



The Islander



Christmas Island Community Newsletter
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民讯

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25th October 2015

Christmas Island
Women's Association

celebrating
**25TH
ANNIVERSARY**

31st October 2015

**Badminton
Comp.**



Christmas Island Giant Gecko -
Endangered Species

If you spot one, please try and take a
photo & let Christmas Island National
Park know @

Photo Credit: Yvonne McKenzie



Dawn Colours'@ Lily Beach
Photo Credit: Yvonne McKenzie

Territory Week 2015

Territory Week is certainly the time of year that the Christmas Island community comes together to celebrate the wonderfully eclectic society that has developed on this rock in the middle of the ocean.

Territory Week stretched 15 days this year and encompassed a myriad of activities and events including a Marathon, Mid-Autumn Festival, Pasar Malam (Night Market) at Tai Jin House, Cove Day, Pool and Badminton competitions and more.

Once again Cove Day proved a favourite for the Christmas Island community soaking up the sea, sun and enjoying the variety of food on offer.



Junior Champions Raft - Oonga Boonga

Jetty with the *Home Tree* raft. There were later reports by anxious residents to police of Blue people driving around town with a large tree on the roof of the car.

Parks again with *Pussy Riot*, proved that you need not apply with sound mind if you're looking for a job, as tails were raised and claws exposed whilst Territory Day volunteers were asked "where is the closest litter box?" Eyebrows were raised as the *Pussy Riot* raft passed families in the parade as a Cat donning unfeasibly large ----- mounted on the raft headed down to the shore.

Oonga Boonga in full Amazonian war garb looked set to sail or eat somebody before heading out into the Cove and looked particularly interested in the *Frozen* crew.

The Territory Day Raft Regatta Race is generously sponsored each year by Christmas Island Phosphates giving away \$1,800 each year in prize money for the event.

Preceding the Regatta event was the Fishing competition with bounty hunter Greg McIntosh taking out overall and largest catch with a Yellow Fin Tuna weighing in at 28kg.

It had traditional & favourite activities and events, such as the Raft Regatta at 2pm that again saw amazing ideas and concepts in the craft of raft building.

Who will forget the kids with the "Frozen" Raft breaking into song as they headed to the coves shore with their raft. Out on the high seas many an opposing raft sailor winced before letting loose with a volley of well used by eggs, proudly provided by Boong Trading, and flour towards the Frozen raft. Daniel Becker and Family looked perfectly normal and at ease in blue as Avatars on the



The Champion Raft Race team - Power Rangers



Adults Best Costume - Pussy Riot

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Ex-Islander Tour Group, part 1

Christmas Island saw its largest ten day tour group ever in the form of the 2015 Ex-Islander Tour Group. The tour was conceptualised and promoted by the Friends of Christmas Island Association and Travel Exchange earlier this year. Upon announcement of the package and dates, response was so great that it was booked out completely within a month of release. The mid-year change of flight schedule did not deter the tour group, with still 100 confirming the trip, flying in from both Jakarta and Perth. Comprised of participants from Singapore, Malaysia and Perth of all island community backgrounds, Christmas Island welcomed home around generations of former residents including their family members.

Many members in the tour group had been born on the island and had lived here during the British Phosphate Commission years during the colonial apartheid reign of the Crown. Ex-Islander residents recounted stories of living at South Point, Camp 5 and 4 as well as around the current township.

Museum visitations

The Chinese Heritage Museum and Tai Jin Museum recorded more visitor log-ins in the tour group period than even the opening week of each museum respectively. The exhibits at the Chinese Heritage Museum literally sprung to life as residents recognised people in the historical photographs as lost friends, family and lovers. Old memories flowed, laughter was heard and tears were shed by the visitors as they saw pictures of loved ones they had not seen in decades.

Mr Michael Tan, island fisherman

Mr Michael Tan of Perth came across a photograph of his mother, father, himself and his younger brother taken in the mid-1950s. His younger brother had died at age 5 from epilepsy and this is the only photo of him known. He lived in the atap housing adjacent to the roundabout where a parking lot now is.

Mr Tan had attended schooling on Christmas Island and spoke of how much he and his friends would fish off the cantilevers to supplement their diet. Mr Tan actually caught two sizeable fish during his visit to the island and claims an even larger third fish got away.

Ms Lin, technical drawings officer

Ms. Lin of Perth was surprised at the presence of her technical drawings hanging up in the museum. She had been engaged in her youth in the British Phosphate Commission Drawing Office for 29c an hour as part of the team that produced the technical drawings for industry on island. A blown up print of the Coolies Memorial technical drawing hangs in the museum; her signature is visible in the corner.

Such was Ms. Lin's talent that she was engaged by the Commonwealth of Australia at the rate of 79c an hour to work on a classified plan for a significant piece of infrastructure. Utilising weekends and time after office hours, the Commonwealth operated from the BPC Drawing Office to render plans for the Christmas Island Airport. Ms Lin was sworn to secrecy from the Commonwealth on the project. The technical papers did not refer to any name, location or other identifying information as to exactly what was being planned or its location. Ms. Lin remarked that when she landed on Christmas Island with the tour group, she felt like she had completed one large journey – from making her pencil drawings of the Christmas Island Airport in secrecy to finally touching down in 2015.

Tong Chee's descendent Lee Ann Tan

Tong Chee was one of the most important figures in the Chinese Literary Association's history. He was a president of the CLA, then known as the 'Literary Association', and first came to Christmas Island from China as an indentured labourer in the 1940s. He lived out his days here and is buried in the Chinese cemetery in Settlement.



Ms Lin standing next to her technical drawing in the Chinese Heritage Museum.



Chris Su for the Shire and Lee Ann Tan, descendent of Tong Chee, present the Tong Chee road street sign to Director Leon Mills for addition to the museum.



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