



BOAB BULLETIN

No. 110

June 2012

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETINGS

commencing 7.15 for 7.30 p.m. at
Shenton Park Community Centre, corner Onslow and Herbert Roads

Wednesday, 6 June 2012

the Hon. Tom Stephens MLA, Member for Pilbara

will launch the Kimberley Society's latest book

Kimberley History: People, Exploration and Development

(non-members are welcome, subject to paying a \$5 hospitality fee)

Wednesday, 4 July 2012

Sandy Toussaint and other contributors

will discuss their soon-to-be-launched book

“Kimberley Stories”

(book note and member's price on pages 3 and 4 of this newsletter)

(non-members are welcome, subject to paying a \$2 hospitality fee)

Wednesday, 1 August 2012

Russell & Matt Barrett (Kings Park)

“Working with Kimberley flora”

Wednesday, 5 September 2012

Tom Carlson (Retired OIC Fitzroy Crossing Police)

“Police work, 1967-1972”

Please note that, with many of our speakers involved in work-related travel, this program may change at short notice. Should a speaker not be available, we try to find a substitute with a similar subject.

Members and visitors are invited to stay for supper after the meetings.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Kimberley History: People, Exploration and Development

I am very pleased to advise our members that the Proceedings of the Society's Kimberley History Seminar held at the University of Western Australia on March 27, 2010 have been printed and are now available for sale to members and the general public. Western Australia's Kimberley region embraces one of the world's last great wilderness areas. The region has a fascinating Indigenous and early European history. Archaeological evidence indicates that Aborigines may have first occupied the Kimberley between 53,000 and 60,000 years ago. Known European exploration of the Kimberley coastline commenced in 1644 and land based exploration in 1837. Guano mining was the Kimberley's first extractive industry with the first material being taken from Browse Island in 1872.

The book is a handsome, lavishly illustrated, full-colour 240 page volume containing 15 papers on different aspects of the Kimberley's Aboriginal and early European history. Contributors to the volume, in the order they appear, are Jeffrey Gresham, Mark Bin Bakar, Mike Morwood, Cathie Clement, Hamish McGlashan, Tony Quinlan, Tim Willing & Alison Spencer, Geoffrey Bolton, Phil Playford, Michael Cusack, Kevin Kenneally, Mike Donaldson & Ian Elliot, Christine Choo, and Bill Bunbury. The papers have been diligently edited by Cathie Clement and collectively they represent a significant contribution to our knowledge of the Kimberley's early history.

The design work for the book was done by Maria Duthie Design and it was printed in Perth by Scott Print. *Kimberley History: People, Exploration and Development* is the third major publication by the Society following the previous two volumes resulting from rock art seminars held in 1997 and 2005.

At our June 6 meeting, we are privileged to have the Hon. Tom Stephens MLA, Member for Pilbara to officially launch the book. It will be available for purchase by Society members for \$35 a copy inclusive of GST at the launch and at subsequent monthly meetings. The recommended retail price for the book is \$49.95 per copy inclusive of GST. I would encourage members to attend this important event and purchase a copy of the book—you will find it interesting reading.

Jeffrey J Gresham

Congratulations to all involved in the Kimberley Society's new publication – *Kimberley History: People, Exploration and Development*. Those at the Seminar will be delighted with this exceptional presentation of the proceedings, and those unable to attend will enjoy the benefit of a well researched and illustrated series of papers. I am sure the book will appeal to a far wider audience, appreciative of the user friendly layout and meticulous editing. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in the early history of the vast and diverse Kimberley region. Well done! – *Kevin Coate, naturalist & Society member*

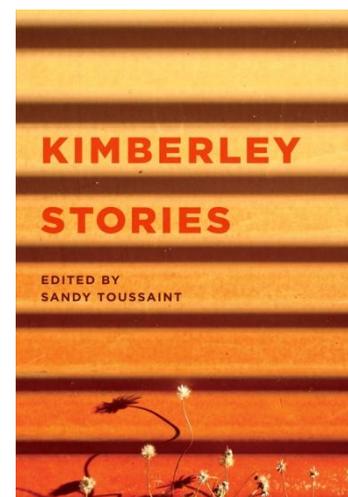
Congratulations on a terrific book – impressive in every sense. – *Stephen Scourfield, award-winning author & travel writer*

Comprehensive yet compact, *Kimberley History* leads the reader from the archaeological record to early discoveries, European exploration and settlement. It presents a balanced view of the concomitant conflict with the indigenous residents and is well illustrated with maps, artwork, and quality images not previously brought together in a single publication. This book is eminently readable and deserves to be on the shelf of anyone interested in early Australian history. – *Frank Woodmore, outback explorer & Society member*

BOOK NOTE

Kimberley Stories edited by Sandy Toussaint. Fremantle Press, Fremantle, 2012. Paperback, 212 pages, illustrated, map. ISBN 9781921888823. Recommended retail price \$24.95.

The day I received a review copy of this book from Fremantle Press, I attended the opening of the Shaun Tan exhibition at Fremantle Arts Centre. One of his major themes is the urban landscape, especially around Mt Lawley and Perth's northern suburbs. This is a significant contrast to the Kimberley landscape, called more often *country*, and people's connection to it. The recurring themes through the book are relationships with people, the weather and the country. Not having lived in the Kimberley for some time, I had forgotten a fair bit about the weather.



Jacqueline Wright in "A seasonal unease" describes the problem for white people or *kartiya*. Traditionally, most people describe wet and dry seasons but, as she explains, Aboriginal people around Broome will recognise six seasons. In Jimmy Chi's short song "Northern Town", he extends the seasons to eight. These two contributions reminded me of how I was intrigued by desert mothers from Balgo complaining to me how hot it was in Derby on one occasion. Having been out to Balgo and travelled in the back of a ute in temperatures of approximately 55° Celsius, I didn't quite get it. However I eventually recognised it was the humidity that was draining for them. Going out to the desert from the humid coast the dryness of the heat is almost refreshing, as I also remember from days visiting Marble Bar. Then again I can remember a day when it was a "cool" 42° in Derby but on the same day Perth was blistering in 49°.

On reading this book, lots of memories are evoked on a personal level. Visits to Steep Island and Raft Point and the Aboriginal art sites there are certainly stunning memories that remain with me. I also have very treasured memories of going hunting and fishing with Aboriginal people. I never caught a fish in the Kimberley but I did pull cherabun out of a net on one occasion at Looma. The unbridled joy of everyone jumping into the back of a vehicle which is almost always a Toyota, and usually the clinic nurse's troop carrier, and going to dams or water holes to fish and catch cherabun after a busy clinic was the perfect way to end the day for me.

I was told when I went to the Kimberley never to swim in the Fitzroy River as this would guarantee that one was always obliged to come back to the *country*. I must admit that I avoided the Fitzroy River but I must have gone in quite a few other creeks and water holes. The "River fever" description by Lesley Corbett on her return to Perth echoes those feelings precisely. I was told it would take six months to get used to not being in the Kimberley. I must admit when the six months was up I thought, "Well that's it, I'm going back," but my life had taken a totally different course and I was unable to do that. I hope my daughter will read the piece "Sacred earth and ancestral gifts" by Pat Mamanyjun Torres to help her understand the connections and obligations and naming of family members.

On a personal level I was delighted to see pieces by people I know and whose children I saw in my position as Kimberley Paediatrician. I note that Donna Bing-Ying Mak mentioned having arranged for the Notre Dame University medical students, or certainly those in the Rural Clinical School, to visit the Kimberley as a part of their elective, which I think is a fabulous idea.

Do be warned that there are some fairly graphic descriptions of alcohol and drug-related violence in the lives of both non-Indigenous and Indigenous people which is unfortunately all too common in Kimberley towns.

I am glad to see Jimmy Chi's contribution as I understand he had not been well enough to attend the opening of his film *Bran Nue Dae*. I found Peter Bibby's "From *Escapadia*" amusing, about the types of people described in there. Unfortunately when I last saw Peter he didn't remember me playing tennis with him with the AMS doctors in Broome in the late eighties.

I enjoyed the anthology, and, as the final note on the back cover says, "Once known, never forgotten, the Kimberley gets under your skin."

Jack Vercoe

MORE ABOUT *KIMBERLEY STORIES*

On Wednesday 18 July, June Oscar, Chair of the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, will launch this anthology at Broome Library. It contains short stories, creative non-fiction, prose, poetry, and a play extract. Two weeks prior to the launch, the editor and some of the contributors will do a presentation about the book for the Kimberley Society in Perth. See the front page of this newsletter for details.

In addition to the contributions mentioned in Jack's book note, and other explanatory material expected in an anthology, *Kimberley Stories* also contains:

- Places named in the text
- Introduction – **Sandy Toussaint**
- Arriving, departing, and never quite leaving – **Kate Auty**
- Art on the run – **Kim Mahood**
- 'Just leave it. It's good the way it is.' – **Bonita Mason**
- Colour in the face of time – **Stephen Scourfield**
- Leaf – **Sandy Toussaint**
- leaf carries its place with it – **Jane Mulcock**
- Seagull – **Pat Lowe**
- Sandy's send-off – **Murray Jennings**
- Break a leg! – **Marminjiya Joy Nuggett**
- Jandamarra in translation – **Steve Hawke**
- Hooked on history – **Cathie Clement**
- By your students you'll be taught – **Andrew Burke**
- Double vision – **Steve Gome**
- A pair of feet – **Luisa Mitchell**
- The ride of his life – **Richard Davis**
- Variations on country – **C. Ann Hobson**
- butcherman – **Robyn Wells**
- Dugong connections – **Kelvin Garlett**
- A backdrop black – **Leon Henry**
- Notes accompanying "From *Escapadia*"

Because the Kimberley Society contributed to the cost of producing *Kimberley Stories*, copies are being made available to members at **the special price** of \$15 per copy at the Society's meeting on 4 July. Non-members who attend as guests will be able to purchase a copy for \$22.

Members who cannot attend the meeting can buy copies **post-free, during the month of June only**, at the RRP of \$24.95. To do that, you will need to send your order to Fremantle Press, marked for the attention of Clive Newman. Payment by credit card (Visa or MasterCard) is the preferred option but a cheque or money order is acceptable. The contact details are e-mail (cnewman@fremantlepress.com.au), fax (9430 5242) or post (PO Box 158, North Fremantle, WA 6159). Please specify the number of copies required, as well as providing your address for the delivery.

REST IN PEACE

On 27 March 2012, **Frank Rodriguez**, a well known West Kimberley identity, passed away quietly in Broome. Frank and his daughter **Cindy Solonec** were the Kimberley Society's guest speakers on 3 December 2008 and told the audience something of his life in the Kimberley. He went there in 1944 as a 21-year-old, having first travelled from Galicia in Spain to New Norcia with the intention of becoming a monk. Instead, he worked as a station hand and then became a builder. That story can be read on the Kimberley Society's website. Of note is that Frank must have been one of the few men in Australia to build the church in which he would marry—the *Holy Rosary* in Derby. Predeceased by his wife Katie and three of their children, Frank is survived by Pepita, Frank, Cindy and Phillip, as well as ten grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. Sympathy is extended to Cindy and the other members of the family.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN THE KIMBERLEY

Along with other parts of Western Australia, the Kimberley is frequently in the news with regard to the current boom. Two projects that form part of the combined State and Federal governments' \$517.5 million investment in community and infrastructure expansion in the East Kimberley were officially opened in February. On the 3rd, it was the turn of the new airport terminal at Kununurra and, on the 4th, the new Community Recreational Fishing Jetty at Wyndham. The work on the \$8.7 million airport redevelopment won a top prize in the Master Builders-Bankwest Kimberley-Pilbara Building Excellence Awards. The award, received by Pindan Contracting, a division of the Perth property and construction company Pindan, was presented at a dinner at the North West Expo in Broome on 5 May.

In April, veteran rocker James Reyne performed in Derby at the opening of the new Spinifex Hotel. The old Spini was purchased last year by Emanuel Dillon, Managing Director of the Perth-based Complete Group, which was supplying buildings for the immigration detention camp at Curtin. After knocking over the old hotel, the company constructed a two-storey prefabricated building that offers a startling new look for the site. It represents a \$15 million investment.

On 28 April, another step was taken in the development of the Waranyjarri Estate, which is set to double the size of Broome. The newly-opened display village includes exhibition homes from eight local and metropolitan builders, and 28 single residential lots from Stage 5 of the estate were made available for purchase. The estate is being developed in consultation with the WA Government, LandCorp, Shire of Broome, and the traditional owners. The aim is to house about 13,000 people in more than 5,000 homes, with adjacent schools, shopping, tourism, and commerce.

MANAGING WATER IN THE ORD RIVER

In response to recommendations from the Environmental Protection Authority, the Department of Water is updating the 2006 plan to secure water for irrigation expansion and to protect the lower Ord environment. The *Ord surface water allocation plan* defines how much water will be released downstream of the Ord River and Kununurra Diversion dams, under both the current and proposed enhanced rules for hydropower. It has been released for public comment, with the closing date of 14 September 2012. Comments can be submitted by email to allocation.planning@water.wa.gov.au or sent by mail to Ian Loh, Water Allocation Planning Branch, Department of Water, PO Box 6822, Perth, WA, 6842.

AWARDS

On 3 April 2012, the distinction of Fellow of the Library Board of Western Australia was conferred on **Mr Lindsay Peet**. At the function held to celebrate that event, Professor Matthew Allen, Chairman of the Library Board, spoke effusively of Lindsay's great contribution to the State's history and heritage. Over many years that contribution has resulted in the transfer of historical materials from the Peet family collection to repositories that include the J. S. Battye Library of West Australia History and the Royal Western Australian Historical Society. Lindsay has also purchased other valuable early documents and donated those to libraries, and, through his generous financial contributions, he has made possible a great deal of conservation work on library collections. As only the 16th person to have been made a Fellow since the award was created in 1984, Lindsay joined a distinguished group of people who have shaped, guided and fostered library and archival services in Western Australia. Slightly fewer people have been recognised as "Gems of Time" by the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) but Lindsay is also a "Gem", having received that award in 2009. He is one of only four people to have received both awards.

Lindsay's interest in military aviation history is well known. His work as a professional historian specialising in that area has contributed much to our knowledge of wartime activities in the Kimberley. Long-time members might recall his June 1995 talk on "World War II and the Kimberley" while newer members are more likely to recall "The Saga of the Shady Lady" from March 2006. The first of those talks was presented when Lindsay was a Vice President of the Kimberley Society, having already served as a member of the Interim Council and having been one of the three people present at the first of the formal meetings that discussed forming the Society.

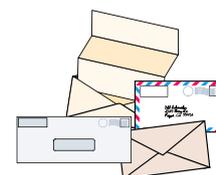
On 19 April, the Kimberley featured in the work of two of the 14 winners in the 2012 WA Youth Awards. In the category titled "Communicate! WA Youth Media Awards Print", journalist **Flip Prior** was honoured for her story about Josh Sibosado. Published under the heading 'On the team for life', it told of Josh, a 23-year-old from the Kimberley, using his experiences with suicide and depression to help other young people. Flip, who is a Kimberley Society member, works out of Broome as the North-West reporter for *The West Australian* (see www.facebook.com/pages/Flip-Prior/121663684613831). This is her second WA Youth Award; the earlier one having been for her reporting in 2009. Coincidentally, Josh Sibosado has previously taken out awards for his contribution to the group that won the category titled "Innovate! BHP Billiton Award". It went to **Alive and Kicking Goals**, 'for using football to raise awareness of youth suicide in the Kimberley and developing strategies to encourage young Aboriginal people to live life to the full'. The WA Youth Awards, which are supported by Lotterywest, are presented by the Department for Communities in partnership with the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia.

In April 2012, Australia's North West Tourism Awards went to: **Kimberley Coastal Camp** (Pilbara Development Commission - Ecotourism Award, and ATEC Cultural - Tourism Award); **Mount Romance - The Sandalwood Gallery**, Broome (Kimberley Development Commission - New Product Development Award); **Cable Beach Club Resort & Spa** (Australian Geographic - Accommodation Award); **Red Sun Camels** (Department of Environment & Conservation - Land Based Operators' Award); **Cygnets Bay Pearls** (Regional Development Australia - Marine Operator Award); **Home Valley Station** (Print Logic/Matrix Design - Unique Accommodation Award), **Matso's Broome Brewery** (The West Australian - Retail Tourism Award, and Tourism Western Australia - General Tourism Award), and **Gail Gower** (Skal International - Individual Award for Excellence).

JAMES PRICE POINT

Barely a day goes by without mention of James Price Point. In mid-May, the deployment to Broome of more than 100 police officers with riot gear, at an estimated cost of \$1 million, drew widespread media coverage. As part of that ten-day operation, about 55 officers, mostly on foot, escorted 14 Woodside vehicles past protesters on Manari Road on 14 May. The trucks carried earth-moving equipment, fuel and temporary workers' accommodation to the site earmarked for a multi-billion dollar liquid natural gas (LNG) processing plant. Most of the outside police were then sent home or elsewhere in the Kimberley. On the 18th, two Broome women were arrested after allegedly locking themselves onto a concrete-laden vehicle used to block another Woodside convoy. On the 21st, with no violent protests having occurred, only about 30 police were on hand to escort a truck convoy along Cape Leveque Road. Numerous issues remain unresolved. Geotechnical studies began on 11 May but fear is being expressed that the marine drill survey will extend into the intertidal zone (a heritage-listed stretch of coastline) where dinosaur footprints are known to exist. Fourteen turtle nesting sites are also said to be at risk.

The latest twist in this saga, which includes 18 months of protesting, saw the non-profit Environmental Defender's Office of Western Australia launch a civil case in the Supreme Court. That action, taken for Richard Hunter (a Goolarabooloo man who is a traditional owner of the James Price Point site), challenges the validity of Woodside's approvals for the preliminary works. It hinges on the Kimberley Joint Development Assessment Panel having granted retrospective and new approvals to Woodside in February without receiving a Shire of Broome report.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It is the 1st of April, the day Tom Quilty liked to celebrate his birthday – which actually fell on the 4th in 1887.

I have just learnt from Halls Creek man, Ivan Bridge that Mr Mike Merrison, from aged 16 in about 1963, a jackaroo and stockman on Springvale Station for Tom and Olive Quilty, died of cancer on the 28th of March, 2012 just gone.

It is a shocking fact that three people in the periphery of the Tom Quilty legend – the wives of Ivan Bridge and Gilbo McAdam included with Mike – have died of cancer at Halls Creek in the past 7 years. Notably, Ivan Bridge, Mike Merrison and Gilbo McAdam lived at Burke Park, the satellite residential area north of Halls Creek, and on the way to Old Town.

I firmly believe that it is time for the State of Western Australia to supply the Halls Creek Shire with scientific investigators to give sound enquiry into these deaths. I strongly suspect that, if arsenic was used in the mining process for gold – historically, at old Halls Creek, or at Palm Springs in the late 1990's – then this must be an avenue of examination which must be explored.

Mike Merrison himself was the bore operator for the new Halls Creek's bore water pond. The relationship of the Creek itself and the water table must be figured on. The question must be asked: "Is gold mining-related arsenic being seeped into the town water supply at Burke Park and Halls Creek?"

Bluey Quilty, MA

MORE CALLS TO TRANSPORT KIMBERLEY WATER

In April 2007, a one-page article in the *Boab Bulletin* began:

A year ago, the independent expert panel appointed by the Western Australian Government submitted a report titled 'Options for bringing water to Perth from the Kimberley'. The panel evaluated the viability of bringing the water by canal, pipeline and ocean (with super-tankers carrying it, or tugs towing large synthetic bags). The report can be seen at http://dows.lincdigital.com.au/Kimberley_Water_Source.asp. One of its findings was that: 'Transporting water by canal would be the most expensive, have the greatest environmental impacts and hold the greatest risks for providing a reliable water supply'. With the government having endorsed that finding, and other equally negative findings relevant to economic, environmental and technical issues, one might think that would have been the end of the matter. Not so.

Little has changed. Calls to pipe the water to Perth were renewed in March 2012 after a visiting US academic, Professor Robert Glennon, said the WA Government should avoid the mistakes of southern US States in drawing too much groundwater. Despite his sharp criticism of Perth's water usage, particularly in the pampering of lush lawns, pipeline advocates again began writing to *The West Australian* to argue the case for bringing Kimberley water to Perth. Frederick G. McCulloch of Murdoch then pointed out the earlier findings on the cost of transporting that water. Brandon Brooksbank of Brunswick Junction saw McCulloch's letter as patronising and called for the "once-in-a-century project" to go ahead. The letters continue to arrive but they now call for Gina Rinehart or asylum seekers to build the pipeline.

Please don't forget this is your newsletter.



Kimberley news, articles, and items of interest are all most welcome.

COUNCIL 2012-2013

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Vice-Presidents:	Jack Vercoe and Jeff Murray
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Membership Secretary:	Mike Donaldson
Treasurer:	Gilbert Marsh
Councillors:	Ken Ahmat, Audrey Bolger, Michael Cusack, Hamish McGlashan, Roger Passmore, Dorothy Perret and Frank Woodmore.

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