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Peeler Gazette President's Observations

Last day of Autumn 2023.

Whilst working for the WA Police Union (WAPU) I prepared a couple of articles regarding the opportunities for those who retire from the WA Police Force to stay connected with the 'Blue Family.' The WAPU runs retirement information sessions that deal mainly with financial positioning and at the time this involved those being eligible for a severance package.

Since being heavily involved with the WA Police Historical Society *Police Museum* (WAPHS) from 2017 onwards I was surprised by the lack of interest in the 'Blue Family' after leaving the WA Police Force (WAPF). This is certainly borne out by the lack of interest in joining the WAPHS and performing volunteer work at the *Police Museum*. Not only has the nature of policing changed - the nature of retiring has also changed.

Commissioner Bob Falconer expressed his view that for the vast majority of police officers policing would only take up a portion of their working life, giving the impression that only a few would make a lasting career in the profession. I abhorred this point of the view in the mid-1990s but he was spot on as is evident by the number of cessation notices that are received at the WAPHS each week.

Remaining connected to the 'Blue Family' could be through the WA Police Social Club (WAPSC), WA Police Retired Officers Association (WAPROA), WA Police Sports Federation (WAPSF) and the numerous sporting clubs that are affiliated with that organization. WA Police Legacy (WAPL), WA Police Widows Guild (WAPWG) or - if interested in the history of policing WA - the WAPHS.

Until a permanent base was found for the WAPHS and *Police Museum* at the 1897 Highgate Hill Police Station situated at 57 Lincoln St Highgate, research activities were carried out through involvement with the WAPF Community Affairs Branch.

The current committee and dedicated volunteers are kept busy and until the WAPF appoint a paid Curator to undertake the day to day running of the three buildings and utilities, research aimed at working out the service history of all those police officers who have retired, resigned, or died since 1966 will be held back. This information is only available on one PHREMS computer in a WAPF facility.

So, we encourage any retired police officer who doesn't need to keep working to join up. Even a couple of hours a week will help chip away at the cataloging that is required with documents, physical photographs and books held in the Police Library.

Probably the most challenging project for the WAPHS is deciphering the contents of some of the very old *Occurrence Books* that will eventually have to go to State Records via the WAPF Records Branch. These books provide the very essence of WA Society from 1826 onwards and reflect the challenges faced by everyday people including the obviously then bewildered indigenous tribes.

These books were written with a nib pen using ink from a glass ink well. The variety of cursive handwriting is amazing and every now and then easy to read upper- and lower-case writing is discovered. Hopefully these marvelous entries will be available in a digitized format.

We are yet to receive a visit by our Patron Commissioner Col Blanch, which is a shame as I am sure a couple of hours out of his busy schedule would be most rewarding in understanding the history of policing the largest police jurisdiction in the world.

Dave Lampard
WAPHS President

Minutes of the meeting between WAPF Liaison and WAPHS Executive Committee

Held at the Meeting Room Police Museum 57 Lincoln Street Highgate

1/15 pm Friday June 23, 2023

Apologies: Al Finnegan VP WAPHS
Attendance : WAPF Liaison Acting Commissioner Mike Bell
Senior Constable Jazz Lawford
WAPHS. President Dave Lampard
Secretary Lena Wiggerman
Treasurer Cariol Vernon

Note: **Agenda** was sent to all WAPHS Committee and Mike Bell.

Note: November 10, 2023 Updates underlined.

Previous meeting minutes as per distributed emails January 31, 2023

Chair Dave Lampard invited Mike Bell to provide a summary.

Mike spoke about his MoAP (Museum of Australian Policing) visit to Sydney and the set up where Podcasts of investigating detectives/crash investigators related to an exhibit and photographs. He also explained how easy it was to visit the site compared to the WA Police Museum. Something he would like to see in WA by moving the Police Museum to the CBD.

Chair then moved onto the listed agenda items.

1/. Promised sworn officer on a return to work rehabilitation project to access service record information of officers who have left the WAPF between 1966 and 1992. Update. Retired unsworn officer Phil Trainer to take on the role.

Graham Harvey 6798 now retired has been performing this role for a couple of months. He asserts that it is not just a case of accessing the information on the PHREMS (Black Screen) green lettering solitary PC at WAPF HQ. (Personnel, history, records, employment, medical, service) through Jazz I invited Graham to visit the WAPHS and see what we want and are up against.

2/. SLA (Service Level Agreement) Funding, Sent back to the ED WAPF liaison with a couple of required corrections. (Note: This has taken three months since the AGM) Update..Funding for 2022,2023,2024 now received.

3/. Security Screens for unprotected windows, walls. Apparently with the Commissioner for approval. (Note: This has taken three months since the AGM) Update no progress.

4/. Gifted decommissioned WAPF van that can be fitted out ready made with exhibits so volunteers are able to attend public events in Regional WA. The van was in the northwest. Update Fingers crossed will proceed.

Mr Bell will follow up. (Note this has been outstanding for over 12 months)

5/. Status of the WAPF appointing a salaried Curator. Which was supposed to occur on April 1, 2023. PD not yet complete along with other issues; Update currently nothing further to report.

Specific role, Keys access and availability, WAPF laptop, Ergonomic Chair, working with the WAPHS committee and volunteers.**6/.** WAPHS involvement with the MoAP development plans. None this is being done entirely by the WAPF. Chair, expressed how ludicrous this was when we run the WA Police Museum.

6/. Cont- Mr Bell advised that there are several groups working on various projects, The Commissioner is on the executive group. WAPHS Summary, we cant help if we don't know.

7/. WAPF approval to build the garage and carport on the south side fence of the property to house current and gifted future vehicles. This plan cannot advance to the numerous bureaucratic levels of approval with support from the WAPF. Mike Bell would prefer a more secure building that can be locked. Chair; Great such as a large objects gallery that should be built by the WAPF when they take back control of the land. Which the WAPF have no intention of building. (Frustrating). Update..Plans on the desk of the City of Vincent town planning adjudicator.

8/. WAPF intentions re the vast expanse of available land on site. None. WAPF would prefer the police museum housed in a building in the CBD with easy off the street walk through access close to bus, train and parking. This would be subject to a possible 5 year plan after evaluation by a consultant. Chair, strongly disagree with the poor location of 57 Lincoln St Highgate which offers free parking and short distance walks to two regular bus service.

9/. Bear Cat and other decommissioned historical vehicles. Bear Cat due September 2023. Concerns re the damage the Bear Cat may attract. Chair, The other gifted vehicles have been on site for two years with no attempts to damage the. Ideally all gifted vehicles should be under locked cover in a large objects gallery built by the WAPF that would not have to navigate all the approval processes faced by the WAPHS. If received the WAPHS will accommodate the vehicle as best we can. [Update Bear Cat arrived and on display.](#)

10.Website. Jazz is in the early process of designing a replacement website. I completion I approved a monthly upgrade charge of \$44.00 to maintain the site by providers Wix. [Update no progress, issue very frustrating](#)

11. The WAPHS and WAPROA are not included on the WAPF Blue Family portal. No wonder we cannot attract attendance by WAPF personnel. Jazz would see what she can arrange. [Update WAPHS now included.](#)

Mike Bell asked why the WAPHS no longer holds monthly general member meetings.

Chair, They were discontinued as there was no requirement to hold them, cost \$4,000.00 per year for food and drinks and very few of the attendees offered to be supportive volunteers. Carol and myself were not prepared to spend hours preparing food. We are committed to hold three committee meetings each year as per the rules and will call a meeting with the minutes of this meeting as the main agenda item.

Chair: Recent achievements by the volunteers at the WAPHS and Police Museum.

- A. Project to better fence Smith Street with sturdy printed shade cloth, where vehicles are parked. Make use of the gifted decommissioned cell doors. [Update. Fence wrap Design completed and due for delivery](#)
- B. Mural being designed depicting the history of aboriginal people's involvement with WA Policing 1826 current date. Will send the final draft on once received. [Update sadly no approval from the Water Corporation](#)
- C. After 26 years the records held by the WAPHS have been fully documented and once placed on a XL spread sheet will be forwarded onto the WAPF Records Branch
- D. The meeting room is now able to offer visitors a rotating visual display of historic photographs and DVDs.
- E. The Pittman Walsh memorial re location in Kalgoorlie is proving very difficult with numerous obstacles being put in the way. The memorial must be moved closer to GEHwy otherwise it will disappear into the extended mining pit. Update memorial to be relocated and site due for rededication in late April 2024.
- F. The Wagin Historical Village now houses a 1950's style replica police station that the WAPHS will assist to enhance with period exhibits.
- G. The Ford Anglia was displayed at the Pinjarra Festival during the WA Day celebrations. [Update recently loaned to Toodyay Police. The loans will discontinue has the old girl can't take the car trailer moves any longer.](#)

Summary

The current committee and dedicated volunteers have brought the Police Museum and its contents to a point where a more concerted effort can be applied to Police History and members service records. Exactly what the objects of our constitution require. Funding is required to pay the bills and keep the museum open.

It is now up to the WAPF to decide the way forward and the only practical way of achieving this is to commit the necessary funding to the already suitable plans and build a large objects gallery. No setting off of another unnecessary consultancy project. Wasting the 1897 Highgate Hill Police Station (100 years display) would be a travesty.

D J Lampard

President

WAPHS

Sling twins



Debbie and Michael Carpenter

Mick Carpenter Senior Constable 4836 was severely injured in a police motorcycle crash in 1975 yet battled on through disabilities to achieve retirement.

Police Motorcycles.

Constable Jack TURKICH 2662, astride a 1955 BSA M20 Police Motorcycle. Reg#11033.

Unusual, as it was a slow side valve engine yet had telescopic front forks but a solid rear suspension. More likely used for suburban police station or firearm branch inquires.



Albany - A Brief Account

First visited in 1791 and named King Georges Sound by Captain George Vancouver of the 'Discovery'. A British presence was established in 1826. Confrontation with the aboriginal people was carefully avoided. So as 2026 approaches I wonder what is planned for the area. Questions will be asked of the WAPHS about who performed police duties.

A few of the notable names of police officers from 1826 to 1900 are:

Alexander Cheyne
John Stanton
W.Thomas
Gaoler Hughes
John Mason

James Dunn
Lawrence Moody
Robert Hester
William Pretious
William Snook

William Finlay
Matthew Smith
John Chipper
Harry Chipper
Thomas Rowe

Michael Pilkington
Charles Newland
Edward Lemon
Robert Connell.

A Rare Tombstone (From the old dart)

LOTBKF John Platt

William Wood was a cotton weaver from Eyam. He was on his way back to Manchester after selling cloth and had quite a bit of money on him (about £100 in 1823 — roughly £10k today). He was walking home and stopped at Disley for a pint.

There he chatted with three men and continued home over the tops. After about ten minutes, the three men followed up the hill in Wood's direction catching up with him after a mile or two. William was beaten to death with stones and left at the roadside where his partly concealed body was hidden under the wall bottom and discovered later and taken to the Cock Inn in Whaley Bridge, where a coroners inquest was held a few days later.



The next day, three men appeared in Macclesfield and bought new clothes, giving away what they had been wearing. The three men had already left by the time news of the murder reached the town, but their old clothes were found stained with blood.

The police followed to Manchester and one of the men was arrested in a pub - his companions had already left, however, and there was no further trace of them. The man arrested was Charles Taylor, who was 17. He committed suicide at the New Bailey Prison in Salford. His pals, of a similar age were already known to the authorities, having only recently been released from a term of imprisonment.

Taylor had just left prison the day before the murder, and on 12th August of 1823 the second man Joseph Dale was arrested in Liverpool whilst trying to enlist on a ship. By 24th April 1824, Dale was sentenced to death and was hanged the following Wednesday. **The third man, John Platt, was never found.....**

.....did he get to Australia, Canada or the USA.???????

Afternoon Shift 1920's Highgate Hill Police Station

AS 1920s



Opening of the Replica 1950s Wagin Police Station, Wagin Historical Village - 5 June 2023

Ann and I travelled to Wagin to attend the opening of the 1950's style Wagin Historical Police Station situated in the Wagin Historical Village.



Tony Mott Cutting the Ribbon

Life Member Anthony Thomas Charles 'Tony' Mott 2417 retired Deputy Commissioner had been invited to present his account of policing in the Wagin District in the 1950s for the 2023 WA Day Celebrations and was invited to cut the ribbon and announce that the station was open for visits and inspections.

Tony's son Peter and extended family travelled down with him. Thanks Tony.

The WA Police Force was represented by Acting Inspector Carlos Gastao Correia 6846 OIC of the Katanning Police Station. Carlos had been stationed at Wagin in the 1980's together with Sergeant Simon Rhett Bickers 9651 the current OIC at Wagin.

Left to right: WAPHS President Dave Lampard, with Acting Inspector Carlos Gastao Correia, Sergeant Simon Rhett Bickers



On the Sunday Ann and I had provided a number of interesting additions to the station and will locate any more suitable duplicate pictures and items that may be used to enhance the 1950's style of the premises including a latrine bucket for the cell. The lock up features the original restored wooden cell door.

WAPHS Secretary Lena Wiggerman was on hand to take photographs. Resigned WAPHS member Don Wiggerman had previously prepared folders on the history of police officers that have worked at Wagin.

Joyce Turnor, volunteer at the Village gave a history of the procedure that was required to obtain funding from the State Government Wheatbelt Development Commission for the station that was built by Albany Builder Peter Johnston.

D J Lampard

Dave Lampard
President.



Joyce Turnor Speaking on the Day

WAPHS supporting Wagin Historical Village.



Weather did not discourage attendance on the day!

Whilst at Wagin I had a good chat with Joyce Turnor from the Wagin Historical Village the main organiser of the WA Day Event. I advised that wherever we could help with items that we have in duplicate triplicate or more we could assist.

These items would enhance the building and make it look like a 1950's police station.

I have already donated a frame depicting the chevron worn for that period, a 1953 Picture of Queen Elizabeth II, and a few smaller items for the bookcase desk.

I propose that we now make available.

- *A mannequin,*
- *A 1950's Tunic any constable rank,*
- *A decent Australian and WA Flag (they only have a battered print version)*
- *Framed photographs of policing the district in those or similar times.*
- *One of the old career chalk boards*
- *Any other spare police books of the era.*

I will contact the OIC at Wagin and/or Katanning and have them collect the items the next time they are attending in Perth with a van for any purpose.

Found in the back of an old Esperance Occurrence Book

An Esperance Sensation

Native Shoots a Policeman

Esperance February 15, 1906

Constable James Gerald Lynch 482 of Esperance Police Station was shot in the shoulder yesterday by an aboriginal named Woobey whom he had arrested under a warrant for arson.

Woobey who was until last week employed by Mr. J. White and owing to his cruelty his Gin had deserted him and gone to live with another aboriginal named Moses who is also employed by Mr White. ...continues

Finding the Gin would not return to him, Woobey visited White's residence last Tuesday between 2 and 3 in the morning and set fire to the hut in which the natives were sleeping. Fortunately White was aroused by Moses and put the fire out before any damage was done.

Woobey made for Bingibing 15 miles distant to the camp of a man named Hudson and employee of Dempster Brothers. Constable Lynch and Mr. White went there yesterday. It appears as though Constable Lynch had arrested Woobey a short distance from the camp, handcuffed him and took his gun from him.

They then made their way the Hudson's camp and whilst Constable Lynch and Mr. White were waiting for a drink of tea. Woobey went into Hudson's tent put two cartridges into Hudson's gun and fired both barrels at Constable Lynch. One of the charges hit the constable in the shoulder and the native (Woobey) cleared into the bush. Hudson and White jumped on their horses and ran him (Woobey) down.

Constable Lynch although in great pain is not in any danger and is progressing favorably.

Dr. Wace states that the wound is not dangerous. Woobey is in the lock up.

Writer:

There is no mention on Constable Lynch's record of neglect of duty due to the need to have a cup of tea. It is also remarkable that Woobey was able to load and fire a shot gun whilst handcuffed.

Constable Lynch who had joined in May 1899 and had served previously in Perth went on to serve in Ravensthorpe, Yundermintera, Jarrahdale, North Fremantle and Fremantle resigned March 1922 and still had a sore shoulder.

Plods at the Beatles Performance, Pavilion Gardens Buxton April 1963



Crowd Control 1963-style - Just keep on singing - The show goes on even during Plod first Aid

Sergeant Rick Veaney 5996 (retired) honoured.

NUMEROUS officers will have been trained by Sergeant Rick Veaney 5996 at some point throughout their careers, and to recognise his commitment and contribution to training within the agency, the tavern in the Academy Scenario Village has been named after him.

Mr Veaney retired on 5 February 2023 after a long career with the WA Police Force, which saw him serve throughout the State.

Much of his service since returning to the metro area

has been spent in training roles at both the Maylands and Joondalup Police Academy and within metro Districts.

Speaking at the Tavern's reopening on 14 February, Operational Leadership Development Unit Senior Constable Nadine Britton said Rick was regularly described as being the 'best trainer I have ever had' by officers. "He's a very humble man who has passed on a tremendous amount of knowledge with passion and empathy, making a real impact on so many throughout the agency," she said. "His training legacy will now live on for many years as Recruits produce scenario statements in moot court with Mr Veaney as the licensee."



Aged Care Residents Enjoying Their Visit to Museum - September 2023



Pitman Walsh Kalgoorlie Memorial Relocation.

Update October 10, 2023 from Dave Mac Donald

“ I went to Kalgoorlie last Thursday for several reason: one, to attend the Police Remembrance Day Ceremony and two, to have discussions with Wayne Astill and Norton Gold Fields Ltd and I am pleased to report that the Pitman and Walsh site rededication is now underway, all contracts have been issued and to date the following has been agreed and will not be altered.

Pitman& Walsh site Rededication - Event Date will be 10am 27th April 2024.

“Save the date “invitations will be prepared by Nortons

The land has doubled in size and has been surveyed and pegged ready for the clearing of the scrub. Only trees will be left. The actual roadworks will not take place until the 18th December 2023 or at the beginning of January 2024 and will be completed in estimated two weeks.

Parking area for 16 cars and separate area for 3 caravans

It is unfortunate but the actual area for the planting of the wildflowers will have to wait until the roadworks are completed. Garden furniture has been ordered but will be kept in safe storage until a few weeks before the opening.

The existing memorial will be relocated at the new site the same time as the furniture.

NORTON GOLD FIELDS LTD have already committed that this new area will have unrestricted entry for visitors and the actual site (Milers Find) will not be destroyed further when the area surrounding has been mined and safe for visiting.

Long term plans may include a walkway to be constructed from the new monument to Millers Find; however this would be in probably 20 years so it will not happen in our days - but the WA Police Historical Society site will always be preserved which was the main part of our agreement

For your info the initial costing of the relocation and dedication ceremony was \$100,000 but after further discussions looks like the costing was incorrect due to the larger roadworks, the land area, main road signage etc so consequently it is now budgeted at an unbelievable \$250,000 which will without any doubt be used. I find it hard to believe as the existing memorial and plaques came in at a cost of \$10,000 in 2015 but considering that the road was then a track, only 5 plaques and the monument on an area no larger than a backyard.

The only thing I missed out on was getting a toilet in the area and that is because neither the Council or Nortons wanted the ongoing responsibility for the maintenance and the fact that no water is available to the location so it would have to be chemical.

A public toilet and caravan dump is only 3 or 4 kilometres down the road and in view of the \$250,000 I thought enough is enough (for the time being) - tomorrow is another day.

In the near future the Society will be getting a “Save the Date” invitation from NORTONS and although it is about 6 months away the accommodation in Kalgoorlie is at a premium for reasonable priced units . I will be following this through to the end and probably go up again for a couple of weeks before the event. “

Dave Mac Donald.

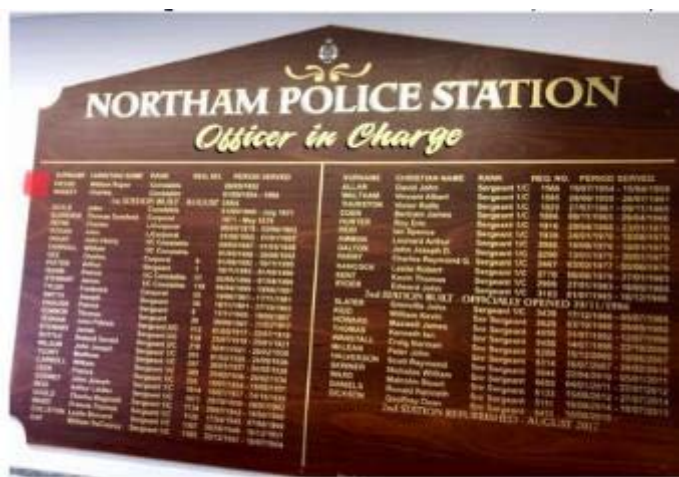
(On behalf of the committee well done Dave)

Charles WISBEY

Extract from an article by Graham Webster 2023

The family, with Amelia, left Plymouth, Devon, on 28 December 1853 on *Victory* and arrived in the Port of Fremantle, Western Australia on 24 Mar 1854². Aboard were 64 male (Charles was listed as WITBY), 103 female immigrants, 38 boys under 14 years, 31 girls under 14 years and 4 under one year. Various household goods were among the imports, including 18 kegs tobacco, 55 cases of beer, 10 hogsheads ale, and 30 cases gin. Starch, soda, blue, biscuits, and herrings³.

After his arrival he worked in agriculture⁴; it is believed he farmed a property at Irishtown called "Hard Bargain". But on 1 September 1854 Charles joined the West Australian Police Force as a Constable⁵ and became only the second officer in charge in the Northam Police Station (until 1868)⁶.



Memorial board in Northam Police Station of officers in charge⁴ (ROBERTS, Twitter, 30-May-2018)¶

The Superintendent of the West Australian Police (1853-1856), John Augustus CONROY, reporting to the state's Governor in April 1855, listed Charles on strength at Guildford⁷.

At Northam, Charles role in the police force was various:

The duties of a police officer in the early days of settlement in the Eastern Districts were of a very multifarious and onerous nature. Many of our readers can recall the trials and vicissitudes attending the lives of those on outpost duty. The call from home to follow some unfortunate into the back country, and in so doing to spend days and nights in the wilderness exposed to the trying effects of the climate, and without the necessary equipment to withstand the hardships consequently endured called forth the best traits of human character imposing self-denial and strong de termination combined with self reliance.⁸

He is listed, in correspondence with the Colonial Secretary, as a Mounted Constable, September 1857 to February 1858⁹. But equally he was on foot duty in October 1857 at the York Fair¹⁰. As an encouragement, in June 1858 Charles was award a cash reward of £10¹¹.

In 1859 he tried to quench a fire, possibly caused by sun on a piece of glass in grass tree rushes for repairs to the roof, together with Thomas MEAD – the new owner – and Richard MORRELL – the previous owner, in the thatch roof of the newly-owned Northam Inn. Postal contents, and the building, was destroyed¹².

As said above, his role was various as witness the following report by the Superintendent of Police in August 1860 and the response from the Governor's office¹³:

Relieved IW [Instructing Warden] Kenny at Avon Rpp [Road Party] 20-22.8.1860...by this is appears that a constable has been taken from his duties to charge of a rad party a proceeding involving much of a very objectionable character...RM [Resident Magistrate] told not to be repeated: wholly irregular to employ policeman to superintend convicts.

In January 1864 reports show that Charles with other members of the police force and the community contributed to subscription "...in aid of the sufferers by the disastrous fire at the Greenough Flats..."¹⁴.

As referred to above, policing in the districts away from Perth often involved tracing errant convicts and rebellious indigenous locals. Charles would have had to ride round the country visiting the settlers and shepherds to see if they had any complaints to make. Also, to see several woodcutters and ascertain if they had paid their license fees. While he was away one day in early the 1860s there was an incident. Two escaped convicts roamed at large to the terror of the settlers. They reached the home of Mrs. WISBEY and asked her for some food; she realised that they were the escapees.

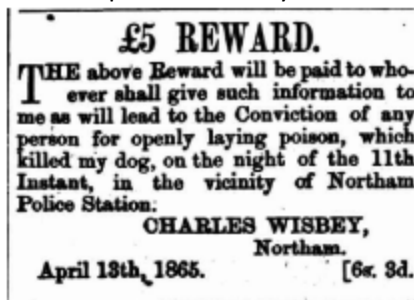
She offered to cook them a meal and asked them to wait in the building used as a lock-up. They agreed. To their dismay they realised their mistake as soon as they entered the building when the constable's wife locked and bolted the door behind them. She held them prisoner until her husband came home, 12 hours later¹⁵.

On 8 February Charles was investigating John INGRAM, charged with stealing a cow, the property of William CHIDLOW, of Northam¹⁶. In April 1864 Charles arrested James FORD, charged with forging and uttering an order for money, with intent to defraud William DODD, of the Toodyay district¹⁷; the arrest was not made

earlier as Ford had left the district and used a different name. The former prosecution was successful, the latter not.

In January 1865 Charles was involved in arresting David REEDER, indicted for the murder of Denny, an aboriginal native, at James STEERE's station, on the Blackwood; Reeder was convicted of manslaughter¹⁸. In April, Charles offered a reward for information on the poisoning of his dog:

Obviously, there was no take up of the reward as the advert was repeated weekly until 12 May 1865¹⁹.



The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times, 21 April 1865, p2 <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/3748552>

Although not all arrests went to Charles' advantage as witnessed the charge of murder of Edward Ellis CLARKSON by Egup or Conder, an aboriginal native, at Galver Cutting on 1 August 1865:

To the Editor of the Perth Gazette & W. A. Times.

SIR,-In your issue of the 21st ult., it was said that the capture of one of the natives for the murder of the late Mr. Clarkson was made by police-constable Edwards, and no mention was made of any other officer. Without opposing Mr. Edwards, but injustice to a zealous and enterprising officer, I beg to say that the capture in question was made by police-constable Charles Wisbey, who on this as on other occasions, has proved himself to be an officer of superior merit, and it is to be hoped will meet with due reward. I am Sir, Your obedient servant, NORTHAM.²⁰

The trial took place in April 1866 and accused was found guilty and sentenced to death²¹. Later in 1866 Charles was again involved in an agricultural dispute when he investigated George LONGBOTTOM, charged with killing a calf, the property of W CHIDLOW, with intent to steal. LONGBOTTOM was taken into custody on 24 July 1866 and the verdict of the trial was guilty, five years penal servitude²². Still at Northam, Charles was involved in the trial of Jack, an aboriginal native, charged with the murder of Balgett, a native, at Newcastle, on the 6 February 1867 where he gave evidence on the alleged crime scene; verdict, guilty, but with a strong recommendation of mercy²³. Later in 1867 gave evidence in the trial of Charles PEACHEY charged with stealing a pony, the property of John Wall HARDEY, at York, in February; verdict, guilty, with three years imprisonment. Not all of Charles activities were directly related to crime on his 'patch'. In a trial in April

1868, Charles, as a Corporal, gave evidence of searching for Michael BRYANT charged with stealing a watch from the person of Robert WILSON, at Perth in January 1868; he found him at Haysom's²⁴.

By 1868 he was transferred to York as Sergeant in charge after various spells of duty, from Northam, at York as Constable²⁵. During his time in Northam his reputation as a fair officer grew: "...So useful was Mr Wisbey the position of senior police officer in the eastern districts that for many years, we believe, at the earnest request of the settlers he was allowed by the Government to remain there,

The rule of the department being, and is still, to constantly change these officers"²⁶. He was fully involved in the local community; in August 1864 he was on a committee for the establishment of a Mechanical Institute²⁷, largely instigated by the George THROSELL²⁸. Northam was renowned in the early 1860s as sober and respectful:



Charles Wisbey at the Swearing in Ceremony of Police at York in 1868. Charles is sitting on the left (BENTLEY, Grandfather was a policeman, p52)

Its small school and neat little church and Mechanical Instute are symbolic of its character, and were complemented by the conscientious work of Constable Wisbey...²⁹

Although after a refusal to George THROSSELL for a gallon licence but granted a licence to sell colonial wine in his store, "...Constable Wisbey claimed that there was an immediate deterioration of behaviour in the community"³⁰

At York he was responsible for sub stations at Lakes, Youndegin, Beverly and Stanton Springs³¹.

One of his early trials as a Sergeant was in early 1869 involved Charles POVAH charged with stealing sundry tools in the previous year. Charles gave evidence in the trial of John CLARKE, charged with stealing a pig, the property of Edmund CAHILL of Daliak, when in October 1868 he searched the accused house although the verdict was not guilty³². In another trial he investigated the stealing of a filly belonging to S E BURGESS by James

FITT where the verdict was guilty, six years penal servitude³³.

In October 1869 Sergeant of Police, York, Charles WISBEY gave evidence in "...one of the boldest and to some extent most successful forgeries in the colony..." in the trial of William BERRETT and James DIXON, both found guilty with seven years imprisonment³⁴.



Sergeant Charles WISBEY (on right) in undress uniform, ca 1896 (BEN LILLY, Grandfather was a policeman, p57)

In March 1870 he was also appointed Poundkeeper³⁵; this gives an idea of his role:

IMPOUNDED in the public pound York, on the 17th Sept., 1870—One bay mare, about 14 hands high, branded off side on ribs **GS** or **CS**, small rope round neck, hollow back, a few white hairs on withers, aged. If not claimed within the time allowed by law will be sold to defray expenses.
CHARLES WISBEY,
Pound-keeper.
York, Sept. 19, 1870. [8s. 6d.]

The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times, 23 September 1870, p2 <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/3014363782494>

In May 1870 in a sheep stealing case, Charles arrested William SERMON who was found not guilty³⁶. In August 1871, whilst serving in York, Police Constable Michael LALLEY complained that a malicious report against him was made by Charles and Sub-Inspector FINLAY claiming he was unfairly accused of drunkenness; he threatened to resign if he was not transferred to Perth. His complaint was rejected and LALLEY had to resign!³⁷

Later in 1871 Charles was involved in a 'mistaken' postal fraud where a letter posted in York by his daughter Fanny (aged 16) was wrongly handed to someone who thought it was for them but did not read. The letter was eventually handed back to the post office for redirection, the envelope having been destroyed by an infant. Charles apparently took the actions as being deliberate and was 'called out' by George THROSELL:

...I cannot too strongly express my contempt. Will it be credited that the man [ie Charles Wisbey] was a professed friend of my family, and that a short time before he made his charge he was at my house and drank brandy, at my expense, to the good health of those he must at the same time have been planning to ruin? Such conduct seems too Judas-like for these days, but alas ! too true³⁸.

During his Northam days his family grew: Frances (Fanny) was born there in 1855; Amelia was born in Toodyay (some records give Northam) on 31 January 1857; Martha Jane born 4 May 1859 in Northam; Sarah Eliza born in Northam in 1861; Mary Ann born 1863 in Toodyay; Emily born 26 November 1865 in Northam; Eleanor born in Perth on 24 April 1868 and Elizabeth born in 1870 in York.

In 1872 Superintendent Matthew SMITH restructured the police districts and brought Fremantle more under control from Perth, although it still remained a distinct entity with a local sergeant in place³⁹; this first sergeant was Charles WISBEY on transfer from York⁴⁰. What must have been one of his court cases in this this new role, Charles gave evidence in November that he made an arrest on a warrant of Patrick MACNAMARA, indicted for robbery with violence in Fremantle; verdict, not guilty⁴¹.

In September 1875, the *Western Australian Times* wrote a scathing report on the Fremantle court and police, hinting at corruption⁴². A reporter had attended a court session and reported on two particular cases. In one case, in which a ticket-of-leave man was applying to the court to take up a position with Mr WOOLLAMS, a local sawyer, the paper reported:

A respectable-looking man applied to the magistrate to allow him, being a ticket man, to have an engagement (produced) with a Mr. Woollams, both sawyers. The learned sergeant (Wisbey) here rose and addressed the bench, that he "would not allow him to take the engagement, that he could get him an engagement at the Vasse." The man said he had no wish to go so far as he could get plenty of work here. The learned sergeant then called out, "stop your jaw, will you!" I thought this a novelty and allowed by the bench too. The same bumptious individual told Mr. Slade that he would give the man a 7 days pass for Fremantle, but not an engagement. Why? Echo answers because it appears Mr. Simpson at the Vasse wants several pairs of sawyers, and requested an official of this court to send some down. Does Mr. Simpson also want Fiddlers? The sequel will show.⁴³

That morning, the other significant case concerned Pat KELLY, an elderly man who worked for local publican Mr HARWOOD.

The police had arrested him for being in a bar when he was on the list of those prohibited from buying alcohol. The verdict, in this case, was that "the police acted wrong in entering the Hotel and arresting Pat, unless called upon by the landlord to do so. At the same time KELLY must leave HARWOOD's house"⁴⁴ which, the paper noted, would have left KELLY homeless. The report concluded "Why not promote the learned Sergt.

to Perth? He is (as Mrs. George Case observes) “so remarkably clever,” and Mr. Landor would soon put him through his facings, and take the “jaw” out of him.”⁴⁵ The newspaper then published a letter supporting Mr WHISBEY [sic] but adding the comment:

*Sergeant Wisbey has woke up one morning and found himself famous. We have received a number of contradictory letters on the subject, and we are tired of it. So we hope in Sergeant Wisbey’s alleged parlance that everyone will “hold their jaw” about it for the future.*⁴⁶

The “hold your Jaw” reference was also used by the newspaper in an October episode of the satirical column “The Owl and the Magpie” on the justice system in the colony. The *Inquirer and Commercial News*, another paper in the colony, condemned the reporting and defended Charles WISBEY, stating:

*These remarks were quite uncalled for, if not utterly false. The sergeant is a very kind and popular man, both with his officers and all who come in contact with him officially, and quite unworthy of the slanderous effusion which appeared in your contemporary.*⁴⁷

Then in 1876 Charles was transferred to Bunbury on promotion as a Sub-Inspector⁴⁸. By the end of his first year in the district, WISBEY was accused of corruption by the Anglican minister, Reverend WITHERS. However, given his recent treatment in Fremantle, Charles sued the Reverend for defamation of character and won. The case arose from an inquest on Jack MELOY (also reported as MOLLOY) who died as a result of drinking; the verdict was death as result of apoplexy⁴⁹. Withers commenting on the verdict wrote:

So far from any bona fide effort to ascertain the real cause of death being manifested; the Sub-Inspector appeared desirous to screen the publican.

*Some five or six witnesses – most unwilling ones – were examined. The feeling common to all evidently was “Jack” (meaning the deceased) is out of the way, and nothing that we can say can do him any good. Let us screen the publican.*⁵⁰

This was the libel complained of; there was a second count for slander, arising out of following observation made by the defendant in the course of a sermon preached by him, and alluding to the same case “...the heads of the police connived to smother the matter up”⁵¹. The verdict was:

*Found for defendant [Withers] on the first count, for libel; on the second count, for slander, for plaintiff [Wisbey] damages 20s*⁵².

In 1877 the West Australia police grant was considerable cut by the Government; set at £14,000 and planned to decrease £1,000 a year until 1888 when the entire funding would be the responsibility of the Colony⁵³. This had an immediate effect on the number and salaries of police officers; the Superintendent salary became £400 pa, Inspector’s £200pa and the number of Sub-Inspectors reduced to three from four, the most junior being Charles WISBEY⁵⁴. This left Charles in danger of being let go but Matthew SMITH, Superintendent of Police felt “...the force could not afford to lose such a reliable man...”⁵⁵. He wrote to the Colonial Secretary that this would mean:

*...discharging...a very deserving officer, Sub-Inspector WISBEY after twenty two years, and leave Bunbury district without an officer in charge, a step I am sure the Honourable Members of Council will not press when they understand the facts.*⁵⁶ .

They relented and agreed to retain Charles but as a Sergeant in Charge of the district. In August 1878, Charles HOWARD was appointed Inspector of Police for the Southern Regions but it was questioned why Charles, among others, had been overlooked in preference to a young man with little experience⁵⁷. With little chance of promotion within the police force Charles announced that month he would resign at the end of the year⁵⁸, and departed the police force in November 1878 receiving a ‘gratuity’ of £294 3s 4d and 50 acres⁵⁹.



Charles WISBEY and wife Ellen, date unknown (BENTLEY, *Grandfather was a policeman*, p111)

Western Australia Police Historical Society (Inc)

Museum of Western Australian Policing.

*The museum is open from 9am to 3pm each Tuesday and Friday.
At 57 Lincoln Street Highgate.*

Note: The land line 93283691 is only attended during these hours.

*Contact and inquiries are to be directed via email to
waphs@policewahistory.org.au*

Committee:

President: Dave Lampard

Mobile #0438080916

E Mail. david.lampard@policewahistory.org.au

Vice President: Al Finnegan

E Mail. waphs@policewahistory.org.au

Treasurer: Carol Veron

E Mail. carol.vernon@policewahistory.org.au

Secretary: Lena Wiggerman

E Mail. waphs@policewahistory.org.au

Committee:

Mike Dean, Russell Armstrong

E Mail, waphs@policewahistory.org.au

WA Police Force Liaison

Commander Mike Bell.

Website

policewahistory.org.au

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The following are volunteers and or committee at the Police Museum.

Note: 1 to 7 are WAPHS (Inc) Committee.

1. David John Lampard (Dave) President Retired 1/C Sgt 4717
2. Albert Marshall Finnegan (Al) Vice President Retired Sergeant 6783
3. Carol Louise Vernon Treasurer Retired Sergeant 6428
4. Michael Deephouse (Mike) Committee resigned Constable 5007 Sadly recently deceased after a long illness.
5. Michael James Dean (Mike) Committee retired Snr Sergeant 4873
6. Russell Lee Armstrong Committee retired Inspector 4539
7. Lena Wiggerman Secretary civilian
8. Ian Barnes Volunteer Retired 1/C Sergeant 4839
9. Donald Charles Hawkins (Don) Volunteer Retired Sergeant 4897
10. Bob Horton Civilian, ex WA Police Union Industrial Officer
11. Kevin Clarke Retired Traffic Warden
12. Phil Trainer retired unsworn officer.