Reid



The Old Bradshaw Homestead
Photograph courtesy Brian Reid



The remains of a Brocho Panel inside the
Leichhardt Yards
Photograph courtesy Andrew Barker



Andrew Barker, President Kununurra Historical
Society & Tony Austin at the Leichhardt Yards
Andrew was explaining the idea of "bronco-ing" to
Tony. Photograph courtesy Margaret Donald

Bradshaw Pack Track Climb Up Yambarran Range on 21 August 2010

by Margaret Donald, Ruth Kerr and David Liddle

The track up the escarpment above Bradshaw homestead follows a ridge line parallel to a spring fed stream. The top of the track onto the plateau above the escarpment has been blasted out to provide an easier passage upwards. The resulting stone (mainly sandstone) in combination with local rocks from the steep slope has been utilised to form dry stone walling along the track for several hundred meters below. In addition to a couple of short sharp zigzags near the top, the track gains altitude with two large zigzags across the slope. At the lower end these connect to a "trail" which extends further down the ridge. While this lower section is not marked with a border of stones, in places the relatively clear pathway amidst a field of rocks leaves little doubt this segment is an extension to the zigzag track evident further upslope. In fact the formed track is much longer than first thought with approximately 450 metres of zigzag pathway constructed through the rocks. The trail below adds a further 150 metres to the route. From bottom to top the route extends approximately 360 metres as the crow flies and rises around 150 metres in altitude.

The Defence Department had burnt the spear grass earlier this year so it was much easier to follow compared to last year. However the track has Pandanus, Acacia, Ironwood and other woody plants growing on it making it challenging to follow in places. Way points and latitude and longitudes were taken at numerous points along it to provide a reasonably accurate record of the track. Numerous photographs were taken of the track often with persons in to provide a scale.

The view from the top over the Angalarri and Victorian Rivers and ranges to the east, south and west is like looking over a vast sea of landscape.

It took 2.5 hours for Margaret Donald, Ruth Kerr, David Liddle and Peter O'Brien, to climb including recording time. The temperature on the day was around 38 degrees. The trip was extremely satisfying and provided an excellent basis for understanding the heritage values of the track and reporting on them.

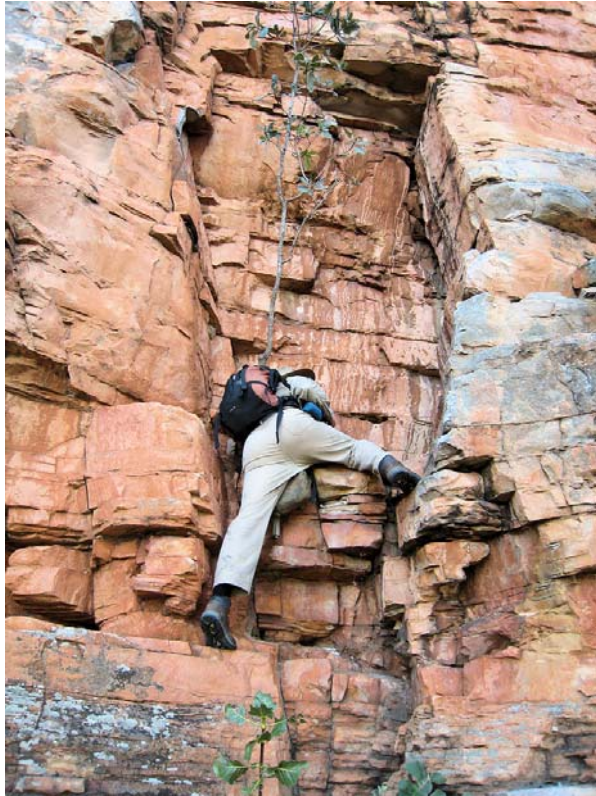


View of the Victoria River from the top of Packhorse Cutting. You can see the curve of the Angalarri in the plain below and just make out its confluence with the Victoria River
Photograph courtesy Margaret Donald

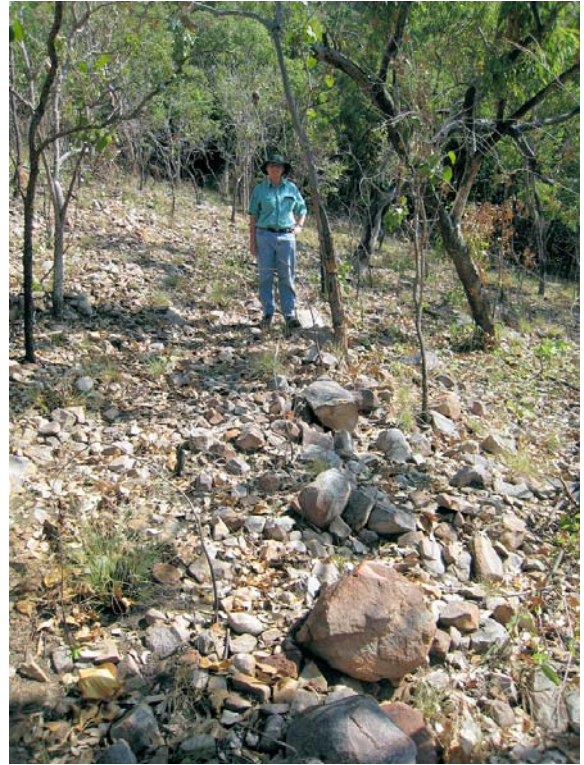


View of the Victoria River from the top of Packhorse Cutting

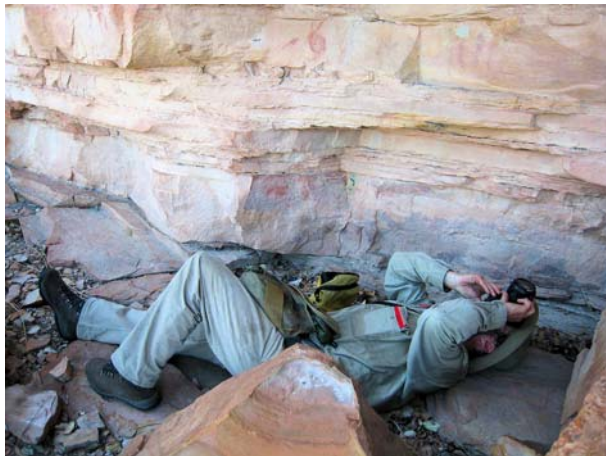
Photograph courtesy Margaret Donald



David Liddle climbing the cliffs in pursuit of Aboriginal Art. Photograph courtesy Margaret Donald



Ruth Kerr marking the line of the path at the Bradshaw Cutting. Photograph courtesy Margaret Donald



David Liddle photographing Aboriginal art Photograph courtesy Margaret Donald



The Ikymbon Cataract Photograph courtesy Brian Reid

Congratulations to Dr Ruth Kerr

While intrepid Ruth was clambering around Bradshaw Station she was informed that she had been awarded life membership of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland

Government House Open Days 27 & 28 August

Working at Government House Open days is always an enjoyable experience which provides the chance to catch up with locals and chat to tourists. The two day event was highlighted by unexpected buckets of rain followed by a wedding in the picturesque surroundings of the beautiful garden. The HSNT made nearly \$200 in booksales.

Thank you to Government House for allowing HSNT to have a stand and Big Thank You to volunteers, Renata Mohrbach and Di Clark who helped out.

New Military Darwin Museum

The NT Government is seeking comments on the proposed new World War Two site at East Point Reserve. Two sites at East Point have been identified as suitable for the new museum both close to the existing Military Museum.

Have your say -

Attend a community consultation Session -

5pm to 7pm Tuesday 7 September or

10am to 12 noon Wednesday 8 September at the Ballroom A, Crown Plaza Darwin Mitchell Street

Or complete the online feedback form at www.nt.gov.au/consult

Or send a written submission to Defence of Darwin, PO Box 496 Palmerston NT 0831 or
Email: communications.nretas@nt.gov.au

By Friday 17 September