

# RECORDS

## TERRITORY

### Northern Territory Archives Service Newsletter

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#### From the Director

Welcome to Records Territory. In this edition we bring news of lots of archives collecting activity and snapshots of the range of archives in our collections including a spotlight on Cyclone Tracy following its 30th anniversary last December. Over the past few months the NT Archives Service has been busily supporting research projects through both our public search room and the NT History Grants program.

On the Government Recordkeeping front, we have passed the first milestone of monitoring agency compliance with the Information Act and have survived the first full year of managing our responsibilities under the Act. Other initiatives have included the establishment of a records retention and disposal review committee and continued coordination of an upgrade of the government's records management system TRIM.

We are currently celebrating the long awaited implementation of the archives management system, although there is a long journey ahead to load all of the relevant information to assist us and our researchers. There is considerable debate within the office regarding the naming of the system, and we'd be grateful to hear if you have any suggestions.



Greg Coleman  
Director NTAS

#### NT History Grants

The Northern Territory History Grants for 2005 were advertised in The Australian and local Northern Territory newspapers in mid-March this year. The grants scheme provides an annual series of financial grants to encourage and support the work of researchers who are recording and writing about Northern Territory history. The closing date for applications was May 06 2005.

Details of successful History Grant recipients for 2004 can be found on page 10.

We congratulate the following History Grants recipients for completion of their research projects for which they received part or total assistance from the NT History Grants Program.

Robert Gosford – *Annotated Chronological Bibliography – Northern Territory Ethnobiology 1874 to 2004*

John Dargavel – *Persistence and transition on the Wangites-Wagait reserves, 1892-1976 ( Journal of Northern Territory History Issue No 15, 2004, pp 5 – 19)*

David Roberts – *Nautical themes in the Aboriginal rock paintings of Mount Borradaile, Western Arnhem Land ( The Great Circle Vol 26, No 1, pp 19-49)*

Tony Roberts – *Frontier Justice: A history of the Gulf country to 1900*

John Mulvaney – *Paddy Cahill of Oenpelli*

Klaus Neumann – *Refuge Australia: Australia's humanitarian record*

Peter Monteath – *The diary of Emily Caroline Creaghe, Explorer*

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## Oral History

### Oral history training

One important function of the NTAS Oral History Office is to provide the Northern Territory community with training and information on best-practice methods and standards in the discipline. Oral history is a complex enterprise, and people starting out have different levels of understanding, skill and types of experience. In the past, full-day public workshops have been offered in Darwin and Alice Springs. But although always well-attended and enthusiastically received, the amount of information discussed is always difficult to cover in any depth in a single workshop.

In April 2004, the NTAS Oral History Manager, Francis Good, provided a two-hour presentation: *Oral History: an Introduction* in Alice Springs. This was publicly advertised, and given twice to provide people with alternative times. Rather than equipping attendees with basic skills to start interview recording projects, the aim was to sketch out the most important topics, and demonstrate what aspects need to be understood by further study and practice. In all, 46 people registered, demonstrating just how keen is the interest in how to go about oral history

research. Attendees were also surveyed on their needs for further training. Eighty percent gave first or second preference to (a) interview research and planning, and (b) interview questioning technique. But there was also solid interest in sound recording, preservation and legal/copyright issues.

Based on these responses, four workshops were then offered in August. Two topics—background research/planning and questioning technique—were each given separate half-day sessions; and two separate two-hour sessions were also provided—one on ethics, copyright and access, and another on recording, preservation and technology issues. For good measure, each was also offered at two alternative times—eight sessions in all, both during and after business hours. Again, the response was enthusiastic, and 22 people attended over a week-long period. In addition, anthropologists of the Central Land Council requested a separate workshop on a range of topics focussed on their interests, and this was also provided in a full-day session for ten staff, and covered similar ground.

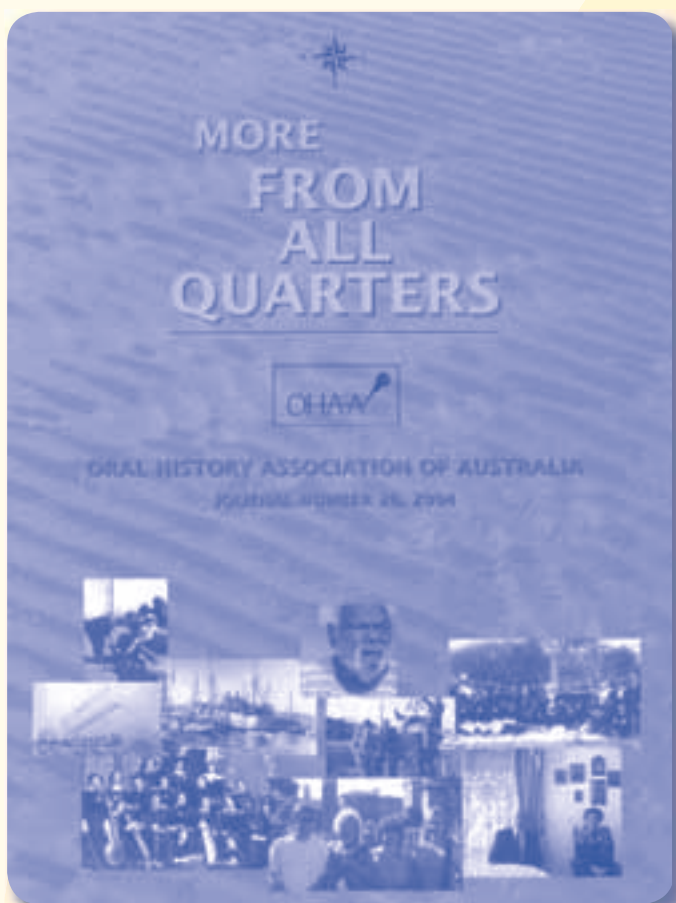
There has always been a strong interest in oral history research in Darwin also,

although many more people have been provided directly with individual assistance, training and advice at the NTAS office there than has been possible for researchers based in Alice Springs. Nevertheless, later in August 2004, the same program of four workshops were offered in Darwin, twice each. Seventeen people attended these, twelve coming to all four sessions.

### Oral history journal

The *Journal of the Oral History Association of Australia*, No. 26, 2004, is now available. Francis Good was the editor on behalf of OHAA both for this issue and for No. 25 in 2003. The current 106-page issue includes ten papers discussing a range of issues and projects from around Australia, two additional project reports, summary reports on over twenty state, territory, national and international projects and events, and seven book reviews, and is copiously illustrated. Two papers are of particular interest in the Northern Territory. One is by Liam Campbell, a past recipient of an NT History Grant and a PhD candidate living and working in Yuendumu, about his friendship and biographical work with Darby Jampijinpa Ross, a Warlpiri elder, which also provides much thoughtful discussion and reflection on the scholarly literature in this field, together with some excellent photographs.

Bill Bunbury, well-known ABC broadcaster and another recipient of an NT History Grant, also provided an article on a presentation he gave at the OHAA national conference in Perth in 2003: *Turning the map upside-down*. It is based on his recent six-part radio feature series, and includes results of research he carried out at the NTAS in Darwin. Bill presents views from historians about the development of modern Australia that are derived from perspectives on the history of human occupation of the northern regions of the continent. These challenge notions that the modern nation's history is one primarily of the development and expansion of British penal colonies in southern Australia. In the sound clips heard in Bill's presentation, oral accounts of early contact between indigenous Australians and 'outsiders' from Europe and the archipelago to the near north of the continent are discussed—these have greatly amplified ideas derived solely from other sources. In the broadcasts, 'oral testimony of contemporary Australian historians' become 'narrative with a personal dimension'. Inquiries about the OHAA Journal can be directed to Francis at the NTAS, or to [francisgood@mail2me.com.au](mailto:francisgood@mail2me.com.au)



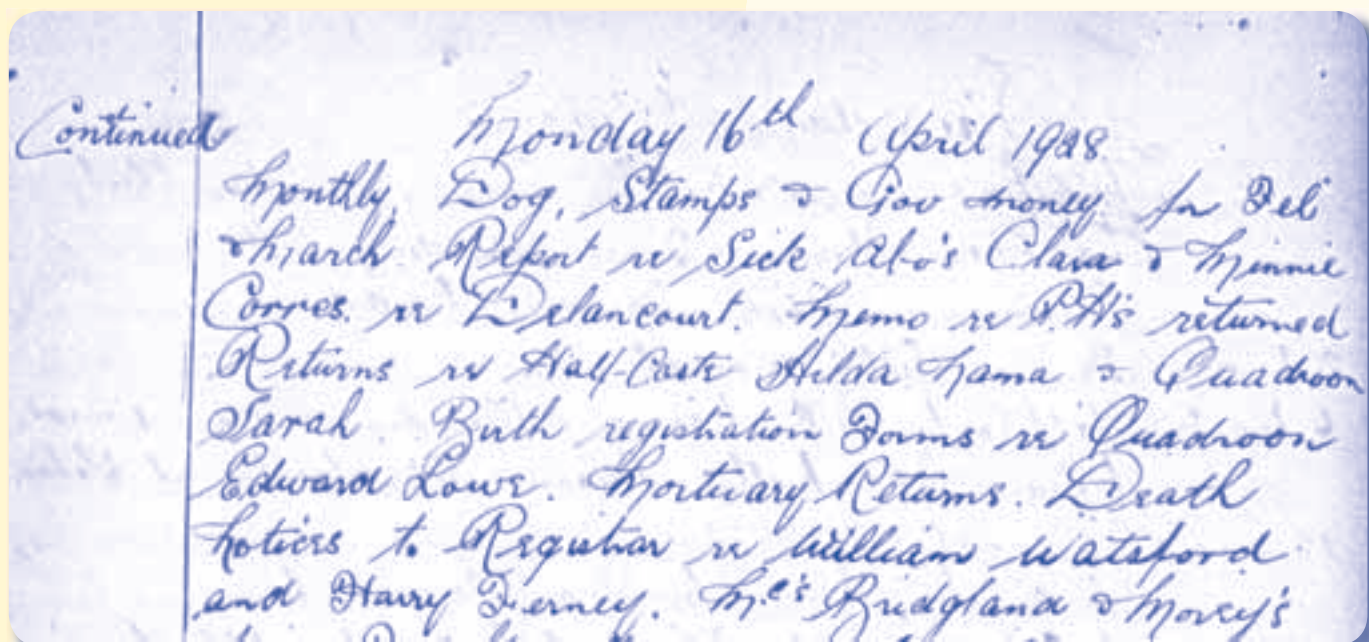
## Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG) on access to NT Government Records

### Funding for pilot indexing project

The AAG has recently been successful in a submission for funding from the Northern Territory Government for a 6-month pilot project to index records in the custody of the Northern Territory Archives Service (NTAS) relating to Aboriginal people. The NTAS is managing the project and the recruitment to two indexing positions was finalised early this year. Project officer, Jenny Reilly, has been working on guidelines for the indexing and the NTAS is grateful for the advice provided by the National Archives of Australia in relation to their Bring Them Home Indexing project. Annette Ford joined us in early February as the second indexing officer. Jenny has also been working on the database design and it's possible that TRIM Context might be able to meet our needs. Thanks must go to Helen Barnes for the work she is doing for us on the design of the database.

A range of police archives, including hand written journals, have been identified as the first records to be indexed. As police in the remote parts of the Northern Territory were often the main face of all aspects of early Northern Territory government administration (South Australia 1864-1910, Commonwealth 1911 onwards), their records are considered important sources of information on a range of aspects of government administration including the administration of Aboriginal people of mixed descent.

The NTAS is excited at the prospect of being able to provide a useful tool for link-up purposes and for Indigenous people to find out more about their families through our collection and we hope the AAG will be successful in further submissions for funding to continue the project beyond June 2005.



F 268, Police Station Borroloola, Police journals, 1899-1948

### History grant helps document Stolen Generation

The AAG and the NTAS would like to congratulate Alec Kruger and Gerard Waterford from Alice Springs, for receiving a 2004 Northern Territory History Grant. This grant was awarded to Gerard and Alec to assist them with the research and documentation of the life and times of Alec. Alec is a member of the Stolen Generation and one of the many things he has done in his very full life was to take the Commonwealth government to court in 1995 for his forced removal under the Aboriginals Ordinance 1918-1957 (NT). Alec has long been a campaigner for the rights of the Stolen Generation to be recognised. His life story promises to be a valuable contribution to the history of the Stolen Generation and the Northern Territory.



Alec Kruger at Reconciliation Place, Canberra in May 2004 (photo courtesy of CASG&FAC)

## Compliance with the NT Government Records Management Standards

Section 134 of the Information Act requires Northern Territory public sector organisations (agencies) to implement the practices and procedures for managing their records necessary for compliance with the NT Government Records Management Standards. The standards were issued in October 2003 pursuant to the legislation and are available on the NT Archives Service website.

Compliance with the standards requires agencies to provide certain information to the NT Archives Service. During the first round of compliance for the financial year 2003/04, agencies were asked to

- provide a copy of their records management plan
- provide a copy of their records management policy
- provide an annual log of changes to terms used to classify and title their records
- provide an annual list of current, draft and proposed disposal schedules relevant to their unique (functional) records

- provide notification of disposal forms for all authorised records disposals.

Most agencies have been able to provide this information and have helped to establish a compliance and reporting framework to support the provisions of the Information Act. This has enabled records management to be placed firmly on the agenda with senior management in agencies.

In early 2005 many agencies undertook an e-based records management self-assessment survey based on the compliance checklists from each of the five standards. Taken as a percentage, agency responses indicated compliance with all the standards was 53.1%. This figure will be used as the overall benchmark against which future surveys will be conducted.

Barry Garside  
Records Policy Adviser – Standards and Training

## Obituary – Peter Spillet

Our condolences go to family and friends of Peter Spillet who died suddenly in December 2004 after falling ill in Bali during one of his frequent visits to Indonesia.

Peter first came to Australia when he migrated here in 1950 and after spending a short time in Western Australia and Melbourne he came to Darwin in 1951 where he took up a job with the Department of Works. He lived at the 'Belsen' camp for a while, and in his oral history interview held at the NTAS (NTRS 226, TS 663.) he describes life and conditions in Darwin at that time. He was married in Christ Church in 1954 and from his earliest days in Darwin he became involved in a range of community activities. He was on the governing bodies of the R.S.L. and the Pensioners' Association, was an Alderman of Darwin City Council and a canon of Christ Church, the Anglican Cathedral. Detailed accounts of the history of these bodies during his time with them can be found in his oral history interview.

Peter was the founding President of the Historical Society of the Northern Territory, and the founding President of the National Trust in Darwin, as well as the first Heritage Officer to be appointed by the government soon after the commencement of self-government in the Territory in 1978. In his oral history interview he recounts the development of these bodies, and some of the exciting research expeditions and surveys in north Australia and Indonesia that he has undertaken. The most fascinating of these was the building of a Makassan perahu, by traditional methods, in Sulawesi, and its sailing from Ujung Pandang (Makassar) to the north coast of the Territory in 1987/8, as a replication of the trepanger voyages that predated British settlement. Funded as an Australian Bicentennial project, it was primarily his in conception and execution, and enabled renewal of contact between Makassan and Aboriginal family relatives for the first time since contact was broken in 1907.

Peter has also published several books and articles on Northern Territory history.

This brief account of Peter's life can hardly do justice to all that he achieved during his life time. It is possible however to get

some idea of the enormous contribution that Peter made to the Northern Territory by accessing the eleven-and-a-half hour oral history interview held at the NTAS (NTRS 226, TS 663). This interview was recorded in Darwin in February and March 1991 by Francis Good.



NTRS 1854, Historical Society of the Northern Territory collection, item no. 1785, 150th Anniversary of British settlement on Melville Island, Nov 1974.  
L - R Eric Johnston, ?, ?, Peter Spillet

## New Accessions – Darwin

Since our last newsletter the Archives Services staff have been busy with the tender process for an Archives Management System. Nevertheless archivist, Kym Muller, has managed to process quite a few donations. In the article below, Kym highlights two of these donations that feature different aspects of the Northern Territory and lists several other collections just to whet your appetite.

### Cropley collection:

Ronald Theodore Cropley (b. 1898 – d.1967) worked as a pilot for the Arnhem Land Development Company from 1933 to 1935. He had been to the Northern Territory before, in 1931, to fly the badly damaged "Golden Quest II", used in the Lassetter expedition, back to Sydney.

During 1933-1935, Ronald flew between Arnhem Land, Pine Creek, Alice Springs and Darwin carrying personnel and supplies to the mine site, and mail to outlying areas. While Ronald was undertaking this work his family – his wife, Sadie and son, John – stayed in Sydney.



NTRS 2280/P1, item no. 11, Railway Station, Pine Creek, ca1934

Amongst the material donated is a scrapbook which contains photographs and newspaper clippings collected by Sadie about Ronald, and also the photographs he sent back to the family to show them life in the Northern Territory. For instance, Ronald was involved in the first use of an aircraft in a Northern Territory Police manhunt in 1935, and there are four news clippings documenting this event in the scrapbook (NTRS 2281).

John Cropley, Ronald's son, was responsible for the donation of these photographs and papers relating to his father to the Northern Territory Archives Service.

Below is a list of the series relating to the donation. These series are open to researchers and available in the Darwin Search Room, and include:

- NTRS 2280, Photographs of Darwin, Pine Creek and Alice Springs 1933 – ca1934
- NTRS 2281, Scrapbook relating to the flying career of Ronald Theodore Cropley 1931-1935
- NTRS 2282, Maps of the Northern Territory ca1933-ca1935
- NTRS 2283, Copy of Pilot Log 1933 – 1935

Copyprints of the photographs relating to Alice Springs (NTRS 2309) are available in our Alice Springs Search Room

(nee Harrigan) was a Nurse based on Elcho Island during 1956-1962. Russell and Ruth Beazley were married in 1963.

These series are open to researchers and available in the Darwin Search Room, and include:

- NTRS 2265, Black and White Copyprints from Black and White Photographs relating to Mission Life in Darwin, Croker Island, Goulburn Island, Elcho Island, and Elcho Island Outstations 1938-1968
- NTRS 2268, Black and White Copyprints from Black and White Slides relating to Mission Life in Milingimbi, Elcho Island, and Elcho Island Outstations 1949-1962
- NTRS 2272, Colour Copyprints from Colour Slides relating to Mission Life in Croker Island, Goulburn Island, Elcho Island, Elcho Island Outstations, and Yirrkala 1948-1966

### Beazley collection:

Another major donation contains copyprints of photographs taken by Russell Beazley and Ruth Beazley during their time working in East Arnhem Missions from 1947-1968. Included are photographs of a Makarrata (peace making) ceremony in Milingimbi, Mission buildings, boats, and farming.

Russell Beazley was a Missionary for the Methodist Church during the period 1947-1968, working on the following Aboriginal Missions: Croker Island, Goulburn Island, Milingimbi, and Elcho Island. Ruth Beazley



NTRS 2265/P1, item no. 74, Sister Proctor standing outside the new Sisters' Cottage, Goulburn Island, May 1948

### More new accessions:

- NTRS 2314, Norman C Bell, Reference Copy of Palmerston Map, 1895-1901.

This copy shows the future plans for Palmerston (Darwin) in 1895 and was signed by the South Australian Surveyor-General in 1901.

- NTRS 2301, Vaiben Louis Solomon, Copyprints of Glass Plate Negatives, ca1890-1901.

Includes images of the 1901 Federation celebrations in Melbourne, and earlier scenes of Palmerston (Darwin), Mackay,

Papua New Guinea, Bundaberg and Brisbane.

- NTRS 2317, Northern Territory Force, Swimming Program of the Combined Services Sports Carnival, 1943.

The donor, Geoff Frier, represented the army in the swimming carnival and the program includes his annotations of the races he competed in, final placings and times.

- NTRS 2316, W.B. Cochrane, Correspondence relating to Darwin and New Guinea, 1959.

This letter from W.B. "Cocky" Cochrane, Crocodile Hunter and Taxidermist, to Brian Baldwin, former Librarian at the Darwin Public Library, discusses crocodiles, English emigrants, and the differences between Dutch and British controlled New Guinea.

*Please note:* These series may contain images of Aboriginal people who have since died, which may cause sadness and distress to their relatives. No offence has been intended by making these images available. Please view these archives with care.

## New Accessions – Alice Springs

*Since we opened our regional office in Alice Springs in November 2003, our Archivist, Pat Jackson, has been busy consolidating the service. Part of the work that Pat has been undertaking is the processing of a range of community archives that have been donated to the NTAS. In the article below, Pat outlines some of the processes that are involved with the acceptance of donated material and describes in detail some of the collections she has processed.*

Before a donation becomes part of the NTAS holdings and is able to be used by researchers there is a large amount of behind the scenes work that takes place. For community archives this work can be quite involved and complex. We negotiate with donors and evaluate material for its value (historical and social). We perform preservation work that can involve putting material into acid free folders, the removal of rusty paper clips, cleaning away dead insects and dirt, and enclosing fragile items in mylar (an acid free, archival plastic). We also repair torn papers and flatten maps and plans that were stored for decades rolled up in tubes.

When we do this work we are also listing the items and grouping them into series, depending on their relationship with other items, what format they are (for example diaries, correspondence photographs, slides) and how they were created in the first place (in the course of business or as the result of someone's interest in a particular area). For some material this is quite obvious, for others

a degree of detective work is involved. This is especially the case when we receive donations from deceased estates.

The purpose of doing this work is to provide better intellectual control over the material (so we can manage the collection) and to provide better access to the material for the public (so researchers can find out what is in our collections).

For the past twelve months the Alice Springs office was busy with processing a number of collections, the most sizeable being that of John Bucknill Owen and his wife Sheila Owen. The Owen collection will be discussed in greater detail in the next issue (see page 16 for examples of items from this collection). Other series include material from Elsa Corbet concerning her husband Leo Corbet and his tourist attraction, Pitchi Ritchi at Heavitree Gap. Dick Kimber donated documents and photographs given to him by the late Centralian Advocate and Australian Post journalist, Alan Wauchope. Eleanor Mengel donated a magnificent series of mounted studio photographs taken by Martin Kleinig of Palm Valley and Pine Creek in the 1920s.

### Wauchope collection:

The Alan Wauchope material donated by Dick Kimber complements other material in our collection donated by Alan Wauchope (NTRS 702) and also our oral history collection where Alan is featured as an interviewee (NTRS 226 TS 134) and as an interviewer (NTRS 226 TS 268: John McCarthy).

The latest material is divided into two series, a series of photographs and a series of correspondence, manuscripts and newspaper clippings. Unfortunately most of the photographs (some 120 odd images) had either minimal or no description provided with the photographs, making describing them a challenging task. In some cases a magnifying glass helped provide visual clues (such as with the Cyclone Tracy evacuees images), in other cases we can only provide minimal description. When an archivist does this

we use square brackets [ ] to indicate that we have provided the description. For example, NTRS 2337 Item 108 is described as [World War II scene: Alice Springs. Two men posing in front of AIF truck. Macdonnell Ranges in the background: b&w].

Among the documents in the latest addition to the Wauchope collection are manuscripts such as a History of the Memorial Club and a copy of The Wicked Uncle, a life of Ly Underdown. Alan's correspondents included Creed Lovegrove, Bryan Bowman, Ron Brown, Reg Rechner, Vic de Fonetenay and Bob Liddle. The newspaper clippings include articles on Ted Marron: 'A newsagent with a difference' and Bill McKinnon. The latter was featured in the Brisbane 'Sunday Mail' 16/11/1984) in the article 'Matrimonial knot is another adventure for 'Hanging Bill''. The article is concerned with Bill McKinnon's second marriage at the age of 80.

The series that comprise the latest additions to the Wauchope collections are:

NTRS 2336, Correspondence, manuscripts and newspaper clippings

NTRS 2337, Photographs of Central Australia: People and Places

### Petrick collection:

Finally we turn to the Elsa Petrick collection, donated by her daughter Eleanor Mengel. Elsa Petrick was one of the 'Johannsen Girls' as they are still referred to in Alice Springs. The images of the Macdonnell Ranges and Palm Valley were taken in 1924 by the photographer, Martin Kleinig and are indicative of a style of early twentieth century photographic artwork. These images are important as they show a relatively untouched Palm Valley and Macdonnell Ranges. A number of these images also show one of the earliest known vehicles in Central Australia traversing the Finke River. In one photograph a young girl, possibly Elsa, is mounted on a horse at Simpson's Gap.



NTRS 2337, Wauchope collection, Photographs of Central Australia: People and places, item no. 108, [ World War II scene, Alice Springs. Two men posing in front of AIF truck. MacDonnell ranges in the background: b&w ]

## New Accessions – Alice Springs

In the case of these photographs, descriptions were provided on the mounts, making the archival task of describing the photographs a much easier one.

This series is accessioned into the Archives as:

NTRS 2343, Mounted photographs of Palm Valley and Macdonnell Ranges.

### Corbet collection:

One of the series that form part of the Corbet Collection is of photographs taken of Pitchi Ritchi in the 1960s. These photographs show William Ricketts' statues and carvings, Leo Corbet with various school groups and a signed photograph of Leo with Rolf Harris (see image NTRS 2341 Item 9). Other series in the collection include news-clippings about Pitchi Ritchi, correspondence from a range of people congratulating Leo on his unique attraction and the visitors' book from Pitchi Ritchi. Among the newspaper clippings is this piece of sensible fashion advice for women intending to visit the Red Centre in winter in the 1960s:

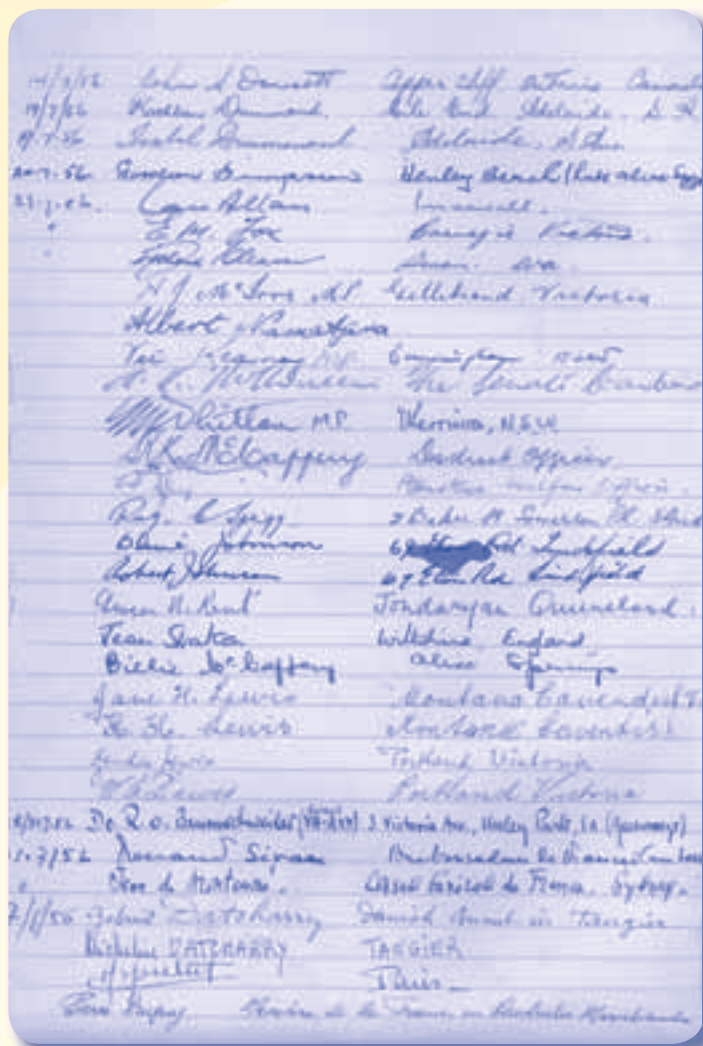
*For day wear, remember you'll be walking and climbing as well as sitting, so make sure your wardrobe is practical and comfortable as well as smart. Slacks would be the best bet. But if you feel your figure can't carry slacks, settle for a comfortable skirt, perhaps of tweed, cut to give you lots of room for action...one point to remember, the red dust of the centre is murder on white or pastel clothes, even undies. So try and pack black undies, or navy blue or coffee colors, and stick to dark and bright colours for your clothes.* (NTRS 2338: Item 20: Leo and Elsa Corbet Collection)

The Visitors' Book is itself a time capsule of the 1950s-1970s, including the touring cast of Ray Lawler's 'Summer of the Seventeenth Doll', sundry Ambassadors and High Commissioners, members of the 1956 Indian Women's Olympic Hockey team, Olympic medallist Herb Elliott, Pattie Menzies, Gough Whitlam and Albert Namatjira.



NTRS 2341, Corbet collection, Photographs of Pitchi Ritchi, Central Australia, item no. 9 [L - R Leo Corbet, Rolf Harris]

The new accessions mentioned above are only a part of the material that the Alice Springs has had the pleasure (and sometimes frustration) of working with across the past twelve months. With a number of important and exciting donations about to be finalised the wealth of Centralian archival material held by the NTAS Alice Springs office and available for use by researchers can only increase.



NTRS 2340, Corbet collection, Papers and Visitors' Book for Pitchi Ritchi, item no.8

The series that comprise the Corbet Collection are as follows:

NTRS 2338, Newspaper clippings on Pitchi Ritchi and William Ricketts

NTRS 2339, Notes on historical features, correspondence, photographs and newspaper clippings

NTRS 2340, Papers and Visitors' Book for Pitchi Ritchi

NTRS 2341, Photographs of Pitchi Ritchi, Central Australia

NTRS 2342, Correspondence and Visitors' Book.

## Spotlight on.....Cyclone Tracy

**December 24 2004 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> year since the arrival of Cyclone Tracy in the Northern Territory. Cyclone Tracy, Australia's worst natural disaster, virtually destroyed Darwin in the Northern Territory of Australia in the early hours of Christmas Day 25 December 1974.**

Conflicting estimates exist of Darwin's population on 24 December 1974. Milliken (Milliken, EP. *People who experienced Darwin Cyclone Tracy: Human Responses in Report on Proceedings of a Research Workshop on Human Behaviour in Australia*. National Disaster Organisation, Department of Defence, 1984, p. 199.) gives an estimate of 49,000 with 5,500 of them being on holiday away from Darwin at the time. Stretton (NTAS, Stretton, Alan, *NTRS 226 Oral history interview, TS 956*) states that 34,830 people were evacuated. Approximately 75% of these were evacuated by air between 26 and 31 December; the remainder drove out of Darwin.

All forms of communication within Darwin were destroyed. External communications were in disarray. Roads had to be cleared of debris to allow vehicles to get around Darwin. Police and civilian motorcyclists formed a courier system hand delivering messages. People were in

shock from the night of noise and terror. Food and water supplies were disrupted. The treatment of injured and identification and disposal of the dead was urgent.

The precise number of people killed by Cyclone Tracy may never be known. It was reported that 49 deaths occurred and people were missing at sea during the Cyclone. Hundreds were injured by flying debris. Roofing iron, fibre cladding and building timbers were lethal projectiles in the cyclonic winds.

Members of the armed forces, police forces and essential services organisations from around Australia worked together with the people remaining in Darwin after the Cyclone to clean up Darwin and to provide relief services. The city was rebuilt and it grew through the determination of those people who stayed and those who came after.

The strength of the holdings at the NTAS relating to Cyclone Tracy is predominantly in personal records consisting of oral histories, photos and personal papers.

Our *List of holdings relating to Cyclone Tracy* is available on our website and in the search room of the Darwin Office of the NTAS.

Examples of some of these records are given below.



*NTRS 1658, Vicki Harris collection, item no. 4, View of cyclone damage from No. 35 Buchanan Terrace, Nakara (Harris residence)*

### Oral history interview -

**Dawn Lawrie, NTRS 226, TS 505**

Dawn Lawrie was the Independent Member for Nightcliff in the Northern Territory's Legislative Assembly at the time of Cyclone Tracy. In this interview Dawn describes leaving her home during the eye of the storm with her husband and children. She recalls the evacuation process, the system of permits for re-entry and delays in the rebuilding of Darwin. She praises the work of the Navy, NT and Commonwealth police and other services.

This interview was recorded by Bill Bunbury in Darwin in May 1987. (Extracts from "Cyclone Tracy - I Still Don't Like High Winds" the Radio National Talking History program of the interview of Dawn Lawrie by Bill Bunbury used by permission of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. (c) ABC. All rights reserved)

*Below are some extracts from Dawn's oral history interview where there is some description of how her family got from their house to a cyclone shelter and also discusses an amusing incident at the airport.*

... I grabbed something which I considered quite valuable, plus the boxer dog, plus the boxer puppy, and we got into the car and took over for what we thought were stronger premises.

But the car never made it; we were awash. We were stranded in the street for half-an-hour, and the car was rocking. I put the children below the level of the seat in the back of the car; put them on the floor of the car, with the boxer bitch on top of them so that if anything came through the back window of the car they wouldn't be killed, or speared. It was that bad.

When the eye came, we thought we'd make it to a neighbour's house. The eye came and there was a flash of lightning - it was still

- and that house had disappeared. I said: 'All of Darwin's blown away.' Just then a car came towards us out of the gloom and we said: 'Can we get a lift to Carpentaria College?' - this was a sturdier building - and he said: 'Yes, mate; hop in.'

Well, there were already seven people in the car. So with my husband, myself, our three kids and the two dogs, we somehow piled on top of these.

... The airport was a shambles but they were starting flights of people out. We were standing there with the three kids and the puppy, and officialdom - as officialdom always does - appeared, and said: 'The three kids can go on the plane but you can't take that there puppy.'

And I said: 'Well, what's wrong with taking the puppy? I was sending them down to my brother.' 'No, no, you can't take the puppy.' And I just stood, and I was speechless.

We were sodden and grimy and dirty,



## Spotlight on.....Cyclone Tracy

and along came the TAA captain of the aircraft, tall, tanned, silver hair, blue eyes, immaculately dressed, and he knew me. He said: 'What seems to be the matter my dear?' I said: 'Well, my three children are going on your plane.' He said: 'Fine, where's their luggage?' I said: 'We don't have any luggage, it just the puppy, and we've been told we can't take the puppy.'

And he drew himself up to his six-foot-four, grabbed the puppy and said: 'The puppy travels on the flight deck. There, there, don't you worry.' And the puppy did.

### Oral history interview - Major-General Alan Stretton

NTRS 226, TS 956

Major-General Alan Stretton was born in Melbourne in 1922. In this interview Major Stretton recounts his experiences in Darwin after Cyclone Tracy, as head of the Natural Disasters Organisation in Canberra. He recalls landing at the airport amongst overturned aircraft, an airport without navigational aids, on a portion of the runway that had been cleared by the RAAF. He gives his view of the role of different arms of the defence forces and their responses to the emergency. Major-General Stretton comments on the notion of taking control of Darwin and holding power in a situation where his authority had limited legal basis.

The interview was recorded by Francis Good in Darwin in December 1999.

*In the extract below Major General Stretton talks about how he persuaded people to agree to evacuate despite it meaning that families were going to be temporarily split.*

Now, it got to the stage that it was a very -- you couldn't have planes coming in without people to get on them. If they went back empty, you know, there'd be an outcry. On the other hand, you couldn't have people hanging round at the airfield with no planes coming in. And when -- I think we had 50 planes on one day, coming in -- and you could imagine the problem of making sure that there were sufficient people to get on those planes, you know, and to work it out.

[On 27<sup>th</sup> December 1974], I had made arrangements, or got the Minister of the Northern Territory and the Australian Government to agree that they'd pay the fares of all these people *out*. When we got down to about the 28<sup>th</sup>, we were starting to run into difficulties coming up, of getting



NTRS 1655, Mrs P. Hart collection, item no. 10, view of Darwin hospital buildings

the numbers to go out, because people were adjusting to their environment; it meant in many cases that families were going to be temporarily split, and they were starting to think: 'Oh well, we'll remain there and if we go there, how do we get back?'

And I was really concerned, because next day, I'd ordered all these planes -- enough for about 8000 people -- and we had 700 people listed to fly out. And the population was still not down to what I believed was a reasonable and safe area.

*[Major Stretton called a meeting of Commonwealth government officials and they agreed to pay the return airfares]*

I wrapped up as quickly as I could the rest [of the meeting]. I rushed over to the ABC, because this was late in the afternoon, and I said:

'There's just been a decision by the Australian Government, that for a limited time, anyone flying out tomorrow, and the day after, will be guaranteed that their families [will get] a [free] return fare. Have a holiday on the Australian Government, but you've got to register now to go.' ...

### Oral history interview

Rosemary Mayo NTRS 226, TS 653

Rosemary Mayo was born in England in 1945. She came to Darwin in 1969. At the time of Cyclone Tracy, Rosemary lived in Mitchell Street with her family. In this

interview Rosemary describes preparations for the Cyclone, the storm itself, damage to the fire station where they spent most of the night, the birth of her baby on the day after the Cyclone at the Hospital, her evacuation and arrival in Brisbane.

The interview was recorded by Suzanne Saunders in Darwin in June 1987.

*In the extract below Rosemary describes the conditions at the hospital on the day after the cyclone and the trauma of being whisked off to the airport with her two children and a baby that had only been born twelve hours before.*

[After the cyclone]

... from what I can remember, all the women who'd had babies were to be flown out. ...

... I had the one case with me that had all my nighties, and everything in it - which I'd lifted up the night before onto a chair because the water came right through the hospital ward, that night. It just rose up above - to about three inches of water. So we were sleeping - or trying to sleep in that ward with no power, and everyone getting sticky, and paddling along the water to the toilet. ...

... picked up baby, who was twelve hours old, got onto a coach with a lot of other - injured people - a lot of people who were injured, and mums and babies. And were driven out to the airport, and we were all crying. Everybody on that coach, I remember crying.

## Spotlight continued

### Oral history interview -

**Cedric Patterson** NTRS 226, TS 600

Cedric Patterson was born in Victoria in 1925. He came to Darwin as Supervising Architect, Construction, for the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Construction in 1959, and was working in this position when Cyclone Tracy struck. In this interview he describes the family's experience of the Cyclone, which destroyed their house and nearly everything in it, and then some events that followed including how the staff in his Department handled emergency roofing jobs..

The interview was recorded by Francis Good in Darwin in January 1990.

*In the extract below Cedric provides some amazing figures relating to the re-roofing of houses following Cyclone Tracy*

... [the Department of Housing & Construction staff ] target [for re-roofing of houses] was three thousand five hundred houses in thirty-five days which meant a hundred a day... eventually we got to about four thousand houses that were re-roofed.

### Oral history interview -

**George Redmond** NTRS 226, TS 734

George Redmond was born in Charters Towers in 1913. He came to Darwin in 1962. Mr Redmond was the Director of Construction for the Department of Works at the time of Cyclone Tracy. In this interview he



NTRS 1674, Michael Bresnahan Collection, item no.15, Houses in Gregory Street, Parap (opposite Toy Street) on Christmas Day, 1974

comments on the reconnection of electricity by the Electricity Supply Undertaking, clearing of streets, reconnection of water supply and sewerage and weather-proofing and restoration of buildings.

The interview was recorded by F H Bauer in Canberra in 1993 and 1994.

*In the extract below George describes the repairs to the Darwin Hospital which was considered the highest priority*

... on Christmas Day the roof of one ward

had been repaired, emergency generating sets installed to supplement the emergency power, and town water delivered by mid afternoon. ...

... By the 30th, nine buildings and the laundry [were] repaired, and the hospital was on town power. By the 7th of January the operating theatre had been re-roofed, earlier repair work make more secure, and the cyclone damaged chilled water plant replaced, and all essential facilities for the hospital [were] functioning efficiently. ...

## 2004 History Grant Recipients

**Congratulations are extended to the following recipients of last year's Northern Territory history grants.**

**Albert Colson** of Alice Springs: \$3,600 to research the story of the work and times of Central Australian pioneers, Fred and Elsie Colson.

**Eva McRae-Williams** of Darwin: \$1,000 to research history in indigenous community museums focussing on the Tiwi Islands.

**Jill Jolliffe** of Darwin: \$4,000 to research the Northern Territory as a staging point for World War II in Portuguese Timor.

**Karen Hughes** of Adelaide: \$1,800 to research and record oral histories with Roper River elders.

**Tony Roberts** of Bega, NSW: \$4,000 to continue researching a history of Borroloola and the Gulf Country.

**Alan Mayne** of Melbourne: \$6,000 to research cross-race histories along the northern corridor which opened up with the building of the Overland Telegraph, 1870-1970.

**Jack Frawley** of Sydney: \$2,000 to research adult education and the Aboriginal arts industry in Northern Australia.

**Michele Langfield** of Melbourne: \$3,000 to study responses and perspectives from Northern Territory cultural organisations to global heritage influences.

**Pearl Ogden** of Darwin: \$2,300 to research the lives and times of a selection of people in the Victoria River Downs region, 1890s-1990s.

**Barry Allwright** of Alice Springs: \$2,000 to research the "ruby rush" in Central Australia and its influence on the establishment of Alice Springs.

**Angelique Edmonds** of Ngukurr: \$3,000 to research the confrontation between Aboriginal place and colonialist space in the Roper River area since 1841.

**Gerard Waterford & Alec Kruger** of Alice Springs: \$5,000 to research and document the life and times of Alec Kruger

**Jinki Trevillian** of Brisbane: \$3,500 to research Japanese and Islander migration in Northern Australia from early to mid-twentieth century.

**John Hobson & Josephine Harrison** of Woy Woy, NSW: \$4,500 to research an internet-mediated project documenting the gay and lesbian history of Central Australia.

**Edward Street** of Beauty Point, Tasmania: \$4,300 to research the convict mechanics who served at the distant settlements of Northern Australia, 1824-1831.

## Research in Progress

Once more we have looked back over the period since our last newsletter and asked our researchers if they would like their project to be listed and described here. This selection reflects the level of interest from our community, Australia and the rest of the world in the history of the Northern Territory of Australia.

**Bruce Birch, Research Fellow, Iwaidja Documentation Project, Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics, University of Melbourne – *Yiwarruj, yinyman, radbiyi lda mali: Iwaidja and other endangered languages of the Cobourg Peninsula (Australia) in their cultural context.***

This project is documenting, in as full a cultural context as is possible, the Iwaidja language of the Cobourg Peninsula, Northern Territory, Australia (Iwaidjan language family, non-Pama-Nyungan). This language is still spoken by around 200 people but under increasing threat from English. The project also involves recording material from other languages of the region (Marrgu, Ilgar/Garig, Amurdak and Manangkari) which are all reduced to one or two speakers each. In addition to linguists, the research team includes specialists in ethnomusicology, material culture / archaeology, and social anthropology. The research team is building a comprehensive, searchable and browsable sound and video documentation, with Iwaidja transcriptions alongside English translations, an Iwaidja dictionary of around 5,000 words, detailed phonetic analysis, and briefer materials on other languages of the area.

**David Bridgman, Ph.D. candidate, RMIT University, Melbourne – *The Anglo-Asian Bungalow: Form, function and meaning.***

My study examines the Anglo-Asian bungalow within the context of an emerging regionalist architecture in Australian and a wider colonial architecture encompassing Singapore, Malaysia and British India. The symbolic importance of the Anglo-Asian bungalow within the small colonial society on the edge of the continent is also examined.

**Julie Brimblecombe, Project Officer Environments, Services and Populations Research Division Menzies School of Health Research PhD candidate. Funding: National Heart Foundation – *Food-related policy – local reality: A study on the food supply in a remote Aboriginal community.***

There are many factors that have, and continue, to shape the food supply in remote Aboriginal communities. 'Making sense' of how people interact with the food supply and local perspectives of food can offer insight into how Aboriginal people have accommodated changes in food supply. In developing appropriate and sustainable

health and food-related policy and interventions, it is imperative that Aboriginal people's ideas about food and diet are taken into account. This study investigates changes in the food supply and corresponding socio-cultural shifts that have influenced people's access to healthy food and documents the barriers identified by Aboriginal people in attaining a healthy diet. This information will be fed back into the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services food-related development and implementation processes.

**Doris Buttignol, documentary film maker, France – *Mapping of country.***

My next documentary film is exploring relationships to the land through mapping of the country. I have chosen to explore this topic in Australia. I started my research at the Northern Territory Archives Services where I had the chance to meet a French archivist which was very helpful as I was able to conduct some of my historical research in French. I found a great deal of material in the NTAS. I am especially interested in witness accounts of the various expeditions done by surveyors and the way they were mapping the country. Diaries, photos, correspondence and various reports allowed me to understand who these people were and what they were trying to do.

In the movie I would like to compare the Aboriginal way of mapping the country (painting, dancing, singing), to the evolution of mapping of the country by non-Aboriginal people. This includes the first maps of Australia, some of which were originally from France (Pierre Desceliers/ *La terre Australe, Ecole de Dieppe, 1550*), to the satellite photos of today.

Therefore I have also been travelling all around Arnhem Land, trying to meet people who are the keepers of oral history and investigating their relationship to the land.

I am now going back to France to write and explore all the material I have gathered. Then I plan to return to Australia after the wet season for the second stage of this research work which will allow me to go deeper in this investigation and get ready to eventually film my documentary.

**Prudence Colville and Jonathan Matthews from Cojo Productions – *Zero Hour – The Bombing of Darwin***

'On February 19, 1942, Australia sustained its first military invasion when the

Japanese, fresh from their devastating attack on Pearl Harbour, bombed Darwin. This documentary claims to tell what the filmmakers believe to be the true story behind the bombing of Darwin: of the high-level political, bureaucratic and military blunders which led to the loss of so many lives, the lack of leadership and the looting of the town by the very people who were put in charge of defending Darwin property. It also tells of individual acts of bravery and heroism against all odds. This story reveals the best and the worst of us all.'

**Robyn Davis, PhD Candidate, Charles Darwin University – *The movement and experiences of women during the Second World War.***

My interest is related to the role played by women in both the Northern Territory and the Eastern part of the Indonesian Archipelago. Most mainstream histories depict women as having been evacuated from the Northern Territory at the war's onset. In fact, many women remained in the Northern Territory during this time and made significant contributions to the war effort. Many of their stories are contained in the Northern Territory Archives.

**Kitty Eggerking, PhD student, Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, Australian National University – *Landmarks: Living in Land, Language and Law.***

My research focuses on the first land-rights case, which is popularly known as the Gove case of 1970. As well as dealing with issues arising from the case, I try to give an account of events leading up to the case. These events include the painting of the Yirrkala church panels, the making of three bark petitions that were sent to the federal parliament and a parliamentary inquiry that was triggered by the first of the petitions. My main interest in this research is to try to understand how Yolngu and Balanda made sense of each other at a time when there was no familiarity with the concepts or language of land rights, let alone native title. Concerns like this I hope are captured in my title.

**Ian Hillock – *Rethinking colonial endeavour in relation to agricultural settlement in the Northern Territory, 1863 to 1945: a critical perspective.***

The purpose of the work is to investigate why successive 'colonial' administrations failed to effect permanent agricultural

## Research in Progress continued

settlement in the Northern Territory and to examine why colonial settlement was less successful in the Territory than in the rest of Australia. In 1895 John Costello described the Northern Territory as 'an unlucky country'.<sup>1</sup> To many, the Northern Territory remains an enigma. My study examines the historical context of this enigma, so those questions arising from the socioeconomic sustainability of agricultural settlement in the Territory may be better understood. I contend that by not engaging with available agricultural knowledge, agricultural settlement was in effect forestalled.

1: Report of the Northern Territory Commission, Minutes of proceedings, evidence and appendices." In Northern Territory State Library: South Australian Parliamentary Papers No. 19, 1895, p. 183. Hereinafter SAPP, thus SAPP 19/1895, p.183.

**Darren Kwong** – *The history of sport in the Northern Territory.*

Darren has been looking through many of the Archives records in particular oral histories and mission records for his project.

**David and Di Lancashire, David Lancashire Design** – *Wharf Precinct Submission.*

David Lancashire came to the NTAS looking for historical images to inform the above project. Paul Foelsche and Harold Kent Collections with their images of Goyder's Camp and early Palmerston were of particular interest.

**Julie Mastin, Master's Thesis in Archaeology, Charles Darwin University** – *John George Knight.*

Julie Mastin used the NT Archives Service to gather historical background about the Mud Hut/ Knight's Folly site prior to excavating the site. Sources of information included plans, Inwards Correspondence to the Government Resident of the Northern Territory of South Australia, oral history interview transcripts and photographs.

**Michael Real, geodetic engineer** – *'A Sky too Far, a technical appraisal of the flying skills and aviation achievements of Charles Kingsford Smith'*

The main topic of my research is Charles Kingsford Smith and Tommy Petherbridge who disappeared in November 1935 over the Andaman Sea in their Lockheed Altair aircraft. The book incorporates a chapter involving a rigorous investigation into the so-called 'Coffee Royal' affair which involved the disastrous Kookaburra flight of Keith Anderson and Bob Hitchcock who came to grief in the Tanami desert

of the Northern Territory. Geographically the research/inquiry involves Australia, including the Tanami Desert as well as Hawaii, USA, Myanmar, Great Britain, New Zealand, India, Iraq and Greece (the last three are places which Kingsford Smith visited for fuel during the last flight).

An important by-product of my research into the Kookaburra is to locate and centralise all missing pieces of the Kookaburra aeroplane from its Tanami site into the Alice Springs Diorama. Vern O'Brien, one of the regular NT Archives clients, has been most generous with his time, advice, and considerable knowledge.

**Libby Robin, Research Fellow, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University** – *Science in the Northern Territory - Daly River.*

Dr Libby Robin research activities include the history of environmental science, activism, politics and policy, especially in Australia and comparative environmental history. At the time of her visit to NT Archives Dr Robin was interested in science in the NT in particular in the Daly River area.

**Marjory Salles, colourist and painter, France** – *The Red Road in Australia.*

This is an investigation about the colour red in Australian Art: pigment, colouring, vegetable dyes.... How does the artist choose his/her pigments? Where do they find it? What is the impact of one specific red material? What is the liaison between the colour, the geographic place and the way of symbolisation of an artwork? Indigenous art practices are closely related to their country, their culture and their heritage. That is why it is very important for me to study their way of thinking.

I am a colourist in textile dye, and in my own artwork I use vegetable dyes, like the madder which roots give the red colour, not only in dyeing but also in painting. I am interested in the meaning of red, its symbol, its specificity according to its source and the place where it comes from.

This project began with a travel across the country: Perth, Warmun, Darwin, Tiwi Islands, Arnhem Land, Alice Springs, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney. I have met technicians in dyeing and painting in order to exchange ideas with them about the use of the colour red and its source. Then, I plan to share my experience with the French children and to realise a red scenography, an artwork with red as the centrepiece.

My research at the Northern Territory Archives Service have been useful, I have

read oral histories and I have found a very interesting testimony about the use of red ochre in body painting. For the first time, I have found an indication about the beneficial property of the ochre for the skin. Another testimony gives me some information about the red ochre and the place where it comes from. Each red ochre comes from a particular geographic place and the Aboriginal artist can identify the source. All this information is very precious to me, it validates my specific way of thinking the colour.

**Ruth Singer, Phd candidate, Department of Linguistics, University of Melbourne** – *Manifestations of gender in Mawng*

This is a field-work based project, looking at the Aboriginal language Mawng (Maung) the language of the owners of Goulburn Island and some of the adjacent coastal areas in North-west Arnhem land. Research on the Mawng language was initiated by Mrs. Heather Hewett, who worked for the mission on Goulburn Island. Her annual reports are stored at the AIATSIS and provide interesting background information on the context in which she carried out her work. The PhD project focuses on the syntax and semantics of grammatical gender. The data collection involves transcription and translation of Mawng texts. These texts include myths, historical texts and everyday stories. Some texts were collected by earlier researchers such as Heather Hewett, Arthur Capell, Catherine and Ronald Berndt and Anne Dineen. Others have been collected by the researcher herself between 2002-2004. It is hoped that these may be published as a collection of texts. Video and audio recordings could also be prepared for use by Mawng speakers and others. For more information please see: <http://www.stud.nt.unimelb.edu.au/~rjsinger/>

**Greg Smithers, PhD candidate, UC Davis University California USA** – *Breeding out of colour. A comparative analysis of the idea of 'breeding out of colour' in the United States and Australia between the 1850s and 1930s.*

During his visit to NT Archives Greg examined a considerable amount of material ranging from oral histories to missionaries' collections to police records.

**Sue Thurston, Clinical Nurse Manager, Department of Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine, Fremantle Hospital and Health Service** – *The use of recompression chambers in Australia.*

'I am researching the recompression chamber that Carl Atkinson built for his own use as part of his salvage work during the 1950's and 1960's. Carl Atkinson treated

## Research in Progress

other divers with Decompression Illness including several pearl divers. The story of this chamber is part of a research project on documenting the history of the use of recompression chambers in Australia.

**Dr Jinki Trevillian – *Internal migration of Japanese and Islanders between Thursday Island Darwin and Cairns.***

The above topic will be explored through a couple of articles addressing the Japanese Luggers cases and the subject of the White Japanese. These topics give ample scope to examine relationships between Darwin and Thursday Island, Japan and Australia, before World War Two

The main collections consulted in the NT Archives Service included the Department of Pearling and Fisheries Correspondence, NT Administrator, Supreme Court records, police correspondence and oral histories.

**David Welch, Australian Rock Art Historian – *Aboriginal Culture.***

The NTAS has many excellent photos of Aboriginal people and their traditional day to day life, taken by early pastoralists, missionaries and others. I have searched the collections in order to find images suitable for inclusion in a general book about pre-contact Aboriginal culture. Images include food gathering, tree climbing, housing, watercraft, camp life, string making, dancing, public corroborees, and portraits of people. The friendly staff at NTAS have made this an enjoyable and productive exercise and I hope to have the book out late 2005.

**Dr Ann Westmore, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, the University of Melbourne – *The use of lithium in the treatment of mental illness in the 1950s***

During her visit to NTAS Dr Westmore examined files from the Commissioner of Police and the Coroner's Court documenting deaths and mental illness.

**Jim Wilmot – *Family history project Autobiography***

'The main aspect of my research has been to discover/update the information concerning the time spent in Darwin by my parents and myself in the period 1938 to 1950. I am also interested in writing something concerning the women of the Territory during the early period of the 1900's. I would like to take a view of the day to day lives and living conditions of these women, as I believe that they must have been a breed apart to be able to cope with the deprivations of the time and the problems of servicing their families.'

**Ushma Scales, Ara Irititja Archival project – *Physical, social and economic life of doggers in Pitjantjatjara country.***

This project, which is about protecting the past and accessing the future, has been running since 1994. Using computers combined with clever use of specially written programs, the project sorts and digitises copies of various types of archival collections from all over Australia that relate to the Pitjantjatjara and neighbouring Yankunytjatjara and Ngaanyatjarra tribes. There are interactive Ara Irititja computers in over a dozen communities in the Pitjantjatjara area. For more information about this project have a look at the following website – [www.irititja.com](http://www.irititja.com)

The focus of this particular research is to try and get a glimpse of how life was for the various doggers in the Pitjantjatjara country. This country consists of the Tri-state areas of southern Northern Territory, the North West of South Australia and the adjacent lands of Western Australia. Ara Irititja already has a few stories and photos relating to Doggers and the basic aim of this research is to flesh out some of these characters. Ushma will be looking at historical records from 1920 to 1940. These include NT Government archives, the Strehlow Research Centre, the South Australian museum and the State Library of South Australia.

**John Hobson – *Queers of the Desert***

"Does Alice Springs actually have a gay history?" That's the question that usually greets any mention of the Queers of the

Desert; a community-based project to document the lesbian and gay history of Central Australia. Thanks to a grant from the NT Archives Service a great deal of that history is now being unearthed and documented.

The project aims to self-publish, via the web, a range of personal and document-based stories that tell the stories of the many queer folk who have inhabited the Centre. A number of pages were initially produced for the site based on individuals' recollections and personal archives. However, with the receipt of an NT History grant, the scope of the project has been able to expand greatly. A visit to the Territory by the project's Sydney-based coordinator allowed for very fruitful searches of early Alice Springs court and gaol records and NT Supreme Court records held by the Archives Service, as well as the Centralian Advocate holdings at Alice Springs town library and Hansard in Darwin. Many personal leads could also be followed up and meetings held with groups and individuals to write their own stories.

The Queers of the Desert project is particularly grateful to the NT Archives Service for its faith and support, and owes a special debt of gratitude to the search room staff in Alice Springs and Darwin, whose knowledge of the collection and enthusiasm to support research has been outstanding. For more information go to the following website-

<http://www.geocities.com/queersofthedesert/>

**John & Audrey Cropley – *Ronald Theodore Cropley***

John and Audrey Cropley drove up on holiday to Darwin recently from their home in New South Wales. Whilst here in Darwin they took the opportunity to look at an item in the Cropley collection which is a collection they donated to the NTAS in 2004. Details about this collection can be found on page 5.



# Trim System Management

## TRIM System Management

The TRIM Support Team has been busy in its preparation for the imminent upgrade to TRIM Context, as well as keeping on top of the day to day work that is always a challenge in a support area. Delays beyond our control have been experienced in the rollout of TRIM Context to agencies, which has impacted on our planning. As reported in the Records Territory of June 2004, No.28, the initial rollout in agencies was to commence in July 2004. The revised commencement of the rollout in agencies will now be July 2005 with the upgrade expected to be completed by the end of December 2005. We are waiting anxiously for the new look TRIM with the additional functionality it provides.

## TOWER software

TOWER Software representatives have visited Darwin three times in 2004.

March 2004: This visit provided an opportunity for the technical team to discuss strategies for the deployment of TRIM Context to desktops, and for TOWER to provide advice on technical issues for implementing TRIM Context across the NT Government's wide area network. TOWER also addressed specific agency concerns, for example, Police Fire and Emergency Services and its firewall, the Department of the Chief Minister and Novelle. While in Darwin TOWER once again presented to NTG agencies an overview of TRIM Context, (73 agency representatives attended the presentation).

May 2004: Presentations covering TRIM Context functionality and technical architecture were delivered to the DCIS Information Management Committee, the NTG Information Management Committee, IT Managers and IT Directors (2 sessions), CSC (Desktop service provider) and the NTAS TRIM technical team

November 2004: This visit focused on resolving technical issues with TRIM Context for the whole of government deployment and to resolve some issues with the recent implementations of TRIM Context at Charles Darwin University and Power Water Corporation. The visit also provided an opportunity to look at some strategic planning for this whole of government system.

TOWER Software has scheduled another visit to Darwin in May 2005.

## Training

The TRIM Support Team has been fortunate to have Wilma Carlow working as part of the team over the past twelve months. A significant part of Wilma's work with us has been to update the TRIM Captura training material to match the changes required for TRIM Context and to develop new training modules. This has been a moving target with the rollout of TRIM Context being delayed and TOWER Software releasing upgrades of TRIM Context every quarter.

With the focus for the TRIM Support Team being on the upgrade and developing the relevant training material for this, TRIM Captura training was ceased in January 2004. Where agencies required training for their users the NTAS provided the training material and agency TRIM System Administrators conducted the appropriate training.

TRIM Context Train the Trainer (T3) training was conducted in May 2004 by TOWER Software for key agency TRIM Administrators. Fifteen people attended this training. The purpose of the training was to skill agency administrators on the changes in TRIM Context that would enable them to train TRIM users in their respective agencies. Due to delays in the implementation of TRIM Context this training will be offered to agencies again in May/June 2005.

Helen Barnes and Celina Hodge from the NTAS System Support have also completed the TOWER accredited TRIM Context training. This enables them to conduct future T3 training as well as Administrator and all other TRIM Context training. Congratulations to Helen and Celina in becoming TOWER accredited TRIM Context trainers.

## User forums

Celina Hodge has conducted a number of TRIM User Forums in Darwin and regions (Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Nhulunbuy) in 2004. The forums are well attended by agency staff and other organisations external to government. There have been some interesting presentations this year. The user forums are invaluable for information sharing and networking.

## Records Systems Projects Update

As stated in the previous Newsletter budget funding was approved for the upgrade of

TRIM to TRIM Context, Content Manager (electronic object store) and DB2UDB (underlying database) in 2003/2004 for the planning and 2004/2005 for the upgrade.

The planning phase of the project is mostly completed but unfortunately the upgrade for agencies has been delayed. Agencies are anxious to move into the new "look and feel" world of TRIM Context. In spite of the delays we have completed some key deliverables in accordance with the TRIM Context Project Plan:

- the replacement of the TRIM Servers was completed in February 2004. DCIS/Data Centre Services now provide the technical support for TRIM, Content Manager and DB2UDB as a total managed service. Prior to this the NT Archives Service owned the servers.
- Strategic planning documents have been completed covering the TRIM Context Technical Architecture and TRIM Context Training Strategy. These are currently being reviewed to ensure they are current with the version of TRIM Context being implemented in all agencies commencing July 2005.
- Train the Trainer (T3) training was completed for key agency staff in May 2004. A trainer from TOWER software conducted this training. This training will be offered to agencies again in May/June 2005 and Helen Barnes will conduct these sessions.
- Charles Darwin University (CDU) upgraded to TRIM Context 5.2.2 in August 2004. The CDU manages its own environment but has always followed the NTG's implementation and upgrades since TRIM was installed in 1999.
- Power Water Corporation (PWC) upgraded to TRIM Context 5.2.2 in October 2004. PWC has moved out of the whole-of-government umbrella as it has migrated its TRIM database from DB2UDB to Oracle. PWC is now supporting its own technical and application environment.

The proposed upgrade for NTG agencies will be the latest version of TRIM Context that is to be released by TOWER in April 2005. In the interim the NTAS will be piloting the upgrade in January 2005 to ensure the deployment method is sound and identify any issues.

The changed implementation/rollout

## Staff Notes

schedule for TRIM Context will now be:

- January 2005 - NTAS will Pilot the upgrade rollout strategy with TRIM Context 5.2.3.
- May 2005 - NTAS to upgrade to the version and build of TRIM Context to be deployed in all agencies
- July 2005 - Commence rollout in agencies (15).

The upgrade completion date is expected to be the end of December 2005

### Staff

Celina Hodge and Helen Barnes attended the TOWER Software - TRIM User Forum (TUF) held in Canberra in September 2004. This forum is invaluable for ongoing networking and the sharing of information about and issues with the TRIM product from sites around Australia. Of particular interest this year was the future direction of TRIM Context and expected enhancements.

For further information, please contact the System Manager, Jeanette Collins, or the TRIM Training and Support Officer, Helen Barnes, or the TRIM System Support Officer, Celina Hodge or the System Support and Project Officer, Wilma Carlow.

### Who's Who

- **Jeanette Collins** - System Manger, phone (08) 8924 7641
- **Celina Hodge** - System Support Officer, phone (08) 8924 7083
- **Helen Barnes** - TRIM Training and Support Officer, phone (08) 8924 7698.
- **Wilma Carlow** - System Support and Project Officer, phone (08) 8924 7149

We are pleased to have appointed Emma Nitschke to the position of Archives Access Officer in the Darwin office. All agree that Emma brings considerable energy to the position.

The project to implement a new archives management system has brought several temporary project staff to the NTAS over the past year. Sue Freeman is one of those valued staff who has been working in the project role as administrative history researcher.

Jenny Reilly has also been a welcome addition to the staff since joining us to work on access and promotions projects including the compilation of guides to holdings and the Aboriginal name index. We are pleased that Annette Ford has also recently joined the Aboriginal name indexing team.

Gavin McGargill has left Alice Springs for the bright lights of Darwin. He is now working in the DCIS Information Management Unit. Carolyn Newman replaced Gavin as the Archives Services Officer in Alice Springs at the end of February. Carolyn is a long term resident of Alice Springs and brings to us a range of skills from her various work backgrounds including five years as a coordinator at 8CCC (community radio) and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.



Annette Ford



Carolyn Newman



Emma Nitschke



Sue Freeman



Jenny Reilly

## Archives One for NTAS

As many of you will be aware, the NTAS has been seeking support for the implementation of an archives management system for a few years. Funding was made available last year, and we tendered for the supply and installation of an archives management system in May 2004.

The contract was awarded to Technology One for the supply and installation of Archives One. Archives One was developed by Queensland State Archives, and has also been installed in state archives in Tasmania,

Victoria and South Australia. The Public Record Office of Victoria made further developments, and it is this version which the NTAS has purchased. A few enhancements to the system have been developed. The enhanced system was installed in March, although it will only be available for staff use while we enter a few thousand series lists.

Stay tuned for updates on the release of Archives One on our web site.



## New accession to be featured in the next issue - Owen Collection



NTRS 2198, Owen collection, Records relating to Order of Australia, J.B.Owen receiving his Order of Australia from the Administrator, John England, 1979



NTRS 2198, Owen collection, Records relating to Order of Australia, [ Telegram from Malcolm Fraser ]

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