

## From the Director

Welcome to Records Territory.

In the previous edition I advised that the Northern Territory Archives Service is no longer responsible for Northern Territory Government recordkeeping. An amendment to the Information Act was recently introduced in the Legislative Assembly which defines the roles of the Archives Service and the Records Service. These are now two separate areas of Government managing government archives and records respectively. I note that the same archives and research services continue to be provided by the Northern Territory Archives Service in Darwin and Alice Springs.

In this issue we bring you the regular update about who is researching what in our search rooms, and updates about some of the unique archives collections that have recently been deposited in our Darwin and Alice Springs repositories. We also provide a glimpse of some of the promotional activities undertaken by staff across the Territory in the areas of oral history, archives collection, and release of Cabinet records.

The Northern Territory History Grants for 2009 are now open and we are seeking applications for grants to be taken up in July.

*Greg Coleman*  
Director, Northern Territory Archives Service

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## Cabinet records release

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2009, the first Cabinet records created under Northern Territory self-government in 1978, became open for public access.

The Northern Territory Cabinet consists of government ministers who meet to make decisions on matters such as major policy issues, proposals with significant expenditure or employment implications, matters which involve important initiatives or departures from previous arrangements, proposals with implications for Australian, state and local government relations, legislation, and high level government appointments.

Cabinet submissions and decisions are an invaluable record of the decisions of successive Northern Territory administrations, and cover a wide range of issues relating to the social, political and economic development of the Northern Territory.

In 1978, the Northern Territory Cabinet received submissions, including:

- establishing of the administration of the Northern Territory Government after self-government;
- local government for Katherine, Tennant Creek and "small and isolated communities";
- Aboriginal health programs;
- the construction of community health centres;
- the development of the Ayers Rock Resort at Yulara;
- the establishment of casinos in Darwin and Alice Springs;



Members of Executive 1977-1978. Front L-R: Roger Steele, Jim Robertson. Middle L-R: Nick Dondas, Paul Everingham, HHA J England, Ian Tuxworth. Rear: Marshall Perron. ENGLAND, JOHN ARMSTRONG NTRS 1637, Copyprints of official duties as Administrator 1976-1983, Item 46



(Former) Acting Chief Minister Marion Scrymgour inspecting the records of the 1978 Cabinet, released to the public for the first time on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009

- major project developments for the reconstruction of Darwin, including the Museum and Art Gallery at Bullocky Point;
- the development of the Araluen Cultural Complex in Alice Springs; and
- the McArthur River Project in the Gulf of Carpentaria region and the Ranger Uranium Project in the Alligator Rivers region.

The Cabinet submissions and decisions are filed by meeting date and bound in volumes. A full listing of the submissions and decisions is available online at: <http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/ntas/cabinet/index.html>

Cabinet documents are available for viewing at the Northern Territory Archive Service in Darwin, and scans of selected records are available online via the NTAS Website at <http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/ntas/cabinet/index.html>, along with a highlights narrative.

An access agreement negotiated between the Northern Territory Archives Service and the Department of the Chief Minister provides for an annual opening of Cabinet submissions and decisions and the Executive Council meeting papers 30 years after the records creation.

The series described above are listed as follows in the List of Holdings:

#### **DEPARTMENT OF THE CHIEF MINISTER**

NTRS 2575, Cabinet submissions and decisions, 1971-2003

NTRS 3353, Index to Cabinet submissions and decisions, 1977-1978

These series can be accessed in the Darwin Search Room of the Northern Territory Archives Service. The Darwin Search Room of the Northern Territory Archives Service is open by appointment to the public from Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 12.00noon and 1.00pm to 4.00pm. To contact the Reference Archivist please phone 8924 7677 or e-mail [nt.archives@nt.gov.au](mailto:nt.archives@nt.gov.au), or visit our website for further information.

## Update from the Oral History Unit

The oral history program has recommenced for 2009. Current oral history interviews being conducted include those with recently arrived refugees from overseas; also interviews covering the topics of Aboriginal administration and family history.

If you think you know someone whose experiences should be recorded for our oral history collection please contact the Oral History Unit. Nomination forms are available from our website or you can request a form by phone.

The recent acquisition of material into the collection from Trish Lonsdale (yet to be formally accessioned) is a very exciting development for the Oral History Unit, as it includes oral history interviews recorded in the 1960s and 1970s, making them amongst the earliest received by the Northern Territory Archives Service. Early recordings like this, relevant to the Northern Territory, are very rare and valuable, as their detail can reach back to the previous century.

If you know of any oral history records held in personal family collections or by organisations please consider their future preservation. The Northern Territory Archives Service may be able to assist you with preservation, by providing advice for transferring it to formats which can be accessed today and in the future.

The Oral History Unit would be pleased to hear from you if you have an oral history project in mind or would like to volunteer as an interviewer. Interviewers working collaboratively with the unit on a project are assisted with oral history training and the provision of recording equipment.

Oral history training workshops focus on the interview process and interview techniques. At the end of a one day workshop, participants will understand issues of 'informed consent' and how to plan and conduct an oral history interview. They will also have the opportunity to put the theory into practice by planning and conducting an interview during the workshop. It is preferred to keep training workshops to small groups of 4-6 people to maximise the hands on aspect of interviewing.

If you are interested in participating in such an activity, please don't hesitate to call Matthew Stephen, Manager Oral History Unit, Northern Territory Archives Service, on (08) 8924 7651.

# Reaching far, wide and deep

The Northern Territory Archives Service is staffed by a small dedicated team, with the purpose of caring for and making accessible a unique and irreplaceable collection telling the stories of the Northern Territory. Our collections are used for research which reaches far, wide and deep. Three examples of projects are listed below which illustrate the scope of our work.

**Reaching wide**, some of the inspiration for the movie "Australia" comes directly from Northern Territory Archives Service collections.

When Baz Luhrmann, screen writer and film director and Catherine Martin, costume and production designer, visited the Northern Territory Archives Service, what was to become the film "Australia" probably did not have any shape or form. Meeting them was of course exciting. They looked through many series of images held in our collections and with our permission for their research purposes, Baz Luhrmann photographed many albums in our holdings.

Following this, over subsequent months we were contacted by members of their team researching details of Northern Territory history, including live cattle export, and government house activities, dress and uniforms etc. A number of images of crocodile and buffalo hunting, from within our collection were acquired for the purpose of 'wall dressing', on the movie set.

The Northern Territory Archives Service is included in the credits for the film, somewhere at the very end in very small letters, along with the thousands



**Buffalo shooting party**

WILSON, CHARLES, NTRS 3335, Photographs of Darwin and the Northern Territory, Digitised version, ca1920-ca1930, album1, item 101



**Don Pictures**

WILSON, CHARLES, NTRS 3335, Photographs of Darwin and the Northern Territory, Digitised version, ca1920-ca1930, album 3, item 387

of people and organisations who took part in the making of the movie.

Seeing the film was an interesting experience. It was necessary to remind ourselves of the fact that, although evidently thoroughly researched, the story was, after all, a work of fiction.

Many elements of the story, however, do have a factual basis as discovered by Martin and Luhrmann's research into our collections. For example, when watching the film it was possible to immediately recognise the open air cinema in wartime Darwin as the Don Picture Theatre. Also the homestead on 'Faraway Downs' felt genuine with its flower garden at the front, copying the images present in many collections showing pastoral homesteads. In addition to this, the words of the nameless 'Doctor' in the film about the treatment of 'half caste' children and the assimilation policy of the era, rang true, as if taken straight from historical evidence present in our archives.

Through this film our small archives service is reaching out to millions of people across the world.



**Crocodiles at Daly River**

WILSON, CHARLES, NTRS 3335, Photographs of Darwin and the Northern Territory, Digitised version, ca1920-ca1930, album 3, item 316



**Reaching far, we answer many family history enquiries. The query described below came to us from Sweden.**

We receive many queries via e-mail from interstate and overseas with the occasional query from non English speaking countries. Bo Karlsson from Sweden contacted us via e-mail in June 2008 looking for information about his uncle Josef Ferdinand Israelsson. Bo Karlsson's only known facts about Josef were that he was in Maranboy, Northern Territory, during the war and had died in 1961.

After some investigations we were able to advise Bo Karlsson that the Northern Territory Archives Service held a probate file in the name of Josef Israelsson. Bo Karlsson informed us that he was going to visit Darwin later during the year.

Eventually an appointment to visit the search room and access archives was made for September 2008. We found probate records for Joseph Israelsson, and a check of oral history interviews revealed that one included a mention of him. We arranged for these archives to be made available in the Search Room.

For our researcher, this visit was special. His family in Sweden had received only one letter from their relative in 1947 where he described his life in Australia and told how he raised an Aboriginal child feeding him with goat milk. He had sent a photograph of himself with a group of Aboriginal people from what he described as the Maranboy Aboriginal settlement.



Bo Karlsson in Darwin Search Room

Bo examined the probate document which described Josef as a gardener who died at the Katherine Hospital. Bo Karlsson's mother is listed there as a niece of the deceased.

PROPERTY NOT GIVEN OR			
A	B	C	D
Name of Person Beneficially Entitled to Property (Name Next of Kin)	Address and Occupation (if any)	Residence (if any) of the Beneficiary at the date of the death of the deceased	When the Beneficiary is not given or when the Beneficiary is not given or when the Beneficiary is not given or when the Beneficiary is not given
<b>At Maranboy</b>			
(a) Aina Maj KARLSSON	Maranboy, Sweden	Sweden	
(b) Josef Ferdinand KARLSSON	Maranboy		
<b>At Maranboy</b>			
(a) Josef KARLSSON	Maranboy, N.T.	Maranboy	
<b>At Maranboy</b>			
(a) Josef KARLSSON	Maranboy, N.T.	Maranboy	
(b) Josef KARLSSON	Maranboy, N.T.	Maranboy	
(c) Josef KARLSSON	Maranboy, N.T.	Maranboy	
(d) Josef KARLSSON	Maranboy, N.T.	Maranboy	

The item entry shows Aina Maj Karlsson, Joseph Israelsson's niece who is Bo Karlsson's mother SUPREME COURT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, E104, Probate files, single number, 1955-1975, item 2189

For reference staff assisting Bo Karlsson the next logical step in his investigation was to look for a garden licence application in the area of Maranboy likely to be connected with mining. Mentions were found in registers and a file discovered which gave more details about this particular tenure.

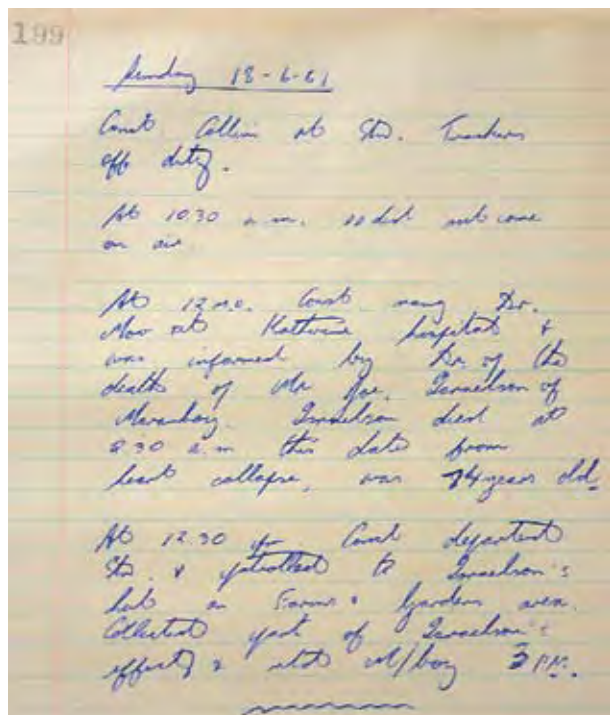


This image shows a covering letter sent by Israelsson with his Garden Licence payment. DEPARTMENT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, MINES BRANCH, NTRS 183, Garden area tenement files with "GA" prefix, 1946-1967, item GA2736



**Register showing payments by Israelsson**  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, MINES  
BRANCH, DARWIN, F1199, Register of machinery, residence,  
garden and business areas, District D [Maranboy] 1940-1956,  
volume 1

Early Police Journals are a great source of information as the Police played an administrative role in remote areas. Looking through Maranboy Police Journals, Bo found that the police regularly patrolled the Aboriginal compound at Maranboy where his uncle was based and made numerous mentions of Joe Israelsson. Bo was particularly moved by the entries in the journal documenting Joe's death at the Katherine hospital after a short illness.



**These pages of police journals show the regular patrols and the police role at the time of Israelsson's death**  
POLICE STATION, MARANBOY, NTRS 2111, Day journals  
[Previously registered as F290], 1928-1986, volume 5

The extract from the oral history is interesting. Israelsson's mention is only small. It is only an aside in an anecdote but it says a great deal about the kind of person Israelsson was and the environment in which he lived.

**Interviewer:** What sort of a bike was it you had, Jim?

Jim Gayton: "Well, I had a 500cc side valve Triumph which was nearly worn out. Down the road they gave me a big Indian... Well, it was the most useless machine I ever had. I must tell you an amusing incident about it. Out from Maranboy there was an Aboriginal compound, and in my travels I used to travel over all these tracks, and I used to go into that compound if I was in that area because the old bloke in charge was a chap by the name of Israelson and he always had goats there. If ever I was going past he would say to come in for a good glass of goat's milk. And there's nothing like cool goat's milk, you've got thick cream on it. This particular day going into this camp was an area of sand - and this Indian, it was foot clutch and it was a bummer of a bike to ride - so I'm going in this day and I dropped down my gears, the old gear change you know, and decided I'd go a little bit faster through the sand so I got half way through and it tossed me off. And of course there was great excitement. All the piccaninnies who had seen it happen reckoned it was marvellous..."

**Extract from Jim Gayton interview transcript 216**  
NORTHERN TERRITORY ARCHIVES SERVICE, NTRS 226,  
Typed transcripts of oral history interviews with "TS" prefix, 1979-ct

Finally our researcher knew that his uncle had come to Australia in 1915. A search in National Archives of Australia *Recordsearch* confirmed this also indicating that Josef had entered Australia from Perth. The few files held at the National Archives appear to complete the picture by indicating that initially Josef had been involved in mining.

Hopefully Bo Karlsson will discover these other archives at a later stage in his research. He is now back in Sweden and with his latest e-mail sent a couple of images taken from his home study, postcards of a distant country.

## Reaching deep, 'The First Australians'

The First Australians is a multi-media production first aired on SBS Television in October 2008. Episode Four, "There is no other Law" concerned the story of Mounted Constable Willshire and the murder of members of the Arrernte people for which he and his Aboriginal trackers were put on trial in the late 1890s.

It is also the story of Frank Gillen, one of the few representatives of the administration in Central Australia, who alerted the authorities to Willshire's heavy-handed approach to enforcing the law of the colonisers.

Research for this episode of the First Australians took place at the Northern Territory Archives Service, Alice Springs office, over a six month period in 2006-2007. A research assistant initially visited to scout out what was available, and later on Rachel Perkins and her production team came along and looked at photographs and the record item we refer to as the "Willshire Journal". This is the Alice Springs Police Station Journal from the time that Willshire was in the police force. In this journal, Willshire writes of his daily activities including travelling around Central Australia responding to pastoralists complaints of cattle killing. Rachel was quite excited to see this record. In some respects it brought the past closer to see Willshire's own handwriting.

Other record series that provided inspiration for the episode included several photographic collections such as James Broadbridge, 'Photograph album relating to Alexandria Station and the A.B.C. Amateur Race Club'; Joe Davis, 'Photographs and related papers of Wire Creek to Alice Springs railway construction' and Bob Buck, 'Photographic negatives and prints of Hermannsburg and the Finke region'.



**[Women on donkeys]**

BUCK, ROBERT (BOB), NTRS 1248, Photographic negatives and prints of Hermannsburg and the Finke region, 1920-1921, CP 50



**Working in Garden**

BUCK, ROBERT (BOB), NTRS 1248, Photographic negatives and prints of Hermannsburg and the Finke region, 1920-1921, CP 23

We also discussed recently published works on Willshire, such as Peter Vallee's *God, Guns and Government on the Central Australian Frontier* (a work that also cites our records) and *In the name of the law: William Willshire and the policing of the Australian frontier* by Amanda Nettelbeck and Robert Foster. Peter Vallee provided some of the commentary for this episode.

We were thrilled to be acknowledged prominently in the credits, and we were very happy to see research turned into such a quality production.

For more information about the First Australians please see [www.sbs.com.au/firstaustralians/](http://www.sbs.com.au/firstaustralians/)

The collections referred to in this article are listing as follows in the Northern Territory Archives Service List of Holdings:

POLICE STATION, ALICE SPRINGS, F255, Police journals, Officer-in-Charge, 1886-1956

BROADBRIDGE, JAMES, NTRS 1463, Photograph album relating to Alexandria Station and the ABC Amateur Race Club, 1916-1923

DAVIS, JOE, NTRS 573, Photographs and related papers of Wire Creek to Alice Springs railway construction, ca1920-1929

BUCK, ROBERT (BOB), NTRS 1248, Photographic negatives and prints of Hermannsburg and the Finke region, 1920-1921



## Reflections of a young archivist

My name is Anita Maertens, and as a prerequisite for a postgraduate degree in Information Management that I will begin in September 2009 in the UK, I have been gaining practical experience by working at libraries and archives in England and Australia. In late 2008 I found myself in a position to work at the Northern Territory Archives Service on the arrangement and description of newly acquired collections.



Anita Maertens, Photograph taken by Kym Muller

This “last frontier’s” fascinating history and abundance of undiscovered territory in research makes the Northern Territory Archives Service a unique place to work.

(This utter uniqueness, I cannot help but point out, is rarely acknowledged by Darwinians, who for the most part seem to not be aware of our existence at all. Being a European only recently arrived in Darwin, I had a conversation with an Immigration officer not so long ago that culminated in great misunderstandings about my place of employment. The confused woman kept on heatedly repeating “on Bagot Road!”, while I, in frustration, kept on pointing my thumb over my shoulder, countering “No no, the NORTHERN TERRITORY Archives, right down this street!” I was sure she could see a little corner of the large “Northern Territory Archives Service” sign on our building right from where she was sitting.)

The occupational field of an archivist is one shrouded in mystery. The theoretical foundation of “Keeping Archives” (the flagship publication of the Australian Society of Archivists) seems to be perfectly comprehensible – but when the fledgling archivist begins to stumble upon the first of many challenges and oddities, the complexity of managing archives is suddenly seen in a new light.

That archives are “preserved because of their

continuing value” does not exactly prepare you for the bizarre and miscellaneous (two words, by the way, which seem to be strictly forbidden in the vocabulary of an archivist) items considered of infinite value by a collection’s creator – these could include hundreds of photographs of feline friends or an empty tape reel.

Knowing that archives “include every known form and format in which information can be fixed in the form of records” did not necessarily prepare me for some of the Northern Territory Archives Service’s extraordinary items.

As someone new to practice in the field of archives, I would like to offer some observations of the activities involved in arranging and describing the personal papers and objects lovingly preserved by another human being.

Wearing my bright purple powder-free nitrile examination gloves, the rush of excitement at opening the first large box of five and catching a first peek of faded documents, rolled maps, personal diaries, and early photography, was reminiscent of the joys of Christmas. Solemnly pacing myself, however, I was required to work slowly to respect the original order of the items in the box.

One of the important tasks of the archivist is implementing appropriate methods of preservation – in practice, again, not quite meeting my expectations. I remember quite clearly when in the first box, the first file, there it was. I stared at it. It just sat there spitefully; rustily biting into the papers it was holding together: the paperclip. Preservation work, as it turned out, can simply be patiently removing thousands of corroding paperclips while causing as little harm as possible to the attached bundles of paper.

As I progressed through the collection it became apparent that in the 1980s, the collection’s creator suddenly made a new discovery – the staple. With grim realization I take the awl which Kym offers to me with an encouraging bright smile. As it turns out, an awl happens to be the ideal tool for removing rusty staples.

In summary, then, the profession of archivist seems to be an exercise in restraint and patience, with an unflinching respect for original order – no matter how chaotic a collection’s order may appear to the beholding archivist. Contributing to the preservation of such a valuable collection brings with it a feeling of great respect for the work, and the challenges of arrangement and description become easily acceptable.

More about the actual contents of this newly acquired, arranged and described collection will be revealed in the next newsletter.

## Thompson's List of "Half Castes" in the Northern Territory, 1899-1900

**"...bringing about a better state of things than that prevailing with reference to the relations between the aborigines and the white and coloured races..."**

(NTRS 790, item 10441, page 2)

Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Government Resident of the Northern Territory expressed concerns for the welfare of "half caste" Aboriginal children, the abuse of Aboriginal women and the effect of the trade of opium and liquor on Aboriginal people in and around settled areas of the Northern Territory. In 1899, Charles Dashwood, Northern Territory Government Resident, proposed a bill in the South Australian Parliament which was intended to provide protection to Aboriginal people. This Bill failed to be passed due to concerns over the regulation of employment.

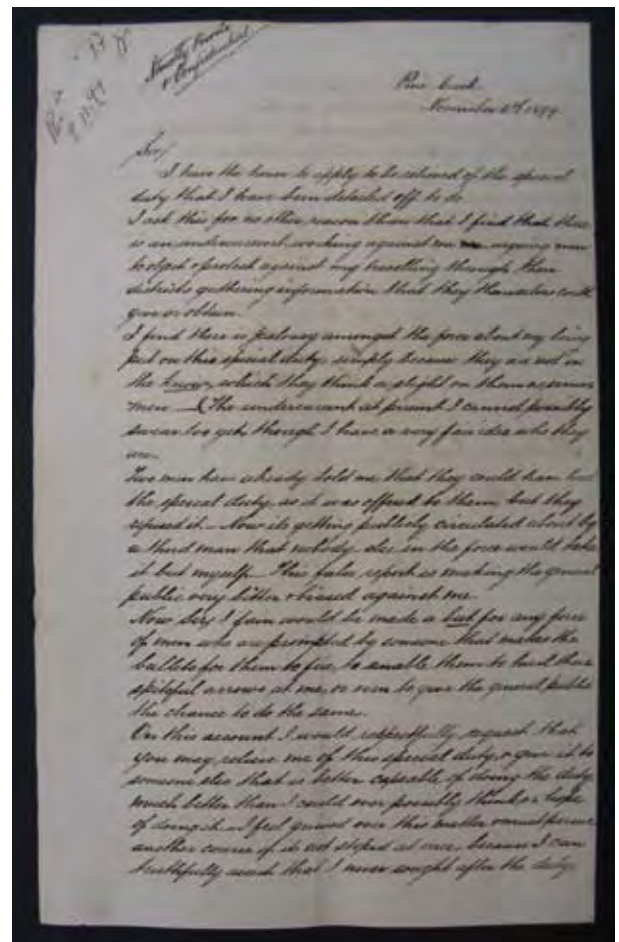
In late 1899 Police Inspector Paul Foelsche, based in Palmerston (now known as Darwin), anticipating a request for information from the Minister, gave instructions to Mounted Constable George H. Thompson to "report on the conditions of Aborigines and their relations to other nations".

The instructions given to Thompson referred to the opium and liquor issues, noted that there were no laws for the protection of Aboriginal people, and that no definite instructions relating to this could be given. Thompson was advised that circumstances must be his guidance, and to report individual cases of concern to the police inspector. He was asked to ascertain the names of all non-Aboriginal persons who were cohabiting with Aboriginal women, with special note taken of cases where such females appeared to be children. He was also to compile a list of all "half caste children", comprising their names, gender, approximate age, name of mother, mother's tribe and reported father.

Mounted Constable 3<sup>rd</sup> Class George H. Thompson, accompanied by Police Tracker Paddy and with several horses, commenced his survey in Pine Creek on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1899, visiting mining camps and other settlements situated between Katherine and Darwin. The task was completed on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1900.

Thompson kept a daily journal and also reported to Foelsche on several occasions and it is through these documents that an understanding can be gained of the difficulties that he encountered.

Early on, Thompson's main concern was with the actions of his colleagues who were unaware of the nature of his special duties. On 6<sup>th</sup> November 1899 Thompson wrote to Foelsche to request that he be relieved of his special duties. Referring to his fellow police officers, he stated that there was an "undercurrent working against me, urging men to object & protest against my travelling through their districts gathering information that they themselves could give or obtain." Thompson commented on jealousy amongst other officers and false rumours that nobody else in the force would take on the special duties but him. He felt so "grieved" over the matter that he was intending to ask for an inquiry to be forwarded south once he could confirm the originator of the rumours. Foelsche replied by sending a memo



Extract from Thompson's letter to Foelsche, 6 November 1899. GOVERNMENT RESIDENT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, NTRS 790, Inwards correspondence, 1870-1912, item 10441, page 34



(Palmerston) — *List of Half casts in the Northern Territory* —

Name	Sex	age	Mother's name	Mother's tribe	Reported Father's Name	Remarks
Willie	Male	13 to 14 years	Nellie	Larakur	Shepherd or Dr. Morris	Half cast Willie is employed by Mr. Herbert, he appears to be well fed, clothed
Topsy	Female	3 years	Mary Ann	Larakur	G. Hedley	Half cast Topsy is living with her brother with the Blacks at P.A. Hill, she appears to be well fed but scanty little clothes
Lucy	Female	6 years	Kittie	Woolna	P. Guech	Half cast Lucy is living with the Blacks at Palmerston
Kittie	Female	16 years	Jennie	Woolwonga	R.W. Thomas (Road)	Half cast Kittie is living with Inspector Gielcke under agreement from the Protector of Aborigines, she appears to be well fed, clothed, & looked after
Lucy	Female	14 years	Mrs. Birleth	Woolna	Mrs. Littlejohn	Half cast Lucy is living with the Blacks at Palmerston, she does not appear to be well fed nor clothed

verified as correct as can be given  
George H. Thompson M.B. 30/10/00

Extract from the list of half castes that Thompson collated.

GOVERNMENT RESIDENT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, NTRS 790, Inwards correspondence, 1870-1912, item No 10441

to the various police stations stating that no other constable was asked by him to undertake the special duties and that if any officer interferes with, in any way, the special duties of Thompson, he would be brought under the notice of the Minister.

In the course of his survey Thompson assisted with general police work. After a report of a break-in at Glencoe Station, Thompson and Paddy attended and arrested two Aboriginal men who had been tied up by station staff. They then found and arrested three other Aboriginal men implicated in the burglary and three Chinamen for receiving the stolen goods and supplying opium.

Several times Thompson wrote to Foelsche to report on individual cases of abuse of children.

Thompson referred to the information that he collected as the "List of Half Casts (sic) in the Northern Territory". It shows the locality, name of the child, gender, approximate age, mother's name, mother's tribe, reported father's name and remarks about the living conditions of the child. It totals eleven pages.

The list, daily journal and correspondence between Thompson and Foelsche are included in a report to the Government Resident Hon Justice Dashwood, from Foelsche, on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1900. This is filed with

the inwards correspondence of the Government Resident's Office. In our List of Holdings it appears as Government Resident of the Northern Territory, NTRS 790, Inwards correspondence, 1870-1912. A microfilm copy of the Inwards Correspondence is also available.

Recently, the eleven pages of the list compiled by Mounted Constable George H. Thompson, have been scanned and a typescript created which allows for easier reading and the ability to search for names of those included. This is a valuable resource for those researching Aboriginal family history, or the history of the Northern Territory, and is available through the Northern Territory Archives Service Search Room in Darwin.

### References:

GOVERNMENT RESIDENT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, NTRS 790, Inward correspondence, 1870-1912, item 10441

Government Resident's Report on the Northern Territory, 1899, 1900 and 1901, South Australia, Office of the Government Resident (NT), Government Printer, Adelaide

## Up the track

### A trip to Tennant Creek with Pat Jackson, Archivist, Northern Territory Archive Service Alice Springs

It wasn't quite a scene from *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* or *Thelma and Louise* but in late August/early September of 2008, I went on a road trip up the Stuart Highway with record-keeping colleagues from the Department of Education and Training, Southern Region. The purpose of the week long visit was to discover records to be taken into Archives, and to liaise with the public and with government agencies in Tennant Creek, about Archives.

In a wonderful example of cross agency cooperation, Bridget Farren (Manager, Records Information Management Unit, Department of Education and Training, Southern Region), her off-sider Jamie Haestier (Records Officer) and I, packed up the four wheel drive with empty boxes and headed up the highway, not quite looking for adventure, yet sort of prepared for anything that might come our way.

Tennant Creek falls under my area of responsibility and it took (I'm ashamed to admit this) almost five years to organise a trip such as this to Tennant Creek. We've had a number of researchers look at archives relating to Tennant Creek in the Alice office and I've written an article for a previous *Records Territory* on a year in Tennant Creek as reflected in police journals, but I had only previously stayed in the town overnight.

While in Tennant Creek I had a series of meetings with government representatives and the public. I visited a number of historical sites such as Battery Hill and the National Trust's Fulwood-Tuxworth Museum in the Old Hospital. Roddy Calvert from Battery Hill was particularly generous with her time and her knowledge.

One of the highlights of the trip was our adventure in Warrego, an abandoned mining town to the north-west of Tennant Creek. I say 'adventure' as it is not often that you get to go out to a place that has become a ghost town in your life-time. Warrego was a mining town with a population of around 2000 at its peak, with a primary school built to cater for 100 children.

When we arrived there, the school had been closed for over a year since the school population had dwindled to below five students. The entire mine site was locked and we needed a key to gain entry. When at the site of the township we could see where houses once were and now where nature was reasserting itself.

The school buildings were still intact, eerily so. Our mission for the visit to Warrego was to find a filing cabinet of student files known by the Department of Education and Training to be located somewhere in the primary school. This we found easily, and in forty degree heat, Bridget and Jamie transferred the records from the filing cabinet into boxes while I labelled the boxes and acted as 'court photographer' to document the activity.



Warrego School records – a gecko lurks beneath...



We then wandered over to the pre-school buildings to see what might be there and came across a scene that was reminiscent of the *Mary Celeste* (the *Mary Celeste* was a merchant ship discovered in the Atlantic Ocean in 1872 under full sail heading to the Straits of Gibraltar. It had no crew aboard and all belongings intact, spooky!). Children's art smocks were hanging on their hooks, art work was pinned onto boards, a kettle and mugs were sitting on a cupboard in the small kitchen. And most surprisingly of all, on the table as you entered the building was a collection of school records going back to the time of the Commonwealth Teaching Service. This included material such as instructions to teachers, roll books and minutes of school meetings.

We were shocked and delighted to find this booty and quickly set about packing the records away into boxes to take with us. We disturbed a sleepy fat gecko that was living amongst the records. It was soon apparent why the gecko was so fat, as we found ourselves covered in mosquitoes who couldn't believe their luck.

The next visit for Bridget, Jamie and I was to Tennant Creek Primary School and there we found records nicely boxed and labelled. The task of sorting out which material was permanent and suitable for transfer to the Northern Territory Archives Service was made much easier by the school's attention to detail with its recordkeeping.

A visit to the Department of Education and Training 'Stores' almost caused us several heart attacks.

Here we found decades worth of education records piled high upon each other. It was rumoured that some of these records were older than I am, and given that I was born in the year that England won the Soccer World Cup, you can tell that's not yesterday. The scale of the work to be undertaken was far too much for us to do in the couple of days remaining. In fact we estimated that it would take approximately a month to sort the records, list them and pack them for a trip to Alice Springs, and then eventual transfer of the permanent material to the Northern Territory Archives Service. We plan to do this in June and July of this year.

When we return to Tennant I will also, hopefully, run some workshops on *Caring for your Family Archives* for the Tennant Creek community.

This trip was a perfect example of the Northern Territory Archives Service working with a records management unit that is determined to better manage their records and ensure that historical material is transferred to where it can be preserved and used for research purposes. At this rate, the Southern Region of the Department of Education and Training is set to become a lead agency in terms of records management and is certainly (in this humble Archivist's opinion) throwing down the gauntlet to larger records management units across the Territory.

In short, I'm looking forward to going back to Tennant Creek, to enjoying Tennant Creek hospitality, working hard on records and discovering more about Tennant Creek's unique history.



[A mural on a school building](#)



# Putting names to Faces

## Photograph collections at the Northern Territory Archives Service

The Northern Territory Archives Service collections include thousands of images spread across hundreds of archival series. Some of these images include information about the people or the events being captured, but many do not.

The Northern Territory Archives Service recently displayed images from the Charles Wilson collection in the foyer of the Darwin office. This collection consists of approximately 436 images taken during Charles Wilson's time in Darwin working for the Post Master General's Department between 1928 and 1930, and the display featured some of the images from his collection, including three photographs of Darwin football teams, possibly from the 1929-1930 football season.

The people captured in these photos are not identified, and these images have stirred interest with visitors to the Northern Territory Archives Service, some of whom have set about the task of putting names to the faces.

The Northern Territory Archives Service is interested in improving the information available about people and places featured in images within our collections, and welcomes your assistance if you can provide this detail. Any detail provided will be included as secondary information to the item, and will assist future researchers in searching for records in the collections.



**Wanderers** [Wanderers Football Team Group photograph circa 1929-1930], Charles WILSON, NTRS 3335, Reference digitised copy of images relating to the Top End, ca1924-1932, item 341

Charles Edward Wilson was born at Moonta, South Australia in 1907. As a youth he began work with the Post Master General's Department, and travelled to Darwin on the SS *Marella*, arriving in December 1928, to take up a three year posting.

During his years in Darwin working at the Post Office, he played for the 'Wanderers' football team and in 1930 was the team captain. He had an active social life and enjoyed his time in Darwin very much, travelling also to Katherine, the Daly River and the Tiwi Islands. His oral history interview recalls of his time in Darwin:

**"Oh they were the days in Darwin. I really enjoyed myself. I reckon that I'd like to have those three years all over again. I think Darwin was a great place"**

Northern Territory Archives Service, NTRS 226, Typed transcripts of oral history interviews with "TS" prefix, 1979-ct, Charles Wilson, TS 550, page 4



**Buffalos** [Buffalos Football Team group photograph circa 1929-1930]. Charles WILSON, NTRS 3335, Reference digitised copy of images relating to the Top End, ca1924-1932, item 342



**Waratahs** [Waratahs Football Team Group photograph circa 1929-1930] Charles WILSON, NTRS 3335, Reference digitised copy of images relating to the Top End, ca1924-1932, item 340

The Northern Territory Archives Service received a donation of three albums of photographs, presumably taken by Charles Wilson during his time in Darwin. These images and an Oral History Interview transcript are available for public access in our Darwin Search Room.

Please check our list of holdings via our website at [www.nt.gov.au/nreta/ntas/collection/index.html](http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/ntas/collection/index.html), to search for other photographic series within our collections.



**At Rapid Creek**

Charles WILSON, NTRS 3335, Reference digitised copy of images relating to the Top End, ca1924-1932, item 94



**Rapid Creek Camp**

Charles WILSON, NTRS 3335, Reference digitised copy of images relating to the Top End, ca1924-1932, item 91



## New Accessions – Darwin

The following organisations and individuals have recently donated records for the Community Collections of the Northern Territory Archives Service.

### The Buddhist Society of the Northern Territory Inc

The Buddhist Society of the Northern Territory was established in 1983 by members of the local Buddhist community in Darwin. Due to the region's multicultural environment the Buddhist Society has sought to integrate practitioners of different Buddhist traditions, cultural backgrounds and languages. Its members are Thai, Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Burmese, Cambodian, Anglo-European, and Chinese. These groups share the temple and other facilities at the International Buddhist Centre in the Darwin suburb of Leanyer.

Researchers must seek written permission to access the following series (contact the Darwin search room for further advice):

**NTRS 3371**, Minutes, 1993-2006

**NTRS 3372**, Newsletters, ca1983-ca2008

**NTRS 3373**, Administration and correspondence files, 1983-2007

*Thank you to Anita Maertens for arranging and describing this material during her time as a volunteer at Northern Territory Archives Service*

### Country Women's Association of the Northern Territory Inc, Katherine Branch

The Katherine branch of the Country Women's Association (CWA) was formed in 1937. The major early achievements of the branch were the establishment of a free lending library and the organisation of an annual Christmas tree for children. Continual fund raising efforts resulted in the construction of the CWA hostel on the main street of Katherine in 1956. The rest room added to the hostel in 1976 was a popular meeting place for locals and tourists alike and was famous for its apple pie and cheesecake. Sadly, declining membership and other factors split the branch apart and it was closed by 1995.

Researchers must seek written permission to access the following series (contact the Darwin search room for further advice):

**NTRS 2321**, Administration and correspondence files, 1950-1993

**NTRS 2322**, Building and finance committee files, 1950-1986

**NTRS 2323**, Letter books, 1949-1957

### McNeill, Edward Andrew (Andy) Arthur

In 1959, Andy McNeill joined the Northern Territory Police Force and moved to Darwin. He spent 33 years in the police force and retired on 30 April 1992, having reached the rank of Assistant Commissioner.

In May 1992 Andy McNeill was elected Mayor of Alice Springs and held the post for 8 years. Andy McNeill's widow, Marlene, donated this autobiographical manuscript which details his career with the Northern Territory Police during 1959-1992, and events and life in Darwin, Katherine, Borroloola and Alice Springs. The title "Big Deal" is a reference to Andy McNeill's nickname during his police career. The manuscript was illustrated with black and white photographs and copies of newspaper clippings and documents.

Researchers must seek written permission to access the following series (contact the Darwin search room for further advice):

**NTRS 3376**, Autobiographical manuscript, "Big Deal", ca2000

### Spillett, Peter Gerald

Peter Spillett (1926-2004) donated material relating to the Darwin Town Council and Father Angelo Confalonieri, the first Catholic Missionary in the Northern Territory.

Mr Spillett served as an Alderman on the Darwin Town Council for seven years. In 1980 Mr Spillett was awarded a Churchill Fellowship and travelled to Europe to research Father Angelo Confalonieri which resulted in the publication of the article "Apostle of the North".

Researchers must seek written permission to access the following series (contact the Darwin search room for further advice):

**NTRS 2288**, Research files relating to Father Angelo Confalonieri in Port Essington, 1845-1998

**NTRS 2289**, Photographs relating to Father Angelo Confalonieri, 1847-1969

**NTRS 2290**, Personal correspondence relating to Darwin City Council, 1952-1969

**NTRS 2291** Copies of Darwin Council election canvassing diary, 1957

**NTRS 2292**, Copies of photographs of Darwin mayors, 1912-1920

**NTRS 2294**, Reference copy of newspaper clippings relating to Darwin municipal election, 1956-1957

**NTRS 2295**, Newspaper clippings relating to Darwin municipal election, 1956-1957

**NTRS 2306**, Reference copies of personal correspondence relating to Darwin City Council, 1952-1969



### Wilkins, Anthony (Tony) Stephenson

Tony Wilkins donated material to reflect his wide-ranging work experiences and personal interests. The material is available in the following series:

**NTRS 3378**, Publications relating to Cyclone Tracy, and yachting, 1973-ca2001

**NTRS 3379**, Research file relating to aviation, ca1974

### Wilkins, Sylvia (nee George)

Sylvia Wilkins took 10 black and white photographs of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh when they visited Darwin on 18 March 1963. The Royal couple were touring Australia to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Canberra.

The photographs are registered as:

**NTRS 3370**, Photographs relating to the royal visit of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh to Darwin, 1963

## New Accessions – Alice Springs

### Henry Richard Charles (Harry) Taylor

Some donors are an absolute delight to work with, and their passion for the history of Central Australia is inspiring. Harry Taylor is one such donor.

The Alice Springs office has had the pleasure of working with Harry Taylor on his sizeable and varied collection since 2004. Harry's collection reflects his participation in the tourism industry in Central Australia and his interest in Central Australian history and events. A small part of Harry's collection also reflects his life before he came to Central Australia.

Harry was born in Melbourne in 1916 and is the eldest of eleven children. As he states in his oral history with Bernard O'Neill, he grew up during the Great Depression and left school at the age of fourteen. After working on farms for others, he bought land and started to breed and sell poultry. This diversified into selling aviary birds and associated equipment and feed. Harry's poultry business (Rosebank Poultry Farm, Victoria) was one of the first to export live eggs overseas from Australia.

In 1952, Harry, his wife Joy and their children drove to Quorn, South Australia. They continued their journey to Alice Springs by train, putting their car on the Ghan. It was during this visit to the Northern Territory that Harry realised that there was a need for more affordable and better quality accommodation for tourists and other visitors in Central Australia.

Claude Cashman from Darwin was eager to sell a

bungalow and land he owned in Bath Street, Alice Springs. For the sum of six thousand pounds, Harry and Joy purchased just over a quarter of an acre of land, one bungalow, an outside "dunny", a large shed, a windmill, a bore and some fences. This is now the site of Elkira Court Motel which they established.

NTRS 3155 includes some working records of Elkira Court Motel such as correspondence from clients and travel agents. For example, there is a letter of introduction from Jann Springett (item 20) for two Canadian women who wanted to visit Alice Springs. Jann is writing as the "Social Editress" from radio station 5DN. Jann also ran a successful travel agency and visited Central Australia on a number of occasions. Formal letters of introduction, now probably a thing of the past, are a relic of a time when communication was not as easy as it is today.

Harry also realised the importance of promotional material. His collection includes a range of Elkira Court Motel brochures which show the change to decimal currency, and his recognition of overseas markets, such as the United Kingdom, United States and Japan.

TARIFFS	ALICE SPRINGS	12-15-18	U.S.
(lowest to highest)	Dollars	to P.L.S.D.	Dollars
Daily Rate	3.25	3 15 9	8.87
(with A.C. water)	3.75	3 15 9	8.87
Dinner, Bed and Breakfast	6.25	3 15 9	8.87
(with A.C. water)	6.75	3 15 9	8.87
Bed and Breakfast	4.25	1 17 00	5.29
(with A.C. water)	4.75	1 17 00	5.29
A.C. rooms, single	2.00	2 15 9	5.29
A.C. rooms, double	3.00	2 15 9	5.29
(with dinner and bath)	14.00	8 15 4	13.58

Approximate Daily occupancy rates for similar motels in Alice Springs.

1956

**ELKIRA COURT**  
MOTEL AND GUEST HOUSE  
ALICE SPRINGS  
In the Heart of Australia

“ELKIRA”  
for your most comfortable and friendliest  
accommodation in Alice Springs.

TELEPHONE 338 TELEGRAMS “ELKIRA”  
H. E. & A. J. Taylor, (owner-manager)

Approved by:  
GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAUX,  
T.A.A. and RECOGNISED TRAVEL AGENTS

#### [Promotional material for Elkira Court Motel]

Henry Richard Charles (Harry)TAYLOR, NTRS 3155, Business records of Elkira Court Motel, item 15

Other methods of promotional activities included Harry's membership of two tourism associations, the Australian National Tourism Association (ANTA) and the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA). Harry attended the conferences of these organisations in order to promote the Northern

Territory, and more specifically Central Australia, and to learn about developing markets. NTRS 3146 and NTRS 3148 reflect this side of Harry's life.



**[Northern Territory exhibition space featuring handicrafts and artworks from Central Australia, Maningrida and Yirrkala Mission]** Henry Richard Charles (Harry) TAYLOR, NTRS 3151, Black and white photographs of travel and tourism conferences, item 6.

In NTRS 3151 we have images from the AFTA Gold Coast Conference (1965). These photographs show the Northern Territory delegation presenting the Gold Coast Mayor with a didgeridoo. Among the delegates are Harry Taylor and Ian Tuxworth (long before he became Chief Minister of the Northern Territory). The trade exhibition for the Northern Territory is also pictured. This is very much a snapshot of the time – from the furniture, the ashtray and the simplicity of the display.



**[Northern Territory representatives with Mayor Small and Mrs Small, Ian Tuxworth in back row (with moustache); Harry Taylor (second row fourth from the left)]** Henry Richard Charles (Harry) TAYLOR, NTRS 3151, Black and white photographs of travel and tourism conferences, item 3

The importance of Harry's promotional activities was recognised by TAA (Trans-Australian Airways). In recognition of the business that Harry was creating for those with an interest in tourism in Central Australia, Harry was able to fly with the airline free of charge. Harry kept a number of these free of charge (FOC) airline tickets and these are in NTRS 3149.

The TAA tickets exhibit the history of air hostess fashion long before they became known as flight attendants. They are from an airline that no longer exists and, with a picture of a beaming air-hostess, their cardboard baggage chits and hand written details, are a contrast to today's self check-in slips of paper you get from a kiosk at Australia's larger airports.



#### TAA Ticket

Henry Richard Charles (Harry) TAYLOR NTRS 3144/P2, Publications relating to the Northern Territory including tourism, events and education

Harry was also involved in the formation of CATA (Central Australian Tours Association), where a group of like-minded individuals sought to work together to promote Central Australian Tourism. These records can be found in NTRS 3150.

Harry collected a number of publications relating to the Northern Territory and Central Australia. These range from a 1959 children's school book titled *Let's look at the Northern Territory* (this includes one of the best descriptions of the role of the Commonwealth administration in Central Australia), to a 1959 Northern Territory telephone book (where you only had to dial three numbers to reach someone). The collection includes ephemera such as menus from clubs and associations which held dinners at Elkira, a menu from the Ghan; a copy of *Folksmith Monthly* from 1973 and a program from the 1959 Bangtail Muster.

Harry has now entered his 93<sup>rd</sup> year and is still finding material to donate to the Northern Territory Archives Service. This material will undoubtedly complement the material that Harry has already donated, and be a fascinating contribution to the Central Australian Collection.



The Harry Taylor Archives are listed as follows in the Northern Territory Archives Service List of Holdings:

**Henry Richard Charles (Harry)TAYLOR**

**NTRS 3144**, Publications relating to the Northern Territory including tourism, events and education

**NTRS 3145**, Menus, newsletters and programmes of Central Australian events and organisations

**NTRS 3146**, Tourism and travel conference related material

**NTRS 3147**, Building records for Elkira Court Motel including contracts and specifications (Central Australia)

**NTRS 3148**, Publications relating to travel and hospitality industries

**NTRS 3149**, Airline magazines, brochures and tickets

**NTRS 3150**, Business records for Central Australian Tours Association including memorandums of understanding, articles of association and reports

**NTRS 3151**, Black and white photographs of travel and tourism conferences

**NTRS 3152**, Black and white copyprint of Albert Namatjira

**NTRS 3153**, Colour photographs and copyprints of Northern Territory people and places

**NTRS 3154**, Newspaper clippings related to tourism and Central Australian people and events

**NTRS 3155**, Business records of Elkira Court Motel

**NTRS 3156**, Photocopies of correspondence concerning Elkira Court Motel; its customers, building works and relationship with Trans-Australian Airlines (Central Australia)

**NTRS 3157**, Personal papers including menus, correspondence and publications

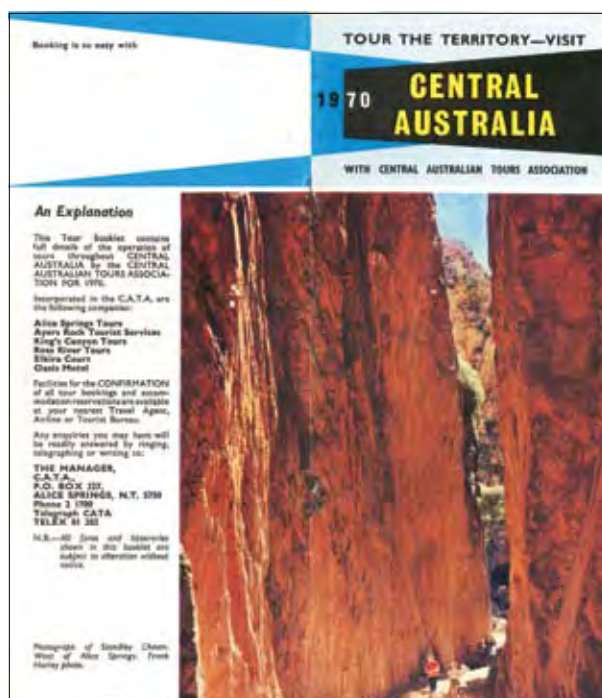
The Northern Territory Archives Service holds two Oral History Interviews conducted with Harry Taylor, as follows:

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ARCHIVES SERVICE,**

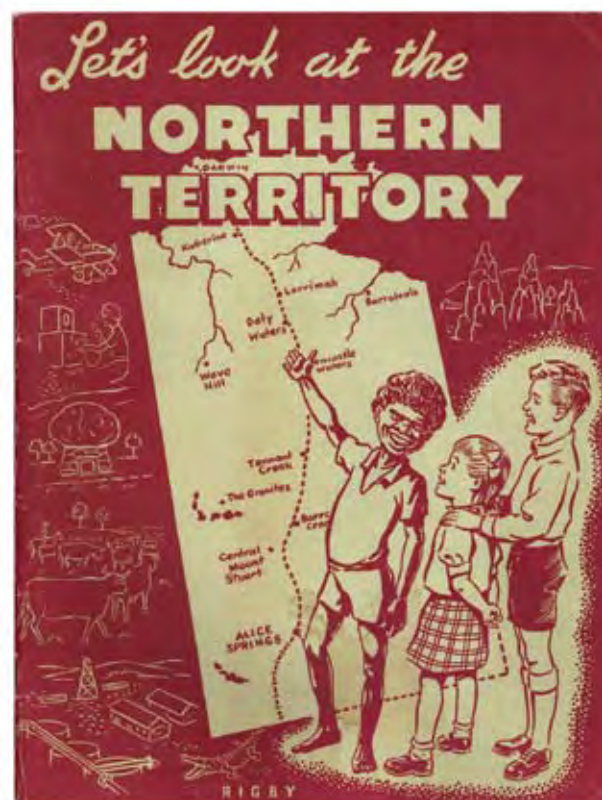
**NTRS 226**, Typed transcripts of oral history interviews with "TS" prefix 1979-ct,

Harry TAYLOR Item TS1105 Interview recorded by Bernard O'Neill in 2003,

Harry TAYLOR Item TS1022 Interview recorded by Shane Hersey for the Strehlow Research Centre.



**Alice Springs, Heart of Australia's Scenic Wonderland, 1966**  
Henry Richard Charles (Harry)TAYLOR, NTRS 3144/P2,  
Publications relating to the Northern Territory including tourism,  
events and education, item 29.



**Let's look at the Northern Territory, 1959**  
Henry Richard Charles (Harry) TAYLOR NTRS 3144/P2,  
Publications relating to the Northern Territory including tourism,  
events and education



# Obituaries

## Brother Bennett

Our condolences go to the family and friends of Brother Bennett (M.S.C.), who passed away in December 2008, aged 95 years.

**Brother Bennett's memory will be upheld at the Northern Territory Archives Service in an oral history interview and photographic collection, cited as follows:**

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ARCHIVES SERVICE NTRS 226** Typed transcripts of oral history interviews with "TS" prefix 1979-c, Item TS 761 Interview with Brother Edward Bennett recorded by Francis Good in 1993. This item also contains a booklet of Brother Bennett's memoirs.

**BROGAN, THECLA; BENNETT, BROTHER; PYE, BROTHER, NTRS 1684, Photographic copyprints of Roman Catholic Mission at Garden Point (Pularumpi) ca1940-ca1960**

Brother Edward Bennett was born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1913 in Sydney. He attended the Marcellin College in Randwick, and left the day after turning 14 to work as a jackaroo at Kadara Station in central New South Wales. After about 14 months, he returned to Sydney and worked with Riverstone Meat Company and at his grandfather's butcher shop in George Street, Haymarket.

Edward went back to the bush in about 1930 to work for the Kidman Bros on "I Wonder Downs", in Queensland. He spent 6 months droving 4500 sheep heading for Mungindi in New South Wales. When the team reached Thallan in Queensland, he was offered a job on Nullera Station.

It was late 1933 when Edward answered the call to enter religious life with the Sacred Heart Catholic Mission. After his training at St Mary's Towers, Douglas Park, New South Wales, he was professed as an MSC (Missionary of the Sacred Heart) on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1935. Brother Bennett was appointed by the Church to many different locations throughout his life: firstly to the Little Flower Mission in Alice Springs in December 1935. This mission was later moved to Arltunga, then to Undoolya Station and renamed the Santa Teresa Mission. He was transferred back to this region at various other times in his life, and also to attend the celebrations of his Golden Jubilee on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1985 and for the visit of the late Pope John Paul II on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1986.

Brother Bennett also spent time at the Garden Point Mission on Melville Island, and was the first M.S.C.

brother to be appointed to the Island in 1941. It was there, on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1942, that he first witnessed the Japanese aircraft fly overhead en-route to Darwin. He was transferred to Darwin in 1945, then worked for seven years as skipper aboard the Mission Luggers *St Francis* and the *Margaret Mary* before choosing to return to the Garden Point Mission in about 1952.

Brother Bennett spent time at a logging camp at Port Herd, Bathurst Island in 1953, and was sent to Port Keats in about May 1960. In July 1987 he left the Northern Territory to embark on a Marian Pilgrimage to Europe with Brother Bernard Delaney. Brother Ed Bennett spent his final years in Alice Springs, and died in December 2008 at the age of 95.



**Mentors to the boys: L-R Father McDermott, Brother Bennett, Brother Quinn and a visitor.** BROGAN Thecla; BENNETT, Brother; PYE, Brother, NTRS 1684, Photographic copyprints of Roman Catholic Mission at Garden Point (Pularumpi) ca1940-ca1960, item 9

## Sam Calder

Our condolences go to the family and friends of Sam Calder, who passed away in September 2008, aged 92 years.

**Sam Calder's personal records were deposited with the Northern Territory Archives Service where they are now awaiting processing. These records will add great value to the collections.**

Sam was born on August 10<sup>th</sup> 1916 in Toorak, Melbourne, where he grew up and completed his education at the Melbourne Grammar School.

From 1932 to 1939 he was a member of the Fourth Brigade of Mounted Artillery and reached the rank of Sergeant. During this period he also worked for the ESA Bank in Melbourne for 3 or 4 years from about 1934, where he met Eddie Connellan, the founder of Connellan Airways. Sam obtained his commercial pilot licence and moved to Alice Springs to join Eddie Connellan's new airline.

When war broke out Sam returned to Melbourne to join the RAAF. After serving overseas for a time he was relieved of his flying duties, granted leave and posted back to Australia, arriving in December

1944. He then resumed civilian life after joining the Reserves in March 1945.

Sam married Daphne Campbell in 1945, and they had four daughters. After the war Sam returned to Alice Springs, where he became the senior pilot for Connellan Airways. He held this position until 1947 when he gave up flying to manage Singleton Station. Later that year the family moved to the Connellan owned Narwietooma Station.

About a year later the family moved again, to Orange in New South Wales where Sam worked in his father-in-law's orchard. In 1951 they returned to the Northern Territory to Argadargada Station, where Sam was the manager until 1959. They also spent time at Brunette Downs where he was the assistant manager.

The family then returned to Alice Springs, where Sam was employed as a costing clerk for an electrical firm, and became a director and shareholder of a service station, which he helped to run for many years. He was also involved in many sports and community activities throughout the town.

In 1966 Sam was successful in gaining a seat in the Commonwealth House of Representatives after a branch of the Country Party was established. He held this seat until 1980.

When Cyclone Tracy devastated Darwin in 1974, Sam was able to get a flight into Darwin and helped the evacuees by keeping them calm, carrying their luggage and helping in anyway he could.

Sam spent his retirement in Darwin and took an interest in matters relating to Defence in the city.

Sam Calder received the following recognitions: The Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) in 1944; The Order of the British Empire – Officer (Civil) (OBE(C)) in 1980 and he became a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2000.

### **Hilda Muir**

Our condolences go to the family and friends of "Aunty" Hilda Jarman Muir who passed away in October 2008 aged (approximately) 88 years.

**Hilda Muir will be remembered through three oral history interviews held at the Northern Territory Archives Service as follows:**

**NTRS 226, TS 290 – recorded by Barbara James in 1979**

**NTRS 226, TS 793 – recorded by Francis Good in 1993**

**NTRS 226, TS 794 – recorded by Francis Good in 1995**

Hilda was born with a 'proper bush birth' in Yanyuwa

country in the Borroloola region around the year 1920. In 1928, she was removed from her family and country, and taken to the Kahlin Compound in Darwin, thereby becoming a part of what is now known as the Stolen Generations. In her Oral History interview given in 1993, Hilda recalled the deprivation and cruelty that she and others experienced whilst they lived at the compound. This treatment, however, never dampened her positive outlook on life. She left Kahlin at the age of fourteen to begin training as a nurse at the Darwin Hospital.

In 1940 Hilda married Bill Muir. Together they had ten children. Hilda and three of her children were evacuated to Brisbane during the war. She enjoyed her time in Brisbane. On her return to the Territory in 1946 she relocated to Delissaville (now Belyuen). She had to send her older children to the Retta Dixon Home, and felt isolated and unhappy at this time. The family moved to the Parap Camp in 1948, where Hilda was much more contented, being with neighbours including the Cubillo, Angeles and Lew Fat families.

Whilst at the camp, in about 1957, Hilda was approached to assist at the newly formed child minding centre. A few years later in about 1960, Bill and Hilda bought a block of land at Fannie Bay.

In 1973 Hilda renewed her family ties upon her return to her country near Borroloola, although Hilda was saddened by the fact that she had not returned to visit before her mother had passed away.

In her interview with Barbara James, Hilda tells of her experience of Cyclone Tracy during which her husband Bill was killed.

In 1995, Hilda was one of the people chosen to present a case to the High Court seeking compensation for being a part of the Stolen Generations. The case was dismissed in 1997. In 2000, Hilda returned to her home land and was subsequently recognised as an owner and custodian of the Yanyuwa country.

In 2004, Hilda published her autobiography entitled *Very Big Journey: my life as I remember it*.

### **References:**

The Obituaries were compiled with the help of the following:

Northern Territory Archives Service, NTRS 226, typed transcripts of oral history interviews with "TS" prefix, 1979-ct.

Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography edited by David Carment, Christine Edward, Barbara James, Robyn Maynard, Alan Powell and Helen J Wilson published by Charles Darwin University Press, 2008.



## Katelyn Hemsley, Alice Springs Researcher

**The most consistent researcher to attend the Alice Springs office of the Northern Territory Archives Service has been painstakingly documenting the graves of Central Australia**

Almost every week since August 2005, Katelyn has used our police journals and police correspondence series combined with community archives such as the Adele Purvis collection, to try and locate graves in the cemeteries of Central Australia. Her mission is to put a name to unmarked plots and to discover more about the people who have lived and died in Central Australia, and more specifically, those who have died in Alice Springs.

Katelyn began using the Northern Territory Archives Service when she realised that records concerning the Memorial Cemetery in Alice Springs were incredibly difficult to find. Many of the graves are unmarked and even though the cemetery is now closed for general burials, there remains some confusion as to who is buried where; this is especially true for Aboriginal burials and those of stillborn babies.

Through her extensive research (using not only the resources of the Northern Territory Archives Service but also the Alice Springs Town Council Library and the Strehlow Research Centre), Katelyn has been able to locate un-marked graves. This has given family members of the deceased the opportunity to know where they are buried.

Katelyn is working on a database (which she has generously shared with the Central Australian Stolen Generations and Family Aboriginal Corporation) which lists deceased persons of Alice Springs, where they are buried and any further information she can find about them.



**Katelyn pointing out the unmarked graves to Val Dearman and Joanne Taylor (left) of Central Australian Stolen Generations and Family Aboriginal Corporation, at Memorial Cemetery, Alice Springs**



**Katelyn in the Alice Springs Search Room**  
Photograph taken by Megg Kelham

In 2006 she received a Northern Territory History Grant to research and record deaths and lone burials in Central Australia. She has photographed many of the graves and this in itself will be an important record in time.

Katelyn is also fascinated by the general history of Alice Springs and is always on the look-out for material she feels might interest the Archives. Katelyn's enthusiasm and knowledge of Central Australian history and her generosity in sharing that knowledge will no doubt be a lasting legacy for all Centralians.

The collections used by Katelyn, referred to in this article, are listed as follows in the Northern Territory Archives Service List of Holdings:

### POLICE STATION, ALICE SPRINGS

F68, Correspondence files, alphabetical single number series, 1928-1945

F69, Correspondence files, annual single number series, 1945-1949

F70, Correspondence files, annual single number series, 1950-1955

F255, Police journals, Officer-in-Charge, 1886-1956

### PURVIS, ADELE VIOLA (NEE ZIMMERMANN)

NTRS 1, Personal papers and photographs about Central Australian history, 1857-1981

## Research in progress

This is a selection of research projects conducted recently with the help of the Northern Territory Archives Service collections. Over the last six months we have noticed an increase in family history related projects.

**Dr Philip Batty**, *Senior Curator at Melbourne Museum*

Dr Philip Batty is writing a history of intercultural engagements between Aboriginals and Europeans in the western region of Central Australia (1920s - 1980s). The Northern Territory Archives Service has proved to be an excellent source of information for his work. At the Alice Springs office, Dr Batty recently discovered what he described as 'archival gold'. It consisted of daily records of Mounted Constable McKinnon's 1933 epic journey into the western desert, covering more than 1500 kilometres by camel. McKinnon's photographic album (held in Darwin) also contained valuable images of this journey.

**Lauren Bell**, *Research Assistant to Dr Gary Robinson, Charles Darwin University*

"Tiwi Demography Project: Impact of Demographic Change in the Tiwi Population since WWII. Stage one: Assessment of Sources and Methods". A seeding project funded by AIATSIS, this historical demography project seeks to examine available historical and contemporary sources relating to the population of the Tiwi Islands. This will allow for a deeper understanding of the demographic changes in the Tiwi population, the correlation to changing cultural, economic and political contexts, and prediction of the future needs of the Tiwi people.

**Bree Blakeman**, *PhD candidate, School of Anthropology and Archaeology, Australian National University*

My research is part of an Anthropology PhD looking at the politics of interpersonal relationships among the Yolngu people of North East Arnhem Land. As part of this project I delved into the old Uniting Church Mission records to see what was, as a body of data, equivalent to missionary commentary on their relationships with the Yolngu people at the time.

**Marian Buller**, *Genealogist, Canada*

I am very interested in the dynamics of families, how they lived in past times and their backgrounds. I started my research with my father in England during the late 1940's, and have been at it ever since. Last September I visited the Northern Territory Archives Service search room in Darwin for information about a pioneer of the Northern Territory, William Thomas Pearce. He had a mine in Maranboy and

the homestead in Daly Waters where he developed the aerodrome in the late twenties and thirties. Land tenure files have been useful in tracing William Thomas Pearce's activities.

**Elizabeth Close**, *Director, National Trust (NT)*

Doctor's Gully is one of the most interesting areas of early Darwin with many layers of history dating right back to Goyder's arrival in 1869. Elizabeth Close has been investigating the many valuable resources held by the Northern Territory Archives Service in order to document the story surrounding the heritage listed Peel's Well.

**Margaret Ford**, *School Principal, retired and passionate Family Historian*

In 1925 Richard Ford, Margaret's grand father, and two friends travelled from Adelaide to Darwin in a Crossley car, following the Overland Telegraph Line, staying at places like Alice Springs, Banka Banka and Powell's Creek. The journey home included Newcastle Waters, Anthony's Lagoon, Brunette Downs and across into Queensland. Margaret Ford has developed the story of the journey from 300 photos taken during the journey. In the Northern Territory Archives Service Margaret found information about the Banka Banka Station at the time her grand father would have visited it.

**Gordon Grimwade**, *Member, Queensland Heritage Council, Expert Member, International Committee for Cultural Heritage Tourism, ICOMOS, John Oxley Fellow 2008, State Library of Queensland*

Gordon Grimwade is researching overland migration by Chinese between the Northern Territory and north Queensland in the late 19th century. During this period, often ill-equipped Chinese people undertook the challenging 1500 km trek in search of work. For his research Gordon used the early police archives, in particular the Borroloola Police Station Police Journals, and the Inwards Correspondence to the Government Resident of the Northern Territory of South Australia.

**Erica Izett**, *PhD candidate, Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts, University of Western Australia*

"Cultural crusades and collaborations: the history of white women in the making of Aboriginal art, between 1880-1980". This project will examine the significance and extent of the involvement of selected white women in the initial development and reception of Aboriginal art in the Western world.

**Mayumi Kamada**, *Professor, Nagoya University of Commerce and Business, Japan*

"War, Citizens, Nation: The Interconnected Memories



**Research in Progress** continued...

of the Pacific War Linking Australia, Indonesia and Japan". I have been working in the project with four other academics. In my role I have undertaken a research on 'Indigenous Australians' memories of the Pacific War', in which I would like to look into how the Pacific War influenced the Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, and their connections with Japanese, Indonesians and other Asian people.

**Bo Karlsson, Genealogist from Sweden**

I have a big interest in genealogy. The reason for my journey to Darwin was to find some evidence about my grandfather's brother Josef (Joe) Israelsson. The only thing I knew about Joe was that he lived in Maranboy during the Second World War. The visit of the Northern Territory Archives Service in Darwin was very interesting; I found much information about my relative.

**Judy McFarlane, Tanumbirini Station**

I am trying to trace the history of owners and managers of Tanumbirini Station since it was first taken up as a cattle property by Henry Coop in 1897 so that I may put together a time line. Also to find the names of the people buried in two unmarked graves at Old Tanumbirini which are beside the grave of John Mara 1910.

**Irene McGonnell, Mainoru Store**

With the help of the Northern Territory Archives Service I was able to find what I needed about Mainoru Station. I was interested in the history of Mainoru Station in particular going back to the first owners, also the Aboriginal people who worked and lived on Mainoru, and the school that Mrs Dodd ran and where she taught all the children from early 1950 to 1969. Most of those students now live at Bulman Community, Arnhem Land. The best part was looking at the old photos from Margaret Dodd's collection. The Aboriginal people who come to the Mainoru Store for shopping helped me with identifying the people in the photographs. I compiled this research material for the current owners of Mainoru Station so they can add to it over the years.

**Stuart McKay, De Havilland Moth Club, England**

The project is a book covering the 1934 MacRobertson International Air Races from London to Melbourne which is due to be published in September 2009 to mark the 75th anniversary of the event. There were 20 starters in England and all the competitors who reached Australia entered the country at Darwin which was one of five compulsory Control Points on

the route to Melbourne. With the use of the internet, contact was made with the Northern Territory Archives Service whose staff provided access to relevant photographic material and then supplied quality digital copies suitable for publication.

**Bronwyn Mehan, Writer**

In November, Bronwyn began research for an essay exploring the relationship between Bill and Doreen Braiting and anthropologist Olive Pink. Her subsequent readings in Northern Territory Archives Service of contemporary police reports, land tenure files and oral histories have provided her with background material and ideas for a forthcoming crime fiction series set in Central Australia in the 1940s.

**Alec O'Halloran, PhD Candidate, ANU**

Alec O'Halloran is conducting background research into the life of Papunya Tula artist, Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri. Northern Territory Archives Service helped with oral histories, reports and records from Central Australia for the Haasts Bluff and Papunya areas, where he lived and worked for many years. The project has the support of the Papunya Tula Artists Company.

**Steve Playford, Adelaide**

Steve Playford researched the career and travels of his great-uncle Edward Copley Playford ("Cop") 1864 - 1950. Cop commenced as Chief Warden in 1896 in the Northern Territory and occupied many positions including Special Magistrate, Acting Administrator (1926) and Director of Mines until retirement in 1930. A colourful character and capable bushman, it has been long believed that his exploits would rival Alfred Searcy who was Sub Collector of Customs at Port Darwin. The official records so far examined reveal much, but fall short on his adventures.

**Dave Richards, Journalist**

The Olive Pink Botanic Gardens is soon to launch an historical audio production in MP3 about its founder Olive Pink. The guide will be available to visitors to the garden and tells the story of Miss Pink in Alice Springs through the recorded words of people who knew her. Several of the many voices on the recording have been taken from Northern Territory Archives Service Oral History interview recordings, including those of Reg Harris and Pop Chapman.

**Dr Anna Shnukal, Writer**

Dr Anna Shnukal carried out research in the Northern Territory Archives in July 2008 into the history of nineteenth-century Filipino immigrants to the Northern Territory, their links with their compatriots in

**Research in Progress** continued...

the pearly fleets of Broome and Thursday Island and the fate of their Australian born descendants. Anna used the Inwards Correspondence to the Government Resident of the Northern Territory of South Australia, the Government Residents and Administrators' Annual Reports and the collection of oral history interviews.

**John Spencer, Griffith University**

Bedload sediment transport of selected tropical Australian rivers is currently under investigation as part of "Theme 4: Water, Carbon, Sediment and Nutrients" of the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRaCK) research program (<http://www.track.gov.au/>). This investigation involves on ground field measurements, airborne instruments, satellite imagery, modelling, and historical aerial photos. The Northern Territory Archive Service holds a range of historical aerial photos and assisted in accessing this material.

**It wasn't all chop picnics**

Images depicting life in the Top End for Defence Service personnel during WWII



Selected images and excerpts from oral Histories are on display from 9.00am-4.30pm weekdays until end of April 2009, in the foyer of the

Northern Territory Archives Service,  
25 Cavenagh Street Darwin,

to commemorate this era and the people who lived it.

Visit our search room to make an appointment to view more of these collections. The search room is open from 9.00am to 12noon, 1.00pm to 4.00pm weekdays.

## Staff notes

In January we farewelled Gillian Drewes when she retired. Gillian had provided great support for many years in the oral history unit as the oral records officer. We wish Gillian, and her husband Irwin, all the best in their retirement.

Anita Maertens has joined the team for six months as an archivist to help process community archives collections. Anita leaves to study archives management in Britain later in the year.

## Who's who

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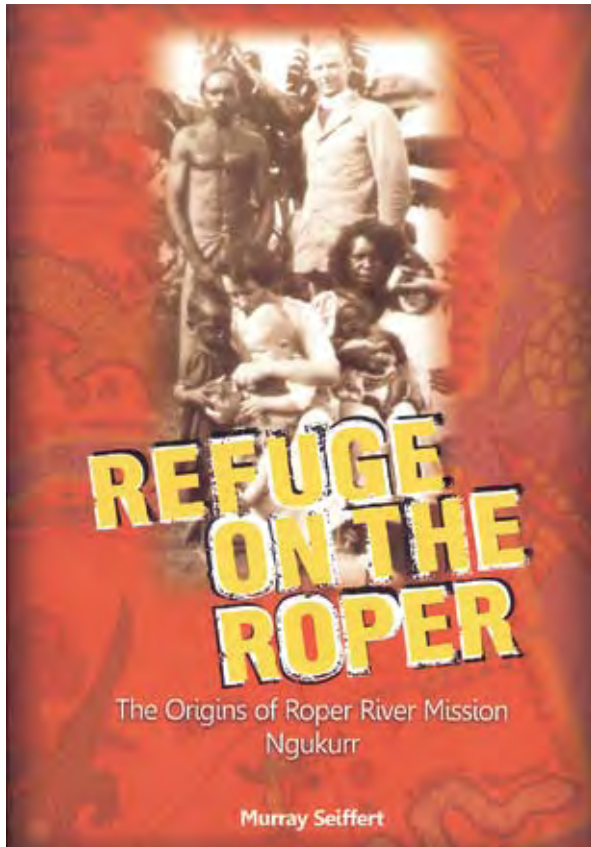
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## Northern Territory History Grants

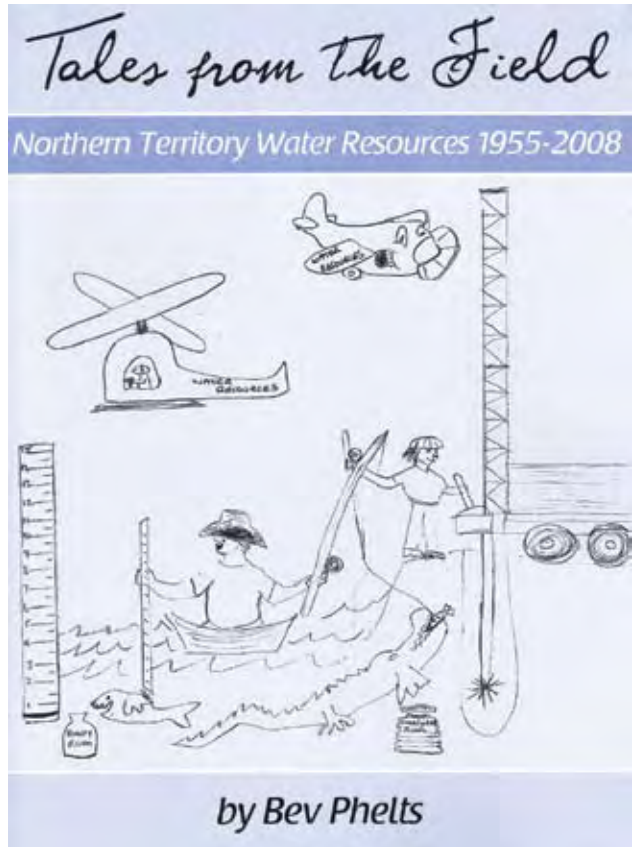
**The Northern Territory History Grants Program is now seeking applications for the 2009 grants.** The grants program, established by the Northern Territory Government to commemorate Self-Government on 1 July 1978, is designed to encourage research about the Northern Territory's history. A total of \$50 000 is available, with single grants ranging from \$500 to \$7000. Applications to take up a grant in July 2009 are invited from individuals or groups Australia-wide. Grant applications close Friday 1 May 2009. For more information please see [www.nt.gov.au/historygrants](http://www.nt.gov.au/historygrants)



### Past History Grant Recipients

We congratulate Murray Seiffert, 2007 Northern Territory History Grant recipient, on the completion of his project about the establishment of the Roper River Mission, Ngukurr, and the publication of his book *Refuge on the Roper*, published by Acorn Press in 2008.

And congratulations to Bev Phelts, 2008 Northern Territory History Grant recipient, on the completion and publication of *Tales from the Field: Northern Territory Water Resources, 1955-2008*, published by Hollands Print Solutions in 2008.



## Northern Territory Archives Service

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