



Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2011 NO: 48

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President's Report by Dr Brian Reid

With the arrival of our lovely dry season we are gearing up for the annual field trip.

Unfortunately, some of the roads have been badly damaged due to our heavy wet season - so access could be difficult. This year, thanks to the fabulous groundwork undertaken by Colin Beard, we are going to the historic Victoria River Downs Station. The trip will be as usual, on the Darwin Show weekend, 22-24 July.

The VRD manager has kindly agreed to us camping near the homestead and he will run a guided tour of the Station's buildings. As well as being one of the earliest and largest Top End stations, VRD was also where one of the early Australian Inland Mission Hospitals was established.

The proposed itinerary is –

Friday, 22 July (show day) - Expeditioners muster at VRD Turnoff on Victoria River Highway near Timber Creek at 12 Noon. (People could spend Thursday night at Timber Creek/Victoria River Roadhouses).

Travel in convoy to VRD via Jasper Gorge. Set up camp at Jacky's Camp on the Wickham River adjacent to VRD Homestead.

Saturday, 23 July – VRD Managers, Russell and Julie, will provide a guided tour of the surrounds, VRD's homestead, the Old Store and Post Office, the WW2 bomb shelter, cemetery and the National Trust Old Nursing Home/Hospital. Later, in the day we travel to the original VRD Homestead site on the Pigeon Hole Road.

Sunday, 24 July - Travel back to Darwin at own leisure.

Last year's camping trip was to the physical remains of the telegraph station at Powell Creek, near Elliot. It was a great outing to a very special place. When we returned, the Council wrote to the owners thanking them for the access and making some suggestions about stabilising one of the buildings and some basic conservation work. I am very pleased to report that some of this work has now been planned.

Singles/doubles looking for a ride and willing to share costs - we can try and find you a seat. If members are interested in coming along, please complete the form at the end of the newsletter or email Bev Phelts with your details. Please RSVP by 15 July.

2011 Chief Minister's Northern Territory History Book Awards – Congratulations to Dr Mickey Dewar

The Chief Minister's NT History Book Award is presented annually to the author of a published book on Territory history. This year marks the 8th year of the award and it is encouraging to see authors produce some fabulous and interesting publications. The winner of the award was announced at a function at Parliament House on 12 May and the Historical Society is happy to congratulate Mickey on being this year's winner. Her book *Darwin - No Place Like Home: Australia's Northern Capital in the 1950s through a Social History of Housing* was written and researched through her 2007 Frederick Watson Fellowship and published by the Historical Society.

HSNT Council Member, Alan Powell's book *Northern Voyages: Australia's Monsoon Coast in Maritime History* and past President, Matthew Stephen's book, *Contact Zones: Sport and Race in the Northern Territory, 1869-1953* were short listed.



The 2011 Chief Minister's NT History Book Awards and NT Literary Awards



Dr Mickey Dewar receiving her award from Minister, Dr Chris Burns

HSNT Coming Events

Tuesday 14 June 2011 – Book Launch from 6pm to 7.30pm at the Darwin Sailing Club

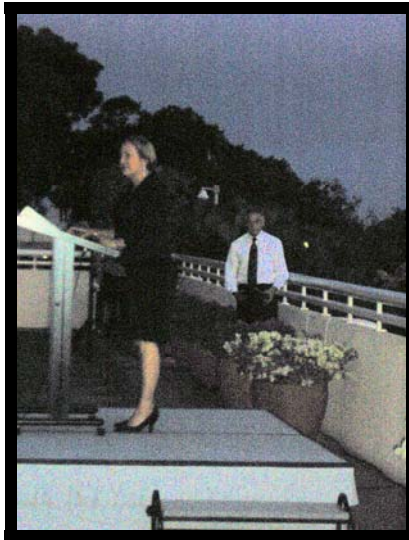
Beyond the Boundary Fannie Bay 1869-2001 by Eve Gibson will be launched by Emeritus Professor David Carment.

The book focuses on events, buildings and town plans that contributed to the history of Fannie Bay. It covers the first buildings in the area which includes the railway, Vesty's meatworks, and housing. The book records the landing of the first flight from England to Australia in 1919, and the enormous impact that World War Two and Cyclone Tracy had on the suburb. A copy of the book can be obtained at the launch or via HSNT \$25.00 Postage \$3.00

Justice Mildren's book launch

Justice Dean Mildren's book, *Big Boss Fella all Same Judge* was held on 23 May on the lawns of Parliament House. The book is on the history of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory and was launched by the Chief Justice French of the High Court of Australia. The book was published as part of the Court's centenary celebrations.

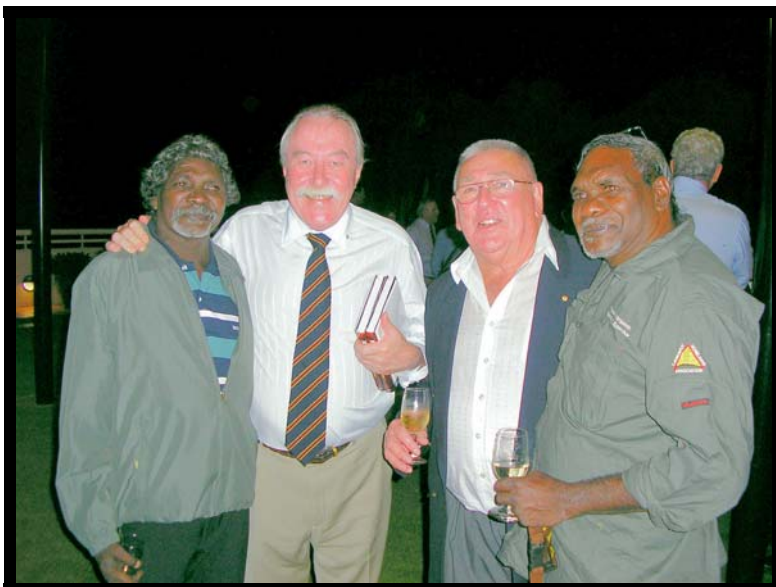
The launch was a very popular event with the lawns graced by members of the public and the law profession. Some old familiar faces were Ted Egan, Sally Thomas, Rex Wild, John Reeves and David Angel. The opening speech was given by Delia Lawrie, the Attorney-General with Chief Justice French launching the book amidst stories on Darwin's early days and the Lindy Chamberlain trials.



Delia Lawrie opening the launch



Guests on the lawn at Parliament House



From left: Man Man Wirrpanda, Administrator Tom Pauling, past Administrator, Ted Egan and Dhukal Wirrpanda.

The Wirrpanda's are descendents of Yolngu leader, Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda who was tried and found guilty in 1934 for the murder of Constable Stewart McColl. Wirrpanda was sentenced to death but after a High Court appeal his conviction was overturned and he was released. After his release from Fannie Bay Gaol, Wirrpanda was never seen again and it is believed that he was murdered.

Coming Events

NT Writers Centre

LANDSCAPE & MEMORY - Leonie Norrington in Pine Creek

Friday June 10 – Sunday June 12

\$250 full | \$230 member/concession

Fee includes two days of writing workshops, camping accommodation and food.

Immerse yourself in a weekend away from it all with award-winning writer, Leonie Norrington, writing and spending time in the beautiful NT bush. Visit Umbrawarra Gorge, swim in the local dam, make damper and write, write, write!

For more information contact the NT Writers' Centre

[p] 08 8941 2651 | [e] info@ntwriters.com | www.ntwriters.com.au

YEAR OF FICTION - SHORT FICTION WORKSHOP – Jennifer Mills in Alice Springs

Saturday June 11, 9.30am – 4pm

full \$120 | concession or membership \$90 | concession & membership \$75

We all have a story or two, but what makes a good story into a great piece of fiction? This workshop will look at the craft of writing short stories which stand out from the crowd. In a full day intensive discussion, we will look at the practical skills writers use to craft their stories. We will cover voice, character, pace, tension, narrative structure, and imagery. The workshop will also look at where and how to get your writing out into the world.

This workshop is intended for participants who have written stories that they would like to work on; work does not have to be complete. Jennifer Mills is the author of two novels and many award-winning short stories.

YEAR OF FICTION - SHORT FICTION WORKSHOP – Cate Kennedy in Darwin

Thursday June 23, 5.30pm – 8.30pm

Full \$55 | members or concession \$45 | members and concession \$35

Have you got a short story in you? If you've always been interested in how a good story works but can't get yours to come to heel, or if you have a bunch of unfinished stories in the bottom drawer which need new life breathed into them, then this enjoyable workshop is for you. Cate Kennedy will guide participants through the essential elements of writing good fiction, from characterisation to dialogue, from imagery to plotline, to help get you inspired and back on track. She will make you look at your strengths in a whole new light.

Cate Kennedy's short fiction has been published everywhere from the Big Issue to the New Yorker, and she is the editor of this year's and last year's Best Australian Stories. She has taught writing workshops and masterclasses in every state in Australia so far except the Northern Territory, so the mood in this session will be celebratory! Bring along a notebook and pen.

WORDS ON THE FRINGE

25 – 26 June, Katherine, NT

The Katherine Fringe Festival runs from the 24 – 26 of June. On June 26, the NT Writers Centre will be presenting an action packed one-day literary festival as part of this event – Words on the Fringe. The mix will include many special guests, including Shane Maloney, Cate Kennedy and Sophie Cunningham. The festival will include workshops, panels, reading and spoken word performances, open mic, book launches, a comedy debate and musical performance. Keep watching the NT Writers Centre website, <http://www.ntwriters.com.au/> for the program coming soon.

Interstate Events

In Cooroy, Queensland - REALITY WRITES

22 – 24 July 2011

Cooroy Literary weekend, QLD. Organised by the Sunshine Hinterland Writers Centre, Reality Writes is a thought provoking weekend for readers, writers and everyone interested in what's going on in the world today.

Program to be launched online on May 21st at www.realityliteraryfestivals.org to book ph: 07 54477090

On the Victorian & NSW Border - WRITE AROUND THE MURRAY FESTIVAL REDISCOVERING POETRY

7 – 11 September Albury Festival

Panels and workshops exploring a variety of aspects concerning writing, reading, publishing and much more. Festival dinner, literary lunch and festival finale big book club.

Website www.writearoundthemurray.org.au

Museums Australia and Interpretation Australia Conference

14-18 November 2011

The Organising Committee is pleased to announce the Museums Australia and Interpretation Australia 2011 National Conference *At the Frontier: Exploring the Possibilities* to be held on Monday 14 – Friday 18 November 2011 in Perth, Western Australia.

Call for Abstracts

The Committee invites you to submit a current and unpublished abstract of no more than 250 words using the themes below which relate to the Conference theme *At the Frontier: Exploring the Possibilities*.

- The Future
- The Landscape
- The Vehicle

The deadline for abstract submissions is Thursday 2 June 2011. Before you submit your abstract please take a few moments to view the submission guidelines below.

Where are we going? What is our destination and what are we trying to achieve? What is our vehicle? What innovative processes or technologies are helping us to achieve our aims? What barriers must we break through? What challenges lie across our path? What are the new opportunities for our sectors? At the end of the first decade of the 21st Century we find ourselves facing exciting, troubling and unknown futures.

At the Frontier 2011 will explore this negotiable landscape over four days. Papers, workshops and interactive forums will encourage debate and speculation. *At the Frontier 2011* will open up a space of conjecture about the futures of museums, galleries and interpretive centres as well as museology, interpretation and education.

We welcome abstracts from members and non-members alike that explore the possibilities of

Oral Presentation: Presentations of 20 minutes, with 5 minutes for Q&A.

Pechakucha: Short, focused presentations limited to 20 slides of 20 seconds each. The presenter speaks for 6 minutes, 40 seconds in all.

Workshops: Workshops should enable delegates to engage with each other and share experiences in relation to problems or issues. Workshops can be for either 1 hour 30mins, or 3 hours (half day).

Contact the Conference Secretariat:

International Conferences & Events (ICE) P/L Suite 4, Level 2, 73 Hay Street
Subiaco, WA 6008 Phone: +61 8 9381 9281 Fax: +61 8 9381 9560

The Opening of the Nurses Exhibition at the Nursing Museum, Charles Darwin University – 12 May 2011



From left: Jenny Hanley, Susan Green, Janie Mason & Jacqueline O'Brien (nursing museum volunteers) and Cassandra Deon, Exhibition Curator.
A 4th year trainee nurse's cap is in the background.



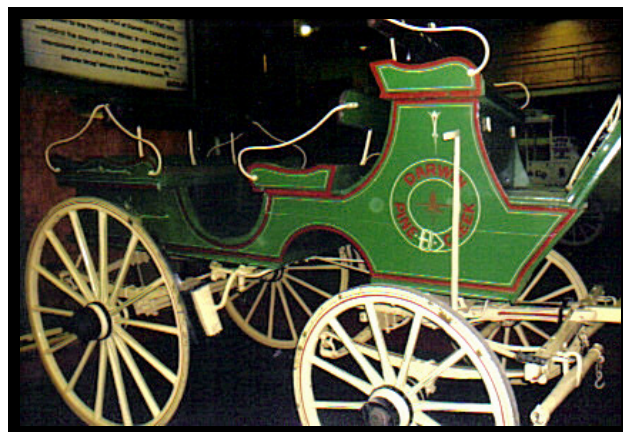
Current CDU nursing students with CDU Nursing Leader, Dr Peter Brown



From left: Kevin Davis CDU, Jeff Moffett, Chief Executive of NT Health & Dr Steve Shanahan CDU



Note the Darwin – Pine Creek signage



Coach named “Old Darwin Drag”

Seen at the 2011 Sydney Royal Easter Show.

The coach was made in Annerley, Queensland in 1893. When it was completed, the owner hitched 4 horses to it and drove it to Darwin. From Darwin, it was used to transport passengers and goods to remote regions. Later “Snake Bite Brown” used it as a passenger service from Darwin to the Pine Creek mines. The Darwin – Pine Creek sign can be seen on the side of the coach. Believe it or not, it carried 16 passengers. After the Darwin to Pine Creek run, the coach was sent by boat to Nundah, Brisbane to the Hooey family who used it as a pleasure vehicle for parades and movies. It was later bought by Bill Kingham, a well known Brisbane horseman, then by Ossie Orr, who was a collector of fine horse drawn carriages. Don Ross purchased it and for the past 16 years it has been used at shows and heritage days. It was restored to its former glory by Don Ross Junior and is now used in displays and in the Cobb and Co demonstrations.

News from the Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS)

New Federal Money for Community Heritage Grants

Under the Federal budget, the government announced that it will provide \$4 million over the next two years for Community Heritage Grants. It is understood that some of the grants will range from \$5000 to \$150,000, which will be ideal for historical societies. The FAHS warmly welcomes this news, but we are waiting further details on such matters as the criteria and the timetable.

FAHS cont.....

Disaster Planning and Recovery – new addition to the FAHS website

The new disaster planning and recovery page at [www.history.org.au/Disaster planning and recovery.html](http://www.history.org.au/Disaster%20planning%20and%20recovery.html) is an important resource for historical societies. It includes practical advice as well as links to relevant useful and informative websites.

Recent floods and cyclones

Fortunately, most historical societies and museums have escaped reasonably well the damaging effects of the recent floods and cyclones. The FAHS response has been largely to try to help with developing and circulating lists of the damage that has occurred and with facilitating access to post-disaster advice.

Meetings attended by the President

The President, Associate Professor Don Garden, has been busy attending meetings with the Hon. Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Hon. Tony Burke MP and senior Federal Government heritage officers to discuss heritage legislation and to promote the work of historical societies and their financial needs. The President also met with the President of the Australian Council of National Trusts, Dr Graeme Blackman and Dr Darryl McIntyre, President of the Museums Australia.

Associate Membership of the Federation

Applications for Associate Membership of the FAHS are invited from like-minded societies having objects of a similar or identical effect as those of the FAHS and which are not formally affiliated with one of our member societies. For further details visit the FAHS website at www.history.org.au and hover your mouse over the 'About us' drop-down menu.

Collections Australia Network (CAN)

The Federation regrets that funding for the Collections Australia Network (CAN) has been terminated. It is understood, however, that the database will be accessible via the internet but no new records will be added.



Field Trip to Victoria River Downs Station

Yes, I am interested in attending

NAME

NAMES OF YOUR PARTY MEMBERS

.....

.....

I AM INTERESTED IN TAKING ADDITIONAL PERSON/PERSONS YES/NO
If yes, how many people ?

CONTACT DETAILS

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Northern Territory Library's 30th Anniversary Commemorative Publication & Exhibition Launch held on 23 May



This was another successful event at the Library and it was surprising to see what "Treasures" that the Library had stashed out the back.

Some of the items on display are maps of the Humpty Doo Rice farms 1958-1959, logs of HMS *Alligator* 1838-1840 and the Surveying Schooner *Beatrice* 1864, the Fancy Dress Ball Dance Program, Palmerston Town Hall 1895, the very first issue of the *Northern Standard*, February 1921, Harold Giles' diary 1900-1901, Letters from Frederick Bradshaw to John Bradshaw 1904-1905, the Bushman's First Aid book written by Dr Mervyn Holmes 1913 and Stephen (Sam) Calder's flying log book and medals from the Second World War 1939-1945.

The "30 Treasures" will be on display in the Library until 26 August 2011.

Dr Mickey Dewar, the historical research consultant for the project had the honour of opening the exhibition



Guests at the exhibition



Jo McGill, Director of the Northern Territory Library addressing the audience