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FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC

e-BULLETIN No. 142 – 27 August 2015

Hon Editor, Dr Ruth S. Kerr

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1) New Western Australian Heritage Act - public comment invited

On 12 August 2015, Heritage Minister, Hon Albert Jacob MP, released the [Heritage Bill 2015 \(Exposure Draft\)](#) for stakeholder and community consultation.

It is the culmination of the 2011 review of the [Heritage Of Western Australia Act 1990](#), the first major initiative of the [State Cultural Heritage Policy](#).

Submissions close Friday 25 September 2015.

More information is available by following this link:

www.stateheritage.wa.gov.au/news/2015/08/12/public-comment-sought-on-new-heritage-laws

(Source: Australia ICOMOS *E-Mail News* No.695, 21 August 2015)

2) Charles Darwin University's Nursing Museum

Charles Darwin University's Nursing Museum and Historical Photographs Collection started in 1987 when the first pre-service nursing program commenced at the University. The museum aims to preserve and promote moveable cultural heritage. It is a reflection of the evolution of health care in the Northern Territory. Photographs, artefacts, instruments, memorabilia and ephemera are collected and displayed.

The displays may be viewed at the University's Casuarina Campus (building Blue 5) and are open to the public in the usual opening hours of the University. Other displays are in the Chancery (Orange 12), Arts/Law (Yellow 1) and the Medical School (Yellow ¾) and Darwin Private Hospital Foyer.

Significant donations of items came from the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Territory health services, personal collections and the Pat Ferrier estate. Volunteers undertake the cataloguing, preservation and counting displays.

A Management Committee oversees the museum. Funding is sourced from small grants and the services of University staff. Donations have been made by the University, the Cinderella Collection project of Council for Australian University Museums and Art Collections (CAUMAC), Veterans Affairs Department, Museums Australia, Australian Nursing Federation and Royal College of Nursing Australia. Further funds came from Management Committee fundraising and Health Sciences students at the University from their social club on its closure in 2000. A significant bequest to honour Elizabeth Anne and James Donald was received in 2002 through the University's Foundation. The Museum Patron is Doctor Valerie Asche.

The Museum has erected two plaques. One was erected at the Cenotaph in Darwin. The other is on the eastern side of the Stuart Highway from the Adelaide River Railway Station below the 119th General Military Hospital and across the river from the Adelaide River War Cemetery.

The Nursing Museum is a member of Museums Australia, CAUMAC and community groups. Ms Janie Mason, Hon Secretary of the Historical Society of the Northern Territory, is a Charles Darwin University Fellow and Nursing Museum Curator. The University's Cultural Collections Advisory Board advises the Vice Chancellor and University of the strategic focus, development, co-ordination and promotion of University cultural collections including the Nursing Museum.

(Source: Personal Visit to the Nursing Museum on 24 June 2015; Nursing Museum Promotional leaflet)

3) Destruction of cultural structures at Palmyra, Syria

There is enormous world outrage over the destruction of World Heritage listed cultural structures at Palmyra and the death of the city's retired archaeologist, Khaled al-Asaad. An article in the *Weekend Australian* of 22-23 August by Luke Slattery addresses the issue of cultural memory. He refers to Abraham Lincoln's first inaugural address where he describes 'the mystic chords of memory' – the 'ties that bound living generations to dead generations and forged a shared human tradition.' The remains of Palmyra, an oasis of palms, have been considered an emblem of hope. The Corinthian colonnades, the well preserved Temple of Bel (a Semitic deity), the camp of Roman emperor Diocletian but are currently under threat of imminent destruction by Islamic State.

(Source: *Weekend Australian* 22-23 August 2015 p.21 including two photographs; Australia ICOMOS *E-Mail News* No.695, 21 August 2015)

4) Fire damage in Winton, Queensland

A substantial part of the Waltzing Matilda Centre burnt down in the early hours of the morning of 18 June. The fire started in an inaccessible part of the roof and burnt through the Banjo Patterson room, billabong area, Qantilda Museum with artefacts on loan from the Historical Society. A significant component of the library was saved. Much material in cabinets in the World War I display was saved. Paintings in the Regional Art Gallery were destroyed. The fibreglass copy of the Daphne Mayo sculpture of the swagman was destroyed. The Winton Shire Council met and decided to rebuild the Centre. It is expected to cost between \$8 million and \$12 million, much of which will be covered by insurance. Negotiations are underway between the Council and the copyright holder for Waltzing Matilda regarding new signage, merchandise and promotions.

(Source: *Longreach Leader* 26 June 2015 pp.1 and 6; *Courier-Mail* 8 August 2015 pp.1,9)

5) Gippsland Plains Rail Trail in Victoria

The Gippsland Plains Rail Trail extends 63 kms across Gippsland and has Traralgon and Stratford railway stations at the ends. The rail line built in the 1880s passes through the timber town of Heyfield and the Macalister Irrigation District as well as dryland grazing country. The rail line now serves as a biolink including remnants of the Gippsland red gum grassy woodlands. The line was closed in the 1980s. Rail infrastructure remnants have been retained. The Green Army and the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail committee of management have been recording the historical rail heritage and the recording of vegetation. Interpretative signage will be installed along the route.

(Source: *North Queensland Register* 20 August 2015 p.31)

6) Radio National program on rabbits

ABC Radio National's The Ideas Network, Wendy Zukerman, Science Journalist/ Producer, has advised FAHS that their article on the history of rabbits in Australia will be of interest to our Societies and broader networks. The following website provides the information.

www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/earshot/louis-pasteur-and-the-10m-rabbit-reward/6703072

(Source: Email to FAHS from ABC RN 18 August 2015)

7) Resurgence of libraries

A recent report by Arup, entitled *Future Libraries*, reveals the re-emergence of libraries in society. The report is based on stakeholder meetings in London, Melbourne, San Francisco and Sydney covering design, management and operations. Arup found that libraries are being transformed from a formal institution into a flexible and adaptable space. The report identified that libraries are shared space where people's intellectual needs are met. Retrofitting libraries has allowed groups to meet to allow assisted research and collaborative study. Increasingly schools are appointing teacher librarians to assist students negotiate data on the internet. Resurgence of libraries is particularly strong in corporate and professional services sectors where libraries facilitate clean research of topics. The senior librarian at Arup, Kim Sherwin, stated that 'Simply going to the internet is considered a bit of a liability to many professions. Corporate librarians are seen as people who know where to go for the best and cleanest information.'

(Source: *Australian Financial Review* 17 August 2015 Special Report – Education p.S4)