

# RETIRED POLICE ASSOCIATION OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

NEWSLETTER No. 70 JULY 2015



## **National Police Service Medal recipients at Darwin, 25 June 2015.**

Rear left to right: John Rowe, John Wolthers, Eddie Josephs, Commissioner Reece Kershaw, Maurie Burke John Roberts and Gary Manison.

Front left to right: Peter 'Boots' Guinane, Lee McNab, Graham Rees, Dave Picker, Alan Mitchell and Tony Wallbank.

## Contact Details

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## Committee and Contacts

President: John Wolthers	Vice President : Bill Matchett
Secretary: Gary Manison APM	Treasurer: vacant
Public Officer: Dennis Scrutton	
Committee Members: John Bell, Garry Casey and Tony Wallbank.	

## Next Committee Meeting

The next Committee meeting is on Thursday 16 July 2015, RPA House, Darwin. Any branch or member that would like to raise any issues please contact the Secretary by email or telephone.

## President's Message

Things are really looking up with the Association. There has been a number of social functions and branch meetings that have brought people together and it is hoped that this current trend can be continued in the future. We still need to catch up with a number of retired members who we encourage to become members.

With the appointment of a new Police Commissioner, we will be inviting him to be our Patron, along with offering the position of Vice-Patron to the new President of the Police Association.

Currently, the Committee is investigating a range of new merchandise, including ties, polo shirts and even a formal dress shirt. However, we are still open to suggestions from members and welcome any feedback on these

issues. New Membership Cards are on the way and will be distributed to members in late July.

### **National Police Service Medal**



The Governor-General approved the applications for the NPSM by 80 retired members. All members have been advised and medals sent or presented at a ceremony at Darwin on 25 June 2015. At the ceremony 12 members were presented with medals by the Commissioner. Some photos of the ceremony are provided courtesy of John Bell. There are still some eligible members who have not applied for the award and they can obtain the application form from the Association. At the medal presentation ceremony at Darwin, the Commissioner acknowledged the work of former President Graham Rees in having the medal awarded to retired members.



## **Membership Fee**

Members are reminded that membership runs out each year on 30 June. The fee is \$25 per year and you can pay up to 5 years in advance. All queries about membership should be made by email to the Association at [rpant@bigpond.com](mailto:rpant@bigpond.com) or by telephone.

New membership cards are being printed and will be distributed in late July.

## **RPANT Tie**

Some inquiries have been made about having a tie made up for the Association. The Committee came up with this design and it will be available in September for \$20, exclusive of postage.

## **Latest from RPANT - South Australia branch - May 2015**

An outline from the AGM held 2 May 2015, at Hahndorf.

- The election of Office bearers for the year 2015-16 was conducted by Terry EY as Returning Officer.
- Jon SIMS was elected as President.
- Neil VOGELSANG was elected as Vice President
- Bob KIRBY was elected at Secretary
- Janice LAVIS was re-elected as Treasurer
- Kingsley TAYLOR was re-elected as Welfare Officer
- Paul FARNAN was re-elected as an Ordinary Committee member
- Additional Ordinary Committee members elected were: Geoff WRIGHT, John SCOTT and John PAIN

Several members, including the incoming President Jon SIMS, thanked the outgoing (Inaugural) Branch President Bruce WYATT for his outstanding contribution to making the SA Branch an efficient and effective unit over the last 6 years.

## **WA News**

Ex NT Coppers and members of the RPANT Joe Rollnik and Jeff Allen both represented the WA Police Bowling Club at the Interstate Bowls carnival held at Tuncurry NSW from the 11th to 19th March Joe won the Singles plate and Jeff made the Semi-Finals of the triples only to lose by 1 shot on the last end. It was a fantastic carnival enjoyed by all.

## What, Where and Who are they?

The winner of the contest was Denver Marchant. Five people still unaccounted for and the location and reason for the function remains a mystery.

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|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Cliff Gill     | 8. Charlie           | 14. ?            |
| 2. Ian Doube      | Menenghetti          | 15. Eric Raeburn |
| 3. Stan Gibson    | 9. Danny McIvor      | 16. Lance Newton |
| 4. Lee Melville   | 10. Don Godley       | 17. Barry Symons |
| 5. Dean Monaghan  | 11. ?                | 18. ?            |
| 6. Dianne Caswell | 12. Allan Carmichael | 19. ?            |
| 7. Bob Hayden     | 13. ?                |                  |

## Traveller's Tales

Garry Holden and Ross Walshe spent a day in London recently. First time they had seen each other in about twenty five years. Both joined in Squad 29/78. They had a great look around and lunched with their partners Alexis and Margaret. The twenty five years just melted away.



## Special Birthdays

Congratulations to following members who had or are having special birthdays between March and September 2015.

### 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Harold DARWEN (10/03/1935)	Peter HAMON APM (1/06/1935)
Jack NICHOL (26/04/1935)	Penny JACKSON (26/05/1935)

### 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Peter LEACY (1/03/1945)	Alex CAROLAN (23/08/1945)
Frank MORRIS (30/03/1945)	Norm BREEN APM (24/07/1945)
Reg HENSHAW (24/04/1945)	Les PERRY (22/09/1945)
Tom DAVERN (24/04/1945)	Kerry KENT (25/08/1945)
Bob THORNING (13/06/1945)	Steve BURKE (30/09/1945)
Kevin RIGGS (14/07/1945)	

### 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Peter L HANLON (25/03/1955)	Diane WOODYARD (21/07/1955)
Paul GLEESON (20/04/1955)	Peter NUNN (28/06/1955)
Paul FARNAN (8/04/1955)	Lee MELVILLE (28/07/1955)
Ian BALL (27/06/1955)	

### 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Michael J ADAMS (27/07/1965)	John ELFERINK (24/09/1965)
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## Some Interesting Reminiscences'

Several letters were received from former members about their time in the 1950's and 60's in the Force. **Graham Jones Reg. No. 106** who joined in 1959, now lives in Wales and has just visited family in Australia and notes the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015 of some events in Central Australia:

24 March 1960 – The Riverside Hotel opened in Alice Springs –“a good crowd in attendance – I was on shift duty”.

23 April 1960 – Attended the official opening by Deputy Prime Minister John McEwan of the memorial at Central Mt Stuart for John McDowell Stuart. Drove from Alice Springs and back that day.

6 June 1960 – Fire almost destroyed the Stuart Arms Hotel at Alice Springs.

**Peter Groves Reg. No.C36** joined in 1951 and resided in the police accommodation at the time: “a long galvanised iron building with a large open space and about 10 rooms”. A short time after Peter was moved to “huts located behind the police station opposite the bombed out Bank of New South Wales just above the harbour”. Insects were a problem with the hut and “the tracker from Borroloola gave me a seven foot carpet snake which kept the insects at bay and frightened the hell out of visitors to my hut”. One regular job was to go over to Bathurst Island on the water police boat “an old war time torpedo boat run by Roger Davis”. Peter spent time at Timber Creek in 1952 and later returning to Darwin and resigned in 1952 to play professional rugby league in England for Warrington. Prior to leaving Darwin “I spent a week boxing in Jimmy Sharman’s tent against all comers and made myself 400 pounds and a black eye”. Obviously, Peter could handle himself in and out of the ring! Interestingly, the basic wage in Australia in 1952 was ten pound sixteen shillings. Peter went to Sydney, got married and travelled to England where he played football until he returned to Australia.

Peter is planning to be in Darwin later in the year for a few days and hopes to meet up with RPANT members. He will be an interesting person to talk to over a few drinks.

## Vale Stan Fensom

18/2/1954 - 3/4/2015



Son of Stanley and Joyce, Spouse of Jane, Father of Mel, Sophie and Laura,  
Brother of Bill, Judy, Jill, Grahame and Wenona

Stan joined the Northern Territory Police Force in late February 1979 and served just short of thirty years, retiring in February 2009. Before joining the police Stan served in the Army in 3RAR for six years where he was based in Darwin and fell in love with the place. This was one of the main reasons that he joined the NT cops, as well as the fact that it was the best paid at the time which was enough to sway him.

Stan was posted to several outback communities including Groote Eylandt, which he reckoned came about because he helped himself to a certain tea trolley that was presided over by Mona the tea lady, thinking that the contents were readily available to all. He grabbed a Scotch Finger and scoffed it down causing outrage in the corridor as it was well known that, generally speaking, no one below the rank of Senior Sergeant was ever seen in the vicinity of the trolley. Shortly after this unauthorised use of the said biscuit, Stan was called up by his commanding officer and informed that remote Groote Eylandt was looking for a good man and Stan was it. This is Stan's version of how his posting happened.

He spent time in various remote communities in the Northern Territory before returning to Darwin where he worked in General Duties. His work mates were exposed to a barrage of every known Slim Dusty song sung on top note, poor quality jokes and continual movie renditions of Blazing Saddles.

In 1984 he went to the Criminal Investigation Branch and for the next twenty-five years he was a permanent fixture as a Detective Senior Constable. He was attached in the SURF section which was primarily involved in property break and enters.

Stan met Jane in 1990 and they had a daughter Laura in 1992. They set up house in Howard Springs in the rural outskirts of Darwin. Outside of the force, Stan loved fishing and as many of his mates will tell you, he was out on the water on most weekends bringing home many eskies of fish to fillet.

He was a dab hand at growing vegetables and all visitors to the house were expected to take the guided tour around the veggie patches and leave with multiple shopping bags full of home grown produce. He was proud of his home made fish pond, complete with waterfall and fully stocked with Barra that were often hand fed much to the delight of visitors.

After retirement in 2009 Stan, Jane and Laura departed Darwin and headed to Young in NSW to be closer to family. After purchasing 100 acres of land they built a home and Stan decided that sheep farming was for him. He often reflected on his early years in the shearing sheds as a fourteen year old and drew on those experiences with his new-found hobby.

Stan was very popular and everyone who sat around a table with him listening to his many stories always left with a smile. He will be sorely missed by all.



Retired members what attended Stan's funeral. Back row: Shaun O'Sullivan, Chris Bentham, Steve Wallace, Dave Duffield and Chris Baird. Front row: Matt Sodoli, Lyn Balchin and Jim Lindsay. (Thanks to Steve Wallace for the copy of the Eulogy and photo.)

## **Vale Francis 'Frank' John MORRIS**

30/3/1945 - 9/6/2015

Senior Constable Reg. No. 649

NT Police 1/1/1974 – 1/5/1985

Frank passed away in Alice Springs where he had been living for a number of years. He joined the Northern Territory Police Force as a 28 year old and was invalided out in 1986 at just 40 years of age. The disappearance of the baby Azaria Chamberlain while Frank was the OIC at the old Ayers Rock Police Station had a profound effect on him and for those that knew him was the underlying cause of his early retirement and premature end to his career. His harassment by the press at the time affected him profoundly. Frank later also suffered through a series of health issues but endured them without much more than a descriptive comment.

Frank left the NT for a time but returned years later when his marriage ended. He returned to Central Australia because that was where he wanted to be – he just loved the Territory. Frank made friends outside the NT Police family but he was always happy to sit down with a coffee and chew the fat with old coppers. He will be remembered by this old copper as a decent and friendly bloke who was proud to have been an NT copper and member of the Police family.

***REST NOW OLD FRIEND AMONGST THE HONOURED DEAD***

*(Thanks to Tom Svikart for this Eulogy)*