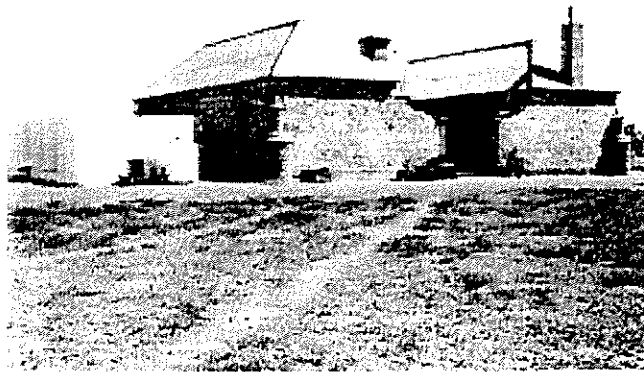




the **CITATION**

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*Charlotte Waters Police Station 1933.
Photographer D.D Smith. Resident Engineer Alice Springs.
Courtesy National Trust*

Constable John (Jack) William Kennett — NT Police Officer, 1928- 47.

**Taken from the book,
The History of Alice Springs Through Landmarks and Street Names
by
Jose Petrick**

John (Jack) William Kennett, born in Glanville, SA, in 1896, came to the NT in 1926 as a carpenter. Two years later he joined the NT Police Force and was stationed at Daly River, Brock's Creek, Mataranka and Katherine.

He was then posted to Charlotte Waters, an isolated police station and OTL repeater station, 300 km south of Alice Springs. The journey from Alice to Charlotte Waters took from one to five days, the route went over the treacherous Depot Sand Hills. Vehicles bogged easily in the loose sand.

In January 1936 Constable Kennett, his wife and children, two little daughters and three sons, came into contact, unknowingly, with people who were diphtheria carriers. As the Family became ill, the diphtheria symptoms were not recognised immediately. The two girls succumbed first, then Mrs Kennett, and then two of the boys. Constable Kennett made nightmare journeys over the sand hills in the relentless heat to take the family in relays to Alice Springs. Baby Rosslyn, aged one year, died in her sick mother's arms during one heart-rending journey and Joyce, aged eight, died in Alice Springs. Mrs Orr kindly cared for the family in her railway cottage, as they were in quarantine.

Due to the quarantine restrictions, Constable Kennett had to bury his two daughters himself and friends were unable to comfort the family in sickness and mourning.

Afterwards, people spoke of Constable Kennett's great courage and fortitude during the tragedies and the nightmare journeys over the sand hills.

Mrs Kennett and her two sons were in quarantine for a month but slowly recovered, and the grieving family returned to their lonely outpost home.

Volume 6, No 4 - August 2000.

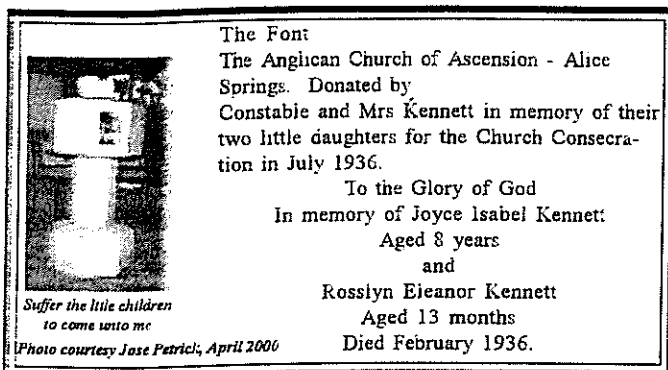
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY
THOSE OF THE POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE



In memory of their two little daughters, Mr and Mrs Kennett donated the marble font to the newly opened Church of the Ascension, Alice Springs. They chose the text inscribed around the top: Suffer the little children to come unto me.

END OF 2000 MILE FLIGHT DASH TO ALICE SPRINGS WITH SERUM.

Courtesy Adelaide Advertiser



Mr and Mrs Ted Colson of Bloods Creek Station, south of Charlotte Waters, were friends of the Kennett family.

After years of planning and waiting for rain for water and herbage for the camels, in May 1936, Ted, and his Aboriginal helper Peter, were the first people to cross the Simpson Desert from west to east and back again from Bloods Creek to Birdsville, Qld.

Before they left, Constable Kennett went to Bloods Creek to farewell them.

When Ted and Peter had travelled 300 km. of drought-ravaged sand hills, they came to a 'glorious' sight of the flood out of the rivers Todd and Hale, with good green grass and 'fresh green acacia trees, extending for some miles'.

Ted named the verdant pasture Glen Joyce, after his young friend, Joyce Kennett, a very beautiful child.

Constable Kennett retired to Alice Springs in 1947 due to ill health and managed the RSL Club until his death in 1950.

He was survived by his wife (Mrs Frank Lynn) and three sons Jack, Jim and Joe.



Pilot Anderson flying a Bond's Tours mono plane, made a perfect landing in the rain at Parafield last night having completed a flight of nearly 2000 miles to convey anti-diphtheria serum to Alice Springs. His flight through the blinding dust storms and wind, which at times reached a velocity of 50-60 mph was described by a fellow pilot last night as an outstanding achievement.

Pilot Anderson left Adelaide on Saturday afternoon with the intention of flying to Alice Springs and returning to Adelaide with one of the children suffering from diphtheria. He was held at Farina until Sunday morning to await the arrival of an Aero Club Miles Hawk plane piloted by Instructor J.H. Buckham, with a supply of serum.

Taking off in a 50 - 60 miles an hour dust storm for his dash to Alice Springs, Pilot Anderson said that the weather was bad to William Creek where it moderated slightly but he had to punch into a head wind all the way to Alice Springs, which he reached at 5.45pm on Sunday. On reaching Alice Springs he learned that the doctor had decided the child was too ill to be transported to Adelaide. He left Alice Springs at 7.15am yesterday in a dead calm. He had a fair run until about 400 miles north of Oodnadatta, where the weather looked very threatening and the whole country was covered in a pall of dust through which landmarks were invisible. After filling up with fuel at Oodnadatta he pushed on to Farina against a hard, south westerly wind but flying at an altitude of 100 feet he could not see the ground on account of the dust. Just before taking off at Farina rain began to fall. Through pushing into a strong westerly wind his petrol supply was low, on reaching Bute and he landed to refuel. It was dark when he left at 7.40pm and he flew the rest of the journey by compass. Visibility was bad for he did not see the lights of Adelaide until he was over Two Wells.

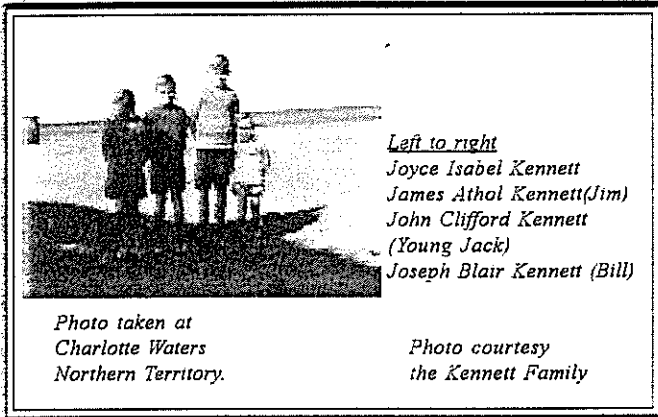
Pilot Anderson said that he had not had a square meal since he left home on Saturday. He had been living mainly on tinned fruit.

95 per cent of children immune.

The Chief Quarantine Officer (Dr W. H. Ponsford) stated yesterday that he had not received any further requests for anti-diphtheria serum from



Alice Springs and he thought that the present supplies should be sufficient. In 1934 during a previous outbreak, 95 per cent of the children at Alice Springs were immunised against diphtheria. The only persons in the locality in the danger of contracting the disease now were those at outlying places like Charlotte Waters who had not received the anti-diphtheria injections.



Left to right
 Joyce Isabel Kennett
 James Athol Kennett (Jim)
 John Clifford Kennett
 (Young Jack)
 Joseph Blair Kennett (Bill)

Photo taken at
 Charlotte Waters
 Northern Territory.

Photo courtesy
 the Kennett Family

Vol XXXV No 142 Thursday Island April 1936

This script was hand written above the Article below

**THE CARPENTARIAN
 ALICE SPRINGS AND TENNANT CREEK**

The beginning of 1936 has brought some curious happenings-some tragic, some joyous-to our little world in Central Australia.

The death of our King seemed to usher in a series of events which were as strange as they were real. We held a public Requiem for His late Majesty King George V.

January was exceedingly hot and unpleasant. It was relieved for me by a trip to Tennant Creek where, for a wonder, it was cooler than here. The little shack was completed, the services were better attended, and the car made a good trip. Services this time were held in the new A.I.M. Welfare Hall.

I arrived back in Alice Springs to find an actual start being made on the construction of the building, the progress of which we are watching with interest.

February began with more unpleasant weather-heat and dust and eventually an east wind. The southern papers were full of the story of a young Melbourne school teacher who perished out West, near Eyre's Rock. He was on an adventure trip on a

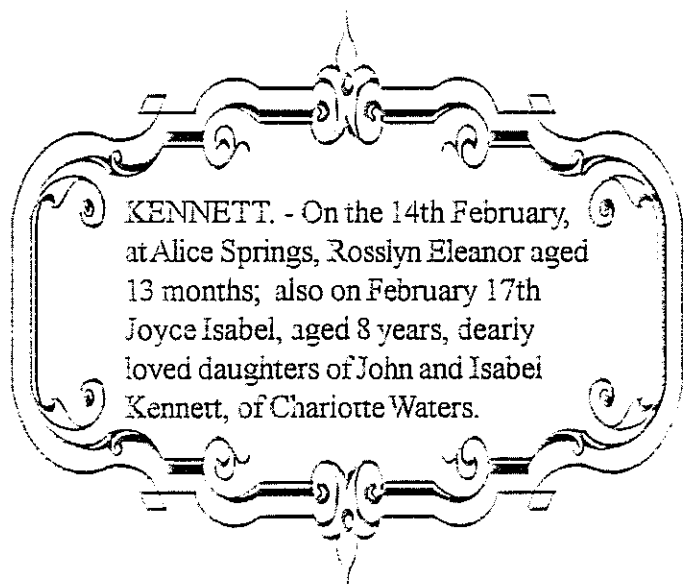
motor bike.

In the middle of February we had an epidemic of diphtheria at Charlotte Waters-200 miles south. On account of this I made-at the request of the parents-a trip to the Charlotte to bring medical aid to a sick babe. Doctor Riley travelled with us. Two cars went back to Alice Springs. On the way back-on this treacherous track-my car got bogged in the sand in the Finke River. It ended up in a 28 mile walk for the doctor and me to get into Horseshoe Bend. We learnt then that the baby had died in her mother's arms before reaching Alice Springs. Other cases of diphtheria were reported amongst the children left behind at Charlotte Waters. My car was de-bogged through the kindness of Mr Elliot of Horseshoe Bend, and I returned to Charlotte Waters and brought four more children to Alice Springs.

Another blow befell the Kennett family when their second child, a girl of eight years, died of the same complaint. It was a sad blow to the parents losing these two beautiful children who a week previously had been a picture of health. To add to the troubles the mother and two other children were suffering from the complaint. We were all deeply sorry for Mr and Mrs Kennett in their bereavement and anxiety.

Courtesy Jose Patrick

The notice below was copied below the above story.



KENNETT. - On the 14th February, at Alice Springs, Rosslyn Eleanor aged 13 months; also on February 17th Joyce Isabel, aged 8 years, dearly loved daughters of John and Isabel Kennett, of Charlotte Waters.

Courtesy the Kennett Family and Jose Patrick



ADVERTISERADELAIDE
SECOND DEATH
FROM DIPHTHERIA.

This is a copy of the letter sent by Isobel Mary Kennett Nee Clifford to Joyce when suffering from diphtheria just before she died.

Child Too Ill To Be Flown To Adelaide.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY AFFECTED.

ALICE SPRINGS, February 17.

Joyce Kennett, 8 died from diphtheria today. Her 13 months old sister died on Friday while being brought from Charlotte Waters to Alice Springs for an operation. Both victims are the Children of Constable Kennett, of Charlotte Waters. Joyce was to have left today for Adelaide by a plane specially chartered from Adelaide, but she was too ill to be moved. Mrs Kennett and her two sons are now suffering from diphtheria but their condition at present is not serious.

All contacts have been isolated including Matron Jones and Miss Robb, of the half-caste institution. Matron Jones, who has 120 half-cast children in her charge, went to Alice Springs at the request of Constable Kennett because it is alleged, the sisters at the hostel refused to take infectious cases. When questioned this morning the sisters in charge of the hostel denied that this was the position.

There are rumours that differences have arisen between the Government medical officer (Dr Riley) and the sisters at the hostel. A Meeting of residents is to be held outside the Stuart Arms Hotel tomorrow, when the position will be discussed and an attempt will be made to launch a movement which will remedy the situation.

Courtesy Advertiser, Adelaide.

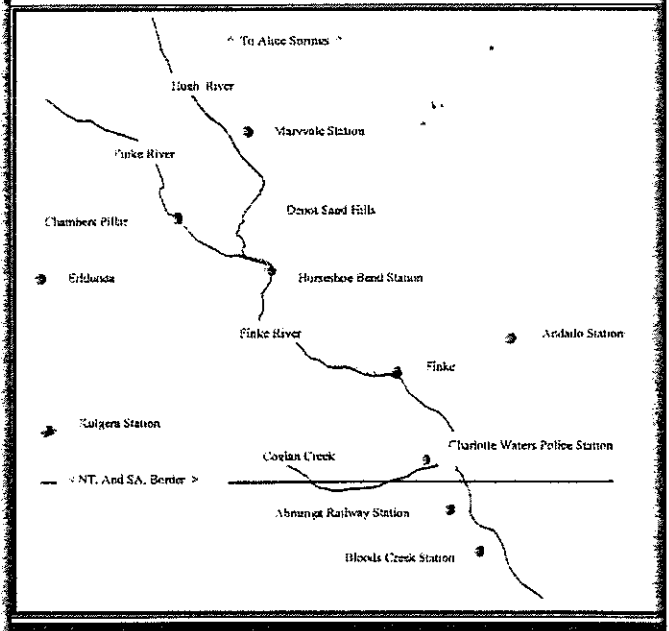
Love from all of us here Loving your Mother.

My dear little girl,

I am very sorry to hear that you have been so ill, it has upset me and we are thinking of you day and night. Every little while the boys come in and say have you heard any news on Joyce Mother. They are so anxious about you. Be brave dear and do everything the Doctor tells you to. I want you to hurry up and get better so that you can come home. I miss you terribly. I have no little girl now to do jobs for me. Give Mrs Orr my love and tell her I shall never forget her kindness in looking after you. How is Kirk? I suppose he has grown since I saw him last. Goodbye Darling heaps of

Courtesy Kennett Family

Map Locating Places and Rivers

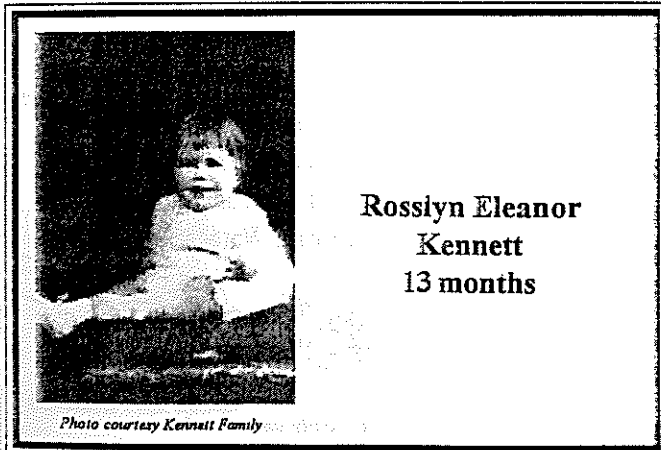


CONSTABLE JACK KENNETT

Following is the heart wrenching story that we have been given permission to reprint. John Percival McDonald Smiths book, *The Flower in the Desert*, Chapter Six recounts the tragic story of Jack and Isabel Kennett and the sad loss of two of their children. This book was reviewed by Peter Westmore in News Weekly May 20. 2000 p 22.

www.newsweekly.com.au

Geraldine Kennett and family along with Jose Petrick are at present working on a story about this tragic episode. We hope to bring this to you at a later date.



Rosslyn Eleanor Kennett
13 months

Photo courtesy Kennett Family



Flower in the Desert

This story comes to you courtesy

of John P McD Smith

from his book,

Flower in the Desert.

Chapter 6

John P McD Smith

Sea View Press, '1999.

P75.

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South Australia

TRAGEDY AND FULFILMENT (Chapter 6)

1936 was to be a momentous year in Father Smith's ministry in Alice Springs and in the growth of his outback parish. It was the year that the Church of the Ascension would be completed and dedicated; but like many other circumstances in life it was punctured with sadness.

The year opened with extreme summer temperatures beating down on the red centre accompanied by violent dust storms that choked everyone and everything. Later nimbus clouds came rolling in from the northwest and tropical rain began to fall settling the dust and dropping the searing temperatures. In one deluge eighty points of rain fell with the Todd and Charles Rivers soon running a torrent. It happened to be the fourth of January and Jack Donnellan's tender for the building of the new church and rectory was accepted.

The weather remained cold and dull for a week and on Sunday, as usual, Father Smith held his two masses with nine present for the town service in the AIM Hall and twenty-four present for the service at the 'Bungalow'. Following the mass Father stayed at the 'Bungalow', as he often did, for a game of cricket with the children.

On the fifth of February an actual start was made on the church building with Jack Donnellan pegging out the site which Father Smith, Vic Peace and others had been clearing during the last month. Searing temperatures had returned with the children barely back to school for the new year. Father met his friend Jack Kennett, who was in town from Charlotte Waters, and he seemed keen for Father to make a visit again. It was Thursday the thirteenth and there was some concern for the health of the new Kennett baby, Rosslyn. What was to unfold was a story of sadness, bravery, dedication and service. Father Smith's own words best tell the story:

"Charlotte Waters was two hundred miles south of Alice Springs, and was a Repeater Station on the Overland Telegraph Line".... The Kennett's nearest

Neighbours were the men of the railway gang at Abminga and the McDrill family at Andadoo Station some seventy miles east of Charlotte Waters ... At the time of this incident two McDrill children were staying with the Kennetts. Constable Kennett had come to Alice Springs on the fortnightly train with his daughter Joyce, aged eight, who had injured herself ... Mrs Kennett had stayed behind at Charlotte Waters to look after the six children ... and to attend to the Repeater Station. When Rosslyn, aged thirteen months became ill with a sore throat and bad breathing, she rang her husband and asked him to get home as soon as possible. So, being without transport himself, he came to me and asked me to take him. In the meantime the doctor could not be found in the town. His advice was needed to ease Mrs Kennett's mind about her little girl. It was discovered that he [the doctor] had left that morning for Horseshoe Bend Station where he was called to attend a case of a man suffering from poisoning. He had gone with Claude Golder in his utility.

Having agreed to take Constable Kennett I had first to mend a back spring in my Ford V8 utility. This was difficult enough under any circumstances but worse in a smothering dust storm. My friend, Vic Peace, was of great assistance in this work and having fixed the spring we were ready to start out at 2pm. Our party consisted of Jack Kennett, Vic Peace, Sandy, the Constable's black tracker, and myself. As usual my dog, Ditto was in his place on the back of the utility.

The road used in those days was along the railway line through Maryvale Station, over the [dreaded] Depot Sand hills to Horseshoe Bend, then past Old Crown Station through New Crown Station to Charlotte Waters. The only people to be contacted in those two hundred miles, except for the railway gangs, were at Maryvale and Horseshoe Bend. There were massive sand hills for about fourteen miles, high walls of sand which ran east-west; and these were quite formidable for a car. The north side of these walls were usually cut out with the prevailing wind, so that driving south towards them we were faced with a sheer wall of sand anything up to six feet at the top of the sandhills. The technique was to let half the air out of the tyres as soon as we came to the sandy country.... Then before we could attempt to charge the sandhills it was necessary to walk up to the top to make a graded trail with a spade, and if you had it to place lengths of coconut matting in the tracks for the



wheel to grip. At the first of these steep pinches we caught up with Claude Golder and the doctor who had made several charges trying to dash over this sand hill known as Smith's Pinch and probably the worst of them. However, Constable Kennett was an experienced driver in sand and having made some careful preparation we got over without trouble leaving the other car to follow in our tracks. After sailing over eleven of these sandhills we came at dusk to Horseshoe Bend Station which is nestled in a secluded spot on the bank of the Finke River.

While we were having a meal Claude Golder and the doctor arrived. Just before we were ready to start off Mrs Kennett rang to say the little girl was worse and she was very worried. The doctor spoke to her over the phone and summing up the symptoms, said he suspected Diphtheria and that he would go to Charlotte Waters with us. In the meantime the doctor had attended his patient, who had recovered from a dose of Strychnine poisoning but complained of a pain in his shoulder, probably caused by being held by the arm by someone twisting around suddenly when being in a fit as a result of the poisoning. The doctor was able to put his shoulder back and make the man comfortable before we sped into the night. After a few miles we were out of the sand country and then we had to pump the tyres up to full pressure but the track was better now, although it took us until 3am to reach Charlotte Waters.

The all important thing was the little girl's health. The doctor quickly diagnosed her as a Diphtheria case and dangerously ill. He advised her immediate transportation to hospital at Alice Springs. So after hurried preparations and a meal we set out on the return journey an hour after we had arrived. This time Constable Kennett drove his own car and Mrs Kennett went with him nursing the sick baby. I left my off sider, Vic Peace, behind to look after the other children, Jack, Jim and William and the two McDrill children, and the doctor came in my car. It was for us a day of misfortune. Before daylight we took a wrong turning and when the sun arose discovered we were west instead of north. We had already gone thirty miles off course and had to retrace our steps. In the meantime the other car had gone ahead and we had a water bag full and all of the provisions. Getting back on the right road and travelling north we were soon at the Yellow Cliffe's Crossing of the Finke River, which is about twelve miles from the Finke Railway Siding. We did not know this at the time, but here we stuck fast in the

loose sand in trying to pull out of the crossing. This was about nine o'clock in the morning and there we stayed all day! Nothing we could do would shift the car, except to bed the back wheels deeper into the sand. At about 5pm we decided to walk towards Horseshoe Bend feeling sure that someone from there would come out looking for us. The heat and the flies did not improve conditions for walking at this time of the year and we had only half a bag of water left. We walked on, resting every now and again, until midnight. The doctor thought it best to go on ahead as I began to knock up. He took a good drink from the water bag before he left it with me. It was moonlight and the road could easily be followed. From then on I walked and rested at intervals and was cheered on by the presence of my dog Ditto.

Shortly after the doctor had gone, I lay down in the sand and very foolishly used the water bag as a pillow. I awoke from a restless doze to find water trickling down my neck and discovered that the cork had come out of the water bag and it was now empty. As soon as it was dawn I was tormented by flies and the increasing heat intensified my thirst. There was no water anywhere, only sandhills on both sides of the road. The little dog was tonguing badly but kept running ahead and then back to me. Every time I rested he came and looked expectantly at the empty water bag. I was in no way apprehensive but only rather exhausted; but the thought of a young school teacher from Melbourne who had gone out to Ayers Rock on a motor bike and had perished, came to my mind. We heard subsequently that he had a heavy fall from his bike and had lost all his water.

By 9am I had walked so far that I thought Horseshoe Bend should be close, but there was not the faintest clue that any habitation could be anywhere near, as all one could see was sand. Then I stumbled under the shade of a low shrub exhausted, and I must have slept for a few minutes with Ditto nestled alongside me. I was awakened by the roar of an engine and was overjoyed to see the Horseshoe Bend truck coming towards me. My first thought was, 'Thank God I won't have to walk any further.' My legs were like lead. I was immediately given a spot of brandy and the dog had a cooling drink. To my disappointment Mr Elliott said, "We'll have to push on to get the doctor over to Rumbalara to catch the train. He is rather anxious about Joyce Kennett and wants to get back to Alice Springs. Horseshoe Bend is just a quarter of a



mile away. The doctor had got into Horseshoe Bend a half an hour before and they were hurrying him off to the train. He told me the sad news that Rosslyn Kennett had died in her mother's arms ninety miles from Alice Springs. The poor mother had to carry her lifeless babe to the journey's end.

I then walked on a few hundred yards and came onto the bank of the Finke which was steeply graded to its bed and there was the Homestead—a welcome sight. I found that a black boy had a camel saddled and ready to go out looking for me. A rest and a meal put both Ditto and me on our feet again. However we had to wait until the truck came back to go out and rescue my car. We had walked twenty-eight miles and found we were much nearer the Finke siding where we could have got help.

Shortly after Gus Elliott returned the telephone rang and it was Vic Peace calling to tell me that two of the boys had contracted sore throats and what was he to do? I rang Alice Springs and got the doctor who had not long arrived. His instructions were to get the children to Alice Springs as soon as possible. So I contacted Charlotte Waters and told Vic to have the children ready and that I would go back for them as soon as I could.

Gus Elliott then drove to Yellow Cliffe's Crossing and took four native boys and much tackle, and with his aid it did not take long to pull my car out of the sand. We turned south again and made a new track across the Finke. This time Mr Elliott allowed a native boy named Lazarus to come with me. Near New Crown we met a car coming north and they had our party on board. A man named Alby had called at Charlotte Waters and my friend had told him of their plight and he had no hesitation in bringing them to meet me. So all transferred to my car and we turned north again and on to Yellow Cliffe's Crossing. By this time it was dark and we wanted to take no risks with the sandy bed. So Vic and Lazarus lit flares and stood on the north side to show me the new crossing I had made earlier. In this way we had no trouble getting across and we sped onto Horseshoe Bend well into the night. After a brief rest we were up and on the road by daybreak. It was now Sunday the Sixteenth of February, three days since we'd left Alice Springs.

Getting an early start we made good time over the Depot Sandhills which were easier to traverse going north so long as one was careful to push a track

with a spade at the top of each to avoid a sheer drop going over the top. The children with sore throats did not seem any worse but we were determined to push on as fast as we could. When we came to Alice Springs we found Constable Kennett, with two other men, one a telegraph line man named Botteril and Claude Nicker. They had come down the road to meet us, anxious about our safety. The Constable's car, in which they had travelled was immobile with a broken crown wheel. As the car could not be shifted, all crammed into my utility, five men, five children and a dog. We got safely to Alice Springs arriving at 12:30pm.

Here we found that Joyce Kennett's condition had grown worse and she too had developed Diphtheria. As these were infectious cases the AIM Hospital could not take them in and so she and the two boys with sore throats were tended by the AIM sisters in a private house—that of Mr & Mrs Orr of the Commonwealth Railways. Constable Kennett had arranged to charter a plane to take Joyce to Adelaide, and all those who had been in contact with the children were placed in isolation including myself. Joyce however, did not go to Adelaide as she became too ill to move and the next day she passed away. Mrs Kennett was also suffering and was treated for Diphtheria. Good care and nursing, with which my friend Vic Peace assisted, ensured that the boys and their mother recovered.

The Methodist Minister, Rev Harry Griffith, had conducted the burial service for Rosslyn in my absence. As I read the Burial Office over Joyce, the Constable and I were the only ones who stood close to the grave side as the other mourners present had to stand a distance away because we were still in isolation.

This is a factual account of a tragic story and is far too much concerned with my own part in it. It does not and cannot take into account the anguish of mind which must have been undergone by the parents - a condition which only they themselves know. The whole incident serves to illustrate the difficulties under which people had to live and the dangers which had to be faced to pioneer our great outback before the days of the Flying Doctor and the air radio network. In the little Church of the Ascension there is a marble font given by Constable and Mrs Kennett and dedicated to the memory of Joyce and Rosslyn Kennett".



PILOT BILL ANDERSON'S LETTER TO
THE KENNETT FAMILY 18/5/1936

C/- Robertson
Miller
Parafield
May 18, 1936

Mr J Kennett
Charlotte Waters

Dear Sir,

I received your letter some time ago,
and should have answered it much
earlier but am afraid my natural
laziness got ahead of me once
again.

Regarding your-
self and your family it is quite cer-
tain that everyone who had any
idea of the facts of the case would
have done anything they could to
assist you when you needed the as-
sistance so badly.

As for myself the
only thing I felt upset about was
that there seemed nothing more I
could do after talking with the doc-
tor.

As for your wife
and yourself. I have nothing but
the greatest respect and admiration
for you for the way you carry on
your duties so courageously in such
a desolate piece of the country and
in spite of knocks such as you have
just experienced.

I certainly hope
that in future you will be fortunate
enough to experience the good for-
tune that your courage deserves.

With Best Wishes for the future.

Bill Anderson

Courtesy Mrs Geraldine Kennett and the Kennett Family

TRADGIC ECHOES SOUND

CHARLOTTE WATERS
POLICE STATION 1993



Photos courtesy of Barry Albright

Well Known Figure Passes
DEATH OF MR. J.W. KENNETT

Courtesy Centralian Advocate
Friday, August 11, 1950.

Alice Springs residents were saddened
on Thursday morning of this week to learn of the
death of Mr. John William Kennett, formerly a mem-
ber of the Northern Territory Police Force and lately
manager of the Alice Springs Memorial Club.

Mr. Kennett, who had been in ill health for
some time, passed away at the Alice Springs Hospital
in the early hours of Thursday morning.

His funeral, conducted by the Ven. Archdeacon
P. McD. Smith, took place on Thursday afternoon,
and representatives of all sections of the community
attended.

Mr. Kennett had long associations with the
Northern Territory, from Darwin to Charlotte Waters,
and was well known and respected by all.

He joined the Northern Territory Police Force



in Darwin on September 20, 1928, transferring from another Government department there. He served at various stations in the northern end, including Daly Waters, until 1932, when he was sent with his family to Charlotte Waters. He was stationed there for some time, and then served at both Barrow Creek (now closed) and Alice Springs Stations.

About five years ago Mr. Kennett retired from the Police Force medically unfit. Later he took over the management of what was then known as the R.S.A. Club. He continued to be in charge of the club when it was reorganised as the Alice Springs Memorial Club, and always regarded the welfare of this organisation as his own particular responsibility. A genial personality and a good raconteur, Mr. Kennett won himself many friends among members.

The officer in charge of the southern division of the N.T. Police (Inspector W. McKinnon) said that the passing of Mr. Kennett would be regretted by members of the force throughout the Territory, many of whom remembered him with affection. 'During his career with the force Mr. Kennett was a capable and conscientious officer,' Inspector McKinnon said.

The President of the Alice Springs sub Branch of the R.S.A. & A.I.L.A. (Mr Merve. Parer) said that Mr. Kennett had been a keen member of the sub branch, and a staunch worker, particularly for the 'old diggers', of which he himself had been one.

The President of the Alice Springs Memorial Club (Mr M. W. S. Greatorex) also paid tribute to Mr. Kennett's conscientious work and keen interest in the welfare of the club and its members. 'His passing is regretted by all of us,' Mr. Greatorex said.

Mr Kennett was 54 years of age at the time of his death. He is survived by a widow, and three sons, Messrs. Jim, Jack and Bill Kennett.

Official organisations represented at the funeral included the R.S.L., N.T. Police Force, Administration, and Alice Springs Masonic Lodge.

SCHOOLS TRIBUTE

As a mark of respect to the memory of Mr. J.W. Kennett, the flag at Alice Springs Higher Primary School was flown at half-mast. The headmaster (Mr. K.C. Rudd) expressed regret that it was impossible to postpone the sports day, but stated that the house captains would wear black armbands in tribute.

OUT AMONG THE PEOPLE

by Vox

Northern Territorians

Courtesy The Advertiser Adelaide January 25th 1946

Constable Jack Kennett, a Husky Northern Territorian is one of the little group of far Northerners enjoying triennial leave down south.

When I dropped in on him at Barrow Creek, while en route to Darwin about 10 months ago, he was officer-in-charge of the police station at that historic little settlement.

When I met him in King William Street he told me that the Commonwealth had recently closed Barrow Creek station for good and contemplated establishing a police post at Teatree Well, some 60 miles south where the water is better.

The water supply at Barrow Creek has never been good, Jack said.

Constable Kennett spent six of his 19 years service at Barrow Creek where incidentally, his wife was unofficial postmistress.

Reg Rattley senior mechanic on the telegraph repeater station at Barrow Creek and his wife, will look after the post office in future.

Constable Kennett will probably be stationed at Darwin after he has finished his leave.

TIT-BITS

These are some of the things he told me yesterday. - George Hayes, of Neutral Junction station, is in town Mrs. Hayes who has been in ill-health has been down here for some time.

Very good rains have fallen at Neutral Junction eight inches having been registered before Christmas, and Mrs Hayes had taken the opportunity to come south to see his wife.

Paddy Ryan, prospecting identity of the NT, died suddenly from heart failure at the Granites a few weeks ago.

Jack Kennett went out (about 300 miles north west) to investigate, and arrange the burial.

At the Granites, where Mr C. H. Chapman and his son Pat are working the mines, Constable Kennett saw some 'very nice gold'.

Randal Stafford, picturesque outback veteran, is still thriving at Conistan station, where he has made a number of improvements. The property is flourishing



and a good herd has been built up.

In memory of his old mate, Fred Brooks, who was speared to death by blacks in 1928 Randal Stafford has placed a fine headstone over Brook's grave at Mt Treachery, near the junction of The Granites and Mt Doreen road, and about 15 miles from the Coniston homestead.

Information taken from diaries of Constable Jack Kennett

Jack Kennett makes reference in his diary to returning home to Barrow Creek after leaving Alice Springs at 9.30 am on February 6th 1940. p 14.

Constable Jack Kennett also states in his diary that he took over at Arltunga, February 24th, 1943. On the 24th March he was notified by Superintendent Stretton, that he may be going back to Barrow Creek as the Johnstons were unhappy with the patrol work.

On the 28th March a memo arrived from Superintendent Stretton instructing Constable Kennett to pack up all their gear and go to Alice Springs as early as possible and then on to Barrow Creek.

They set off to Alice Springs on the 30th after saying their goodbyes and arrived at 7.00pm on the 30th March.

Constable Kennett was on his way back to Barrow Creek on April 1st. He stopped at Aileron and had tea then went on to Ti Tree which was 120 miles on and camped the night. He arrived at Barrow Creek on the 2nd April and everything was handed over on the 3rd April. Constable Kennett officially took over Barrow Creek on the 4th April 1943.

This information has been extracted from Jack Kennetts Personal Diaries which can be viewed in the Alice Springs Restricted Collection.

We would like to thank Jose Petrick, Geraldine Kennett, the Kennett family, John P McD Smith, the Adelaide Advertiser, the Advocate and Barry Allwright, for extending to us the right to copy the stories and photographs within this publication.

These stories bring to us, some of the reality of living and working in the remote areas of our Centralia in the early days. These stories portray the unimaginable hardship and so very often tragic experiences that people endured. We are very grateful in being able to bring these stories to our readers.

The Editor, Citation. Dated May, 2000.

by
Ed Ferrier

In your Special Edition of May 2000 you make mention of the late Sergeant Joe Mutch's involvement in the investigation of the murder of George Grantham.

Grantham was a very likeable chap who had worked for years in the Top End bush as a ringer and in various other capacities.

His taxi was a beautiful new blue-green Plymouth sedan, registered number NT 222. It was the only one of its kind in the Territory and no doubt one of few in Australia, as new American cars were very hard to get in those days and there were long waiting lists.

It was probably the most conspicuous car the murderers could have chosen to steal.

George was a determined knuckle man and fought back strongly against his attackers, absorbing several small bullets before the head shot that killed him.

A prison officer told me that on the morning of their executions in Fannie Bay Gaol the man who had played the lesser part in the crime asked permission to polish his boots and went bravely to his death. The prime offender was not so courageous.

The men said they had thrown the rifle into the grass beside the Barkly Highway, somewhere between Tennant Creek and Mt Isa.

Two trackers were stationed on the back of a truck which was driven slowly along the highway and, astonishingly, they spotted the rifle.

We are still looking for any stories that may interest our readers for inclusion in *The Citation*.
Please forward to
PO Box 2630 Alice Springs NT 0871

Please note corrections: June Edition:
*In the story written by Peter Riley,
Page 1. Should have read - Completed in
twenty three months, by August.
Page 2, paragraph 4. Should have read -
In 1941 transferred from Finke to Darwin,
(was there on 19/2/42 at the bombing).*