



the CITATION



Northern Territory Police Museum & Historical Society Inc

Letter from
Syd Bowie
Dated 3 /10 /
2000

RESPONSE TO INFORMATION CALLED FOR ABOUT
THESE TWO PHOTOS,
PLACED IN
VOLUME 6, No 5, OCTOBER, 2000.

We can't help much
with the other
photograph, but
believe it may have
been taken at Fog

Dam, near Darwin

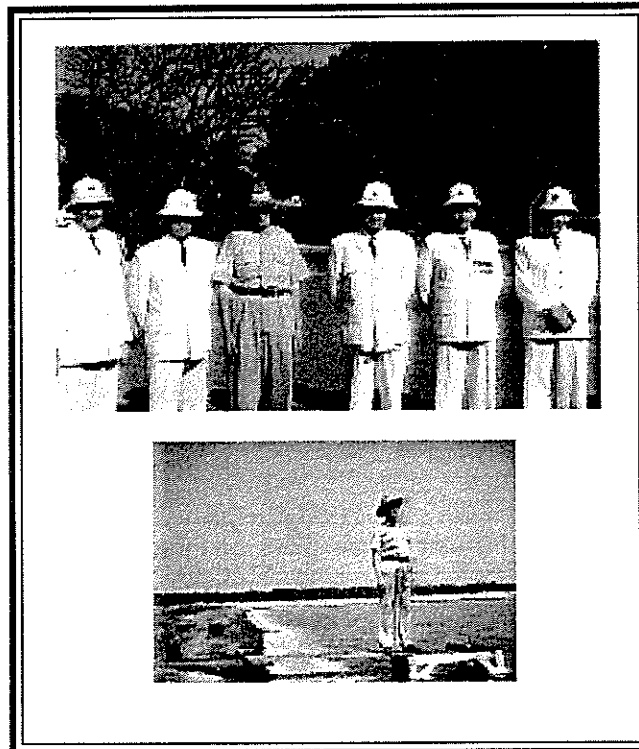
Regards
Syd Bowie

The relevant copy
of Citation arrived and my
wife and I had no diffi-
culty in recalling the
occasion and the names
of the members con-
cerned.

From Left to right
of the persons shown are
Greg Ryall, Bill
McKinnon, Gordon Stott,
Clive Graham, Jim
Mannion and myself.

The Photograph
was taken in the grounds
of Government House,
Darwin and was mainly
for the purpose of pre-
serving Stott with his long
service and good conduct medal. I
can't recall if all the others in the
photograph received the medal at
the same time but it is probable that
they did.

The award of such medals
was a rather rare occurrence in
those days and to the best of my
recollection this was the first ever
presented in my time. This was
because at least 22 years of "ex-
emplary Police Service" was
required and few members sur-
vived that long. I understand that
qualification has now been short-
ened considerably.



As to the date the photo-
graph was taken, I have been
unsuccessful in obtaining any useful
information. In fact I cannot even
locate the date, or even the year,
when my own L. S. and G.C. medal
was presented. The only identify-
ing mark is a small engraving on the
back, only readable with a magni-
fying glass which shows four letters
which appear to be "EC" followed
by a small "R" and a "P". If
followed up this would probably
only give you the vintage year,
which would probably not help
greatly.

Letter from
Peter Riley
Dated 23/10/2000

In response to your
request in the October
Citation requesting identifi-
cation of those in the group
photo, back page, I am
enclosing photo copy of
Police News.

In pictures, pages thirty and
thirty one, Citation June
1966, in which the group photo is
of those presented with the long
service medal at the ceremony on
14/10/65. Commissioner
C.W.Graham received his medal as
Superintendent, December 1959.
(See Citation page forty seven,
December 1965 for details).

I believe those in your photo
from left to right are; Inspector
G.L.Ryall, Senior Inspector W.
McKinnon, Senior Constable
G.C.H.Stott, Deputy Commis-
sioner, C.W. Graham, Inspector
J.J.Mannion and

continued on p2

Volume 7, No 1 - February 2001.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY

THOSE OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC OR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE



Continued from p1

Inspector S.J. Bowie. Inspector Mannion (Jim) appear to be wearing service colours/medals and would be the only one in the group so entitled for serving in the Army, World War II.

If I am correct with the identification of Senior Inspector McKinnon (Bill) the photo must have been taken in 1962 or before then (see N.T. Police News, March 1983, pages 22 and 23, Peter Hamon's letter). L. C. (Lou) Hook, probably Senior Sergeant, promoted to Inspector June 1962, died road accident 16/6/67, on fifth anniversary of his appointment (see Citation December 1967, page eight). Bill McKinnon retired 1962.

The uniform in your photo appears to be a white tropical one as evidenced by the white helmets, while that of 1965 looks to be khaki colour. I do not know what the occasion was in your photo. Of these in the 1965 photo, Syd Bowie and A. C. (Dave) Mofflin are still living and in your photo, Syd Bowie only, who may have already given you identification details. If not, the foregoing may be of assistance.

*Regards and best wishes.
Yours sincerely
Peter Riley*



Inspector S.J. Bowie in uniform as a young policeman.



Inspector S.J. Bowie in uniform as a young policeman.

just prior to Bill McKinnon's retirement, (probably in late 1961). It was taken in the laneway at the side of the old Bennett Street Police Station. These were the six members who had received the Queen's Police Medal and were then still serving in the force.

The bottom photograph could be of Tim Tisdell and it may have been taken at East Point.

*Warmest regards
Saus Grant*

**ERROR PAGE 1
DECEMBER ISSUE
CITATION
VOLUME 6, No. 6, p 1.**

We apologise for the error in our last Citation and hope the story on page 4

Alice Springs First Police Officer, will help set the record straight.

*Letter from
Saus Grant
Dated 16/12/2000*

Dear Garth,
On the back page of the Citation. Volume 6, No. 5, - October 2000, there are a couple of photographs from Jim Berry's collection.

No doubt you have been advised of the identity of the six former members in the top photograph - Greg Ryall, Bill McKinnon, Gordon Stott, Clive Graham, Jim Mannion and Syd Bowie.

The Photograph was taken



We would like to thank all those who responded to the request for help in identifying the photo's on our front page.

Please keep the letters and stories coming in along with any old photographs you may have that could be of interest to our readers.



A GENTLEMANLY ARREST

By
Ed Ferris

One day in the early 1950's a telephone report was received at the old Darwin Police Station in Bennett Street that a man had been shot and wounded near a bush hut some 50 miles away. An ambulance had been sent to pick him up and the suspect was a man named Nugget.

We learned later that Nugget had an understanding with one of the ladies from a nearby camp. Apparently her husband had no objection to this arrangement but felt there should be some measure of reciprocity, in the form of access to the rum supply at Nugget's hut. Unfortunately for all concerned Nugget didn't see it that way at all and warned the husband that next time he approached the hut he would be fired upon.

No doubt smarting under this manifest injustice the husband boldly marched toward the hut and Nugget unleashed a charge of No 2 shot, of which there are about 140 in a standard 12 gauge cartridge. At a range of 80 yards eight of the pellets struck the man, one of them surprisingly penetrating right to the thighbone. (I saw the X-Ray Photo).

No serious injury was done but that was certainly through good luck only. Understandably the husband departed at speed and shortly afterward the matter was reported to Police.

At that time major offences were dealt with by the Plain-Clothes Information Branch, most capably headed by the late Sergeant Joe Mutch, assisted by

the late Senior Constable "Gene" Tunney and myself. We set off for the scene of the offence, accompanied by a taciturn tracker whose name eludes me.

Upon arrival at the site the tracker immediately spotted the empty cartridge case in the grass where it had been ejected from the gun. He showed us where Nugget had been standing and also where the husband had been standing when the shot was fired. From the firing point the tracker walked slowly to the latter position, pointing with a stick to tree leaves which had been punctured, stalks of grass which had been cut off by pellets and grazes on a small tree-branches where pellets had passed, leaving tiny crescent-shaped indentations.

When these things were pointed out to us by the tracker we could see them clearly and easily, but left to our own devices we never would have seen them.

Anyway we were able to draw a "cone of fire" with considerable accuracy.

Having gained all the evidence we could at the location we left for the Adelaide River Hotel, which was then the Railway Station building and where we had been told Nugget would be found.

Not knowing what would be Nugget's frame of mind or state of sobriety, or whether he had his shotgun with him, we approached the pub with caution, after leaving the tracker with his relatives at the Police Station. (The local Constable was away at the time).

We were relieved to find Nugget and two mates quietly drinking at one end of the little bar.

In those days we had been

known to quaff a cooling ale ourselves and as it was late in the afternoon we took up position at the other end of the bar, no words having been exchanged between the parties.

After a good ten minutes Nugget approached our party and said, "I understand you're looking for me Joe?"

Joe replied. 'Yes Nugget, you're not going anywhere tonight are you?'
"No."

"Alright, lets have a yarn in the morning, after breakfast".

"Ok", said Nugget and returned to his own group.

Presently the evening meal was served and taken in silence by us all. Afterward we all returned to the bar and again there was no conversation between our groups. At 10pm the bar closed and we all bunked down under mosquito nets in a corrugated iron dormitory

After breakfast next day Nugget made a statement and submitted quietly to arrest.

Committed for trial, he was sentenced to three years imprisonment, a tough penalty even for those times.

Had Joe chosen to interview Nugget as soon as we arrived at the hotel, things might have gone much less harmoniously.

Joe and Nugget had known one another at Tennant Creek in years gone by and I had the feeling Nugget (a rough and tough looking soul) at some time in the past might have tested himself out against Joe and thereby gained some experience if nothing else. At any rate he obviously held Joe in high regard. Nugget was a hard-working toiler and apart from one



or two little personal shortcomings wasn't a bad bloke. He said he didn't think the pellets would do much harm at that range.

Joe's decision to leave things until the next morning saved Nugget the ordeal of a night in the cell with the ferocious mosquitoes which infested Adelaide River at night. (Mosquito nets were not issued for obvious reasons). It surely must have been one of the most gentlemanly arrests in Police history.

Alice Springs
First Police Officer:

Shirley not Priest

Letter from
Mr Keith E Mooney Smith
Dated 5th December 2000

You will note that the article published in respect of Heavitree Gap Police Station in "Citation" Volume 6 Number 6 of December 2000 written by myself does not mention, Mounted Constable Priest. However, in a lead article on page one, it is stated that such an officer established the first police camp in 1872 at Alice Springs Telegraph Station and that he remained in charge till 1886.

It is unfortunate that an error made in 1957 accrediting Edward William Priest and not John Charles Shirley as the first police officer persists till the present.

Edward William Priest was born in England on 16 February 1858. His occupation was that of a plumber when he joined the South

Australian Police Force as a Special Constable on 9 September 1879. For a very short time in 1881 he was stationed as a Foot Constable in Port Augusta. Apart from this, his whole distinguished career was spent in Adelaide mainly in the Detective ranks.

On 1 April 1888, he was appointed 2nd class Detective Constable. By 1904 he had rise through the ranks to Sub-Inspector of Detectives and in 1916 he was appointed Superintendent of Foot Police, a position he held when he retired in 1921. No record has been found of another Mounted Constable named Priest in the South Australian Police Force at that time.

The December 1961 issue of *Citation*, at page 46 notes that Priest Street in Alice Spring was named after Mounted Constable Priest who was first in charge of the Alice Springs area when the Telegraph Station opened in 1872. Certainly this could not have been E W Priest since he was never a Mounted Constable and at the time he was only 14 years old.

The old racecourse area in Alice Springs was developed in mid 1950. The task of applying street names lay with the Place Names Committee of Lands and Survey Branch, NT Administration. In this instance, it is believed that various names were submitted by the newly formed National Trust with research being undertaken by the wife of a pastoralist Adela Vida Purvis (1903-1982) an avid amateur historian. The basis for her information of Priest is unknown.

The Place Names Committee had no research facility and no doubt accepted the information on face value. Priest Street was named

vice NT G G No. 16 of 17 April 1957 (amended, N G No. 50 of 11 December 1957). Priest Way was named vice NT G G No. 38 of 26 September 1990.

I trust that the information set out above may resolve the issue.

Keith E Mooney – Smith
5th December 2000

THE MUSINGS OF A
TERRITORY POLICEMAN'S
SON.

An address to the public.

1/11/2000

The Musings of a Territory
Policeman.

by

Creed Lovegrove.

Dated 30/10/2000

If you read the stories of Ernestine Hill (The Territory), Ion Iodress (Man Tracks and Namarluk), Sydney Downer (Patrol Indefinite), Vic Hall (Bad Medicine) and many others you will pick up all sorts of researched and anecdotal snippets about The Force and it's members. Former Commissioner, the late Bill McLaren, has done a far more detailed study which, I hope, will be published in due course. I understand it is so detailed it is unlikely to be popular reading, it is the sort of record needed on the shelves of a reference library. Such a study will fill an important place in the historical mosaic that makes up the big picture of the development



of the Northern Territory.

One of the first things I have observed over many years throughout the Territory is the wider community leadership role, outside of their law and order responsibilities, which police in charge of smaller police stations accept in their communities. Those in charge of these outposts seem to be people of stature who automatically fall into this role and to whom the populace looks for all sorts of practical help and advice. In those communities their rank within the force is of no importance; the stature of the Constable in Charge of say Mataranka, is as great in Mataranka as the Commissioner's is in Darwin. I believe it is an important aspect of policing because it is the basis for trust and respect.

What I am talking about is probably best epitomised by a policeman I never met but whom I have heard about all my life. He is the legendary Sergeant Bob Stott who was in charge of the Central Australian area in the 1920's. He was famous in the Centre. My mother in law, the late May Adamson who went to the Alice in 1920 as a 15 year old girl and who passed away at 93 a couple of years ago, often talked of Sergeant Stott and the Stott family. At the time of her arrival there were only five white women in the Alice. As an example of the wide role he played she tells the following story. At one time, after she was married, she developed a terrible toothache. At that time there was no medical person in The Alice so she went to see Sergeant Stott, fixer of all things. He had a set of dental forceps. He put a headlock on her and without any more ado he

extracted the tooth, no anaesthetic or anything to deaden the pain. Despite the rather alarming technique and the trauma she suffered she was grateful for the help the Sergeant had given. The alternative was a ten-day buggy ride to the A.I.M. Hospital at Oodnadatta where the famous A.I.M. sisters were stationed at that time.

He was also a bit of a social worker with a rather novel approach to this profession. I was told the story of a family man in Alice Springs who got on the grog and neglected his family. Eventually the wife, as a last resort, went to see Sergeant Stott. The Sergeant strode the couple of hundred yards down to the Stuart Arms pub where he found the errant husband three parts blotto. Stott grabbed him by the seat of the pants and the scruff of the neck and frog marched him back to the local lockup where the door was wide open. He gave him a hefty boot in the tail which sent him flying into the cell and yelled, *'now you're in.'* he then followed him in and booted him out the door, yelling, *'Now you're out.'* *Go home and look after your family.'*

Summary of justice. Not really politically correct but effective and I'm sure the poor wife felt better for it; but don't try it these day's.

It is no wonder then that when a visiting dignitary graced the Alice Springs school of about twenty pupils with his presence on Empire Day and asked, *'Does anyone know who is the King of England?'* One of the brighter students put up his hand and answered, *'Yes. Sergeant Stott.'*

Amongst others who spring

to mind immediately as filling this sort of role are Sergeant Stott's son, Gordon at Daly River, Timber Creek and Elliott, Tas Fitzer at Daly River and Timber Creek, Hughie Deviney at Rankine River, Broken Nose Johnson and Constable Heathcock at Borroloola; all people of great dignity and stature and highly respected in their communities. I am sure there were and still are many others.

I sometimes wonder at the amount of information a quiet young boy picks up in the process of just hanging around men and unconsciously eavesdropping. It probably happened more in earlier days in small communities where entertainment and recreation were limited. I recall I was a full bottle (well a stubby might be nearer the mark) on many things that were talked about at the time. Aboriginals, Constable Murray, Mr Nightingale the white eccentric who was often in custody because of unusual things he did like uncoupling the train to see what would happen or cutting the O. T. Line for the same reason.

On reflection I imagine I was a bit of a pain to the adults who used those areas, including the prisoners, but I was undaunted by any display of irritation which was directed towards me. With total preoccupation in the important business of a four or five year old, I ranged over my domain with territorial possessiveness.

I think the most tolerant were the prisoners, most of whom could speak little English but with whom I seemed to be able to communicate satisfactorily. The black prisoners would often squat at the iron barred windows about three and half metres above the floor of their



communal cell. One day I asked one if he wanted a tomato and he indicated that he would. I picked a green tomato from Dad's garden, his pride and joy and said before tossing it up 'you no more killem me.' He replied 'Yes', meaning yes he wouldn't.

My 'Barrer boys' activity became a regular event until the trackers jacked up, fearing I suppose, Dad would suspect they had pinched the tomatoes.

Even before I started school I had fairly unrestricted access to what might be described as Creed's domain. This area took in most of the facilities and all the land bounded by Hartley Street, Parsons Street, Bath Street and the Methodist Church property to it's south. It took in the area where the Alice Springs Supreme Court and Police Station now stand. In those days, in the late 1920's and early 30's, it contained the Police Sergeants residence, some police single quarters, the Stuart Town Gaol which still stands there as a relic of bygone days, the police saddle shed, blacksmithery with its enormous bellows, trackers camps, troughs and a well with a windless on a raised mound.

Subsequently, a morgue was built on the corner of Parsons and Bath Streets and this diminutive building conjured up all sorts of terrifying thoughts in a small boy. I kept clear of this building most of the time except when the attraction of digging out lizards outweighed the fear of going near the morgue. Between the tracker camp and Bath Street was a wood yard which provided an occupation for Aboriginal prisoners.

Dad successfully applied for a position of Sergeant in Charge of

Central Australia so by early 1930 we had arrived there and that is where my first memories begin.

My parents quickly came to love The Alice even though mum was really a top-end girl. Their house was always open to towns folk and especially the young constables who were recruited to the force and started their duties in the centre. The families of those policemen who were out-posted in Central Australia were also always welcome, as were other friends from out bush. Amongst those young constables were Bill Littlejohn and Clive Graham both of whom became Commissioners and Bill McKinnon who became an Inspector. Although I was still very young I got to know the constables fairly well and was comfortable in their presence.

An old Alice Springs identity, Mrs. Peg Nelson, wife of the late Jock Nelson, former Member of the House of Representatives for the N.T. and Administrator of the Northern Territory, recently said to me. 'You know Creed you were a cheeky little beggar when I knew you as a small boy. One time you were hanging around the police station when a message came in that the blacks had had a serious fight down through the Gap. Two constables got the police buckboard (car) ready to go down and see what needed to be done. You immediately jumped on the buckboard ready to go. One of the constables said 'Get off Creed'. You can't come it might be too dangerous.' She went on to say that I replied, in a deep voice, "I can't see any bugger round here who's going to put me off." I don't think there was any doubt that I was put off.

Another story relevant to policing which I was told by the late Ian McCrae. He said he was with a group of men who were excavating a large hole in Parson's Street. He said I wandered up and stood for a long time at the edge of the pit gazing down at the workers and saying nothing. Eventually Ian McCrae said to me, 'What do you think you are doing young fella?' 'Watching you blokes work,' I replied. 'Doesn't your dad work?' He said. 'No.' I said shaking my head wisely, 'My dad's a policeman.'

The police complex was a busy place. There were always either horses or camels in the stockyard being prepared for police patrols. If the yards were not being used for that purpose there would be a few milking cows or dads racehorse. 'Marchington' being attended to. This meant that the trackers or some of the prisoners spent a lot of time operating the windless at the well and hauling great buckets, each holding about 36 litres of water, up from the depths of the earth. They were then dropped bottoms down on a metal spike set in a half a hollow log. The buckets had a gate valve in the bottom, which was opened, when the bucket was dropped on the spike causing the water to run down a series of log channels into the stock trough below.

There would be great excitement when the camels were being loaded for a patrol somewhere into the desert. Up to a dozen camels would be sitting, kneeling or squatting as camels do when they have been 'whooshed,' growling and groaning and blowing green bubbles in protest but in the end, accepting their enormous loads.

Then they would be made to seesaw up and be tied nose to tail with the constable and his trackers mounted. Out the front gate they would go in a string, along Parsons street and then South along Bath Street to head out into the Simpson or the Western deserts.

Sometimes it was a horse patrol going out and if the plant had been in the police paddock any length of time there were usually some fire works when the younger horses were first ridden. But like the camels, they would eventually be packed or saddled to head off through the town to wherever duty called.

In March 1933 Constables Bill McKinnon and Tony Lynch were given the job of taking a party of prisoners, interpreters and witnesses to Darwin to stand trial for something or other. The police hired a small truck from a man called Joe Barton who also acted as driver. I was sent to Darwin on the trip with them for dental treatment. I don't remember all the details but there are aspects of the trip that are clear in my memory. The truck was delayed for a while between Alice Springs and Barrow Creek and I was taken on to the police station at the Barrow to await the truck. I stayed there with Constable Cameron and his grown up daughter who was a friend of my mother. I remember the truck breaking down out in the bush and a small plane flying over, which would have been pretty rare for those days. Bill McKinnon rushed to the flour bag in the tent and taking several handfuls of flour, wrote the letters, O.K. on the open ground. When we arrived at the homestead gate at Helen Springs station, the cattle dogs had bailed

up a big goanna. One of the men killed it with a rock and Constable McKinnon stood me on the running board of the truck and took my photograph holding the goanna in one hand and his pistol in the other. The Bohning family was in charge of Helen Springs station and in the typical bush fashion of those days, made us welcome.

I remember overnighing at the Newcastle Waters Police Station where Constable 'Jock' Reid was in charge. I understood he later went on to become Commissioner of Police for the A.C.T. which I like to think was a reflection on the quality of the N.T. Police as well as recognition of his own ability. A couple of years ago I was in touch with his daughter Hazel Southwell in Canberra, who was writing her dad's story for the family and she thought I might have some memories of him which would help her. We exchanged a fair bit of information.

At the bits of boggy road between Newcastle Waters and Birdum the aboriginals had to jump off the truck and push. I am not clear in my mind whether I travelled with them on the train from Birdum to Darwin, but I think I did.

In an article in the N.T. Digest of several years ago headed '*The way it was*' '*A Policeman's Lot*', Bill McKinnon says the trip took five days. I imagined it was a lot longer than that but as I have said. I was not quite six years old.

When I look at the photograph of that truck I am amazed at the number of us who were able to climb aboard.

An aboriginal prisoner named Terry escaped from the old gaol guard, Jim Shannon whilst

wood gathering through 'The Gap'. I heard about the escape the day it happened. Next morning I noticed much activity in the area with dad, some constables and trackers, Peter Alice and Walter Ross searching around with looks of concern on their faces. Being part of my domain I decided I had every right to get into the act. The constables were not much help, as they tended to ignore me so I concentrated on the trackers. They showed me Terry's tracks where he had crossed the yard and again when he left.

Terry remained at large for some time and I got regular news as to his probable whereabouts and exploits just by hanging around or by direct questioning of the trackers and their wives during my visits to their camp at sundown or at daylight before Mum and Dad got up.

There was an exciting morning when talk amongst those who knew was that Bob Hamilton, the constable from across the street had got word that Terry was at Emily Gap.

Hamilton armed himself and took off in his Buick after Terry and at midnight, in the moonlight, they did battle. Terry was something of a tactician as he occupied the high ground, indeed the top of the ridges of the gap leaving the constable to occupy the creek bed. Many shots were exchanged but no injuries were sustained, except perhaps to Bob's pride.

It was said by the well informed, around the camp fires at the police yard that Hamilton had inadvertently armed himself with a crooked barrelled rifle Terry would have been back in gaol or pushing



up daisies.

All attempts to catch Terry failed until the return of Constable Murray, who I later learned, had a formidable reputation. My own boyhood experienced of him was of a kind, dignified man who did not spend much time in my domain and was not one to gossip around the traps.

Anyway he had been back no time when he collared Terry. My informants told me Murray's tracker, Police Paddy, made the arrest in a camp on Undoolya Station when Terry had only one bullet left.'

Dad was promoted to the rank of Inspector and in 1937 we moved to Darwin.

By
Creed Lovegrove

THE 'GROG' TREE

Excerpt from

'The Coppers Wife'.

By

Christine Cox

Dated 2/10/2000



Constable Phil Mitchel about to pour grog onto tree 1959

In response to Bill Wilson's article on alcohol consumption in the October *Citation*, I proffer this snippet. In 1958 when Harry first joined the job, one of the most common charges was 'Ward Drink Liquor'. All Aborigines were classified as Wards of the State. It was an offence for Aborigines to drink liquor and for any person to supply them with it. Needless to say many Aborigines came to court after having broken that law. Mandatory sentences of six months ensued.

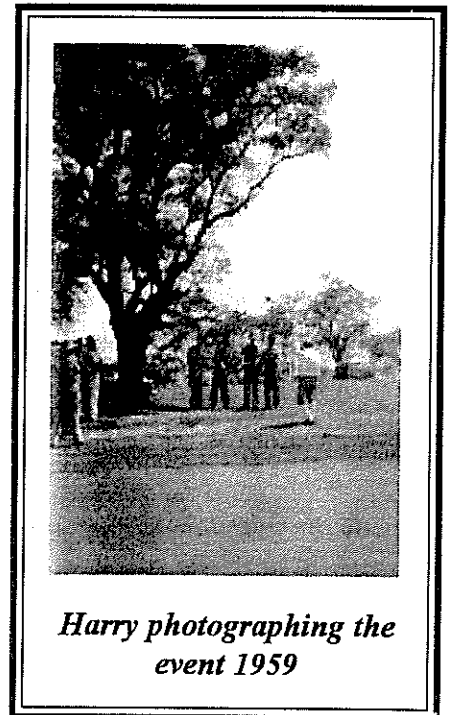
Any alcohol found in possession of offenders was confiscated and the Magistrate always made an order for the destruction of the said alcohol. Sometimes it was beer, but mostly large glass flagons of cheap red wine. Immediately after each morning's court session, the police and their Aboriginal trackers would have to dispose of the alcohol.

A Police Photographer was present to record the disposal. So as not to create an offensive smell in the yard at the courthouse, officers would walk across to The Esplanade and empty the grog out on to a Milkwood tree. I worked at the courthouse at the time and regularly witnessed these procedures. Much laughter took place amongst the courthouse staff and police officers about how healthy the tree would be after yet another drink-the only time the tree ever got a

drink except when it rained. The tree withstood the battering from Cyclone Tracy and still stands there to this day.

The Aboriginal offenders were often distraught, not only at being jailed but to see their precious grog being tipped out.

By
Christine Cox



Harry photographing the event 1959



The Grog Tree 1990