



BOAB BULLETIN

No. 137

December 2016

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETINGS

commencing 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.

Dalkeith Hall, 97 Waratah Avenue, Dalkeith

Wednesday, 7 December 2016

“Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities”

Kim McCreanor (CEO, AMRRIC)

Wednesday, 1 February 2017

“Walking (and helicopter) adventures in the Kimberley 2016”

Mike Donaldson, Jeff Gresham & Roger Passmore

Wednesday, 1 March 2017

“Kimberley Visions: understanding rock art style provinces”

Sam Harper, Sven Ouzman & Peter Veth

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, the topic may differ on the evening.

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

The Society asks a \$2.00 hospitality fee from non-members.

ARGYLE DIAMONDS ORD VALLEY MUSTER

Friday 19 May to Sunday 28 May 2017

Tickets are on sale for some of the key events, with [Ticketmaster](#) currently offering them for Melbourne International Comedy Festival Roadshow at Hoochery Distillery on 22 May; Kimberley Kitchen with Colin Fassnidge at Celebrity Tree Park on the 24th; the Durack Homestead Dinner with Colin Fassnidge on the 25th; and Kimberley Moon Experience on the banks of the Ord on the 27th with feature artists Jimmy Barnes, Daryl Braithwaite, The McClymonts and more. Kimberley Fine Diamonds Corporate Circle will cater for 625 guests. Muster Multipass and tickets for some of the other events are selling rapidly. Details of events and other options for purchasing tickets are available at the Ord Valley Muster [website](#) or from [Kununurra Visitor Centre](#) (08 9168 1177) or [Mellen Events](#) (08 9383 3534).

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A standout event for me in November was the annual public lecture sponsored by Kimberley Foundation Australia at the University of Western Australia. The free talk was this year presented by Professor Andy Gleadow of Melbourne University and it detailed the complex programs attempting to date the Kimberley rock art. A very high-powered team is focussed on this problem using all the modern techniques available including the tongue-twister LAICPMS (laser ablation inductively coupled plasma source mass spectroscopy), Uranium-series dating, and C¹⁴ radiometric methods. Promising results are already being obtained, confirming ages for the art dating at least back to the Pleistocene, and many more dates are expected over the next year.

Another highlight was the annual meeting of the Kimberley Foundation's Science Advisory Council where expert researchers in a wide variety of disciplines from universities in Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, and Perth summarise results and discuss ongoing projects. Apart from the rock art dating project, there are other projects unlocking past climates in the Kimberley over the last 20 000 years, documenting occupation dates to before 45 000 years ago from archaeological excavations, landscape evolution studies using cosmogenic radiation to ascertain how long rocks have been exposed to sunlight, and detailed mineralogical and geochemical studies of mineral accretions on rock surfaces that impact the rock art. Kimberley Visions, a major project headed by UWA's Prof Peter Veth and involving many disciplines, started this year to explore the connections between Kimberley and Arnhem Land cultures dating back to the last ice age. And a French team working with Monash University archaeologist Bruno David has documented human modifications to a rock shelter to remove large rock slabs and enlarge the site, swiftly debunking the notion that the early hunter-gatherers were just a passive part of the environment many thousands of years ago.

There has never been such coordinated scientific research into Kimberley Aboriginal occupation and rock art histories dating back probably close to 50 000 years, and the coming years promise a vastly improved understanding of this early history of our favourite place.

Mike Donaldson

AWARDS

June Oscar AO, a senior Bunuba woman, has been named the 2017 WA Local Hero in the [WA Australian of the Year Awards](#). Recognised for her role in bringing about the restriction of full-strength takeaway alcohol in Fitzroy Crossing, she accepted the award 'on behalf of the many women and children in the Fitzroy Valley'. Ms Oscar and the other WA winners will attend the national awards in Canberra on 25 January.

Olive Knight (Kankawa Nagarra) from Wangkatjungka community was one of the four finalists in the 2017 WA Senior Australian of the Year category. A book note on her inspiring memoir, *The Bauhinia Tree*, appears on page 6.

Jonathan Smith took out the 2016 [WA Regional Small Business of the Year Award](#). "Jono" qualified as an electrician in 2002, worked for Derby electricians for seven years, and then established Wattnow Electrical in the town. As a category award winner, he received \$1,000 and a partial scholarship valued at over \$7,500 from Curtin University's Growth Program. Being the overall winner took that to a full scholarship, \$25,000 worth of television advertising courtesy of GWN7, and more.

GIJA TOTAL HEALTH

On 5 October 2016, **David Rose** spoke to the Kimberley Society about pro bono work that is being done for a not-for-profit aboriginal health and wellbeing program centred in Warmun in the East Kimberley. David is a mining engineer who worked at Argyle Diamonds from 2003 until 2007, as General Manager and then as Managing Director. During this time, he had close engagement with the Gija and Mirriwung elders. He now works as a Director at KPMG, consulting to the mining industry. He is Chairman of the Gija Total Health Advisory Group, Vice Chairman of Christ Church Grammar School, and President of Rowing WA. His summary of the talk follows.

Launched in June 2008, Gija Total Health (GTH) aims to improve the health and lives of the Gija people in the East Kimberley Aboriginal Community of Warmun and its associated outstations. It is a deceptively simple fresh model that places a fulltime manager in the community, reporting directly to the [Warmun Community Council](#), through its CEO, to consult with the Gija people and find sustainable ways to improve outcomes in all areas of physical, mental, social and environmental health. The model also includes a non-incorporated Advisory Group who provide a network into the best of the relevant pro bono medical and other appropriate expertise to support a set of objectives determined by the community Council.

GTH walks a fine line between paternalism and self-help to provide constructive support to the Warmun community.

Gija people have lived in the lands around Warmun since the Ngarranggarni, or creation time, when spiritual beings roamed the land and created everything in it. This country contains their traditional hunting grounds and ceremonial sites, the songs and stories, and the resting places of the ancestors, all of which embody the past and define the future for the Gija mob.

After the [1885 gold discovery](#) at Halls Creek, a road and then a telegraph line linked the goldfield to Wyndham. A telegraph station constructed at Turkey Creek in 1897 became the hub of a small settlement and, to minimise its negative impact on the Gija people, the government established an Aboriginal feeding depot at nearby Violet Valley in 1912. Following the [Equal Wages Award](#) for Aboriginal stockmen in 1965, most Gija people were forced off the stations and drifted into fringe camps at Turkey Creek, where they set up camps with family and others who had worked on the same nearby stations.

[Warmun](#) is now one of the largest Aboriginal communities in the East Kimberley, with a stable population of over 300 people, and total transient population of around double that. The town comprises nearly 100 houses, a school, health clinic and police station and the internationally acclaimed Warmun Art Centre.

However, like so many other remote aboriginal communities, Warmun faces some entrenched problems including illegal substance abuse including alcohol, a general malaise in physical, mental and social health. There is welfare dependency and low morale due to sense of powerlessness and compromised cultural identity. This is compounded by lack of cohesion in government policy and a difficulty attracting reliable professionals for community work. However, unlike many aboriginal communities, Warmun is blessed with cultural cohesion, being predominantly made up of Gija people with a surviving cultural tradition in art, stories and joomba.

GTH's formation arose from an initiative called Jirrawun Health, which provided medical services to a group of Gija artists, particularly those of an art movement known as [Jirrawun Arts](#), most famous for its signature artist, the late [Paddy Bedford](#). In 2007 Jirrawun Health folded due to an unsustainable corporate and financial structure, and, as it turned out, some divisiveness associated with its choice of name, as well as perceived elitism within the broader Gija community.

However, [Professor Ian Constable AO](#) and I remained committed to the need for adjunct health services for the Gija mob, so we set about developing a new model by removing unnecessary layers of corporate structure, putting existing community institutions at the centre, and respecting the role of existing health services.

Gija Total Health's point of difference and success is owed to the pivotal role of the community based manager who earns the trust of the Gija people, and efficiently channels available funds and support. The first Gija Total Health manager was Megan Buckley, who had previously run the [Warmun Art Centre](#) making her uniquely networked within the community which won the program its initial support. She was also smart and had the patience and skill to navigate the maze of external relationships, grant applications and acquittals required to support the programs.

The list of eminent medical professionals who assist the coordinator to leverage specialty health programs and funding from the Commonwealth government and business sectors is impressive, and has included: Professors Fiona Stanley, Ian Constable, Kerin O'Dea, Helen Milroy and Harvey Coates. All experts in their fields and highly respected within their wide networks. Connection locally is just as crucial, with local doctors, [Ann Ward](#) and [Catherine Engelke](#) among our keenest supporters. Incidentally, Catherine is the first Gija person to become a doctor and now practices in Kununurra and Warmun. These supporters give their time pro bono because they believe this is a program that is capable of making a difference in the long term.



Ann Ward, Bessie Daylight and Betty Carrington.

The relatively small investment by government over the years in supporting the salary of the GTH manager has seen this pro bono support sustained over an extended period, which provides enviable leverage for government funded programs.

Medical programs have included:–

- Eye Health Clinics –through the [Lions Eye Institute](#)
- Pediatric Ear Nose and Throat clinics – through [Prof Harvey Coates AO](#), and his colleagues;
- Oral Health and Dental Programs – delivered through the [Kimberley Dental Team](#);
- Mental Health programs – consisting of in-community professional counselling; and
- Drug and Alcohol programs – coordinated through a pre-existing rehabilitation program by local stalwart, [Sister Theresa Morellini AM](#).

In the area of community well-being, programs have included:–

- Youth programs and after school/[school holiday programs](#);
- Supported bush trips and camps;
- [Early Childhood](#) – including regular Warmun Playgroup for babies to 5 year olds;
- Effective Parenting and Healthy Community workshops; and
- Nutrition – initially through [Prof Kerin O’Dea](#), and subsequently through the [EON garden program](#).

Two of the most intractable issues for Warmun are substance abuse (including foetal alcohol spectrum disorder) and low school attendance. GTH has been involved with both issues at a support level, but sustained solutions will need internal community champions, people who can transcend family groups and loyalties, and make unpopular decisions for the benefit of the community as a whole.

GTH is an unconventional but effective model. It doesn’t fit the mould, and government cannot quite pigeonhole it. Consequently, our ongoing funding has survived only on the ingenuity of successive managers and CEO’s to find sufficient funding to sustain the program. It is difficult to retain quality professionals in remote communities, yet the success of any government programs focusing on health, job creation and reduction in alcohol misuse, rests on successful communication and creating a bridge between good intentions and indigenous people.

Gija Total Health is a working bridge.

There is also one sad statistic that says something of the plight of these communities, the magnitude of the challenge, and that, just maybe, life is a little better since GTH started. By mid-2010, the Warmun community was reporting reduced antisocial behaviour and no suicide. In comparison Warmun reported 5 suicides in the two years prior to GTH commencing in June 2008.

This recalls an observation from the famous anthropologist, Professor W.E.H. Stanner, in his Boyer lecture series in 1968, where he described “a mode of assent to the tragic terms of life, a view – not of pessimism – but of acceptance that reality is a joyous thing with maggots at the centre”.

THE WYNDHAM CAMELEERS

As part of the Wyndham Tourist Association Inc's grant funded project to promote indigenous and non-indigenous tourism in Wyndham, we seek any photos or information about the Wyndham cameleers, including trade routes. This information will be featured in the restoration of the [Afghan Cameleers Cemetery](#) and the recording of the site of the Wyndham Old Mosque.

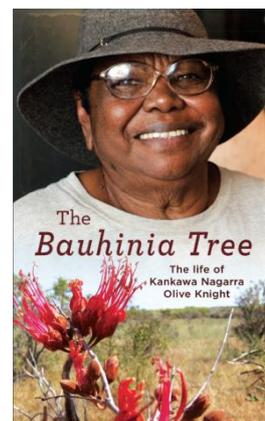
We are aware of the valuable information in Yvonne & Kevin Coate's book *More Lonely Graves of Western Australia* and we know of various books that have been written about camel drivers in Australia.

Information can be sent to The Wyndham Tourist Association Inc., PO Box 54, Wyndham, WA 6740, and, if need be, messages may be left on the Wyndham Caravan Park's landline – 08 9161 1064. For more details please contact Barbara Venn, Mobile 0418 331 473, or by [email](#).

BOOK NOTE

***The Bauhinia Tree: The Life of Kankawa Nagarra Olive Knight* by Olive Knight as told to Terri-ann White. [UWA Publishing](#), Crawley, WA, 2015, 108+ pages. Paperback, illustrated, maps, ISBN: 9781742585093, RRP \$22.99.**

Before reading any of her words, the reader encounters the author in a glowing introduction and a series of photographs. A strong, talented woman, Olive Knight has travelled widely but lives in the [Wangkatjungka community](#) 100 kilometres south-east of Fitzroy Crossing. The community has approximately 180 permanent residents who are Walmatjarri, Wangkatjungka or Gooniyandi, strongly connected to their desert culture.



Olive is Gooniyandi: part Gooniyandi, part Walmatjarri. Born to a tribally married 15-year-old mother after an illicit liaison with a slightly older mission-educated “half-caste” lover, she was fortunate not to have been killed at birth. This rocky start to life continued when her widowed mother fled baby Olive’s white grandfather’s Bohemia Downs Station, taking her to the adjacent Christmas Creek Station. Fortunately, things improved after her mother remarried.

The narrative progresses chronologically, taking the reader through 70 years of highs and lows in which, apart from Olive’s schooling at the UAM Mission in Fitzroy Crossing and the cave school on Gogo Station, her early life does not seem to have differed much from that of her mother. It is sobering to think that Olive’s arranged marriage (at about fifteen years of age), post-natal depression and other hardships were probably also the lot of many other young women of her generation.

Better times came when Olive got together with Jim Bieundurry. They had four children and, while Jim trained and worked as a missionary, later immersing himself in the fight for Aboriginal rights, Olive became an interpreter and translator. Walmatjarri is her main language. She also speaks English, Creole, a bit of Gooniyandi (her childhood language) and a little bit of Bunuba.

In 1985, the homeland movement took the family to Jim’s country at Lake Gregory, Paruku. His heart then gave out and he died that June. Olive, overcoming the devastation of losing Jim and the support he had provided, studied with the Perth Aboriginal Medical Service and qualified as a health worker. That path took her back to the Kimberley where, after working in community health, she was elected as a chair of Wangkatjungka community.

Several constants have sustained Olive since childhood – her Christian faith and [singing and song writing](#) in which her traditional songs are integrated with blues. Through her artist son Clifton, Olive’s music came to the attention of photographer Russell James and actor Hugh Jackman. That led to friendships and international travel. The collaboration between Clifton and Russell is part of the story behind the creation of the socially-conscious business known as [Nomad Two Worlds](#).

One of the most interesting parts of the book (Chapter 11) deals with Olive’s effort to understand, and do something about, the foetal alcohol spectrum disorder affecting some of the children in her family and community. Like the surrounding chapters, which also touch on her aspirations and philosophy, it reveals how determination, energy and a desire to help others have contributed to her becoming a respected elder and a participant in many events, projects and programs.

At a time when media portrayal of indigenous people’s lives is often negative, this book offers a timely and refreshing perspective from a brave and articulate writer.

Cathie Clement

QUANBUN DOWNS STATION – SOME HISTORY & ANECDOTES

On 2 November 2016, Brennan J Rose treated the Kimberley Society to a PowerPoint presentation that included approximately 50 slides related to Quanbun Station, which is situated on the Fitzroy River about 47 kilometres west of Fitzroy Crossing. His talk, woven around the sequences of slides, was mostly about growing up on the station in the 1950-60's. In his summary below, a little additional context has been provided.

My family owned and ran Quanban. The earliest records for the station show that Rose Bros. took up 50,000 acres on 21 May 1888 as pastoral lease 721/134. The brothers were [Edwin](#), George Canler and John Charles (known as Charles). Their father Robert Henry Rose (1833-1909) arrived in Australia in 1852.

The Roses' connection with the West Kimberley was quite extensive. George was the first on the scene, arriving in 1882 as the manager for James A Game's Yeeda Station. In 1885, while still at Yeeda, George purchased the adjacent Mt Anderson Station. By that time Edwin and Charles had arrived. They gained experience on Mt Anderson and other stations. Their brother James and three younger half-brothers – Arnold Jeffes, Augustus (Gus) Frederick and Percival – followed them into the Kimberley pastoral industry.

In 1891, after George withdrew from their partnership, Edwin and Charles stocked Quanbun with sheep. They also had cattle. Edwin did the initial droving, taking 2000 sheep from Roebourne to Quanbun, about 1300 kilometres, in seven months. I think they lost about 3-400 as conditions were harsh on the trip due to it being a drought year with little feed or water. Edwin ran the station while Charles worked elsewhere and in 1903 they sold to Arnold Jeffes Rose. He went into partnership with Percival in 1912 but became the sole owner again following Percival's death in 1935.



A series of photos taken in or before the 1920s showed early homesteads, hay and shearing sheds, donkey teams pulling wagons of wool and wood, and wool being washed in the Cunningham River. The wool washing was done to remove the yoke from the wool to maximise the sale price.

Taking wool to the port

The shearing had to be done after the Wet before the grass seeds set, especially the corkscrew which damaged the wool and also made mustering very difficult. Yoke builds up in the hot and humid wet season.

A photo depicting blade shearing on canvas sheets was the norm in the beginning as the shepherded mobs were shorn where they were. The wagon would load the wool and move to the next mob. In my early twenties I still had to shear the stragglers by blade.

Another photo showed a horse team scooping out Alligator (later Jubilee) Dam. This photo is significant in that it is the site of the oldest mammalian remains in WA. [Pliocene bones](#) were uncovered whilst digging this dam in early 1920 or so and reported by [Ludwig Glauert](#) in 1921. A review of the 1921 diary doesn't mention this find so further examination of older diaries may date the actual digging of the dam.

The first generation of Roses were among those who opened up the land and then went south to get married and live. Some of the next generation remained in the West Kimberley and raised families there. The Rose children (Mt Anderson, Liveringa, Quanbun) and the Henwood children (Noonkanbah, Calwynyardah) were the first generation to be raised on the Fitzroy sheep stations. Mrs Grace Henwood was the sister of Canny & Kim Rose.

As was the custom, my mother travelled to Bunbury where I was born in 1946, then home to the station. Schooling was by correspondence till I turned ten. Then it was off to Guildford Grammar boarding school. We did not have School of the Air but had to complete two weeks of lessons before the next plane where we sent them off to Perth and picked up the next lot.



One of the succession of Quanbun homesteads

Photos of the homestead and sheds were shown with explanations as to their uses. Our stores were ordered twice a year from J. & W. Bateman in Fremantle and sent by state ship to Derby, then by truck. An office in front of the store had the Traeger Radio which was the only communication we had with Derby, twice a day. Communication was by telegram and if you wanted things to be private you had to do it in writing and send it on the fortnightly DC3.

In the photos, a dingo in a trap was an example of one of the major reasons for the demise of the sheep industry. As the stations on the Fitzroy gradually turned to full time cattle production, the poisoning and aerial bating of dingos by the APB stopped, leaving Quanbun isolated to look after itself. I made the mistake of buying the last 4000 sheep from Noonkanbah, leaving Quanbun the only sheep station on the Fitzroy. I had to accept defeat when full time dogging and two men riding shotgun around the lambing ewes resulted in hardly a lamb.

Recreation growing up on a sheep property consisted of tennis, shooting, fishing and swimming. Because we had two large rivers running through the station there was an abundance of fish and cherumbas. Please note that everyone in my years on the Fitzroy called the fresh water prawn CHERUMBAS and not what is now wrongfully named cherumbim. The Aborigines called them cherumbas. Barramundi, bream, catfish, sawfish, stingray, shark, eels, turtles, mussels and Johnson crocodiles were all caught in the local pools.

Some photos showed the Aborigine house girls who worked in the homestead, kitchen and gardens with their children, our playmates. In the time before I went away to school, we need to remember that the older people in our tribe were born before the white settlers had arrived in the West Kimberley. In their generation they had to adapt to a whole new way of life where things were now owned individually and you had to work to be fed and clothed. Everyone on the property could speak and understand English and the children my age were going to the mission school in Fitzroy Crossing. My memories are of the tribe singing with sticks most nights (seldom heard a didgeridoo) and of a happy people.

Among the other photos were some of the Fitzroy Crossing Race week. All the stations would camp on the river with their horses for a week of parties and catch ups.

I also had one of the original Fitzroy Crossing Inn and one of the AIM Hospital. My mother was an AIM sister and I also married an AIM sister which proves what a marvellous organisation it was.

Other photos commented on were of the present homestead and buildings, dust storms, the wet moving in from the east, off to school down south, shearing and the rivers.

KIMBERLEY CATTLE STATIONS

The Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) has approved the \$100 million sale of four Kimberley cattle stations to a joint-venture partnership between a Chinese investor and an unnamed Kimberley cattle family. Known as Consolidated Australian Pastoral Holdings, the partnership purchased the one million-hectare aggregation from SAWA Pastoral Company (Kimberley pastoralist Nico Botha and his South African-based brother). The stations are Moola Bulla and Mount Amhurst (near Halls Creek), Beefwood Park (near Fitzroy Crossing), and Shamrock Station (near Broome). Those geographic locations provide access to the key export points of Broome and Wyndham. The stations carry a total herd of approximately 47,000 head, mostly Red Brahman / Droughtmaster cross, which will presumably go to the Indonesian market and processors located in Darwin and Perth.

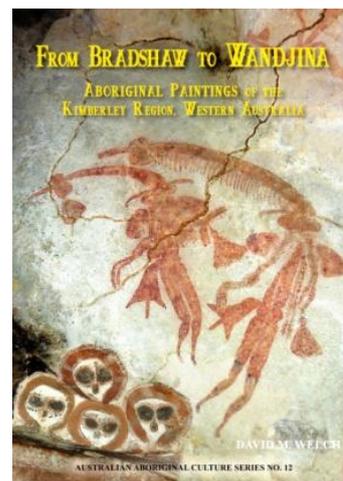
The sale is one of three involving Chinese interests in recent months. The purchase of Consolidated Pastoral Company's Carlton Hill by Chinese property developers Shanghai Zhongfu was announced in August. Encompassing 476,000 hectares in the lower Ord River area, Carlton Hill Station will continue to be run by CPC under a 10-year-leaseback of 90 per cent of the station. CPC retained ownership of its plant, equipment and 50,000 cattle because Shanghai Zhongfu, which trades in Australia as Kimberley Agricultural Investment (KAI), requires only the land it intends to use for intensive irrigated farming. That land is freehold and will be part of KAI's expansion of Ord stage 2. Reports of the sale put the price at \$100 million, with CPC receiving \$70 million in cash. The 10-year-leaseback is valued at \$30 million.

Shanghai CRED group, which owns Yakka Munga and Mt Elizabeth stations in the Kimberley, is involved in the third sale. It owns one-third of the successful \$386.5 million offer in which Gina Rinehart (Hancock Prospecting Pty Ltd) entered into a Bid Implementation Agreement to purchase the Kidman portfolio. One of Australia's largest beef producers, S. Kidman & Co Ltd has pastoral leases covering 101,000 square kilometres across Australia. Those stations include Ruby Plains and Sturt Creek Stations south of Halls Creek.

BOOK NOTE

From Bradshaw to Wandjina: Aboriginal paintings of the Kimberley region, Western Australia by David M. Welch. Australian Aboriginal Culture Series No. 12, [David M. Welch Publications](#), Darwin, 2016. Soft cover, 102 pages, 240 x 170 mm, prolific full colour images, RRP \$25.

In this book David covers the range in painted styles of the Kimberley rock art from the earliest examples of irregular infill animals in what he calls The Archaic Period, through the Bradshaw or Gwion styles to Wandjinas (often spelt Wanjinias in current usage) and the limited examples of paintings of the Contact Period which portray European items.



David has many publications relating to Kimberley rock art – he cites 26 references in this publication – and is well qualified to comment on Kimberley rock art having been researching it for about 30 years. One of his long-standing views of the long history of Aboriginal art in the Kimberley is that of progressive change in styles rather than abrupt change with long periods in between.

In this latest book, he again argues for this progressive change and illustrates similarities between accoutrements depicted in ancient rock paintings and those worn by Aboriginal people engaged in ceremonial dances in recent times, or depicted in early photographs from the early 1900s.

David developed his own nomenclature for Kimberley rock art more than 20 years ago, and he has always avoided the whitefella name Bradshaw in his publications. It was therefore surprising to see Bradshaw in the title of this book, but he does explain the history of this term (named after explorer Joseph Bradshaw who first reported the figures) and he continues to use his preferred nomenclature of Tasselred Figures (Tassel Bradshaws or Ngunuru Gwions), Bent Knee Figures (Sash Bradshaws or Yowna Gwions), Kimberley Dynamic Figures (Elegant Action Figures or Dynamic Gwions), and Straight Part Figures (Clothes Peg Figures or Dalal Gwions).

The Wandjina section of the book contains many images of spectacular paintings, some not previously published. There are also summaries of important mythologies associated with Wandjinas, and a section on Totemic (Dreaming) sites.

This small book is a great addition to the literature on Kimberley rock art and is a must for anyone with an interest in this subject. Copies are available at Boffins Bookshop in Perth and at other outlets listed on David's website.

Mike Donaldson

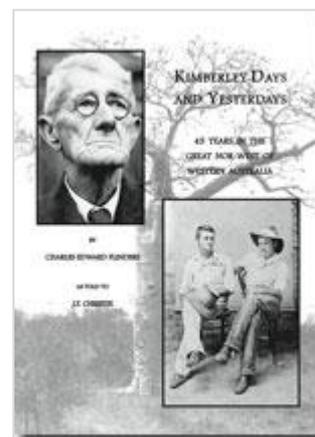
COMPENSATION FOR RYAN MARRON

Former WA police constable [Ryan Marron](#), who suffered brain damage and paralysis after contracting Murray Valley encephalitis in 2011 while serving at Balgo in the Kimberley, is to receive [\\$6 million compensation](#). He, his partner and his family were obliged to fight long and hard for this ex-gratia payment (half of what they had hoped to secure for his future medical needs) because WA police officers are not entitled to workers' compensation. The State Government has so far resisted union pressure to establish a dedicated fund for medically retired officers but current Police Minister Liza Harvey has said that she will aim to introduce such a scheme.

BOOK NOTE

***Kimberley Days and Yesterdays : 45 years in the Great Nor-West of Western Australia* by Charles Edward Flinders as told to J.F. Christie. [Hesperian Press](#), Carlisle, WA, 2016. Soft cover, 122 pages, A4, illustrated. ISBN 978-0-85905-064-5, RRP \$30.**

Sitting in Wyndham in 1934, J.F. Christie wrote: “There are very few of the old-timers who retain such vivid memories of the early days of the Nor-west of Western Australia as Charles Edward Flinders.” While Christie might have come to journalism late in life, he knew a good story when he encountered one. And there, sitting in Flinders’ home town, he had enough for a book.



In a Publisher’s Note at the front of *Kimberley Days and Yesterdays*, Peter J Bridge tells of tracking down this manuscript after reading, in a 1934 letter (then 50 years old), that Angus & Robertson had rejected it because its theme was similar to the book *Cossack Gold*. Hesperian reprinted *Cossack Gold* in 1984 and intended to publish Flinders’ manuscript in the annotated form adopted for such works as Lamond’s *Tales of the Overland*. Research and editing began but the breadth and nature of the stories defied all efforts to provide comprehensive annotation. Since then, the publication of other people’s reminiscences and the advent of [Trove](#) have reduced the need for such editorial intervention. Readers will, however, need to verify any information they wish to use from Flinders’ writing because, like many people recalling events from past decades, his memory was far from infallible.

To round out the Christie manuscript, Hesperian Press added seven chapters to the front of the book. That material came from manuscripts, articles and documents held by the Flinders family and the J.S. Battye Library of West Australian History. The first addition is titled ‘Fleeing London’ and there Flinders introduces himself as the great nephew of the navigator Matthew Flinders. Then, describing his voyage to Australia with his 17-year-old younger brother Bill in our summer of 1886/1887, he wrote:

On board I met Sir Malcolm Fraser, Colonial Secretary for Western Australia, ... and I chummed up with William Lambden Owen, a young engineer who, like myself, was setting out on a great adventure. In fact, he was my cabin mate.

Owen was the author of *Cossack Gold*, which Flinders considered ‘well worth reading’. The two men started work in the Cossack and Roebourne area in 1887, and Flinders then moved to the Kimberley. His early jobs tended to be short lived because, in his twenties, he wanted ‘something with at least a bit of excitement in it’. He saw and heard plenty as a police constable (1887), court orderly, landing waiter, West Kimberley Road Board secretary, auctioneer, mail contractor (1894–95), Halls Creek publican, Wyndham storekeeper (1905 onward), and Road Board chairman (1928–34). He knew pastoralists, pearlers and policemen, and he had firsthand experience of Jandamarra (Pigeon) and other Aboriginal people clashing with settlers and the police in the West Kimberley in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Flinders’ rambling but interesting flow of stories about his life is interspersed with anecdotes about history, other people and their experiences. The places he discusses include Broome, Cossack, Derby, Halls Creek, Port Hedland, Roebourne and Wyndham as well as various stations and mines outside those towns. His friend Michael Patrick Durack, in a foreword to the Christie manuscript, wrote: ‘I have heard the stories and incidents recorded in these pages and am delighted to find how accurately they have been memorised and faithfully set forth.’

Cathie Clement

NATURAL WORLD OF THE KIMBERLEY

The seminar held at the UWA club on the 15th October was the fourth in the series of whole day meetings arranged by the Society and the first devoted to natural history. Despite some last week anxiety about enough enrolments to cover the expenses of the event, as has happened previously there were many late registrations and a healthy crowd enjoyed the proceedings. Last minute cancellation by speakers were covered by colleagues and a speaker who had his dates mixed up made amends by giving one of the best talks of the day.

The range of subjects and depth of the scientists' presentations was formidable, but the speakers are all to be congratulated and thanked for their ability to present their research findings in so lucid a manner. Having covered the plants, animals, shore line and environmental issues we are now so much better informed about the science of the natural history of the Kimberley.

Poster presentations were an innovation which added interest to the breaks. It was a long and packed programme, which left little time for discussion or socialising – a lesson for next time? We were tired but happy at the end!

As usual the University Club proved an excellent venue. The catering was good and the staff unobtrusively ensured that the event ran without any significant hitches.

Hamish McGlashan

BROOME, ITS SURROUNDS, AND ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

After a low-key public notice in Perth's *Weekend West* newspaper on 5 November advised that the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee (ACMC) would be assessing [LSC11 \(DAA 30274\)](#) on 14 December, [a public outcry](#) occurred. Few people would have been aware that the area in question is 'Broome and surrounds'. The situation came about because, with a Supreme Court decision last year having found that the wrong criteria was used in an assessment of parts of Port Hedland, the ACMC has to revisit that assessment and others. Some of them will be revisited on the 14th but, as a result of the outcry, the Broome assessment has been removed from the agenda and a new closing date for submissions has yet to be announced.

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