



Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER October 2010

NO: 42

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From the President

Matthew Stephen

The HSNT's lecture series for 2010 on the Northern Territory pastoral industry has been most enjoyable and informative. The pastoral industry has always played a significant role in NT development and there is no reason to think that this will change in the future. If members have any suggestions for the lecture series in 2011 they would be most gratefully received.

As you will see in this issue HSNT is seeking a new treasurer. It is a very important role in our organisation and if you, or someone you know, have the time and the requisite skills to do the job please let the HSNT council know.

Some HSNT members may have attended the recent public consultations held by the Northern Territory Government on the proposed Defence of Darwin museum site at East Point. The consultations were limited to the site of the museum although it is clear that many people who attended had many other issues they wanted to discuss. It can only be hoped that assurances given by the Northern Territory Government that such concerns would be noted are acted upon. It is up to the HSNT council, other community groups and individuals to make their voices heard in important public debates.

Coming Events

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

It's still not too late to join us for the Patron's Dinner. The 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.

National Trust Talk - Friday 1 October- 5.20 for 6pm start

Peter Bate talk is on "Monsoons and Mists: living with the weather (Bureau) in the NT". His talk will briefly summarise the beginnings and growth of weather observing and forecasting in the Territory from 1865 onwards, with reflections on living in the Territory and on a career in a national organisation people seem to either love or scorn. Peter has now retired from the Bureau of Meteorology. Venue is Burnett House, 4 Burnett Place Larrakeyah. Cost \$2 members of the Trust and \$5 non-members. Light refreshments and drinks will be available from the bar.

HSNT Talk – Ian McBean - Wednesday 27 October 2010 –

at the Museum and Art Gallery NT Theatre, Concher Street, Fannie Bay – 7.20pm for 7.30pm start - Gold coin donation. Stay for refreshments after the talk

Ian McBean arrived in Central Australia with little more than a swag and a saddle back in 1953, for his first taste of life on an outback cattle station.

He worked his way up from a harsh and humble start in frugal stock camps and dusty droving tracks, to become one of the Northern Territory's most successful family cattle station owners. Ian started life in the Territory on Elkedra Station in Central Australia. In 1956, he bought his own plant and continued droving in his own right, taking cattle from Brunette Downs and Alexandria into Queensland. In the early 1960s, he went droving in the Victoria River District, driving cattle from Auvergne Station to Queensland. While he was on the road with a mob in 1964, he drew Innesvale Station in a land ballot. So he sold out in Camooweal and brought horses over to his new station. There was absolutely nothing there – no fences and no improvements.

When droving, Ian would travel with a cook, a horse-tailer and three or four ringers to work the cattle. Every ringer had four horses so the horses could have a spell on the long journeys.

Ian built up Innesvale into a workable cattle station then, in the early 1980s, sold it off and moved onto his new purchase, nearby Bradshaw Station. Again, he developed the property into a very workable venture before selling out to the Defence Department in 1996 and moving to the Top End to take on Bonalbo Station in the Douglas Daly mixed farming district.

Ian now runs a small Brahman breeding herd and grows improved pasture. His carrying capacity has increased from 6-8 beasts per square kilometre, to one beast per hectare.

Information taken from the NT Cattlemens Association internet site

ANU/CDU History Colloquium - Saturday 6 November

The colloquium will be held at the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT Theatrette. The Colloquium is organised by the Professional Historian Association and will be an all day event. Everyone is welcome to attend. The program is at the end of the newsletter.

Historical Society of the NT – Treasurer

The Society is seeking a member who has basic bookkeeping experience and who would be interested in becoming our Treasurer. It is a voluntary position and hours spent on the position would be approximately 4 hours per month. The Treasurer would also have to attend our Council meetings which are held on every second Wednesday of the month. Training and support will be provided. If you are interested, please contact Earl James on phone: 8981 2715 or email: ebmjames@bigpond.com. Or Bev Phelts on 89 818236ah or mobile: 0417 868 827

2010 Northern Territory History Grants

The Grants were approved by Gerry McCarthy, MLA, Minister for Arts and Museums.

Congratulations to the following members who were recipients of the Grants –

- Barry Leithhead of Sydney to research the life and work of Cecil EA Cook M.D. - A pioneer in Tropical Medicine and Public Health;
- Margaret Clinch of Darwin to research and identify places of historical interest valued by members of the ordinary community in the Darwin and greater Darwin area;
- Bev Phelts of Darwin to research the life and work of Felix Ernest Holmes: A Darwin Electrician, Pearler, Horse-racer, Agriculturalist, Pastoralist, Butcher, Baker and Icemaker 1890 – 1930

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

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

Monday 4 October 12.10pm

***"The United Nations University and Indigenous Australians - negotiating partnerships and leading the world."* by Sam Johnston**

Sam Johnston is head of the United Nations University in Australia and helped to establish a Research and Training Centre on Traditional Knowledge at CDU. He operates out of Melbourne and Japan – the headquarters of the UNU, which is the research hub of the United Nations. Sam has published extensively on international environmental law; governance of international spaces and international regulation of biotechnology. He co-authored the first edition of the Handbook of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Earthscan, 2001) and Global Environmental Problems and International Environmental Agreements: the Economics of International Institution Building (Edward Elgar, 1999)

Friday 8 October 8:30am -10am

**'The New North: Canada's Perspective' by Flo Frank
Coordinated by The Northern Institute at CDU**

Ms Flo Frank is one of Canada's most highly respected community development practitioners. Communities and organizations reshaping their futures are her primary focus - specifically those with high Indigenous populations in transition. Canada's issues associated with governance, health, economic development, education in remote environments have resonances with the NT's current circumstances. Flo is currently writing a book on new styles of advocacy and leadership, cultural stewardship in community development and another one titled Belonging, Beliefs and the Capacity to Act.

Monday 11 October 12:10pm

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. 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".

Friday 22 October 12:10pm

**"Investing in the equity of the Human Spirit" by Janet Buhagiar
CEO of St Vincent de Paul Society NT**

Janet is responsible for the operation of the St Vincent De Paul retail outlets, accommodation services and outreach programs across the NT, that provide help to over 300 people in need every day. She spent eight years in senior management roles with retailer Coles Myer, but decided to transfer her corporate skills to an organisation where her "shareholders" were disadvantaged people, and where she could truly make a difference to those in need.

Janet currently sits on the Board of NT Shelter, a non-profit housing organisation, and has been involved in the community sector in a voluntary capacity, both on the ground and in leadership positions, for over 8 years. She is a finalist in this year's Telstra Business Woman's Awards.

On now – ends 7 November - 'Behind the Lines' Exhibition

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.

If you are visiting interstate there are upcoming events

Perth - 6pm Wednesday 6 October 2010 - National Trust (WA)

The National Trust of Australia (WA) invites you to preview recently completed, commonwealth funded, conservation and interpretation works at the home of former prime minister John Curtin, his wife Elsie and their children 1923 –1998. At 24 Jarrad Street, Cottesloe Cost: \$15 Email: anne.brake@ntwa.com.au

Melbourne - Thursday 7 October 2010 - Hawthorn Tram Depot

Slide show and drinks, preceded by tour of Hawthorn Tram depot led by Robert Green, Heritage Victoria's tram history expert.. 5.30pm tram depot tour, 6.00pm drinks - 6.30-7.30 slide show provisional program. At the Hawthorn Tram Depot, 8 Wallen Road, Hawthorn, cost \$10. Email: megan.mcdougall@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Sydney, Tuesday 26 October 2010 - "The History of whisky Distillation in Australia" by Chris Middleton

Held in History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney, 5.30 pm for 6pm start. Cost \$8 which includes light refreshments on arrival. Organised by the Royal Australian Historical Society, phone 029247 8001 or email history@rahs.org.au

Sydney, Thursday 14 October 2010 - "Night Tour of Sydney Observatory"

Meet at Sydney Observatory, Watson Road, Observatory Hill, The Rocks. Cost \$15

Getting there : www.sydneyobservatory.com.au/planning/how_to_get_here.asp

Organised by the Royal Australian Historical Society, phone 029247 8001 or email history@rahs.org.au

Launceston, Tasmania 10-12 November 2010 - "Peeling Back the Layers"

The event will showcase world's best practice in using interpretation to provide enriching authentic experiences for visitors and to better connect communities to the many layers of their historical, cultural and natural heritage. Contact email: abby.clifton@launceston.tas.gov.au

Sydney, Tuesday 30 November 2010 - "Cockatoo Island Dockyard, 1857-1991" by John Jeremy

Held in History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney, 5.30 pm for 6pm start. Cost \$8 which includes light refreshments on arrival. Organised by the Royal Australian Historical Society, phone 029247 8001 or email history@rahs.org.au

Adelaide, South Australia 5-7 August 2011

Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations (ACPHA) - "Bringing Together"

ACPHA, in association with the PHA (SA) and the PHA (NT), is hosting a professional development conference in Adelaide in August 2011. The year coincides with South Australia's State Conference which themes the following milestones:

- South Australia's 175th anniversary of European settlement;
- the centenary of the transfer of the Northern Territory from South Australia to the Commonwealth; and
- the 30th anniversary of the PHA (SA), the first association for professional historians in Australia.

Further information will be made available as it comes to hand.

Well Wishes

Long time HSNT members, Vern O'Brien and Reg Wilson recently returned to Darwin from Adelaide where they both underwent heart operations. Not to let mere heart problems restrain them from their pursuits – we hear that Vern was back volunteering at the Genealogical Society and Reg was out for his usual long walks within days of their return.

Something to ponder on by Associate Professor Don Garden, President of the Federated Australian Historical Societies

Using the figure of \$24 per hour for volunteers, if our 100,000 members average an hour per month of 12 per year (a conservative estimate) we contribute \$28.8 million to national cultural heritage.

A new historical website to try from Vernon Baker - www.atlium.org

Our organisation has set up a new website which is dedicated to capturing historical and current snapshots around the world. Atlium.org is a user created compendium of local and personal events, places and people. Atlium has just been launched and is intended as a free resource for all. We are currently looking for early contributors to help drive the website

Friends of the North Australian Railway (FNAR)

FNAR have submitted a proposed heritage declaration for the former North Australian Railway corridor at The Narrows. The submission has gone to the Minister for Natural Resources Environment and Heritage and it was advertised in the NT News on Saturday 25 September. Trevor Horman, President of FNAR writes: We have done a lot of work in recent years cleaning up this site and restoring railway hardware such as the bridge, the signal, the 5km "mile post" etc. It is very fitting that the site be listed to give it the modest level of protection that the legislation affords. It will also enable heritage funds to be expended on the site. It is the only significant remnant of the NAR within 100km of Darwin". This is a worthy heritage project and deserves public support for its heritage listing. Trevor will keep us up to date with its progress.



Government House Open Days

Council member, Yvonne Forrest (left), was visited by members Renata Mohrback and Adelaide member, Hux Carver at the HSNT book stand

Photograph courtesy Judy Richardson

Delissaville

Tony Pickering is seeking information on Delissaville during the time the plantation was growing sugar cane, coffee, tobacco etc... during the late 1800s. In particular, does anyone know if the jetty and any other infrastructure still exists? Please contact Tony on phone: 8943 2432 bh or email: tony.pickering@kgyoung.com.au

News from Leith Barter

Leith was a librarian at the NT Library for many years before he relocated to BlackButt, north of Brisbane. It has been 12 years since Leith left Darwin, and in recent years, he has been the local history librarian, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Pine Rivers. Leith is soon to retire, build a house and settle in Coominya, Qld.

Leith writes -

"Hello again" to the many members who know me. I turned 63 in September but I have opted for an early retirement. I have only been back to Darwin once during the past 12 years, and I tend to look back at my time there through rose coloured glasses. The problem is, once a Territorian, always a Territorian. I cannot yet think of myself as a Queenslander, even though I suppose I can claim that I have made my mark in local history circles here but I remain intensely proud of my life membership of the HSNT.

I am lucky in that my wife, Marilyn, is six years younger and she wishes to remain working for some time. Although she went into semi-retirement from her full-time, permanent position as a primary school teacher last year, she continues with 'relief' (or 'supply') teaching.

Coominya is about an hour and a half drive west of Brisbane and is a small, but very historic village in the Brisbane Valley, north of Ipswich and south of Esk.

During my retirement, I plan to keep on researching and writing history. I am really looking forward to this and I am hoping to follow up recent successes. One of my greatest legacies in the Moreton Bay Region will be the collection of 89 (soon to be 90) video-recorded oral history interviews with local residents. Although other historians have been filming oral history interviews for a long time, I was one of the first in south-east Queensland to commence systematically videotaping (rather than merely tape recording) these interviews. My book, *Pioneering the Pine: a Short History of the Pine Rivers Shire*, has been very successful but I am particularly proud of my attempts to popularise local history through the production of three DVDs. The most recent of these, *Normanby: the Spirit of an Early Industry*, was produced last year with money provided by the Queensland Government's Q150 program.

For those who are interested, there are brief biographical notes below which also includes details of what I have actually been doing as a 'Local History Librarian'. This often requires explanation. My best regards to everyone.

Biographical information:

- over 40 years experience in libraries in South Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Northern Territory as well as Queensland (including 8 years as a Lecturer in Library Practice at the Northern Territory University)
- as well as librarianship qualifications, I have a B.A. (UQ) with a double major in history and a Post Graduate Diploma (NTU) in history – I wrote a thesis on the history of uranium mining in the Northern Territory during the 1950s and 1960s
- lifelong interest in history and involvement with historical societies, including life membership of the Historical Society of the N.T. and current membership of the Australian Historical Association, the Oral History Association of Australia, the Queensland Family History Society and the Royal Historical Society of Queensland
- wrote a book and several journal articles on aspects of Northern Territory history; also jointly edited a publication on the Northern Territory at the time of Federation
- Local History Librarian, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Pine Rivers District:
- maintain/develop a collection of over 2,000 books and pamphlets, maps, photographs (4,000), vertical files, oral history transcripts and recordings, local newspapers and magazines, some unique manuscript materials, genealogical/family history materials
- although based in the Strathpine Library, the position has district-wide responsibilities
 - answer reference enquiries from a great diversity of clients - from primary to tertiary students and the general public at all levels – also Councillors and Council staff

- research aspects of Pine Rivers history & record oral history reminiscences of local residents and former residents
- photograph sites of historical interest
- provide advice to Council on history and heritage matters
- recommend and provide wording for historic plaques constructed by Council
- give talks on aspects of local history and family history
- liaise with community groups (convened monthly meetings of the North Pine Historical Society for many years)
- assist/encourage local amateur historians and volunteers

Some recent projects of particular interest include:

- writing and updating a hypertext history of the district for the Council's Internet website
- organising and indexing a Council Intranet database of over 6,500 digitised historical photographs
- involved with the creation of the Pine Rivers Heritage Museum, and now liaising closely with the Museum Curator
- the 'Eyes of Residents' program, which involves recording oral history interviews on video (high quality digital recordings using a local video production company) – to date, 89 interviews have been recorded
- as an offshoot of the 'Eyes of Residents' program, and as a result of a successful State Government grant application, during early 2002 worked in partnership with a local video production company to produce a one hour documentary film: *Two Centuries: a History of the Pine Rivers Shire*
- completed a second documentary film on timber-getters and woodworkers in the Pine Rivers area, *Pine Valley Timber: a Short History* (2006)
- completed a third documentary film on the history of Strathpine's Normanby Rum Distillery, *Normanby: the Spirit of an Early Industry* (2009)

Professional Historians Association (NT)	The Centre for Environmental History, The Australian National University	The School of Creative Arts and Humanities, Charles Darwin University	The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
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ANNUAL HISTORY COLLOQUIUM

Saturday 6 November 2010

The Theatrette, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

<i>Time</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Title</i>
Session A	Chair – Dr Steven Farram, CDU	
9.20 - 9.30 am	Welcome	
9.30 – 10.00 am	Emeritus Professor David Carment, CDU	<i>Stuart's Triumph: 'Planting the Flag on the Shores of the Indian Ocean'</i>
10.00 – 10.30 am	Alessandro Antonello, ANU	<i>The International Geophysical Year and the conceptualisation of the Antarctic: Australian ideas and debates, 1954-1959</i>
10.30 – 11.00 am	<i>Morning Tea</i>	
11.00 – 11.30 am	Adam Hughes Henry, ANU	<i>Ethics, human rights & foreign policy: Australia and the Dutch East Indies (1945-1946) and East Timor (1975-2000)</i>
11.30 – 12.00 noon	David Fetting, ANU	<i>Ben Chifley and the Asian Revolution</i>
12.00 – 1.30 pm	<i>Lunch, Cornucopia Cafe</i>	
Session B	Chair – Emeritus Professor David Carment, CDU	
1.30 – 2.00 pm	Captain Richard Irvine, Australian Defence Force Academy	<i>Top End Guerrillas (The Volunteer Defence Corps and the training of guerrilla bands in the Northern Territory during the Second World War)</i>
2.00 – 2.30 pm	Elizabeth Ganter, ANU	<i>Why My Thesis is History: Aboriginal memory and shared fates in the Northern Territory's representative bureaucracy</i>
2.30 – 3.30 pm	Lloyd Browne, CDU	<i>Very Good, Very Good: some glimpses into Larrakia and Wulna society at the instant of European contact</i>
3.30 – 4.00 pm	<i>Book Launch and Afternoon Tea</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Emeritus Professor David Carment will launch Adam Henry's recent book, <i>Independent Nation: The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1946: Australia, the British Empire and the Origins of Australian-Indonesian Relations</i>, published by Charles Darwin University Press.</p>		

Entry is free and morning and afternoon tea is provided. Lunch is at your own expense. For further information please contact Dr Steven Farram on (08)8946 6865 or steven.farram@cdu.edu.au

