NEXT MEETING

KIM EPTON

will be speaking about

“Rivers of the Kimberley - their history, discovery, and naming”

Wednesday, 3 April 1996 at 7.15 for 7.30 PM

All meetings, unless otherwise advertised, are held at the Old Observatory, the headquarters of the National Trust of Australia (WA), 4 Havelock St, West Perth. There is street parking, plus limited parking on site. Tea/coffee/biscuits are provided after the meeting and the Society asks a $2.00 hospitality fee from guests who are not members of either Kimberley Society or the National Trust. Entrance to the Old Observatory is usually through the door that faces the city.

PROGRAM FOR THE REMAINDER OF 1996

1 May  An Anthropologist's Perspective of the Kimberley:
          Peter Bindon, Western Australian Museum

5 June  Historical Flooding of the Fitzroy River:
          Jerome Goh, Main Roads Department

3 July  To be advised (possibly Dr Phillip Playford on Devonian Reefs)
7 August  Mammals of the Kimberley and their decline:
Norm McKenzie, Western Australian Museum

4 September  Mabo and Native Title in the Kimberley:
Speaker to be advised

2 October  Frank Hann's Exploration in the Kimberley, 1898:
Mike Donaldson & Ian Elliot

6 November  Kings Park's Botanical Activities in the Kimberley:
Kingsley Dixon, Kings Park*

4 December  The Kimberley Society Coastal Expedition, 1996:
Kevin Coate and others*

Please note that, as many of our speakers are heavily committed to field work in the Kimberley,
this program may change at short notice.

4TH REGIONAL MEETING
JIM AND NORMA ANDERSON
will host a talk on
“LIVERINGA STATION: ITS HISTORY AND BUILDINGS”
on
EASTER SUNDAY, 7 APRIL 1996

This visit is for members only and will commence at 10.30 am for 11.00 am. Participants can make their own way to the station or can travel from Derby with West Kimberley Tours by contacting members Chris or Jenny Kloss on telephone (091) 931 442 or fax (091) 911 609. Road conditions are expected to be good, and members are invited to bring their own picnic lunches. A “thirst-quencher” or two will be available on arrival, and tea, coffee and hot water will be provided by Liveringa. Any southern-based “footloose” members who may be in the vicinity can be assured of a cordial welcome.

Please note that an error in the last newsletter indicated the station was established in 1908. This was actually the date of construction for the present homestead, whereas the station itself dates from the early 1880s and was one of the original sheep stations established along the Fitzroy.
FROM THE PRESIDENT

The new year seems to have brought a rush of enthusiasm for Kimberley Society activities and, at the February and March meetings, we had audiences in the vicinity of fifty people. Roy Hamilton (Kununurra), Pam Masters (Derby) and Tony Sachse (Bencubbin) were in town for the January meeting, and Michael and Wendy Cusack (Kojonup) made it to the February meeting. There were 10 guests in February and, surprisingly, 24 in January. Three of these people have since joined the Society.

The visit to Liveringa station has now been organised and should be a great day. Having spent some very pleasant time on the homestead verandah with Jim and Norma in the past, I can guarantee that members who make the trip out to the station will not be disappointed in the charming buildings, picturesque views and Jim’s detailed knowledge of the station’s history.

The program of speakers for the coming year sounds most interesting and you will note that some of those whom we missed last year, because they were in the field, are in this year’s line up. We are also learning as we go, however, and now advise that the availability of all speakers is dependent on their presence in Perth on the designated evening. Should they have to go into the field at short notice, we will again endeavour to field a replacement speaker in the same area of expertise.

Cathie Clement

KIMBERLEY CAMEOS

At the Society’s meeting on 7 February 1996, the “3 speakers” format from the first meeting of 1995 was repeated and, again, was well received. The first speaker was an old Broome identity, Thomas Dampier Chapple, whose parents arrived in the pearling port in 1901. Tom was born there and recalled some of his childhood in a talk entitled “Snippets from the Early Days of Broome”. A story about growing up on goat’s milk, which was so rich that he ended up being 14 stone when he went away to school, at the age of 14, drew some laughs, as did a few of his other stories.

Tom’s tales gave us insight into an unusual childhood spent with a multi-racial background of Aborigines, Malays, Koepangers, Chinese and Japanese, the latter being the leading pearl shell divers, and the odd English remittance man. This racial mixture caused much tension, and fighting was common, but there was also entertainment through such venues as the Sun Picture Gardens. Ted Hunter opened this silent movie venue in 1916, and we heard how the tram delivered patrons to the front door under the watchful eye of the owner. The Sun Picture Gardens still function today, and the place is recognised as an important heritage site.

It was clear that Tom has many more yarns to tell – perhaps none as comical as the one about the Asian cook and the one-legged “chooks” – and that he is very much a living part of the history of the town of Broome. We look forward to more reminiscences in the future.

Our second speaker was the well-known photographer of natural history and author of many books, Michael Morcombe, who spoke about “Wildlife Photography in the Kimberley”. We heard about his first Kimberley trip, which was done in 1967, driving a Holden panel van.
with a faulty radiator in late October. Michael was with Malcolm Lewis (a fellow Kimberley Society member) concentrating on the south west part of the area, and they got no further north than the King Leopold Ranges.

His next trip was to Drysdale River and Mitchell Plateau, which they had all to themselves. Here he told a story about having an olive python in one hand and a giant spider on a stick in the other, trying to keep them apart! A flight to Koolan Island and photographs of the black kites hovering over the world’s most picturesque rubbish tip were also part of this trip.

Birds are Michael’s favourite subject and he delighted us with slides of the Kimberley’s best, too beautiful and numerous to mention. But the lengths the photographers go for a good shot of birds in nests was astounding. The height of the scaffolding necessary to construct a flimsy hide beside a giant gum tree was amazing and they really deserve every good picture they get.

Pat Vinnicombe was our final speaker. An anthropologist and archaeologist currently working with the Aboriginal Affairs Department, she spoke on “Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings from Turkey Creek”. The community at Turkey Creek, which is located between Halls Creek and Kununurra, is known as Warmun, and artists from the area include Queenie McKenzie and the internationally known Rover Thomas.

We were privileged to see not only Pat’s excellent slides of the artists and their work but also some of the actual artefacts which have been used in dances and were loaned by Subiaco art dealer Mary Macha, who was a guest at the talk. Pat spoke of the role of the eagle hawk and kangaroos in the mythology of the area, and she also explained the ways in which some paintings represent the country of the artist. Of great interest was her description of how the dot painting techniques of the Warmun people differ from those of many other Aboriginal people and, in this regard, we heard how the people have adapted their art forms to reflect the introduction of new mediums into their society. Put very simply, the light coloured dots in the Warmun paintings have evolved from the earlier practice of using small tufts of fibres from the coats of animals to decorate ceremonial boards that were carried during dances. Pat also mentioned that the colours used by the artists are still made from the traditional materials and illustrated this point with slides of women out collecting these materials.

As with the other two speakers, we felt that we had had no more than a glimpse into an area about which there was so much more to learn. We look forward to an opportunity to see and hear more at future meetings. This meeting, having begun with wine and cheese, concluded with a hot beverage, biscuits and much socialising.

_Daphne Choules Edinger_

**SNIPPETS**

*Post & Rail*, the newsletter of the Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre, W.A. Branch, recently included “Kimberley Champagne” in a list of outback terms. It is unlikely to become popular at our meetings, however, being a mixture of methylated spirits and Sal Vital.
BOOK NOTE


In August to October each year, some 800,000 migratory waders descend on the rich tidal mudflats of north-west Australia. They then spend the summer feeding and moulting before flying back to breeding grounds in Central and North-East Asia (above the Arctic circle). In 1988, the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union recognised the importance of the mudflats, which support the third largest number of migratory waders in the world, by establishing the Broome Bird Observatory on the shores of Roebuck Bay. The objectives of the Observatory are to foster environmental education and research; and observations of the waders and other birds have been recorded since 1988.

The Observatory is run by the RAOU, a non-profit organisation, and staff member Peter Collins has combined the records kept by the Observatory with other earlier records to produce this informative booklet on all birds ever recorded in the area. The annotated list covers 286 species from which individuals, often in huge numbers, have been seen not only at the Observatory but at Broome, Roebuck Bay, Anna Plains Station (80 Mile Beach), Coconut Well, the Broome Sewage Works, Barred and Willie Creeks, the southern area of Roebuck Plains station, Lakes Eda and Campion on that station, and the old Pearl Coast Zoo. Some of these places are private property visited under arrangements between the Observatory and the owners or managers.

Each entry in the booklet contains a species number (from the *Atlas of Australian Birds*) and a status symbol, e.g. V for vagrant (fewer than one record per year on average). The scientific and common names and the taxonomic order follow those in *The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and its Territories*. An index guides the reader to relevant pages and the booklet also contains several appendices.

The book is available from the Observatory, PO Box 1313, Broome, 6725, phone (091) 935 600; RAOU Head Office, 415 Riversdale Road, Hawthorne East, 3123, phone (03) 9882 2622, fax (03) 9882 2677; and RAOU WA, 71 Oceanic Drive, Floreat, 6014, phone (09) 383 7749.

*Cathie Clement*

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The Council of the Kimberley Society is delighted to welcome the following new members:

Mr Anthony Jack, BENCUBBIN WA
Mrs Athel McComb, MOSMAN PARK WA
Mr Martin Gole, GOOSEBERRY HILL WA
Ms Adrienne Meakins, NEDLANDS WA
Mrs Shirley Slack-Smith, NEDLANDS WA
Kachana Pastoral Co. P/L, KUNUNURRA WA

Mrs Alison Yates, COTTESLOE WA
Ms Coby Stumpel, FERNDALE WA
Mrs Pat Chapple, CLAREMONT WA
Mr Basil Phillips, MOSMAN NSW
Mrs Esmé Kloss, DERBY WA

*April 1996* 5  BOAB BULLETIN
WYNDHAM MUSEUM

For more than 20 years, objects, photos, stories and records of early life in Wyndham were collected and stored by Errol Snow and others, waiting for a safe place for their display. Energetic locals such as Errol (37 years in Wyndham), Lee Scott-Virtue (born in Kimberley), Marie McLeod, Barbara Heys (28 years in Wyndham) and Viv McMicking (35 years in Wyndham) decided that a museum should be created so that locals and the public could access the town’s history. A small committee put in much time and effort to convert the old Courthouse into a museum which was opened to the public on 31 May 1995, and officially on 7 August in that same year. In its first year over 3000 people toured the exhibits.

In the early '60s, Clarrie Cassidy, then Shire Clerk, made requests to the public to donate items to the collection, and many people generously responded. As a result, a large number of artefacts, photographs (original and copies) and personal recollections have been presented to and held by the Shire for their care and protection. These items were passed to the Historical Society when it was within sight of its goal of opening the museum.

The community sponsored the formation of a Heritage Sub-group to monitor the collection and display of new material. This group incorporated such well-known old-timers as Maggie Lily, Billy Lee Tong, Dick McCale, Bob MacLannan and Tex Boneham and therefore represents many second and third generation families. Their involvement has resulted in the collection of oral histories from themselves and others. Further valuable input was received when the Kimberley Development Commission provided staff (Liz Collins) to advise and assist in the transition to a professional museum. Through the S.T.E.P. (Small Town Enterprise Projects) program, a small grant of $9000 was made available to pay for the cataloguing of the collection. Dr Mike McIntyre (curator, Maritime Museum, Perth) and Val Humphries (WA Museum) visited Wyndham to offer their expertise for future displays in the museum. To date over 1500 artefacts, photographs and documents have been catalogued onto a card system. They now await transfer into a computer program to make cross-referencing significantly easier for researchers.

Through the cataloguing we have created themes such as Aborigines, missions, post and telegraph, police, Afghans, Chinese, stock routes and surveys, meatworks, mining, gold rushes, war, aviation, maritime and pastoral life. Information, both pictorial and documentary, is still being sorted and classified, and will enable us to continually change the displays. As an example of the wide range of items collected so far, there are photos of Durack’s store in 1924, the 1932 ruins of the Magistrate’s residence that had to be abandoned because of the hostility from local Aborigines, Joe Fong (a Chinese cook at the mine in 1923), Ah Kim at his market garden in 1932, Aboriginal prisoners 1924/25 in war paint and chains, a race meeting in 1919, M.P. Durack presenting the winner’s Cup at the races in 1932, a 1920s donkey team hauling wool in wagons, headstones in the graveyards that indicate the interesting ethnic origins of many of Wyndham’s early residents, the history of the Meatworks (1916-1985).

A special display of the State Ship Koolama incident opened when the author of the book, Bill Loane (a Kimberley Society member), visited Wyndham to further his research. Other special collections on events with national significance such as the search for the missing German aviators Hans Bertram and Adolf Klausman in 1932 are also on display.
Local artist and poet John Hughes believes the collection will increase as more people with knowledge of the region donate their stories and photos. Enquiries can be made to Errol Snow, Historical Society Coordinator, by phone (091) 611-002 (bus hrs) or Fax 611-295.

Jan Richardson (Wyndham)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I read with interest, in the December issue of the Boab Bulletin, the comments regarding the desecration of the pioneers’ graves in the Brockman area, caused by indiscriminate mining exploration. I can well recall the little scattering of graves there, and it was rumoured that there was still plenty of gold in the Cemetery Creek.

The old stone hut at the Brockman was occupied, for a time, by my late father-in-law Bill Johnstone. He was prospecting in the area during the early 1940s and I understand that he made a few modifications to the hut at that time. The old hut was pretty basic and hardly qualified as some sort of Brockman Hilton. Bill and Mrs Johnstone later established a successful business in Halls Creek.

The last person I saw living in the Brockman hut was Don “Darkie” Green in 1954, when he took up residence there for a time.

There are a number of graves dating from the early mining days scattered along the banks of the Elvire River between Halls Creek and Flora Valley station. I saw some of these graves when I was working at Flora Valley station during 1946/48. We were up and down the river a fair bit, riding into town for mail, taking cattle from Margaret station to the Valley and carrying out repairs to the Halls Creek – Flora Valley section of the old Vestey telephone line which followed the Elvire closely. The graves were quite visible particularly after fires had swept down the river. Perhaps someone has managed to bash a road down there and obliterate these graves as well.

The Vestey telephone line ran from Halls Creek to Mistake Creek station, via Flora Valley, Turner and Ord River stations, a distance of about 200 kilometres.

Cee Watts (North Rockhampton)

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The Kimberley coastal expedition (Familiarisation for Kimberley Society members) is fully booked with one member having expressed interest in being on the waiting list. Most of the members who will be going on the trip met one another at the 7 February meeting and all will be contacted in writing as soon as further information is available.

Synnot Creek was the subject of the winning entry in the amateur black and white category of the Wild Rivers National Photographic Competition initiated by the Australian Heritage Commission in Canberra. The photographer was Cottesloe engineer and trekker Peter Ewing.
WILD RIVERS

An article by reporter Carina Tan-Van Baren in *The West Australian* on 28 February 1996, noted that the Australian Heritage Commission in Canberra has released, for comment, draft management guidelines for wild rivers in Western Australia. Wild rivers, according to the article, are defined as those that have not been significantly disturbed by modern development and, as might be imagined, most occur within the Kimberley region. Those identified so far include the Prince Regent, Hunter, Gibson and Glenelg. Others are expected to be named in the next 18 months.

The management guidelines appear to be aimed at State agencies and landowners and, as sometimes happens when Federal agencies devise policy that affects State activities, they are not receiving unanimous acclaim. The newsletter will report further if appropriate.

TALK OF A NEW DAM

Sensational headlines in the *Sunday Times* on 3 March 1996 drew attention to the revival of a proposal to dam the Fitzroy River at Dimond Gorge. Inquiries initiated by Kimberley Society indicated that interest is currently focussed on an investigation of the potential for agriculture and horticulture, and, in particular, the growing of cotton in the Broome area. The feasibility studies are not scheduled to begin, according to a report published in *The West Australian* on 9 March, until a committee formed by the State Government consults local communities. The proponents of any concrete proposal to dam the Fitzroy will also have to obtain the clearances required under legislation that exists to protect both Aboriginal heritage and the environment.

KIMBERLEY REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Minister for Transport has released, for public comment, the Kimberley Regional Transport Strategy prepared by the Department of Transport and the Kimberley Development Commission. Comments would be appreciated by 31 March and, if you would like a copy of the strategy, contact the Department, telephone (09) 389 0611, facsimile (09) 386 5119 or KDC, telephone (091) 68 1044 or (091) 93 1444 or (091) 93 6122, facsimile (091) 68 1473.

PURNULU卢 NATIONAL PARK

The National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority has advised that the management plan for the Purnulu (Bungle Bungle Range) National Park is now available. It was prepared in accordance with sections 53 to 61 of the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 and has been approved by the Minister for the Environment.

Copies of the plan can be seen at the office and library of the Shire of Halls Creek or at the Department of Conservation and Land Management, either at the Woodvale Library, the State Operations Headquarters at 50 Hayman Road, Como, WA, 6152, or the Kununurra Regional Office in Messmate Way. Copies are available for purchase at the Kununurra or Como offices, at a cost of $10.00. The Analysis of Public Submissions is available for $3.00.
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that the THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of KIMBERLEY SOCIETY (INC.) will be held at THE OLD OBSERVATORY, 4 HAVELOCK ST., WEST PERTH, on Wednesday, 1 May 1996, at 7.30pm.

AGENDA

1. President's Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the previous A.G.M.
4. Business arising from the Minutes
5. Council Report
6. Treasurer's Report and presentation of Accounts for approval
7. Election of Office Bearers and other Councillors:
The Constitution of Kimberley Society Inc. requires that the Council shall consist of: a President; two Vice-Presidents; a Secretary; a Membership Secretary; a Treasurer; and not less than 3 or more than 7 other persons, all of whom shall be Members of the Society. (see nomination form over page)
8. General Business.

The meeting will start promptly at 7.30pm, and will be followed by the presentation from the evening’s speaker and social contact over a cup of tea/coffee at the conclusion of the talk.

Cathie Clement
President
Perth
11 March 1996

RED DOT

If your envelope carried a red dot, our records indicate that we have not received your dues for 1996. Consequently, unless we receive payment, this will be your last newsletter.
KIMBERLEY SOCIETY (INC.)

NOMINATION FORM

NOMINATOR

I, .............................................................., being a Member of Kimberley Society (Inc.),
hereby nominate ....................................... for the position of ...........................................

Signed ..............................................................

SECONDER

I, .............................................................., being a Member of Kimberley Society (Inc.),
hereby second the above nomination.

Signed ..............................................................

CANDIDATE

I, .............................................................., being a Member of Kimberley Society (Inc.),
hereby signify my willingness to stand for election to the position identified in the above
nomination.

Signed ..............................................................

This form must be lodged with the Secretary of Kimberley Society by 5.30 pm on Tuesday, 9
April 1996. Completed forms should be posted to the Secretary at PO Box 8471, Perth
Business Centre, Perth, 6849. Forms can be sent by facsimile to (09) 272 2087 but will be
accepted only if the original form is subsequently lodged with the Secretary by 5.30 pm on
Friday, 26 April 1996. If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the
Council, further nominations shall be received at the Annual General Meeting. Should any
positions remain vacant at the conclusion of the AGM, such vacancies shall be deemed to be
casual vacancies and may be dealt with by the Council according to the Constitution.
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE RANGELANDS

The Environmental Protection Authority has prepared, for public comment, a paper that reviews the state of rangelands (all arid, semi-arid, desert and tropical savannah lands) within Western Australia. Currently, 45% of this land is in pastoral leases; the remainder is vacant Crown land, Aboriginal lands, national parks and other conservation areas. The paper has been prepared to support the recently released State Government strategy “Managing the Rangelands” and, as well as identifying principles and objectives for rangeland conservation, it reviews the adequacy of the conservation reserve system and pastoral lease management. It also includes a draft environmental strategy.

Copies of the position paper are available from the EPA, telephone (09) 222 7000, facsimile (09) 322 1598, and from relevant shire and Agriculture WA offices. Comments should be received no later than 31 May 1996, addressed to: The Chairman, Environmental Protection Authority, Westralia Square, 141 St Georges Terrace, Perth, 6000 (Att: Mr Vaughn Cox).

INTERESTED IN BIRDS?

The Broome Bird Observatory has sent us its 1996 brochure on tours, courses, camping and accommodation. All tours are two hours and transport is available from Broome. The tours on offer are “Shorebirds Tour”, “Mangrove Bird Walk” at Crab Creek and “Bushbird Safari” to Roebuck Plains. Binoculars, telescopes and morning or afternoon tea are supplied.

The short courses available this year are:

“Wave the Waders Goodbye”, 3-8 April with Course Leader Danny Rogers, a professional ornithologist who works for the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union. The course takes in the sight of the peak migration of shorebirds to Siberia and it includes visits to all the top birding sites of Broome, along with bird banding and hide photography. The last few days will coincide with the Australasian Wader Studies Group Expedition, with thirty participants from eleven countries.

“Banding Field Craft”, 3-8 June with Course Leader Perry de Rebeira. Enthusiasts of all levels of experience can learn correct and safe methods of catching, handling and processing birds from an expert. Course members visit a range of habitat every day, attend slide talks in the evening and relax in the shadehouse for dinner.

“Birding in the Warm Winter Sun”, 3-8 August with the Wardens Jon Fallow and Becky Hayward. Activities take in beaches, mangroves, freshwater wetlands and plains.

“Welcome the Waders Back”, 10-15 September with the Wardens. See shorebirds at high tide roosts, some with colourful breeding plumage. The course includes excursions to inland lakes, crystal ponds (sewage works) and mangroves.

Courses range from $185 (self-catered camping) to $440 (full accommodation and catered). Bookings are essential, and interested members should contact the Broome Bird Observatory for a course registration form. The Observatory is on Crab Creek Road, which floods during very high tides. The PO Box is 1313, Broome, 6725. Telephone number is (091) 935 600.
OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

To encourage studies, particularly collaborative projects, which will enhance knowledge and understanding of the Kimberley’s history, peoples, cultures, resources, natural history, heritage, and environment;

To encourage personal, organisational, corporate and government actions that will help to preserve the Kimberley environment, and its rich Aboriginal and European heritage;

To promote the dissemination of information about the Kimberley;

To co-operate with other Associations and any other bodies or persons having similar aims;

To produce such publications as may be determined by the Council from time to time; and

To inform and make recommendations to other parties, including organisations, corporations and government, on matters relating to the Kimberley.

COUNCIL 1995-96

President: Cathie Clement
Vice-Presidents: Kevin Kenneally and Lindsay Peet
Secretary: Daphne Edinger
Membership Secretary: Greg Ross
Treasurer: Mike Donaldson
Councillors: Adrienne Boulter, Kevin Coate, Ian Crawford, Ian Elliot, Felicity Morel, Jenny Perceval

Newsletter Editors: Lesley Kemp, Peter Kemp and Cathie Clement

All correspondence should be addressed to The Editors, Kimberley Society, PO Box 8471, Perth Business Centre, PERTH, WA, 6849.

Contact is also available by telephone (09) 272 3308 and facsimile (09) 272 2087.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Council of Kimberley Society Inc.