



Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER May 2021

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HSNT Committee – President: Matthew James; Vice President: Bev Phelts;

Secretary: Wendy Asche; Treasurer: Lyn Reid; others - Brian Reid, Judy Boland, Ian Anderson, Derek Pugh, Rosemary Chalmers, Robyn Smith, Clayton

Frederickson & Libby Siebert

FUTURE EVENTS

3 Feb to 28 June - Exhibition - *Signed, Sealed & Delivered - When the Post Office was King* - NT Archives, Kelsey Crescent, Milner.

A free exhibition that can be viewed Wednesdays to Fridays - 9.30am to 4.30pm
Bookings essential - phone: 8999 6890

Wednesday 5 May - Book Launch at NT Library at 5pm

Derek Pugh's new book *Darwin, Growth of a City: The 1800s* will be launched by our Patron, The Hon Austin Asche AC.

The 1880s started with a boom in Palmerston (Darwin) and the Top End. South Australian investors flocked to put their money into gold mines, sugar and coffee plantations, and the pastoral industry. Cattle stations bigger than a British county were carved out of the bush. The Overland Telegraph Line stretched across the continent signalling Australia's largest engineering feat of the 19th century and the Top End's diverse community was a mélange of people including First Nations, Chinese miners, European explorers, mercenaries and missionaries.

Hear about the extraordinary tales of murder and mayhem, fortunes won and lost and the remarkable men and women who forged a new Australian identity known as the 'Territorian'.

The book will be available for sale for \$30

Thursday 6 May & 3 June - 11am to 11.30am - Floor Talks - *A Little Bit of Justice – The Drawings of Charlie Flannigan* - NT Library

A Little Bit of Justice - The Drawings of Charlie Flannigan highlights the story of an Aboriginal stockman who was incarcerated at Darwin's Fannie Bay Gaol between 1892 and 1893

The exhibition features 22 of his drawings depicting local architecture and narrates the story of his transportation to the gaol and scenes from his days droving on pastoral properties, all carried out whilst in solitary confinement. The exhibition is the first time Charlie Flannigan's drawings have been shown together. Learn more about Charlie's story from Curator Don Christophersen who will give a floor talk about the exhibition.

Saturday & Sunday 8 & 9 May - Rural Potters Fair - 9am - 4pm

Pottery and refreshments on sale at Arnhem Nursery, 55 Arnhem Highway

Saturday 15 May - Riding the Rails: Heritage Festival 2021 - National Trust Event

Fancy a bike ride back in time? Organisers of the annual National Trust Heritage Festival are planning a 30km round trip rail trail bike ride along the old North Australia Railway from Yarrowonga to Wishart Siding.

Constructed in 1887, this section of track was used until the railway closed in 1976. Now organisers are proposing a rail trail bike ride as part of the festival from Saturday, 8 May to Sunday, 16 May 2021.

The ride on Saturday, 15 May, will start and finish at the café in the Yarrowonga Village with the first 9.5km on the sealed bike path to Coolalinga, which was constructed on the old rail track formation (pictured).

The remaining 5.5km to Wishart Siding is along a dirt and gravel track close to the Stuart Highway. As the grades are gentle the route is fine for bike riders of reasonable fitness and a bicycle suitable for gravel and dirt tracks.

Stopovers will be made at points of historical interest along the way, including the Mitchell Creek Bridge, McMinns Lagoon Siding, the original Fred's Pass Road crossing, the fettlers huts at Wishart and some rail history information boards.

The event will be held early on Saturday morning, with the 30km round trip expected to take about 3.5 hours. For more information, email: menzies2@bigpond.net.au.

Tuesday 25 May - Sheean: an Ordinary Seaman's last stand - a talk by Dr Tom Lewis - 5.30pm at the NT Library

Dr Tom Lewis, renowned popular military historian, will recount the gallantry of Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean and his last combat of action. Sheean's last combat of action was in December 1942 when the *HMAS Armidale* was attacked by a Japanese air raid that took place between Australia and East Timor. Learn how Sheean was posthumously awarded the Victorian Cross, 78 years after his death and how his legacy of bravery continues to be commemorated to this day.

Saturday 5 June - Parap Markets

Janie Mason will be running a HSNT book stall at the markets. Drop in, say hello and pick up one of our discounted books

Friday 9 July - NT Seniors Expo - 10am to 2pm

This year's expo will be held at the CDU Stadium, 235 Abala Rd, Marrara

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Centenary of Darwin's Cenotaph

On 24 April the Darwin RSL held a ceremony to mark 100 years since our cenotaph was established. The ceremony was held on The Esplanade and our Governor General, the Hon David Hurley AC DSC was one of the many dignitaries who attended. The service included a beautiful back drop of music by the Army band and the Larrikia Nation held a smoking ceremony.



Bev Phelts, HSNT Vice President was chuffed to meet the Governor General, David Hurley
Photograph courtesy Ian Anderson



The smoking ceremony provided by the Larrikia Nation



Among those in the front row are the Governor General; Chief Minister, Michael Gunner; Minister for Veteran Affairs, The Hon Darren Chester MP; NT Administrator, Her Honour Vicki O'Halloran AO; Darwin Lord Mayor, Kon Vatskalis; Member for Solomon, Luke Gosling OAM, MP; Member for Port Darwin, Phil Kirby and Senator for the NT, Samantha McMahon

100 Years of the RAAF

In April our Patron, The Hon Austin Asche AC, attended the centenary of the RAAF 1921-2021 at the Darwin Aviation Museum.



Austin with two volunteers from the Museum.
Photograph courtesy Wendy Asche



Past NT Administrator, John Hardy and wife Marie Hardy chatting to RAAF cadets at the Aviation Museum.
Photograph courtesy Wendy Asche