



HSNT Annual Field Trip 26-31 July 2018:

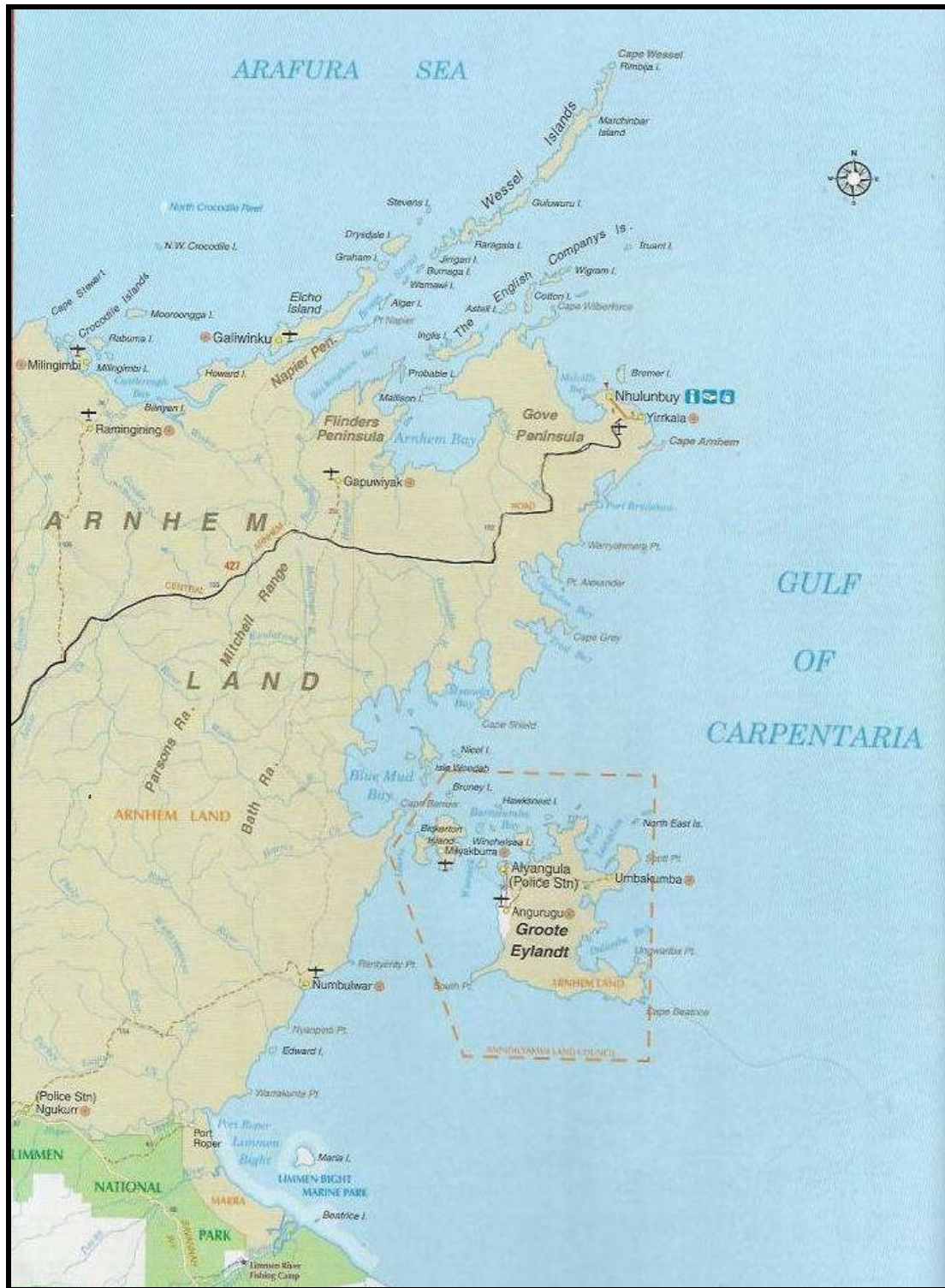
Darwin to Nhulunbuy/Gove

by Bev Phelts

From Darwin, the trip to Nhulunbuy via the Central Arnhem Road is a return journey of just over 2000km. Take the Stuart Highway south and 50km south of Katherine turn off at Maranboy. You will travel through the Aboriginal communities of Barunga, Beswick and Bulman. A permit to enter Aboriginal land is needed and this can be obtained from the Northern Land Council.



Route of our drive



Our drive to Nhulunbuy took two comfortable days with a camp over night stops at Mainoru each way.

Day 1 – Thursday 26 July

The group mustered at the Katherine Visitor information centre and caught up over lunch. At 1pm, we headed off in convey to the Maranboy turn off.



Signs at the Stuart Highway/Central Arnhem Road turnoff



Maranboy mine ruins



Ruins of the Maranboy hospital





Two goats were the only security at the old Maranboy hospital



One goat got friendly with Janie Mason



Afternoon break was at the Lookout Site

From left: Kevin Coonan, Earl James, Laurie DeFrenne, Ruth Kerr, Alan Mitchell, Matthew James, Lyn Reid, Janie Mason, Fiona Scott & Brian Reid



A magnificent view from the Lookout Site

We arrived at Mainoru Store late afternoon and set up camp for the night. Mainoru Store is a lovely place to camp as it has showers, toilets, fuel and some groceries. The camping ground is sparse with plenty of shade, trees and lawn. We were able to have our open camp fire that evening to sit around, drink wine and chat about the day.

Day 2 – Friday (Darwin Show Day) 27 July

We headed off to Nhulunbuy around 8.30am. Morning smoko was at Wilton Creek and lunch at Flat Rock Creek. Then we had our first blowout. Earl and Matthew James were the lucky ones! We arrived at Nhulunbuy around 3pm and set up camp at the Walkabout Lodge which is right in town.

The Lodge caters for campers, cabin/hotel accommodation, functions and has a great pub. The meals at the pub are well priced and huge.



Morning tea at Wilton Creek

From left: Earl & Matthew James, Alan Mitchell, Laurie DeFrenne, Ruth Kerr & Kevin Coonan



Lunch at Flat Rock Creek

From left: Alan Mitchell, Brian & Lyn Reid & Laurie DeFrenne.



Our first blowout.



How to raise the flat tyre when the vehicle is too low for the jack



Camp at the Walkabout Lodge



The camping ground has cheeky cockies which ended up stealing 2 loaves of our bread by removing lids & coverings. They knew when it was meal time and would steal when we were absent.

Day 3 – Saturday 28 July

Today we visited Will Stubbs at Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art & Museum Centre, Yirrkala who gave an interesting talk on the history of the centre and Yirrkala. Our guide around Yirrkala was Witiyana Marika, a senior traditional elder and foundation member of Yothu Yindi. Witiyana's father, Roy was one of the Yolngu people who presented the Federal Government with a bark petition in 1963. Next stop was the Arnhem Land Historical Society. They are based at the Gove Control Tower site and are in the process of developing it as a museum. In the evening, Phil Herdman of the Society gave an interesting talk on the history of the Gove area.



Outside the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art & Museum Centre. The building was originally the first Yirrkala hospital. It was opened as an art centre by Gough Whitlam in 1988.



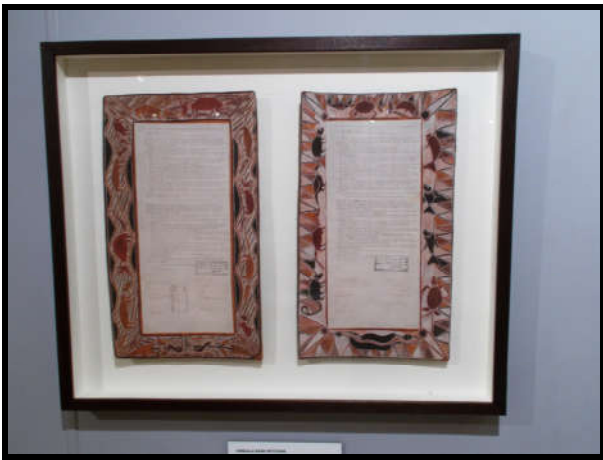
Inside the art centre, Fiona Scott



Lyn Reid deciding what to buy



Matthew James & Witiyana Marika



Replica bark petition presented to the Federal Government in 1963. The petition asked that the Federal Government consider the views of the Yolngu before making any decisions that effected them or their land



Maccassan pottery fragments



Message sticks (peace treaty) presented to the Yolngu by anthropologist, Donald Thomson in 1935



Yirrkala memorials to the Yolngu people who served Australia and its allies in wars. Also the HMS Patricia which was sunk by the Japanese in 1943 near the Wessel Islands



A mural on the wall of the Yirrkala community store



Inside the Yirrkala Uniting Church



The beautiful sea view from the previous missionary houses, now Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation buildings



Lunch at Shady Camp.
From left: Earl & Matthew James, Witiyana Marika & Alan Mitchell



Yirrkala cemetery



Inside the headquarters of the Arnhem land Historical Society. From left: Laurie DeFrenne, Alan Mitchell, Matthew James Lyn & Brian Reid, Earl James, Janie Mason, Fiona Scott, Bev Phelts, Ruth Kerr & Kevin Coonan



Gove Control Tower site and home of the Arnhem land Historical Society. The tower was built by the Civil Aviation approx 1990

Day 4 – Sunday 29 July

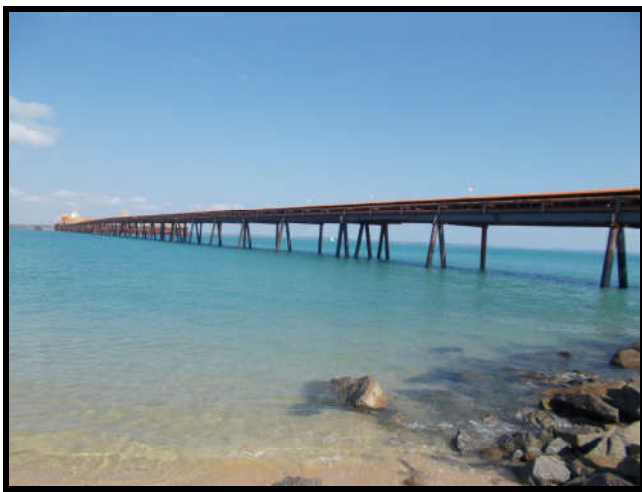
Today we went out to Mt Saunders and climbed the lookout to see magnificent views of the township. Then we explored the area around the Rio Tinto Mine (previously Nabalco). The mine no longer operates but its claim to fame was that it had the longest conveyor belt in the southern hemisphere. This followed with a drive out to East Woody Point beach then to Drimmie Head which was a World War 2/Catalina site. The day concluded with a delicious dinner at the Gove Boat Club.



Mt Saunders lookout



The entrance to the Rio Tinto mine



Rio Tinto Mine – the longest conveyor belt in the southern hemisphere



The barge bringing in supplies to Nhulunbuy

Days 5 & 6 – Monday & Tuesday 30-31 July

Our last two days of our trip was the drive back to Darwin with an overnight stopover at Mainoru. The only casualties were that two vehicles including mine suffered blowouts.



Our tyre was changed with great assistance from Kevin Coonan and Matthew James

Thanks

Big thanks to Matthew James our wonderful President and guide who organised the itinerary including all necessary communication to secure on ground activities, the permits, the research and compilation of our field material that complimented the itinerary. Janie Mason who organised our bookings with the Walkabout Lodge. Earl James for his information article " The Road to Gove".

Also our marvellous Gove hosts: Will Stubbs, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art & Museum Centre, Witiyana Marika, senior traditional owner and members of the Arnhemland Historical Society.

Participants - Earl James, Matthew James, Bev Phelts, Janie Mason, Ruth Kerr, Alan Mitchell, Brian & Lyn Reid, Fiona Scott, Kevin Coonan, Laurie DeFrenne,

Mechanical problems – 3 blowouts

Encounters with Animals – 2 goats, donkeys, horses, buffalo, cockies, cattle, wallabies & 1 dingo

Photographs - All photographs were provided by Bev Phelts

Note - Aboriginal Land Permits were required for this trip.

To buy take away alcohol in Nhulunbuy, a permit is required. An exception is if your accommodation is within the same complex, such as the Walkabout Hotel/Lodge.

Nhulunbuy Town Centre



STAY

Accommodation

- 1 Walkabout Lodge
- 2 Grove Peninsula Motel

www.walkaboutlodge.com.au
www.grovenotel.com

EXPERIENCE

Nature

- 3 Gayngaru (Town Lagoon, Nature Walk & Bird Hide)
- 4 Map (Roy Marika Lookout)
- 5 Galaru (East Woody Beach)
- 6 Wirraway (Wirraway Beach)
- 7 Gadalahami (Town Beach)
- 8 Middle Beach

EAT

Dining Out

- 21 Walkabout Lodge & Tavern
- 22 The Waterfront Kitchen
- 23 Coffee Restaurant
- 24 Maccas Restaurant

Cafes & Takeaway

- 14 Karmayan Cafe
- 15 Three Es Cafe
- 16 Peninsula Railway & Cafe
- 17 Munchie n' Grub Cafe
- 18 Grove Plaza
- 19 Kiosk Takeaway
- 20 Local Takeaway

PERMITS

Alcohol permits for consumption outside licensed premises are available at the Nhulunbuy Training Centre, Chesterfield Circuit 29.

Permits for access to beaches, Roy Marika Lookout, day use and camping areas around Nhulunbuy are available from the Dhimurra Office 30 or online at www.dhimurra.com.au. Permits to travel the Central Arnhem Road are easily accessible through Northern Land Council office 29 or online at nlc.org.au.

SHOP

Retail

- 25 BP Service Station
- 26 Westpac
- 27 Endeavour Square Shopping Centre
- 28 Captain Cook Shopping Centre
- 29 Groves Industrial Supplies
- 30 Westpac Bank

PLAY

Clubs

- 9 Town Pool Aquatics Centre
- 10 Sun Life Bowling Club
- 11 Country Golf Club
- 12 The Arnhem Club
- 13 Boat Club
- 14 Bowls
- 15 Tennis
- 16 Squash Club
- 17 BBA
- 18 Gun Club
- 19 Speedway & Motocross

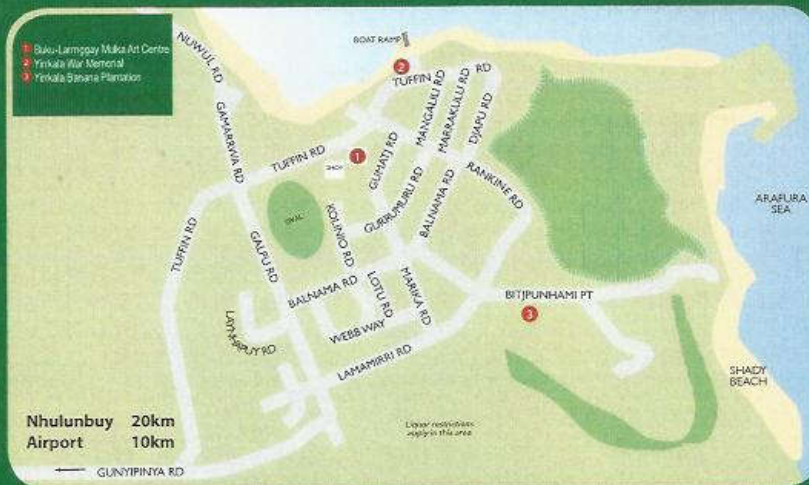
Mechanical Repairs

- 21 Grove Toyota 8987 1911
- 22 B.C. Autos & More 8987 2280
- 23 Tyre Power 8987 3610
- 24 Grove Automotive Centre 8987 1001
- 25 Nhulunbuy Smash Repairs 8987 3000
- 26 Iani Auto Repairs 2427 233 432
- 27 Grove Rentals Auto Repairs 8987 1700

Emergency Facilities

- Emergency 000
- Police 8987 1919
- Hospital 8987 0024
- Fire 8987 1906
- Ambulance 8987 0000
- Doctor 8987 3644
- Dentist 8987 1931
- Vet 8987 1101

Yirrkala



Groote Eylandt





Northern Land Council
Aboriginal Land Act 1978
Northern Territory of Australia

**PERMIT TO ENTER & REMAIN ON ABORIGINAL LAND OR
SEA ADJOINING ABORIGINAL LAND (Tourist)**

Permission is granted for Bev Phelts to enter and remain on Aboriginal Land for the following purpose:

Historical Society of the NT 2018 Field Trip to Gove

Permission is strictly restricted to the following locations and dates:

Location	Entry Date	Exit Date
Nhulunbuy	27/7/2018	30/7/2018

Transport Details:

Travelling By Private Motor Vehicle, of make Thrifty Hire Car, registration Hire Car

The following persons are authorised to travel with the principal applicant and are bound by the same conditions as the principal applicant:

____ (Signature)

____ (Signature)

DARWIN (Head Office)	PO Box 42921	45 Mitchell Street Darwin NT 0811	PH: (08) 8920 5178 Fax: (08) 8945 2633
JABIRU (West Arnhem)	PO BOX 18	Unit 3 Government Building Jabiru NT 0886	PH: (08) 8979 2410 Fax: (08) 8979 2650
KATHERINE (South Region)	PO BOX 396	5 Katherine Terrace NT 0851	PH: (08) 8972 2799 Fax: (08) 8972 2190
NHULUNBUY (East Arnhem)	PO BOX 820	Endeavour Square Nhulunbuy NT 0881	PH: (08) 8987 2602 Fax: (08) 8987 1334

The Road to Gove

A Memoir by Earl James

The Town of Nhulunbuy on the Gove Peninsular lies at the eastern end of what is now known as the Central Arnhem Road. This road commences at a point on the Stuart Highway about fifty kilometres south of Katherine and heads generally northeast for six hundred and seventy kilometres to the town. The first fifty kilometres has a tarmac surface as do the final few kilo's into the town but the rest of the road is either dirt or gravel. The surface makes for dangerous driving at speed. Most of the way is through Aboriginal freehold land.

For the first half of the journey, the road passes a number of places of historic interest. After that one must enjoy the delights of nature until the approaches to Gove are reached. At a distance of 20k's along the road, the remains of the Maranboy Police Station may be viewed, along with the remnants of a tin mining stamp-battery that crushed ore for half a century or more. Maranboy was once the site of Australia's largest tin mine.

At 28k's, we pass by the Aboriginal community of Burunga. In 1945 when the mine at Maranboy closed, this place was known as Beswick Creek and/or Bamyili. In 1984 it was renamed Barunga by the Aboriginal elders. At 58 k's we come to the Aboriginal community of Beswick, also known as Wugularr. Formerly a cattle station, it was transformed into an Aboriginal settlement by the government in 1947.

Then at a distance of 117 k's there is a great look-out with a view over a vast plain to the east. And at 195k's we reach the limits of white settlement at the Mainoru River. Here there is a roadhouse and camping area managed by the Mainoru cattle station which intrudes into the Aboriginal owned lands. Further on at the 255k mark we reach Bulman, another Aboriginal community. This one grew out of the early white man's cattle industry and now Bulman, along with the nearby settlement of Weemol, facilitates an Aboriginal industry harvesting buffalo.

From there onwards, there is little to see except nature for the next four hundred kilometres. At that point we run into a T-junction near the site of the annual Garma festival. If we turned to the right, we would come to Gulkuluk, the site of the festival. If we turn left, we reach the Gove airport in another 17k's and we are back on the bitumen roads. In another ten or twelve kilometres we reach the entrance to Nhulunbuy – journey's end.

I have made that journey ten times to attend the Garma festival during that event's formative years. When first I made the run, most of the road from the Mainoru River onwards, was not really a road but simply a bush track. Over the ten years that I made the journey I saw the track gradually transform into a reasonable right of passage. I have no idea what the road is like now as it is at least ten years since last I made the journey and the authorities are continually improving it.

But the first time I drove to Gove, there was no road at all past Mainoru, the cattle station originally owned by Jack Mackay whom I first met in 1955. That first journey was made in the late 1960s and the story has been told in my memoir *The Spinifex is Green*, published by the Historical Society of the Northern Territory in 2014. On that trip we followed a bush track that weaved in and out of the scrub until we reached Bulman. From that point we followed, with great difficulty, the tracks made by a couple of geologists that had pioneered the route to the Gulf a few years earlier until we lost their tracks at the foot of the Mitchell Ranges. Today the road skirts north-easterly around the ranges. But we wanted to get to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and that was to the east of us. So we bush-bashed through the ranges, during which time I proved that Landrovers could climb trees. Eventually, after many such incidents, we passed through the ranges and came to the plains country below. There, we came across some tracks made by mineral explorers and we followed these into Gove.

At that time the population of the Gove Peninsula consisted of all who lived at the Yirkalla Mission plus a large construction team living in a camp nearby the airstrip that was a relic of the WWII. A feature of this journey was that I was joined by a number of assistants that flew in and we undertook the establishment of a number of trig stations around the peninsular for mapping purposes. My team and I were responsible (or perhaps guilty) of clearing the trees from the tops of such high points as Drimmie Head in Melville Bay and Mt Saunders near the soon to be constructed town of Nhulunbuy.

This was not my first trip to Gove. In the early 1960s I was sent there to survey a boundary around the airstrip. On that occasion, I travelled by air and a vehicle was sent to Gove by sea on the barge that serviced the mission. The population of the peninsular then consisted of the mission and a couple of mining people that lived in a hut by the airstrip. They were still in the process of assessing the potential of the bauxite deposits. A feature of this journey was the fact that while I was there, the Mission was visited by the Governor General and I received instructions from Darwin to put my car, and myself, at his disposal. So for a day, I was chauffeur to royalty.

Since those days my only contact with Gove has been by my afore-mentioned attendance at the Garma Festival and brief visits to the Gove airport while in transit from Darwin to other places.

END