



N.T. POLICE, FIRE AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

The

Citation

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE
MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

Issued December 2005

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, here we are again and so soon after the last time! Another interesting issue of the Citation which shows the dedication and heroism of our predecessors, the police officers of yesteryear. It also demonstrates that service, especially in the bush, would not have been possible without the support of spouses, then unrecognized in any tangible way by the Police Force. Now of course, there is a spousal honorarium paid to members' spouses in remote locations; no doubt it would have been well received back then, had it been offered. The summary of the various medal winners reminds me of one of the displays at the Australian War Memorial. One of their most prominent displays is a room set aside for VC winners. I am not afraid to say that in a recent visit I was moved by the incredible valour of the soldiers who were honoured in that room. In time, I hope our Museum will be able to ensure that our own heroes are also honoured by a display in the Museum, but I suppose I am getting ahead of myself here - we need to have a museum before we can finalise the displays to be found in it.

On the subject of a museum, I am afraid the short span of time since my last message means I can offer no new news. I remain hopeful, however, that there will be a resolution during my term as President.

Mark McAdie

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

I will start by introducing myself. I'm Barry Frew and I was recently elected secretary of the N.T. Police Museum & Historical Society and have some large shoes to fill, those of legendary past secretaries and Curators. I am a retired member of the NT Police and I have a great regard and interest in the history of the force.

We have a web site for the Society which was commenced by Janell Cox and John Rowe; it can be accessed at <http://www.nt.gov.aulpfes/police/ntpmhs>. *Have a look!*

The Society magazine (The Citation) has been revived this year thanks to Saus Grant, and is to be published twice yearly with some great yarns of past members and events. We hope that others will submit articles, photos etc of interest to Saus, who will continue to edit the magazine until an editor is secured. The magazine has been sent to all our financial members, and we hope to dispatch a copy electronically (e mail) to each Police Station in the near future.

Citation was started in the mid 1960s and Jim Mannion was its heart and soul. Originally you had to buy it at a newsagency. We wish it all the best for the future.

We have had a successful display, aptly named *The Thin Khaki Line*, commemorating the 30 year anniversary of the role of Police during and after Cyclone Tracy, initially at the Legislative Assembly and then moved to the foyer of the PMC Building at Berrimah.

Some of our intended future displays will include the NT Police involvement during WW2, and a display of the history of our Women Police. *Watch for them coming to a NT Police station near you.*

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of the workers here at the Museum office, House 3 PMC.

Barry Frew

CHIT CHAT

A special thanks to two of our computer whizzes for their help with the October issue of "The Citation". **Danny Bacon's** expertise ensured that we had photographs in the copy, and **David Watters'** know how produced the address labels. David inserted the photographs to accompany the articles in this issue – **a great job thanks David.**

Janell Cox forwarded the article from "The Gympie Times" about Betty Sprigg which is included in this issue. Janell and family are thoroughly enjoying life in sunny Queensland.

A whirlwind of workers worked wonders at the **Big Clean Up** at "The House" on Saturday 29 October. The garden sprang to attention, the dust flew, and trailer loads of rubbish were deposited at the dump. Gurneys gyrated over the concrete, and anything left was neatly packed away. And that was just downstairs! Upstairs the kitchen, bathroom and toilet gleamed like beacons. Fans and air cons, with filters newly cleaned, worked to capacity. Pictures were hung and display boards installed.

A huge vote of thanks to the hard working crew: **Paddy McQuaid, Denzil McManus, Deirdre Hurwood, Margaret MacCarthy, David Watters, John Woodcock, Tony Wallbank, Mark McAdie, Dennis Scrutton, John Jones, Sean Parnell, Saus Grant, Norma Grant, Alan Mitchell and Graham McMahon.**

The Timber Creek Police Museum has been closed for the "Wet" season and an opening date in 2006 will be advised.

that's my life

The following article appeared in "The Gympie Times" dated Tuesday September 13, 2005. It is reproduced courtesy of the Gympie Times and with the kind permission of the Editor and the writer, Pat Town. Betty Sprigg recalls her life with the Aboriginal women at Roper Bar in the early 1950s.

Life skills Outback-style

LIFE as the wife of a policeman took Betty Sprigg into a variety of places, one of the most interesting being a time spent at Roper Bar, a 12hour trip from Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Betty had no preparation for life in the rough. Before her marriage to Dan she had completed her training as a nurse and this had not been conducive to life on an outback station.

At Roper Bar, Betty walked into a life that was a challenge in more ways than one. She had no skills at all in domestic work when she arrived at her new home, an old-style house on piers with the police station office underneath.

However Betty was met by her three house-girls who were Aboriginal Police trackers' wives. Edna was about 60 and was skilled in all the domestic attributes that Betty lacked. Doreen was in her 30s and there was also a laundry girl named Marg who was much younger - about the same age as Betty.

The house girls were very clean and had a bath in the river every day then smothered themselves with baby powder.

Every morning Betty held a medicine parade, regularly attended by one old dear who became the bane of Betty's life. This lady was one of four wives and caused great amusement as well as a good deal of frustration. She came with others with a variety of ills real and imaginary. "You dere Missus, my kidney him bin buggered up!"

As Betty came to know the indigenous folk from the camp, she learnt to speak Pidgin English and began to enjoy their visits. Each was a pantomime, with the house girls shrieking abuse at the camp women for daring to come to the house dirty.

The house girls regularly went on walkabout and relief labour would be brought from the camp. These girls had little or no knowledge of house routine and often caused panic. One starched Dan's underpants so stiff that they stood alone. This wasn't noticed until a roar from the bedroom followed by horse yard language alerted Betty that all was not well.

Another girl made shepherd's pie for tea which, when served, sported a layer of watermelon rind under the golden brown potato.

Each day after lunch Betty went with the house girls to swim, with one of the party always keeping watch for crocs, which were plentiful. There was always a good deal of tittering and barely suppressed mirth. Betty wondered at the cause for a time then found out that the girls were highly amused by bathers. "Missus' Bogey Pants' were always good for a laugh.

Edna, the oldest of the house girls was considered an authority on most subjects. She firmly believed in the Kadaicha Man, Debbil Debbil and God. Sometimes life became very confusing. Betty often found incredible that they all lived together in harmony - or mostly. As she scrubbed the bath Edna sang the first verse of *There is a Green Hill*, pausing only to scream threats in native language to someone from the camp who dared to sit in the shade instead of weeding the garden.

When Betty had visitors the girls would put on an all-girl corroboree. The cast was naked except for the two house girls who were arrayed in Betty's cast-off bras and pants. The orchestra consisted of didgeridoos, tapping sticks and chanters. It was always a very good performance and the girls had several offers from people who wanted to film them.

Christmas was always a special time at Roper Bar. A bullock was killed, puddings were made and a 44 gallon drum of cordial prepared from extract, sugar and water, which both children and adults really loved. The first Christmas Betty was on the station she made the mistake of checking out the preparation of the puddings and promptly wished she hadn't. Doreen was mixing the weeviliest, wormiest ingredients Betty had ever had the misfortune to behold. When she suggested that perhaps the flour should be sifted and the fruit washed, the girls looked at each other and rolled their eyes. Doreen expressed what they all felt - "Oh no Missus, more better we leave them in - good tucker!"

The celebrations finished with a full-fledged corroboree complete with feathers and white paint. Betty and the "boss" were treated as VIPs and always enjoyed the performances.

Betty enjoyed the time she spent at Roper Bar and was sad to leave but felt she was a lot more tolerant of a race very different to her own.

- PAT TOWN

A NEWSY LETTER

This letter was written, probably in 1937, by Ted Heathcock to his friend Alec Black. Ted Heathcock was a Mounted Trooper from 1.6.1913 till his death at Alice Springs on the 28.6.1944. He served at Timber Creek, Wave Hill, Maranboy, Mataranka, Roper River, Boorooloola, Darwin and Alice Springs. "My girl", to whom he so lovingly refers, was Henriette Sabina Rayney, and they were married at Mataranka on 15.11.1931. A display at our museum tells of one of her courageous deeds. Ruth was later awarded the M.B.E.

The book, "Sister Ruth" by Victor C Hall is a biography of this compassionate woman.

Dear Alec:

It was a pleasant surprise to get a letter from you. It arrived yesterday & only having two days to get through a 6-weeks mail means the typewriter. So please excuse the latter.

My girl did not know what she was letting herself in for or she would not have given the W.W. that item.

She's had hordes of letters this mail & last, but they live and learn. They wanted me to give them an account of our outback police life but they make such a song about it that when one reads afterwards one could murder them.

However that's that. Now this letter of yours. I must say it was a pleasure to receive it as I had often wondered what had happened to you. Whether you had stopped one or what.

I wonder what happened to Billy Wilson (with the wound)? He was engaged to Miss Summerhayes of Cooktown. Do you remember her, she was a perfect pianist & I've often wondered how they got on. Billy was too much of a b-hoy though to settle down I think.

Yes, I remember Houston, Grentell & Wally Lattimer. I heard Lattimer lost his foot. He had a mate named Harry Stone, a fine sort of chap I have often wondered how he got on too.

I met another one named Walter Staines of Townsville when I was on holiday in Brisbane last year. He was at a re-union of the 2nd L.H.B. He is a teller at the Commonwealth Bank in Bris. We had a night together.

My girl & I had a wonderful time for five months down South this time. Spent a month in Bris then 6 weeks Sydney. Overlanded it to Adelaide, breaking the journey at Melbourne for a while then a month in Adelaide at the Centenary, & casually overlanding it through the lakes to Alice Springs & home to Roper.

This is my third term at Roper about 10 years & now I have just received word from H.Q. that I am to take charge of Borrooloola. It is next door below here & about 300 miles per road but cutting across it's about 200.

Borrooloola is a good station and there is likely to be a chilling works over that side now it is Abbott who is to be made Administrator. This station has a large district comprising all the country inside the parallels 133 & 137 Long & 11 & 15½ S latitude. Including all the Islands. I love the bush & I'll still be able to love it at the 'Loo' as nearly all that country is cattle.

My girl has an aptitude for the bush too so we are both in our element.

Yes, I have often looked back to the parties we used to have & I have very vivid recollections of the 'little brown jug' harmony & it's 22 years ago nearly.

It would be a pleasure to meet a few of the old boys again & I suppose we shall meet again - we weren't meant just to pass - perhaps not all together. That wouldn't do would it? I've had a fairly passable time the twenty years up here. My mate McColl was killed from this station whilst I was away on my last but one holidays 4 years ago. You remember the Caledon Bay mob got him. I occasionally go up that way but only if there is a murder. They are a warlike mob but I get on fairly well with them. Trade tobacco works wonders. I was

also over in charge of Timber Creek District in 1918 to 1921 & then the Wave Hill District (bigger than this one but not so good) with Tanami Goldfields on one patrol. It used to take me about 4 or 5 months when I took that trip on as I was Acting Warden & had to visit once a year. All the Southern side of this district is cattle & all West too. The Elsey - We of the Never Never - is next door but one W. about 120 miles. Altho the Station or most of it is in my district.

I knew a lot of the characters in the Book; they are mostly all dead now. Old Tom Wakelum (now we shant be long) was ahead of me by a day when he got drowned. I was on my way in to the railhead on a trip to Wembley 1924. I heard old Tom was ahead of me & was trying to catch him up when I heard that he was missing. Crossing the King River - it was in flood - his horses got washed away & he went with them.

I spent a couple of days looking for his body but there were too many alligators to find him. Practically all of them died unnatural deaths too... one speared, one perished, two drowned. Another perished too, the teamster Jack Grant. The Canny Scot died in Katherine Hosp three years ago & old Jack McCarthy died last year in Adelaide.

By the way, have you read the 'Sky Pilot' by Langford-Smith. That is about this quarter of the globe. He has quite an amount in about Roper & yours truly. Also a few items about yours truly whilst I was at Mataranka for a short while. Another about this side is Sky-pilot's last flight.

Anyway Alec, I must cut this a bit short just now, as I still have some official mail to complete. I shall have six weeks to write to you again between now & next mail.

We have a six weekly mail (pack) & the roads are middling. I have a Buick & I know it. I suppose there may soon be a monthly motor mail. I get a small mail through Burketown as the A.K. 'Noosa' comes here with our rations etc every month after the floods are finished, about April. It serves the Roper & Mac Arthur Rivers. Borroloola is on the latter.

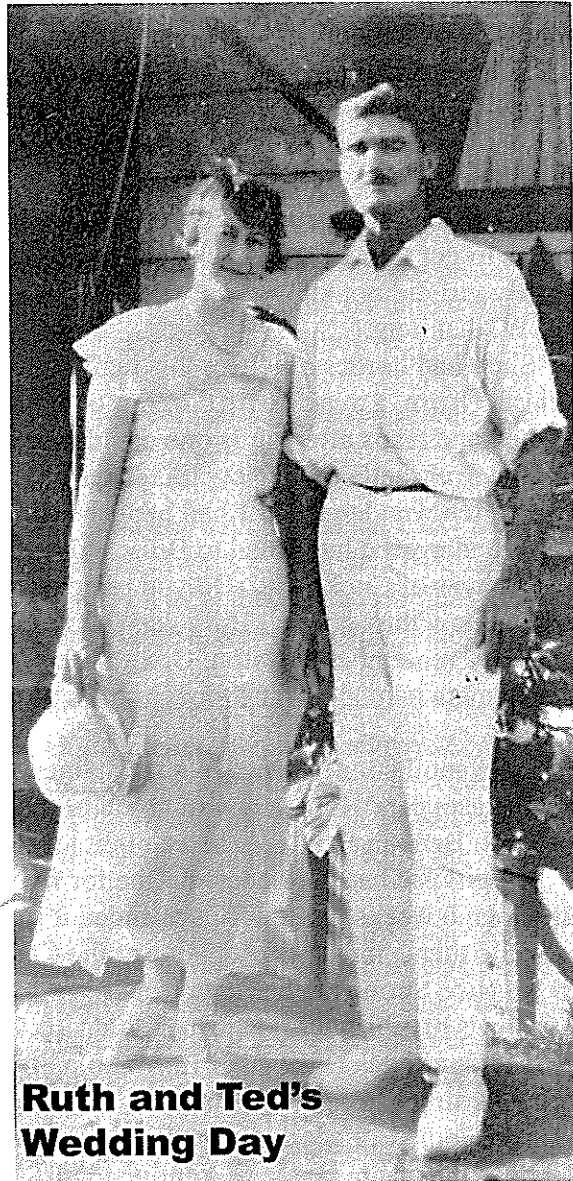
Well boy it will be a pleasure again to receive one from you but my address will be next time Police Station, Borroloola. Via Camooweal for your Queensland letters or Via Burketown.

Greetings from my sweetheart & self to Mrs Black the youngsters & yourself. We have been married 6 years have no youngsters but are still sweethearts.

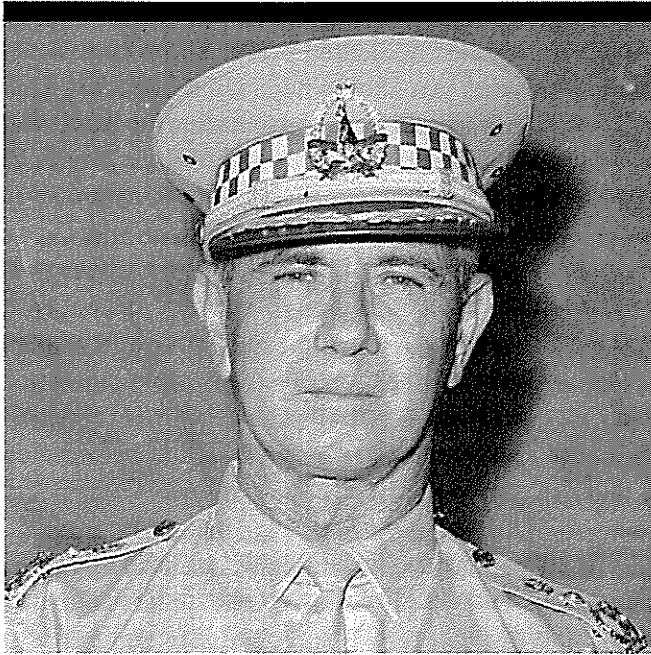
Yours sincerely,

(signed) Ted Heathcock.

P.S. I am Postmaster too so will put an extra date stamp on for luck.



**Ruth and Ted's
Wedding Day**



Clive William GRAHAM (14.4.1908 - 11.7.1983)

The following item was given to us by John "Pastry" Wilson – President of the Retired Police Association and brother-in-law of Mr. Graham's daughter, Eleanor Jean.

The first Commissioner of Police of the Northern Territory promoted through the ranks was Clive William Graham. A son of a former New South Wales police Inspector, he joined the Northern Territory Police on the 7 November 1932.

At that time there were only about 40 members in the Northern Territory Police Force, and this included the Superintendent and four Sergeants!

Clive Graham was born in Sydney in 1908, one of a family of seven. He was educated in various country schools, mainly in the remote areas of New South Wales, and finally at East Maitland High School.

He served his apprenticeship in electrical engineering at B.H.P. Steel Works, Newcastle from 1925 to 1930.

In 1931-32 during the depression, he worked spasmodically for B.H.P. and other electrical firms, and at one stage was self employed hawking household goods around the Sydney suburbs.

He applied for a vacancy advertised for the Northern Territory Police, as did many others, and was appointed as a Mounted Constable in Darwin, at the age of 24 years, in November 1932.

After serving in Darwin, Groote Eylandt, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, he opened the Police Station at Hatches Creek about 300 kilometres north east of Alice Springs. He took

his new bride (Jane Hayes from Undoolya Station) to their new home at Hatches Creek in July 1938. It was a canvas and bough mansion!

Mounted Constable GRAHAM went to Groote Eylandt with Mounted Constables Ted MOREY, Jack MAHONEY and Vic HALL and Trackers following the spearing of Mounted Constable Albert McCOLL in August 1933. This group of dedicated police stayed until April 1934, and returned McCOLL's remains to Darwin. An aborigine, TUCKIAR, was arrested and tried for the murder of McCOLL. He was acquitted of the murder.

Later in 1938 the Grahams transferred to Barrow Creek; in 1939 to Finke near the South Australian border; Rankine River, near the Queensland border in 1940, and then north to Anthony's Lagoon two years later.

Whilst he was a Sergeant at Anthony's Lagoon, he led a horse patrol of well over a thousand miles in the Nicholson River area, near the Queensland border, investigating cattle stealing offences and other matters. He was accompanied by Constable Syd BOWIE of the Northern Territory Police and Constable Chapman from the Queensland Police. They caught one cattle-duffer red handed, and he became quite talkative about his thieving exploits, as he knew he was on the Queensland side of the border and knew that the Territory Police could not touch him. He was introduced to Constable CHAPMAN and duly arrested!

After World War II and following a short stint in Alice Springs, he and his wife and two daughters remained stationed in Darwin.

Margaret Ann Graham was born while her father was serving at Rankine River in February 1941; Eleanor Jean whilst he was in Darwin in October 1944, and Pamela Jane in March 1949.

Ten years after joining the Northern Territory Police, Clive Graham was appointed as a Sergeant; in 1949 a Senior Sergeant; 1952 an Inspector; a Superintendent in 1956; Deputy Commissioner in 1960, and then finally in 1964 the top job, Commissioner of Police.

Prior to 1964, the rank of Commissioner was held by the Government Resident, or as the position is now known, the Administrator. The highest rank of the Police during this era was Superintendent. There was a short respite from this practice when Major G.C.V. Dudley held the position of Commissioner for a three year period 1924 - 1927. On his departure, the old system resumed.

On the 1 July 1964 Clive Graham became the first serving Member from the ranks in the 94 year history of the Northern Territory Police Force, to become Commissioner of Police.

He served at this rank until his retirement on the 7 September 1966.

He was awarded the Police Long Service and Good Conduct medal in December 1959 and the Imperial Service Order medal in the 1967 New Years Honours list.

The month of July seemed to be very significant for Clive Graham; most of his promotions were effected in this month, his transfers the same, his wedding ...and then his untimely death in Adelaide, on the 11 July 1983.

MOUNTY *WITHOUT* A HORSE

The following is Chapter 1 of a yet to be completed book by a former member – no doubt it will cause many a member to recall his/her first journey to the unknown North. The year he arrived in Darwin was 1955 which could help with the author's identity. I have another question – who met the author at the airport? Ed.

1. Air Male Mounty

Once upon a time, many years ago in the mid-fifties, there was an ordinary every-day, some might say "Grubby" factory worker in provincial Victoria who, in the quest for a new life, a warmer climate, perhaps a little adventure, answered a newspaper advertisement for Northern Territory Mounted Police Force recruits. His application was successful which surprised the lad somewhat and which confronted him with the enormity of leaving home and travelling from Central Victoria to begin an adventure in far off, isolated, tropical, Darwin.

"You know that we still have horse patrols at some of our bush stations in the Territory. Can you ride a horse?" said one of the panel of interviewers, a large ominous figure of a man. This in a large upstairs room in the posh Elizabeth Street Headquarters of the Commonwealth Bank in the "Big Smoke". *"Well, sort of...."*

"What do you mean - sort of?"

"I've never ridden a horse with a saddle but manage alright bareback." There was a momentary silence and thankfully no further comment about horsemanship. Perhaps the panel was pleased to pass on to the next subject with a note: *"Has some riding ability'.*

Just as well because the hopeful's knowledge of horses related to some years earlier, when, with other kids, he would take turns to ride a docile old hack. The horse and children would meander about suburbia two three or even more riders at a time. So it was quite an awesome experience for one of those kids to find himself in such splendid places mixing with exalted authority.

"You'll be paid normal time for last Friday. The job you applied for is Commonwealth Public Service. Your Melbourne interview is regarded as normal duties!" commented the knowledgeable factory "Time Clerk" early the first Tuesday after his interview. The would-be Northern Territory Policeman had not mentioned his application, nor the purpose of his visit to Melbourne to a soul, not family, best friends, anyone. He was amazed that a workshop clerk should be so well informed at such short notice. One working day! It was his first inkling that Government Departments could and did work closely together at times. A letter of appointment duly arrived from the Department of Territories ... *"You have been chosen for appointment ... etc., and the Department of Supply..... etc. ...has agreed to your release, etc... .."* And if the Department of Supply had not agreed would that have been the end of his endeavour to start a new life?

Air travel was the only sensible means of transport over the long journey to the far off, romantic, tropical town of Darwin. One airline, T.A.A., long before it became Australian Airlines later to amalgamate with Qantas, serviced his chosen route from Melbourne to Darwin - via Adelaide.

There were no air services from his home town and like so many of his contemporaries our adventurer had never travelled interstate or for that matter far from home; much less contemplated travel by air. He had only images from films and advertisements to prepare him for the experience of a lifetime - his first separation from mother earth. Another revelation was when he realised that transferring from one Government Department to

another had changed his employment status somewhat - from that of a common factory hand to esteemed public servant - one therefore entitled to "First Class" trappings.

As punctual and predictable as ever the morning train rumbled into the bleak suburban station at 7.05am where our traveller boarded the faithful old Melbourne-bound service that cold, September Monday morning. Having said his last farewells it was away via Kangaroo Flat, Ravenswood, Harcourt, Castlemaine and all stops southwards to the metropolis. Travelling alone, he was prone to nostalgic memories of past journeys over the same line. There was ample time to reflect on carriage decor: - spacious mirrors, plush leather upholstery and photographic prints featuring attractive holiday destinations on the Victorian rail network. Good old "A2" class steam locomotives, gone from service, had been superseded by stylish, all-business, more efficient, diesel-electric monsters boasting a motive power of 1600hp.

Coach transport was provided from the city terminal to Essendon where an array of airliners plied the busy airport. In those days most people had heard of the new-age "Vickers Viscount" airliner, introduced by T.A.A. in 1954, so it was not too surprising for our adventurer to find himself seated in plush, immaculate surrounds of the first class section of one such "Viscount". What luck! Everything seemed so new and attractive; ultra modern, so comfortable and spotlessly clean as if just out of the showroom!

His window seat provided a marvellous view of the expansive, outstretched wings each with two turbo-props engines any one of which probably more powerful than the great locomotive which had propelled his train to Melbourne. He did his best to put aside thoughts of terrible disasters which, including the crash of a Viscount airliner near Melbourne, only a year previously, had plagued post-war airline development. Real take-off apprehension came with the powerful forward thrust of four jet turbines. Strange vibes caused knuckles to show white where they firmly gripped armrests, countering unfamiliar sensations of floating over the ground at 100 miles an hour; then lift-off to climb at an incredible rate towards the heavens. Our friend experienced more uneasiness when he noticed that the wings had buckled along their length, were corrugated and seemed to flap up and down under load variations. Now had he read somewhere that long wings would snap off if they did not flex? Having accepted his fate and committed his trust to aeroplane and crew it wasn't long before the intrepid passenger was enjoying the experience. Excellent service and seemingly personalised attention accompanied his first in-flight cold beer. What an experience for a novice traveller, winging his way at about 400mph in armchair comfort. Just like in the advertisements! He found himself privately observing that this "Public Servant" bit was alright, and first class travel really was good stuff! Pity his mates weren't with him to share the experience.

The then reputation of Adelaide as a "Wowser" city was not diminished when our would-be "Mounty" found himself booked into a large hotel on North Terrace. Conveniently situated opposite the railway station and many other city establishments, and only a few doors from the airline office it proved to be for residential accommodation only. It was a "Dry Pub" with not a drop to drink!

Next day was a 7am take-off from Adelaide Airport so an early start and a short coach ride to West Beach where our now-confident traveller boarded a DC3 airliner. He well knew that the Douglas was a reliable aircraft with a remarkable service record but he was not prepared for the disconcerting "Nose-up attitude" when the thing taxied, and to a lesser degree, when it was flying.

"All aboard - close doors - seat belts fastened - seats upright!", then up-and-away she went out over the Gulf St Vincent to bank Northwards over the top of Spencer Gulf and past Port Augusta at a sedate 120 or so knots.

No heart-in-the-mouth this time, or plush surrounds and the sturdy wings were not given to flapping. Soon vast salt lakes appeared on the parched, seemingly barren, land below where it stretched un-ending into the distance. The aeroplane landed now and then to stop at tin sheds with airport names painted on roofs: Leigh Creek - Oodnadatta - Alice Springs - Tennant Creek - Daly Waters; (some airports!) ever heading northwards to Katherine and finally Darwin. No wonder everyone called the service the "Milk Run," and little wonder that no other airline took up the long distance challenge over the vast, seemingly waterless uninhabited wasteland. Imagine surviving a crash landing in such a hostile environment. Death by dehydration would be merciful even if a little prolonged. After a delay at Tennant Creek to wait for a Magistrate on tour, the airliner touched down at final destination after 7pm.

Some of the outback stops on the way had been hot and desolate but nothing could prepare strangers for the pre-wet-season heat and humidity of Darwin. The stifling air seemed to wilt passengers as they alighted to walk across the vast tarmac. Was it the roof of Hades they crossed to reach the terminal building? It was an almost unbelievable environment after leaving behind months of autumn, winter and spring weather. A long day it had been for our traveller after crossing the "Island Continent" from one end to the other. He was suddenly in a different world. Cold miserable weather, "Footy", favourite pubs and old mates were behind.

It was an amiable Policeman who met him, in fact a fellow Victorian who had spent some time as a Patrol Officer in Papua New Guinea. His easy-going manner was deceptive as it concealed a lot of experience and ability. Night fell before they had completed the three to four mile journey, along basic roadways, through unfamiliar landscapes to Police Barracks.

Having survived the challenge of long distance travel the next test might well be that of riding horses! After all he had joined the Northern Territory Mounted Police Force knowing that life might be rather rugged. So our recruit was not too surprised on arrival at barracks and introduction to his very own quarters. They consisted of a cubicle about eight feet square with walls of fibro-cement panels, which started about a foot above the concrete floor and rose about five feet for all the world like a stall in a horse stable. The "Room" was set underneath a large elevated building, the only concession to personal comfort was a snow white mosquito net slung from a floor-joist above a single bed. Barracks downstairs accommodation really was just like a stable with separate stalls, the starkness not fully revealed at night time. There were no fans to supplement natural ventilation and no hot water in the shower situated next cubicle but one. In fact there was no need for hot water as that from the normal reticulation system was warm enough. It was nothing like home, but then accommodation came gratis with the job, and as luck would have it there were no horses to share the stables.

When our friend laid his head to rest he could hardly imagine, in his wildest dreams, what adventures were piled up just waiting to begin on the morrow. At 8am. next day he would sign-on for duty and in the following 28 days would work 12 day shifts, 6 afternoon shifts, 5 midnight shifts and enjoy 5 days off duty. In that short time he would deal with two fatalities, one a murder; the other a road accident victim. So the pace was set in a pioneer environment where Police, ever in short supply, were always busy.

He had truly embarked on a great personal adventure, one destined to last a lifetime!

Letters from the past certainly make for interesting reading — here's another one — they really did it tough 91 years ago.

Borroloola Police Station.
Aug. 10th. 1914.

Sir,

I have the honor to request Five Months leave of absence on full pay to date from such date in November or December next as can be availed of after arrival in Darwin of the boat scheduled to leave here in November next — if granted, — the grant to cover a permission to leave here with my wife and family for Darwin in the November boat —

On the 1st inst. I commenced my thirty-fourth year of continuous service in the police force, the last eight years and seven months of which have been served in the Northern Territory. I have not had any recreation leave during my service here. I require the leave for recreation and to enable me to place my son at school in one of the Southern cities.

I would also respectfully request that return fares for my wife and myself be granted (half-fare for my wife)

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obed^t servant.

(Signed) C.A. Dempsey.
S.P.

Yr.

N. Waters Esq.
Inspy. of Police.
Darwin.

SOME HEROES FROM OUR PAST

1912 - WILTON RIVER - RESCUE - NEIGHBOUR - ALBERT MEDAL

Neighbour, being brought in for trial on a charge of raiding a fencer's hut, and despite the wearing of a neck chain, saved the life of Mounted Constable Johns, in whose custody he was, by going to his rescue when the constable's horse was swept away, injuring him in its struggles, as the party was crossing the flooded Wilton River.



Constable Johns, later Commissioner of Police in Adelaide, kept in touch with Neighbour, who was employed as a stockman on Hodgson Downs and Nutwood Downs stations until his death on June 21st 1954. He described him as "...a fine specimen of Australian aboriginal, who spoke very little English, had plenty of courage, apart from the incident for which he received the Medal, a very happy disposition, and was regarded in his tribe as of the warrior type."

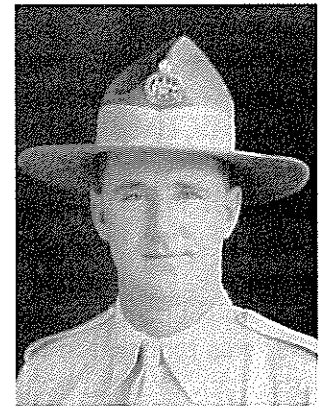
Neighbour served at times as a police tracker, and once more, in 1940, was instrumental in saving life on the flooded Roper River. He worked tirelessly on a launch with Constable J. Mahoney, ferrying rations and rescuing stranded natives, many of whom were in danger of drowning. He was survived by one daughter, Amy, living in 1956 at Nutwood Downs station, N.T.

1942 - BOMBING OF DARWIN - E McNABB - BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL

The Following is an Extract from the Commonwealth Gazette No. 170
Dated 5th August 1943.

Government House,
CANBERRA.
30th July, 1943.

THE KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the following award for courageous conduct and devotion to duty at Darwin:-



BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL (CIVIL DIVISION).

Constable Eric Arthur McNab, Northern Territory Police Force.

Constable McNab proceeded to the Post Office which had received a direct hit and rendered good service in recovering the wounded from the debris and removing the dead. During raids and for some time afterwards he displayed courage and devotion to duty until finally it was found necessary for him to enter hospital suffering from war neuritis.

1952 - KATHERINE - MURDER - W. CONDON - KING'S POLICE & FIRE SERVICE MEDAL

In the Honours and Awards of the 24th February 1953, the Citation for the Posthumous Award for Gallantry for William Brian Condon reads:

In recognition of Constable Condon's courage, gallantry and outstanding devotion to duty at Katherine, Northern Territory, on 9th June, 1952.

Being fully aware of the personal risk involved, this Officer fearlessly and without hesitation approached an armed and dangerous man with a view to arresting him and thus preserving the peace and safeguarding the lives of citizens.

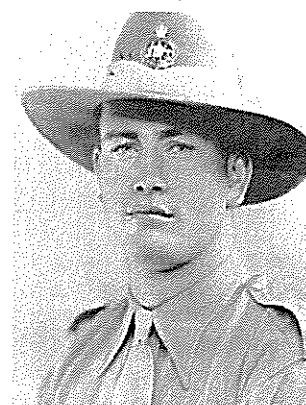
He was shot down at close quarters, endeavoured to rise to close with his assailant and was shot again. He died shortly afterwards.



1956 - TENNANT CREEK - FIRE - J. MANNION - GEORGE MEDAL

SGT J J MANNION G M
POLICE STATION DARWIN NT

I AM ADVISED HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN HAS APPROVED THAT YOU BE AWARDED THE GEORGE MEDAL IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR BRAVE ACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE FIRE AT CAMPBELLS STORE TENNANT CREEK IN DECEMBER 1956. MY MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES JOIN ME IN CONGRATULATING YOU R G MENZIES PRIME MINISTER.



COURTESY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWS

It was reported in the NT News dated Tuesday, December 4th :

Heroes in the night of great courage were Police Sergeant James J Mannion and Dr James Edward Lyttle, both of Tennant Creek.

Sergeant Mannion bullocked his way into the inferno after the first set of explosions, amid flying torches of blazing petrol and oil, to make sure nobody was trapped in the blaze.

Dr Lyttle worked feverishly to treat more than 30 of the injured while TAA men hastily converted a DC-4 airliner into an aerial ambulance to rush the critically injured men to Darwin.

The fire-fighters threw everything at the blaze – including the mobile tankers which cart Tennant's domestic water supplies in the dry season. The water-carters "milked" private tanks to rush water to the fire.

A bulldozer driven by two men whose names are unknown ground its way into the burning debris after the worst of the blaze and shoved the embers into a heap to stop the flames from spreading.

Tennant publican Ken McIntyre said that white-hot flames leapt to 80ft in height "as if thrown by a huge blow torch".

"How Jimmie Mannion ever got in there and out again I'll never know."

Ed's Note: **Hubert Fairhurst** and **John Knowles** were the two men who did such a magnificent job with the bulldozer.

VALE

Rosemary Patricia McQuaid
1950 – 2005

Wife of former Senior Sergeant Paddy McQuaid, Rosemary shared her infectious zest for life with all who knew her.

Our deepest sympathy and sincerest condolences to Paddy, to their children Joseph, Patrick and Bridget and their families.

S Grant
For the editor.