Wedded bliss at long last

By CLAYTON BENNET

A TERRITORY couple tied the knot this year after a 50-year engagement.

Long-time NT lovebirds David and Shirley Ross were engaged in 1962 but it wasn’t until April, 2012, that they made it official.

David first crossed paths with Shirley in 1959 when he was on holidays from Mount Valley Station on the edge of Arnhem Land where he was working as a ringer.

He visited Retta Dixon Home in Darwin where he had lived years earlier and where Shirley was then staying.

“It was a case of High, Wide and Handsome meets Little Girl Dressed In Blue,” David said, quoting his favourite Slim Dusty song.

The pair didn’t see each other again until late 1961 in Katherine where they chose to go steady.

They decided to live in Katherine after Darwin became “too big.”

After having their first child, Dotty, David and Shirley then went to get married in 1964.

David bought a ring but he lost the ring so the wedding was called off.

Since then David said he had asked Shirley to marry him but she said “no, you’re married to your best man.”

The soul mates have eight children together but never bothered to get married.

David worked with the Department of Works and Housing and played for the Darwin Buffaloes while Shirley was a stay-at-home mum looking after her children when David went bush.

It was only their 50th anniversary that prompted a walk down the aisle.

“We really just wanted to get the family together for our anniversary, so we thought we would finally get married,” Shirley said. “Our kids pushed us to do it.”

The event brought together 300 family members from throughout Australia.

The couple—who have 35 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren—are now retired and enjoy camping, fishing and visiting their son David Ross Jr in Darwin.

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APPROVAL for a new savanna burning project on a remote Territory station has been hailed a landmark decision, as the fire project on the unused Fish River cattle station was declared an eligible “offsets project”.

North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance boss Joe Morrison said: “It has been a long journey. It can now sell credits under the burning methodology — this is a major step to better livelihoods for people on country.”

The 18,000ha station 10km south of Darwin was acquired by the Indigenous Land Corporation and would be handed back to traditional owners.

He said partnerships in western Arnhem Land paved the way for the fire abatement project.

Project promotes burning desire for better life

TWO fences have been destroyed by two 24-year-old alleged drink drivers in the Top End.

One man lost control of his vehicle and crashed into a fence at Coolalinga at 10pm on Friday. He allegedly gave a breath-alcohol reading of 0.123. Meanwhile, a learner driver without a licence also lost control of his car and damaged a fence in The Gardens about 1am yesterday.

The driver’s breath-alcohol reading was allegedly 0.94 per cent.

He has been charged and is scheduled to appear in court at a later date.

Also a 59-year-old man was dropping a friend at the airport but was snared by police who took an alleged reading of 0.94 per cent reading from him yesterday.

Fences cop it in night of drink-drive mayhem