



The

# Citation

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

*Patron – Commissioner Paul White APM*

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**Committee** Mr John Rowe  
Mr Doug Smith  
Mr Graham McMahon



**PAUL HENINRICH MATTHAIS  
FOELSCHE**

**BORN 30 MARCH 1831  
NEAR HAMBURG**

**DIED 31 JANUARY 1914  
DARWIN, NT**

**MAY HE REST IN PEACE**

## CURATOR'S REPORT

It's just like "trying to find a needle in a haystack"!! Unfortunately, due to operational requirements we have had to relinquish House No. 2 back to the Department. This has meant that we have had to combine House No. 3 as the office for the Retired Police Association of the Northern Territory Inc as well as the storage area for our museum collection. We have been advised that this is only for the short term as space within the Peter McAulay Centre is not yet available for us.

This means that we are presently unable to access the majority of our collection and have no display area to provide even a small exhibition. The good work that has been done by the volunteers continues, albeit on a smaller scale.

Obviously, this type of storage is not good for the collection and we are working with the Department to try and resolve this matter as soon as possible.

On a happier note - over the past 3 years we have applied for a Community Heritage Grant through the Australian National Library. This year we tried once again and finally have been successful. To receive the Grant (of \$7,000 - maximum available is \$8,000), I had to fly to Canberra, at the expense of the Federal Government, to undertake two days of workshops on "significance and collections" and receive a certificate from the Federal Minister for the Arts, The Hon Rod Kemp MP.

The funds were sought to enable us to continue on with our conservation and preservation work, in the main, purchasing the correct materials and storage boxes to properly protect the collection.

This year we have also received two Grants from the Northern Territory Government:

- a Regional Museums Support Grant for \$23,000 to contribute towards the Curator's position and obtain Professional Development; and
- a Northern Territory History Grant for \$4,000 to continue our Oral History Project with the recording of former member's history within the NT Police.

I would like to thank the wonderful support that we continually receive from Sue Harlow, our Regional Museums Support Officer. Sue is always available to provide expert advice and guidance about matters of importance in relation to our collection. Thank you Sue - you are one in a million.

Thanks also to Rosemary Rowe and Val Watters - our tireless volunteers who have managed to keep smiling - even after the move. Their time is invaluable to us.

Janell Cox  
Curator

### AUGUST LUCANUS 1848 - 1941

Story written by Graham & Kath  
McMahon - January 2004

*(Ed. Note: The articles have been typed as they appeared in the actual newspapers whereby they have described Chinese people as "Chinkies". This article is of a historic nature and does not represent the views of the Northern Territory Police Museum & Historical Society Inc)*

I came to the Northern Territory in 1954 and joined the Police Force in 1958. I was retired from the NT Police Force in 1971 as a result of an injury received whilst on duty. At the time of my retirement I held the rank of Sergeant First Class. I was 34 years of age.

After retirement I turned to commercial fishing, an occupation which was much more physically demanding than the Police Force. Despite a number of Commonwealth Medical Officer's examinations I was never again considered physically fit to rejoin the Police Force.

In 1999, my wife Kath and I retired from commercial fishing. We decided at the age of sixty-two we would rather wear out than rust out. We decided to go bush and fossick with metal detectors and prospect for minerals.

We purchased a four-wheel drive vehicle, a quad bike, metal detectors and camping equipment. We researched the history of gold mining in the Northern Territory. We learnt from our research about alluvial and reef mining in the Yam Creek/Margaret river area, which is adjacent to the present Grove Hill Hotel and extends southward towards Hayes Creek.

Gold was discovered in the Northern Territory in 1865. Workers erecting the Overland telegraph line in 1870 made significant discoveries at Yam Creek. Whilst sinking holes for telegraph posts they found alluvial gold at a metre's depth.

A makeshift telegraph station called "The Shackle" was established at Yam Creek and reported to Adelaide a number of gold discoveries ranging from Bridge Creek to Pine Creek.

In 1880 a DB Tennant discovered alluvial gold in the headwaters of the East Margaret River. This was the area that interested Kath and I. We were determined to learn the history of the area and to explore the country.

After Tennant's discovery Chinese miners were the first to take advantage to such an extent that they monopolised the "Margaret Rush". It has been reported that at least 600 Chinese, and at the height of the frantic activity 1500 Chinese worked the field in 1880. Nuggets up to 700 ounces were found. Of course it was not success for all. Many failed, some died. The main activity was during the

"wet" season when the miners used it's rains to wash the gold from the mined alluvial earth.

The conditions of heat, humidity, flies, mosquitoes and tropical storms we have experienced make us wonder, admire and be in awe of those early miners of the area who did not have frozen food, eskies, generators, vehicles and fly repellent spray.

Our research revealed the following gem of a telegram we presume was sent officially to the Government Mining authorities -

*"Telegram Yam Creek June 30<sup>th</sup> 1880  
Twenty-four pound weight (288ozs)  
nugget found Margaret Rush. Great  
rioting and fighting last three days.  
Two factions Chinese, many  
wounded. Police openly insulted,  
afraid to arrest ringleaders. No  
warden to settle disputes."*

Another report to the authorities dated the 1st January 1881 stated inter alia:

*"We have been looking for an account  
of the late large find on the Margaret.  
The report is that from one large  
boulder, when broken up, no less  
than 700 ounces were obtained by  
one Chinaman. The stone was close  
to the police camp, was sat on by  
your correspondent, and four  
Germans had their fire for cooking  
alongside of it. The gold was  
completely covered by a thin coating  
of quartz, and a Chinaman having  
broken the skin, discovered the  
kernel. So much for Chinese luck. It  
was supposed the Europeans would  
have made the scramble, but the  
police were present at the washing,  
and the Europeans were short of  
pluck."*

Kath and I were intrigued as to the exact location of the Police Camp and who were the Police personnel who were stationed there?

Kath is a dogged researcher and obtained a copy of photographs and information from the South Australian Police Historical Society Collection plus the LC Debnam Indices and Police Stations in the

goldfields area of the Northern Territory 1870 to 1914 (1996).

The above stated re accommodation of Police in 1873:

*"Yet it was the trooper who was stationed on the goldfields who really fared worst of all. The Police accommodation at Pine Creek, for an example, consisted of a tent. The troopers up country accommodation were the worst wretched hovels that could be imagined. The quarters generally consist of one or perhaps two worn out circular tents that have long ceased to keep out the rain, and during violent storms the floods sweep through these tents with such violence that the men are compelled to stand on boxes to prevent themselves from being swept away by the force of the current.*

*If the situation in regard to the accommodation caused dissatisfaction among the troopers, the problem associated with horses would have led to outright exasperation."*

The Police camp at the Margaret Rush goldfield was described as an outpost of the Yam Creek Police camp on the Margaret River and there was a great influx of diggers and prospectors to the area. The Post was still in existence in 1881.

The Police stationed at Yam Creek in 1880 were Fopp, Montagu and Lucanus. Police Trooper August (nickname Luke) Lucanus (surname was frequently misspelt as Lucarnis, Lucarnius, Lucarnus) was stationed from the 7th July 1880 at the Margaret Rush Post. History reveals that it was a tumultuous time.

The duties of Police Troopers in the goldfields were to act as Mining Wardens, to collect rents, record illnesses and deaths and to maintain law and order.

During our fishing days Kath and I rebuilt an 18 metre fishing boat from a hulk to a vessel that passed all the survey requirements for 200 miles offshore fishing. From our seagoing experience we were able to deduce a theoretical

longitude and latitude of the Margaret Rush Police camp. In 2002 we used our quad bike and a GPS to locate the camp. As luck would have it the various published descriptions of the camp dovetailed into the area we located.

It was an eerie feeling for Kath and I to stand on that very isolated hill where the Police camp had been situated and to imagine the numbers of Chinese miners, their industrious efforts, their disputes and the rioting that occurred there.



**August Lucanus**

Ernestine Hill in her saga of Australia's North, the book "The Territory" described the Chinese riots as follows:

*"David Tenant surveying plantation lands on the Margaret River kicked a six pound nugget. Seven hundred Chinamen were there in a flash swarming hill and gully, living on rice biscuits, pelting white men out with sticks and stones. The Margaret River washed down gold in pounds, not ounces, twenty, forty, eighty-pound nuggets already in a glass case, curiously surrounded in thick crystal quartz. The Chinese got the lot. They banded together in tongs, jostling and squabbling, jumping claims and jumping on each other,*

*snatching wash dirt in showers. Macao men rabbited a patch just left by Cantonese and raked off a hundred and fifty ounces. The Cantonese rushed back and forth and the battle of the Margaret was on. It raged for four days and three nights, the whole field whacking at it in close up fights of tomahawks, nailed sticks, dolly pots, dinner knives, pistols, short handled shovels and sharpened bamboos, billies of boiling water and flying buckets of ore. One tall Chinkie like Ajax felled everything around him with a long handled pick. When a band of white men came over the hill to legislate for peace they were belted back by a howling mob of a couple thousand Mongols throwing rocks. A despatch rider set off for Lucanus the trooper.*

*Lucanus was a direct descendant of the centurion who witnessed the Resurrection ~ at least according to Lucanus and none could say him nay. Unarmed and without a hat he leapt into the fray and quelled it with a yell. In fear of his brass buttons it dissolved like froth on the river. So ended the battle of the Margaret River with five of the generals tied to trees."*

The following article re the Chinese riots appeared in the July 1880 issue of the Northern Territory Times and Gazette:

#### **Chinese Row at the Margaret**

*At the Margaret River Rush, on Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup> June, a dispute arose between a working party of Hongkong and a similar party of Macao men, who occupy adjoining claims. It appears that the Macao men had withdrawn their pegs, leaving a space between the two parties. The Hongkong men there upon pegged the intervening space and struck heavy gold in it. The Macaos seeing this immediately disputed the pegging, and a great row arose. After threatening and disputing in the usual Chinkie style, it was agreed to hold the ground suspended until the Warden arrived, and Charles Antonio was deputed to fetch him. He went, but his mission proved abortive, as no Warden was to be found, although one was supposed to intend to arrive on the following Monday. On*

*Saturday the Hongkong men got a quartz specimen containing, as they told the whites, 150 ounces gold; and white diggers who saw the lumps of gold come out of it seem to think this an understatement.*

*Upon this great excitement arose as this specimen was found in the ground immediately adjoining the disputed ground, but nevertheless during the Saturday and Sunday the agreement was respected, and one big Chinkie held this rich patch and threatened to kill anybody who came on it. At last, on Sunday evening or Monday morning the Chinamen despairing of seeing a Warden or getting the dispute settled by legal means, agreed to scramble for it, and the ground, on Monday, presented the appearance of an ant-heap when the ants are building or repairing, with this difference, that the ants are working in harmony, whereas these Mongolians were working each for himself, the devil take the hindmost, jostling and crowding and squabbling all day. No pegs were regarded, but the ground seemed to be open to all the Chinese diggers to jump in and scramble out as much gold or wash-dirt as may be. Sometimes there would be perhaps 200 diggers working and another 200 or 300 looking on at the former, as fresh rows were constantly arising. Towards evening this culminated in a fight between the Hongkongs and Macaos or the Amoys, and long-handed shovels, bamboos, and stones were freely used, a number of men being wounded, some seriously.*

*A solitary trooper was present, but was of course powerless. About the time of the final row, or just before Tom the Greek jumped a Chinaman's claim which lay outside, on the ground that the man was working in another claim, he being of course in the general scramble. The Chinamen, however, soon pulled up Tom's pegs. Upon this he claimed the protection of the trooper, who went on to the ground and threatened to arrest the man who pulled out and threw away the pegs. The culprit, however, seeing that the whites were helpless, pulled out his miner's rights and told the trooper that that was a Chinaman's rush, that the Chinese had pegged all the ground within a quarter of a mile, and the whites had no business there at all."*

After the disputes had settled down at the Margaret Rush a second large dispute arose and was reported in the Northern Territory Times and Gazette as follows:

The following is the substance of the reply sent in Chinese by the Resident to a memorial from the Margaret. That the Warden had instructions to administer the Act strictly; that, therefore, those storekeepers who had erected their stores on ground approved of by the Warden would not be disturbed during the currency of their licence; but that those who had erected their stores before taking out a licence and having the site approved, would have to shift the buildings if the Warden was certain they were on the lead of gold, and if the ground was required for gold-mining purposes. Notices in Chinese have been posted on the goldfield, fully explaining to the Chinese the necessary steps to take previous to erecting stores or residences.

The article continues:

### **Chinese Riot at the Margaret**

(By our Special Reporter)

*The beginning of troubles between the Europeans and Chinese on the goldfields took place on the Margaret rush, on Tuesday evening, the 10<sup>th</sup> inst. Not being an eyewitness of the origin of the riot, I shall content myself with what I actually saw.*

*About five o'clock in the afternoon, when the miners were engaged boiling their billies, suddenly there was an unusual stir noticeable in the lower Chinese township, adjoining the European camp. The hum of angry voices increased to savage yells, and in a few minutes a miner named F Stone was seen running towards the European camp with upwards of two hundred Chinese pursuing him and throwing stones. Those Europeans who were near, seeing the danger to their countryman, ran up to protect him, and in doing so, had to use the same missile as the Chinese, viz., stones. The word ran along the creek, and the Europeans mustered with all haste, but the Chinese had the advantage of being in a crowd,*

*while the others were scattered about, and in five minutes the odds were about four hundred Chinese to twenty Europeans. The former were emboldened by their numbers, and essayed to rush down on the European camp, when Mr A Lucarnus, the officer in command at the police station, and the only officer on the place at the time, ran between the combatants, and after violently gesticulating to the Asiatics, with much difficulty persuaded them to retreat, not, however, before he had been considerably battered about the legs and body with stones. Having recognised five of the ringleaders, he called on some of the Europeans to assist him to secure them, and they were immediately seized and lodged in the police station. As there was reason to suppose that the Chinese would attempt to rescue the prisoners, half a dozen Europeans guarded the station, and the remainder mustered what arms they could, lest the Chinese should again come down the creek in a body.*

*In the meantime Mr Lucarnus put on his uniform, and rode through the Chinese camp armed. The sign of the uniform and the sword were more than enough for the coolies, and the riot was quelled with no more serious results than a few bruises from stones.*

*It is seldom our police are placed in a position where their courage can be tested, but Mr Lucarnus has proved himself equal to any emergency. It was no mean thing to rush into the midst of two hundred excited Chinese. As soon as he saw the danger he sprang like a kangaroo from the station to the scene of the conflict without a hat and without arms. It was perhaps as well that he had no arms, for when the stones were showering round him, and the coolies for a minute appeared obstinate he might have used a revolver if he had had one in his hand. It was fortunate as well that the Chinese have a wholesome dread of a brass button, and that the presence of one policeman prevented further violence, for if that officer had not been present the fight would have continued. The Chinese would have brought all their force to bear, and the Europeans would have brought all the arms they possessed against the enemy. Whatever may have been the cause of*

the fight the Chinese were the rioters. Two hundred fell on one man, with the intention of murdering him, and had they not been driven back from the assault a considerable amount of bloodshed would have been the result.

On Wednesday morning the five Chinese were taken to the Shackle, and committed for trial by Messrs Burkitt and Nash.

The cause of the fight, as stated here and sworn to at the police court, was that a man named F Stone held a claim near to a Chinese storekeeper named Jemy Ah See, and was on very good terms with him. Stone wheels his wash-dirt on a barrow to the water, and at knocking-off time, having more dirt than he could carry, he asked Ah See to keep a bag for him till the morning. Ah See all at once, became hostile, and after some arguing he shoved Stone and the bag of dirt into the street, where upon Stone retaliated in the usual British fashion. A was cry was immediately raised, and Stone, finding "the centre to a periphery of kicks and cuffs", apart from stones, beat a retreat to his own camp, the Celestials in pursuit.

Some of the incidents of the battle were amusing. One powerful young European came to the front and intended to throw stones in return, but he became a splendid object for the enemy; and instead of throwing, he found himself sufficiently occupied in avoiding, the missiles. He admitted himself it was a most unsatisfactory method of fighting.

Mr Johnston and Mr Thomas O'Neill happened to be passing through the enemy's camp at the time, but they were outside the scene of the stones, and so escaped uninjured.

On the other hand the smallest man we have pelted away like a "steam engine" or rather, like a Gatling gun, and did a good deal of execution, while he was too small to be observed by the enemy.

Billy Muck came up at the end with a tomahawk, and there was no mistake as to which side of the ranks he intended to fight on, but at the same time he was anxious to know "What for Chinaman

growl?" I noticed two men stationed on the side of the hill with rifles. They did not evidently intend to join in the melee but if the fight had continued, those rifles would have told.

Your reporter had a splendid view of the conflict from an eminence. Some say he ought to have joined in the battle, but war correspondents are not supposed to go to the front, and if he had not observed a cautious distance there might have been no one left to tell the story."

On the 9<sup>th</sup> October 1880 the Northern Territory Times and Gazette reported as follows:

#### **CIRCUIT COURT.**

Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 1880.

(Before His Honor E W Price, Esq., and a Jury of six)

#### **The Margaret Rush Riots**

Five Chinese, named respectively, Jommy Ah An, Ho Sam, Ah Look, Ah Sam and Ah Son were charged, with assaulting one Frederick Stone, at the Margaret rush, on the 10<sup>th</sup> August last, with intent to do him grievous bodily harm.

Mr Burt appeared for the defence.

The particulars of this case have already appeared in our columns.

Frederick Stone deposed that he was a minor residing on the Margaret rush. He knew Jommy Ah An, and was at his store on the 10<sup>th</sup> inst. Worked a claim near his store, and was on friendly terms with him. There was a bit of a squabble during the day. There were three bags of dirt on his barrow and one he wished to leave with Jommy Ah An. The consequence was a quarrel, during which Jommy Ah An pushed Stone, who retaliated. The Chinese then rushed in a body, and witness ran towards the European quarters. The Chinese pursued him with stones, and he fell twice in retreating. There was no dispute about the ownership of the bag, but complainant's claim ran directly under prisoner's store.

*James Maddock recognised three of the prisoners as throwers of stones.*

*Several other witnesses deposed to seeing Stone pursued by the Chinamen, and to their running to his assistance.*

*August Lucanus deposed that he was trooper in charge at the Margaret rush station. On the afternoon of the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, he heard a disturbance. Saw the man Stone running, and a number of Chinamen after him. The Europeans were coming up at the time. Called to the Chinamen to go back. Jommy Ah An seemed to excite them on. Was between the parties, and struck several times with stones.*

*The case occupied a considerable time.*

*The jury, after retiring for a few minutes, brought in a verdict of guilty, and the prisoner was sentenced to six years' hard labor.*

*Prisoner said he was satisfied with the verdict of the jury.*

Mounted Police Trooper Lucanus resigned from the Police Force in 1883 after serving in Pine Creek. Kath and I wondered who he was, where did he come from, where did he go and what became of him.

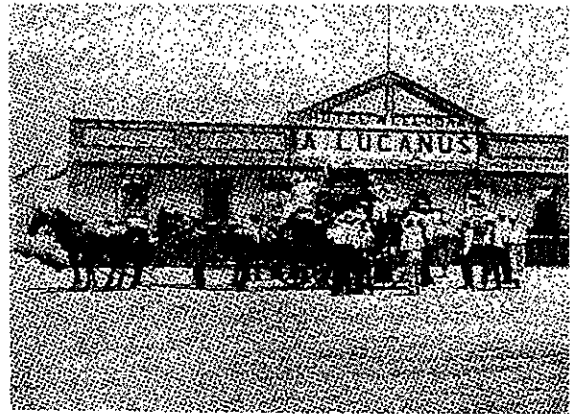
Our research revealed that August Lucanus was born in West Germany in 1848. He served in the German Army during the Franco-German wars. He migrated to Adelaide in 1877 and joined the SA Police Force. He transferred to Darwin in 1878. (The NT was the then Northern Territory of South Australia.) After leaving the Force in the NT he and a partner operated a store and carrying business at the Port Darwin Camp which was situated near Yam Creek.

On a Sunday in October 1883 a Malay rode up to the Shackle Telegraph Station and reported that natives had killed a party of miners at the Daly River copper mine. Lucanus was put in charge of a search party to look for one of the missing victims named Houschildt who together with another victim named Noltenius were mining pioneers in the Yam Creek/Pine Creek areas and were widely known and respected, they were also known to be

kind to Aborigines giving them food and tobacco but not liquor. Four of the five miners had been killed. Lucanus gave an undertaking that his search party would not shoot or kill Aborigines. His party was successful in "dispersing several Aboriginal groups". He received praise from official sources for the manner in which his search party non-violently carried out their tasks.

Lucanus left the Territory in 1885 travelling overland to Wyndham at the time of the Halls Creek Western Australian gold rush. During the trip Aborigines attacked his party. Lucanus was speared in the back. The stone spearhead was extracted leaving a large open wound from which he suffered no consequences.

Lucanus in 1892 worked as a Special Constable with the Wyndham Police. He joined the WA Police Force in April 1894; he was promoted to Senior Constable in August 1895. Several months later he transferred to Cue in WA and resigned from the Force in 1896.



**A stage coach outside  
A Lucanus's Weeloona Hotel**

(Photograph from the book  
**WILUNA "Edge of the Desert"**  
by P R Heydon (OAM))

Lucanus married Ellen Walbran after leaving the Police Force and they owned and operated several hotels. The couple built and opened a new hotel that they named the "Weeloona", at Lake Way in 1897. The area later became the town of Wiluna. In 1899 they faced bankruptcy, however their fortunes improved to the



extent that they owned two pastoral leases for six years.

Aboriginals killed Lucanus's son-in-law whilst driving on the Canning stock route in Western Australia. Ellen Lucanus died at Wiluna on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 1920. He again married on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1928 a sixty seven year old Caroline Hoschen. Lucanus was nearly eighty years old, age was no barrier to him as he went into business with a James Mōylan and operated a grocery store at Claremont, a suburb of Perth, he also had interests in a wine and spirits business.

Wiluna boomed again when new gold recovery methods were discovered, Lucanus could not resist the urge to return to Wiluna with his wife and his partner Moylan, but their fortunes diminished and by 1935 he and Moylan were bankrupt.

In 1935 Lucanus was blind. He resided at the Aged Blind Institution at Victoria Park, Perth. He died in January 1941. He is buried in the Karrakata Cemetery.

Throughout his life August Lucanus was popular, receiving send off parties when he left an area to go elsewhere. In Wiluna he lobbied for a Police Station, hospital, school and postal/telegraphic services.

In 1910 the Wiluna Road Board was established, some meetings were held at the Lucanus and Moylan "Weeloona Hotel". Lucanus was a founding member of the elected Board and up until the present time he is the sixth longest serving member of the board.

The Weeloona Hotel and his adjoining store were large establishments; the hotel's long horseshoe shaped bar was reputed to be the longest bar in the world.

August Lucanus lived a varied and interesting life and gained respect from his contemporaries. He was a true pioneer.

From the 15<sup>th</sup> August to 6<sup>th</sup> September 1929 the Western Australian "The Daily News" newspaper published a series of Lucanus's memories. They will be repeated in future editions of Citation.

Hail August LUCANUS, a mighty man was he.

## UNVEILING OF PLAQUE AT ELLIOTT POLICE STATION

All members are invited to the unveiling of the first Commemorative Plaque recognising the contribution made by Aboriginal Police Trackers and their families to the Northern Territory Police Force.

Commissioner Paul White APM will officially unveil the first plaque at the Elliott Police Station on Wednesday 25 February 2004 at 12 noon, to be followed by a light luncheon.

Identical plaques will be placed at all Northern Territory Police Stations throughout this year and will be unveiled by Commissioner White as he visits each station.

The wording on each plaque reads:

***This plaque  
has been placed in recognition  
of the contribution made to policing  
in the Northern Territory  
by the ABORIGINAL POLICE  
TRACKERS  
and THEIR FAMILIES.***

***Since 1870 their skills,  
perseverance and dedication to duty  
have played a vital role  
in outback policing.***

***Paul White  
Commissioner of Police  
2004***

We look forward to seeing you there.