



**Marion Scrymgour**

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS

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## **World Record Holders Arrive in Alice**

Alice Springs residents should dust up on their morse code technique as Heritage Week gets into full force in Central Australia this week, Environment and Heritage Minister Marion Scrymgour said today.

Ms Scrymgour said world record breaking members of the Sydney Morse Codian Fraternity have arrived in Alice Springs for Heritage Week.

It is part of a jam-packed week running from April 23-29 and culminating at a Heritage Night at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station on Friday.

"Heritage Week is a fabulous opportunity for Central Australians to learn a little more about the beginnings of their town – and I encourage all to take part in the activities planned throughout the week," Ms Scrymgour said.

Events include historic heritage walks, film nights, museum tours and culminates in a wine and cheese night at the Stuart Town Gaol on Friday.

Ms Scrymgour said Morse Codian Fraternity member Les Edwards – who is also in Alice Springs – became the world record morse coder last weekend when he sent a message to Sydney.

"Mr Edwards and his morse code partner combined to beat two-time SMS world champion James Trusler in a battle of speed and accuracy," Ms Scrymgour said.

Mr Edwards said: "We sent the message on a 100-year-old typewriter in one minute and eight seconds, which was eight seconds faster than James.

"We were lucky enough to set the new world mark on the television show *Australia's Guinness World Records* last Sunday night and we are now in Alice Springs to showcase the skill that had gained us a place in the Guinness Book of Records".

Mr Edwards said Heritage Week in Alice Springs was a great opportunity to demonstrate a skill he had been perfecting for 50 years.

"I was part of the last class of professional Calligraphers to go through in 1956, when I was 17 years old, but now the skill has been virtually lost with new technology," he said.

“We have brought our equipment all the way from Sydney and will be conducting demonstrations for all visitors to the Telegraph Station throughout Heritage Week.

Mr Edwards said he and Mr Carter would challenge the crowd to beat their world record in the ‘Battle of the Communicators’ competition at next week’s Heritage Open Night on April 28.

“Members of the community will be able to come along and try to beat the best Morse Codians in the world, by sending a SMS message on their mobile phones,” he said.

**Media Note Les Edwards is contactable on 0407 418 972**