

Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER February & March 2022

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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

Sunday 23 January - Secondhand & New Books for sale - 2pm-4pm at History House



Our second booksale will be held at History House. We have all sorts of books for sale - lots of history and fiction including DVDs and some used electrical goods.

All going cheap - books range from 50c to \$2 and DVDs are 50c. Make an offer - **Note: Cash only**

Come and enjoy the airconditioning, have a cuppa & cake and a chat.

History House is located at 1/16 Charlton Court, Woolner. Charlton Street is off Bishop Street (look for pink building - Middis Lighting). Turn into Charlton Street then first right into Charlton Court. History House is at the bottom of the court.

Thursday 3 February at the Museum & Art Gallery - 5.30pm-6pm

To mark Lunar New year, Dr James Bennett, Curator of Asian Art will show and discuss some of the treasures from the Museum's Southeast Asian art collection

Saturday 5 February - HSNT bookstall at Parap Market

Our wonderful volunteer, Janie will be running our book stall

Saturday 5 February at the Museum & Art Gallery - 11am-11.30am

Talk on the 2021 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards.

Learn more about the works and the exhibition through curatorial insights from Rebekah Raymond, Curator of Aboriginal Art.

Saturday 12 February at the Museum & Art Gallery - 11am-noon

Talk on the build up to the bombing of Darwin

Jared Archibald, Curator of Territory History will talk about the myriad of stories that surround the first attack by an enemy power on Australian soil.

Saturday 19 February to 15 May - Exhibition 'Tiwi Heroes: World War Two Encounters'

The NT Library exhibition showcases the Tiwi and their dramatic encounters with allied and enemy servicemen. This multimedia exhibition celebrates the contribution made by the Tiwi people in the defence of Australia during World War Two

Memorials Come and Go... by Derek Pugh

In 1954 a roadside memorial to Sir Charles Todd was built about 20 kilometres south of Dunmarra, and 1.7 kilometres east of the 'joining pole' where Patterson made the final connection of the Overland Telegraph Line that linked Adelaide with London. It was a marble-sheathed obelisk that glinted in the sun. It must have been visible for miles. The inscription said in part:

'THIS COLUMN WAS ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF SIR CHARLES TODD ..., HIS GALLANT CONSTRUCTION TEAMS, OPERATORS AND LINESMEN UNDER R.C. PATTERSON, A.T. WOODS, W.H. ABBOTT ... [AND 11 OTHERS]....

The column is still there, but sometime during the last few decades the marble sheathing disappeared. The current monument is carved from a rosy hued granite. Its surface is pitted, rather than smooth. The base is concrete and stone, with cracked sections and parts missing.

To me it is a shadow of its former self. As part of the 150th commemoration of the opening of the line in 2022, it would be nice to clear up a few mysteries. Where did the marble go? Who took it and why? Can anyone help?



The memorial before



The memorial now

Membership for 2022 (January to December 2022) is now due

Individual membership:	\$60.00
Concession membership student/pensioner:	\$35.00
Family membership: two adults at one address:	\$70.00
Institutional membership	\$70.00

We only accept cash, cheque, money order or bank transfer (no credit card).

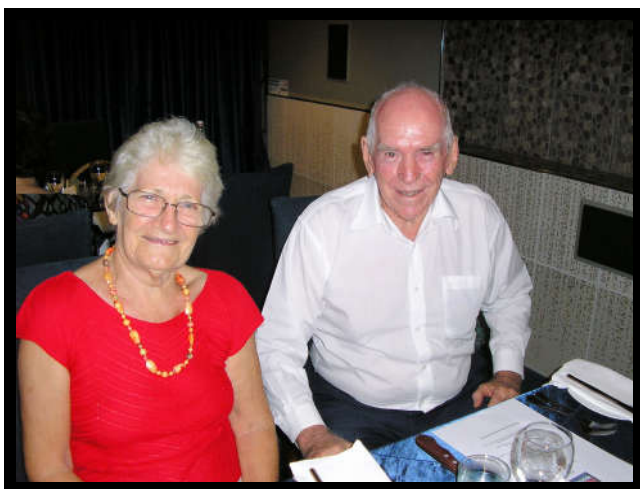
Bank transfer details: Historical Society of the NT BSB:015 896 (ANZ) Account No: 228391976
Remember to include your "SURNAME & MEMBERSHIP" against your deposit and email your details to hsnt@iinet.net.au if your personal details have changed.

Mystery Bank Deposit

The HSNT has a mystery deposit of \$30 made on 19 November. There is no name or identification with the deposit. Would the person who made the deposit please contact Bev on 04178688 or email: hsnt@iinet.net.au

Vale Graham McMahon 1936-2021

Obituary provided by his daughters, Lyn Connor & Jan McMahon



Kath and Graham McMahon 2012

Graham and Kath McMahon were Society members for many, many years.

Long-time Territorian Graham McMahon passed away this week (Wednesday 08/12/21) at 85 years of age. Dad came to Darwin at the age of 17 in 1953. Darwin was not his destination but a stop-over between the Kimberleys through to the QLD cane fields. However, he joined the local Aussie rules competition and the club he played for wanted him to stay, so secured him permanent work and so began his love for the Territory.

He worked for the Dept of Health at the old Darwin Hospital and later joined the NT Police force 1957/58 as a local recruit, which was unusual at the time. In 1958 he met Kath Ralph at a Christmas party, they married in 1959 and had 3 daughters.

He was actively involved in sport, which included basketball, Aussie Rules, hockey, and water polo as both a player and coach for many decades. Dad was also involved with the Police Boys Club in Smith Street for many years. When he could no longer play sport, he continued coaching various hockey teams.

He was a bushie at heart and we as a family spent a lot of time out bush but not as much as dad, fishing and camping, and meeting many Territory characters along the way. As a result of his love of the bush, he and mum started a tour company in the 60s, to show others the beauty of the areas that surrounded Darwin. In the 1970s he, along with others, fought to stop mining interests in an area of the Territory and for the creation of a National Park (Kakadu National Park). Through the years dad actively contributed to a variety of local, Territory and National Associations.

Graham became a commercial fisherman in the late 70s, which resulted in 3 boats being built/rebuilt either under the house or in the front yard, which became a landmark of the neighbourhood. The last boat he worked on (at Hornibrooks) for 9 years was the South Seas Daniela (formerly the Daniela II from the Adelaide River Jumping Crocodile tour) She made her way back into the water, where she can still be seen today.

He also campaigned hard for 4 decades for official recognition of an aboriginal police tracker and for all police trackers, which came to fruition in 2015. He had a long life, which he lived to the full and was fiercely proud of being a Territorian. An avid storyteller and the best BBQ cook of fish.

Graham was laid to rest on 16 December. We send our condolences to Kath and her family.

Vale Pearl Ogden OAM



Pearl with Wendy James, 2015

Pearl Ogden, historian and author was a long-term Territorian who passed away on 30 November 2021. Her family connections were to the Fogarty, Cox, Colson and Crowson families.

Born in Charters Towers in 1944, Pearl and her parents arrived in Katherine in October 1945 at the end of the War. In 1954, Pearl lived with her grandmother in Katherine for six months and attended school there. After leaving school, Pearl lived and worked in Mount Isa and in the Whitsunday Islands region.

In 1971, she and her family returned to Katherine and they lived in what had been her grandmother's house in First Street. Pearl's interest in Katherine's history came with the establishment of the Katherine Historical Society. She was a foundation member and their first honorary life member.

Early in 1973, Pearl and her son Bradley moved to Kununurra where she worked for Ord River Crop Control and Ord River Aircraft Services. Pearl drew on that experience, along with the photographs taken and records kept, when researching and writing 'Chasing last light: Aerial Mustering 1968-1978'. The history covers the first decade of aerial mustering by fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters and gyroplanes across Northern Australia. Many of Pearl's publications were on her family history or the Katherine region such as 'Leg's More Sweeter Than Tail', 'From Humpy to Homestead: the Biography of Sabu', 'Katherine's Earlier Days', 'The Fuller Family of the Katherine Region' and 'People of the Victoria River Region',

In 1995, Pearl became the Electorate Officer for the Hon Shane L Stone, Member for Port Darwin. Within months Shane became the Chief Minister for the Northern Territory. Pearl and Shane enjoyed a good working relationship and Pearl continued to work for him when he became the Federal President of the Australian Liberal Party.

In addition to her work as an author, Pearl conducted research for interpretative signage, displays, eulogies or obituaries, heritage talks and walks, interviews, newspaper and magazine articles, contractual work and many other things that do not end up in book form. I am sure many members would have attended Pearl's lively and interesting talks over the years.

Information taken from www.navigators.nt.gov.au

HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

5 December - Christmas afternoon tea at History House

About 40 people attended our xmas get to together. Derek Pugh gave a talk on the Powell Creek repeater station, the Overland Telegraph Line and the 150th anniversary celebrations which are planned for August.



Earl James & Libby Siebert



Jan Moore, Lyn Reid & Rosemary Chalmers



Judy Boland, Bev Phelts & Fiona Scott



Jan Richardson, Ann Groves & Austin Asche



Kevin Coonan & Jan Hills



Margie Roe & Jan Moore



Matthew James, Peter Siebert, Wendy Asche & Robyn Smith



Mark Ames, Ian Anderson & Martin Fisher



Jenny Foreman & Austin Asche



Roger Davey & Janet Leather



Ian Anderson, Derek Pugh & Libby Siebert



Wendy & Earl James

10 December - Celebrating the Great Air Race 102nd Anniversary



Flight Lieutenant Anita Newman, Commanding Officer RAAF opens the ceremony



RAAF regulars and cadets who were involved in the ceremony



RAAF cadets & Parap Primary School Children



Ann Groves with a photo of her father, Flight Sergeant Virgil Bambrick who served during WW2



Former Chief Minister, Clare Martin & Yvonne Forrest



Derek Pugh with our Patron, Austin Asche