

RECORDS

TERRITORY

Northern Territory Archives Service Newsletter

October 2000 No.22

A Branch of the Department of Corporate and Information Services

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

The period since the last issue of *Records Territory* has been one of new releases for the Northern Territory Archives Service (NTAS).

In June, we issued the NT History Awards for 2000 and we participated with other government archives in the launch of the national *Documenting a Democracy* Website.

Focussing on our government recordkeeping responsibilities, the NTAS released in August a set of whole of government recordkeeping policies, endorsed by Cabinet, and the much awaited *Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records of the Northern Territory Government*.

As usual, this issue of *Records Territory* includes a range of information for both our community and government clients and customers. If you are a customer or just an interested reader, we would value your feedback on other issues which you would like to hear about in future issues.



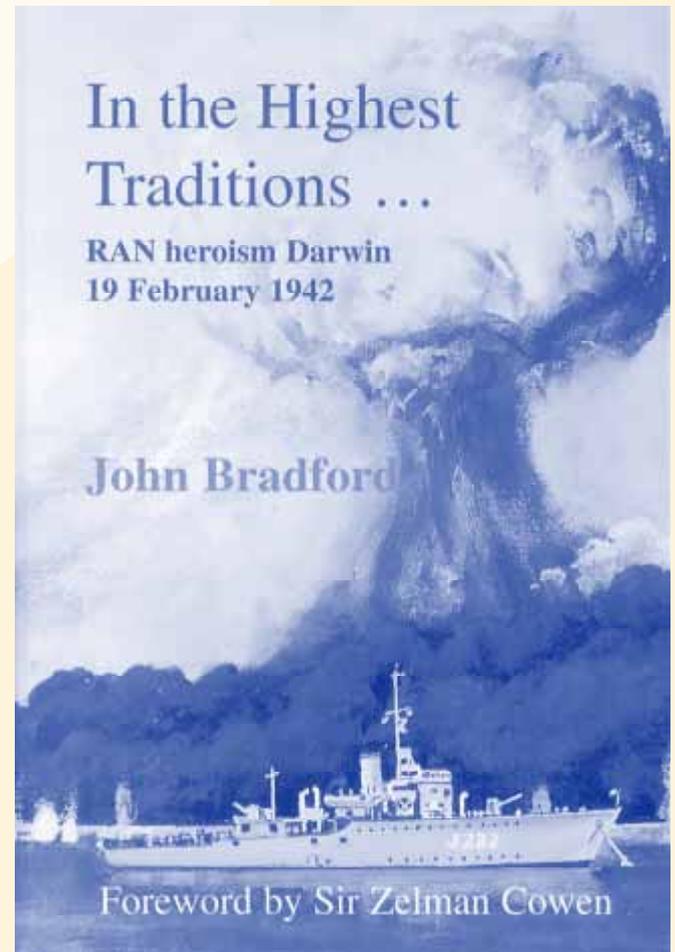
Greg Coleman
Director NTAS

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NT History Awards

We congratulate John Bradford on the publication of his book *In the Highest Traditions: RAN Heroism 19 February 1942*. John received a 1996 NT History Award to assist him research this work. As Sir Zelman Cowen states in his foreword to the book, it is valuable in contributing to a complete record of an important event in our national history.



Details of the successful recipients of the NT History Awards for 2000 are provided on page 5.

East Timor Update... next issue

Lookout for the next issue of this newsletter in February 2001 for an article updating the situation on archives in East Timor.

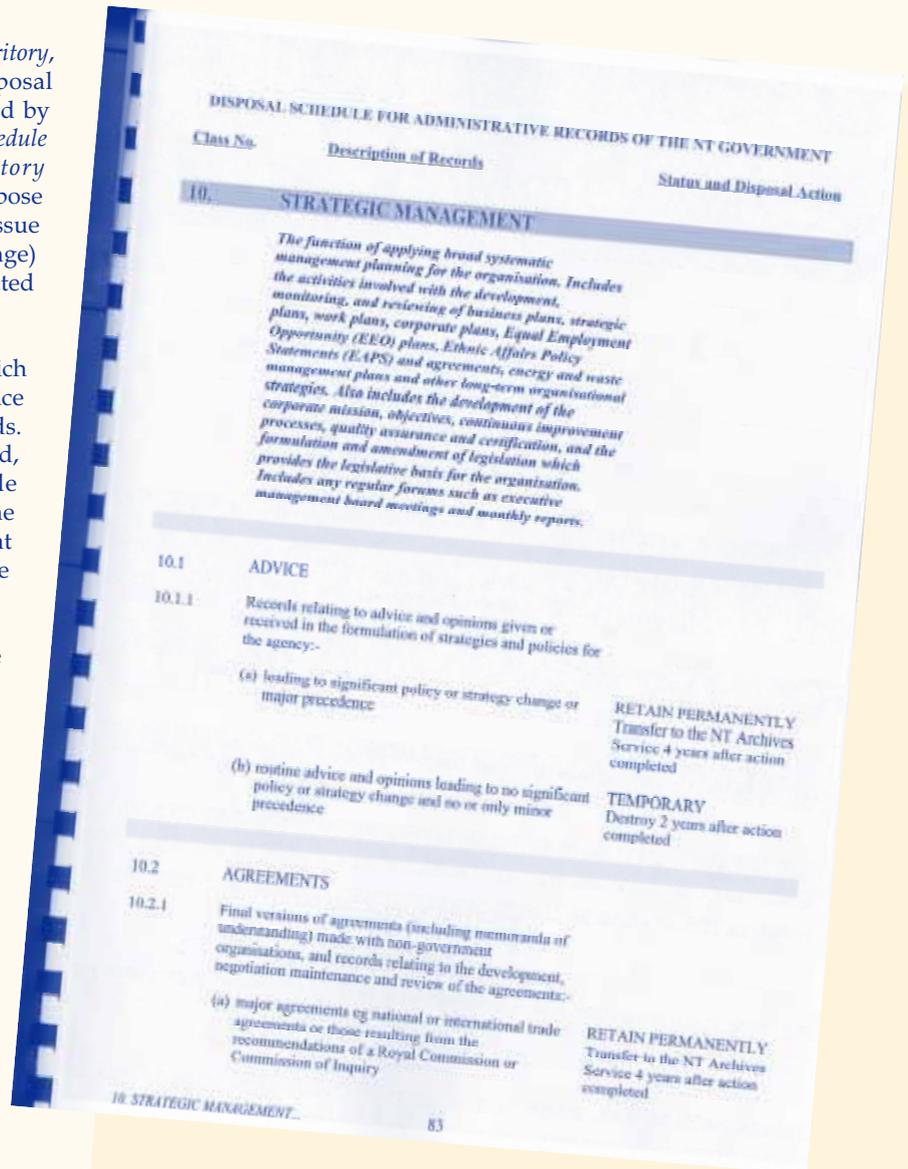
Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records of the Northern Territory Government

As foreshadowed in the previous edition of *Records Territory*, the NT Archives Service has recently issued a disposal schedule to cover certain categories of records created by most or all NT government agencies—the *Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records of the Northern Territory Government*. This schedule will enable agencies to dispose (but not necessarily destroy – see the February 2000 issue of *Records Territory* (No. 20), “Why Disposal?”, back page) of virtually all administrative or corporate services-related records.

The issue of this schedule will enable many agencies which have no disposal schedule coverage at all, to sentence perhaps between a quarter and a third of their records. (*Sentencing* is the technical term for examining a record, determining the disposal class within the schedule applying to that record and ultimately deciding the record’s fate – consigned to archives for permanent retention, to secondary storage for destruction at some time in the future, or immediate destruction.)

This schedule should help cut a considerable swathe through many collections of records which have accumulated since self-government was granted to the Territory in 1978, but which hitherto have been neglected for lack of guidance as to precisely what to do with them. The benefits are many and include the freeing-up of expensive office accommodation, greater access to a more adequately managed collection of records and lower secondary records storage bills.

If an agency has not yet received a copy of the schedule or requires assistance in its application, please contact Barry Garside, the Records Standards Coordinator. The schedule will also appear on our website shortly (www.nt.gov.au/nta).



Records Management Policies Released

Records Management Policies and Guidelines for the Northern Territory Government were released in August 2000. Endorsed by Cabinet in June 2000, the policies set a framework for good recordkeeping and establish the standards upon which all government agencies can work towards developing agency-specific goals and objectives for recordkeeping. The policies are accompanied by some practical guidelines and examples of the kinds of practices that will ensure compliance with recordkeeping principles and offer operational effectiveness.

It is timely that the Northern Territory government review and improve its recordkeeping practices, since good recordkeeping underpins the proposed Information Legislation that is expected to be in place in the Northern Territory within the next 12 months.

The policies have been distributed to all Northern Territory government agencies in hard copy, and are also available from the Northern Territory Archives Service web site at: www.nt.gov.au/nta

The NT Archives Service is keen to support agencies to implement the policies, and is offering promotional presentations to any group interested in discussing issues arising from policies.

For further information, please contact the Records Policy & Training Coordinator, Beth Moloney.

Outsourcing Secondary Records Storage

Previous issues of this newsletter have included articles on the contracts for secondary records storage the Northern Territory government has entered into with Pickfords Records Management in Darwin and Centralian Records Management in Alice Springs.

These contracts allow local businesses to assist the government in the cost effective management of its secondary records – records that whilst only temporary may not be destroyed until some time in the future because of accountability, evidentiary or legal reasons. Permanent value records are still to be transferred to the NT Archives Service.

By outsourcing an area of records management that in the past had been neglected due to a lack of resources, the government has made available services that ensure the ongoing management of its corporate memory – secondary records – thereby improving its ability to transact business by the effective retention of associated records.

At the invitation of the Darwin contractor, Pickfords Records Management, the Hon Peter Adamson MLA, Minister for Corporate and Information Services, officially opened Pickfords new purpose-built facility at Berrimah in July. The Alice Springs facility in Hele Crescent has now been fully operational for more than a year.

Both contractors have reported that uptake has been slow in the first year of operation. Part of the problem is funding although the services are provided at very reasonable rates and effective utilisation by the government will result in significant cost-savings in the long run.

A recent example highlights this point. Several years ago, prior

to the execution of the current contracts, one agency hurriedly transferred a significant quantity of records from a shed required for other immediate purposes to an alternative storage contractor. No thought was given to the transfer as many records were not in order and lists were incomplete. The consequence was that information was not always readily accessible. This hit home for the agency when it was involved in a court case in which the records in question were crucial to proceedings yet access to those records – if they had survived – was very difficult resulting in expensive search fees and possible liability for the agency concerned. All this could have been avoided had the records been managed properly at the outset with adequate listing, control and storage, all of which can be provided by the current contractors – and at considerably less cost than any court case.

Further details of the services provided by the secondary records contractors can be obtained from:

Darwin -

Mr Les Bullard

Pickfords Records Management
889 Stuart Highway
Berrimah NT 0828

Phone: 8931 1262 Fax: 8931 0069

Email: les.bullard@pickfords.com.au

Alice Springs -

Mr Drury Pyper

Centralian Records Management
12 Hele Crescent
Alice Springs NT 0870

Phone: 8953 3566 Fax: 8953 4474

Email: centralianrecords@bigpond.com

Secondary Records Repository to be closed

The NT Archives Service is also divesting itself of the storage and servicing of secondary records, a role it has been performing alongside archival management since its inception back in 1983. The consequence of this is that the collection of government secondary records it has been managing will be transferred to the appropriate storage contractor. Many agencies have already been contacted about this issue. One way in which costs can be reduced is to utilise the recently issued Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records of the Northern Territory Government (details of which appear elsewhere in this newsletter). This will enable the relevant agencies to reduce their holdings of secondary administrative-type records somewhat by destroying those no longer required to be retained.

Information on all aspects of secondary records issues is also available from the Records Standards Coordinator at the NT Archives Service, Mr Barry Garside.



STAFF NOTES

All staff wish Kylie Tallo every success since Kylie left us early in September to take on bigger challenges with the OH&S Branch of our department. Kylie's cheer and "can do" attitude will be missed by all.

We welcome Tatum Puro who has come from the Strehlow Research Centre in Alice Springs to work with us for a few months. Tatum is providing us with the appropriate skills to revise the existing TRIM records management training packages for NT government employees and to set up some new modules as part of this package.



Tatum Puro

ORAL HISTORY - CONFERENCES

For those interested in oral history and related issues Francis Good our Archivist, Oral Records, has provided details below of four conferences in the coming twelve months

Voices of a Twentieth Century Nation

The Oral History Association of Australia is calling for papers to be presented at **Voices of a Twentieth Century Nation**, its next biannual conference, which will be held at the National Library of Australia in Canberra from 30 August to 2 September 2001.

Themes to be explored are: **Reconciliation** encompassing work with all sorts of communities, especially the Stolen Generations; **Pragmatics/Methodologies** including interviewing, project management, preservation and legal issues; **Making & Remaking Nationhood** recognising the Centenary of Federation, and the diverse voices 'making' the nation and **Collaboration** between oral history and so many other human endeavours, such as therapy, art and law, to name but a few.

There will be a choice between two field trips and two workshops for participants, with opportunities to visit other participating organisations such as AIATSIS, the Australian War Memorial, ScreenSound Australia, the National Archives, the National Museum and old Parliament House.

Offers to present papers and workshops from individuals and groups are invited. For details of requirements and requests for the registration circular, contact the convenor, Dr Susan Marsden, tel. (02) 6247 6766, or fax (02) 6249 1395, or call Francis Good at the NT Archives Service on (08) 8924 7651.

13th Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research

This conference will be held in Melbourne 16-20 July 2001, titled *Traditions and Transitions*. A call for papers has been issued, abstracts due 1 November 2000. Some themes (among many) include: **Rediscovered histories** (issues like oral history, memory and interpretation); **The**

colonised and the colonisers (collective/individual memory, narrative education and history); **Folk narrative by and about children** (children's lore and adult sensibility, folk narrative as a multicultural resource). Obtain full details and registration from Susan Faine at the congress secretariat, phone/fax 03-9417-4684, or see www.vicnet.net.au/~folklife/

Partnerships for knowledge.

The Australian Society of Indexers, ACT Region Branch and the Canberra Society of Editors will be jointly sponsoring this national conference of both societies in April 2001. See www.editors.dynamite.com.au for details.

Bearing Public Witness: Documenting Memories of Struggle & Resistance.

Papers are being called for next year's **Oral History Association (U.S.A)** annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, titled *Bearing Public Witness: Documenting Memories of Struggle & Resistance*. See <http://omega.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha/> for details.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

The variety of projects undertaken by researchers using our search room never ceases to amaze us. The topics of interest listed below are some examples of projects that have recently utilised the resources available in the NT Archives Service search room:

- Kraft family at Fannie Bay Gaol 1946-1954/ *Dr Mickey Dewar (MAGNT)*
- Research on gardens in the Northern Territory, including pictorial research, for a major new reference text, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne (forthcoming, 2001)/ *Richard Aitken (co-editor)*
- The health and social value of swimming pools in remote Aboriginal communities/ *Nicole Kilgour (Office of Aboriginal Development)*
- Menzies School of Health Research history project/ *Dr Suzanne Parry & Dr Brian Reid*
- The transformation of the Tiwi: why and how did it occur? & A brief study of the life of Matthias Ulungura/ *John Morris (University of Ballarat)*
- Shipwreck research in Arnhem Land/ *David Steinberg (MAGNT)*
- The Scougall collection of Aboriginal art, Art Gallery of NSW: a reassessment/ *Maurice O'Riordan*
- Research for preparation of textbook on the surveying and mapping of the Northern Territory/ *Carl Cossill*
- Research into a select range of World War 11 sites in the Darwin region, including documentation and photographic images / *Bob Alford*
- Project to document Lot 6846 Town of Darwin, including an historical overview which incorporated Chinatown / *Bob Alford*
- History of live sheep and cattle export trade - Australia / *Trevor Johnston*
- Hindsight program on Macassar in Australia / *Tom Murray (ABC Radio National)*
- History of the Northern Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia / *Dr Susan Emilsen and Dr William Emilsen (United Theological College)*
- The spread of Islam in Australia (PhD.Project, History Department, Univ. New England, Armidale, NSW) / *Dr Gabor Korvin*

NT History Awards 2000

The NT History Awards for 2000 were announced in June by the Hon Peter Adamson MLA, the Minister for Corporate and Information Services. Congratulations are extended to the following recipients of this year's Awards:

- **Bain Attwood** of Melbourne: \$3000 to research the Northern Territory Council for Aboriginal Rights, 1961-1970
- **Limin Bai** of Wellington, New Zealand: \$2000 to study the issue of women's lives in the context of cross-cultures by recording the life of a Darwin woman, Mrs Rene Wu.
- **Bernie Brian** of Kempsey, NSW: \$4000 to compile a series of biographical sketches of past trade union leaders of the Northern Territory.
- **Peter d'Abbs** of Darwin: \$4000 for a study of H.C. Giese and the administration of the Welfare Branch of the Northern Territory Administration, 1954-1972.
- **Shaneen Fantin** of Brisbane: \$1000 to study the history and culture change in Yolngu housing at Galiwin'ku and Ramingining.
- **Genealogical Society of the NT Inc:** \$1000 to document Katherine District deaths, 1873-1940.
- **Robin Gregory** of Darwin: \$2000 to document the history of the Hayes family, the last 200 years of a pioneering family of Central Australia.
- **Katherine Historical Society Inc:** \$3000 to research the history of the original Katherine Airport and terminal building.
- **Michele Langfield** of Melbourne: \$4000 to examine schemes to populate the Northern Territory, 1939-1978.
- **John Morris** of Ballarat, Vic: \$1000 to study the transformation of the social and cultural lives of the Tiwi people, 1919-1990s.
- **Suzanne Parry & Brian Reid** of Darwin: \$1000 to research a history of the Menzies School of Health Research.
- **Mandy Paul** of Adelaide: \$4000 to research a history of people, place and policy in the pastoral industry of Central Australia, 1872-1939.

New Accessions - Film of Darwin 1954-1976

The NT Archives Service recently received a donation of a copy of a film of Darwin and regions of the Northern Territory made by Howard Truran between 1954 and 1976. Howard was a longstanding Darwin resident who worked as a dental technician for the Department of Health. Even though Howard now lives interstate, he generously donated this amazing record of events in Darwin and the Territory during his residence here.

Events captured on the film include a Fannie Bay Ski Club Carnival in 1961, the building and opening of the Catholic Cathedral (1962), St Mary's School, Post Office (Knuckey St, now demolished, 1962), the salvaging of the "Neptuna", the opening of Parap swimming pool and the visit of the Queen in 1963. Among some of the individuals on film are Father Frank Flynn, Bishop O'Loughlin, J.C. Archer, 'Tiger' Brennan, Jock Nelson, and Harold Cooper.

Howard also recorded visits undertaken as a dental technician to places such as Hooker Creek, Hayes Creek, Pine Creek, Bathurst Island, Katherine and Mataranka.

The film in video format is available on open access and the citation is NTRS 1948/P1 Film of Darwin and dental visits to remote communities, 1954-1976. Howard has previously donated the following archives:

- NTRS 226** Oral history interviews TS 511 (Cyclone), TS 520 (1-2)
- NTRS 755** Personal records and historical lists of NT dental officers, 1954-1991
- NTRS 1112** Personal photographs and negatives relating to the Darwin Dental Clinic and Northern Territory Pistol Club, 1930s-1989
- NTRS 1818** Pictorial history of the Northern Territory Dental Service, 1946-1986

Some photos from previously donated archives from Howard Truran



NTRS 1112/P2 19: Laying concrete footpath in Smith Street in front of Dental Clinic 1959



NTRS 1112/P2 32: Laboratory at Mitchell Street Dental clinic 1973

With the imminent signing of the contract to begin work on the long awaited railway in the Northern Territory, it seems an appropriate time to highlight the records we have in our collection that relate to railways.

The history of the railway in the Northern Territory dates back over a century with a railway linking Adelaide and Darwin first proposed in the 19th century.

Our holdings are predominantly personal records consisting of oral histories, photos and personal papers.

For government records relating to the railway in the Northern Territory, it is necessary to consult the National Archives of Australia (the Commonwealth was responsible for the administration of the Northern Territory from 1911-1978) and the South Australian Archives (South Australia was responsible for the administration of the Northern Territory from 1863-1910)

A list of our holdings is available on our website and in our searchroom. Examples of some of these records are cited on the following two pages.

Oral History : NTRS 226, TS 616 MR THOMAS O'CONNOR SCOTT

Thomas O'Connor (Con) Scott was born in Darwin in 1921, the third of six sons born to Helen (Nell) and Leonard (Len) Scott. Len Scott was a guard on the train which travelled weekly between Darwin and Birdum. They lived in one of the eight railway houses on Railway Hill, opposite the railway station which was on the foreshore of Frances Bay.

This extract from the transcription of Mr Scott's interview gives us a snapshot of life and happenings about and along the line from Darwin to Birdum.

Now where did your father go, as guard?
Oh, used to go from Darwin to Birdum, those days. But later on they called it Larrimah, or some place up there, called Larrimah. Might've been a little bit further on, few miles on. The train used to leave Darwin at eight o'clock every Wednesday morning, to Pine Creek that night, and to Birdum the next day. Then come back, and be back in time for the football on Saturday afternoon. Bob Murray was the engine driver, specially he used to get it in real early, to go to watch the football match in the football season.

So between sort of Sunday, then, and Wednesday, what did your dad do?
Oh, Dad used to do mostly on Monday, used to do the business for the people up the line. Do their, you know, ordering, and all their business - banking, if he could - and fixing up their business. And on Tuesday he used to go down and unload his train, and you know, get goods where he knew where he could get to them, and everything.

So what was the purpose of the train? Was it to take goods down to people along the line?

That is right, yes. To all the fettlers along the line, and the bush people out there. The miners, and the cattlemen, and buffalo shooters. They used to come to meet the train, and get their goods, then they'd go back to their camps. And places like Burrundi, where the Hardy brothers - they were buffalo shooters - they used to go buffalo shooting, Fred and Harry Hardy. And then other people along the country, at Katherine - schoolteachers, nurses, at the hospital there, and Chinese shopkeepers. They used to all come and get their goods from the train. Mostly, the fettlers used to get their bread and their butter off their - Dad, he had an icebox in his guard's van - butter would be kept in that. And fresh meat, if they wanted, which was very rarely, 'cause they used to have their own meat.

And did your dad get some food along the way, from people on the farms, for you, as -

Oh yes, he often used to - on the way back he'd get some peanuts from the Daly River peanut farmers, and at Pine Creek Mrs Stevens used to give him some meat. He'd buy the meat from her. And further along, a place called Stapleton, he used to buy the butter from people named Sargents. They had a bit of a place up there; they used to make butter. And sometimes he'd bring a dog home. Someone didn't want a dog, and it ended up we have a dog, then. But that was the sort of thing.

Joe Davis was closely associated with the construction of the North South line between Wire Creek and Alice Springs during the period September 1927 to Sept 1929. These photos are some examples of the 70 photos contained in the Joe Davis collection at the NT Archives Services.



NTRS 573, No 55 - Earthworks levelling & associated clearing. In sight of the Gap at last.



NTRS 573, No 21 - Rumbalara camp July 1929, Joe Davis on left.



NTRS 573, No 58 - Between Deep Well & Alice Springs. Notice hand leathers for when rails were very hot.

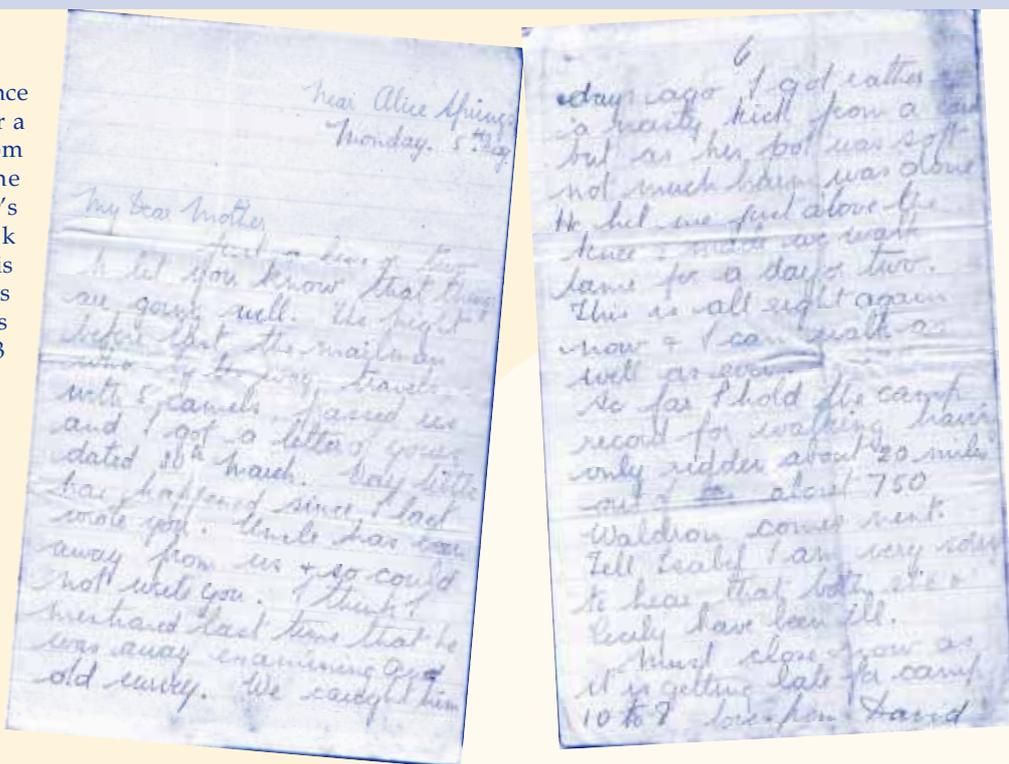


NTRS 573, No 20 - Wire Creek, 1927. (Joe Davis) self on one of our "electric" tractors. We had six of these taken over from the Commonwealth Railways.

SPOTLIGHT ON... RAILWAYS SPOTLIGHT ON... RAILWAYS

In 1913 the Sydney firm Lawrence and Chalmers was engaged for a "flying survey" of the line from Oodnadatta railhead to Pine Creek. David Sturrock, Chalmers' nephew, kept a diary, took photos and wrote letters to his mother during this survey. This is an extract from one of his letters written on May 1913 somewhere near Alice Springs.

NTRS 826/P3, 1(C)
Sturrock Collection



RAILWAY EXHIBITION

Still on the subject of railways, the NT Archives Service has been involved recently in the mounting of an historical exhibition on the railway in partnership with the Railway Executive Group (Dept of the Chief Minister), the Northern Territory Library and the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory.

The display included extracts from oral histories held by the NTAS, photos from the NT Library's collection and the NTAS, memorabilia from library and museum collections, and a general railway display. A series of lunchtime speakers provided personal insights into the railway's history, including the largely unacknowledged contributions of Aboriginal and Chinese people and wartime volunteers. All sessions were recorded and will be lodged with the NTAS.

Jane Munday, Marketing and Communications Manager, Railway Executive Group, who has been the driving force behind the

exhibition, is also planning the publication of a coffee table book on the history of the railway. It is intended to incorporate information about the many people who contributed to the South Australian and Northern Territory sections of the early line, as well as the history of the new Alice Springs to Darwin section. Jane intends to compile some of this information from oral histories already existing at the NTAS as well as recording new ones. Jane will receive training from Francis Good, our Archivist, Oral Records.

If you have any information, memories, ideas of people to contact, or photographs which might be useful, please contact Jane.

Jane Munday

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GPO Box 2520
Darwin NT 0801

Ph: 08 8924 7156
Fax: 08 8924 7078
Email: jane.munday@nt.gov.au



The NT Archives Service oral history section of the Railway Exhibition. (photo: Cathy Flint)

Port-Rail Retrospective



Festival of Darwin

NTAS
Northern Territory Archives Service



Northern Territory Government

October 2000

RECORDS
TERRITORY

WHO'S WHO

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TRIM SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

The NT Government's Recordkeeping Solution - Not Just Physical (Paper) Records

The NT government and IBM commenced a partnership at the beginning of 1999 that sees IBM Australia providing a whole of NT Government Document and Records Management solution. The current implementation of this solution encompassed the conversion of non Year 2000 compliant systems to TRIM and the rollout of 1000 seats of TRIM (with the IBM DB2 Universal Database) across 34 agencies for the purposes of paper-based Records Management. A Pilot of the Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) solution at one NT government agency was also conducted and the agency has been running in a full electronic records management environment since August 1999.

The main software components of the solution comprise TOWER Software's TRIM recordkeeping software, IBM's DB2 Universal Database, IBM's VisualInfo (Content Manager) and IBM ReordLinks (solution developed by IBM for integrating the Records Management System with Lotus Notes applications and e-mail).

Data Conversions

NT government agencies are still identifying records held in various systems (eg Access Databases, Excel, Word, Lotus Notes) requiring conversion to TRIM. The NTAS can provide advice on conversion strategies and assist in converting the records to TRIM as required.

TRIM Version Upgrade

Numerous meetings have been held since the last issue of *Records Territory* to plan the upgrade of TRIM to Captura (4.3). The scheduling of suitable resources for the Project Team and the availability of key stakeholders has been the main issue. These resources need to be coordinated and due to other conflicting projects, some will not be available until the first quarter 2001. As a consequence, the rollout of TRIM Captura in all agencies will commence in February 2001. Agencies will be kept informed on progress and the changes to be expected with TRIM Captura. This will be not only a TRIM upgrade but will also involve an upgrade to the database (DB2 Universal Database) and, for the electronic implementation, some changes to the software specific to the electronic environment.

For further information, please contact the System Manager, Jeanette Collins, or the System Support Officer, Celina Hodge.



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