

December 2023

National Trust of Australia

Northern Territory



E Newsletter

Happy Happy Happy festive season to all and wishing everyone a wonderful time over the holiday period.



The National Trust of Australia NT would like to publicly acknowledge and thank all our amazing hard working volunteers across the NT - Alice Springs, Borroloola, Darwin, Katherine, Pine Creek and Tennant Creek.

No matter how big or small your job is, you are what keeps the NT Trust moving and our properties open and protected.

Thank you for your time, passion and commitment as you are and always will be our biggest asset.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Another year has whizzed by and the wet is almost upon us. This time of year, always brings mixed emotions and memories of the past, some good some not so good. The 50th anniversary of Cyclone Tracy is next year and there are moves afoot to have an event or two to mark the occasion. If you have not put together your cyclone kit it is probably a good time to consider doing so as are many of our Branches are packing up and preparing for the wet season.

The high humidity which precedes the wet also brings masses of scarlet blooms from Poinciana trees around the city. It is extremely hard to be dismal when confronted by this spectacular display. I remember an extremely gullible young fellow who worked for Yankee Als second hand shop in Nightcliff enquiring if any of us had seen the Poinciana lady. Of course, we had, and this kept us entertained for a couple of weeks. The Poinciana lady was rumoured to be the soul of a young lady waiting for the return of her lover from the great war. She pined away and vented her anger by luring young would be suitors to their death by drowning. I think we advised this young fellow, amongst other things, to take swimming lessons.

In late November, the new Transcontinental Railway interpretation sign at Pine Creek railway station was unveiled by the Honourable Dheran Young, member for Daly. The sign replaces the original sign from the 1980s and the world has moved on since then including the completion of the missing section Alice Springs to Darwin. Hopefully there will be a few less people walking away scratching their heads or googling. This also complements works undertaken by the Australian Institute of Mines and Metallurgy, earlier this year at Miners Park.

Katherine branch has again a spectacular Christmas lights display and competition at O'Keeffe House and the 1925 Katherine Railway Station. They put heart and soul into the display and have scooped awards on several occasions in the past. This is even more remarkable as their efforts have been trashed this year on several occasions. If passing through Katherine take five or ten minutes to have a look, you may just be surprised.

It has been a good year to catch up on maintenance on NT Trust buildings. Across the Territory, we've seen work done at the Old Meat House in Borrooloola, Burnett and Audit Houses, Audit House Amenities Block, Pine Creek Old Railway Station and Jones Store in Newcastle Waters. Funding provided by the NTG through Heritage and CBF grants and we thank them again for their ongoing support and assistance.

The Northern Territory Government is sponsoring the development of a business plan for the NT National Trust, which we hope will highlight some of our ongoing major issues (both good and not so good). These may include funding to manage and insure our properties, the rising costs to pay for utilities, remoteness of properties locations and staffing issues. I'm sure the strength of our amazing volunteers will be seen as a great asset. When we have a more concrete timetable those that wish to become involved will have the opportunity to do so. Volunteers and NT Trust members keep the wheels turning for this organisation and without this we would cease to exist.

To each and every one of you the Council of the National Trust NT extends our heartfelt thanks and wishes you all a joyous festive season and a healthy, prosperous new year. Keep safe and we look forward to seeing and working with you in 2024.

Eddie Webber

ROADMASTERS HOUSE

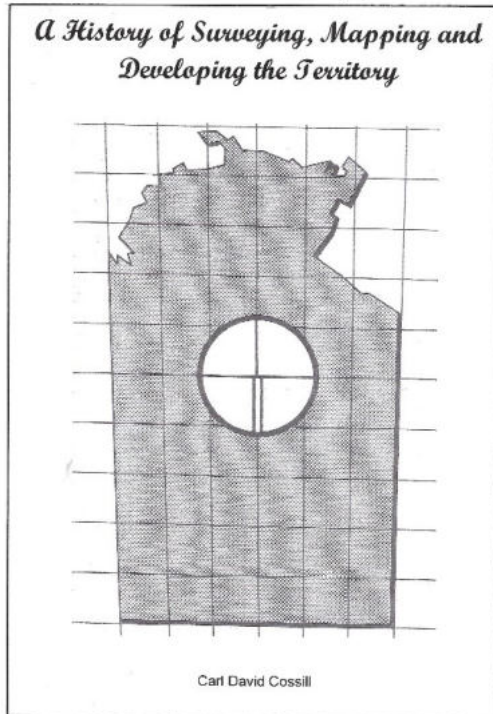
Roadmasters House recently hosted a function to launch a book entitled *A History of Surveying, Mapping and Developing the Territory*. It was written by Roadmasters volunteer Carl Cossill who is pictured below holding the book with Roadmasters House Museum curator, Trevor Menzies on the left.

Carl worked for the NT Lands Department as a Survey Plan Examiner and Draftsman for many years where he acquired an extensive knowledge of the land survey and land development processes. After retiring from the Department, he spent several years researching survey records, maps, historical reports and documents to compile this impressive 513 page book.

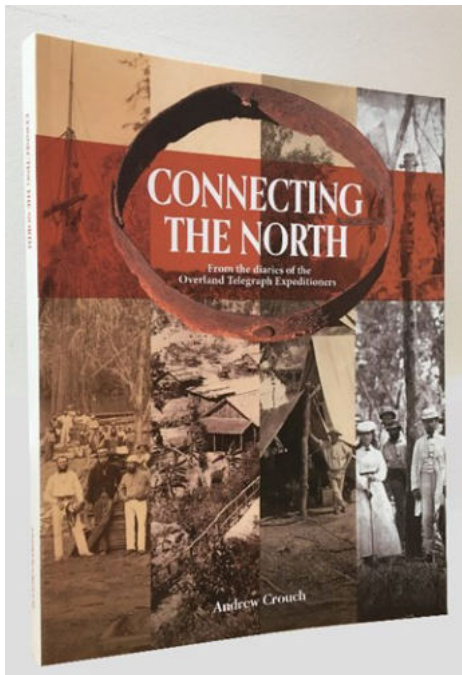
The book provides a detailed account of the history of surveying, mapping, land use planning and land development in the Territory largely based on the activities of the "Lands Department" under its various names over the years.

The contents would be of interest not just to past and present practitioners and researchers in this sector, but anyone interested in this aspect of Northern Territory history. It covers the period from early European exploration and settlement through to the year 2000. A feature of the book is Carl's extensive use of diagrams and box insets to enhance the story.

A printed and digital version has been lodged with the Northern Territory Library for inclusion in the Northern Territory Collection (NTC 354.9429COSS). Refer to the NTL website for further details.



Roadmasters House Museum is now closed for the year and will reopen early March 2024.



CONNECTING THE NORTH

Andrew Crouch

Phone: 0416 123274

Email: crouch2@internode.on.net

Post: 19 Holder Road, Hove
South Australia 5048

2022 was the sesquicentenary of the opening of the Overland Telegraph Line, and that 150th anniversary year stimulated much further interest in the great project, including the research and writing of this new volume.

Connecting the North follows and complements my essay *Building the Line*, published in 2020.

The story of the northern part of the project as it unfolded in the Top End of the NT has only ever been partly told, so this new book is designed to address that gap.

Like *Building the Line*, *Connecting the North* draws on the stories contained in the many expeditioners' diaries, and provides context through other elements such as the early European history of the NT in the leadup and the effect that the Line had on Aboriginal people living along the route.

This volume also presents some of the superb original photos and artwork in a larger format (in colour where applicable).

Historians, descendants and others with a closer interest in the topic will also appreciate the detailed and accurate coloured maps, gazetteer, personnel lists and reference notes that accompany the narrative.

236pp, 70 plus illustrations. Design and printing by Openbook Howden, Adelaide. 270x205, paperback. ISBN 9780645870848.

Connecting the North is priced at \$40, plus postal costs. Please indicate your interest by email.

Thanks and best wishes,

Andrew Crouch

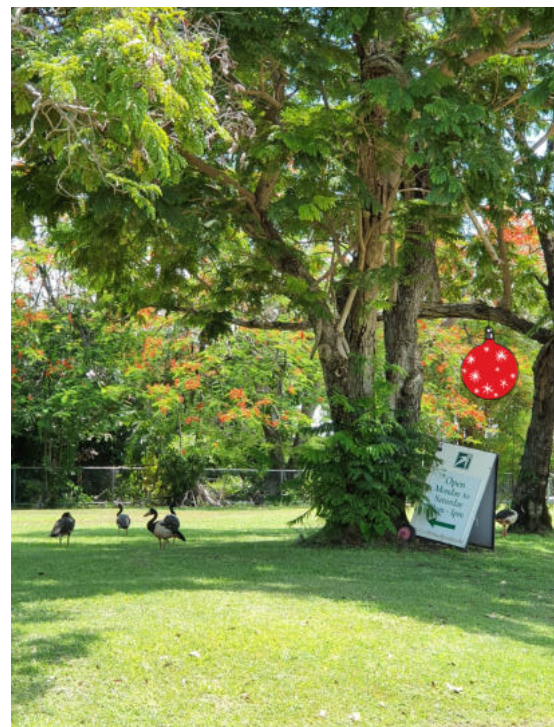
Hansen House in Alice Springs recently had a rough night! A vandal lit a fire on the property but luckily a tenant that was sleeping over was awakened by the fire and bravely put it out in the middle of the night. House and hedge are doing well and the bougainvillea is looking brilliant just in time for Christmas.

LUCKY



You guys had enough to eat then?

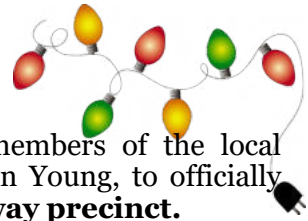
Let's go and check out this National Trust place - it's still open.



2024 Australian Heritage theme

Connections: encourages the community to celebrate the rich and diverse stories of our nation, strengthen cultural and historical ties and forge new bonds. Celebrates our link to people, places and the past and the enduring connections that will shape the future of heritage.

UPDATE PINE CREEK



On Friday 24 November 2023, the National Trust NT joined members of the local community, visitors and the Honourable Member for Daly, Dehran Young, to officially **unveil the new interpretation panel at the Pine Creek Railway precinct.**



The Overland Telegraph Line was completed in 1872 Palmerston (Darwin) to Adelaide some 2,800km. A proposal to link the two cities by rail closely followed enabled by an act of the South Australian Government in 1883. This gave approval for the NTA to commence construction to Pine Creek. Largely, no doubt influenced by the discovery of gold in the region during the construction of the Overland Telegraph Line.

Construction was commenced in the north from Palmerston, eventually reaching Birdum some 40 years later. Construction was a stop start affair influenced by two main events being Commonwealth Government resuming control of the NT, from SA in 1911 and WW1 1914-1918. The railway from the north reached Pine Creek in 1889, Katherine in 1925 and Birdum by 1929. In the south, the section Adelaide to Alice Springs reached Port Augusta 1878, Oodnadatta 1891 and Alice Springs in 1929. This left a considerable gap in the middle further increased with the closure of the northern section following Cyclone Tracy 1974, with the line officially closing several years later.



In 1980, a line from Tarcoola to Alice Springs was constructed on country less prone to seasonal washouts and at this time the Federal Government commissioned a preliminary design and survey of the route, committing \$10m.

Successive Federal Governments ran hot and cold on the project. In 1997, the SA and NT governments established the Austral-Asia Railway Corporation to complete the rail link from Alice Springs to Darwin.

Local long term resident Eddie AhToy told the story of his family's involvement with the railway line over the years and how crucial it was for bringing supplies up and down the "Track".

In 1997, the Asia Pacific Transport Consortium (APTC) was selected to construct the rail. In 2001, the first sod was turned by the Prime Minister, South Australian Premier, Chief Minister of the NT and CEO of APTC.

After 123 years spanning three centuries, the final link was commenced and was completed over 30 months ahead of schedule.

This interpretation panel runs the same parallel, only not quite so torturous. The panels were moved from Fannie Bay Museum to Pine Creek in the early 1980s and has not been upgraded until now.

“After 123 years spanning three centuries, the final link was commenced and was completed over 30 months ahead of schedule”



The unveiling was followed by an excellent morning tea provided by Maisies. Thanks go to local trust member Rosemary Atkins for cleaning up the Railway precinct for the function.



Keynote speakers on the day were the Member for Daly Dehran Young, Jarrod Archbald from Museums, Eddie Webber for the National Trust NT and Eddie Ah Toy who reminisced on the times when train was perhaps the best option when travelling to Darwin as a child.

The train was used for the filming of WE OF THE NEVER NEVER in 1981 and returned to Darwin. However, lobbying by the Pine Creek community saw the train returned on permanent loan. The world has moved on since then and upgrade of the sign will hopefully leave a lot less visitors walking away scratching their heads.



PLACES IN THE HEART– EXCERPT

Places in the Heart is a 1998 publication prepared by the Australian Heritage Commission, where Australians were asked to enter a story about their favourite heritage place. There were 2,725 entries and the below is one of the winning entries.

For a ten year old boy, the fact that Daniel Read's entry is about steam trains and railways is perhaps not surprising. What is surprising is the depth of feeling he portrays for an era well before his time and the importance he places on the knowledge of the Station Keeper.

Pine Creek Rail Precinct is set right in the middle of Pine Creek. If you go there, you can meet the station keeper and see the old puffing billy. The station keeper can tell you a lot about the station and it's past. He even has a Coolgardie safe where he keeps his morning tea. The precinct is part of Australia's heritage because it is ~~one~~ ^{one of} the last parts of the old Alice Springs to Darwin Railway. I like to stop and have lunch there on long trips, like Darwin to Katherine, and feel like I've gone back to the old days of the railway!

Pine Creek Rail Precinct by Daniel Read

SECOND PRIZE WINNER OF YOUTH SECTION
12 YEARS AND UNDER





GULF BRANCH NEWS

The Gulf Branch received a great early Christmas present with security screen and office windows repaired, lights restored in the Police Room and the draft copy of Book 3 looking terrific.

The temperatures are regularly up in the 40's, the cicadas are singing, the rains have already started, the Barra are biting so all is well in the Gulf!

Ted Firkin our caretaker has been amazing maintaining the precinct, mowing and watering, weeding, spraying and keeping the place running and well presented for our visitors over 500 Out Back Tour tourists, plus all the self-drive individuals which, according to the banking another 500 at least, plus Government and locals who come down to visit the Old Borroloola Police Station .

Out Tour groups have already booked for the 2024 season! which gives the branch a steady income. Between Ted and Jim Hammod, who organised our new Museum money box. Unfortunately, Jim has moved back to Katherine however Sharon Kinard, our previous Treasurer has moved back to Borroloola and kindly offered to take back over the banking. With the new box the banking has been kept in the branch's accounts rather than some of our younger visitors!

Melanie and family, Patsy, and Casey along with a team of volunteers have been our main cleaners in 2023 and we hope they will take up the challenge in 2024 pending work and family commitments. Never an easy task with 14ft ceilings and corrugated wall.

The Gulf Branch would like to acknowledge and thank NT Heritage for the grant that enabled much needed repairs to be undertaken to the old Police Station Meat House.

NT Trust President and Gulf Branch Chair Eddie Webber went up another ladder repairing another old NT Trust property! We thank and acknowledge the work, time and support and encouragement of all our local Gulf Branch members, supporters in the town and out of town, as we know that many of you have had to deal with a lot of major challenges in 2023.

We would like to wish you and your families a very happy and healthy 2024.



NT Trust President and Gulf Branch Chair Eddie Webber up another ladder repairing another old NT Trust property



Open day 2023
Annette Bradford and Jim Hammond

KATHERINE BRANCH UPDATE

Ho ho ho
What a jolly good time is happening
in Katherine this festive season



A big thankyou to the local members for this amazing set up and for everyone who came along to support the Trust in Katherine



The National Trust NT Council would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following organisations and bodies for their support and assistance to the NT Trust through grants, volunteer work and in kind support to help maintain our properties.

Accor
Anna Harris
Alex Wright – Axis Plumbing & Maintenance Service
Barpa
Alice Springs Town Council
Bendigo Bank
Emma Bell
NT Government CBF Grants
NT Government Heritage Grants
Katherine Town Council
Pine Creek - Vic Daly Shire
Member for Barkly
Member for Daly
Member for Katherine
Ventia
Roper Gulf Shire
Roy Stanton Painters
Shiva Makam



*"We thank you all for your support and assistance
in 2023 and wish you all a very happy and healthy
2024."*

DARWIN BRANCH UPDATE

Our members and volunteers support the Darwin Branch of the National Trust NT as they believe in the intrinsic value of preserving the past and building a vibrant and rich historic perspective to enrich the community of Darwin and the NT. Without volunteers the Darwin Branch may not be able to open Burnett House to the public and this would be a travesty for the local community now and into the future. The work of volunteers includes, in the Darwin Branch, 'House sitting' which means Burnett House is open five days per week for four hours a day which is an impressive commitment. The House sitter has a depth of knowledge of the house; its' architecture and the importance of this revolutionary domestic building concept. Sharing this insight builds for the National Trust NT with interstate and international visitors a profile of what are the best attributes of the National Trust. That history is about people, their day-to-day lives and how they meet social changes in their lifetimes.

There are tour guides who this year have conducted tours of visitors explaining the architecture and social impact of the vision of Beni Carr-Burnett. Alongside these activities is the gardening, cleaning, planning events for the community and the invaluable 'word of mouth' promotion of the National Trust which happens every day.

A thank you to the volunteers event was held in early December in our beautiful gardens. It was quite fitting that our event fell during the week of the International Volunteer Day 2023. The Darwin Branch uses our gardens for Afternoon Teas, concerts and member gatherings during the year. Funds for the work come from tours, visits to the houses and functions by Darwin Branch.

The 2024 program promises to highlight some favourites in the Darwin community and to create more interaction both within the Darwin community but engaging with other community groups and those who are advocates of heritage and its' preservation from NT government.

Our 'highlight events' for 2024 include the High Tea on 10 March, celebrating International Women's Day, and our Heritage Festival from 4-18 May.

If you can give your time to the Darwin Branch of the NT National Trust it would be greatly appreciated and it would make a difference. To give to future Territorians the legacy of community service for the love of history and of those who have walked before us has the greatest impact and creates a more meaningful future. Darwin Branch Chair - Helen Spiers.

VALE TOM PAULING

It is a great honour and a great responsibility to be given an opportunity to eulogise Tom Pauling – barrister, actor, man about Darwin – renaissance man if ever there was one.

Tom contributed generously and very significantly to the National Trust of the NT when he played major parts in the ‘Ghost Walks’ conducted by the NT Trust. He introduced and engaged people in the historical treasure trove that is comprised by the headstones in the old Darwin Cemetery in Goyder Road. The Ghost Walks very successfully entertained and informed large audiences because they featured reincarnations of some of the notable and interesting pioneers who were buried in the cemetery through Darwin’s earliest years.

Tom brought his characters back to vivid life. That was not surprising as he

was a brilliant actor who first became interested in the theatre very soon after he arrived in town in March 1970. He explained ‘I quickly realised that I needed something better to do than going out and getting smashed every night. And the other problem was lunch – in those days you went out to lunch and didn’t come back.’

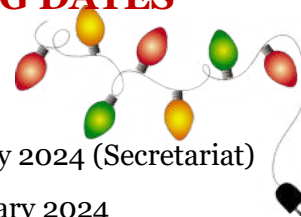
So Tom got involved in local theatre and was in the first ever local production at Brown’s Mart. For the next half-century he was a luminous local star, on stage as well as in Court.

Thanks Tom. We will miss you greatly.

Written by Peter Forrest.



TRUST HOUSES CLOSING AND OPENING DATES



Audit House:	22 December 2023 - 15 January 2024 (Secretariat)
Burnett House:	13 December 2023 - 12 February 2024
Roadmasters House:	end of November 2023 - early March 2024
O'Keefe House:	closed for the wet season
Tuxworth House:	closed for the wet season
Jones Store:	open all year round pending access
Hartley Street School:	reopens in the dry season
Stuart Town Goal:	reopens in the dry season
Old Borroloola Police Station:	open all year round

2024 HERITAGE THEME CONNECTIONS

Don't forget to keep an eye out for the Heritage Festival happenings in 2024 near you - expected to be during April and May 2024. If you are keen to be involved please contact your local branch to get involved.

National Trust of Australia Northern Territory

Audit House
2 Burnett Place
Larrakeyah
Northern Territory

Phone: 08 89812848

E-mail:

admin@ntnationaltrust.org.au
www.nationaltrust.org.au/nt



Membership:

Individual Membership options from \$40 and Household options from \$80 - annually.

This includes free entry to all our NT sites, National Trust Properties across Australia and now 20% off items in the National Trust NT store.

