

November 2017

# National Trust

eNews

*The National Trust of Australia (NT) is a community based, not for profit heritage charity dedicated to promoting and conserving the heritage of the Northern Territory.*



## GUEST WRITERS WANTED



SUBMISSION OPENING SOON

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# Our Superb Volunteers receive recognition

**Message 1:** Tom, at Burnett House, Volunteer at Larrakeyah Branch of the Trust. We visited on Saturday 23 Sept 2017.

We arrived at noon and were offered a tour by Tom. We were the only ones there so we had a very personal tour and conversations.

What a wealth of information Tom is about the House and Darwin and NT and Australia. He knew every detail and corner of the house because he lived there as a young man! Even a minor improvement he made to the bedroom still exists!

He answered every question we had about the structure, the customs of the times and why the house survived Cyclone Tracy. Nothing was too much for Tom address.

The House was scheduled to close at 1 pm but we were still there at 1:30. Tom did not rush us out the door.

We thoroughly enjoyed the visit with Tom at Burnett House. He deserves recognition.

Regards, Susan and Peter Wells, visitors from Oakville, Ontario, Canada.

**Message 2:** We were delighted to visit Burnett House today and were made so very welcome by Roger, to whom we give our thanks. As NT members in England we were delighted to see such an interesting property belonging to a fellow NT organisation. Best wishes for the continued success of NT in NT!

PATRON  
Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AM  
Administrator of the Northern Territory

PRESIDENT  
Mr. Trevor Horman AM

VICE PRESIDENT  
Vacant

TREASURER  
Mr. Colin Beard

BRANCH COUCILLORS

GULF – Ms. Janet Leather  
LARRAKEYAH – Ms. Lillian Smith  
McDOUALL STUART – Mr. Phil Walcott  
KATHERINE – Mrs. Stephanie Hill

GENERAL COUNCILLORS  
Dr. William Low

MEMBERSHIP 2017

1 year      3 years

Individual      \$65.00      \$176.00

Household      \$95.00      \$257.00

Senior      \$60.00      \$162.00

Senior Household      \$85.00      \$230.00

Concession      \$45.00      \$122.00

Concession Household      \$75.00      \$203.00

*The National Trust of Australia (Northern Territory) is a community organisation, which seeks to conserve the Territory's heritage.*

*Membership is open to everyone.*

## Roadmasters House Museum End of Year Function

About 20 persons attended a function at Roadmasters House on 23 October to celebrate the end of the museum year. The Museum is now closed until Monday 5 February 2018 when it re-opens for the annual Goyder's Day commemoration.

The main purpose of the function was to thank the sponsors and volunteers for their support over the year. This support has enabled the Trust to look after the heritage building and to mount an exhibition called *Mapping Darwin's History*.

About 250 persons visited Roadmasters House over the season – a modest number for the first year of operation but expected to grow in the future as people become aware of its existence. Visitors were fascinated by the architecture of the house with its slatted timber walls, push-out shutters and kitchen stove fireplace. Many were intrigued as to how people lived in this type of per-war house that seems quite exposed to the harsh elements of the tropics. The exhibition was well received with many visitors commenting that they learnt a lot about Darwin's colourful past.

During the function, National Trust Northern Territory President Trevor Horman spoke about the Museum's latest exhibit – a length of historic rail track originally from the Commonwealth Railways standard gauge line across the Nullarbor from Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta.

Construction of the 966-kilometre line commenced from both ends in 1912 and met at the siding of Ooldea in South Australia on 17 October 1917. The first train ran on 22 October 1917 – almost 100 years ago to the day of Trevor's talk. But, because of the different rail gauges used by the State railway systems several changes of train had to be made on the journey from Perth to the eastern states. It wasn't until 1970 that a standard gauge track linked Perth with Sydney and the *Indian-Pacific* was born.

The line across the Nullarbor was upgraded in 1967 and the old track sent north for use on the North Australia Railway and the Central Australia Railway. The length of this track now on display adds to the collection of North Australia Railway memorabilia at Roadmasters House, which appropriately was a railway staff house until the line from Darwin to Larrimah closed in 1976.



Helen & Robyn ↑



Skip, Ray & Elizabeth ↑



Pearl, Trevor & Lill ↑



The two Trevors on the Rail Track Exhibit

## Stahl Garden Clean Up

The MPHP Committee engaged Eddie Webber to supervise this clean up project. The committee acknowledges his hard work and thanks him for his commitment. His report follows:

I was invited to a meeting 1<sup>st</sup> November at Myilly Point to discuss the clean-up of the Stahl House block. An electrical contractor had undertaken work to install lighting in line with the (MPHP) development plan and due to contract overruns had not reinstated the site.

Myilly Point is part of the Darwin Peninsular, which is basically a deep weathered porcellinite rock shelf formation with a thin layer of skeletal soil. Any trenching through the porcellinite formation is not without difficulties and in this case piles of large rocks and rubble were strewn around the site. Irrigation lines had been cut and pushed into the heaps of rubbish along with fencing wire and vegetation.

Due to the size of the rocks in the piles, the need to level the site, winnow rocks to minimize soil loss and spread the remaining soil onto the proposed grassed area, it was deemed necessary to hire a bobcat or similar machine to undertake the necessary work allowing for two dump runs.

Tait Civil was chosen as the preferred contractor due to a number of factors including availability, price and machinery including a four metre spreader bar and portable 50mm grizzly (soil sieve).

We met the contractor on site Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> to go over scope of works, site access and confirm availability and rates. Two hours of chainsaw work was required to trim back over hanging branches and to trim off limbs and exposed root formations damaged by the contractor. These were piled into a heap ready for removal along with accumulated rubbish for Mines House and Burnett House. The remaining fence netting was also removed and added to the growing piles of rubbish.

Work commenced at 7.30 on site on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> finishing around 15.00 included,

- Level old garden bed on Burnett –Stahl house fence line.
- Place large rocks around on garden borders
- Remove stumps
- Sieve soil and rubble through grizzly
- Spread and level topsoil
- Remove old fence Mines-Stahl House.
- Remove old irrigation lines 25mm
- Rubbish removed to Council tip approx. 1 tonne.

There is still a considerable amount of tidying up required on site depending on to what happens in the near future. This includes raking and rock picking. Most of the heavy work has been done.

I offer these observations on the ongoing ground maintenance of the (MPHP).

1. If grass is to be established on the surrounds of the Stahl House footprint it will be essential in the short term to have some water system at least while the grass establishes. Long-term considerations include water billing, as it appears to me that Stahl block was originally watered from Mines House water meter.

2. There are a considerable number of large trees crammed into the precinct particularly Mines and Stahl blocks. Tamarind trees will colonise an area pretty quickly if not checked or managed and this seems to be the case here. Larger trees on the Darwin peninsular need to be managed. Due to the paucity of soil in the area and shallow rooting any heavy wind in the wet season can cause havoc. It does not only happen during cyclones.

3. The Banyan trees on Stahl block need an aggressive pruning (if the present over storey is to be maintained) as they are starting to drop a myriad of aerial roots leading to rapid expansion in size. The proposed ablution /catering facility is sited in the overhanging tendrils of one of these and serious thought needs to be given to managing or removing this tree.

4. Ground maintenance across the precinct does not seem to be uniform and consideration should be given to having an inclusive ground maintenance contract. Burnett House and Audit House are reasonably catered for, but the rest require some TLC.

Eddie Webber 7.11.17



## Research for visitors to Hartley Street School

We have recently helped some visitors to Alice Springs find information and photos about their relatives and in return have been helped by them.

While showing a visitor the display panels at Hartley Street School, we came to the panel about the School of the Air and its beginnings at Hartley Street School, first with scripted lessons by the teachers of the school and, as wireless communication improved, with interactive lessons. On the panel is a famous picture from 1951 of some women from the Country Women's Association, which had meetings on the School of the Air radio for remote women. We have been trying for some time to verify the names of the women in the photograph and were all very excited when the visitor told us that her mother and grandmother were in the picture. We shared this information with Peter Forrest who is writing a book about the CWA in the NT.

We continued to share information and pictures with the woman by email when she returned home, in case she had any other photos which would identify the other CWA women. At the same time we were searching avidly for a photo of Mrs Van Senden who it was suggested was in the photo. Unfortunately we could not find another image of Mrs Van Senden.

By chance the woman recently went to Sydney to visit her sister and found that her sister had a photo album of her mother's that she hadn't been aware of. In the album was the CWA photograph, and miraculously when she turned it over, on the back in her mother's handwriting were the names of all the women! What a great find.

The second visitor came as a result of a post on the Growing Up In Alice Springs Facebook page. She was looking for information about her husband's aunt. A number of GUIAS followers, including Pam Hodges, who maintains a website for Tennant Creek, gave the woman what information they had or could find. We knew the aunt had lived in Alice Springs and she had a son who appears with her in some photos from the Laver Collection (held at the Alice Springs Library), but we knew little about him. We were in Hartley Street School looking at the Alice Springs School Admission Register (which has recently been digitised) to see if the son had been enrolled at the school, and there he was in 1919, a pupil at Ida Standley's School!

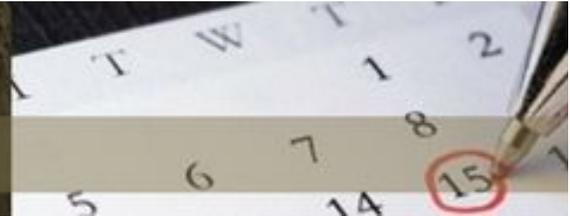
Some visitors have wanted to see photographs of their relatives who attended the school. Others have shared photographs and stories of their time at Hartley Street School, some of which have been incorporated into a short 'Welcome to Hartley Street School' video. We also helped one visitor record the story of his family's pastoral history with local historian Geoff Purdie.

Continue to next page for the photo, front and back →



Country Women's Association Photo, front and back.

## Upcoming EVENTS



*Christmas Party*  
6:00 PM on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017

 NATIONAL TRUST  
LARRAKEYAH BRANCH



Phone 8946 6835 (w) or email [julie.mastin@cdu.edu.au](mailto:julie.mastin@cdu.edu.au)

At Burnett House, Myilly Point Heritage Precinct



Have  
**Your  
Say**

## ON THE MUSEUM OF THE NT

Come along to our community meet and  
greet and have your say.

**11 NOVEMBER 3pm-5pm**

The NT Government is seeking your feedback on a major new Museum and associated site development at Myilly Point as part of its plan to transform the Darwin CBD into a vibrant, world-class tourism destination.

The Museum of the Northern Territory will incorporate our continuous history inclusive of the world's most ancient living culture.

It will embody what it means to be a Territorian.



## MUSEUM OF THE NT

Award-winning architects tropo and ARM Architecture are leading a Territory-wide consultation on the Museum and want to know your views.

Your input will help the consultation team determine the design and development of the Museum.

### MEET AND GREET FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

A community meet and greet will be held at the Stahl Gardens, 4 Burnett Place, Larrakeyah for residents to learn more about the museum.

The event will be held on 11 November 2017 from 3pm-5pm.

You can also provide feedback by filling in our online survey at: [www.haveyoursay/museumoftheNT](http://www.haveyoursay/museumoftheNT)

Written submissions and ideas can also be sent to the consultation team at [museumofnt@tropo.com.au](mailto:museumofnt@tropo.com.au)



[www.haveyoursay.nt.gov.au/  
museumoftheNT](http://www.haveyoursay.nt.gov.au/museumoftheNT)

National Trust has supported this community consultation that, will be held on Stahl Block at Myilly Point Heritage Precinct and we encourage our members to come and have your say too!

**Online Survey Address:** <https://haveyoursay.nt.gov.au/museumoftheNT>



**LARRAKEYAH BRANCH NATIONAL TRUST**

*and the HISTORICAL SOCIETY NT  
invite you to a talk by*



**Allan Mitchell**

**'From Katherine to Cyprus - Allan's year on the  
Island of Love'**

**Friday night 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017**



In 1973, Allan was a young police constable stationed in Katherine. He had been in the NT Police for less than 3 years when he volunteered for a stint in Cyprus as part of the Australian Police Force attached to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Cyprus. Allan describes his year there, from the relative calm of the first eight months, to a full-on military coup and the subsequent intervention on the island by the Turkish army.

Allan is a well-known identity around Darwin. He has been a Territory resident for over 45 years, 31 years as a NT Police officer. He was elected as an Alderman for the City of Darwin (Waters Ward) in 2004, re-elected in 2008, 2012 and he resigned in 2016.

Join us under the verandah at Burnett House for a cool drink and nibbles at 5:30 pm before the talk. Entry: \$2 members, \$5 non-members - \$5 food & drinks

Telephone enquiries to Julie: 8946 6835 BH.

- PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE: IS A MATTER OF TRUST

