

RECORDS TERRITORY

NORTHERN TERRITORY ARCHIVES SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

Having relocated the archives repository and services to the Cavenagh Street building in Darwin late last year, the major task is currently to resume the archives collection program.

Readers from both Government and the community will be pleased to know that further shelving is being installed at the Cavenagh Street building to accommodate the large backlog of archives collections awaiting processing. The shelving fit-out will be completed in June.

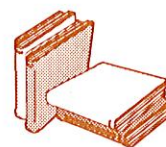
At last count there were 87 community archives collections awaiting processing and over 50 series of NT Government archives awaiting transfer..... so please be patient. Further advice about the Northern Territory Government's storage of secondary records will be issued shortly.

Greg Coleman
Principal Archivist



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Department of Transport and Works

Northern Territory Archives Service



RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Research projects that have recently utilised the resources available in the NTAS Search Room include:

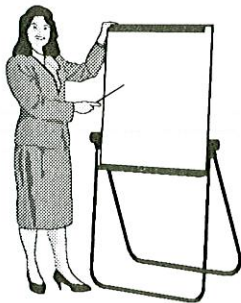
- PhD thesis >A Force Apart: a history of Northern Territory police 1870-1926/ *Bill Wilson*
- History of pearling in the Northern Territory/ *Shirley Shepherd (NTU)*
- Assessment of Heritage nominated places including Harts Range and Plenty River mica mines, Aileron Station, Powell Creek Telegraph Station, Ross River Homestead and Alice Well Police Station / *Robin Gregory (Dept. of Lands, Planning & Environment)*

Andrew Pitt

RECORDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Consultancy commissioned to recommend a records management strategy for the NT Public Sector will be finalising its work around the time that this newsletter is issued.

During May, Judith Ellis, the principal consultant working on the project, will be presenting the draft report and consulting with the project steering committee and other appropriate personnel before final release of the report which will probably be in late May 1997.



The Records Management Advisory Group is eagerly awaiting the report and is optimistic that it will provide some direction and strategies which the Government will be prepared to embrace.

GC

UPDATE

LIST OF HOLDINGS

At the beginning of April, an updated version of the "List of Holdings" was completed, and is now available for use in the Public Search Room. The new version is current for records processed until the end of March 1997.

The "List of Holdings" is the primary finding aid to the records in NTAS custody, and is divided into three categories - Personal Archives; Archives of Organisations', and Records and Archives of Government Agencies.

Although subject indexing is very difficult with archives collections, two general subject or function indexes have been included for the Archives of Organisations section and the Records and Archives of Government Agencies section.

The List also contains an extensive listing of the Oral History Collection and photographic holdings.



For the first time the List will be available for limited searching by staff on our new local area network.

Copies of the List have been distributed to related organisations in the Northern Territory, including the NT Library, Darwin Public Library, Australian Archives and Alice Springs Library.

The size of the list prohibits further copies being made available, but research inquiries can be made to Andrew Pitt (Archivist, Information Services). Guides to specific areas in the holdings such as mining are also available.

Linda Bell

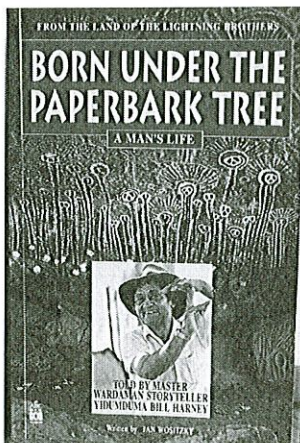


NT HISTORY AWARDS

The closing date for applications for the 1997 NT History Awards was 28 April 1997. The applications being assessed by the History Awards Committee during May. It is anticipated that the Awards for this year will be announced in June with the financial allocation due to be made in July.

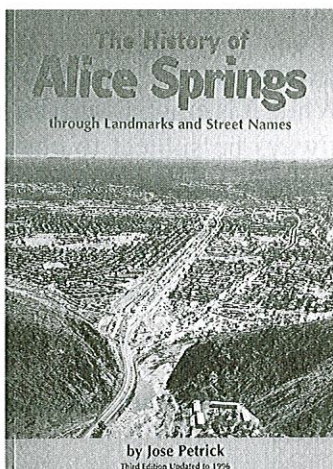
Since the last newsletter there have been numerous acquittals of past History Awards and the production of some significant publications, the authors of which had received assistance from the History Awards program.

We congratulate Jan Wositzky for writing a story of Aboriginal Life

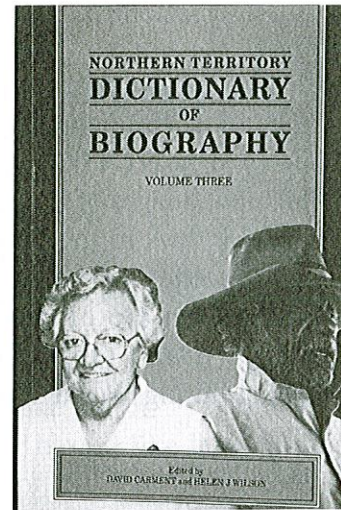


as told by Wardaman man Yidumduma Bill Harney. Titled *Born Under the Paperbark Tree* this book was recently published by ABC Books.

Congratulations are also extended to Jose Petrick who has now published the third edition, updated to 1996, of *The History of Alice Springs through Landmarks and Street Names*.



Volume three of the Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography was also published recently by the NTU Press. This volume includes numerous biographical contributions from past recipients of NT History Awards.



We note with sadness the recent passing of Charlie Schultz. With the assistance of the NT History Awards, Charlie told the story of his life at Humbert River Station to Darrell Lewis in *Beyond the Big Run*.

Greg Coleman



1997 CONFERENCES

The Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) national conference this year will be held in Adelaide at the Hindley Park Royal Hotel, 24th-26th July 1997. For further details contact Bernadette Bean, phone (08)8343 2036, fax (08)8343 2768. Email: bernadette.bean@roads.sa.gov.au

The Records Management Association of Australia (RMAA) is holding its national convention this year in Perth at Radisson Observation City, 15th-17th of September 1997. For further details contact Congress West, phone (09) 322 6662, fax (09) 322 1734, email: conwes@icenet.com.au

Please see elsewhere in this newsletter for details about the national conference of the Oral History Association of Australia.

Greg Coleman

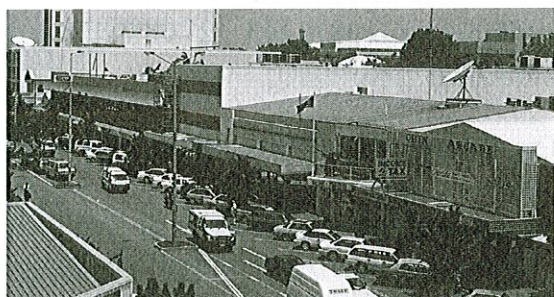
CAVENAGH STREET DISPLAY

A display of photographs relating to the history of Cavenagh Street will soon be mounted in the NTAS foyer area. The display will feature images of Cavenagh Street from its earliest days to the present. Many now vanished scenes will be included such as the original Don Hotel, the Don Theatre, Chinatown and the aftermath's of the bombing during World War 2 and Cyclone Tracy.



Drinkers Outside Don Hotel 1930's
William Coleman Collection, NTRS 884

Cavenagh Street has always been a popular place for locals to meet and generally 'hang-out'. Being centrally located in the city of Darwin has ensured its continuation even after mass destruction.



Cavenagh Street Today

Cavenagh Street boasts some of Darwin's most popular restaurants, good shopping and nightclubs. It's interesting to view the evolution of the 'face' of Cavenagh Street.

Andrew Pitt

ARCHIVES CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

In May 1996 the NTAS was instrumental in organising Archives at the Centre, the national Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists, in Alice Springs. At the time of writing this newsletter the Proceedings of the Conference are being printed at NTU Press, and we hope to be distributing them by late May 1997.

The Proceedings include papers about archives and records management issues and some papers of historical interest featuring the Northern Territory. For further details please contact Greg Coleman at the NTAS.

GC

COMPETENCY STANDARDS

The national competency standards project for records and archives, which is being undertaken by the Finance and Administration Industry Training Advisory Body, is nearing completion. The process has been a complex and highly consultative one in which a large cross-section of representatives from all states and territories have participated.



Susan Henry, the co-ordinator of the project, visited Darwin in February to conduct a workshop which involved participants in drafting parts of the Standards. This gave participants a clear and positive view of where the competencies are going.

While it is emphasised that the standards will always be subject to change and updating, we feel confident that they will provide some much needed information to assist in properly structuring a career path for records management personnel in the NT Public Sector.

The Standards are due to be finalised in June 1997.

Greg Coleman

PROTOCOLS FOR ACCESS FOR STOLEN GENERATIONS

The NT Archives and the Office of Aboriginal Development are currently negotiating with the NT Stolen Generations Reference Group a Protocol for Access to NT Government Records for Aboriginal people researching their families. This follows past policies of separation of children from their families.

The main objectives of the Protocol are to simplify the process of gaining access to NT Government records which are held across various departments and agencies and to address the issues of gaining access to potentially distressing and personal information.



**Signing the
Memorandum of Understanding**
(Photo courtesy of Australian Archives)

The Australian Archives recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Stolen Generations representatives concerning access to Commonwealth Government Records.

It is anticipated that the NT Government Protocol will be issued soon.

Greg Coleman

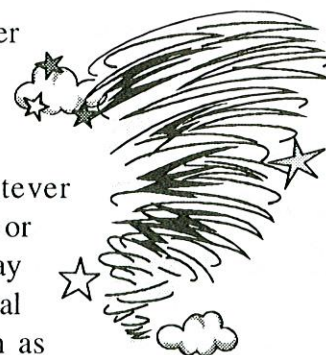
OUTSOURCING RECORDS STORAGE

To all NT Government departments and agencies awaiting advice about secondary records storage facilities, stay tuned. We will be in touch very soon.

GC

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY FOR RECORDS

A records disaster encompasses all types of damage to information/records (in whatever format) on a large or small scale. It may be caused by natural occurrences such as flood, fire, cyclone etc or from an internal hazard like leaking pipes, electrical fault or even an inadequate air-conditioning system. What ever the reason, being prepared for a disaster is essential.



Be prepared....



When reaction to a disaster is prompt and efficient the effects can be minimised.

Being organised and aware of procedures enhances the likelihood of full recovery. Having a plan in place before a disaster occurs is the best insurance against losing vital information.

....Make a Plan

A disaster plan needs to address all aspects of emergency preparedness from prevention, protection and response to recovery and rehabilitation.

The NTAS has recently issued a new leaflet on disaster preparedness and recovery for records. This brochure covers a variety of aspects from outlining reasons for being prepared and making a plan to items required for constructing a disaster kit.

The brochure has received an enthusiastic response, especially after the recent cyclone season experienced in Darwin.

For further information please contact the Archivist (Records Policy) at NTAS.

Sharon Keay

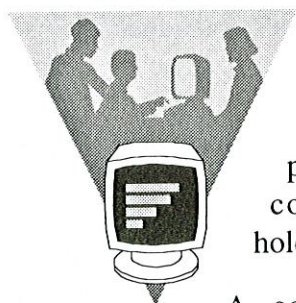
COMPUTERISATION PROJECTS

The recent computer upgrades and network development at the NTAS have enabled work on the computerisation of several functions to take a leap forward.

Four databases have been developed using MS Access 95 for the management of repository space, records locations and series registrations.

A Locations Database was developed to manage series consignment storage information to assist in the retrieval of records. The Locations Database replaces a Locations List which was created using word processing software. Although extremely useful during the repository moves, the list was limited in its capabilities. Until 1994, locations were managed solely by a card catalogue which proved impractical and very cumbersome during the first records relocation.

The new database will allow multiple users to access the location information for greater efficiency, while providing improved control over the holdings.



A complement to the Locations database is the Repository Management Database which replaces the old compactus directories. This database contains information on repository storage down to the box level and will assist in maximising the use of limited storage space.

The two other databases were both designed for the management of series registration information. The previous manual system recorded only basic series information (series number, provenance and description). The new databases contain more fields of information allowing access to greater detail.

The two Series Databases have been developed to deal with record series from two different registration systems. The first is the

system currently used at the NTAS for Northern Territory Records Series (NTRS numbers), using a version of the Commonwealth Records Series system.

The second database is for registration of records received from Australian Archives in 1983 when the NT Government's function and records were transferred to NTAS. Control of these records had been extremely limited until recently, and it is anticipated that the use of this second database will provide greater access to these records.



The reporting and searching capabilities of these systems will allow us to generate a wider range of statistical information about our holdings and their management. The network access to these databases will see greater use of this information for both management and research. I'm sure that this is only the beginning of NTAS' march into the realm of information technology.

Linda Bell

RECORDS MANAGEMENT TRAINING

To help overcome the Territory's lack of available training in records management, the NT Branch of the Records Management Association of Australia will be bringing two seminars to Darwin in August 1997.

The one-day seminars, which will be conducted by the Records Management Office of NSW, will be:

- ◆ Fundamentals of Records Management.
- ◆ Managing a Records Management Program.

For further details please contact Barry Garside at Australian Archives in Darwin, phone 8948 4577 or Linda Bell at the NTAS.

GC

ORAL HISTORY

NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN ALICE SPRINGS

Many readers will already have the program and registration form for the **National Conference** of the Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA) to be held in Alice Springs on September 4-7, entitled **Crossing Borders**. Each of the four days will focus on one of the major conference themes: Oral Traditions and New Technologies; Oral Traditions and The Law (particularly in relation to native title); Cross-cultural and Ethical Implications; and Oral History and a Sense of Place.



A key feature of this conference will be the many opportunities that will be provided for everyone present to take part in discussions and express ideas.

The impressive program of scheduled presentations includes many well-known Australian and New Zealand practitioners, community representatives, academics and media personalities. Author and teacher **Pat Mamanyjun Torres** (currently at Batchelor College), and authors **Bill Gammage** and **Siobhan McHugh** will be keynote speakers.

Some speakers known to Territorians will include: Jane Bathgate with Joanna Barrkman, Baiba Berzins, John Dallwitz, Peter Toyne, Marty Kamener, Pearl Ogden, Mandy Paul with Linda Dobbs Apwerl, and Samantha Wells.

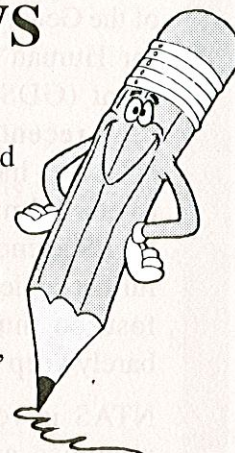
There is also a program of evening events, in which **Sally Morgan**, ABC Radio

National's **Hindsight** team and **Ted Egan** will participate; and optional morning tours will include visits to Yipirinya School, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, National Women's Hall of Fame, CAAMA, and the Strehlow Research Centre.

Discounts apply for registration before 1 August, and for OHAA members. The NTAS is a partner in the conference - Francis Good is a co-convenor, and can be contacted on (08) 8924 7651 for registration forms and advice on OHAA membership.

GOVE NEWS

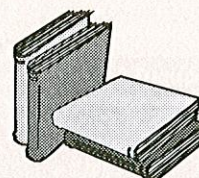
In March, Francis Good accompanied **Dino Hodge**, who was representing the Northern Territory Community Writing Program (CWP), on a visit to Gove to present workshops, seminars and talks at the High School and the Public Library in Nhulunbuy, and the Community Education Centre in Yirrkala.



The visit was organised by the CWP's Community Writing Officer, **Marian Devitt**, around the theme of presenting oral history. Enthusiastic support was given by **Ngalawurr Mununggurr** from the Education Centre's Literacy Production Centre, and **Maggie Travers** and **Ken Minogue** of the Library.

The visit also provided Francis Good with the opportunity to work with a number of Yolgnu elders in making further oral records in addition to those made previously in the region by NTAS on behalf of East Arnhem communities (see *Records Territory* issue No. 12, September 1996).

Francis Good





GENERAL DISPOSAL SCHEDULE FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In the last issue of Records Territory we discussed the update of the General Disposal Schedule for Human Resource Management (GDS-HRM) which has now recently been launched. NTAS has received an overwhelming response from NTPS agencies, with request for further copies coming in thick and fast, so much so that we can barely keep up!

NTAS is very happy with this response and the enthusiasm agencies are showing in compiling their own agency based schedules.

Training courses on applying the General Disposal Schedule for Human Resources Management will be conducted on Thursday, 12 June. There will be a morning session between 9.00am-12 noon and an afternoon session between 1.30pm-4.30pm. For bookings contact 8924 7677.

A BIG thank you goes to all the NTPS officers who assisted with the GDS-HRM, especially those who acted as delegates for their agencies.

For further information on training courses or copies of the schedule please contact NTAS.

Sharon Keay

WHO'S WHO AT THE NTAS

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