

# Top NT journo dies

By NIGEL ADLAM

THE man considered by many to have been the Territory's best-ever journalist has died.

John Loizou, who had been ill for several years, was 70.

He worked for the *NT News* and *Sunday Territorian* before moving to Hanoi in Vietnam.

But his first love was radio.

Loizou made the news himself when he was headbutted in a Darwin pub by then CLP Cabinet Minister Mick Palmer.

The reporter played football for Carlton reserves before moving to the Territory to work for the ABC. Loizou had a reputation for "going the biff" while playing for Wanderers and St Marys.

He won the NT Journalist of the Year award in the early 1990s for a story about two women who ran away from a Chinese sweat shop at Darwin's NT government-owned Trade Development Zone.

Everybody was looking for the women — government goons, the police and the Chinese factory owners. Loizou found them — and discovered they were allowed only \$1 a day from their pay.

Typically, he didn't turn up to the awards ceremony — he was down the pub — and the trophy had to be collected on his behalf by the then photographic editor Clive Hyde.

Loizou had many other great scoops.

CLP Cabinet Minister at the time, Fred Finch, said in Parliament that street gangs were terrorising Casuarina, including an all-girl gang called the Black Mafia. Loizou disappeared from the *Sunday Territorian* office and returned two hours later with a pretty but tough-looking girl and



Legendary former *NT News* and *Sunday Territorian* journo John Loizou with an edition of his *Southeast Asian Times* newspaper in 2000

announced: "This is the leader of the Black Mafia."

He wrote in an old-fashioned style and often shook his head in disbelief at the way that tabloid newspapers "crunched" the English language.

But he had a great hunger to tell a good story — and hold the rich and famous to account.

Loizou was a Marxist but was impeccably balanced in his writing. He thought that Labor's first chief minister, Clare Martin, made the Territory "a better, kinder place".

Loizou, who died in Perth on Wednesday night, leaves his wife Cree, and two sons by his first marriage, Brendan and Damian.

## Stranded boat returns to Darwin

EXHAUSTED sailor Kris Larsen made it home to Darwin yesterday after 42 days stranded at sea.

He was blown 760km west of Darwin by persistent easterly winds after setting sail from Bali to relocate the ketch *White Bird* to Darwin on December 7.

With broken engines, damaged sails and no ability to point into the wind, he asked for help.

Ketch owner John Roodenrys

set out to rescue him on Wednesday last week in yacht *Clare de Lune* along with its owner Paul Butler and another crewman.

They put the *White Bird* under tow and finally limped back into Darwin yesterday afternoon where they were moored at Stokes Hill Wharf for Quarantine and Customs inspection. Mr Roodenrys said the men were exhausted from their journey.

At one stage the *White Bird* looked to be heading directly into the path of a tropical low which had a 50 per cent chance of turning into a cyclone.

But their luck changed for the better and they passed to the south of it.

Mr Roodenrys said a Saturday night squall had taken out both the *White Bird*'s old sails and the new ones the rescuers brought.

## Arrests follow two-day crime spree

FOUR young men have been arrested over a two-day crime spree in a remote NT town.

The men — two aged 16, 17 and 18 — allegedly caused \$1550 damage when they broke into the general store at Alyangula, on Groote Eyelandt. They allegedly stole about \$485 worth of food and clothes from the shop about 4.30am on Sunday, police said.

The four allegedly broke into a home in Alyangula and stole a computer hard drive before unlawfully entering a resort and local recreation club early on Tuesday morning.

Senior Sergeant Tony Deutrom said that the renegade youths stole \$1175 worth of alcohol from the club.

"It is believed the men con-

sumed a quantity of the alcohol and supplied the rest to the community," he said. "We won't stand for this type of behaviour."

A 37-year-old man who allegedly helped the culprits distribute the stolen booze was also taken into custody. Two boys — aged 16 and 17 — faced Alyangula Youth Court yesterday with the other alleged offenders on bail.

## Basketball star to speak at awards

BASKETBALL star Lauren Jackson will be the guest speaker at this year's NT Sports Awards.

She is a three-time Women's National Basketball Association Most Valuable Player award winner and eight-time WNBA All-Star. At the 2012 London Olympic Games, Jackson was Australia's flag-bearer and became the high-



Lauren Jackson

est point-scorer in Olympic women's basketball history, captaining the Australian Opals to a bronze medal.

She will be joined on stage at the awards ceremony by Territory sports guru Charlie King and Australian comedy im-

pressionist Danny McMaster. Nominations for the Sports Awards close on January 31.

The awards night will be at the Holiday Inn Esplanade in Darwin March 22.

Tickets will be available from March 1 through the NT Major Events Company at [www.ntmajorevents.com.au](http://www.ntmajorevents.com.au)



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