



Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER March 2020

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

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

Forthcoming Events

On Now until 28 June at the NT Library - Chinese Portraits Exhibition

The Chinese community played a pivotal role in the development of the Territory since the 1870s. In collaboration with the Chung Wah Society and the Chinese Museum, the Chinese Portraits exhibition features beautiful portraits and family images from the Chinese community, and is a celebration of the Chinese community living in the Top End.

Wednesday 18 March - NT Library - 5pm - 7.30pm - Screening Film - *We of the Never Never*

At the turn of the century Australia was still a very young country, in a land as old as time. Few had ventured far from the growing cities and towns of the coast, into that vast heart of Australia - the great Outback. *We of the Never Never*, adapted from an Australian classic novel, tells of Jeannie (Angela Punch-McGregor) and Aeneas Gunn (Arthur Dignam), a man and his bride who trek to a place where wives are seldom seen, and even less accepted. Enduring hardships and battling against the sexist and racial prejudice of the Australian outback environment this extraordinary woman strives to win the friendship and respect of those about her. Directed by Igor Auzins (Coolangata Gold), this extraordinary story of a woman overcoming hardships and dangers forms the heart warming story of *We of the Never Never*.

This film screening is part of the Northern Territory Library's *Curator's Cut* film series, screening rare films from the Library collection. Free event but bookings are essential. Phone: 1800 019 155
Email: libraryevents@nt.gov.au

Tuesday 24 March & 7 & 21 April - A Hypothetical Darwin at 5.30pm - 7pm at NT Archives, Kelsey Crescent, Milner

Katy Moir, our current Creative in Residence at the Northern Territory Archives Centre has begun to uncover designs and ideas envisaged for Darwin that have never been realised. We invite you to come and be a part of the design process, see what *A Hypothetical Darwin* has looked like in the past and discuss what it might look like in the future.

Tuesday 31 March, NT Archives at 5.30pm-7pm - Jan Hills on '1964 Onwards: one Veterinarian's Perspective'

Dr Janice (Jan) Hills grew up in Brisbane, visiting farms and developing a keen interest in animals. Even at a young age she had veterinary science in her sights. In 1958, after winning a Commonwealth Scholarship, she commenced a 5-year degree with the University of Queensland graduating in December 1962. In 1963, on a driving holiday to the Northern Territory with friends, Jan called in at NT Administration Animal Industry Branch in Darwin to ask about a veterinary position. It was after returning south, and reading an article in *The Age* newspaper about the Territory written by Douglas Lockwood, that her mind was set, and on arriving back in Brisbane, Jan organised the move to the Territory. Jan was a pioneer in her field being the first woman to establish a full-time veterinary practice in the Northern Territory servicing Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Gove. In this talk Jan will share stories of the challenges and triumphs of her experience, from 1964 onwards.

Wednesday 1 April - NT Library - 5.30pm - 6.30pm - Tony Fitzgerald Memorial Lecture

This year's Tony Fitzgerald Memorial Lecture is presented by the Honourable Justice Margaret White AO, a former judge and law lecturer who recently served as a joint Commissioner alongside Mr Mick Gooda in the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory. The lecture will look at the aftermath of the Royal Commission and explore current issues with the youth justice space both in the Northern Territory and other jurisdictions throughout Australia.

About the Lecture Series - The biennial Tony Fitzgerald Memorial Lecture is presented by the Criminal Lawyers Association of the Northern Territory (CLANT). Tony Fitzgerald was an advocate for human rights and was a long-standing member of CLANT. He served as the Northern Territory's Anti-Discrimination Commissioner from 2002 until his untimely death from cancer in 2009.

Free event but bookings are essential. Phone: 1800 019 155 Email: libraryevents@nt.gov.au

Saturday 4 April - Parap Markets - HSNT book stall

Sunday 31 May- Botanical Gardens Open Day -10am to 2pm - HSNT book stall

Come along and say hello to Janie Mason who will be selling HSNT books and publications.

Community Heritage Grants – applications close 4 May 2020

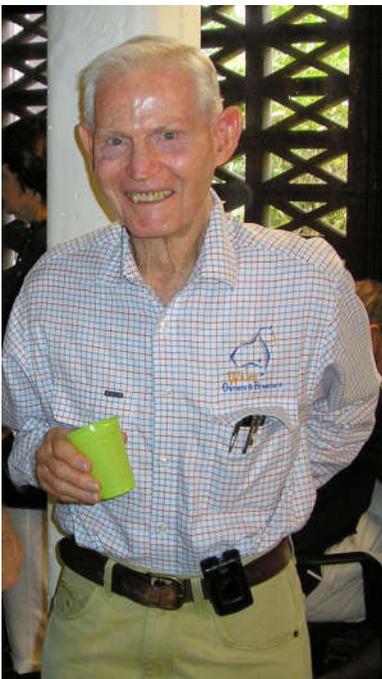
Applications for the 2020 Community Heritage Grants (CHG) program are now open.

The CHG program provides grants of up to \$15,000 to community organisations such as libraries, archives, museums, genealogical and historical societies, multicultural and Indigenous groups. The grants are provided to assist with the preservation of locally owned, but nationally significant collections of materials that are publicly accessible including artefacts, letters, diaries, maps, photographs, and audio visual material.

Applications close 5pm, Monday 4 May 2020 (AEST) www.nla.gov.au/chg/guidelines.

For further information or to discuss your application, Contact: Community Heritage Grants National Library of Australia Phone: 02 6262 1147 Email: chg@nla.gov.au

Vale Reg Wilson - 1931-2020



It is with deep regret that we hear the sad news of Reg's passing. Reg was a long term member of the HSNT (over 40 years) and until recent years regularly attended our functions and events.

Reg was born on Nicholson Station on the WA/NT border. His birth was assisted by Aboriginal women who worked at the station as his father was away mustering. Reg's parents worked for Vesty's and moved around the Territory managing stations for the company. Just before the bombing of Darwin, Reg, along with many other children were sent to Adelaide. Reg's professional life was spent in the NT Public Service where he rose to become the Supervising Surveyor in the Department of Lands. His work took him and his family all around the Territory.

A service for Reg will be held on Tuesday 17 March at 10am at the Baptist Church, corner of Ross Smith Avenue and Stuart Highway, Parap.

Information provided by Reg's daughter, Sharon Wilson & Earl James

Highlights of Previous Events

HSNT AGM

It was a full house with 30 members attending. We thanked our outgoing Secretary, Janie Mason for the many years she was our dedicated secretary. In appreciation of all her work, Janie was made life member of the Society.

We welcome new Committee members; Ian Anderson who is also our NT Representative on the Federation of Australian Historical Societies Council, Derek Pugh and Rosemary Chalmers. For those members who were not present at the AGM, the President's Report and a bio on Janie's volunteer work is at the end of the newsletter.

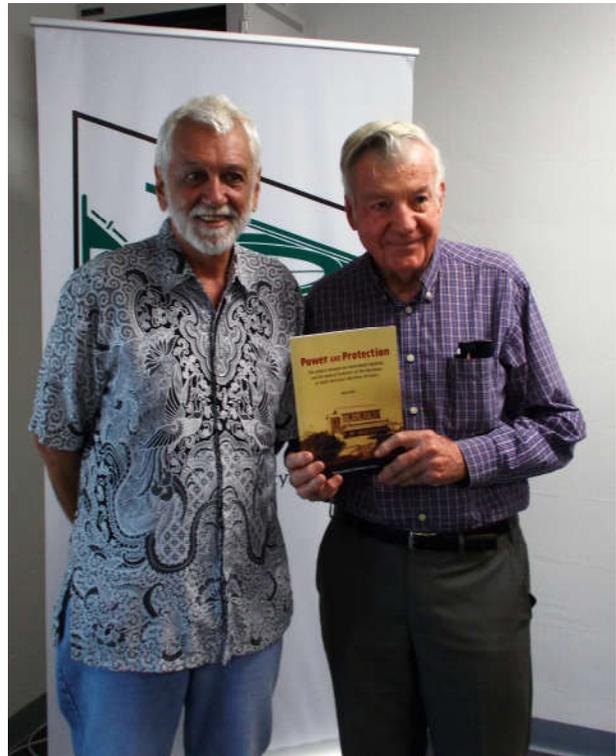
Our new Committee members are: President: Matthew James; Vice President: Bev Phelts; Secretary: Wendy Asche; Treasurer: Lyn Reid; others - Brian Reid, Alan Powell, Judy Boland, Ian Anderson, Derek Pugh, Rosemary Chalmers, Robyn Smith and Clayton Frederickson

Following the AGM, Brian Reid's new book *Power and Protection: The Contest between the Government Residents and the Medical Protectors of the Aborigines in South Australia's Northern Territory* was launched by Dr Steve Farram, Senior History Lecturer, Charles Darwin University.

The book covers the period of the South Australian Government administration of the Northern Territory and the conflicting roles of the Protector of the Aborigines and Medical Officer. The relationship of the Protector with the Government in South Australia and in the Northern Territory was a difficult one. The book traces a contest that developed between the Resident and the Protector which became increasingly aggravated by the shifting concept of protection. The book is on sale for \$25.



Janie receiving her life membership from President Matthew James



Dr Steve Farram launched Dr Brian Reid's new book, *Power and Protection*



Carl Cossill, Earl James & Judy Boland



Janie Mason, Steve & Marion Farram



Maggie Roe & Lyn Reid



Sandra Lenz & Wendy James



Derek Pugh & Alan Mitchell

Commemorating the centenary of the Great Air Race and the onward flight from Darwin to Adelaide - 8 March 2020

After Keith and Ross Smith, James Bennett and Walter Shiers won the Great Air Race flying from England to Australia (Darwin) in 1919, they continued on to Adelaide via Longreach. This stage in their Vickers Vimy took from 13 December 1919 to 23 March 1920.

To honour the centenary of this flight, 2016 Australian Geographic Adventurer of the Year, Michael Smith and Michael Coates will be following the exact same route taken by Bennett, Shiers and the Smiths. On Sunday 8 March from the Darwin Aviation Museum, Michael flew off in his Sea Bear amphibian and Michael left in an ultralight Pipistrel aircraft which is the cutting edge of fuel-efficient technology. Their first night will be at Daly Waters.

The event will attract many participants and a major fly-in to Adelaide Airport on the weekend of 21-22 March.

Information from the Darwin Aviation Museum



Michael Coates with his ultralight Pipistrel aircraft



Michael Smith with his Sea Bear amphibian

President's Report

Dear Members and Supporters,

2019 has been somewhat of a steady year for the Society and as President I have appreciated the exceptional support from our council members and their dedication to their Society, and I sincerely thank them.

The Society's programme continued strongly in 2019 and doesn't look like slowing down for 2020. Our book publishing group has had a busy year, again, assisting a range of authors in publishing a mix of scholarly works. The main focus of this Historical Society is the finding and keeping of the history of northern and central Australia and bringing that history to public access. We have assisted authors in publishing a number of books this year.

After three years of working to return our out-of-print books to public access, the first 5 of over 81 books published by this Society are now available on-line through the NT Library's *Territory Stories*.

Due to our tireless Secretary, Janie Mason, the Society has had book stalls at Parap Markets since November 2017 and now monthly with 'specials' sale prices and with good sales.

Council member Clayton Fredericksen advises the HSNT Journal is well on track with a number of outstanding articles, short reports and reviews to be published.

The July show weekend saw a number of participants venture into the upper South Alligator River Valley and the Gold Fields Loop, on our annual Field trip. Highlights were the abandoned Glencoe and Old Goodparla Stations, Spring Hill and El Sharana mine ruins, Coronation Hill, Burrundie railway station, explosive magazines and cemetery, Callanans Hut, Moline Rockhole and Gumlon (UDP Falls). For the 2020 field trip next year the Society will be venturing through the northern Kakadu region exploring the material culture and historic sites of the area. We are currently working on the itinerary.

On behalf of the HSNT and its members I would like to thank Craig Bellamy for representing the Society in our duties with the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and to Ian Anderson for taking over these duties.

The HSNT Council expresses its deep sadness and regret with the passing of Valerie Ashe and Reg Wilson. Both Val and Reg were long time and very supportive members of the Society.

There has been some upheaval in 2019 which has resulted in significant changes in how we manage the Society's affairs. Also, being into our third year as property owner rather than renter, it is now possible to consider how this impacts on Society finances.

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

Our call for a new Treasurer resulted in three new Council members, Wendy Ashe, Lyn Reid and Robyn Smith, and all stepped up immediately instead of waiting till the March 2020 AGM. Lyn Reid kindly offered to take on our Treasurers position on the Council. The Society struggled for a while in its endeavours to fill the Treasurers position, so this was a great outcome for the Society.

AUDIT

Our new Treasurer, Lyn Reid, has successfully facilitated the annual audit for presentation at the annual general meeting. We have been informed by the Auditor that the Tax Office is now demanding more paperwork of the Society than previously.

ORATION

As an alternative to the monthly talks at Burnett House, the Society has organised and introduced an annual HSNT Oration. On 21 November, the HSNT held its first Oration at the Charles Darwin University,

Moot Court. It was a full "courtroom" with 50 people attending to hear Her Honour Sally Thomas AC speak about some of Darwin's first magistrates.

ANNUAL PATRONS FUNCTION

The annual Patron's Function was hosted by the Administrator, the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran at Government House on 2/10/19. After brief, introductory commentary by the Administrator and the Society's President, guests were much entertained by Earl James talking of how Goyder in 1869 ensured a contented camp in that first settlement at Port Darwin.

MEMBERSHIP

Earl James reports 111 members are financial for 2020 and another 5 are financial to 2021 with total memberships being 149 (totaling 179 people).

Earl has advised the council that he no longer wishes to be responsible for the society's Membership Portfolio. He has spent at least a decade with that responsibility and takes pride in the fact that when he first took an interest, we had only 35 members and now we have 149. The Council thanks him and wishes him well.

NEW MEMBERSHIP FEES

HSNT Council has decided to increase membership fees from 2021. This decision was not taken lightly. Many members will remember our nomadic years – from Cavenagh Street to Girl Guides Parap to 2 houses with the National Trust NT – all lots of effort, rent and access, health and safety issues. We now have our own permanent home. Below is an analysis of 2019 fixed costs which are essential and unavoidable.

Body corporate \$3421
City Council rates \$1207
Electricity base cost \$265
Insurance \$1000
Web/email \$215
Journal plus postage \$3315
Audit & software \$2500
Australia Post box \$226

New membership fees from 2021 will be:

Individual - \$75,
Concession - \$50
Family / Institution - \$95

FINANCIAL STATUS

The Society's active and increased publishing over recent years is shown in our increased income but there is always the continuing balancing act with printing costs and book sales.

DONATIONS

Deductible Gift Recipient with the ATO

The HSNT has Donor Gift Recipient (DGR) status. All donations to the Society of more than \$2.00 is now tax deductible.

Donations must be paid into the HSNT Public fund: BSB: 015896 Account: 2237325272.

Name and contact is needed for a receipt. Please email your details to hsnt@iinet.net.au

Donations to the Historical Society NT are for the "principle purpose of promotion of literature and movable cultural heritage" as accepted by the Australian Tax Office under our following constitutional objectives:

- study of, research into and keeping of the history of the Northern and Central Australia
- encouragement of preservation and/or display of historical relics, records;

- interchange of information by lectures, readings, discussions, excursions and exhibitions with publication of these as appropriate; and
- printing, publication and circulation of books, journals and such other documents as may assist any of the objects of the Society in in media [printed word, digital or other].

SHOPFRONT

With the acquisition of our own property, it was hoped that it could be a shopfront for book sales. From April to November, our member Susan Cameron opened History House on Wednesdays. The venture was not successful and will not continue. As Susan said: Air conditioning cost was probably more than books sold! Thank you Susan, but at least, you got plenty of reading working through our various publications.

HISTORY IN A BOX

The Community Benefit Fund has supported HSNT's History in a Box project with a grant of \$15,000. This will fund five Boxes and five Hubs, the subject matter of which is under consideration. Each History in a Box includes a pull-up banner, 10 x A4 photographs, lecture notes, biographies, other related material, word puzzles and suggestions for further reading from the Historical Society's book shop.

In Conclusion

The coming year is shaping up to be an exciting period for this great organisation. As President, I need to thank the dedicated members of the Council for their support and guidance for my third year at the helm.

Best wishes for the coming year,
Matthew James (President)

Life Membership Award Presented to Janie Mason AM, Honorary Secretary and Public Office

The constitution allows us to honour members of our society with Life Memberships who have gone above and beyond to serve this community.

In my tenure as president, I have learnt that running a functional society can be fraught with difficulty. Little crisis's just seem to pop up everywhere. With diligence the recipient of this Life Membership set about solving each crisis with care and success.

Some outstanding points to consider of the recipients commitment are:

- long term secretary from the days when the Society struggled to its more prosperous state today;
- managed the Society through the difficult days when it moved from base to base;
- much involved in the transfer of the Society's collections of manuscripts and photographs to the NTL and the NTA;
- Instrumental in establishing the Society in History House;
- regular participation in Society field trips, usually with Queensland companion Ruth Kerr.
- zealous purveyor of Society publications at markets and functions; and
- at the same time managed to pursue her professional interest in nursing history with several Society publications.

Her enormous academic achievements are outmatched by a generosity of spirit and collegiality. Our life member has helped innumerable students, postgrads and young academics go further and deeper into their studies.

She was officially appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM). The prestigious award recognised "significant service to nursing and the community of the Northern Territory". Her contributions included service to the heritage sector, the trade union movement, aged care and being a donor to several organisations.

She has been a productive writer of a wide array of Publications and Presentations, receiving a multitude of Awards and having a diverse range of Professional Memberships. These quality attributes that she brought to the table will be sorely missed at the HSNT.

As President of the Historical Society of the Northern Territory I have much pleasure in presenting our award of Life Membership and a plaque to that effect to Janie Mason AM. We will remember Janie for reinventing this society, and creating the foundations for this community as we know it today. We all wish you the very best in your future endeavours.