



the CITATION

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EDITORIAL

Glenys Simpson, Citation Editor and longest serving Northern Territory Policewoman, with almost 30 years service which culminated on the 15th May, 1997 with her retirement, has moved to Woodville, South Australia.



Photo courtesy N.T.News

When Glenys first joined the NT Police, women were only allowed to work in plain clothes and assisted with women and children who were victims of crime, as well as help investigate shoplifters or other minor crime.

By 1978, attitudes changed to the extent that police women were put in uniform and attended to similar duties as their male counterparts.

That same year, she also passed her exams for promotion to Sergeant. As a result of her promotion, she was also the first woman of that rank to command a shift.

The final fourteen years of her career was spent in Community Relations/Media Liaison in Darwin, where she would be on duty at 5:30 a.m. each day.

Being a keen historian, she took over the added role of official Police Historian when Peter Young retired and was instrumental in launching the Police Historical Society and building this periodical, "The Citation" to what it is today.

I know all members of the Society will join me in wishing Glenys a long and happy retirement in the vineyard belt of South Australia.

Good luck Glen.....and cheers.

As a result of a request from the Chief Minister, Mr. Shane Stone, following submissions from this Society, namely, Sergeant Glenys Simpson, The Department of Administrative Services in Canberra, has approved, for those members who served in the Northern Territory Police above the 18th parallel between 1939 and 1945, to be awarded the Civilian Service Medal.

A number of other groups are already eligible for the medal. These include North Australian Railway, Civil Construction Corps, Allied Works Council and Aboriginal Guides who accompanied the North Australian Observer Unit.

The six new groups which qualify include ground crews of civil airlines; those involved in the Red Cross; other Emergency Service organisations; Commonwealth/NT Public Servants including Post Office staff, medical personnel and Navy Department civilians operating the Port of Darwin; and those men and women serving as Police Officers.

People should be aware that if they had a relative since moved from the Territory or has passed on, the application can still be made and the family will be awarded the medal.

Write to:
Medals Validation Unit
Dept. Admin. Services
GPO Box 1331
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Upon receipt of application, The Department may require evidence of service. Many records were destroyed in the bombing and any that survived were generally lost in cyclone Tracy. I have some limited evidence in my own files but family records may need to be searched to comply with the requirements. I will try to help in any way I can.



Editorial - cont'd...

It was very rewarding to receive a number of comments commenting on the Special Edition following the death of Inspector Bill McKinnon. That edition was made easier thanks to documents by authors such as Bill McLaren, Frank Clune, Sidney Downer, Brian Bennett and Peter Forrest. Special thanks to Bill's mate Bob Darken and his daughter, Sue Golledge, who supplied a personal knowledge of him.

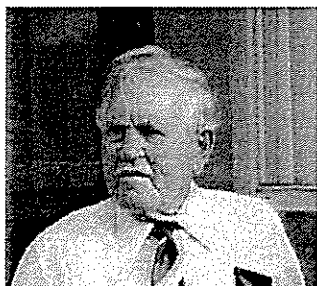
Comments such as those received are a great encouragement for us to continue and 'dig deep' for stories and memoirs. We have some on hand, enough for about two future issues, so any news items, stories or yarns you may have would be most appreciated, including any photos you think we may be able to use. These will be returned on request. Please advise of your requirements when posting such items. In many cases, it may be preferable to send a copy rather than the original.

We are back to normal as far as publications go and the next edition will be due in September.

I hope you enjoy this edition as much as we have in getting it to you.

Garth Macpherson
Editor

ALF "Broken Nose" JOHNSON



Alf Johnson was a member of the Northern Territory Mounted Police from 29-9-28 to 10-3-49.

Like his counterparts of the day, he carried out extensive patrols in isolated areas either on horseback or camel. The well-known photograph shows Broken Nose watering his dog on one of these patrols.

In 1986, Peter Young "Youngie" wrote to Alf and asked for the story behind the photo. In reply, he wrote:-

"Re that photograph giving dog a drink, it is nice to know it has become some sort of a symbol, not only in the N.T. but it is also well known in these parts. All I can say, the photo was taken way back in 1933 when I was on horse patrol, Pine Creek to Oenpelli. The last I remember of this dog, he took after a kangaroo. I just kept riding on thinking 'Oh well, he will pick up the scent and come along'.



BUT poor thing never made it. Some months later, I found his remains in bed of a creek".

Sad story about the dog who obviously met a sticky and untimely end. It has been reported many times in the past that kangaroos would 'bail up' against a large tree or wall like structure such as a cliff or creek bank and when the dog attacked, grab hold with it's hands and by balancing on his tail, strike at the dog with the toes and rip the dog open in a similar manner to the way buck kangaroos fight each other. If there was water in the creek at the time, the dog may have been drowned by the 'roo.

In the same letter to Youngie, Alf stated he was looking forward to attending the centenary celebrations at Katherine and Borroloola as he was feeling in very good health. The letter was written on 5th July, 1986. Unfortunately, he died 20 days later. He did attend the centenary celebrations for police presence in Alice Springs from 1886 - 1986 which he thoroughly enjoyed. The story goes, his doctor refused to give him permission to travel - so Alf changed doctors.



From left, Peter Riley, Alf Johnson, Bill Littlejohn, and Bill McKinnon at the Centenary of police presence in Alice Springs, 1986.



War Comes to Darwin

Back in Darwin and at 10 minutes to 10 on the morning of 19th February, 1942, history was made when Australia was attacked from the air. The Japanese planes struck at Darwin with devastating force. I was in court and when I finished my evidence, I was excused and came out onto the verandah facing Darwin Harbour. I heard the noise of aircraft approaching and immediately spotted three formations of nine planes in each formation. I knew they were Japanese bombers and then remembered my mate, Dave Mofflin who had been on night work was asleep in the barracks.

As I raced over to the barracks, I could see quite a number of bombs falling. They looked like little silver bubbles. I got Dave out of his bed and when we reached the dining room of the barracks, we received a direct hit on the front of the building. The explosion blew us out the back and fortunately for us, finished under a tank stand made of cement. The tank, which was full of water was blown to pieces and we never saw it again. We were very fortunate and received only minor injuries.



Dave Mofflin standing in the bomb crater that demolished the police barracks. Photo and story by Bob Darken.

After a few minutes, we decided to go to the police station to see if anyone was hurt there. On the way, a large bomb fragment came down and I felt the wind of it as it missed my head and buried itself in the ground. We dug it up some days later and it is now in the Alice Springs R.S.L. Club. We were then strafed by a Jap Zero fighter, firing tracer and cannon shells. However, we were again lucky as we missed getting hit by a couple of feet.

Some days after that first air raid, we saw something red in a tree down by the wharf. We decided to check it out and were very surprised to find it was Dave's inner spring mattress which he had been lying on just seconds before it had been catapulted into the sky. I'll never forget Dave's reaction to seeing his mattress in the tree. He put his arm around me and casually said, "Thanks mate". I said, "What for?", to which he replied, "You stupid bastard, you saved my life". My reply was, "Yes, what a stupid bastard I am. We sometimes make silly mistakes Dave".

After the first raid was finished, I went to the Post Office as I heard it also had received a direct hit. It was not a very pleasant sight to see a lot of people I knew blown to pieces. One girl, Iris Ball, I had been talking to that same morning. The two Mullins girls, Mrs. Young and others I knew were all dead. One chap was blown in the air and lodged in a tree. Sandy McNab and myself put them all in the back of a truck and had them transported to the morgue.

A few weeks later, a Royal Commission was held in Darwin by Justice Lowe, assisted by Mr. Alderman Q.C. I gave evidence at that enquiry.

Many years later, a video movie was made of those events in Darwin. I have a copy of it.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ADMINISTRATION,
ALICE SPRINGS

6th October 1936

Senior Constable Reid
TENNANT CREEK

CHAIN FOR ABORIGINAL PRISONERS

I am forwarding, by first available means, sixty (60) feet of light chain for use on aboriginal prisoners. On receipt, please take it on strength to your station, make the necessary entry in your Government Property Book and advise me.

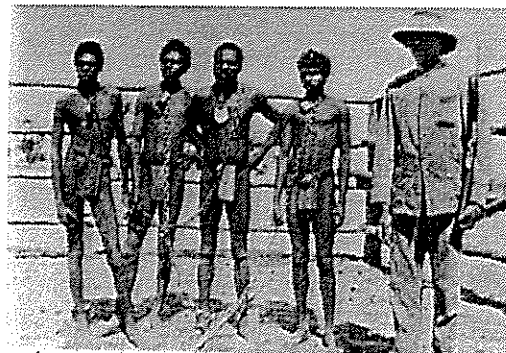
The Minister directs that chains are only to be used on aboriginal prisoners when they are being brought in from the bush to gaol, or on such occasions as their use is considered absolutely essential for the safe custody of the prisoner until he is placed in Gaol.

It is suggested that the portion of the chain around the neck of the prisoner should be padded with basil. Therefore, please place your requisition for basil at an early date.

The sixty feet of chain is in three lengths of twenty feet each. If the occasion arises, one of these lengths may be cut in halves to make two ten feet lengths. Further cutting of the lengths is to be strictly avoided.

(J.C. Lovegrove)
SERGEANT

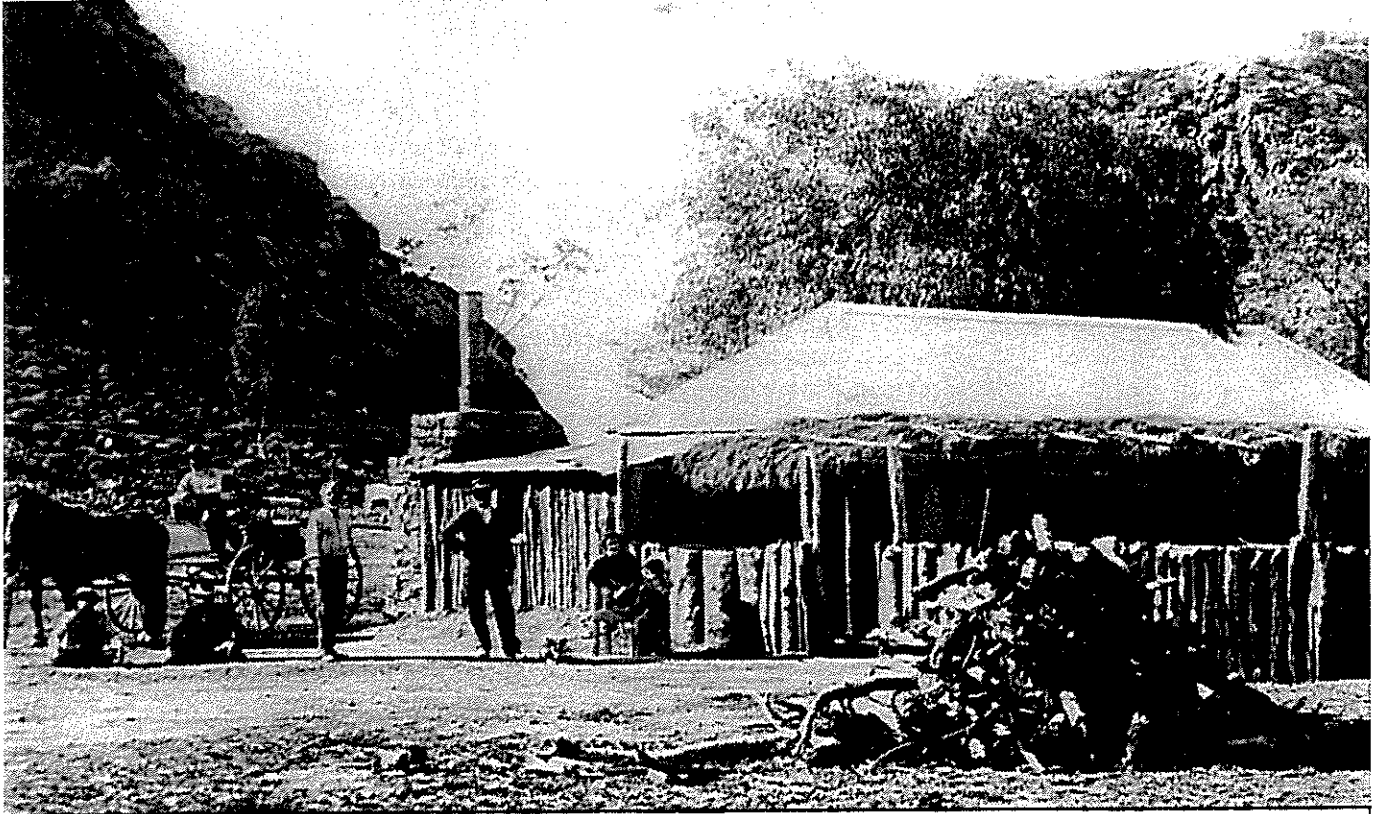
Note:- Basil,
(fleshy (very soft) leather, cut from tanned hide similar to suede)



*Native prisoners in chains
Photo courtesy of "The Way It Was" by Col Stringer*



HEAVITREE GAP POLICE STATION *(Courtesy of Bruce Strong, National Trust)*



Heavitree Gap Police Station c1900

Heavitree Gap was **not** named after Sir Charles Todd as has been popularly believed. Todd had only one given name. The gap was most likely named by William Whitfield Mills after Heavitree School in Devon where Mills was educated.

The first police officer to be stationed at Alice Springs Telegraph Station was M.C. Shirley, posted there in 1879. The police camp moved from the Telegraph Station to Heavitree Gap in April 1886. The camp consisted of tents and timber huts. Construction of the stone building commenced in late 1888, the same time as the town of Stuart was surveyed, and completed in early 1889. The original stone building was 12' x 12' (3.6m x 3.6m) of two rooms, thatched roof and with a verandah all round.

The old thatch and bush timber roof was replaced with sawn timber and galvanised iron in 1893. At the same time, additional improvements were made to the station. These took the form of an office, kitchen, two harness rooms and two storerooms. (Refer photo above).

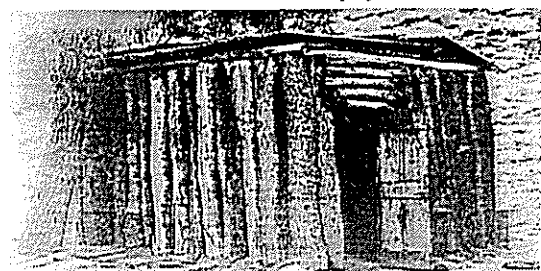
However, it was not until 14 December 1904, that the police station at Heavitree Gap was proclaimed a "public gaol, prison and house of correction".

The police moved to the town of Stuart in 1909/10 where a new gaol and police station had been constructed. The closure of Heavitree Gap Gaol was proclaimed on 2 September 1909. The old police station continued to be used as living quarters for the Junior Constable.

In 1927, when geologist, Cecil Madigan, first came to Stuart, he described the police station as follows:-

Just on the left, before you enter the Gap, stands the old Police Station, with windmill and troughs, and a great beantree, the best example of this interesting tree to be found near Alice Springs. At this time the house was occupied by the Stock Inspector.

At the same time that Madigan was writing, 1936, he noted: ".....now it is empty".

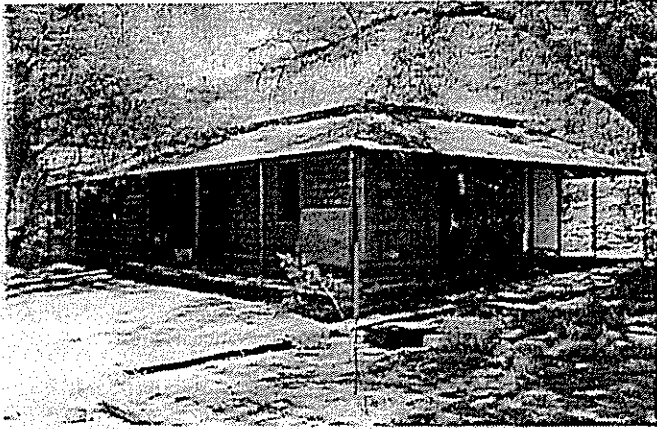


Prison at Heavitree Gap, c1893



In subsequent years, it was apparently mostly occupied intermittently on a caretaker basis. The area was proclaimed a reserve on 6 February 1958. Restoration commenced from early 1967 and was completed by the end of June 1969.

The building is now used for accommodation for TPWC staff and is not open to the public.



Heavitree Gap Police Station 1993

POLICE STATIONED AT HEAVITREE GAP

(Not necessarily complete and accurate)

FROM	TO	NAME	RANK
1885	1898	KELLY, Alfred	
1886	1891	WILLSHIRE, William H	
1886	1888	WURMBRAND, Erwin	
1887	1888	HILLIAR, Robert	MC
1888	1894	SOUTH, William G	
1889		COWLE, Charles Ernest	
1892	1894	MARSHALL, J.M.B.	
1889	1894	CHANCE, Harry	
1894	1895	L'EAU	
1898	1899	JOHNSTONE, Charles P	
1902		WALLS	
1902	1908	NALTY, Charles	
1903	1903	WHITE, R.J.	
1903	1905	PHLAUM, Frederick C	
1905		FRENCH, Isaac Thomas	MC
1905	1910	McLEOD, Frederick John	
1908	1912	DOW, John Graham	
1928		LITTLEJOHN, Wilson Coleridge	



*Standing Left to Right: Tony McEvoy, Terry Boxall, Bill McKinnon, Bob Darken, Basil Courts, Bill Waudby, Kevin Breen, Bruce Evans, Ron Brown, Bert Mettam, John Healey, Peter Riley, Geoff Millgate
Crouching Left to Right: Dave Mofflin, Tony Kelly. All were present at the unveiling of the plaque celebrating 100 years of Policing in Alice Springs on 21st April, 1986.*



HEAVITREE GAP POLICE STATION

(By Max Cartwright)



The European, or as some say, Caucasian, history of Central Australia began with the initial exploration bridle track of John McDouall Stuart, when he first passed through these central regions in 1860. On the 20th June 1870, the colony of South Australia formally authorised the construction of the "Overland Telegraph Line" and in September of the same year, John Ross began a re-survey of Stuart's original bridle path for this purpose.

Although there is some latter day controversy over whether John Ross or surveyor, William Whitfield Mills, discovered the "Alice Springs", it is now accepted that Mills is bestowed that honour and the date recorded is the 11th March 1871. Officially, the overland telegraph line became fully operational when the northern and southern cables were joined at Frew Ponds on the 22nd August 1872, however, our local Alice Springs telegraph station was relaying messages both to the north and south some months beforehand; this was made possible by messages being carried from either end of the line by horse mounted relay.

With the advance and progress of human endeavour, the first cattle properties of Undoolya and Owen Springs were soon pioneered, Hermannsburg Mission founded and with further exploration, travelling stock, prospecting parties and other travellers, a permanency of "law and order" was required. Mounted Constable John Shirley was the first police officer to be appointed to the Alice Springs district in 1879. A quote from William Henry Willshire's book, "The Aborigines of Central Australia" published in 1891, will tell the story better than we of a later generation:

"In December 1881, the writer (Willshire M.C.) was sent up to the Alice Springs telegraph station to take charge of a police camp which had newly been formed at a place situated on the Todd, a fine gum creek...At that time the camp was without an officer in charge. Mounted Constable Shirley, who had been stationed there, having been removed to Barrow's Creek, 200 miles further north..."

Shirley afterwards lost his life whilst engaged in an expedition in search of a man named Radford (in 1883 M.C.)...The melancholy duty of searching for the bodies of those who had succumbed fell to the lot of the author... Mounted Constable Wurmbrand in the interim taking charge of the police camp at Alice Springs".

After forming a "Native Police Corps" in the northern sector of the Territory in 1885, Willshire returned to the Alice Springs Telegraph Station camp. Shortly afterwards, because of overgrazing around the station area and the need to expand the police complex, a move was made to the south western corner of Heavitree Gap; about 6 kilometres to the south. Initially, the Officers Quarters consisted of wurlies constructed of boughs. The stores were kept in a large tent intended for survey purposes only.

The move the Heavitree Gap was made on the 21st April 1886. The strength of the new station consisted of M/C H.W. Willshire in charge, M/C Erwin Wurmbrand, Aboriginal assistants or trackers, Peter, Willie, Wilkie, Collins and Fred.

According to a "National Trust" publication, "*The surviving stone building at Heavitree Gap dates from 1889 and cost of 125 pounds (\$250.00).*"

Little provision was made for any prisoners until one end of a large timber structure was closed off for this purpose. Although a gaol was proclaimed at Heavitree Gap in 1904, a separate log cell was not erected until 1905.

As further settlement of Central Australia progressed, increased police patrols necessitated that three more police camps be established; one on the western Finke River at Boggy Hole in 1889, Illamurta 1893 and Arltunga in 1899.

A planned town site, two kilometres south of the telegraph station was surveyed by David Lindsay in 1888; this town site was named Stuart by the Surveyor General, George Woodruffe Goyder.

On the 31st January 1889, the first 104 town allotments came up for auction in Adelaide, with Lots 48 to 51 and 62 to 65 being reserved for government purposes. The site of the new permanent police station and gaol being part of this planned development.

Work on both the gaol and police station was completed in 1909 at a cost of 1368/2/6 pounds (\$2736.50). The proclamation of the public gaol and police station was gazetted on the 8th July 1909". On the 31st August 1933, the name of Alice Springs was gazetted in lieu of Stuart.

In April 1986, a plaque was unveiled near the old Heavitree Gap Police Station building, to commemorate the centenary of the first permanent police presence in Central Australia; the plaque reads,

**CENTENARY OF
HEAVITREE GAP POLICE STATION
21ST APRIL 1986**

**This plaque commemorates the establishment of the first
police station at Heavitree Gap on 21st April 1886.
Unveiled by the Hon. Ian Tuxworth M.L.A.
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
in the presence of former and
serving members of the N.T. Police Force and
citizens of Central Australia
Monday 21st April 1986.**

The fine old stone police station building at Heavitree Gap is all that now remains of the once large police station complex; Tracker quarters, stockyard, saddle shed, fencing, well and pumping facility, gaol and out-buildings.

The area is now under the control of the Northern Territory Conversation Commission and is being well maintained.





Who won the fridge?

(A story by Ed Ferrier, 14/05/97)



In 1952, (could it really have been so long ago)?, I relieved the late Constable Frank McTighe as O.I.C. Harts Range, then a one-man station.

Sometimes in the afternoon the blue mountains in that area reminded me of Fitzpatrick's famous Travel Talks on the movie screens:-

One morning I heard a commotion outside and saw about 30 men milling about, some of them carrying mica knives about 12 to 15 inches long. Mica was the product mined at Harts Range, for use as insulating material in toasters and other electrical appliances. It was found in what was called "books", because of the likeness to very large volumes which could be split into thin sheets (leaves) by the long thin knives specially made for that purpose.

From their shouts and angry gestures I could see this was no social gathering. The crowd seemed to comprise two roughly equal and evidently hostile groups of Italians. Those who are alive today, no doubt, would be docile old men like myself; at that time, however, they were wild youths and not prudently to be trifled with.

Shoving the six strong little men into my pocket as life insurance, I sallied forth to see what was afoot. It was quite impossible to make sense of thirty voices shouting in Italian, English and half-and-half, so I grabbed three men from each group and ushered them inside the house, shutting the door on the remainder.

I had two bottles of precious beer in the old kerosene fridge and in the interest of international harmony, I somewhat ruefully shared them with my visitors.

The two groups were from different parts of Italy and apparently still bore long-standing ancestral enmities, which surfaced now and then.

Sometime previously, two men, one from each group, had visited Alice Springs and each had bought a ticket in a raffle for a large kerosene refrigerator valued at 150 pounds. This was a very substantial sum in those days - as I recall a new Holden was worth about 1000 pounds, if you could get one.

At that time it was customary for a raffle ticket seller to write the buyer's name on the ticket as well as the butt. In this case, one man's name had been written on the first butt and the second ticket, and vice versa.

All the butts had been placed in a barrel, in the usual way, and one drawn out as the winner. However, it soon became apparent that the ticket matching the winning butt bore the name of the other man. The question now became - *Who won the fridge?* Was it the man with his name on the winning butt or the man with his name on the winning ticket? That was the question I was asked to answer.

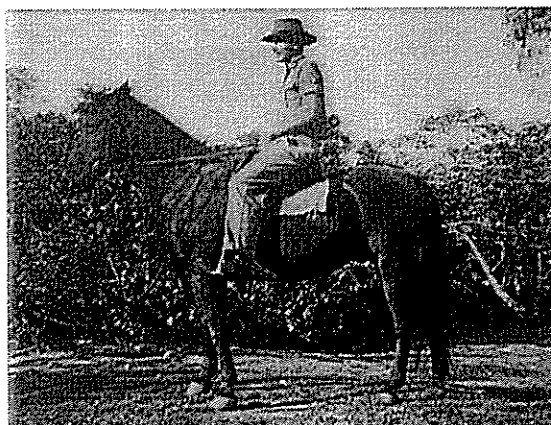
So long after the event it is difficult to convey the brittleness of the situation and the depths of tension which marked the meeting. However, I was in no doubt that actual bloodshed was only a hair's breadth away if I fumbled my cards. My opening gambit was that the men toss for the fridge, in the presence of all those gathered, the winner of the toss to have the fridge without further debate by the loser. A long and vigorous debate in Italian followed, the only English word being the reply - *NO*.

Then I suggested selling the fridge and sharing the proceeds equally. They thought this was a better plan but still not acceptable.

My final suggestion was that they go to Alice Springs and put the question to a solicitor.

Eventually, they agreed to do this and after much further talk the crowd dispersed in various directions. I felt well pleased at having averted mayhem and quite possibly serious casualties. I figured that by the time they reached a solicitor they'd have cooled down a bit and that in the calm of the solicitor's office, they'd be much less likely to explode than out bush among large numbers of their kin.

When they saw the solicitor they accepted his advice to sell the fridge and share the proceeds equally, minus, of course, the solicitor's fee!



Ed
Ferrier
1950



Cemetery gets brush-up



Volunteer Roy Harvey has put in hundreds of hours supervising community service workers on the Kandanga Cemetery project. He is pictured at one of the 185 graves he and his team have painted.

A neatly kept cemetery borders the road leading to the tiny Mary Valley township of Kandanga, the gleaming white graves and clean headstones testimony to the dedicated work of local resident, Roy Harvey.

Mr Harvey's workforce is made up of people who have been through the Magistrates Court and whose fines have been converted to unpaid community service.

Mr. Harvey spends about two days a week at the cemetery "just pottering about, seeing when the next job is", and supervising the community service workers as they are available.

So far his workers have painted 185 of the more than 200 graves - a task that involves meticulous preparation before the paint brushes are wielded.

"It takes about three hours all up to paint a grave, with all the preparation and chlorine treatment to get rid of mildew".

It is a job the retired Northern Territory policeman - whose previous community contributions include building an airstrip and a racecourse in the Territory's outback - finds immensely rewarding.

"It's good when people come and tell me how good the cemetery is looking", Mr. Harvey said.

Kandanga Cemetery Committee treasurer Clive Colburn said Mr. Harvey's contribution to the cemetery and the community in general was huge.

"Roy has done so much for this community - including helping build the swimming pool and organising equipment for the fire brigade - and never been recognised", Mr Colburn said.

However, Mr. Harvey prefers to congratulate his workers.

"I've had all sorts here. Some aren't much good at the work but some are very good - one girl did an extra 40 hours for nothing because she wanted to finish the job".

Community service workers have put in about 800 hours over the past 14 months at the cemetery.

(Written by Anne Skinner, Courtesy "The Gympie Times" - published Wednesday 6/11/96)

TO BLUE

(Poem by Peter Young)

*He's tall, he's lean, he's short, he's stout,
reminds you of someone you knew.
If he's got red hair or a russet top,
just call the bastard, Blue.*

*He may be Battersbee, Rigby as well,
just to mention in passing, a few;
but if the memory's gone, you can't go wrong,
if you refer to the bastard as 'Blue'.*

*He's everywhere, to the Gulf and back;
frequents the Kimberleys too.
No boundaries known, by Christ they've grown;
that army of men called 'Blue'.*

*With flaming lock from Viking stock,
though I've known a Greek - one or two.
Might be Eric the Red, Macropoulous too,
but still call the bastard, Blue.*

*He's quick to hate, but a mate, who's straight,
you'll find he's trustworthy too,
for many's the time that I've pegged my faith
in the frame of a man called Blue.*

*The Australian use of the adjective
has puzzled more than a few,
for who but we could ever see
the colour's not red, it's blue!*

*It also runs to a 'scrap' on your hands
when you're looking for mates who are true,
you'll suffer scant harm if the helping arm
is swung by a man called Blue.*

*He accepts it rough and when things are tough,
you'll find he'll stick 'through and through';
out on the track, to Hell and back,
I'd walk with a man called Blue.*

*But his life slips by and he wonders why
his days are numbered but few;
and his mates, for years, once they've shed their tears,
will drink to a mate called Blue.*