



# the CITATION

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*The following report details a patrol carried out by police between Daly River, Mary River and Adelaide River in September and October 1884. How times have changed. The original document was in poor condition so I took the liberty of re-typing it (including spelling mistakes.) The document would have been produced from Montague's hand-written report on completion of the expedition. Unfortunately there are no sketches to accompany the document. -Ed.*

## REPORT OF PURSUIT OF DALY RIVER MURDERERS.

*Ordered by the house of Assembly to be printed,  
November 17th 1885.*

*(Estimated cost of printing 670, £ 2.12s.6d.)*

RETURN to the ORDER of the HOUSE of ASSEMBLY (Mr. REES, November 11th, 1885),  
being COPY of CORPORAL MONTAGU'S REPORT to the AUTHORITIES of the  
NORTHERN TERRITORY on the PURSUIT of the DALY RIVER MURDERERS.

Yam Creek, October 17th 1884.

Sir - I have the honor to state for your information that on the 7th ultimo, James Love, stockman on the Daly cattle station reported that Henry Roberts of the Daly copper mine, Mount Hayward, had reached the station on the previous evening and stated that on the previous Wednesday, the 3rd, the natives had suddenly attacked the party working at the mine and that the European cook had been killed, and Messrs. Noltenius, Landers and Roberts had been wounded, the former by spears and the latter by a blow from a hammer or pick; that the wounded men had left the claim the same day as the outrage, but that Landers had to be left behind after going a few hundred yards, being unable to travel further; that Roberts and Noltenius had managed to come eight or nine miles, then Noltenius could come no further and Roberts had managed to make his way in by himself for assistance.

After the hunting for the horses, usual on all occasions of emergency here, I was fortunate, after four hours riding to find them and acting on your instructions, left here with Dr. Wood and Mounted Constable Smith for the Daly. On reaching the Howley at 1 a.m. next morning, I ascertained that the name of the man who was dead was named Thomas Schollert, a Dane, formerly employed by Jensen at Pine Creek; also that Henry Housechildt, one of the owners of the claim, was absent from it and was supposed to be at Rum Jungle. On reaching the cattle station we found Roberts there and ascertained that Mr Sachse the manager, with another man and a black boy, had gone to Noltenius' assistance and later, that Messrs. Meyder and Snaddern, from the Howley had arrived and gone on too. Roberts' wound was examined and dressed by Dr. Wood, after which he gave the following account of the occurrence:-

"On Wednesday, September 3rd, about 10 a.m., Schollert was in the kitchen, Landers and Noltenous were on top of the lode taking down the face; I was down below, on the dressing floor. My attention was drawn by an explanation of Landers to about eight or nine natives who were about him and I saw him swinging a hammer, apparently defending himself. There were four blacks with me and I jumped on one side to get away from them, at the same time received a blow on the right temple, which rendered me insensible. On regaining consciousness, I went to the camp and on going to the store to get arms, saw Schollert lying dead with a spot of blood on his forehead. On the way to the store I passed Noltenius and Landers, who were both speared. After getting arms ready I extracted a spear from Landers' side and the larger portion from Noltenius' side. They were both wooden jagged spears. Landers told me when I saw him swinging



the hammer, he was then speared.

Noltenius saw Landers speared and dropped down into the cutting and ran towards the camp; he was speared while running." Roberts expressed great anxiety regarding Houschildt.

He stated that Houschildt left the claim on August 15th for Rum Jungle with two riding and two pack horses and nothing had been heard of him until he (Roberts) was coming in wounded. When about three miles off the track from the claim to Poett's plantation, he heard a whistle and a black boy by the name of Bob Patrick, who had accompanied Housechildt came up to him with two of the horses taken by Houschildt and stated that Harry as he called him, was lying sick at Poett's plantation and sent him back with the two horses. Roberts was then enabled to ride the remainder of his journey and took the boy in with him to the station, sending him back on one of the horses with food, etc. ; for Noltenius and requesting him to remain with him until assistance arrived. It turned out however, that the boy never went near him.

We left the station early next morning, taking three station horses and one belonging to James Waldron which was in the yard; we also took two police horses (loose) leaving one that was tender footed behind. No more horses were to be got. When about six miles from the Hayward Range we met Messrs. Sachse, Meyder, Snaddern and Waldron returning. They informed us that both Landers and Noltenius were dead and that they had buried the latter where he died; that Schollert's body had been thrown into the workings; and that both bodies were so decomposed that they could not examine them. They also found that the camp had been cleared of everything, showing that plunder was the object of the attack. We obtained two station horses from Mr Sachse, one in place of Waldron's and the other in place of the one we had brought from the station. I delivered a telegram I had from Mr. H.W. H. Stevens to him; but he declined to accompany us as he had plenty to do on the station and besides, saw no use in going out.

We reached the claim just before sundown and found Landers body about 400 yards from and in sight of, the claim. The body was lying face downward and had been dragged and mutilated by wild dogs. There was a fracture about the size of a shilling on the left side of the skull, which might have been caused by a spear and I found .380 pistol bullet under the skin, flattened out, which had struck the skull and, grazing it had glanced up under the skin. The body was in a very advanced stage of decomposition; it was impossible to make a very minute inspection. On reaching the claim we found the place had been ransacked, everything nearly being taken away. There was a distinct furrow on the ground where Schollert's body had been dragged along and the wrists and ankles bound with the lashings of an old hammock and thrown into the dressing floor of the mine. His body also was too decomposed to allow a minute inspection. The next afternoon the launch of the SS Palmerston arrived at Owston's plantation, bringing Mounted Constables Mac Donald and Cox and F.C. Stott - Dr. Wood proceeding to Palmerston per steamer.

Next day the party, five in number, together with a Queensland black boy lent by Sachse, proceeded to the claim and finding it impossible to remove Schollert's body, covered it with about a tonne of Mullock and rock. A grave was also dug and Lander's remains buried where he died. Bells being heard in the vicinity, a search resulted in nine horses belonging to Houschildt and party being found and driven away with ours.

On the succeeding day, being anxious to place the horses found in a place of security, especially as some of them were young and unbroken, I deemed it best to send them into the paddock at the Daly station and go myself to Poett's plantation to clear the mystery of Houschildt's disappearance, or to search for him along the track. Accordingly, taking F.C. Stott and the black boy, I sent the rest of the party into the station and proceeded to Poett's plantation, examining the various creeks and camping places by the way; but on reaching the plantation to the Adelaide River the same evening and next night reached the cattle station. Up to this point we had no seen a single black.

Information having been received at the station that there was a camp of natives on a billabong about eighteen miles south and near the river, we determined to proceed there; but early next morning a young man named Tommy and a boy, both Woolwongas turned up with a note from the stockman living at Jigjigla. As it was undesirable that these natives should return to their camp to give notice of there being police at the station, they were both secured and from the elder one, we ascertained that Housechildt had



murdered by a native named Billy, alias Nammy; but Tommy did not know for certain where, as he only knew from what he had been told. He expressed his willingness to go with us and show us the camp near the river and also where Housechildt's body was. We started (with one station horse, using some we had picked up) for the river, taking steps to prevent the natives escaping. The boy was left at the station to await our return. On reaching the camp at daylight next morning found that the natives had left on the previous day; also found that the native with us had been camped with a fencer named Dutton, working there on the day of the murders. Next, we went round by Jigjigla as natives had been seen by the stockman living there in the vicinity and then proceeded due west for the east side of the Hayward Range. Reaching the range next day, we searched in the places indicated by the native, as far down as the river, but could find no traces of Housechildt or his horses. Made further search the next day, down and up the range and towards evening found tracks of horses in hobbles in some green feed on a small creek. Next morning, the 10th, MacDonald, Luck and myself, with native, proceeded to run up the tracks and search for a camp. After going half a mile found two horses- are in hobbles-Bellman, the racehorse and Woolwonga, both taken out by Housechildt and the latter being the one which the black boy, sent to Noltenius' assistance was riding. We followed the creek up to a grassy flat where it branched. I took one branch and MacDonald and Luck the other. In a jungle at the head of the creek, I found a new hobble strap and a saddle pouch, since identified as Housechildt's. On going up the other branch, Mounted Constable Luck's attention was attracted by a piece of newspaper lying on the sand and he then perceived part of Housechildt's head appearing above the sand. Close to the foot of the range near by was a leather packbag and two letters lying on the ground, one addressed to W. K. Griffiths and the other to G. P. Deane. These letters, having been given to Housechildt by Roberts on his departure at the claim. On rejoining MacDonald and Luck we disinterred the remains. The skull had a round hole in it over the left eye, apparently caused by a revolver bullet. The back of the skull was fractured, two pieces of bone near the base of the skull about three inches in diameter, being forced upwards. The deceased's mosquito net was around the body, which was partly rotten from decomposition.

The supposition is that he was asleep in his net when killed, and after being speared was shot with his own revolver. Some of the bones were lying about. These were carefully collected, a fresh grave dug and the remains buried. The deceased it appears to me had crossed the Hayward Range, accompanied by two or three natives and had camped on a small, sandy plain near running water. Across this water and about 100 yards away, was a blacks camp and in it I found the pack saddle and second bag, Housechildt's dial compass and leather kit for farriers tools, a pair of new pincers and some hobbles. The place where the body was found and buried is on the east side of the Hayward Range, about five miles from the Daly River, half a mile from Uhr's marked line and near a bloodwood tree with (*undefined marking*) which grows on the bank of the other branch of the creek.

Leaving Housechildt's grave, we proceeded up the river and crossed to the other side and on the 21st found a native camp on a lagoon. The moment they saw us they commenced running into a scrub, on the border of which they were camped. As they did not stop when called on. They were fired on but with what result is not known. In their camp was found baking powder, tins, paper, needles, quart pot, tomahawks, soap etc. Next day another party of natives was found in a jungle on the north side of the river. They also had articles in their camp, such as baking powder, tins, soap, etc. supposed to be taken from the claim. The natives here also ran away into the jungle on being found and were fired on. The native Tommy here effected his escape, having been left by Mounted Constable Cox outside the jungle to hold his horse. On Cox's return he found both horses loose and the boy gone, taking with him a trace chain that was round his neck and Mounted Constable MacDonald's handcuffs. His going made no difference to us as all occasion to hold him longer was over and I only kept him for his own safety. We then returned to the station, our rations being done and horses pretty well knocked up. At the station we found Masson and party who were preparing to go out. I heard also that Mr Hingston had passed on his way to the plantation a few days previously. The following afternoon, the 23rd, proceeded as far as the gap near Mount Shoobridge, but the police horse Sulton knocked up completely and I had to send my horse back for Mounted Constable Luck to get to the camp. Next day, the rest of the party went as far as the Howley



Hotel and I came by the Howley diggings to the Shackle. The rest of the party arrived next day, being obliged to leave horse Sultan at the old bridge over Yam Creek, knocked up, from which he was brought in next day. Acting on information from the Government Resident, we left again on the 28th for Rum Jungle, reaching there on the 30th ultimo. We found the remains of five natives who had been killed in the attack on Bridson and others on the 27th but they had been burnt by Mounted Constables Wilson and Summers. Finding that P. Saundeers and party had gone to the westward, we left the road at the Finnis and went east, crossing the Adelaide River and going about fifteen miles to the eastward. Seeing no sign of natives we then went north-west and reached Marakai on the Adelaide River on Saturday afternoon. On arrival, we found that a mob of Woolwonga natives had been acting in a threatening way and that two men erecting yards at Jouburra seven miles distant, had been brought in for safety; that work was suspended on the station and the manager, MacPhee, had gone to Southport for assistance. We however, saw no natives but a few friendly Woolners who were working on the run. I visited their camp in the jungle and believe that the Woolwongas left prior to our arrival or just after it. I went down to Beatrice Hills but no blacks had been seen there. On MacPhee's return, with two extra men, work had resumed at the yards and leaving two men at the head station, he proceeded with two others, to muster cattle at the Lower Mary. Hearing that the ranges along the Mary was a great place of resort for blacks and thinking that the mob seen crossing the road near the Howley, coming from the direction of the Daly, had most likely made out in that direction, we went across to the Mary River and travelled up it past Mount Bunday, the northern termination of what are known as the Mary Ranges. This is a prominent range of immense granite boulders and would afford harbor to a large number of natives, as it is almost, if not quite, impracticable to Europeans - the river and numerous billabongs, together with the large amount of game, affording them an easy livelihood. While passing along the Mary, we found a gumtree marked DL over VI marking the site of Mr. D. Lindsay's camps while on that river in 1879. While on the Mary Plains, we destroyed a native camp, implements and spears but did not see the occupants. Running up the Mary to the junction of the McKinlay, we followed the latter stream up to Mount Wells. On the afternoon of the 11th inst. we came upon a camp of natives on a lagoon on the east side of the McKinlay. The women and children ran away but the men, taking their spears and woomeras, retreated to the water. Some of them were recognised as known Woolwongas - Bob, Murray, Charley, Brooks, &c. One of them, while in shallow water was in the act of throwing a double wooden spear at mounted Constable MacDonald and it was only his quickness in firing that saved his life. A spear passed through the top of mounted Constable Cox's singlet and grazed his neck. Three men managed to get away at first, as Mounted Constable Luck could not get his horse to follow them as it would not leave the others. None of those who took to the water are known to have got away. It is supposed there were between twenty and thirty men in the camp. On overhauling their camp, a most miscellaneous assortment of articles was found, among them, a large quantity of tobacco, several knives (both sheath and table), several tomahawks, billies, pannikans, axe, broad axe, choppers, file, chisel, shirts, singlets, blankets, rug, flour, soap, pipes, several boxes wax matches, cocoa tins, a lot of new cotton handkerchiefs, bar and rod iron, shot, gun caps, spoons, twine, knitted jacket, shingling, hatchet, purse, towel, powder flask, part of kerosine lamp, pieces of straps, &c. Some of the knives, the file, chisel, some of the handkerchiefs, &c., are identified by Roberts as being like what belonged to the camp and the knitted jacket is the same as one Schollert had. I must not omit to state that in their camp was found a considerable portion of a bullock, or young steer; the cattle running in locality belonging to Fisher & Lyons. The party saw no more natives while coming up the McKinlay and reached the Shackle on the 14th inst. The police horse Jack knocked up the day we left Marakai and it was only by careful driving we got him in. He was also very nearly drowned in the Mary, into which we rushed and it was only with great trouble he was got out. The other horses, though tired and leg weary managed to get home but will require a good spell to put them right again. When they came in from the Saly, several had lost shoes and were lame in consequence. What the other parties out have done I do not know but I believe the natives have been received such a lesson this time as will exercise a salutary effect over the survivors in the time to come. One result of this expedition has been to convince me of the superiority of the Martini-Henry rifle, both for accuracy of aim and quickness of action.



I have, &c.,

GEO. MONTAGU. Corporal.  
P. Foelsche, Esq., Inspector of Police.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.**

*Submitted by Aileen & Bern Kilgariff AM.*

As a strong supporter of "The Citation" I would like to suggest for your consideration a researched article on the role played by the wives of policemen over the years in the Northern Territory. Perhaps almost forgotten are many stories of support by wives in Outback Police Stations.

As an example:-

Thelma Ryall (a trained nurse), wife of Sgt. Greg Ryall in a serious accident going to Anthony Lagoon gave succour to the injured including Greg, then by mirror stitched her own facial injuries where the accident occurred. Mrs. Jack Kennett and her husband Jack Kennett stationed at Charlotte Waters lost two girls the youngest of the family within a short space of time. One with peritonitis, and dysentery, in floodtime they brought the dead children in their vehicle to Alice Springs, they drove over the Heavitree Gap Railway Bridge - it was all arduous disaster, with them were their three older boys.

There are many tales of dedication, hardship, and danger when the wives internally held 'the fort'.

*I agree with Bernies comments. Any such stories would be most welcome. G Macpherson Ed.*

**Bernie Rochford**

During a recent family holiday in Canberra, I had the pleasure of meeting an ex member Bernie Rochford. Bernie was born in Yass where his parents were farming. He had two uncles in the New South Wales Police Force that may have been a factor in him joining the Northern Territory Police in 1937.

Whilst in the territory, Bernie served at Darwin, Mataranka and a short time at Newcastle Waters. Like the majority of members, he had a great admiration for his fellow member and in particular, the skills of the black trackers.

He left the Northern Territory in 1941, got married and ultimately joined the Federal Capital Territory Police in the same year. Much of his duties revolved around what he describes as "some horse work and investigating reports of stolen sheep".

As time went by, facilities, conditions, procedures and transport improved and Bernie worked his way through the rank structure and by the time he retired on 1st January 1976, was the Deputy Commissioner.

He asked to be remembered to everyone from his days in the Territory.

This is a very small report on a fine gentleman. He wouldn't let me take too many notes but I felt it was necessary to pass on the above information and in particular, to let all members know he is enjoying very good health and looks much younger than his actual years. Unfortunately, his wife was not in good health at the time. However, I am sure all members will join me in wishing them both the very best of everything for the future.

Garth Macpherson.

*Letter to Peter Young from Peter Riley*

MSD 1096

Nambour Q'ind. 4560

28/4/87

Dear Peter,

I am enclosing a Centralian Advocate cutting of 1/8/86 showing M.C. Dowdy's grave at Arltunga. At least it is marked but the headstone leaning badly. The Conservation Commission is restoring old buildings out there - I saw the old Police Station and others when on a bus tour at the time of our visit to Alice for the Police Centenary in April last year.

**WANTED**  
**ARTICLES OF INTEREST FOR**  
**INCLUSION IN FUTURE ISSUES**  
**OF THE CITATION.**

*Please forward to:*  
**Garth Macpherson**  
**C/- Community Relations**  
**P O Box 2630**  
**Alice Springs. N.T. 0871**

*The Editor*  
*and staff members*  
*at Community Relations*  
*wish each and everyone*  
*a safe and happy Easter.*





Mrs. Mahony, widow of Const. Jack Mahony, was on the trip. They were stationed there, probably early 1930's. It might be possible to get the Conservation Commission to put the grave in order perhaps you know about this grave.

The following is an extract from "Citation"- December 1967. It and others, list police whose names have in some cases, been given to streets, mostly at Rapid Creek, Nightcliff suburbs of Darwin :-

"25, O'Keefe. Edward O'Keefe, Mounted Constable, who spent many years (1889-1905) at Police Officer in charge of Timber Creek Police Station (formerly at Gordon Creek until 1896). He acted as Postmaster and was assisted by another Constable plus 3 natives. He resigned in late 1905."

The dates 1889 & 1896, seem to be contradictory. I seem to remember reading the first Timber Creek journal when O'Keefe opened up the station but cannot remember if he had come direct from Gordon Creek. If the date 1889 is correct, the Timber Creek centenary is coming up in 1989. In your capacity of Historical Officer, I thought this would interest you.

Trust this finds you and your family well. I am back on my feet again thank goodness. Kindest regards and best wishes.

Yours sincerely  
Peter Riley.



*Dowdy's grave at Altunga*

*Article and phot which appeared in the Centralian Advocate Friday 1/8/86*

**Nine years at gold field.**

Street names - Dowdy Court - Matthew Francis, (Matt Dowdy).

Mounted Constable Matt Dowdy joined the NT Police Force in 1898, having spent 11 years in the S.A. Police Force.

He was stationed at Darwin, Brock's Creek and Roper River before he was transferred to the Arltunga Goldfield in 1906. He served nine years there.

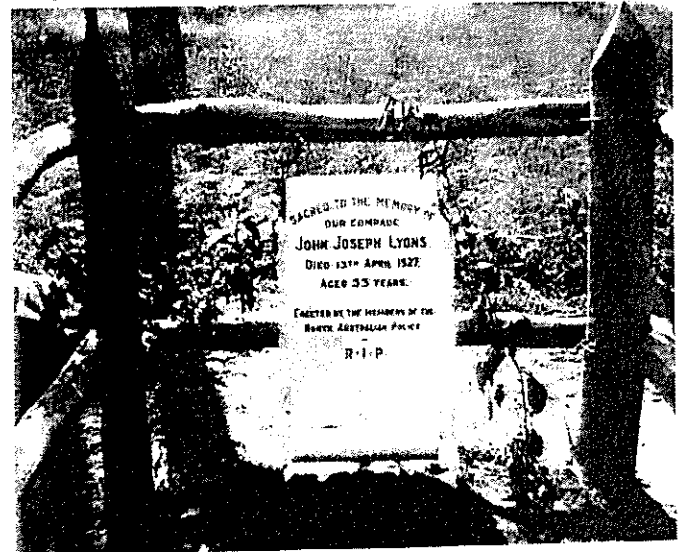
Early policemen with their Aboriginal tracker and a few camels patrolled thousands of kilometers of the outback to isolated mines, properties and small settlements.

They were away weeks at a time. M/C Dowdy died at Arltunga.

He was buried at the White Range Cemetery.

His headstone reads: 'In Loving Memory of Matthew Francis Dowdy who died 17th June 1915, aged 50 years'!

**OTHER POLICE GRAVES OF INTEREST.**



*Lyons Grave at Borroloola*



*Mounted Constable Arthur R. Clapp, Daly Waters*





## HISTORY OF MARANBOY

### POLICE STATION.

As prepared for the National Trust  
by Peter Dermoudy 1989

Permanency of police presence on the field was gained in Dec. 1915 by relocating the police station from Horseshoe creek which itself had been purchased from the Yam Springs Mine.

A simple building of angle iron and corrugated iron it was located just out of sight of the battery and near the head of a small creek near a spring.

The first officer in charge was Mounted Constable Charlie Emery accompanied by his wife and son. Other early policemen were Robert Ardell and Ray Bridgeland. Despite a relatively small population, violence, social and racial problems were always present.

Aboriginals formed the backbone of the work force and influenced the social life of the field. Labour and sexual favours were traded for food and alcohol in a manner understood by both parties but almost incomprehensible to outsiders. Transgression outside the accepted norm were punishable by local law and often administered by an alcohol affected revenger.

Sly grog was currency and as can be expected the lure of easy money corrupted even the "pillars" of society. For example. It was discovered in 1926 that Mounted Constable Cheyne was running a mine in his wife's name and that the miners who were using alcohol as currency to the aboriginal workers, had this secret hold over him which rendered him powerless and unwilling to do anything about the trade.

Murder and suicide appeared to be as common as petty theft.

Living conditions for most of the miners were crude in the extreme. Humpys were mean and primitive, some barely high enough to stand up in.

Food was atrocious and expensive. Despair was common and the end often horrendous in the extreme as illustrated by the suicide of a miner on 3 July 1929 who blew his head to pieces with a stick of gelignite after leaving the following note:-

*i havs Bien in terbel ull nit and i cant stand it any longer - E. Clandinning.*

The bizarre part about the suicide is the fact that the simple act of wiping a hand across one's brow after handling gelignite will cause intense head pain.

He was buried in the cemetery apart from the others (because of his suicide death), his grave has become lost. His hut, only 3.65m x 2.13 x a.98 high, made from paper bark walls and corrugated iron roof was raised by M/C Reid.



**Mounted Constable Robert Reid outside the Maranboy Police Station.**

**(Photo courtesy Hazel Southwell)**

Improvements were constantly being made to the Police Station. M/C Reid recorded on 10 August 1928 that he, aborigine Nym and tracker Charlie were building a trackers quarters and a harness room. The latter had its floor levelled with broken stones before concreting. A month later the water main some 2.5 km away was tapped and piped to a single bib tap at the station. The next chore in December, was to build a concrete path and steps to the kitchen from the house.

In march 1929 the project was to build a path between the kitchen with concrete remains removed from the old police station.

On 7 October 1931 the police were requested to remove the furniture from the hospital (Penola Hostel) to the railway siding for use elsewhere.

This request was followed 12 days later by an instruction to occupy the hospital after the departure of the nurses.

The old angle iron building at the original police site was to be dismantled and moved to the police station at Mataranka.



**Police cells,  
Maranboy.  
(Photo Sue  
Harlow 1996)**

The old angle iron building at the original police site was to be dismantled and moved to the police station at Mataranka.

It is believed the move into the hospital was completed about the end of October followed by the demolition of the old iron building about 7 April 1932. The cost of moving the old building as 1/3d /ton/mile/ for 43 miles (69.2km).

Const. Condon took charge of the station from Const. Mettam on 17 April 1951 and almost as his first duty became involved with the rescue of L. Nelson at the Osman Mine. Nelson has been drinking at a party at the mine and had fallen down a 10.7m shaft which fortunately had a metre of water in it to help break his fall. Nevertheless he suffered a broken arm, collar bone and ribs, concussion and bad lacerations.

It was a great shock to all when Condon was murdered whilst on duty in Katherine on 9 June 1952, shot by Terence Charles Stapleton. He was the second policeman associated with the area to die violently. The first was on November 27 when M.C. Arthur Clapp died within minutes of accidentally shooting himself in the groin with a confiscated pistol he was attempting to slip into his trouser belt.

Jack Stokes was in charge of the station when 75 year old resident, miner and storekeeper for 27 years, Danial Dillon was taken ill. His store was a shanty shared between himself and his fowls. With no hospital at the field it was decided he should be taken to the home of a former AIM Nurse, Mrs. Pearce, whilst Stokes in a borrowed car set out for the airstrip beside the Maranboy siding to meet

Dr. Stephens who had been flown down from Darwin by Roy Edwards. After an examination back at the Pearce's house an aerial evacuation was deemed necessary and a disastrous expedition back to the aircraft began. A series of flat tyres turned the journey into a nightmare which resulted in having to take off in the dark using a truck's headlights as guidance.

Dillon died as the aircraft was taking off.

Stokes then had to work overnight to build a coffin, dig the grave and lay the old man out. Dillon was buried next day in the cemetery which was close to his store. Mrs. Stutterd placed a cross of white flowers on the grave.

By 1950 the police residence required rewiring and a new fence. Hot water piping in the stove was also replaced.

New trackers quarters were built in July 1954 which was the year one of the local characters, "Tiny" Swanson died.

**Harold "Tiny"  
Swanson died 8.12.54  
(Fyshlock col.)**



Charles Harold (Tiny) Swanson was aged 58 when he died on 8 December leaving behind his tiny aboriginal wife, Ruby and his banana plantation.

He arrived as a successful gold and tin miner from West Australia and began fossicking on the Maranboy field until finally concentrating on market gardening.

A huge and at the same time a happy and good-natured man he weighed 34 stone (216kg) in his prime.

An evergreen outback story tells of him lifting unaided, 200 litre drums full of petrol on and off railway wagons in a wager which netted him a drum for every one he could lift.

His double width and double height coffin was lowered into his grave with a mobile crane and eight pall bearers.