

Historical Society of the Northern Territory

Patron: The Hon Austin Asche AC

NEWSLETTER JULY 2023

PO Box 40544, Casuarina NT 0811

Mobile: 0473446201 <https://www.lynhistory.net/>

Email: hsnt@iinet.net.au Newsletter Editor: Bev Phelts

HSNT Committee – President: Matthew James; Vice President: Bev Phelts;
Secretary: Libby Siebert : Treasurer: Lyn Reid; others - Brian Reid, Derek Pugh, Clayton Frederickson, Ian Anderson & Wendy Asche.

FUTURE EVENTS

Thursday 29 June -Speaker Neville Jones, NT Chinese Museum at the Museum & Art Gallery Cafe 8.30-9.30am

This is an Australian Museums and Galleries Association event

Saturday 1 July – visit to the Marrakai Military Museum – 9.15am

The Litchfield History Group are organising a morning trip to the museum followed by a lunch at the Purple Mango Café. Cost to enter the museum is \$10 for pensioners and \$15 for others. Lunch at your own cost. If you wish to attend, contact the Maree on 0437 517 709 by Wednesday 28 June.

Wednesday 5 July 5.30-7pm – Stories from our Elders at NT Library

Celebrate this year's NAIDOC Week at the NT Library with *Stories from Our Elders* an event featuring a collection of stories from some of the Top End's most revered First Nations Elders as told through family member recollections and oral history recordings.

Experience the music of Valentine McGinness followed by an entertaining journey through the lives of Elders Daisy Ruddick, Basilio (Babe) Damaso, Gerry Blitner and Jane Christophersen, each recollection lead by their daughter, granddaughter or son. Hear from professional historians, Charlie Ward and Matthew Stevens, about the importance of building and maintaining oral history collections and learn how you can contribute your own oral history to the collection.

Bookings essential www.eventbrite.com.au/e/stories-from-our-elders-tickets-665109318877

Saturday 8 July - HSNT book stall – Parap Markets

Janie will be selling our books at the markets. Drop by and snap up a special.

Sunday 23 July - Opening of Southport Community Hall - 8am-noon

Southport Progress Association Inc will be having a fun day for their official opening of their community hall. There will a market and a variety of food and coffee.

A supervised Jumping Castle, face painting and on site certified

Playground Equipment under shade and Icy Poles free for kids. Southport merchandise will be for sale - books and t'shirts.

27-30 July - HSNT Field Trip - Darwin Show Weekend

This year our trip will be in the Daly Waters, Newcastle Waters and Elliott region.

Base camp will be at Hi-Way Inn/ Daly Waters. The detailed itinerary for the trip is attached

If you are interested in joining the trip or have any questions, please contact Bev or Brian via email: hsnt@iinet.net.au or phone: 0417868827. If you are coming along, please let us know.

Will the real Edinburgh please stand up? By Derek Pugh

The S.S. *Edinburgh* was a key-player in the cabling fleet that connected Port Darwin with Banyuwangi in Java by cable in November 1871. Captained by Robert Halpin the laying of the undersea cable took just two weeks.

Edinburgh is commemorated by a street name in Brinkin, but she is all but forgotten in Darwin today. Whatever happened to her.

Tracing her history is possible online, but different websites tell different stories. All agree she was built in Glasgow in 1855 and her maiden voyage was to New York soon after. In 1859 she hit an iceberg and limped into a *Newfoundland* port with two compartments full of water. She was sold to the Telegraph Construction & Maintenance (TCM) Company in 1872, and it was then that she came to Port Darwin. In 1875 she belonged to the Eastern Extension of the Australia and China Telegraph Company, before being taken back by the TCM in 1879.

From here her history gets confused. Clydeships.co.uk have her being sold to Holland in 1881 and renamed *Amsterdam*, then sold to Italy as *Eridano* as a 'colonial steamer naval transport' in 1885 and then a hydrographic ship in 1896 until she was converted to a school accommodation in 1907, an ammunition store in 1916, and then a floating school for local children until 1943. The best photograph I can find of *Edinburgh* is from 1885 – when she was known as *Eridano* and a part of the Italian Navy.

Norwayheritage.com recorded a different story. They have her being renamed *Amsterdam* in 1879, back to *Edinburgh* in 1889 and from then on sailing the London-Boston route until she was scrapped in 1917.

To really confuse the issue, there is a photograph of *Edinburgh* off Port Darwin by Paul Foelsche (see LANT PH1060/0004) described as: "*Edinburgh* on New Jetty 1887. The steam/sail ship, *Edinburgh*, is moored on the stone pier that extended from the base of Fort Hill. The ruins in the foreground are of the original Fort Hill Camp and a house that was probably demolished in 1887". Is this the real *Edinburgh*? A sister ship? Is Foelsche's photograph incorrectly dated? What year was that house demolished? Questions abound. More research needed. Ain't history grand?



HIGHLIGHTS OF PAST EVENTS

Audio Tour Launch | Fannie Bay Gaol: On the Inside



Jeremy Hemphill, Heather Boulden



Merry Cooper



Derek Pugh with his sons Harry and Roy



Mark Ames

Brunette Downs Station – tour of buildings

On the weekend of 25 & 26 June, Bev Phelts attended the Station's races and on the Sunday morning the manager ran a tour of the station. The station was founded around 1881 and is about 216 km north-east of Tennant Creek and approx. 229 km north west of Camooweal. The station occupies an area of 12,212 km² (4,715 sq mi) on the Barkly Tableland and is currently owned by the Australian Agricultural Company. The station was once managed by Harry Readford (aka Captain Starlight) who was a renowned cattle duffer and drover.



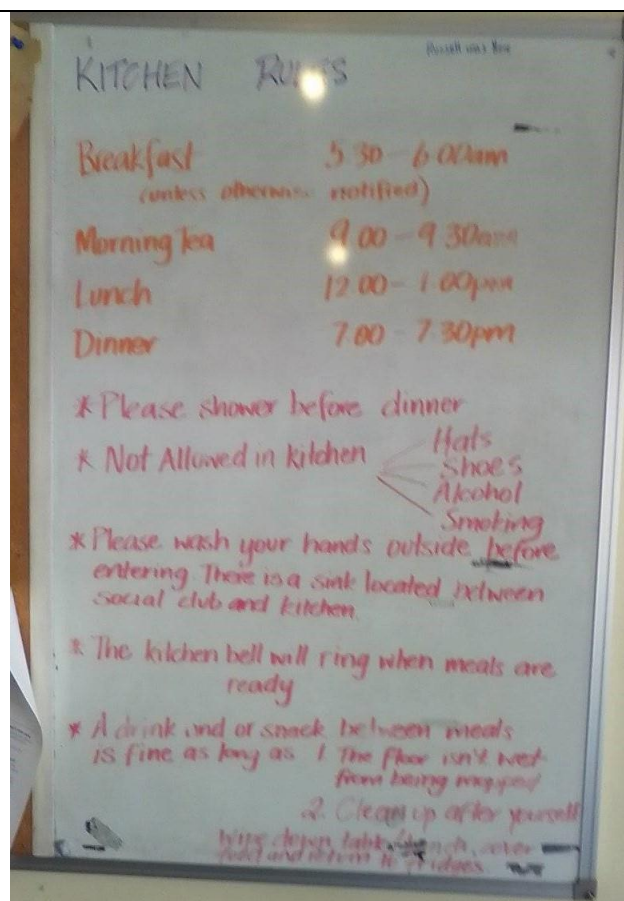
Inside the stockmen/women dining room – Rosa Norman



The homestead and garden



The station grounds



Note the dinner rules