



## **Historical Society of the Northern Territory**

**Patron:** The Hon Austin Asche AC

### **NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2011 NO: 51**

PO Box 40544, Casuarina NT 0811

Office: Room 3, Girl Guides Headquarters, 55 Ross Smith Avenue, Parap

Mobile: 0487 413 709      [www.historicalsocietynt.org.au](http://www.historicalsocietynt.org.au)

Email: [historicalsocietynt@yahoo.com.au](mailto:historicalsocietynt@yahoo.com.au)      Newsletter Editor: Bev Phelts

### **President's Report by Dr Brian Reid**

Lyn, my wife and I have just visited Mornington Station in the South Kimberleys. We camped there for a few days and assisted with a seed eating bird count as we have done for the past three years. There are experimental burning regimes at Mornington and seed eating bird numbers is one of the indicators used for that programme.

Mornington Station was purchased by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) several years ago. It operates as a sanctuary and a research centre. AWC now owns several such stations throughout Australia, especially in the north. It is funded almost entirely by donations.

For the past century or so Governments in Australia have been at the forefront of applied learning; Libraries, Archives, Museums, National Parks, Threatened Species, Biodiversity. These institutions and departments have made major contributions to the country's operating knowledge. But it is changing. Governments today with, at best, narrow majorities feel obliged to venture more and more into populist policies and the centres of applied learning wither as they are starved of funds and specialist staff. Governments in turn are starved of rational advice. Are we heading back to eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe where applied learning was largely the domain of clever philanthropy?

On a more pleasant note, my congratulations to Professor Alan Powell for being awarded the Queensland Premier's 2011 Literary Award (History section) for his Northern Voyages (CDU Print 2011). A fitting reward for a fine piece of work.

### **HSNT talk – Wednesday 26 October**

At the Museum and Art Gallery NT Theatrette, Conacher Street, Fannie Bay – 7.20pm for 7.30pm start The theme for 2011 is to mark the centenary of the transfer of the Northern Territory from South Australia to the Commonwealth Government.

Judy Boland, Darwin High School teacher, will talk about the impact the Commonwealth takeover (1911) had on Territory education. Stay for refreshments after the talk

### **Sunday Christmas Brunch – 26 November**

Venue to be decided.

**Saturday 29 October - History Colloquium** at the Museum and Art Gallery Theatrette

## Congratulations to Emeritus Professor Alan Powell

Alan won one of Australia's most prestigious literary awards. His *Northern Voyagers: Australia's monsoon coast in maritime history* by Australian Scholarly Publishing documents the maritime history of the north Australian coast.



Queensland Premier Anna Bligh and Queensland University Professor Nancy Wright present Alan with a certificate acknowledging his win at the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards.  
Photograph and information courtesy the Qld Premier's Department

Alan's book was the judge's choice in the History Book – Faculty of Arts, University of Queensland category at the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards.

The judges commented that "This is a great work enlivened by recent developments in race relations and wartime historiography that challenges the reader to understand Australian history within a wider framework of world and regional history."

He had commenced writing the book back in 2003 but the idea came about during 1990s when Alan was working on *The Shadow's Edge*. While the book draws on work from other authors, the book contains much of his own research and observations from having sailed the coastline extensively during the past 30 years.

His next book will examine the challenges and the significance of Britain's first three attempts to establish settlements in northern Australia.

Alan highlights the fact that his book and his award would certainly help to raise the profile of Territory historians on the national scene.

## Patron's Dinner – Wednesday 28 September

Judy Boland enthralled us all about her trip to the Antarctica. Her photographic presentation was post card picture perfect. It showcased the amazing wildlife, the huge "pavlova" icebergs and inside the-frozen-in-time Mawson Huts. It was difficult to break for our delicious Greek dinner, topped off with Christo's famous deserts.



From left:

Cath Matarazzo, Sandra Lenz, Janie Mason, Clayton Fredericksen, Lucio Matarazzo and our patron, Austin Asche.

From left:

Kay Goon, Brian & Lyn Reid and Wendy James





From left:

Judy & Col Beard, Julie Mastin and Penny Baird

## What's on at the Northern Territory Library?

### **Exhibition - *Behind the Lines: The Year's Best Cartoons 2010* 5 September - 16 October 2011**

Political cartoons offer a profound and immediate insight into how events in a nation's history are perceived as they unfold.

Behind the Lines brings together the best political cartoons of 2010 in a unique exhibition which documents the highs and lows of the political year. 2010 offered endless inspiration for cartoonists. The climate change debate, mining tax conflict, political party leadership spills and thrills, a federal election, the "new paradigm" and more feature in cartoons published in newspapers and magazines across Australia.

### **Thursday 6 October 4:30pm - Ms Margaret Allen and Ms Ellen Forsyth 'In Conversation'**

Libraries are embracing new opportunities in service delivery – come and hear how the State Libraries of New South Wales and Western Australia are exploring what is possible.

Margaret Allen, President of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and CEO of the State Library of WA, and Ellen Forsyth, Consultant for Public Library Services with the State Library of NSW, will talk about the changing profession and strategic directions being taken by their respective State Libraries. The discussion will focus on how libraries can use new and emerging technologies to connect citizens to information and services.

**Wednesday 19 October 5:15pm - Evening Talk for Anti-Poverty Week by Mark Squirrell**

Author of *'From Arafat to Everest'* Mark Squirrell (Squiz) set off in May 2006, for the summit of Mount Everest to do his bit to raise awareness of the global hunger situation. He knew only too well the realities of hunger, having been an aid worker in countries such as Sudan, Afghanistan and Palestine. This is a climbing story with all the crevasse action and avalanche thrills but also the humanitarian work to put it all in perspective. Book sales and signing will be available

**Thursday 27 October 5:15pm – Book Launch - The Man Who Loved Crocodiles and Stories of Other Adventurous Australians by Marg Carroll**

His Honour, Mr Tom Pauling AO QC, Administrator, will launch Marg's book, which tells of fifteen fiercely independent men and women who have lived life exuberantly. It casts a revealing light on a fast vanishing Australia, and her subjects share their unique experiences with a cocky modern world often focused more on youth.

While there are adventures aplenty, a deep wisdom lies at the core of this book, a wisdom that can come from following the road less travelled, a wisdom that will resonate long after the book has been read.

Book sales and signing will be available.



Janie Mason and Col Beard selling Historical Society books at Government House Open day on 19 August

## **News from the Federation of Australian Historical Societies**

### **A matter of great concern**

The recent practice of discarding undigitised historical materials from some State Libraries and from various university libraries in Australia has been well publicised in the Australian press. Whilst the public may accept discard of out-of-date computer and management books, it is a matter of concern to the Federation when this includes 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Australian history and cultural heritage materials without reference to historians and other professionals and collecting agencies. The Federation has expressed its reaction to these developments in writing to the Libraries concerned.

### **2010 Fellowship Award presentation**

In September, the President, Don Garden, attended the Royal Western Australian Historical Society's State History Conference of Affiliated Societies in York (WA) to present a Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS) Fellowship Award to Professor Reginald Appleyard.

Lotterywest has provided a grant to assist representatives of regional affiliated societies to attend the Conference. The grant covers accommodation and travel expenses.

### **New National History Curriculum – proposed workshops**

FAHS delegates Esther Davies and Julia Ryan (both from the Canberra and District Historical Society) recently met with a Curriculum Officer of the ACT Department of Education and discussed workshops on the history curriculum and necessary funding for them. The Federation believes there is a great opportunity for historical societies across Australia to support the delivery of the new curriculum through being a resource for teaching and teacher development.

### **FAHS 2011/12-2013/14 Operational Plan completed**

The FAHS 2011/12-2013/14 Operational Plan has been finalised. This plan, based on a review of the Federation undertaken by delegates at the 2010 AGM, makes provision for an expansion of the organisation's activities, particularly with regard to advocating at the federal level on issues of concern to historical societies.

### **The Australian Historical Societies Support Group is growing – join and participate in the online discussions**

The online Australian Historical Societies Support Group, which now has 76 members, offers historical societies, like-minded bodies and their members a variety of free, easy to use Web-based services which they can use to communicate with each other across the nation and the world on any topic that is of interest or concern to their organisations.

The website provides easy access to online technologies now available for communicating between group members. Features of mc<sup>2</sup> include a forum, an events list, space for sharing files, space for sharing photos, a links page and a chat room.

This group, through an arrangement between the Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS) and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, is one of the *My Connected Community* groups initiated and funded by the Victorian Government's Connecting Communities Program.

Details on [how to join the Group](#) are available at the FAHS website at [www.history.org.au](http://www.history.org.au).

## **Death of Peter Loveday (1925-2011)**

By David Carment (Emeritus Professor of History at Charles Darwin University)

Dr Peter Loveday, AM, who died on 20 August 2011, was a leading Australian political historian and political scientist whose activities and publications had a considerable impact. As Field Director of the Australian National University's North Australia Research Unit in Darwin between 1981 and 1990, he provided scholarly leadership in a region that had previously received far too little academic interest.

Peter Loveday was born in Renmark, South Australia on 28 December 1925. His English-born father Ronald (Ron) Loveday migrated to the state in 1919 and much later served as a Labor member of its parliament and as Minister for Education. His mother Lizzie Hilary Mills belonged to a prominent South Australian pioneering family.

Part of Peter's childhood was spent on a small mixed farm on the Eyre Peninsula, where conditions were particularly arduous. Drought, insufficient capital and lack of government support forced the Lovedays to move from their farm to Kernella near Port Lincoln in 1936 and later to Whyalla.

Peter was educated at North Shields primary school, Port Lincoln High School and Sydney Technical College, from where he graduated with a Diploma of Metallurgy. Between 1942 and 1952, he worked as a metallurgist in Newcastle and then Port Pirie.

In 1952, he commenced studies at the University of Sydney, which awarded him a Bachelor of Arts degree with First Class Honours and medals in History and Philosophy in 1956. In 1962, he graduated as a Doctor of Philosophy from the same university for a thesis on the development of New South Wales parliamentary politics between 1856 and 1870. It was the first doctoral thesis in Australian history at the University of Sydney.

He married Ruth Laing in 1953 and they had two children, Nicholas and Kate. The marriage was dissolved in 1986. In 1988 Peter married the archivist and historian Baiba Berzins.

From 1957 until 1965, Peter was a Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in Government at the University of Sydney. He was Reader in Politics at the University of Adelaide in 1966 and 1967 before moving to the Australian National University as Senior Fellow in Political Science. Following his retirement from the North Australia Research Unit in 1990, Peter and Baiba returned to Sydney but Peter remained active as a researcher and writer. He was elected a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia in 1977. In 1980 and 1981, he served as President of the Australasian Political Studies Association.

Almost all of Peter's publications focus on Australia. They cover influential and frequently cited articles, books and papers on political theory, political history, political biography, parliamentary politics, pressure groups, social movements, political economy, ideology, Indigenous politics, elections, and the history of education.

Among his books, one of the most significant remains *Parliament, Factions and Parties: The First Thirty Years of Responsible Government in New South Wales, 1856-1889* (1966), which he co-authored with his close friend Allan Martin. Using many sources not previously exploited, they considered the breakdown of the faction system and the emergence of political parties in New South Wales well before the labour movement participated in parliamentary politics. Other

notable works include *Promoting Industry: Recent Australian Political Experience* (1982), a pioneering analysis of the interdependent interests of government and private industry, and, co-authored with Baiba Berzins, *A University for the Territory: The Northern Territory University and Preceding Institutions 1949-1999* (1999), a comprehensive study of the development of post-school education in the Territory.

Peter's decade in the Northern Territory was especially fruitful and happy. He greatly enjoyed living in Darwin. He published widely on various aspects of north Australian economic development, history and politics. A gifted collaborator and mentor, he co-authored and co-edited publications with his North Australia Research Unit colleagues and positively encouraged them with their own work while always insisting on the highest standards. The North Australia Research Unit became a hive of intense intellectual activity. Its seminars and conferences attracted many attendees from the wider community. An active publication program resulted in numerous well-received books, edited conference papers and discussion papers. In 1992, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his services to education in the Northern Territory. After retiring, he maintained strong links with the Territory, which he and Baiba frequently visited.

In addition to his university activities, he served on various committees and boards in Darwin, including the Northern Territory University Planning Authority, the Council of the University College of the Northern Territory and the Northern Territory History Awards Committee. He and Baiba were responsible for the Historical Society of the Northern Territory's book publication program, which resulted in the appearance of worthy contributions to Territory history that would not have been published otherwise. Local historians such as their friend Pearl Ogden greatly benefited from Peter and Baiba's editing skills. His interests went well beyond academic work. He played tennis, was a keen bushwalker, enjoyed sailing and was a gifted photographer

I first met Peter in 1972, when he attended a seminar that I gave as a doctoral student at the Australian National University and made some insightful comments at a crucial stage of my research. I came to know him much better when I lived and worked in Darwin from 1981. We maintained regular contact for the rest of his life. Like many others, I found him a wonderful colleague and friend. He, Baiba and I had memorable discussions about history, politics and other topics, quite often at long lunches. He always showed a lively and inquiring interest in events, places and people. His understanding of Australian Indigenous issues was especially impressive.

Peter's wives, children and four of his seven siblings survive him.