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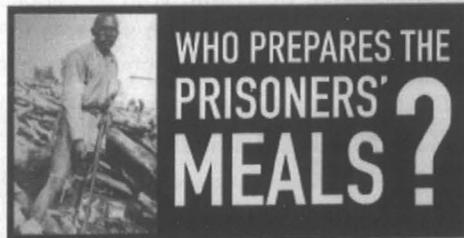
MEGG KELHAM

For Love and Punishment: who prepares the prisoners' meals?
Marking 100 years of International Women's Day and Commonwealth control of the Northern Territory, 1911–2011

National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame,
Alice Springs, 2011

Megg Kelham's *For Love and Punishment* is a small publication, but it is filled with the life stories of women who have – until now – been relegated to history's periphery. This booklet was printed to coincide with the launch of the exhibition of the same name at the Stuart Town Gaol, Alice Springs, in 2011, held in commemoration of the 100 years of International

FOR LOVE & *punishment*



1911-2011

**Marking 100 years of
International Women's Day
and Commonwealth control of
the Northern Territory**

Megg Kelham

Please note that this publication contains images of people who have died and images which some readers may find distressing.

Women's Day This gaol is now the National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame.

The booklet captures the lives of the prison warden's wives: Mrs Agnes Stott, Mrs Jessie Noblet and Mrs Lilian Lovegrove. Taking up the challenge of reading between the lines in the archives, Kelham has pieced together the role that these women played in the function of the gaol. They were, with little acknowledgement, responsible for feeding the gaol's prisoners. Kelham has tried to avoid taking liberties with the snatches of information available to her, which must have been a challenge considering the scant material. Photographs of the women and the local area from this era, as well as images of newspaper articles about Lilian Lovegrove for instance, have helped to illustrate the points made in the text.

Despite the limited nature of the sources, examining the lives of these three women has allowed Kelham to explore the dynamics of different relationships: those between the women and their husbands, between the husbands and their superiors, and between the married couples and the prisoners in the gaol, who were often Aboriginal men and women. With such rich material available, it was at times frustrating that there was not more space for Kelham to explore these relationships and draw on recent scholarship on gender and race in colonial Australia.

Even without the context of the exhibition, this booklet stands as a contribution to the history of women's work in the Northern Territory. Kelham not only reveals something of the lives of women who have been absent from other histories, but she has woven these women's stories into the broader narrative of the Northern Territory as a frontier. As the narrative continues chronologically, we can see the development of greater government influence throughout the late 1920s and into the 1930s. This was most evident in contrasting the levels of supervision for Charles Noblet with Sergeant Bob Stott, who had applied the law with a degree of autonomy not available to those who followed him in the post. Effectively, Kelham has

captured the gradual end of the frontier period through this brief history of remote law enforcement

While these elements of Kelham's work were both interesting and revealing, the text should be edited before future print runs to update the language used to refer to Indigenous Australians, so that out-dated terms such as 'native' are removed and the specific names of Aboriginal communities are used to indicate where prisoners came from. There are other spelling and grammatical errors that could be addressed in this process

Educational materials have been included at the back of the booklet, which have been designed to guide various age groups through the exhibition. These worksheets would be of particular interest to public historians as they encourage visitors to consider the method used to construct and design the exhibition. It therefore asks the visitor to engage with the modes used to construct the history for the public, and the ways in which the exhibition's curators have presented historical information. Kelham guides the visitor down a path less-travelled as a result; more often than not, museum guests consider the exhibition's content rather than the practice of presenting history. This would no doubt appeal to many history students, teachers and enthusiasts.

Visitors to the National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame will, if they read this text, be able to better understand the lives of Mrs Agnes Stott, Mrs Jessie Noblet and Mrs Lilian Lovegrove. Kelham has illustrated how changes to government and law enforcement – sometimes in places distant from Alice Springs – affected individuals, no matter how remote. While there are many learning outcomes that visitors might like to pursue during their time in the exhibition, this booklet does give the general public an opportunity to engage with history in a variety of ways. What public historian would not be excited by work that encourages the community to engage with the ways that our history is constructed?

Kirstie Barry