

RECORDS

TERRITORY

Northern Territory Archives Service Newsletter

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From the Director

Welcome to *Records Territory*, and a happy 2007 to all.

We emerge from a year that saw significant achievements on the government recordkeeping front including: the engagement of a new contract for the supply and maintenance of the electronic document and records management system for government; enhancement of records storage and disposal services; and survival of our third year administering Part 9 of the Information Act.

Achievements on the archival heritage front included: the processing of an enormous amount of documentation for the archives management system; increased public usage of our research facilities; another good year for the NT History Grants program; and continuing success in providing archives services from our Alice Springs facility.

Thanks to all our government and community clients for their support over the past year and we look forward to doing our best for you in 2007.



Greg Coleman
Director NTAS

NT History Grants

This year's round of History Grants were advertised and applications closed on May 5 2006. Successful recipients for 2006 can be found on page 12.

Congratulations again to History Grant recipient Tony Roberts for winning the Chief Minister's Northern Territory History Book Award for 2006. His winning book is *Frontier Justice: A history of the Gulf Country to 1900* (University of Queensland Press, 2005).

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

Shirley Brown - *Icons of the Territory* (2006)

Cathy Robinson - *Buffalo Hunting and the feral frontier of Australia's Northern Territory* (in *Social and Cultural Geography*, Vol 6, No 6, December 2005 886 - 901)

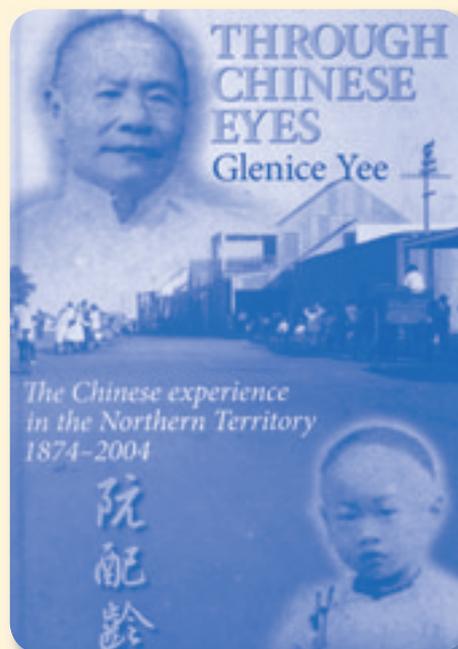
Eva McRae-Williams - *What is an Indigenous museum? A Tiwi Island case study* (thesis, May 2005)

Liam Campbell - *Darby: One hundred years in the life of a changing culture* (ABC Books, 2006).

Glenice Yee - *Through Chinese Eyes: The Chinese experience in the Northern Territory 1874-2004*. See page 10 for more information on the launch of the book.

CONTENTS

- NT History Grants 1
- New Accessions - Darwin 2
- Obituary - Reg Harris 3
- New Accessions - Alice Springs 4
- Trim System Management 5
- Spotlight on ... Tennant Creek Police Journal 6
- Research in Progress 8
- NT History Grant Recipient, Glenice Yee 10
- Australian Society of Archivist Conference - Alice 11
- Francis Good Retires 11
- Staff Movements 11
- NT History Grant Recipients 12
- Who's Who 12



New Accessions - Darwin

Archivist, Kym Muller, provides details below of some recently donated material.

CURNOCK, LOUIS ALFRED (JIM)

NTRS 2583 Photographs relating to Darwin, Koolpinyah Station, and Port Essington, ca1930 - 1942.

Jim Curnock, brother of Ada Mumford, has donated photographs relating to his childhood in Darwin. Also, Mr Curnock has been of great assistance in identifying photographs of the Herbert



NTRS 2583, Item 13: Miss Herbert, Mrs Herbert and the two sons, and Lou and Ada Curnock, son Jim, daughters Ada, Margaret, and Don [left to right, adults standing at back: Rachel Herbert, Anna Herbert, Mrs Curnock, Oscar Herbert, two girls at left are Ada Curnock and Margaret Curnock, and two men kneeling at front are Evan Herbert (left) and Lou Herbert]



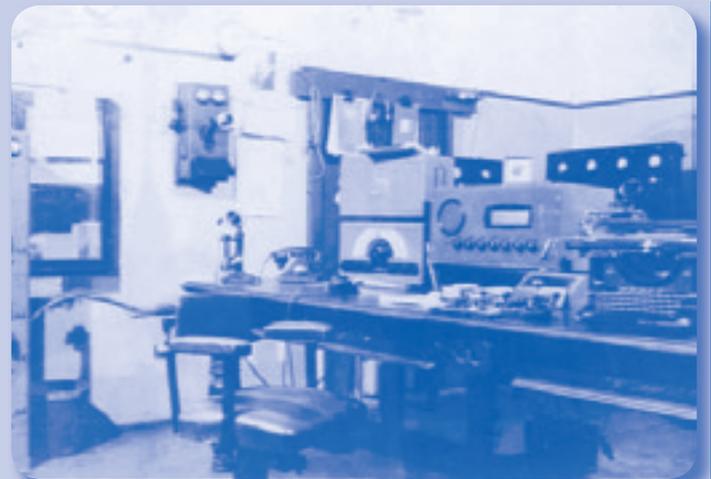
NTRS 2583, Item 4: Carting fence posts at Koolpinyah

family and Koolpinyah Station from other series, and providing information about the way of life in Darwin during the 1930s.

The photographs in NTRS 2583 are mainly of Darwin and Koolpinyah Station during the period 1930-1942. Images include a chimney at Port Essington; an Aboriginal burial ceremony at Mindil Beach; and ships burning in Darwin Harbour after an air raid in the Second World War.



NTRS 2583, Item 23: Piece of Neptuna [bomb fragment, at left, and fragment of the Neptuna, cargo vessel with beer bottle for perspective]



NTRS 2583, Item 25: Equipment in Darwin wireless station where Lou Curnock worked as an operator [Amalgamated Wireless Australia]

MUMFORD, ADA (NEE CURNOCK)

NTRS 2579 "The Northern Territory 1824-1924, a historical summary" booklet, 1924-1924.

NTRS 2580 Reference copy of booklet, "The Northern Territory 1824-1924, a historical summary", 1924-1924.

Ada Mumford visited the Northern Territory Archives Service in February as part of her trip here for the commemoration of the bombing of Darwin.

In 1929 the Curnock family arrived in Darwin so Mrs Mumford's father, Lou Curnock, could take up his post with Amalgamated Wireless Australia (AWA).

The family were given a brief introduction to their new surroundings with "The Northern Territory 1824-1924, a historical summary", a booklet released in 1924 to coincide with the centenary of the Northern Territory.

continued page 3

New Accessions - Darwin

Mumford, Ada (Nee Curnock), continued from page 2

The publication includes images of the Northern Territory dating from 1873 to 1924, mainly consisting of views and buildings of Darwin. The booklet also includes a list of government residents and administrators from 1864 to 1924, and advertisements for local businesses (eg, "Bert Pike, hairdresser").

As the original publication is fragile, a reference copy is available to researchers in NTRS 2580.

CROSS, PHILLIP BENJAMIN (PHIL)

NTRS 2588 "The Alice Springs to Darwin, working towards the dream" unpublished article relating to the Northern Territory railway, 2005-2005

Phil Cross has documented his involvement with the construction of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway over the period 1983-2005 in an article now available to researchers in the Darwin search room.

The article includes the historical background to the project from 1979 onwards; Mr Cross's work on freight forecasts; surveys and evaluations of the impact of the railway on local communities; bid evaluations; and the initiation of a study to monitor the impact of the railway on freight transport arrangements for northern Australia.

O'BRIEN, VERNON THOMAS (VERN) OBE

NTRS 2585 Manuscript and research papers relating to the Herbert family and Koolpinyah Station, 1882 - 1999.

NTRS 2587 Transcript of the diary of DB Wiltshire relating to the exploration of the Adelaide River region (1865 - ca1870), 2003 - 2005.

In the 1980s Vern O'Brien was commissioned to write a brief history of the Herbert Brothers by the solicitors acting for the surviving members of the extended family involved in legal disputes relating to the wills of Oscar Herbert and Evan Herbert.

NTRS 2585 consists of Mr O'Brien's annotated draft manuscript, notes, correspondence and research papers relating to the Herbert family and Koolpinyah Station.

The research papers include copies of newspaper cuttings relating to the Herbert family and the court case; family trees of the Herbert and Schomburgk families; the annotated, draft manuscript of the Herbert family; copies of material from other archives and copies of maps for Koolpinyah Station.

NTRS 2587 contains Mr O'Brien's transcript of the 1865 diary kept by DB Wiltshire, a member of the expedition led by BT Finniss. The diary records the exploration of the Adelaide River region aboard the boats "Beatrice" and "Julia", and includes descriptions of the land, encounters with Aboriginal people, and the naming of rivers and creeks.

As the original diary is fragile and closed for preservation, this transcript is open to researchers in the Darwin search room.



Obituary – Reg Harris

Our condolences go to the family and friends of Reg Harris, AM who passed away in February 2006 aged 82 years.

Reg was born in Adelaide in 1924 and grew up in the small Riverland town of Lyrup, situated between Renmark and Berri. He came to Alice Springs on 24 May 1947 to work as an electrician. One of the first buildings Reg worked upon was the construction of Ly Underdown's Alice Springs Hotel in Hartley Street (the site now occupied by the Diplomat Motel).

In 1948 he started his own electrical business in Alice Springs, which coincided with the introduction of evaporative air-conditioners in the township, many of which he would install. A year later he married Marge, a nursing aide at the local hospital, but they were unable to afford to live together and buy their own block of land to build a home for another year or so.

Reg and Marge Harris were involved in many community activities, including Australian Rules football, netball and hockey. Reg represented Alice Springs on several government and private boards and was involved in the tourism industry. He helped establish the first local radio station in Alice Springs 8HA (the Heart of Australia). When Cyclone Tracy devastated Darwin, Reg was elected chairman of the Alice Springs Cyclone Tracy Appeal committee and supervised aid measures extended to evacuees from Darwin.

Reg was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his services to sport, the town and tourism and was a recipient of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal.

Reg's memory will be upheld through an extensive oral history interview lodged at NTAS. This seven hour and forty minute interview was conducted by Meredith Campbell in 1996 (NTRS 226, TS 859). Reg's oral history is a wide ranging, informative and perceptive discussion of his life and times in Alice Springs.

*Photograph courtesy of the
Centralian Advocate*

New Accessions - Alice Springs

Archivist Pat Jackson introduces some new collections from the Alice Springs office.

Sister Eileen Heath and Annette Roberts

Working on an archival collection is made easier when you know something about the people that created and used the records, when you know something about their life, the things they felt deeply about and their relationships with other people. In the case of the material donated by Annette Roberts concerning Sister Eileen Heath of St Mary's Hostel in Alice Springs, greater context was provided by the fact that Annette was Sister Eileen's biographer.

Annette's biography entitled *Sister Eileen, a life with the lid off* (Access Press, 2002) was vital in providing context for the records donated by Annette Roberts, records given to her by Sister Eileen and by others in the course of her research into Sister Eileen's life and times.

Sister Eileen Heath (1905 -) was a lay deaconess involved in the care and welfare of children of mixed race ancestry in the mid twentieth century. She was pivotal in the development of St Mary's Church of England Hostel as a place where children could board whilst attending school in Alice Springs. Sister Eileen worked as a Welfare Officer for the Native Affairs Branch of the Northern Territory Administration. She was a founding member of the Parole Board of the Northern Territory and a foundation member and Secretary of the Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Association in Alice Springs. She has a long association and interest in the welfare and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in Central Australia.

Sister Eileen received a Member of the British Empire in 1968, became a lay canon of the Anglican Church, was named Centralian of the Year in 1992 and has a road named after her in Alice Springs.

The collection of material donated by Annette Roberts (with permission of Sister Eileen and others) includes photographs, letters, newspaper articles, watercolour sketches, reports, sheet music, diaries, a visitor's book and submissions to a Royal Commission and to the Gunner Cubillo case.

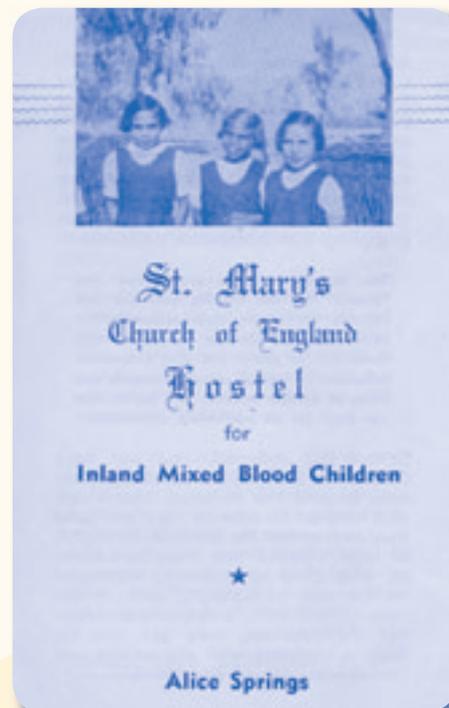
Some of the records in the collection were the subject of a subpoena by the lawyers representing the North Australian Legal Aid Service (NALAS) Stolen Generation Litigation Unit (acting for the late Mr Gunner and Mrs Gunner Cubillo) in the Federal Court case of Gunner and Cubillo versus the Commonwealth Government.

The case was also known as the Stolen Generation Case. The records that were used in the court case were still in evidence bags when deposited in the Northern Territory Archives Service. In the relevant series and item descriptions, the evidence

bag numbers are included in the format [GC ##] to indicate that the records were used in court.



NTRS 2557, item 29, Nita Palmer, Palmer's camp [Sister Eileen Heath, Nita Palmer and cockatoo]



NTRS 2552, item 1, St Mary's Church of England Hostel for mixed blood children (pamphlets) [GC 40, GC 46]



NTRS 2552, item 10, Sheet music used at St Mary's Church of England Hostel



NTRS 2557, item 41, Jubilee or Coronation, "The Belles of St Mary's" [Girls in back of utility with Sister Eileen Heath and Mrs Lillian Schroder]

Trim System Management

It seems amazing that a whole year has passed since the last report on TRIM System Management happenings and it just seems like yesterday. We have survived an upgrade to TRIM Context (Version 5 Release 2 Service Pack 3), which was completed in December 2005 and, as announced on the 11 July 2005, a major NTPS administrative change. We are now planning for another upgrade to TRIM Context.

TOWER Software wins whole of NT Government Contract with its Electronic Document and Records Management solution (EDRM)

The Northern Territory Government (NTG) has made a considerable investment in its EDRM solution and its related infrastructure. From 1998 to 30 June 2006 the solution was supported under a contract with IBM. In May 2006 a Request for Tender was issued for the continuing supply and maintenance of TRIM licences and services for five years, with an optional three year extension, commencing 1 July 2006. The successful Tenderer was TOWER Software.

Under the contract the NTG is expected to become the first Australian state or territory to deploy a single EDRM platform across all government agencies. The agreement will see the number of agency staff with access to TRIM expand from between 3000-4000 currently to all NTG employees who use computers. The contract encompasses the purchase of an enterprise licence which will provide the NTG with full licensing in perpetuity.

TRIM is a centrally managed whole of government system, residing on servers managed by the Department of Corporate and Information Services, Data Centre Services. Each agency has its own TRIM database that is available to authorised users. The NT Archives Service (NTAS) manages the contract with TOWER Software and the Government's implementation of TRIM. The NTG is unique in its implementation of TRIM in that no other site in the world has had the technical challenges in implementing multiple datasets on centrally managed servers.

The Upgrade/s to TRIM Context

The upgrade to TRIM Context was not as seamless as we would have liked. As the implementation experienced technical difficulties. The challenge in managing a centrally supported system is how to upgrade all the components required ensuring minimal disruption to users

across all agencies. TRIM is now a critical application for some agencies as it has been totally integrated into their business processes.

The technical constraints experienced in the initial implementation of TRIM Context have mainly been addressed with the migration, in August and September 2006, from DB2UDB to Oracle where a new database software and server architecture was introduced. Telstra commitment in upgrading WAN links has also meant that a centralised server model is a more viable option with the current (mainly paper) implementation of TRIM.

The planning for another upgrade to TRIM Context has commenced and we have engaged all service providers in the planning process. Given the complexity of rolling out TRIM upgrades across whole of government the least disruptive upgrade path to move from the current version of TRIM to TRIM Context V6 would be in 2 Stages:

- Stage 1 - Upgrade from V5.2 SP3 to TRIM Context V5.2 SP5
- Stage 2 - Upgrade from V5.2 SP5 to TRIM Context V6.2

Stage 1 is expected to be completed by August 2007.

TRIM Training

The recruitment actions to fill the Information Management System Analyst - Training & Promotion Officer position, which was temporarily vacated by Helen Barnes, have not been successful. As a result of this TRIM Administrator and Train the Trainer Training (T3) have not been able to be conducted for TRIM users this year. However, with the rollout of TRIM Context in 2005, 93 people in Government attended T3 and/or Administrator training.

The new contract with Tower Software provides agency training when required and Tower business partners can provide increased support for agency initiatives in implementing TRIM EDRM solutions.

Staff

Helen Barnes, our Information Management System Analyst - Training & Promotion Officer, is now ensconced at TOWER Software as part of her 12 month career break. I caught up with Helen at the TRIM User Forum held at Palm Cove, North Queensland in September 2006. It was great seeing Helen present at this conference.

We were fortunate to recently have Warren Hoffmann and Catherine Maher, from the

Department of Planning and Infrastructure, spend some time in the Support Team as a career development exercise. It gave them the opportunity to see what it was like on the "other side".

For further information, please contact myself or member of the team. Contact details are on the back page of this newsletter.

Who's Who

- **Jeanette Collins** - System Manger, phone (08) 8924 7641
- **Celina Hodge** - System Support Officer, phone (08) 8924 7083
- **Wilma Carlow** - System Support and Project Officer, phone (08) 8924 7149



TOWER
SOFTWARE

Spotlight on...Tennant Creek Police Journals

Brothel-keepers, beer strikes, burials and bicyclists: A journey through a Tennant Creek police journal (26/03/1938 - 13/07/1939)

Archivist Pat Jackson looks at a police journal from Tennant Creek and points out the usual and unusual side to police work during Australia's last gold rush.

One of the strengths of the Northern Territory Archives Service's collection is police journals, especially those written when the police were also the major administrative body in a town or region. The amount of detail written in them varies from police officer to police officer, and from station to station. They can be used by researchers interested in a range of topics, including crimes investigated, the names of police horses and camels, the dipping of cattle along the stock route, the distribution of rations to old and infirm Aboriginals, the maintenance of government bores and the arrival and departure of dignitaries.

The Tennant Creek police journals are not an exception. Yet they have their own regional flavour as they are journals that document life in a mining town. Let's take a look at the journal from March 1938 to July 1939. This period is in the midst of what is described as Australia's 'last gold rush' and just before Australia enters World War II.

The journal opens up with Sergeant Littlejohn and Constable McKinnon performing general police duties. Constable Mutch is in hospital with acute dermatitis on both his feet and Constable McKinnon is relieving him from Alice Springs. The Police Tracker is on fatigues duty - he's cleaning the lavatories and the cells. They register a birth and death, hand over mining duties to the Government Geologist, H.B. Owen, document the incoming mail and arrest a drunken Western Australian miner. The town is quiet and orderly at 12.45 am.

It appears that most days the town is quiet and orderly, when an arrest is made the police note it in the journal and make a special note in the margin of the journal. The same is done for deaths, burials, the provision of meals to prisoners or 'half-caste' children removed from their families or the arrival of the Administrator. The police note when they send or receive mail, a telegram or a wire. These marginal notes are a handy aid for a researcher who might be looking for a death, arrest or a child on their way to a children's home or mission.

On December 10th 1938, Sergeant Bridgland and Constable Mutch have far from a quiet and orderly night as Bridgland writes:

"a crowd of 9 men [who] were singing and

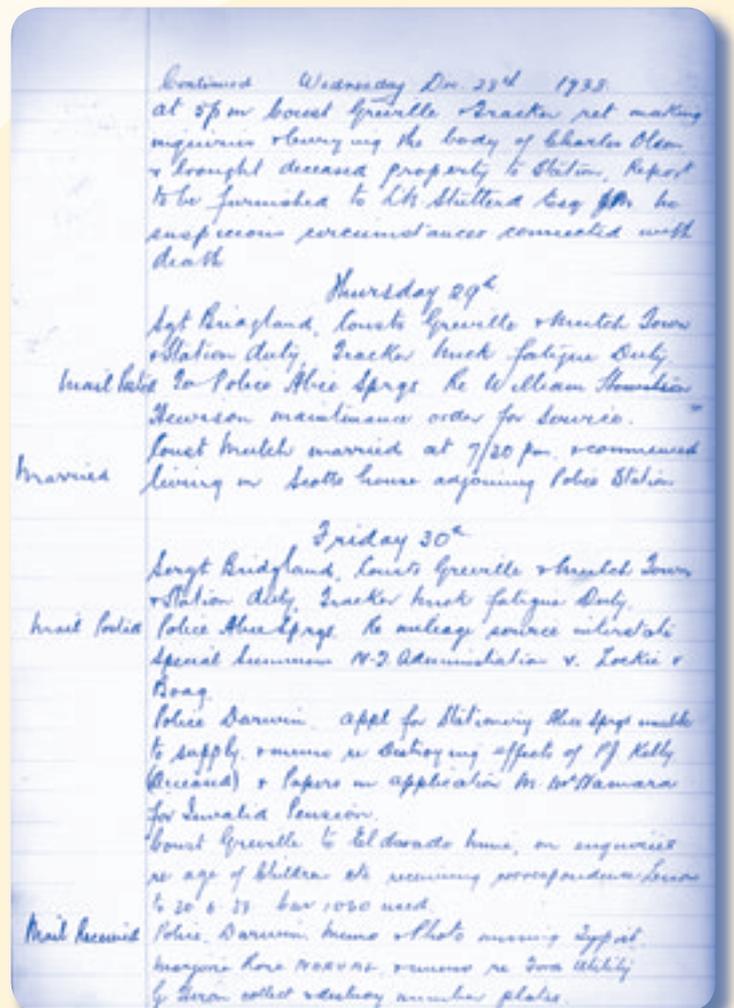
making a disturbance, and when requested to move and stop there [sic] disorderly conduct, they refused and commenced to argue the point and we walked away and was writing their names and going back to see who was who, they commenced to argue again. ...one...made an offensive remark and I arrested him, but was hindered and prisoner taken from Const. Mutch and myself. Five men hindered us [names are listed], with the result we had to let the prisoner go, but warrants will be issued in the morning."

On the same night they also arrested three other men on separate charges of drunkenness and fighting. Most of the arrests that the police make are for men who are drunk, disorderly and using obscene language. Therefore nothing grabs your attention in a police journal like an arrest for keeping a bawdy house, especially when the name of the woman charged is the same as a famous literary and film prostitute. Somerset Maugham wrote in 1921 about the relationship between prostitute and a missionary in his short story 'Rain'. On Friday May 13th 1938, Tennant Creek's own madam (with the same name as Maugham's heroine) is fined ten pounds and one pound's costs. For some reason I like to think that the enterprising and entrepreneurial lady in question was working under an assumed name, one she was inspired to take from either reading Maugham's story or from seeing the 1928 silent film starring Gloria

Swanson or the 1932 talkie starring Joan Crawford.

December 27th 1938 sees the discovery by Aboriginal stockmen of a man's body "about 12 miles away from Banka Banka Station, also a pushbike off main N.S. [north-south] road...dead man presumed to be Chris Olsen who left here some 10 or 12 days ago per pushbike for some unknown destination". Constable Greville and the Tracker travel by car to investigate this death and to bring the body and possessions back to Tennant Creek. They bury the body and there are no suspicious circumstances. All the paper work surrounding this death is handed to Father Leslie of the Church of England to take to the police station at Alice Springs.

The entry for December 29th 1938 is a typical day of town and station duty, however the evening gets better for Constable Mutch as the entry reads "Constable Mutch married at 7.30 pm and commenced living in Scott's House adjoining police station". The word 'married' appears as a marginal comment



F303 ,Police Station, Tennant Creek, Extract from police journal 26/03/1938 - 13/07/1939

Spotlight on...Tennant Creek Police Journals

along with 'mail posted' and 'mail received'. (see image on page 6).

A telegram arrives from the Finke railway stationmaster on January 25th 1939, informing the police that the Finke River is in flood and that it is uncertain when the train will be able to get through. The police are requested to "advise all suspend perishable orders until definite advice from Railways Adelaide". On February 8th, Tennant Creek is experiencing some food shortages. Sergeant Bridgland sends a memorandum requesting authority to loan food stuffs from the supply set aside for rationing to old and infirm Aboriginals. Later in the year the baker, Mr Armstrong, repays a loan of flour that he borrowed during the food shortage.

The lack of material for coffins becomes a recurring theme from early March until late May 1939. As there was not an undertaker in town, burying the dead was another job for the police. On May 24th 1939, material for eight coffins arrives in Tennant Creek. In the margins of the police journal the word coffins is written in block letters and underlined, perhaps a reflection of the level of relief felt. However on the following day a memorandum is sent to Alice Springs requesting some screws to put the coffins together and oil to "preserve the wood". The death of Mustapha Hassen on 27th June necessitates the construction of the first coffin. This is done that night at the police station by Mr Baker and Mr Appleby.

Sergeant Bridgland, Constable Mutch and Tracker Mick also clean out the grave on the following day and buy some hemp rope (costing three shillings and ninepence) for the purpose of lowering the coffin into the grave. A long entry for June 28th outlines the reason why the rope was purchased. The last piece of rope was left in the previous grave due to the 'stench getting on the rope'. The rope was used on April 6th to exhume a suicide and the smell was too overpowering for those concerned.

This suicide resulted in another murky police job, namely the escorting of the suicide victim's intestines to Darwin for analysis. Constable Mutch catches a plane to Darwin on March 30th with the stomach contents and returns on April 4th with Dr Franklin's report and the stomach contents. A telegram is sent to Darwin requesting an order to exhume the body and when it is granted at 10.30pm "Coroner Owen, Dr Thom, Sgt Bridgland and Const Mutch with Tracker Billy left in Coroner Owen's car for T.K. Cemetery and there exhumed remains... Dr Thom made examination of

the brain and after examination the body was re-interred."

The Coroner reports an open finding to this death, the cause being cyanide poisoning. The dead woman lived at Eldorado Mine and the police found cyanide in a cigarette tin. Cyanide was used at this time as a chemical to dissolve gold from finely crushed ore. A half bottle of Gilbey's Gin and the cigarette tin with traces of cyanide are taken as evidence.

There are also several investigations into larceny of amalgam. Amalgam is a mixture of gold and mercury. The most detailed case starts on Tuesday 27th June when the Mining Warden and the Manager of Number 1 Government Battery come into the station and hand over "1 small glass bottle containing amalgam". The amalgam was found "under the mattress of the bed of [an employee] at the Battery". The Sergeant and the Constable travel to the Battery and interview the employee who declares that a part of the amalgam is actually from Number 2 Battery and is the result of "Ward's crushing and he had been told by Ward that he could have what was not cleaned up from the plates". The police conduct a number of interviews and the employee is arrested, taken to the station and charged with "larceny by a servant under Sect. 188 Crim. Law. Consol. Act".

In early July, Sergeant Bridgland travels to Number 2 Battery and the Government Assayer weighs the amalgam. The next day, July 4th, the Mining Warden and the manager

are back at the station and report "finding about 4 oz [ounces] of gold amalgam in room previously occupied by [employee] also two skeleton keys found amongst the rubbish". On July 8th the employee is found guilty of larceny as a servant of amalgam. He has two hours to pay his fine of twenty pounds and costs totalling fifty shillings.

A beer strike or boycott is held in early May 1939. The police report that on May 5th at "8 pm. Meeting held in front of Milligan's garage held by beer strikers. Quite OK. Wrestling held in Scott's Hall. Attended. All orderly. Hotels closed 10 pm". The next day there are two more meetings held by 'beer boycotters'. On Monday May 8th Sergeant Bridgland patrols the town in the police car and goes out to the aerodrome "re: beer strike and men not working on 'drome". The beer strike does not last longer than a couple of days. Unfortunately we do not know any other details about this beer event. Was the quality of beer in Tennant so bad that the public protested, or was there a very short lived temperance movement?

This is just a hint of the many stories in our police journals just waiting to be discovered and to excite the imagination. They provide a unique snapshot of time and of place and are complemented by our personal records and oral history collections. A journey through a police journal can be a most rewarding experience for our researchers and take you back in time. The beauty of this is that you don't even have to leave the air-conditioned Search Room behind!



NTRS 1336/14, McKinnon Collection, Tennant Creek looking south from police station

Research in Progress

Noah Riseman, University of Melbourne
– *Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit.*

This is an ongoing PhD project examining the role of the Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit (N.T.S.R.U.), and other Yolngu participation in the Second World War. The project aims to contextualize Yolngu involvement in a wider discourse of settler-Yolngu relations. Was this force really a break with the structures of colonialism, or was it rather another form of government exploiting indigenous knowledge? The project aims not only to situate the N.T.S.R.U. in wider history of the Northern Territory, but more broadly into a transnational discourse of indigenous people being employed for defense of settler nations in times of conflict.

Pam Wickham, Charles Darwin University & Parks & Wildlife Services of the Northern Territory – *History of mining in the Litchfield area.*

Tin mining history of Litchfield National Park, for undergraduate study and a visitor centre at Wangi Falls at Litchfield National Park.

George Main, National Museum of Australia – *Springvale station.*

The National Museum in Canberra is redeveloping one of its major galleries. The new gallery will consider ten big themes of Australian history. One theme, pastoralism, will look at the expansion of the pastoral industry across the Australian continent by focusing on historical encounters at particular places at particular moments in time. Within part of the pastoralism section of the Creating a Country gallery, the Museum is considering telling stories about the establishment of Springvale station, one of the first Top End pastoral stations, and the construction and operation of Springvale homestead near Katherine by the Giles family in the 1870s & 1880s. While researching the history of Springvale, the Museum has drawn on Giles family material held by the Northern Territory Archives Service.

Sharon Wilson, George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens – *History of the George Brown Botanic Gardens.*

Collection of information on historical background of "Heritage Precinct" of George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens. This information includes photographic images, maps, annual reports, oral history records from 1860s to 1980s. The information will help to determine fact from fiction and provide evidence on which a management and development

plan for the Heritage Precinct can be built. It also gives an insight into social conditions of the time and contribution of individuals to the development and preservation of the Gardens.

Phil Herdman, Nhulunbuy – *History of Nhulunbuy.*

Phil's current projects are-

"Origins of Place Names around Gove"

"Origins of Place Names in Eastern Arnhemland- Roper to Gove"

"War History of Gove, Milingimbi & Wessel Islands"

"History of the Gove Peninsula"

"History of Gove through the local newspapers"

Christopher Whitehead – *History of the Ghan.*

My research was in regard to an interview with Marjorie Gook to which I had been alerted by Francis Good. I was about to write an article on 'The Ghan' on which I had just arrived in Darwin. I write for a magazine called Coast & Country which is published in Melbourne and distributed throughout Australia. This trip to Darwin was made possible by the Great Southern Railways and I thought a personal interest story would sit well with the story of the incredible journey I had just completed. The interview with Mrs Gook was fascinating as she had travelled on 'The Ghan' over a period of many years. In fact she has recently completed her 118th trip!

Andrew Pitt – *The Transcontinental Railway Survey 1913-14.*

My research is aimed at producing a play script based on the experiences of a survey party during the survey of a railway route from Oodnadatta to Pine Creek and an easterly route to Camooweal. The script (working title 'The Last Peg') will draw on the writings (including letters and diaries) of surveyors Richard Lawrence and Nathaniel Chalmers and surveyor's assistant David Sturrock.

Frances Morphy, Australian National University – *Outstation movement in North Eastern Arnhem Land.*

I visited the archives to begin looking for materials relating to the early days of the 'outstation movement' among the Yolngu-speaking people of north-east Arnhem Land. This is as part of a case study of a homelands resource agency being undertaken under the auspices of a larger ARC Linkage grant project on Indigenous Community Governance.

Dominique Sweeney, Australian National University – *The use of masks in corroborees*

In northwest Australia a range of corroborees incorporate the use of masks. These and other performance objects connect bodies to country, cultural knowledge and ancestors. Dominique's project is in two parts: making a digital video (DV) about the way these masks come into being and how they are used; and a written thesis analysing the process involved in making the DV. While centering on filming masked corroborees, it is the relationships, the creation, the people involved in the creation, the preparation for performance and the potential for trading the design, music, concept and materials which frame Dominique's research. Masking in this context is, Dominique believes, a process of manifestation, not transformation. In researching the way balga, junba and wangga corroborees traditionally move across the country through the Wurnan exchange system, a range of interconnections emerge and provide a local framework from which to position research discussion. The people in the film and thesis are involved in the discussion and the way in which they are presented.

Kathy De La Rue, Charles Darwin University – *PhD thesis in Northern Territory history, Charles Darwin University. Provisional title: 'The Development of Darwin, 1911-1978: The role of the Commonwealth'.*

My research is aimed at providing a detailed study of the way Darwin developed socially, economically, and physically during this period. I will be paying special and critical attention to the way in which Commonwealth government policies and the bureaucracies in both Canberra and Darwin affected the city's growth.

Valerie Fletcher – *Mining in the Northern Territory.*

The bald facts of the research was to update and expand material from my Master's thesis, *The Commonwealth Takes over the Northern Territory: 1901-1910'*. It was for an article to be submitted to the Australian Mining History Association journal. The subject matter was story of the two copper smelters built in the Northern Territory in the first decade of last century. The government funded reverberatory furnace was first sited at the Two and a Half Mile (present day Stuart Park/Parap) and later rebuilt at the Daly River Copper Mine. The other smelter was built at Yam Creek near Fountainhead on the original Palmerston/Port Darwin to Pine Creek railway. It was financed by an English company, The Northern Territory Mining and Smelting Company. After the latter closed in 1906 some of the material was taken from Yam Creek to the Daly River to build a second reverberatory furnace to replace the deteriorating earlier furnace. When prices for copper fell the Daly River's smelter closed in late 1909.

Research in Progress

Julia Martinez, University of Woollongong – *Pearl industry and labour migration from Eastern Indonesia*.

Researching Indonesian labour in the Northern Territory pearl-shell industry and labour migration from Eastern Indonesia to Darwin 1925–1955.

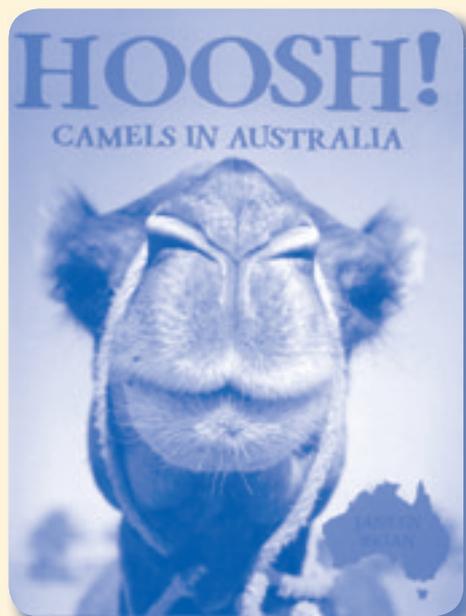
Stephen Carleton – *History of the Darwin Theatre Company*.

The project will commemorate the company's 50th anniversary (1959-2009), and will culminate in a publication comprising of a series of essays outlining the company's history and include visual documentation of posters and programs of key productions over the full 50 years. There will also likely be a CD Rom attached to the publication that includes interviews with key stakeholders and visual footage from the ABC archives in Darwin.

Les Searle, Research Officer, James Cook University – *Dynamic Savannah project*.

The project is the Dynamic Savannah project

Congratulations to one of our remote researchers, Janeen Brian for being shortlisted in the 2006 Children Book of the Year Awards for her book *Hoosh! Camels in Australia* (ABC Books, 2005). Janeen won an Honours Award in the Eve Pownall Award for Information Books.



of the Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre. The project includes a wide group of researchers who are studying various aspects of the changing balance of grass and trees across the Tropical Savannas of Northern Australia. My role in the team is to research and collate existing information from a wide range of sources including the Northern Territory Archives. The historic information contributes to a project website. I am part of a team that will make contemporary observations of the current grass/tree balance later this year. The project will present a comparison between these current observations and the previous state of the vegetation.

Elizabeth Caldwell, Angurugu Community Library – *Historical photos relating to Groote Eylandt*.

In summary, I have been on a quest to locate relevant materials for the "Ngakwurrilangwa Alawudawarra" (Our Story) database, being developed for the Aboriginal residents of Groote Eylandt.

It is always appreciated when the efforts of the Search Room staff are acknowledged in published works. Therefore we were overjoyed at the fulsome praise the staff in Alice Springs and Darwin received in the preface to Barry McGowan's recent book, *Fool's Gold: Myths and legends of gold seeking in Australia* (Lothian Books, 2006). Barry wrote:

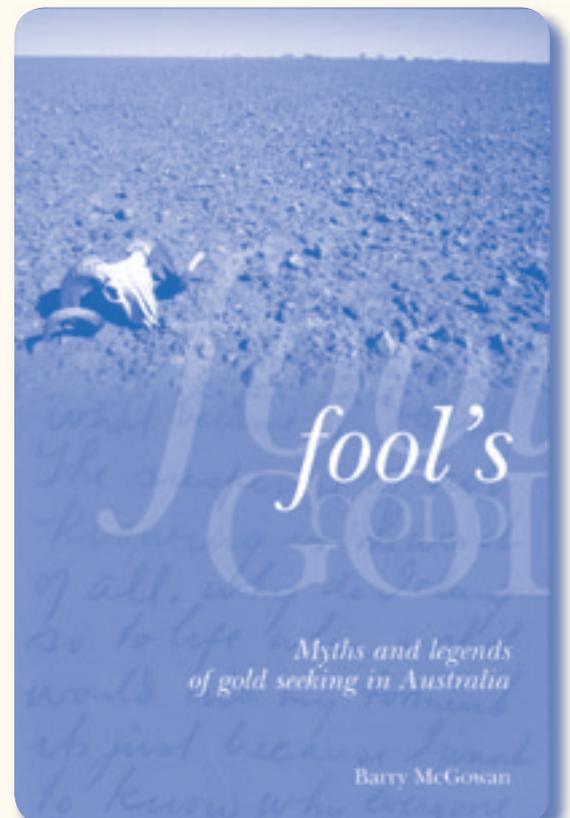
I had allowed time to undertake research in Alice Springs at the Library, the Northern Territory Archives and the Arid Zone Research Institute Library. The assistance from all quarters was overwhelming. Some of the archives material, in particular the extracts from oral histories, was forwarded to me in Canberra, and for this assistance I am very grateful to Carolyn Newman, Pat Jackson, and Françoise Barr, who was relieving temporarily from Darwin.

Thanks Barry for the praise.

My search has included the NT Archive collection of photos from Groote Eylandt where I found a total of 215 potentially useful images.

Mike Sweet, Darwin – *Life and work of Territory architect, Beni Burnett*.

In January 2006 Mike Sweet was commissioned by the ABC's Regional Production Fund to produce and present a radio documentary on the life and work of Territory architect Beni Burnett. The program 'Searching for Beni', explored Burnett's life in China before 1930, and his time in the Territory from 1937 until his death in Alice Springs in 1955. Mike states that the aim was to deepen people's understanding of Burnett and his work. His career spanned a period of time when the British empire was receding, and architecture was changing from classical to the first truly modern influences. Burnett's work in Darwin and Alice Springs left a mark and a legacy, which still resounds with architects today'. *continued on page 10*



The Sea Fox Saga – *involving a Hollywood actor/magician, a beautiful show-girl from Manila and a fully matured bad-tempered chimpanzee*

In mid-1959 a leaking American yacht, the Sea Fox, limped into Darwin from Singapore. Amongst those on board were a Hollywood actor/magician, a beautiful show-girl from Manila and a fully-mature bad-tempered chimpanzee. The yacht remained for a couple of weeks and then set sail for the eastern states with a, mostly, new crew. They ran into trouble in the Arafura Sea and with the help of the RAAF and Navy reached Galiwinku where the yacht was further damaged in an attempted beaching.

Sea Fox was temporarily repaired and brought back to Darwin where she languished for a number of years while attempts were made to sort out squabbles over ownership, debts, etc. She was eventually bulldozed and burnt at Doctor's Gully and the remains buried.

Local researcher Mike Flanagan would like to talk to anyone who was involved in the saga. Mike may be contacted on phone 89851955 or email: mikeflanagan@ozemail.com.au

Research in Progress

Searching for Beni was broadcast by Radio National in April 2006, and an extended version was produced for ABC Darwin and Alice Springs in May 2006.

Further details of Searching for Beni are available from, (and can be downloaded) at: www.abc.net.au/rn/bydesign/

Joanna Boss, University of Melbourne - *Bark paintings made by the Anindilyakwa people of Groote Eylandt in the early 1940s and initially collected by Fred Gray.*

The University of Melbourne holds a rare group of thirty-six bark paintings made by the Anindilyakwa people of Groote Eylandt in the early 1940s. These works were initially collected by Fred Gray, soon after he established the settlement of Umbakumba, and represent the artistic activity of a small number of Groote Eylandters. In the 1940s the paintings were sent to Melbourne and became part of the Leonhard Adam Collection of International Indigenous Culture at the University of Melbourne. At the time of acquisition these outstanding examples of art were aligned more closely with cultural artefacts, and therefore little information is recorded about the artists, the content and context of the paintings production.

As custodians of the University of

Melbourne Art Collection, the Ian Potter Museum of Art is working closely with the Groote Eylandt community to establish cultural protocols, accurate information and access to these special works. Papers held in the Northern Territory Archives Service are crucial to this process of uncovering the story of this remarkable group of early bark paintings.

Professor Tanya Harrod, Royal College of Art, London - *Biography of potter Michael Cardew.*

My project is a commissioned biography of the potter Michael Cardew (1901-1983) to be published by Yale University Press in 2008. Cardew was involved with a project to introduce ceramic production to chosen members of the aboriginal community in the Northern Territories. The project was run under the aegis of the Northern Territory Department of Industrial Art, University of New South Wales from 1968. Cardew was there from May to November 1968. The archive was a rich source of extremely helpful material and complemented further research at the Northern Territory Museum and Art Gallery.

Sabine Hoeng, Darwin - *Iwaidja language projects.*

Sabine is involved in two projects relating

to the Iwaidja language which is an endangered language spoken mainly on Croker Island and the Cobourg Peninsula in north-western Arnhem Land, Northern Territory.

The Iwaidja Documentation Project is funded under the DoBes (Documentation of Endangered Languages) programme of the Volkswagen Foundation in Germany, and coordinated by Professor Nicholas Evans of the University of Melbourne. This is a three year project involving linguists, ethnomusicologists, archaeologists and anthropologists documenting the Iwaidja and other endangered languages of the Cobourg Peninsula in a wide range of settings. The following website provides more information on the project: <http://www.mpi.nl/DOBES/projects/iwaidja/project>

The other related project is the *Minjilang Endangered Languages Publication (MELP)*. Sabine coordinates this project which involves the production of bi-lingual publications in the Iwaidja language. This project is funded by the Australian government (Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Programme, DCITA) and works cooperatively with the Iwaidja Documentation Project mentioned above.

NT History Grant Recipient, Glenice Yee, Launches Her Book at Government House, 4th April 2006

Author Glenice Yee could not have had a more perfect venue for the launch of her book *Through Chinese Eyes: The Chinese experience in the Northern Territory 1874 - 2004*. Glenice has links with Government House that began in the late 1800s when her maternal grandfather, Moo Yat Fah, worked as a carpenter responsible for repairs to the original residence and its 1877-1878 rebuild. In the early 1900s, Glenice's paternal grandfather, Yuen Yet Hing, one of Darwin's leading Chinese merchants, appears in the well known photo taken in 1905 at Government House of prominent Chinese merchants during a Vice Regal visit by Sir George Le Hunt. The 1930s saw the appointment of Glenice's uncle, Con Moo Fat (son of Moo Yat Fah), as the cook at Government House during the period that R.H. Weddell was Administrator (1930 -1937). And finally Glenice, who is also a qualified chef, worked as a chef for a couple of functions at Government House a few years ago.

His Honour the Administrator of the Northern Territory, Ted Egan, hosted the

launch regaling the audience with stories of his experiences with members of the Chinese community particularly in the 1950s when he first came to the NT as a young man. The Chief Minister, the Hon Clare Martin, also attended the launch.

As a Darwin-born Chinese, Glenice has

provided a unique perspective on the Chinese experience in Darwin. Each chapter gives a brief historical overview and the topic is then expanded on through a range of individuals experiences complemented by photos from personal collections still held out there in the community that haven't been in the public domain before.



Left to right: The Honourable Clare Martin, Chief Minister of the NT, Glenice Yee, His Honour Mr Ted Egan Administrator of the NT (photographer - Len Menzies)

Australian Society of Archivists Conference in Alice Springs 2007

Preparations are underway for the Australian Society of Archivists 2007 Conference to be held at the Alice Springs Convention Centre, 23 - 25 August 2007. There will be a number of us from the Northern Territory Archives Service involved with this exciting event.

The broad conference theme for 2007 is Initiatives, Ideas and Interaction: Sharing Our Story.

We'll be discussing recordkeeping

initiatives, ideas and interaction in the fields of:

- Sporting endeavours: from elite sporting events to local organised sport, who is keeping these records and who is using them?
- Scientific research: past, present and future
- Business: where have all the business archives gone?

- Indigenous recordkeeping issues and storytelling: taking it to the community, interaction between art galleries, libraries, archives and museums
- Oral history: in our collections, the collectors and the users, how do oral history programs complement / contrast with the written record
- Recordkeeping legislation: what's been done lately and how does it affect government agencies?
- Regional collections: collaboration, communication and challenges.



The Archives Queen of the Desert, Pat Jackson, welcoming people to Alice Springs

This will be a great opportunity to showcase the Northern Territory and its archival past, present and future. There is already a significant amount of interest in archival circles about this event, with fond memories being held of the last conference which took place in the Alice in 1996. Pat Jackson, the Conference Convenor (also known as the Archives Queen of the Desert) is determined to make ASA 2007 another memorable occasion for archivists and recordkeepers visiting the Centre.

Francis Good Retires

In early October 2006, Francis Good retired from the Territory Government and his position as Oral History Manager. This marked the end of an important era in the NT Government's oral history program since Francis had been at the helm for twenty-one years.

During this time Francis has introduced high standards in audio technology and sound recording and a professional approach to preservation and retrieval services. The oral history collection has grown enormously over the period since it was established soon after self-government.

Francis has become the Territory guru in the oral history business and has trained numerous people in the recording of oral history. On his retirement, Francis was awarded life membership of the Historical Society of the Northern Territory in recognition of his contribution to Territory history.

We thank Francis for all that he has achieved and wish him well as he retires to the south in Castlemaine, Victoria.

Bev Phelts, a Council member of the Historical Society of the Northern Territory, presents Francis with a life membership of the Society.



Staff Movements

Craig Lush

We bid farewell to Archives Services Officer, Craig Lush, who left us in November 2006 to join the police force. Thanks for all your dedicated work over the years Craig, we'll see you on the beat.

Emma Nitschke

We congratulate Emma Nitschke who has been appointed to the position of Archives Services Officer, recently vacated by Craig.

NT History Grant Recipients 2006

Congratulations are extended to the following recipients of this year's Northern Territory History Grants

- **Alan Powell** of Darwin: \$5,000 to research a history of sea approaches to Darwin.
- **Anne Gardiner** of Bathurst Island: \$3,000 to research the history of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Sisters in the Northern Territory, 1908-2008.
- **Judith Lovell** of Alice Springs: \$5,000 to record and document the stories of Kathleen Wallace, Eastern Arrernte traditional owner and custodian of Keringke.
- **Kathy De La Rue** of Palmerston: \$6,000 to research the development of Darwin during the Commonwealth administration, 1911-1978.
- **Wendy Beresford-Maning** of Darwin: \$1,500 to research the work of missionaries of the Sacred Heart in the Top End.
- **Noel Kentish** of Brisbane: \$5,000 to research the life and work of Territorian missionary and humanitarian, Leonard Noel Kentish.
- **Matthew Stephen** of Darwin: \$2,500 to research a comparative study of Aboriginal involvement in cricket in colonial South Australia and the Northern Territory.
- **Heather Hancock** of Alice Springs: \$4,000 to research midwives' stories and the history of home birth in the Northern Territory.
- **Katelyn Hemsley** of Alice Springs: \$3,500 to research and record deaths and lone burials in Central Australia.
- **Stephen Carleton** of Brisbane: \$3,500 to research the history of the Darwin Theatre Company.
- **Jason Gibson** of Alice Springs: \$3,000 to research the history of communism in Central Australia.
- **Adelaide River Primary School Council:** \$3,000 to research the history of the Adelaide River Primary School.
- **Phil Herdman** of Nhulunbuy: \$2,000 to research the origins of early European topographical names in Eastern Arnhem Land.
- **Elina Spilia** of Melbourne: \$3,000 to record oral histories of the Djapu clan of the Yolngu people of North Eastern Arnhem Land.

Who's Who

Greg Coleman (08) 8924 7677
Director
greg.coleman@nt.gov.au

Cheryl Phillips (08) 8924 7677
Administration Officer
cheryl.phillips@nt.gov.au

Linda Bell (08) 8924 7649
Manager, Archives Services
linda.bell@nt.gov.au

Kym Muller (08) 8924 7674
Archivist, Collection Management
kym.muller@nt.gov.au

Pat Jackson (08) 8951 5228
Archivist, Alice Springs
pat.jackson@nt.gov.au

Carolyn Newman (08) 8951 5669
Archives Services Officer, Alice Springs
carolyn.newman@nt.gov.au

Maureen Wilkins (08) 8924 7695
Archives Support Officer
maureen.wilkins@nt.gov.au

Cathy Flint (08) 8924 7347
Manager, Access and Promotion
cathy.flint@nt.gov.au

Françoise Barr (08) 8924 7652
Archivist, Access and Promotion
francoise.barr@nt.gov.au

Emma Nitschke (08) 8924 7653
Archives Services Officer
emma.nitschke@nt.gov.au

Gillian Drewes (08) 8924 7676
Oral Records Officer, Oral History
gillian.drewes@nt.gov.au

Margaret Quan (08) 8924 7494
Records Policy Adviser
margaret.quan@nt.gov.au

Jeanette Collins (08) 8924 7641
System Manager
jeanette.collins@nt.gov.au

Celina Hodge (08) 8924 7083
System Support Officer
celina.hodge@nt.gov.au

Wilma Carlow (08) 8924 7149
System Support & Project Officer
wilma.carlow@nt.gov.au

Loretta Hemsall (08) 8924 7670
Records Policy Adviser
loretta.hemsall@nt.gov.au

Linda Zagorskis (08) 8924 7151
Records Policy Adviser
linda.zagorskis@nt.gov.au

Northern Territory Archives Service

• Darwin Office

Street Address: 2nd Floor, 25 Cavenagh St,
Darwin NT 0800
Postal Address: GPO Box 874 Darwin NT 0801
Website: <http://www.nt.gov.au/dcis/nta/>

Telephone: (08) 8924 7677
Fax: (08) 8924 7660
Email: nt.archives@nt.gov.au

• Alice Springs Office

Street Address: Minerals House, 58 Hartley St,
Alice Springs NT 0870
Postal Address: GPO Box 8225 Alice Springs 0871
Website: <http://www.nt.gov.au/dcis/nta/>

Telephone: (08) 8951 5669
Fax: (08) 8951 5232
Email: nt.archives@nt.gov.au