

FROM WARTIME CAMP TO GARDEN SUBURB:

**A Short History of
Nightcliff and Rapid Creek**



LEITH F. BARTER

Historical Society of the Northern Territory
Darwin, 1994

NT

994.295
BART

FROM WARTIME CAMP TO GARDEN SUBURB:

**A Short History of
Nightcliff and Rapid Creek**

Leith F. Barter

Historical Society of the Northern Territory
Darwin, 1994

Published by the Historical Society of the Northern Territory

PO Box 40544 Casuarina NT 0811 Australia

© Leith F. Barter

Cataloguing-in-publication data supplied by the State Library of the Northern Territory.

BARTER, Leith F.

From wartime camp to garden suburb : a short history of Nightcliff and Rapid Creek / Leith F. Barter.

Darwin : Historical Society of the Northern Territory, 1994.

viii, 56 p. : ill., maps ; 30 cm.

Bibliography: p.55-56.

ISBN 0 646 19897 1

1. Nightcliff (N.T.) - History.
2. Rapid Creek (N.T.) - History.
3. Nightcliff (N.T.) - Historical geography.
4. Rapid Creek (N.T.) - Historical geography.
- I. Title.

994.295

Printed by NTU Printing/Publishing Services

This book is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part of this publication may be reproduced by any process whatsoever without the written permission of the publisher.

Cover photograph: Nightcliff Camp, 1946 - Grace, Ted, Bill and Margaret Juster with a crocodile caught on Nightcliff Beach
(Courtesy of Mrs Margaret Rolfe, née Juster)

CONTENTS

Illustrations.....	iv
Acknowledgments.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Early Knowledge of the Region.....	2
St. Joseph's Rapid Creek Mission, 1882-1891.....	4
Early Twentieth Century.....	7
World War II.....	13
Nightcliff Community Centre.....	25
Birth of the Garden Suburb.....	31
Seabreeze Hotel.....	35
Suburban Growth.....	47
Select Bibliography.....	55

ILLUSTRATIONS

PHOTOGRAPHS

Portion of headstone, John George Knight's grave, Palmerston Cemetery..... (Leith Barter, 1993)	3
Picnic at Rapid Creek, 1899..... (Peter Spillelt Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	11
Picnic at Rapid Creek, 1930s..... (John Watts Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	11
Old road to Rapid Creek, 1930s..... (John Watts Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	12
Bathing at Rapid Creek, 1930s..... (Mayse Young Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	12
2/14 Field Regiment working party near Nightcliff, 1941..... (Harry Beale Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	13
2/14 Field Regiment office under construction at Nightcliff, 1941..... (W. P. Yob Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	14
Half built gun position at Nightcliff, 1941..... (W. P. Yob Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	14
2/14 Field Regiment at Nightcliff with storm approaching, 1942..... (W. P. Yob Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	15
Aftermath of storm at Nightcliff, 1942..... (W. P. Yob Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	15
Open air theatre used by troops at Nightcliff..... (Ray Foskey Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	16
American 86th Station Hospital at Nightcliff, 1944..... (From: E. Kettle, <i>Health Services in the Northern Territory: a History, 1824-1970</i> , v.1, p.327.) Courtesy of Ellen Kettle	19
Surgeon's office, American Hospital at Nightcliff, 1944..... (From: E. Kettle, <i>Health Services in the Northern Territory: a History, 1824-1970</i> , v.1, p.326.) Courtesy of Ellen Kettle	19
Aerial photograph of portion of Nightcliff area, 1945..... (<i>Darwin-Howard River, D52-4, 1945</i> , film no. MAP 665, run 7, print no.V195, AUSLIG) Reproduced with the permission of the General Manager, Australian Surveying and Land Information Group, Dept. of Administrative Services	20
Commemorative plaque above Nightcliff Cliffs World War II dump..... (Leith Barter, 1993)	22
Former gunner, Don MacKenzie, at the Nightcliff Cliffs historic site..... (From: <i>Northern Territory News</i> , Saturday February 29 1992, p.4.) Courtesy of the Northern Territory News	23
Nightcliff Cliffs World War II dump..... (Leith Barter, 1991)	23
View of the debris on the beach, Nightcliff Cliffs World War II dump..... (Leith Barter, 1991)	24
1943 bottle amongst the debris..... (Leith Barter, 1991)	24

Hut at Nightcliff Camp, 1949..... (Iris Fowlestone Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	28
Christmas party at Nightcliff Camp, 1949..... (Iris Fowlestone Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	29
Nightcliff Camp, 1949..... (R. C. Hoath Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	30
Aerial view of Nightcliff Camp, 1949..... (R. C. Hoath Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	30
Aerial view of Nightcliff, 1960..... (Howard Truran Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	34
Accommodation unit at Ludmilla Hotel, early 1950s..... (Douglas Gordan Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	34
First advertisement for the Darwin Tourist Hotel..... (<i>Northern Standard</i> , Friday April 9 1948, p.2.)	35
Ludmilla Hotel and units, 1949..... (R. C. Hoath Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	36
Units at Ludmilla Hotel, 1949..... (R. C. Hoath Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	36
Accommodation unit at Ludmilla Hotel, 1949..... (R. C. Hoath Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	37
Beach at Ludmilla Hotel, 1949..... (R. C. Hoath Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	37
Advertisement for the Seabreeze Hotel, 1955..... (<i>Northern Territory News</i> , Thursday October 20 1955, p.3.) Courtesy of the Northern Territory News	38
Swimming near Ludmilla Hotel, early 1950s..... (Douglas Gordan Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	39
Beer garden, Seabreeze Hotel..... (Christa Roderick Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	39
Ludmilla Hotel, 1953..... (Peter Doyle Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	40
Seabreeze Hotel, 1960..... (State Library of the Northern Territory)	40
Seabreeze Hotel, 1973..... (Mayse Young Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	42
Seabreeze Hotel, 1975, showing damage caused by Cyclone Tracy..... (State Library of the Northern Territory)	43
Aerial view of vicinity of Seabreeze Hotel site, 1979..... (State Library of the Northern Territory)	43
Dance floor with steps leading down, site of first Seabreeze Hotel..... (Leith Barter, 1991)	44
Concrete slab on site of first Seabreeze Hotel..... (Leith Barter, 1991)	44
Residential development, Casuarina Drive, on Seabreeze Hotel site..... (Leith Barter, 1991)	45

View from beach near first Seabreeze Hotel site looking across to residential development in the vicinity of the second site.....	45
(Leith Barter, 1991)	
House under construction, Nightcliff, 1960.....	47
(State Library of the Northern Territory)	
Advertisement for Rapid Creek Development Company, 1961.....	48
(<i>Northern Territory News</i> , Saturday September 30 1961, p.8.)	
Courtesy of the Northern Territory News	
Paspalis drive-in theatre, Nightcliff, 1964.....	49
(Paspalis Collection, State Library of the Northern Territory)	
Leonard family home, Aralia Street, 1960.....	50
Courtesy of Valerie Fong	
Aerial view of Nightcliff looking across Casuarina Drive, 1966.....	50
(State Library of the Northern Territory)	
Cyclone damage to commercial buildings in Progress Drive.....	53
(State Library of the Northern Territory)	
Total destruction in Bougainvillea Street after Cyclone Tracy.....	53
(From: <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , <i>Cyclone! Christmas in Darwin</i> , 1974, p.1.)	

MAPS

Location map showing Nightcliff and Rapid Creek in relation to the surrounding suburbs of Coconut Grove, Millner and Alawa.....	7
Portion of a plan of survey of 21 June 1899 by E. Copley Playford.....	5
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Dept. of Lands, Housing & Local Government	
Portion of plan of Palmerston and sections adjacent to Port Darwin, 1891.....	6
(Adelaide, Surveyor General's Office)	
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Dept. of Lands, Housing & Local Government	
Portion of sketch map, Darwin, 1 inch to 1 mile, 1938.....	8
(Australian Section Imperial General Staff)	
Reproduced with the permission of the Australian Dept. of Defence	
American 86th Station Hospital and 65th Camp Hospital, Nightcliff, 1944.....	18
(From: E. Kettle, <i>Health Services in the Northern Territory: a History, 1824-1970</i> , v.1, p.325.)	
Courtesy of Ellen Kettle	
Portion of plan showing general layout Night Cliffs area, 10 chns. to 1 inch.....	21
(NTRS 1349, Northern Territory Archives Service)	
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Archives Service	
Portion of plan of proposed Greater Darwin, ca.1944.....	26
(Lands and Survey Branch, N.T. Administration)	
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Dept. of Lands, Housing & Local Government	
Portion of Darwin, 1:50,000 sheet, 1st ed., 1959.....	32
(Royal Australian Survey Corps)	
Reproduced with the permission of the Australian Dept. of Defence	
Town of Nightcliff, 1965.....	46
(From: <i>Universal Business Directory for Northern Territory of Australia</i> , 7th ed., Perth, Universal Business Directories, 1965, facing p.113.)	
Reproduction by permission of UBD, © Universal Press Pty. Ltd., DG 4/94	
Northern suburbs, 1967.....	51
(Darwin Nightcliff Road Map, Darwin, Lands and Survey Branch, N.T. Administration, 1967.)	
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Dept. of Lands, Housing & Local Government	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My interest in the history of the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek region commenced in 1976 when I first moved into the area. In the intervening years, although not always remaining a local resident, I have maintained a close contact with the area. The possibility of researching the subject emerged in 1991, and I am very grateful to Associate Professor David Carment of the Northern Territory University for having fostered this interest.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to the late John Bartholomew, formerly of Steve Hatton's Nightcliff Electorate Office, for having made available a large amount of information which he diligently collected over a period of several years.

Most of the research was conducted in the Northern Australia Collection of the State Library of the Northern Territory, the Djorra' Djamirri Collection of the Northern Territory University, the Northern Territory Archives and the Australian Archives, Northern Territory Regional Office. I wish to sincerely thank the staffs of these institutions for their assistance. I particularly wish to thank Michael Loos for facilitating reproduction of many of the photographs which are in the possession of the State Library's Northern Australia Collection.

This short history is necessarily brief and only concentrates on the major issues which have affected the development of the region. When commencing this study, I was struck by the paucity of published information relating to any of Darwin's suburban areas. It is hoped that the present work will make a small contribution to overcoming this problem and will encourage others to deal with the subject more comprehensively.

Although I have concentrated principally on examining documentary sources, much future work needs to be done on the collecting of oral histories. There are still individuals living in the local community who remember Darwin under wartime conditions and who lived in the abandoned military camps in the immediate post-war period. Their reminiscences are vitally needed to inject flesh and blood into the bland newspaper articles and government reports which are otherwise the primary source of information for works such as this. During recent years, Nightcliff High School students,

under the leadership of Social Education teacher Gary Harper, have been making a significant contribution to the recording and preservation of this type of information.

Kathy De La Rue's excellent unpublished report on the historical geography of Darwin also greatly inspired the present work.¹ Because her report deals more than adequately with the physical characteristics of Darwin's hinterland and provides useful information on the background to the settlement of Darwin and its early history, these topics have not been dealt with. Nor does the present work deal adequately with the culture and history of the Larrakia people, the original owners of the land in the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek region. For a brief summary of information available on this topic, readers are referred to a recent publication by Sean Heffernan.²

¹K. De La Rue, *An Historical Geography of Darwin*.

²S. Heffernan, *Rapid Creek (Gurumbai) Education Project Curriculum Materials for English and Social Education Years 8-10*.



INTRODUCTION

The now closely settled residential suburbs of Nightcliff and Rapid Creek have become an almost indistinguishable part of the sprawl of northern suburbs which have come into being during recent decades as Darwin has expanded well beyond its original site on the peninsular plateau at the north eastern entrance to Darwin harbour. Prior to World War II, however, the area lay well beyond the fringe of Darwin's suburban development and remained a peaceful retreat frequented only by picnickers. Although the region had become the focus of an early attempt to establish a Jesuit Mission to Northern Territory Aborigines, and there had been sporadic attempts to encourage agricultural settlement in the area, the long term impact of both these activities was minimal.

All this changed with the approach of World War II. During 1941, a naval outpost, including a large concrete artillery observation bunker, was established on the headland. Various other defence facilities were constructed inland as large numbers of military personnel moved into the area. The 2/14 Field Regiment A.I.F. was given the task of planning and constructing a standing camp which became known as *Night Cliffs Camp*. This Camp, located between the R.A.N. outpost and the present-day alignment of Aralia Street, came under strafing attack from Japanese aircraft during Darwin's first and largest air raid of 19 February 1942. Also camped in the area during 1943 and 1944 were the British pilots and ground crew of 54 Fighter Squadron R.A.F., a Spitfire squadron which played an important part in the air defence of Darwin. During 1944, the American 65 and 86 Camp and Station Hospitals were relocated to Nightcliff from inland locations. A new hospital to house these units was built near the existing facilities on the landward side of Aralia Street. The following year, after the Americans departed for the Philippines, this installation was taken over by the R.A.A.F. No.1 Medical Receiving Station. A wartime dump at the base of the cliffs behind the Nightcliff Swimming Pool is, today, the only tangible reminder in the area of World War II.

With the cessation of hostilities and the return of civilian control to Darwin, the acute housing situation caused large numbers of squatters to move into the abandoned buildings; by June 1946, there were over 100 civilians living in the area. During the following month, the N.T.

Administration assumed control by allocating tenancies and a non-official *Night Cliff* post office was opened in one of the huts. By 1947, the settlement had become known as the *Night Cliff Community Centre*. Increasing pressure for suburban development caused the Nomenclature Committee of the N.T. to officially name the area on 29 October 1948. The conjoint version of the name, *Nightcliff*, was then adopted. The first land sales, in the area now bounded by Casuarina Drive, Aralia Street and Jacaranda Avenue, were held during the following year. By this time, several of the military buildings on the headland had been converted to create the Ludmilla Hotel, the forerunner of the well-known Seabreeze Hotel. A second Seabreeze Hotel was subsequently built near the site of the first, and this hotel continued to be one of Darwin's most popular drinking spots until it was destroyed by Cyclone Tracy in 1974.

By 1960, Nightcliff's population had reached 1,438. Spectacular growth occurred during the next decade, so that, by the end of this period, Darwin's urban sprawl had spread northwards beyond Rapid Creek. Cyclone Tracy caused extensive destruction in the Nightcliff and Rapid Creek areas, but massive reconstruction and continued development of the region during the late 1970s quickly obliterated all traces of this disaster. Despite the fact that flat, townhouse and home unit development is now proceeding at a prodigious rate, the area still retains its character as a *garden suburb*.

EARLY KNOWLEDGE OF THE REGION

The area occupied by the modern suburbs of Nightcliff and Rapid Creek lies within the traditional tribal territory of the Aboriginal Larrakia people. Although little detailed information has been recorded concerning Larrakia land use prior to European settlement, it is known that Rapid Creek and the adjoining coastal hinterland provided plentiful food and water resources, thereby ensuring that the area was an important camping place. The area still remains important to Larrakia people because it contains at least one sacred site, *Gurambai*, meaning elbow, so named because of the shape of the Creek's course near its mouth. Offshore to the northwest of the mouth lies the registered sacred site, *Dariba Nanggalinya*, better known as *Old Man Rock*. The Larrakia believe that *Dariba Nanggalinya* ('old man' *Nanggalinya*) protects Darwin and that any disturbance to him will result in natural calamities. This explanation was most recently invoked after Cyclone Tracy caused massive destruction to the Darwin area in 1974.³

Although the origin of the names *Nightcliff* and *Rapid Creek* has always been surrounded by conjecture and controversy, the naming of the former should be traced back to 8 September, 1839. Early that day, John Lort Stokes, William Forsyth and several other crew members of H.M.S. *Beagle*, which was engaged on the last major sea exploration of the Australian coast, provisioned a longboat for four days and left on an excursion which was to culminate in the discovery and naming of Port Darwin. Leaving the *Beagle* anchored in Shoal Bay near Hope Inlet, the party passed around Lee Point and headed towards the distant coastline, in the vicinity of which, there appeared to be a major opening. Stokes was later to record that:

The sea breeze setting in early, we did not reach it till after dark, when we landed for observations at a cliffy projection near the eastern entrance point: this we found to be composed of a kind of pipe clay, mixed with calcareous matter. We had some difficulty in landing, and then in scrambling up the cliffs by the light of a lantern. If any of the watchful natives happened at the time to be on the look out, they must have stood fixed with astonishment at beholding such strange persons, who at such a

time of night, with no ostensible object were visiting their shores.⁴

The term *Night Cliff* was thus applied to the locality, and it subsequently appeared in this form on Surveyor-General George W. Goyder's original plan of 1869. Goyder also mentioned the locality a couple of times in the diary he kept as leader of the *Northern Territory Survey Expedition*.⁵

Despite these well established facts, many people have insisted that the name is derived from a misspelling of the name of John George Knight, one of the best known government officials in Darwin (then known as Palmerston) for nearly two decades prior to his death in 1892.⁶ It is known that Knight enjoyed visiting the Nightcliff environs and it is believed that he spent long periods of contemplation on the cliff tops.⁷ Because this was remembered by many people after his death, it was widely assumed that this was how the location gained its name. Some oldtimers even claimed that a grave on the cliff was that of Knight, in spite of the fact that Knight was buried in a clearly identified grave in Palmerston Cemetery.⁸ As late as 1952, a former resident who had lived in Darwin from 1876 until 1926, wrote to the *Northern Territory News* insisting that the area was known during that period as *Knightsciff* and questioned how the parties responsible for the alteration of the name could "show such disrespect to a faithful pioneer of the Territory?".⁹ Although it is evident that many Territorians have preferred this variant form of name in deference to one of the most highly distinguished local public figures of the late nineteenth century, it is clear that Knight did not arrive until 1873, several years after the publication of Goyder's map.

Although the precise circumstances of the naming of *Rapid Creek* remain obscure, the name must have been applied by Goyder's surveyors not long after the arrival of the 1869 *Northern Territory Survey Expedition*. The outline of the creek, running as it does from Marrara Swamp to the sea at Casuarina Beach, is present on Goyder's 1869 map, but no name appears on the map. Goyder personally visited the locality on Saturday April 3 1869 and described the creek, without naming it, as a "strong shallow stream near Night Cliff".¹⁰ Sometime between then and 13 September, the

name came into existence; there is an entry in Goyder's diary for the latter date which records that surveyor George MacLachlan was sent out to Rapid Creek to check on the availability of fresh water and good feed for the horses.¹¹ On the basis of a satisfactory report from MacLachlan, "all the spare bullocks and horses were sent out to Rapid Creek to rest" two day's later.¹²

From that time on, the name remained in common local usage and it is evident that settlers continued to visit the area regularly. Harriet Douglas,¹³ who later became Mrs. Dominic Daly, described riding parties visiting Rapid Creek during the period around 1870.¹⁴ In a book published in 1882, William Sowden described travelling from Palmerston to Casuarina Beach passing "Rapid Creek, which rushes swiftly along its bed during the wet season, but at other times is dry ... its waters are clear as crystal".¹⁵ The year 1882 is also crucial because it saw the establishment of the first known permanent settlement in the area.

³C. Chandler, "Revenge of Old Man Rock", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday April 30 1994, pp.15-16; S. Heffernan, *Rapid Creek (Gurumbai)*, p.16.

⁴J. L. Stokes, "Surveying in H.M.S. Beagle", in C. C. Macknight (ed.), *The Farthest Coast: a Selection of Writings Relating to the History of the Northern*

Territory, pp.106-107.

⁵See entries for Saturday 3 April and Wednesday 28 July 1869 in G. W. Goyder, *Northern Territory Survey Expedition, 1868-1870 diary*, original in possession of the Mortlock Library, State Library of South Australia, microfilm copy in possession of the Library, Northern Territory University.

⁶D. Lockwood, *The Front Door: Darwin, 1869-1969*, p.50; for details of Knight's life see also D. Carment, H. J. Wilson and B. James, *Territorian: the Life and Work of John George Knight*.

⁷*Northern Territory News*, Friday November 4 1988, p.8.

⁸*Star*, v.6, no.3, Wednesday January 28 1981, p.7; Carment, Wilson and James, *op. cit.*, pp.62-63.

⁹*Northern Territory News*, Friday March 7 1952, p.6.

¹⁰See entry for Saturday 3 April 1869 in Goyder, *op. cit.*

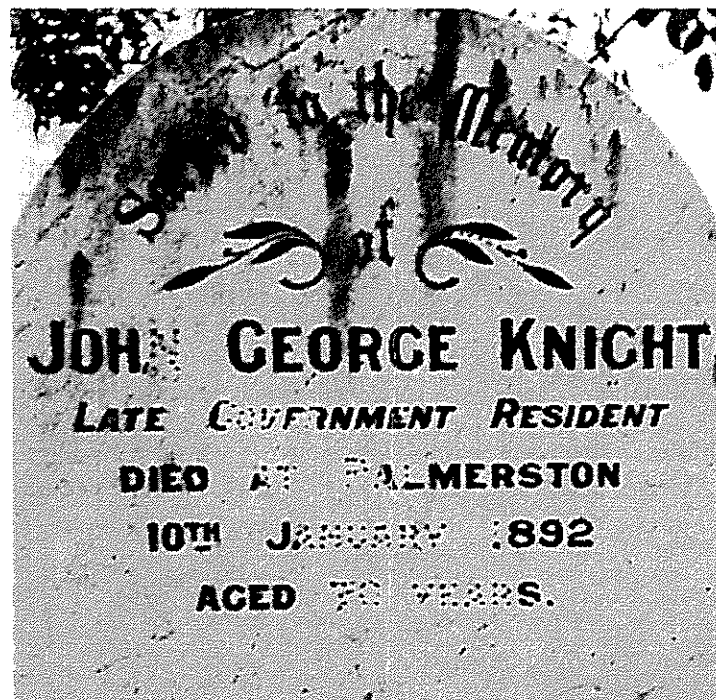
¹¹*ibid.*, entry for Monday 13 September 1869.

¹²*ibid.*, entry for Wednesday 15 September 1869; M. G. Kerr, *The Surveyors: the Story of the Founding of Darwin*, p.173.

¹³Daughter of Captain Bloomfield Douglas, the Government Resident from 1870 to 1873.

¹⁴Mrs. D. D. Daly, *Digging, Squatting and Pioneering Life in the Northern Territory of South Australia*, p.79.

¹⁵W. J. Sowden, *The Northern Territory As It Is: a Narrative of the South Australian Parliamentary Party's Trip, and Full Descriptions of the Northern Territory, its Settlements and Industries*, p.93.



Portion of headstone, John George Knight's grave, Palmerston Cemetery

ST. JOSEPH'S RAPID CREEK MISSION, 1882-1891

A mission to the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory was established at Rapid Creek in late 1882 by the Austrian Jesuit priest, Anton Strele. As far as can be ascertained, this mission was the first attempt to establish a permanent settlement in the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek region. Strele, accompanied by three other priests and one lay brother, arrived in Palmerston on September 24, 1882. At this time, the town of Palmerston supported a white population of only one hundred and fifty people.¹⁶ On 10 October, the party proceeded to the reserve granted to them by the South Australian Government at Rapid Creek, near the locality called *Gurambai* by the local Larrakia Aborigines.¹⁷ Having brought farming and carpentry tools, clothing, tinned meat, a great variety of seeds, some books and requisites for a chapel, they immediately erected some tents and set about the formidable task of establishing their first station, which they called *St. Joseph's*.

Ten months later, a reporter from the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* visited the mission and reported that:

The site selected for the Station is on Rapid Creek, about seven miles north-east of Palmerston, and comprises an area of 320 acres, or a block of land one mile in length by half a mile in breadth... At the time of my visit there were about twelve natives employed on the station, all of whom received a regular allowance of rations and tobacco, but the whole camp contained some fifty, including a large number of children.¹⁸

The reporter took his readers on a tour of the mission, describing a hastily erected mission house on a rising piece of land which would give a good view of the property once the scrub was cleared, frames of new buildings, a well which gave a good supply of water, a tobacco nursery and four acres of garden planted with some three hundred banana plants and the same number of pineapples. As *St. Joseph's* was intended to be a head station from which later missions would be founded, a great deal of effort was put into building up the station.

A plan of survey completed after the demise of the mission (a portion of which is reproduced on the adjoining page) shows that the main

buildings were located not in Nightcliff or Rapid Creek, but in the neighbouring suburb of Millner near the intersection of Ryland Road and Pinder Street, just north of McMillans Road. Subsequent government land grants, however, soon increased the original 320 acres to 1,200 so that additional agricultural land could be utilised and access could be gained to fishing places on the Nightcliff coast.¹⁹ It is evident that these extensions were of such a magnitude that all of the present suburban areas of Nightcliff, Rapid Creek and Millner, along with a substantial portion of Coconut Grove, were subsumed by the mission.

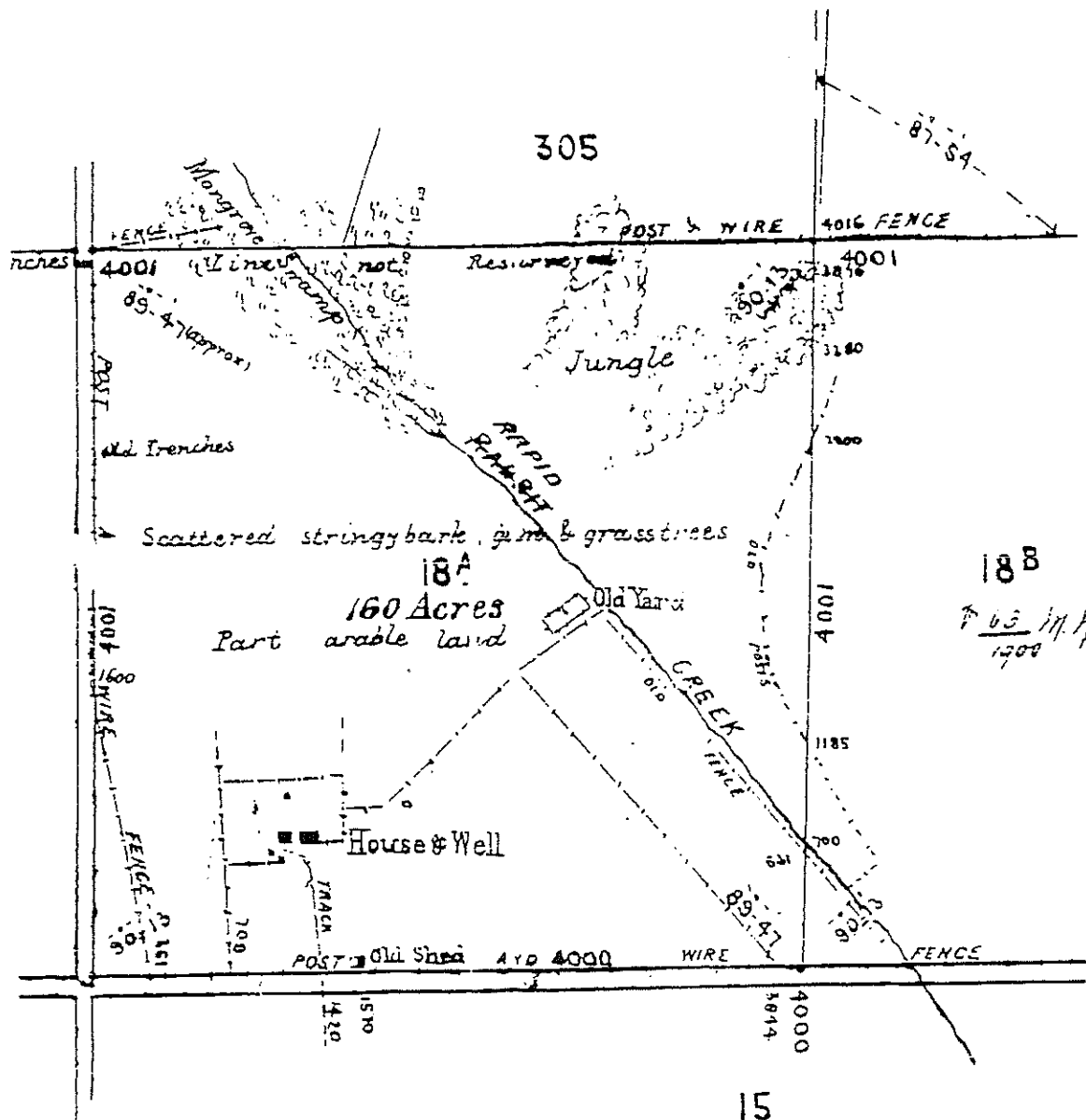
By 1886, the Jesuit staff had been increased to ten and a second mission had been established at Daly River. At Rapid Creek, the number of cleared acres had been increased from four to forty and fences had been erected in an unsuccessful attempt to keep out kangaroos and bandicoots. A new mission house had been constructed along with a number of houses for Aboriginal families, a new well had been dug and a dam had been built across the Creek. By this time, the mission staff were able to report that:

The return of the cultivated land was a great help to the mission last year. Sweet potatoes... (several hundred-weights)... sufficed to the missionaries and aborigines for about two months;... The yield of tapioca, pineapples, bananas, sweet and water melons, was very satisfactory, and an acceptable change on the station. There was also a large field planted with maize and African corn, a species of sago, and a good harvest of both was anticipated... In the nursery garden the fig and olive show the best growth. Pears, apples, cherries and plums, stood two hot seasons very well, and look healthy; vines give less hope; the castor oil tree seems quite made for the ground and the climate.²⁰

The Aboriginal groups with whom the Jesuits first worked were the local *Larrakia* and the *Woolna*, who occupied territory further to the east. The attractions of town life were such that not only did the *Woolna* gravitate to Palmerston and into the territory of the *Larrakia*, but people from the Alligator Rivers

region further east soon followed. This mix of tribal groupings was disastrous, and a pitched battle eventually broke out between the groups which did much to undermine the work of the Jesuits. To their credit, the Jesuits had made an intensive study of the *Larrakia* language, a task they found difficult because of the absence of any existing grammars or vocabularies. By 1885, they were conducting a school for the children in the vernacular. A written language had been composed and by the following year, lessons and songs were being printed with the aid of a small printing press. Despite their best intentions, however, the Jesuits were never

able to persuade any of the Aboriginal groups to take up permanent residence. There was nothing at the station that appealed to them, and although there was much coming and going, at no stage did the same individuals stay for any length of time. In any event, the corrupting influence of Palmerston was far too close; there tobacco and money could be obtained by easier methods which almost invariably involved the prostitution of Aboriginal women. By their own admission, during nine years at Rapid Creek, the missionaries only succeeded in baptising one healthy adult.²¹



Portion of a plan of survey of 21 June 1899 by E. Copley Playford
 Courtesy of the Northern Territory Department of Lands, Housing and Local Government

From 1888 to 1891, *St. Joseph's* continued largely as a farm residence and place for building up herds of goats, horses and cattle to be used by the Jesuits at Daly River. Despite continuing successes with agriculture, the conflict between the Aboriginal groups and the inexorable attraction of the town ensured that the Jesuits were not able to achieve the primary object they desired.²² According to a report published in the *South Australian Advertiser* in 1888:

The Larrakeeyahs, the Port Darwin tribe, appear to be utterly unaffected by the efforts for their evangelisation by self-denying fathers and brothers; the missionaries themselves say that this tribe has been too long associated with the white settlers to give any hope of being affected by Christianising influence. In fact, it is said on excellent authority that recently a corroboree of the old men took place... in which the attitude of the Larrakeeyahs to Christianity was discussed. Whatever may have been the aspects in which it was viewed,

whether it was too much work and too little tobacco, too much morality and too few shillings or not, the decision arrived at was - 'Religion along Rapid Creek no good'.²³

On 3 December 1891, the station, "so fruitful in sorrow and completely destitute of success",²⁴ was officially closed down.

¹⁶R. Jolly, *Rapid Creek Mission*, p.2.

¹⁷G. J. O'Kelly, "Strele, Anton", in D. Carment, R. Maynard and A. Powell (eds.), *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography. Volume One: to 1945*, p.285; G. J. O'Kelly, *The Jesuit Mission Stations in the Northern Territory, 1882-1899*, footnote 74 on p.13.

¹⁸*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Saturday August 18 1883, p.3.

¹⁹O'Kelly, *The Jesuit Mission Stations...*, p.14.

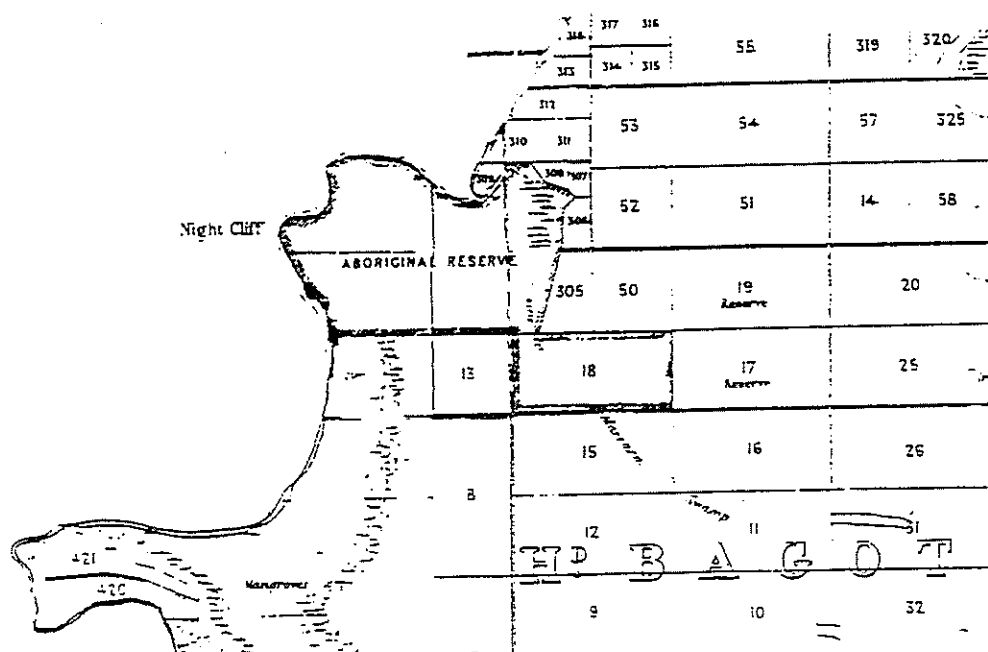
²⁰*ibid.*

²¹*ibid.*, p.17.

²²T. Austin, "Salvation Through Education and Training: Teutonic Industrial Missions to Aborigines", in V. Dixon (ed.), *Looking Back: the Northern Territory in 1888*, p.20.

²³*South Australian Advertiser*, Thursday May 17 1888, p.6.

²⁴O'Kelly, *op. cit.*, p.20.



Portion of plan of Palmerston and sections adjacent to Port Darwin, 1891
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Department of Lands, Housing and Local Government

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

After the demise of St. Joseph's Mission, there is evidence that other isolated settlers were active in the region, and that the land grants relinquished by the Jesuits were subsequently made available as agricultural leases.²⁵ The earliest of these leases, described as being of 200 acres each in the Hundred of Bagot at *Night Cliff*, appear to have been taken up in 1893, but it is not clear whether they were purely speculative or whether the lessees actually resided on the leases and carried out tangible improvements, notwithstanding the fact that the leases generally contained covenants demanding that at least one tenth of the land was to be cultivated within two years.

The earliest residents we can be sure of were Thomas John Norton Dolan, his wife Anna and their three children. The first lease taken out by the family in 1896, Agricultural Lease no.14, was entered in the name of Anna Elizabeth Dolan. A year after her death in 1903, it was renewed by Thomas as Agricultural Lease no.17.²⁶ It is evident that Thomas, who worked as a ganger on the Palmerston to Pine Creek Railway, initially regarded the property as a diversion for his wife, an enterprising woman who, at various times, was also involved in other business activities such as operating the Railway Refreshment Rooms at Adelaide River.²⁷ A few details of Thomas's life were recorded in the pages of the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* in 1908 after he was tragically accidentally run over by a railway train whilst in a state of intoxication.²⁸ Thomas, who was described as having been a rather eccentric Irishman, but harmless and good hearted, was only fifty three years of age at the time of the accident.²⁹

According to stories told to Mrs. Bessie Robinson, who arrived in the Territory in 1911, the Dolans had lived in a humpy situated on the headland near the present day boat ramp. Thomas would ride his bicycle to the Four Mile where he would be picked up by a quadricycle and taken off to carry out his day's work. Mrs. Robinson was also told that Anna had died and been buried at Nightcliff after contracting malaria.³⁰ This is an appealing story, but the facts, as verified by Darwin historian Helen Wilson, are that she died from peritonitis in the Palmerston Hospital.³¹

A useful description of the Dolan's property appears in the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* of 1901:

Mr. T. J. Dolan's farm at Knight's Cliff presents quite a different appearance just now to that it wore a few months ago. He has now quite a respectable area cleared, and a large and promising cocoanut plantation is springing up. A small area has been reserved for pineapples, which thrive excellently, and several hundred banana trees are now being put in. Altogether, Mr. Dolan is to be congratulated for his energy and enterprise, and congratulated upon the splendid results achieved in such a short time.³²

The part played by Anna and the children remains totally unacknowledged in this account. The available evidence suggests that Thomas's work as a ganger kept him away from home for long periods of time, and that the hard work of maintaining the farm was kept up by the rest of the family and by an unknown number of Aboriginal helpers.³³

Indeed, such newspaper reports must have severely irritated Anna because, later that year, she was moved to take the editor of the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* to task for once more making a passing reference to the property as "the residence of Mr. Dolan, at Night Cliff".³⁴ Two weeks later, the editor was obliged to publish the following response:

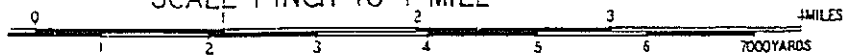
Mrs. Dolan writes directing attention to the fact that *she* is the registered owner of the property in question and scathingly remarks - "Now, a paper should be reliable, and you had only to look in the Gazette to see that *I* am the registered owner and reside here." Alas! and Alas!³⁵

The same edition of the newspaper correctly reported that, just prior to the wrecking of his five ton mission cutter, *Evangel*, on the rocks at Nightcliff, A. A. Lennox, a missionary who was then in the throes of setting up the "Koparlgoo Aboriginal Mission" (Kapalga) on the South Alligator River, had successfully landed some furniture at "Mrs. Dolan's residence near Night Cliff".³⁶

ZONE 4

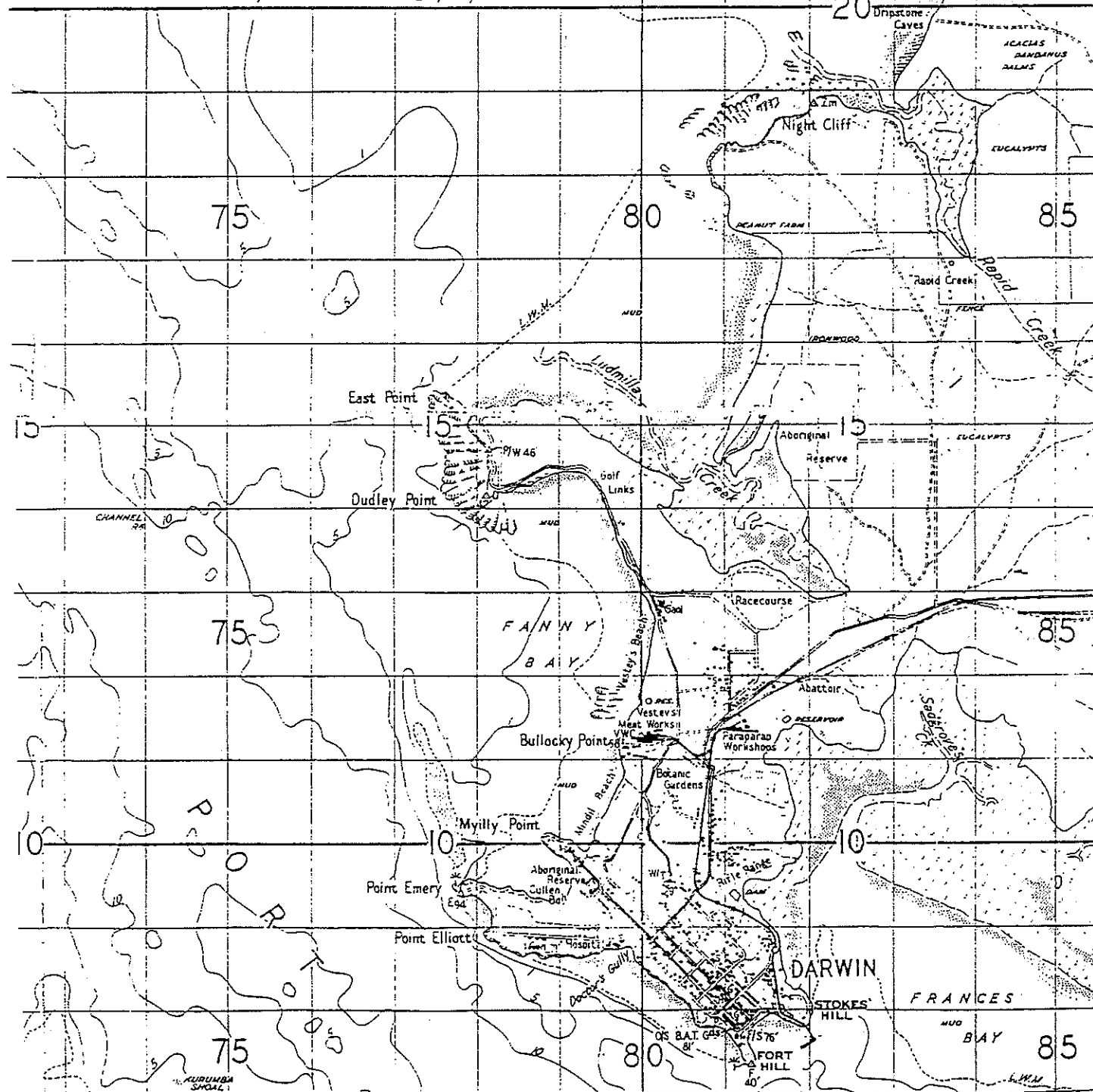
SKETCH MAP DARWIN

SCALE 1 INCH TO 1 MILE



by Australian Section Imperial General Staff.

Green (convergence) and blue (true) correctional figures for the borders of this map are for Artillery purposes.



Reproduced with the permission of the Australian Department of Defence

Anna Dolan obviously possessed a most independent and forthright manner in an era when feminist beliefs were most unfashionable. Thirteen years before, she had appeared in the Borroloola Police Court to face charges that she did "feloniously, unlawfully, and maliciously shoot at one Thomas John Dolan, with intent to kill and murder".³⁷ When the matter came to trial in Palmerston, the charges were dropped through lack of evidence, but her husband was reprimanded for his conduct towards his wife and advised to "sign the pledge and lead a new life".³⁸ Had he taken this advice to heart, he may have avoided his untimely death twenty years later.

Although Thomas Nolan's name occasionally appeared in the press in relation to railway and cycling matters during the few years leading up to his death, he was a keen member of the Palmerston Bicycle Club, nothing more was recorded of the success or otherwise of the farm at Nightcliff. The children may have kept it going for some years; an auction sale of the leases was not held until 2 April 1913.³⁹ The land, described as being "an admirable site for suburban seaside residences", was sold to the well known Territory businessman, Felix Ernest Holmes, on 25 April. During this period, Holmes was systematically acquiring extensive business interests in the city and freehold title over a large area encompassing most of the present day northern suburbs extending from Nightcliff to Holmes Jungle.⁴⁰ Chin Pack Cheong, a Darwin storekeeper, bought the Nightcliff land in July 1940, Holmes having died in 1929. It was compulsorily resumed by the Government, along with the rest of Darwin, in 1946.⁴¹

Although other small scale agricultural enterprises undoubtedly came into existence prior to World War II, little evidence remains and it is certain that they had only a slight impact on the geography of the area. The map on the adjoining page shows that, by the late 1930s, there was a well established network of tracks leading to the Nightcliff headland and to the Rapid Creek area, but these tracks were largely used by picnickers. A homestead marked "Rapid Creek" can be seen on the former site of the Jesuit Mission Station and a peanut farm is shown centred upon an area opposite that presently occupied by the Nightcliff Sporting Complex in Progress Drive. These arrangements have been confirmed by an examination of aerial photographs taken in 1941.⁴² The trackways and homesteads can be clearly made out, but the total area of cleared land is small and it is

obvious that most of the area remained in a pristine condition covered by bushland. Indeed, to the north of the peanut farm and extending to the Nightcliff headland on the western side of the peninsula, was an extensive area with particularly exuberant vegetation. Old residents recall that this area was characterised by lush rainforest, the only remnants of which are a number of large banyan trees still surviving in the area.⁴³

Until World War II, therefore, the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek region remained a largely peaceful retreat outside of Darwin. Even with the advent of motorised transport, the tracks were sufficiently poor that a drive to Rapid Creek was not undertaken lightly. Nevertheless, old residents retain fond memories of such visits. The following recollection in 1982 by a Mrs. Rannard, of her visits in the late 1930s, is typical of many:

We would all travel to Rapid Creek on a truck.

It was a rather pretty drive in the dry season with the tall grass hanging over the dirt road.

Our passing disturbed thousands of fire flies which flew into the air. A beautiful sight.

When we got to Rapid Creek we would wind up the gramophone and sing and dance and really enjoy ourselves.⁴⁴

By the end of the 1930s, however, it was clear that visitor pressure was starting to make an impact and that planning should be undertaken to ensure that suitable land would be set aside for future recreational purposes. The highly respected Brisbane City Planner, R. A. McInnis, visited Darwin in 1940 in order to prepare a town planning scheme.⁴⁵ His comprehensive report, which is full of pragmatic advice, contains the following observations in relation to Rapid Creek:

This is an attractive bathing beach and picnic spot, which is used extensively at the present time. It is situated to the north of Section 836, about seven miles from the town. The road along the front has never been fenced, so it is impossible to be sure that there is sufficient room on public property for the picnic ground. It would be advisable, while the land is of little value, to locate the road boundaries, and if necessary, to reserve sufficient land to assure its uninterrupted use.

Adjoining this spot is a headland known as Nightcliff, which added to the attractiveness of the locality, until it was reserved for military purposes. When it can again be used by the public, a similar investigation should be made to assure sufficient space along the frontage of Section 842.

The Rapid Creek picnic place is entirely uncared for at present; - fires started in the undergrowth have ruined good shade trees, and the litter of broken bottles is a menace to motor tyres and bare feet.⁴⁵

It should be noted that, by late 1940, although the commencement of the Pacific War was still twelve months away, the threat of war seemed sufficiently real that sections of land in the Nightcliff area had already been reserved for military purposes. By the time the McInnis report was fully considered, nothing could be done; the plan was shelved to await peaceful conditions which would allow its implementation.⁴⁷

²⁵*Register of Agricultural Leases, 1892-1921*, Northern Territory Archives, F36.

²⁶*ibid.*

²⁷*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Friday September 24 1897, p.3.

²⁸*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Friday June 26 1908, p.2 for obituary and p.3 for results of coronial inquiry.

²⁹*ibid.*, p.2.

³⁰Bessie Robinson interviewed by Jean Trafford, NTRS 226, TS 112, Northern Territory Archives Service.

³¹Personal communication from H. J. Wilson, 1993; see also death notice in *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Friday April 17 1903, p.2.

³²*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Friday April 12 1901, p.3.

³³For evidence of Aboriginal helpers see Bessie Robinson interview, NTRS 226, TS 112, Northern Territory Archives Service.

³⁴*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Friday November 22 1901, p.3.

³⁵*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Friday December 13 1901, p.3. The italics appear in the original report as reproduced here.

³⁶*ibid.*

³⁷*North Australian*, Saturday November 3 1888, p.3.

³⁸*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Saturday December 22 1888, p.3.

³⁹*Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, Thursday January 30 1913, pp.2-3.

⁴⁰H. J. Wilson, "Holmes, (Felix) Ernest", in D. Carment and B. James (eds.), *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography. Volume Two*, p.96.

⁴¹Personal communication from H. J. Wilson, 1993.

⁴²*Darwin, D52-4, 1941*, film no.MAP 3022 and 3024, run 3E, print nos.39541, 39543 and run 4E, nos.34768, 34770, AUSLIG.

⁴³K. Murphy, "It's All Go at Nightcliff", *Northern Territory News*, Monday October 24 1988, pp.20; L. Dale, "From When Nightcliff Was All Rainforest", *Northern Territory News*, Friday November 4 1988, p.8.

⁴⁴T. Dahlenburg, "Peanuts Rotted on Daly River Farms", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday November 20 1982, p.4.

⁴⁵R. A. McInnis, *A Town Planning Scheme for the Town of Darwin, Northern Territory of Australia: Being a Report on the Present Requirements of the Town and Recommendations for its Future Development*.

⁴⁶*ibid.*, pp.149-150.

⁴⁷De La Rue, *op.cit.*, p.33.



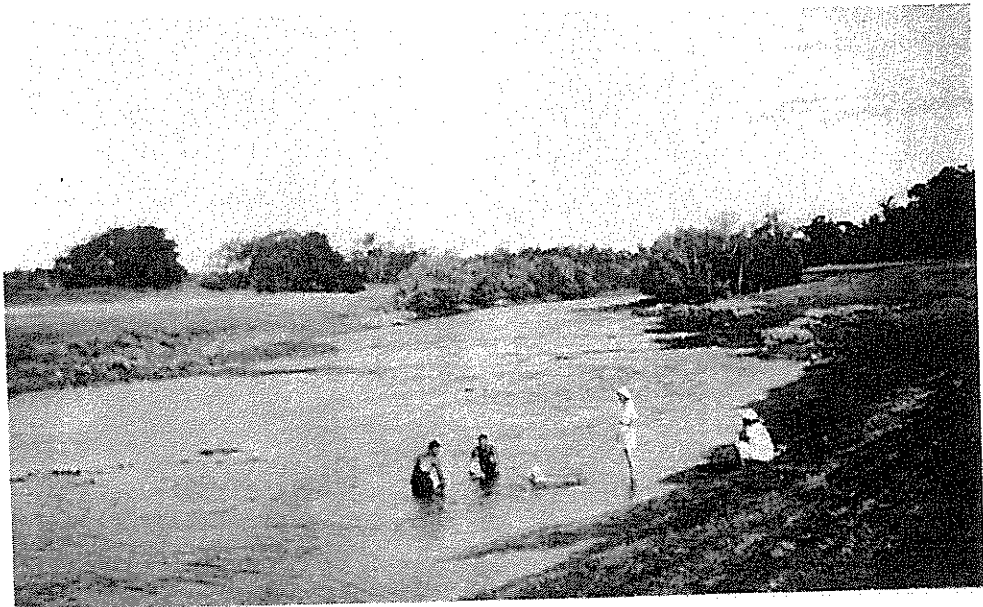
Picnic at Rapid Creek, 1899



Picnic at Rapid Creek, 1930s



Old road to Rapid Creek, 1930s



Bathing at Rapid Creek, 1930s

WORLD WAR II

During the early years of World War II, the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek region lost its sense of isolation, and for the first time, large numbers of people moved into the area. Selected areas were surveyed, roads were constructed, the Darwin water supply was connected and a substantial number of buildings were erected. The area became a temporary home to a diverse range of military and civilian groups. The long term result of all of this activity was that a considerable amount of infrastructure was developed which could be utilised by returning civilians after the end of the War.

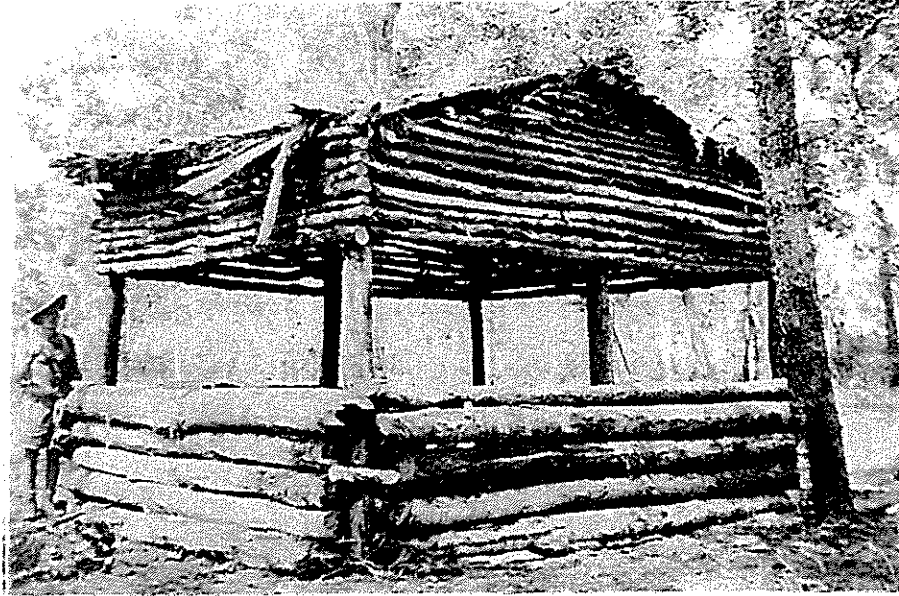
During 1941, a naval outpost, which included a large two storey, high concrete artillery observation bunker, was established on the headland. A number of small accommodation huts and a Sidney Williams hut were also erected for the use of the small number of R.A.N. personnel involved with the outpost. Meanwhile, the Australian Army were also moving into the area in much greater numbers.

The first group to make a significant impact was the 2/14 Field Regiment A.I.F. According to the diary of Lieutenant Colonel S. G. Kingwell, Lieutenant Steve Gilbert, who also happened to be an architect, was given orders to draw up plans for a hutted camp at Nightcliff on 27 July 1941.⁴⁸ The plans for the camp were completed within two days and, from then until the end of the year, the Regiment was required:

...to provide work parties of 200 men to construct the standing camp at Nightcliffs. This work entailed road clearance, foundations, hard standing, ablutions, drainage, erection of Sidney Williams Huts with concrete floors, with unit architects, engineers and tradesmen the only work force employed... During November the Regiment moved out progressively to Nightcliff although work was incomplete.⁴⁹



2/14 Field Regiment working party near Nightcliff, 1941



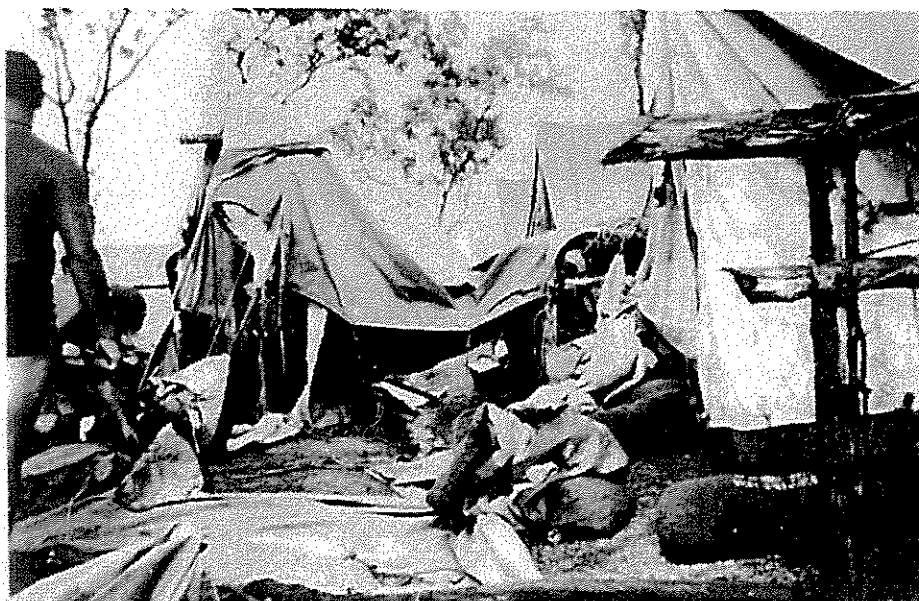
2/14 Field Regiment office under construction at Nightcliff, 1941



Half built gun position at Nightcliff, 1941



2/14 Field Regiment under canvas at Nightcliff with storm approaching, 1942



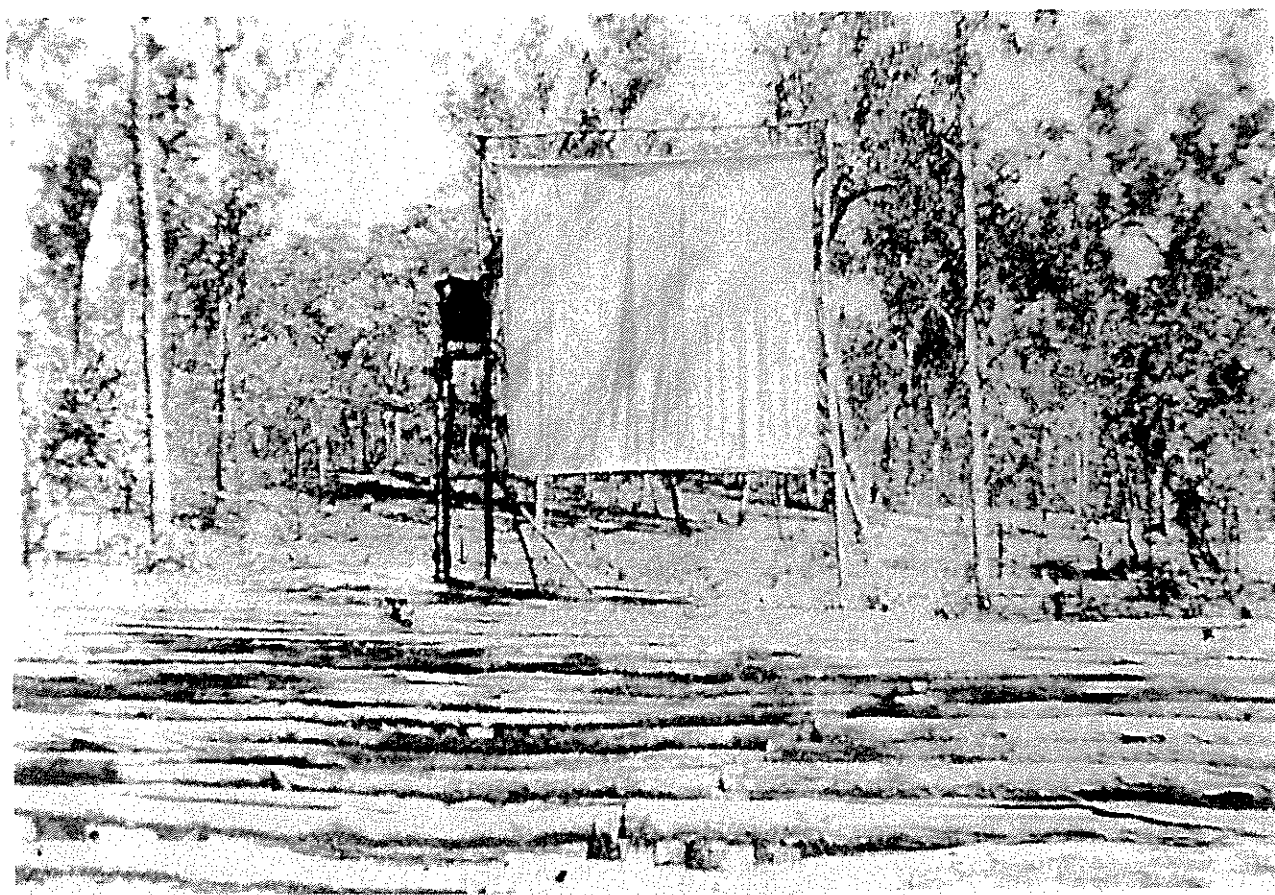
Aftermath of storm at Nightcliff, 1942

According to Kingwell's diary, news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour changed everything. Although the Regiment continued to live under canvas at Nightcliff, work on the incomplete Camp ceased because all hands became urgently engaged on full time defensive preparations and manoeuvres. At times, conditions were extremely difficult. During January 1942, a wet season storm blew down all the tents at Nightcliff and made the road from Darwin impassable; all stores and rations had to be brought in by foot. During the first and largest air raid on Darwin of 19 February 1942, "Nightcliffs Camp came under strafing attack from Japanese Zeros ... where they were engaged by our AA and LMGs (Lewis Guns)".⁵⁰ Immediately after this air raid, the Regiment appears to have been dispersed to a large number of defensive positions around the Darwin area.

One of the most interesting groups to have camped in the Nightcliff area comprised the British pilots and ground crew of 54 Fighter Squadron R.A.F., a Spitfire squadron which

had previously given distinguished service in the Battle of Britain. From January 1943 until June 1944, this Squadron, which played an important part in the air defence of Darwin, operated out of the Darwin R.A.A.F. Base, but all personnel were accommodated at Nightcliff.⁵¹ The standard living quarters were tents for all ranks, but timber and galvanised iron buildings were constructed for messes. Fred Woodgate's book, *The Lion and the Swans*, paints a fascinating picture of life at Nightcliff, and at the other places where the Squadron subsequently served. Diary entries in Woodgate's book show that the men worked hard to improve their living conditions; an entry for 12 June 1943 at Nightcliff tells us that:

The new building for the officers' mess nearly completed and the roof in process of being painted. Pilots did the floor concreting after being released from readiness. Water and drainage laid to kitchen, and to a wash basin in the vestibule.⁵²



Open air theatre used by troops at Nightcliff

According to Woodgate, the men constructed a netted enclosure on the Nightcliff shoreline to trap fish, a device which regularly provided a welcome addition to their monotonous diet.⁵³ Anglican Chaplain Don Begbie erected a tiny chapel using split bamboo for the walls and a tent fly for the roof.⁵⁴ Woodgate also vividly recorded the frustrating aspects of service life. The men, for example, were required to recolour their tents so as to camouflage them, despite the fact that "the Department of Main Roads now has a most regularly laid out camp, with rows of staring white tents, within a couple of hundred yards of our own camp".⁵⁵ In spite of their crude living conditions, the men struggled hard to overcome the tedium of their situation by organising numerous parties and concerts. Woodgate insisted that, "our camp at Nightcliff was the social centre of this part of Darwin, to the delight of both servicemen and civilian construction workers alike".⁵⁶

During 1944, the American 65 and 86 Camp and Station Hospitals were relocated to Nightcliff from inland locations after the number of American servicemen in the Darwin area increased. Ellen Kettle, in her detailed history of health services in the Northern Territory, has noted that there was a large buildup of American servicemen early in 1944.⁵⁷ By the end of that year, there were over four thousand three hundred U.S. Army and Air Force personnel in the vicinity.⁵⁸ Kettle's research has revealed a great deal about Nightcliff in early 1944:

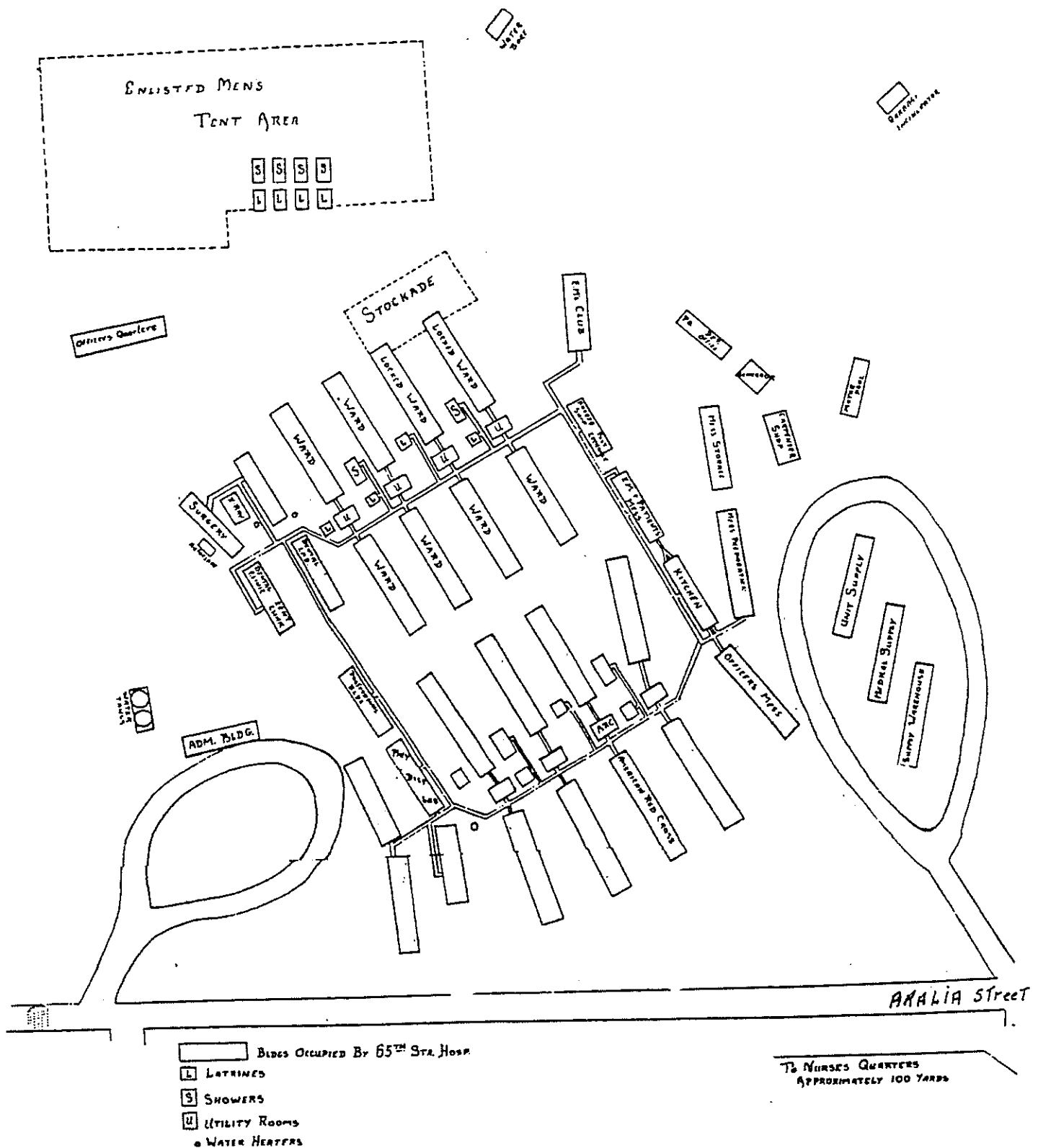
...what later became Aralia Street was then a line of demarcation. The Australians had earlier had a small outpost there and all that remained was a small RAN unit occupying four permanent huts and some tents above the cliffs. The 65th Camp Hospital pitched camp on the existing concrete blocks left by the Australians between Aralia Street and the RAN unit. This was temporary until they erected their new hospital on the inland of Aralia Street. The first patients were admitted to the temporary hospital on 16 April. Early in May their nursing staff arrived from Brisbane by air to care for the patients as most of the corpsmen were busy assembling the new prefabricated five hundred bed hospital... The canvas hospital functioned while the prefabricated hospital was being erected and

they occupied the new buildings as these were completed... The Darwin water supply was connected... This extensive new hospital was fully sewered.⁵⁹

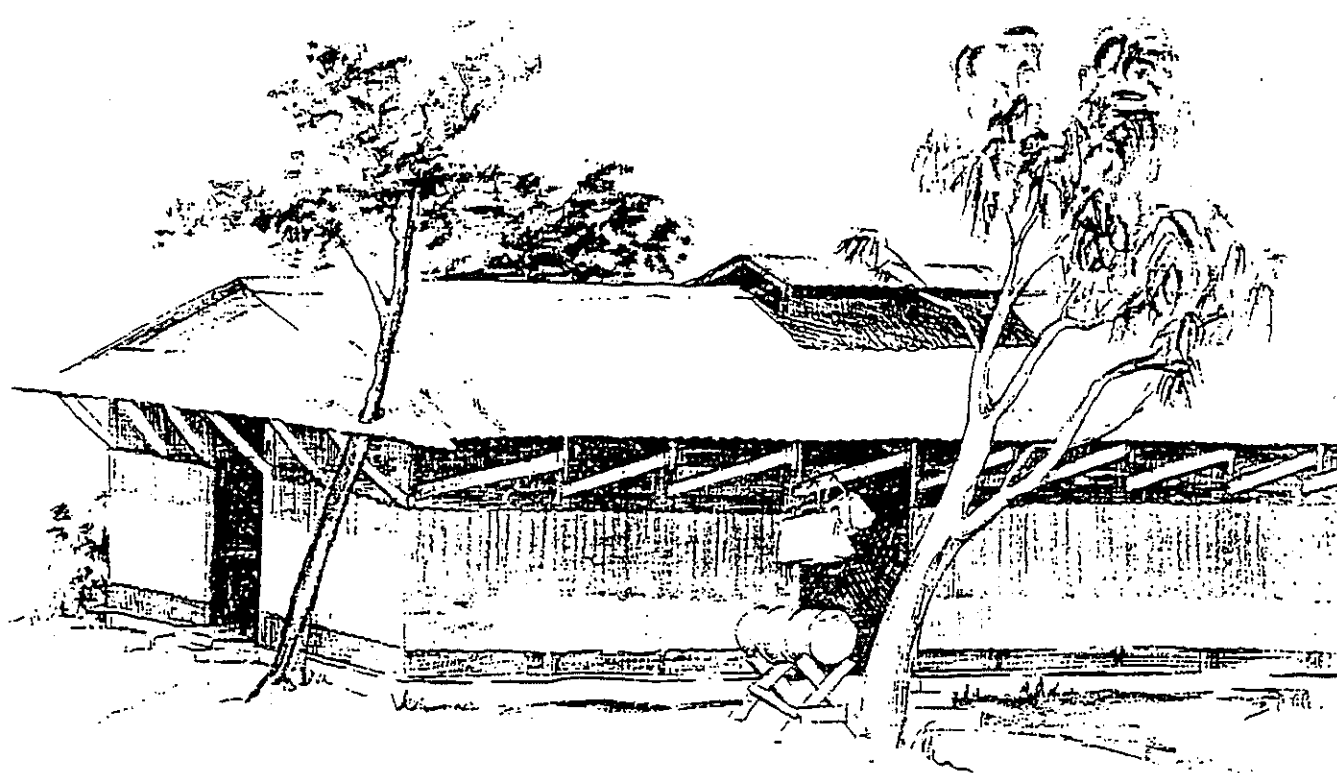
After the 65th Camp Hospital was joined by the 86th Station Hospital on 14 July, both hospitals worked side by side. Jointly, they had a staff of 18 officers, 25 nurses and 134 other ranks. The nurses were accommodated in five huts near the sea in the area which is now bounded by Sheoak and Cedar Streets; life there was luxurious compared to the harsh conditions which had been endured at the inland camps.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the working life of the American Hospital was relatively short lived because the war front was moving away far to the north. The 86th Station Hospital packed up on 30 January 1945 and was evacuated to the Philippines. On 12 February, the R.A.A.F. No.1 Medical Receiving Station occupied the vacant section and worked alongside the 65th Camp Hospital until it, too, was evacuated to the Philippines on 18 July. Although it was planned that the R.A.F. would share the facility with the R.A.A.F. during the planned campaign to recapture Singapore, this was rendered unnecessary by the dropping of the atomic bombs a month later.⁶¹ As will be seen in the next chapter, however, the buildings were not wasted; they became the nucleus of the first post-war civilian settlement in Nightcliff.

The aerial photograph on page 20 reproduces some of the features outlined on the map reproduced on page 21. The American Hospital (later R.A.A.F. Medical Receiving Station) can be clearly discerned, as can a number of other military buildings. The major roads evident on the photograph are those which follow the alignments of present day Aralia Street and Nightcliff Road. Despite extensive human activity in the region during the period covered in this chapter, the area of rainforest on the western side of the peninsula appears largely unspoilt.

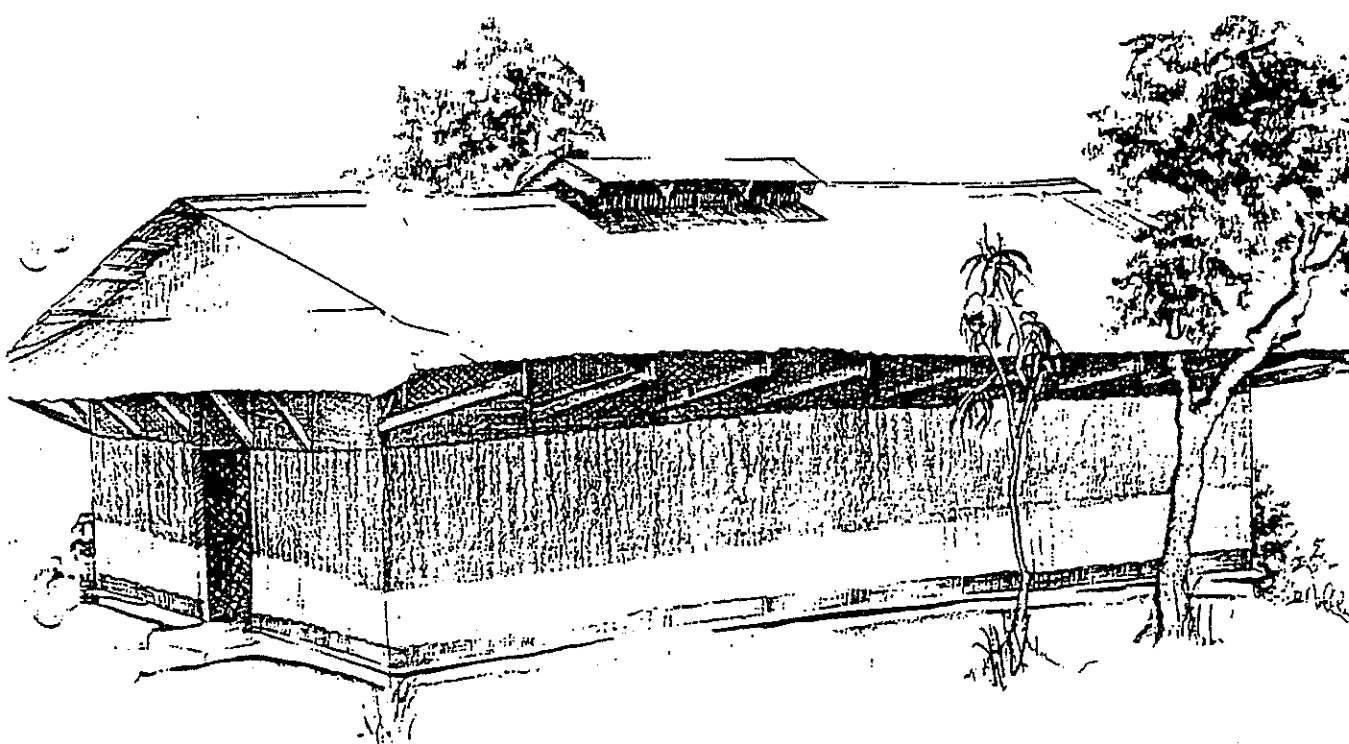
An extensive wartime dump at the base of the cliffs adjacent to the Nightcliff Swimming Pool is the only tangible reminder in the Nightcliff area of World War II. The dump, used by both the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force, although originally more extensive prior to cleanups in the late 1950s and early 1960s,⁶² has considerable historical significance because it contains many items of World War II military machinery and equipment, including aircraft engines.⁶³ Most



American 86th Station Hospital and 65th Camp Hospital, Nightcliff, 1944
 Courtesy of Ellen Kettle



American 86th Station Hospital at Nightcliff, 1944
Courtesy of Ellen Kettle

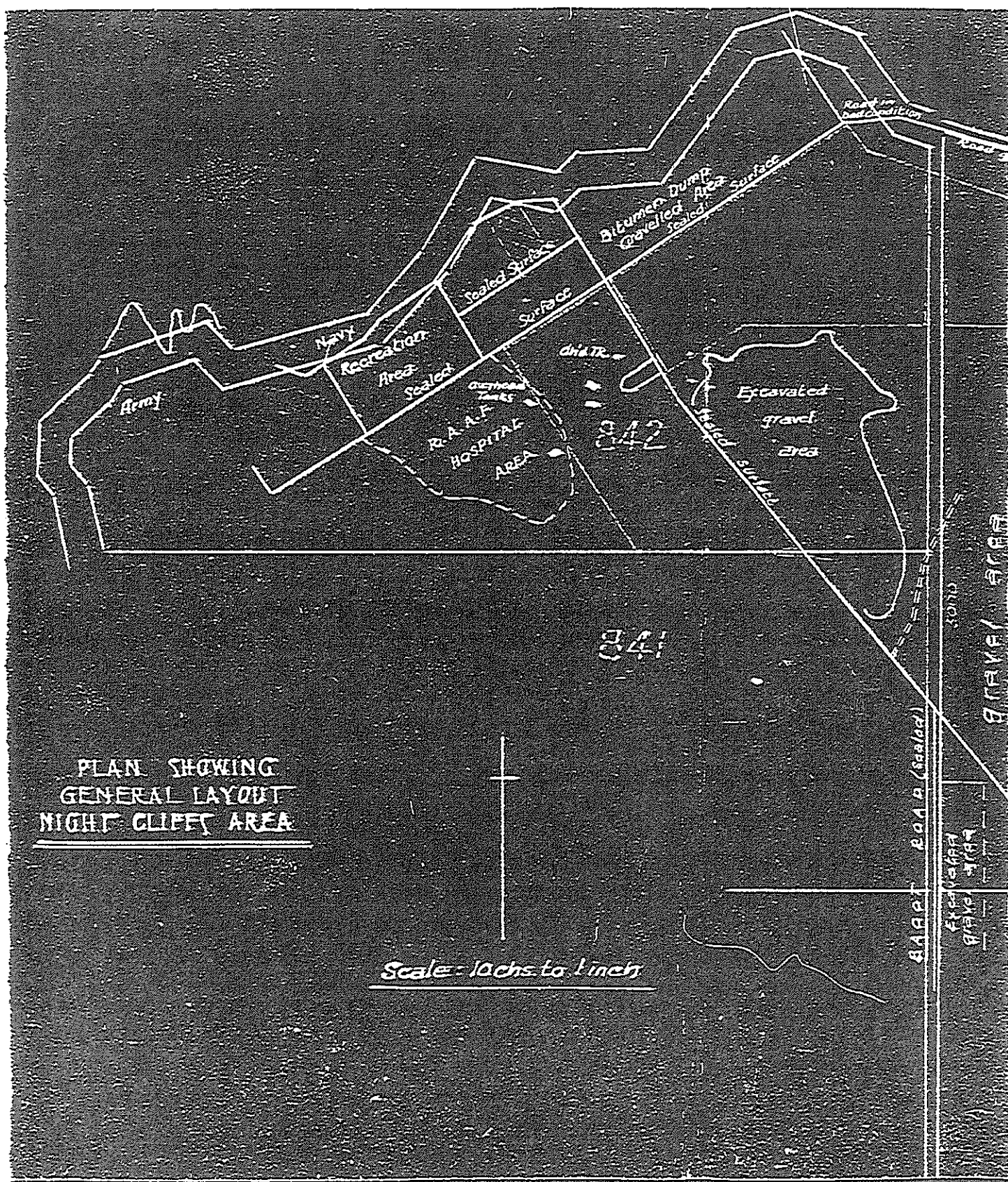


Surgeon's office, American Hospital at Nightcliff, 1944
Courtesy of Ellen Kettle



Aerial photograph of portion of Nightcliff area, 1945

This aerial photograph is © Commonwealth Copyright, AUSLIG, Australia's national mapping agency. It has been reproduced with the permission of the General Manager, Australian Surveying and Land Information Group, Department of Administrative Services, Canberra, A.C.T.



Portion of plan showing general layout Night Cliffs area, 10 chns. to 1 inch
Courtesy of the Northern Territory Archives Service

of the items have become firmly cemented together to form a permanent part of the seashore landscape. Despite this, many items are still recognisable and they retain evidence of manufacturers' details. The site also testifies to the attitude of authorities regarding the disposing of unwanted wartime machinery.⁶⁴

During 1992, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first bombing raid on Darwin and the commencement of the 'Battle of Australia', a large number of events were staged throughout the Northern Territory. As it was also an appropriate time to commemorate military activity in the Nightcliff region, a lookout with an historic site marker containing wording suggested by this author, was constructed on the headland above the dump site.⁶⁵ It was fortunate that Don MacKenzie, formerly a gunner with the 2/14 Field Regiment at Nightcliff, and later a bombardier in Papua New Guinea, was visiting Darwin and was able to represent his unit by officially unveiling a brass plaque during a ceremony held at the site on Wednesday 26 February.⁶⁶

⁴⁸S. G. Kingwell, *History of the 2/14 Australian Field Regiment A.I.F.: Prepared from War Diaries*, entry for 27 July 1941.

⁴⁹*ibid.*, entry for 29 July 1941.

⁵⁰*ibid.*, entry for 19 February 1942.

⁵¹F. Woodgate, *The Lion and the Swans: a Short History of 54 Fighter Sqn*, v.1, p.73.

⁵²*ibid.*, p.75.

⁵³*ibid.*, pp.74-75.

⁵⁴*ibid.*, v.2, p.85.

⁵⁵*ibid.*, v.1, p.75.

⁵⁶*ibid.*, p.76.

⁵⁷E. Kettle, *Health Services in the Northern Territory: a History, 1824-1970*, v.1, p.322.

⁵⁸*ibid.*, p.323.

⁵⁹*ibid.*, pp.322-323.

⁶⁰*ibid.*, p.323.

⁶¹*ibid.*, p.324.

⁶²See especially: "Big Clean-Up of Beaches Planned: Stakes to Go at Last", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday October 19 1956, p.3; K. Willey, "Our Beaches are a Disgrace: It is Time Someone Got Busy on Beach Mess!", *Northern Territory News*, Friday September 16 1960, p.2; "Army Clean-up", *Northern Territory News*, Tuesday October 4 1960, p.7.

⁶³C. Hardwick, *Register of Significant European Cultural Sites in the Northern Territory*, v.2, pp.365-367.

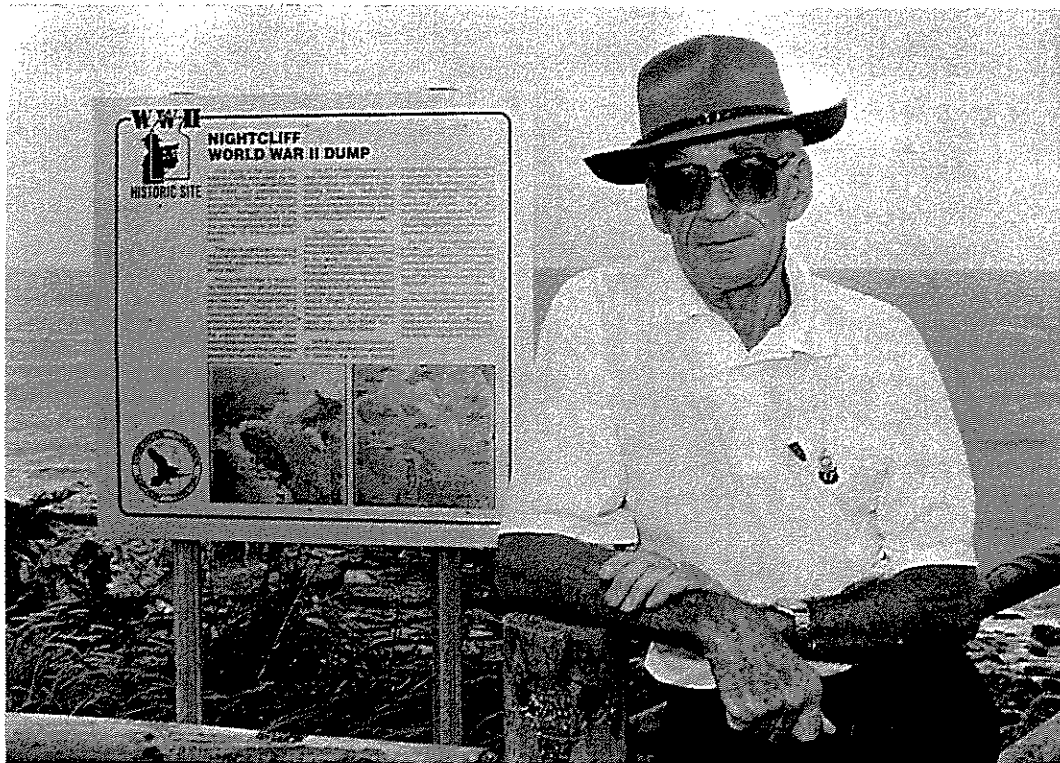
⁶⁴*ibid.*, p.367.

⁶⁵The text of the sign is reproduced in: Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory, *Signs of History: a Photographic Collection of the World War II Historic Sites Signs in the Northern Territory*, p.47.

⁶⁶"Plaque Signifies Role", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday February 29 1992, p.4.

**A COMMEMORATION TO
THE OFFICERS, MEN AND WOMEN
OF THE R.A.N., AUSTRALIAN ARMY,
R.A.A.F. AND ALLIED FORCES
WHO SERVED IN PROTECTING
DARWIN DURING WORLD WAR II
IN THE NIGHT CLIFFS CAMP
UNVEILED BY
BOMBARDIER D. MCKENZIE
2/14 Fd REGT 23 BDE**

Commemorative plaque above Nightcliff Cliffs World War II dump



Former gunner, Don MacKenzie, at the Nightcliff Cliffs historic site
Courtesy of the Northern Territory News



Nightcliff Cliffs World War II dump



View of the debris on the beach, Nightcliff Cliffs World War II dump



1943 bottle amongst the debris

NIGHTCLIFF COMMUNITY CENTRE

At the end of World War II, the military authorities only gradually relinquished control to civil authorities; the *Emergency Control Regulations* in the Darwin area were not lifted until 28 February 1946.⁶⁷ By passing the *Darwin Lands Acquisition Act* the year before, the Commonwealth had acquired ownership of all freehold properties so that a completely new tropical town could be built. R. A. McInnis had also revisited Darwin in 1944 in order to prepare a revised version of his 1940 town plan, but the Commonwealth wished to use more radical town planning concepts than those which he put forward.⁶⁸ A map compiled during this period, a portion of which is reproduced on the next page, is interesting because it foreshadowed the establishment of a Nightcliff townsite. What the Commonwealth Government had not counted on, however, was the enormous public pressure which eventually forced it to allow civilians to return prematurely. Once the floodgates were opened, old residents wasted no time in returning and new settlers followed in large numbers, despite the fact that there were serious accommodation problems because over 50% of Darwin's buildings had been destroyed.⁶⁹

Due to the acute housing situation, it appears that the first post-war residents of Nightcliff did not await any official sanction before availing themselves of the abandoned buildings. As the *Northern Standard* newspaper interpreted the situation:

In these house-hungry times it is unique to hear of tenantless dwellings. However, such was the case at Nightcliff until recently, when several good Australian families, fired with true post-war pioneer spirit, moved in and established themselves.

The small community has grown, and a committee of management has been formed and things are on the up and up...

Latest advice is that Administration have fallen in love with the locale, and acquisition notices in their name appear on some of the few remaining vacant dwellings. Intending tenants had, therefore, better get crackin'.⁷⁰

It appears that intending tenants did get cracking. By 7 May 1946, only about 25 persons were reported to have established

themselves in *Night Cliffs Camp*,⁷¹ but by 6 June, the number had grown to 100.⁷² By 7 October, the number had climbed to 211.⁷³

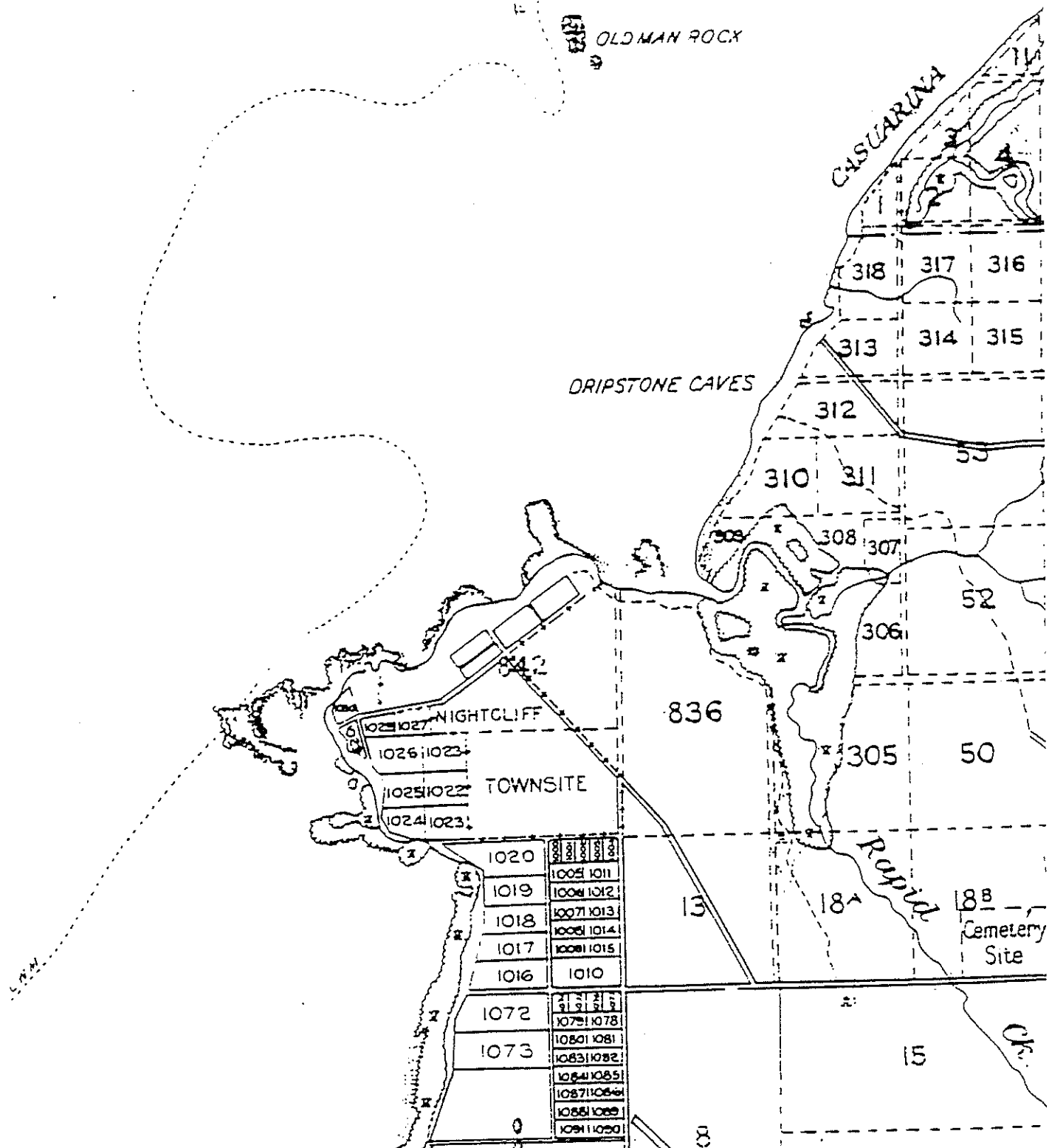
The Northern Territory Administration was not unsympathetic to the plight of the homeless. On the contrary, it had opened up negotiations as early as April with the Darwin R.A.A.F. and with appropriate authorities in Canberra concerning the fate of the Camp.⁷⁴ During May, the Darwin Chamber of Commerce also applied pressure to the Commonwealth by emphasising the needs of homeless civilians.⁷⁵ In its remonstrances with the Commonwealth, the Administration had pointed out that:

...the camp formerly occupied by R.A.A.F. Medical Receiving Station, Darwin, would, in most respects, be an ideal place for the temporary housing of overflow population...

It is built along the sea frontage and it is provided with water, lighting and sewerage. Many of the huts are so constructed that only a limited amount of work will be necessary to make them suitable for the housing of families...

Night Cliffs Camp is the only one reasonably close to Darwin which is suitable for civilian accommodation without substantial reconstruction, and which can be obtained without undue delay. It presents the solution to a most pressing problem which will become increasingly urgent. Already a number of families are quartered in conditions which, to say the least, are embarrassing to the Administration, and the necessity for a well equipped and laid out camp which can be properly controlled cannot be too strongly emphasised.⁷⁶

Despite the fact that a number of Government Departments were involved, the Commonwealth acted quickly to legitimise the situation at the Camp. By 12 June, the Department of the Interior was able to advise the Northern Territory Administration that the Camp was surplus to the requirements of the Department of the Air and that a disposals declaration had been sent to the Commonwealth Disposals Commission.⁷⁷ On



Portion of plan of proposed Greater Darwin, ca.1944
 Courtesy of the Northern Territory Department of Lands, Housing and Local Government

the basis of this advice, the Administration took over a small portion of the Camp and assumed control of the rest.⁷⁸ In the meantime, the steady stream of new arrivals had continued. On 6 July, the *Northern Standard* reported that:

The community has grown considerably, and it is believed that only about three vacant dwellings remain.

One of the latest arrivals deserves special attention. He arrived from Adelaide on a motor cycle and side-car with wife and baby daughter.⁷⁹

By 23 July, the date when the Administration advised that the Camp was fully occupied,⁸⁰ a list of rules had been drawn up for the conduct of the *Night Cliff Community Centre*.⁸¹ These rules stated that the Community existed to house married and single civilians who were unable to secure accommodation in the ordinary way and determined that the "portion of the area consisting mainly of large and medium sized huts near the sea front, shall be reserved for the accommodation of married couples and families; the prefabricated huts standing on the south eastern side of the area shall be reserved for the accommodation of single men".⁸² The rental for single quarters was set at 5 shillings per week and that for married quarters was set at 15 shillings per week for large huts and 10 shillings per week for medium and small huts. At the discretion of the Administration, some of the larger huts were partitioned so as to accommodate a second couple or family. A Municipal Inspector, Owen Fitzgerald, was appointed unofficial Camp caretaker. With the permission of the Navy, he took over the Naval huts in the foreshore area, reserving one for his own use and setting aside the rest for potential future Naval use.⁸³ Subsequent events were to show that the Navy had no further use for these huts; they later became the nucleus of the first Seabreeze Hotel.

An unofficial *Night Cliff* post office opened in Hut 35 on 15 July.⁸⁴ Mrs. Irene Johnston, who lived with her husband in Hut 48, was given control of the postal service. She also helped to set up the first store, a branch of the North Australian Co-operative Society, which opened shortly afterwards in the same hut. Irene and her sister-in-law, Grace Juster, had followed their husbands to the north from Melbourne. She was later to recall that, when they arrived in Darwin on Mother's Day in May 1946, they were two of only ten white

women in Darwin.⁸⁵ The school bus service, which had commenced on 11 June,⁸⁶ was supplemented during August by a regular bus service, although only one daily service was provided with the bus leaving Nightcliff at 7.10 a.m. each morning and returning from Darwin every evening at 5.30 p.m.⁸⁷ Commencing on Sunday 9 June, the Community's management committee organised regular social evenings which quickly became so popular that residents travelled from all over the Darwin area to attend them.⁸⁸

On 16 August, the *Northern Standard* reported that:

Much improvement has been observed in and around the Community grounds, due to the clean-up campaign organised by the Administration. Keep the good work going, Administration, and we will eventually have a garden suburb.⁸⁹

This is the first mention of the possibility of Nightcliff becoming a garden suburb, but the epithet stuck and it became a major preoccupation of residents. From that time on, newspaper articles often referred to Nightcliff as the *garden suburb*.⁹⁰ According to Ellen Kettle, keen gardeners planted papaws and bananas between the huts and quickly gave the area a homely appearance.⁹¹ In her view, the Community Centre was significant because, "apart from having to share ablution facilities, it provided some of the most comfortable housing for several years".⁹²

The following recollections of Mrs. Iris Fowlestone, who spent nine years in the Nightcliff Community Centre after arriving in Darwin in November 1946 with her husband and three children, are typical of many Darwin families who lived in former military hutments during the immediate post-war period:

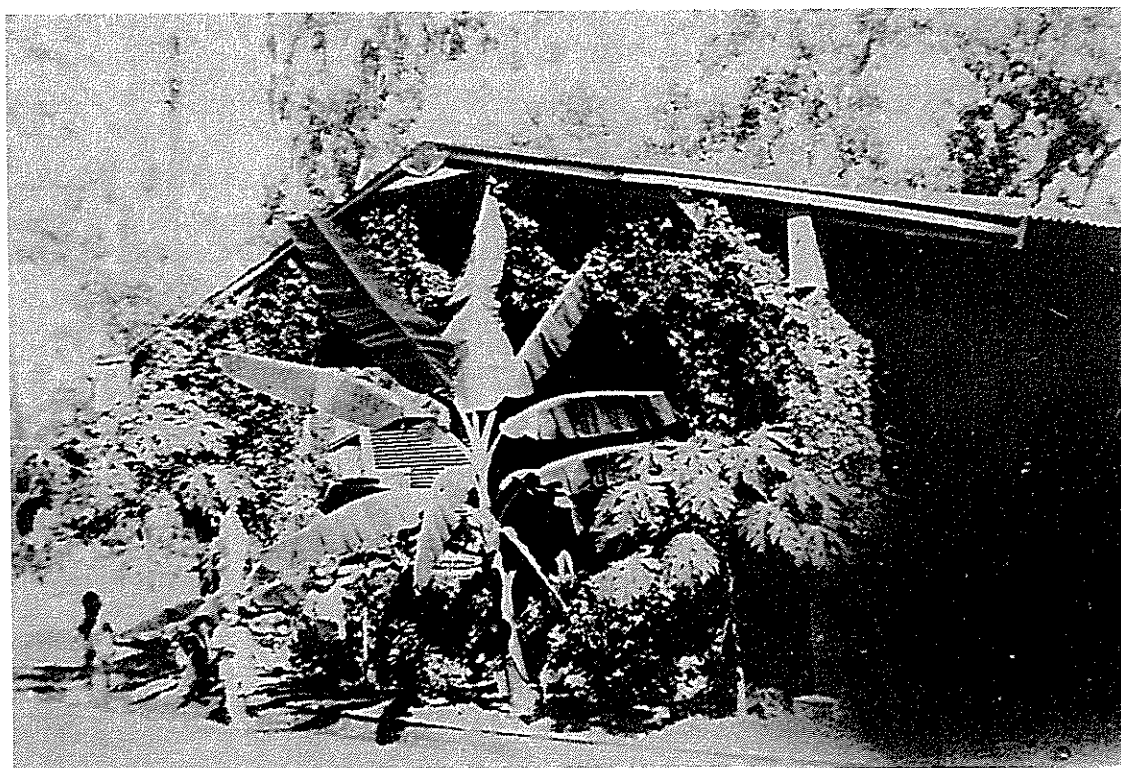
After several weeks, we were able to rent a hut in a camp at Nightcliff, the rent at 10 shillings per week including electricity. There were about one hundred families living here, which had been a wartime American hospital. We were very fortunate as the whole area was sewered, but we had to share toilet and shower facilities with several other huts. A few years later, my husband was able to put in our own bathroom. The only furniture we had was army type, which everyone had at

that time, having been left behind as the forces moved out. With a few nails, paint and curtains we made the place quite liveable. I had a primus to cook on and an icebox to keep food in for the first six months, then was able to buy a kerosine refrigerator and a small electric stove. We had only one twelve inch fan for the baby, and all slept under green jungle nets. The first 12 months was very trying as the children all got, at various times, dysentery, infected prickly heat and conjunctivitis and, as there were no antibiotics at that time, they took much longer to recover. I got ulcers on my legs from sandfly bites, but my husband seemed to thrive in this climate. As time passed, we were able to make the hut much more comfortable with new partitions and the bathroom. My laundry was outdoors with old fashioned wash tub, scrubbing board and a wood copper. The food supplies were all brought here by ship and, of course, not very much fresh fruit and veg, but as we got settled we

were able to grow our own tropical fruit and some veg in the dry season. As time went by, we grew to like the place more and as the children grew up they enjoyed the freedom of having the bush and beach to play. They had wonderful times and often reminisce about their childhood.⁹³

In her recent book, *The Quality of Life*, Maisie Austin has provided us with a fascinating account of her childhood in the Parap Camp, a former wartime encampment of Sidney Williams huts which was located in the Stuart Park area.⁹⁴ Although the Nightcliff Camp was more isolated from the main Darwin settlement, conditions at Nightcliff were better than those which prevailed at Parap. According to Mrs. Dawn Nudl:

It was quite luxury compared with all the Sidney Williams huts, because at Nightcliff the Americans had put in sewerage, and there was the overhead tank that had been built... And they were not iron huts; they were a much superior type of building, so the folks thought that they were living in quite luxury out there at Nightcliff,



Hut at Nightcliff Camp, 1949

and people planted bananas and pawpaws around those buildings, and they made it very nice and very homely.⁹⁵

⁶⁷De La Rue, *op.cit.*, p.35.

⁶⁸*ibid.*, p.36.

⁶⁹*ibid.*, p.35.

⁷⁰"Nightscliff Nights", *Northern Standard*, Friday June 14 1946, p.2.

⁷¹C. L. A. Abbott, Administrator of the N.T. to Secretary, Dept. of the Interior, 7 May 1946, in Australian Archives, A.C.T., CRS A431, 1946/1272, *Acquisition of R.A.A.F. Medical Receiving Station at Night Cliffs to Relieve Housing Shortage*.

⁷²Telegram N.T. Administration to Dept. of the Interior, 6 June 1946, in *ibid.*

⁷³Owen N. Fitzgerald, Municipal Inspector, to the Chief Clerk, 3 October 1946, in Australian Archives, N.T., CRS F1, 1951/541, pt.1, *Nightcliff Community Centre*.

⁷⁴Telegram N.T. Administration to Dept. of the Interior, 23 April 1946, in Australian Archives, A.C.T., CRS A431, 1946/1272, *op.cit.*

⁷⁵Telegram President of the Darwin Chamber of Commerce to Minister of the Interior, 15 May 1946, in *ibid.*

⁷⁶C. L. A. Abbott, Administrator of the N.T. to Secretary, Dept. of the Interior, 7 May 1946, in *ibid.*

⁷⁷Telegram Dept. of the Interior to N.T. Administration, 12 June 1946, in *ibid.*

⁷⁸Telegram N.T. Administration to Dept. of the Interior, 23 July 1946, in *ibid.*

⁷⁹"Nightscliff Nights", *Northern Standard*, Saturday July 6 1946, p.4.

⁸⁰Telegram N.T. Administration to Dept. of the Interior, 23 July 1946, in Australian Archives, A.C.T., CRS A431, 1946/1272, *op.cit.*

⁸¹In Australian Archives, N.T., CRS F1, 1951/541, pt.1, *Nightcliff Community Centre*.

⁸²*ibid.*

⁸³L. H. A. Giles, Government Secretary, to Naval Officer in Charge, Darwin, 10 July 1946, in *ibid.*; see also Owen N. Fitzgerald, Municipal Inspector, to Chief Clerk, 2 July 1946, "Report on Night Cliff", in *ibid.*

⁸⁴*ibid.*

⁸⁵See entry for Irene Florence Juster in: *Northern Territory Women's Register, 1948-1988*, p.66.

⁸⁶"Nightscliff Nights", *Northern Standard*, Friday June 14 1946, p.2.

⁸⁷*Northern Standard*, Friday August 23 1946, p.9.

⁸⁸See, for example, *Northern Standard*, Friday June 14 1946, p.2; Friday June 21 1946, p.7; Saturday July 6 1946, p.4; Friday July 12 1946, p.3; Friday August 16 1946, p.6; Friday August 30 1946, p.2.

⁸⁹"Nightscliff Nights", *Northern Standard*, Friday August 16 1946, p.6.

⁹⁰e.g. "Garden Suburb Dance", *Northern Standard*, Friday December 6 1946, p.6

⁹¹Kettle, *op.cit.*, p.324.

⁹²*ibid.*

⁹³Iris Fowlestone interviewed by Radio 8TOPFM, 1987, tape recording of interview held by the State Library of the Northern Territory.

⁹⁴M. Austin, *The Quality of Life: a Reflection of Life in Darwin During the Post-War Years*.

⁹⁵Dawn Nudl interviewed by Nightcliff High School students, NTRS 226, TS 651, Northern Territory Archives Service.



Christmas party at Nightcliff Camp, 1949



Nightcliff Camp, 1949



Aerial view of Nightcliff Camp, 1949

BIRTH OF THE GARDEN SUBURB

During the immediate post-war period, continuing debate over town planning strategies, a restriction on anything but short term tenancies and a chronic shortage of labour and building materials meant that very little was accomplished. By October 1948, however, the Chief Surveyor had completed plans for the first waterfront suburban subdivision in the Nightcliff area.⁹⁶ Before the auction plans could be prepared, it was necessary to give the satellite town site an official name. For this purpose, the Nomenclature Committee of the Northern Territory met on 29 October. Although the Committee noted that the earliest map of the Darwin area showed the locality as *Night Cliff*, and that other forms had been used such as *Night Cliffs* and *Nights Cliff*, the Committee decided that the conjoint version of the name, *Nightcliff*, was sanctioned by local usage, conformed with the rules of the Committee and did not destroy the original form of the name.⁹⁷

The proclamation gazetting the new town was published the following March,⁹⁸ and the first auction sale of 31 blocks took place on 23 April.⁹⁹ The blocks were available as leases for 99 years with annual rentals varying between £2/10/0 and £4.¹⁰⁰ All of these blocks were located on a strip of land between what is now Casuarina Drive and Aralia Street northeast of Jacaranda Avenue. Jim Gayton, a well known Nightcliff resident who still lives in the area, remembers purchasing one of these blocks, lot 5 on the corner of Nightcliff Road and Casuarina Drive (then known as the Esplanade), for £41, subject to an annual rental of £4. Jim then set about building a home by dismantling and reconstructing two military surplus prefabricated buildings which had been part of a Catalina flying boat base at East Arm.¹⁰¹

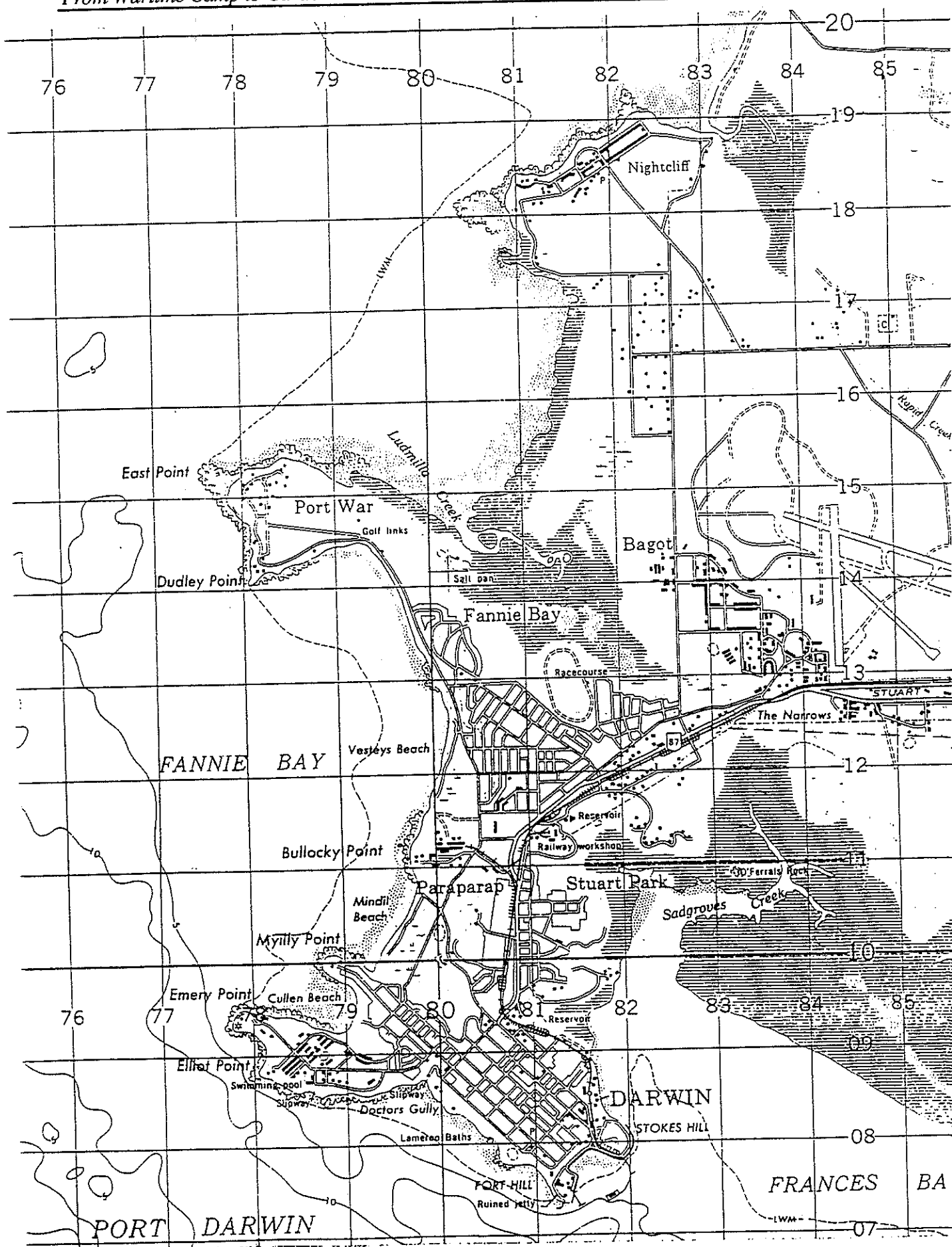
Slowly at first, but with gathering momentum, Nightcliff's suburban development accelerated during the 1950s. The subdivisions extended outwards from the vicinity of the first waterfront lots auctioned in 1949, but a large area on the western side of the peninsula was also subdivided into a number of 2, 5, 15 or 20 acre agricultural leases. Unfortunately, this development rapidly led to the destruction of the rainforest.¹⁰² Although many of the resulting farms were small in scale producing fruit and vegetables predominantly for private use, some, such as those owned by Mrs. Mary

Scott (vegetables, poultry and dairy produce), and the three Yuen brothers, Les, Eddie and Doug (vegetables and poultry), were commercially viable.¹⁰³

During the decade of the 1950s, about 320 homes were built in the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek area.¹⁰⁴ At the end of this period, it could be confidently stated that Darwin had passed from the "hut and hovel era" ... into a Territory-sized building boom".¹⁰⁵ Along with Jim Gayton, another early builder on one of the original allotments was Harold Cooper. Cooper, who later became Darwin's longest serving Mayor, holding the position from 1959 until 1966,¹⁰⁶ commenced building a house in Aralia Street in May 1950, at a time when, apart from the former military huts, there were only about 10 other houses in the area.¹⁰⁷ Yet another person to remember this period was former Legislative Councillor, Fred Drysdale, who later recalled that, when about a dozen residents decided to build, "they all worked on one another's homes in turn until all were completed".¹⁰⁸

It was this spirit of self-help which had also led to the development of organisations such as the Nightcliff Progress Association, which commenced in 1950.¹⁰⁹ Progress Drive was so named in 1952 to immortalise the work of this Association.¹¹⁰ Much later, the Nightcliff Community Association grew out of the Nightcliff Lessees Association which had been started in 1955 by Frank Muir and John Baker. During the late 1950s, many other men, including Paddy Taylor, George Fowlestone, Alf Hooper, George Gibbs, Jim Gayton, Alan Longstaff, John Negus, Paul McNamara and David Aron, were active workers for the Association.¹¹¹

The mid 1950s also witnessed the development of the Aralia Street shopping complex. Early to build were Bill and Margaret Bell who, in order to open the first garage in the area, purchased lots 122 and 123 on 4 June 1954 for £250. As this business, Nightcliff Motors, is still being operated by Mrs. Bell and her sons on the original site, Bell's Garage is not only the oldest building remaining in the complex, but it is also the longest running business in the Nightcliff area.¹¹² The first store in the shopping complex, located near the corner of Pandanus Street, had been opened not long before by John Tremaine. Wehr's Bakery



Portion of Darwin, 1:50,000 sheet, 1st ed., 1959
 Reproduced with the permission of the Australian Department of Defence

followed soon afterwards on the site now occupied by the Aralia Street Supermarket.¹¹³ Jim Gayton's store, which later traded as the Wong and Raggatt Supermarket and remained as such until Cyclone Tracy struck the area, opened around 1959 on the corner site (Gayton's Corner) presently occupied by the Asian Gateway Restaurant.¹¹⁴

One of the biggest problems during the 1950s was the continuing presence of the Nightcliff Camp. In 1950, the Northern Territory Administration had tried to divest itself of any responsibility for the future maintenance of the huts by issuing leases to the occupants.¹¹⁵ These leases were for a period of two and a half years, the intention being that lessees should use that time to seek alternative accommodation or even remove the huts to permanent blocks. The chronic shortage of housing made that a totally unrealistic expectation and, two years later, there were still 70 families being housed in the huts, despite the fact that it was reported that they:

...were now rapidly deteriorating. The black iron sheeting had outlived its normal lifespan and dry rot and white ants had affected the timber.

It would be uneconomical to pull many of the huts down and re-erect them on another block.¹¹⁶

During the next five years, the situation appears to have worsened rather than improved; in 1957, a correspondent to the *Northern Territory News* claimed that there were 98 families living in the huts.¹¹⁷ It appears that they changed hands several times in a matter of a year or two, "each owner making a £100 or so profit".¹¹⁸ By 1957, they had been "bringing up to £500 and £600 from desperate home seekers in Darwin".¹¹⁹ Although the Administration had been forced to renew the leases several times, largely due to pressure from the Nightcliff Progress Association, in the latter year, they served notice that they would shortly seek the ultimate removal of the huts so that the land on which they stood could be subdivided. They were finally removed in 1960. Only two years later, it could be claimed that:

the areas where they stood are unrecognisable.

Tropical style homes, with lush gardens and neat fences have been built. Tarred roads and footpaths wind through rows and rows of homes.¹²⁰

⁹⁶Director of Lands to Acting Administrator, 26 October 1948, in Australian Archives, A.C.T., CRS A432, 1949/13, *Proclamation of a New Town of "Nightcliff" Within the Darwin Town Area (Northern Territory)*.

⁹⁷Nomenclature Committee of the Northern Territory, Minutes of Meeting Held at Darwin on 29 October 1948, in *ibid.*

⁹⁸*Northern Territory Government Gazette*, no.11, 16 March 1949, p.406.

⁹⁹"Sale of Leases Darwin & N'cliff", *Northern Standard*, Friday March 18 1949, p.3; "Home Builders Promised Help", *Northern Standard*, Friday April 14 1949, p.1.

¹⁰⁰"Home Builders Promised Help", *loc.cit.*

¹⁰¹Jim Gayton, personal communication, 12 May 1994.

¹⁰²Dale, *op.cit.*, p.8.

¹⁰³Nightcliff High School, *The History of Nightcliff* [CD-ROM].

¹⁰⁴"Progress Drive Licence", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday December 10 1960, p.7.

¹⁰⁵"Building Boom Lifts Us from Hut and Hovel Era", *Northern Territory News*, Tuesday February 14 1961, p.11.

¹⁰⁶A. Heatley, *A City Grows: a History of the Darwin City Council, 1957-1984*, p.128.

¹⁰⁷"Darwin Needs More Hotels - Mayor Claims", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday March 22 1962, p.10.

¹⁰⁸"Nightcliff Has Pride in Itself", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday December 13 1962, p.25.

¹⁰⁹"Town Board Agrees to Form Progress Association", *Northern Standard*, Friday July 14 1950, p.7.

¹¹⁰"Darwin Suburbs Want These Street Names", *Northern Territory News*, Friday February 22 1952, p.5.

¹¹¹"Nightcliff People are Most Community-Minded", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday December 13 1962, p.24.

¹¹²Garage Operating for Forty Years, *Northern Territory News*, Wednesday April 13 1994, p.21.

¹¹³Margaret Bell, personal communication, 4 May 1994.

¹¹⁴Jim Gayton, personal communication, 12 May 1994.

¹¹⁵"Shanty Town Must Go - Housing Most Vital Need", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday December 4 1952, p.1.

¹¹⁶"Seeks Extension on Nightcliff Leases", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday November 27 1952, p.3.

¹¹⁷"The Nightcliff Huts", *Northern Territory News*, Tuesday June 11 1957, p.3.

¹¹⁸"Building Boom Lifts Us from Hut and Hovel Era", *Northern Territory News*, Tuesday February 14 1961, p.11.

¹¹⁹"Nightcliff Huts to Go With Expansion Plans", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday May 30 1957, p.1.

¹²⁰"Nightcliff Has Pride in Itself", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday December 13 1962, p.25.



Aerial view of Nightcliff, 1960



Accommodation unit at Ludmilla Hotel, early 1950s

SEABREEZE HOTEL

No institution was more evocative of the spirit of early Nightcliff than the Seabreeze Hotel which, for over twenty five years, was one of Darwin's most popular hotels. There were actually two Seabreeze Hotels. The first was commenced in 1947 by Commander Alexander Earl 'Chook' Fowler using several of the abandoned military buildings which had been constructed on the headland near the present-day boat ramp. Fowler, who had been District Naval Officer, Darwin, from 1936 until 1938, initially occupied the land merely on a caretaker basis, but he later obtained a licence from the Minister for the Army to legally use the land and erect further buildings in order to operate a tourist hostel.¹²¹ In this way, the Hotel began its life as a private guest house, the *Darwin Tourist Hostel*. A Sidney Williams hut provided ample dining space for 36 diners and up to 31 guests could be accommodated in a number of small huts which were scattered about the locality. Initially, the accommodation arrangements were fairly spartan as the huts, which were only 3 or 4 metres wide, contained little more than two single army stretchers. Toilet and shower facilities were separately provided to the rear of the accommodation units.¹²² All the buildings were situated on the cliff top on what is now public land.

In 1950, Fowler was granted a private hotel licence which permitted the sale of liquor to guests at any time and to persons having a meal on the premises.¹²³ Just prior to this, the name had been changed to the *Ludmilla Guest House* and, after the licence was issued,

it became the *Ludmilla Hotel*. The new licensee, Mrs. K. M. Stuart, took over the management from Pat and Grace Thomas who, with the help of women from the Nightcliff Camp, had pioneered the operation of the business during the early period when it had traded as the *Darwin Tourist Hostel*. According to Ted D'Ambrosio, who became a part owner of the business in 1955, the stringent requirements of the liquor license could be got around "by serving cheese and biscuits with the drinks".¹²⁴

Typical of the memories of Darwin residents who visited the Ludmilla are those of Wendy James who:

...remembers the first accommodation huts being made of hessian which deteriorated rather quickly and had to be replaced with masonite and fibro.

"The setting was beautiful, like something out of a South Sea Island movie. You sat in chairs under the palm trees with the sea pounding against the rocks; or danced on the big red cement dance floor right on the cliff's edge; you almost expected Errol Flynn to appear on the scene..."

"There was a gun emplacement there which we kids used to use as a changing shed when we went swimming..."¹²⁵

According to Ted D'Ambrosio:

"A lot of people used to use the

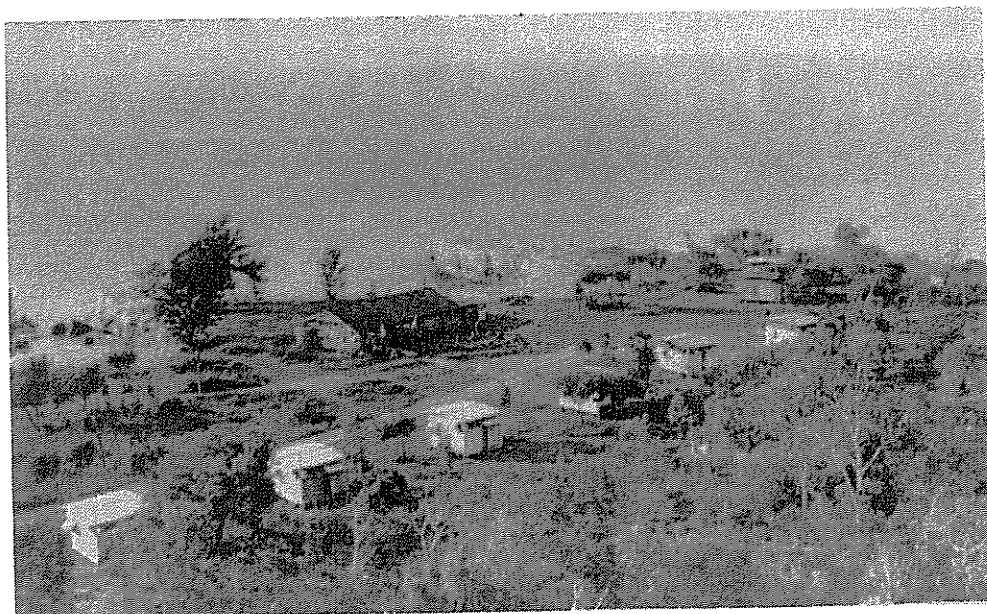
HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION DARWIN TOURIST HOSTELS LTD.

Offer accommodation at their Nightcliff Tourist Hostel for limited periods during the coming season — Right on the Seafront — Safe Swimming on Good Beaches — Attractive Jungle Walks — Good Accommodation and Food — Always a Cool Breeze — 7 Miles from Darwin by Bitumen Road — Bus Service — Airport 4 Miles.

NIGHTCLIFF — DARWIN'S HOLIDAY SUBURB

Afternoon Teas, Luncheon and Dinner Parties by arrangement with the Manageress, Mrs. J. Phillips, or at the Office of the Company's Agents:—

A. E. FOWLER & SON,
Weedon & Lawrence Buildings - - Telephone 367.



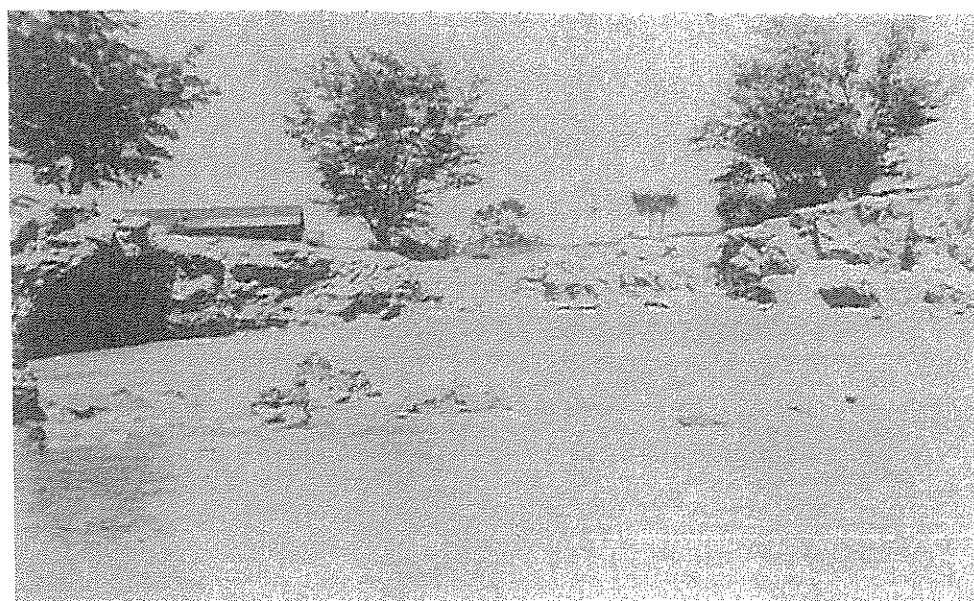
Ludmilla Hotel and units, 1949



Units at Ludmilla Hotel, 1949



Accommodation unit at Ludmilla Hotel, 1949



Beach at Ludmilla Hotel, 1949

little pool that formed in the rocks on the cliffs, just in front of the dance floor. There were three steps leading down to it..."

"In later years the gun pit got a rather unsavoury reputation as an unofficial house of ill repute..."¹²⁶

During 1955 and 1956, Mrs. Dorothy "Mumma" De Fraine became the licensee and quickly developed a reputation for organising spectacular Saturday night dances which became the highlight of Darwin's social scene. As Mrs. De Fraine later recalled:

Every fourth Saturday night we would hold a novelty night and invitations would go out at two guineas per head.

These were eagerly sought and the place would really be done up to the nines with festoons of colored lights, pretty cloths, candles and decor to suit the theme, be it Hawaiian, Italian or Chinese and so on.

We all dressed formally and many men went to the trouble to send down south for corsages for their womenfolk...

We got a six-piece orchestra together (although don't ask me how, as we had few musicians then) and had a wonderful time.¹²⁷

It was during this period that the hotel changed its name again to finally become the *Seabreeze Hotel*. A new company, Sea Breeze Investments Ltd., was set up in May 1955 by Commander Fowler to acquire his interests and further develop the business. As well as Fowler, the newly created Board included Ted D'Ambrosio, A. B. Newell, J. S. Tennant and E. A. Becker.¹²⁸ An immediate concern of the Board was to try and obtain more security over the leases which had been granted rather tenuously to Fowler during a period of great uncertainty some five or six years before.¹²⁹ Another problem arose in 1956 when Mrs. De Fraine left to further her own business interests. This difficulty was resolved temporarily by having Ted D'Ambrosio's brother, Alfred, take over the licence.¹³⁰

In 1957, the Seabreeze owners were granted a full liquor licence on condition that the existing premises would be demolished and replaced with a new structure expected to cost

CUP EVE BALL

at the

SEABREEZE HOTEL

BETTER THAN THE "CHINESE DINNER DANCE"
BETTER THAN THE "SHIPWRECK PARTY"
BETTER THAN THE "NIGHT IN BALI"

THIS TIME THE SURPRISES ARE A SECRET
YOU'LL LOVE THEM

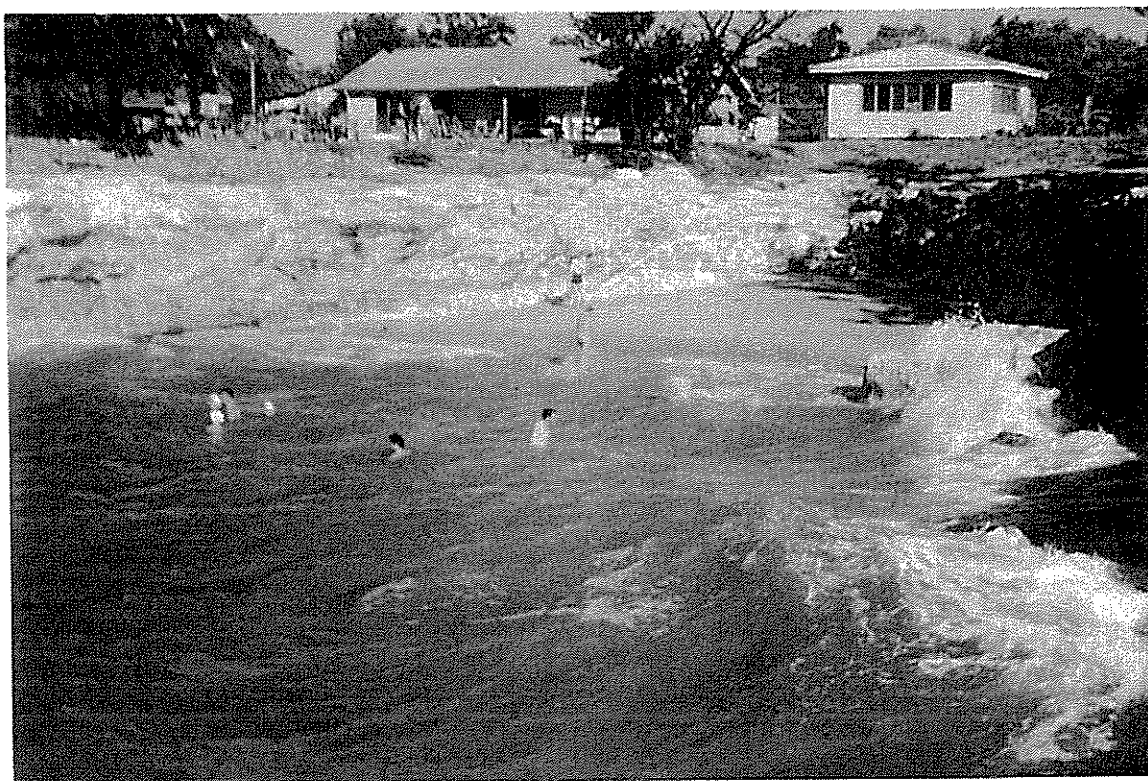
Help The Spastic Centre At Mt. Lawley Perth

BY ENJOYING DARWIN'S MOST EXCITING BALL
TICKETS £2-2-0 PER HEAD

Phone 374 for Reservations
Limited number only

You can lay the odds on the best dinner ever served in the
Territory

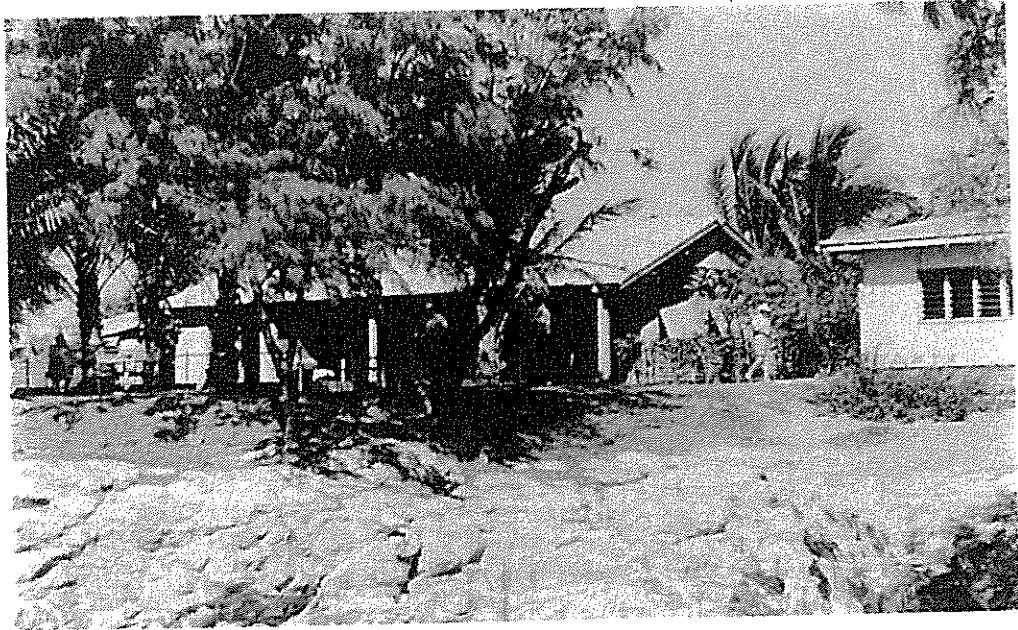
Advertisement for the Seabreeze Hotel, 1955
Courtesy of the Northern Territory News



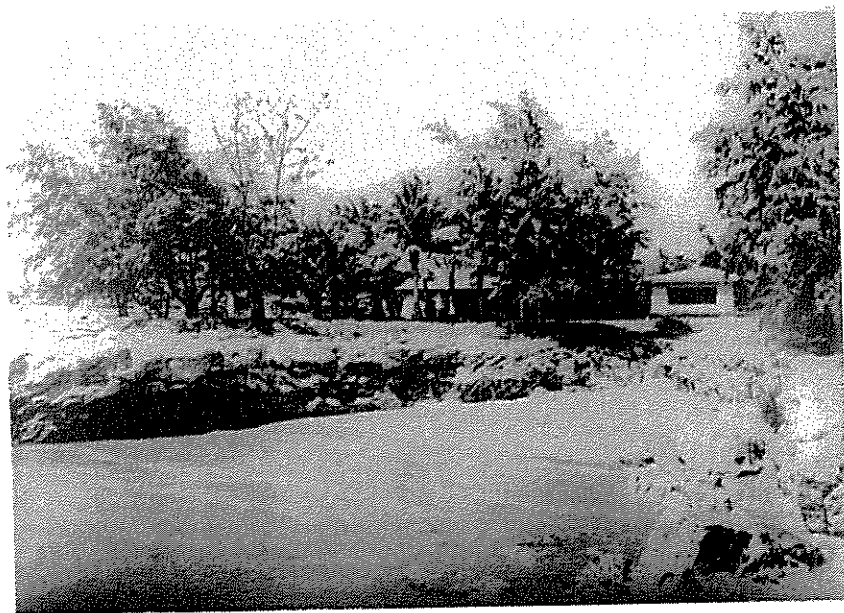
Swimming near Ludmilla Hotel, early 1950s



Beer garden, Seabreeze Hotel



Ludmilla Hotel, 1953



Seabreeze Hotel, 1960

£60,000.¹³¹ They had been under pressure for some time to relinquish the area as public land and move to the other side of the road. Unfortunately, however, since they were not able to secure sufficient finance, the business was sold to interstate interests.¹³² During the late 1950s, a new licensee, Miss Claudia Desailly, operated the old hotel whilst negotiations for the new continued; it was not until March 1962 that the second Seabreeze Hotel opened in new premises and thereby became Nightcliff's first public hotel.¹³³ Financial difficulties had repeatedly held up the building programme and had nearly jeopardised the granting of the licence. The new building was located on the opposite side of Casuarina Drive and slightly to the south of the old hotel.

As the new hotel neared completion, arrangements were finalised to remove all the remaining military structures from the seafront. These installations included a strongly built concrete blockhouse and an observation post which had been built to house and protect the shore end of a submarine cable from East Point used in connection with the anti-submarine and radar defence of the Darwin area.¹³⁴ According to an account extracted from the personal diary of Hans Sachse:

The removal of the bunker was no easy task. It took a few boxes of gelignite to demolish the structure and remove the rubble afterwards. The demolition of the soldier's quarters was the easiest part. The construction material used was timber and fibro sheeting. A dozer was brought in to flatten the huts. Special care was taken not to destroy the original Nightcliff hotel. It stood amongst coconut trees right on the edge of the cliff, but it was empty and a few weeks later was removed.

A few of the huts were already destroyed by the workmen when the machine moved onto the next group of quarters. A voice came out of one of the huts just seconds before it would have been crushed under the dozer blades. All operations were stopped and a quick check was made to find out who was living in the hut. It was 'Tiger' Brennan, the M.L.A. and future Mayor of Darwin. All of us standing near the hut were shocked when we heard the voice. It was

only a matter seconds and Tiger Brennan would have been killed.¹³⁵

Even if the new hotel had lost some of the 'Errol Flynn' atmosphere of the old location, it still continued to be one of Darwin's most popular drinking spots. One of the best known Territory publicans, Mayse Young, took over the lease in 1973 and managed the hotel until it was totally destroyed by Cyclone Tracy. At that time, the hotel was described as being "a lovely tropical hotel, with an uninterrupted view of the Arafura Sea, and had a real family atmosphere".¹³⁶ The aftermath of the tragic events of Christmas eve, 1974, when the Seabreeze Hotel received the full impact of Cyclone Tracy as it roared in from the Arafura Sea, have been vividly described by Mrs. Young:

Darwin, first light on Christmas morning, 1974.

I waded out through knee-deep water, across what had been our lounge room floor. Among the shattered glass and sodden furniture were scraps of christmas tinsel, and just one pathetic little package still in Merry christmas wrapping, caught in a tangle of splinters and broken fibro cement. the unopened gifts we had placed with love and laughter under the tree the night before had been blown or washed away in fragments. Behind the Seabreeze Hotel, only one wall of the manager's flat remained standing and we could see now that this barrier certainly had saved our lives.

Standing in the unnatural silence and thick, humid heat, I found myself struggling to believe the scene of destruction before me. Only yesterday this had been our comfortable family hotel, with its tropical beer garden overlooking East Point and the Arafura Sea. Now, the hotel building was an unrecognisable ruin, the garden had been stripped bare, the trees were uprooted and the pool overflowed with smashed timber, twisted iron, and a mass of sodden debris...¹³⁷

Sadly, the Seabreeze was never rebuilt, but the

saga of the hotel did not end until 1981, at which time the site was subdivided into thirteen prime residential lots which sold for high prices at auction.¹³⁸ In recognition of its importance to the people of Darwin, the site of the first Seabreeze Hotel was entered into the National Trust's Register of Significant Places during 1992.¹³⁹ Regrettably, however, there is still no signage in place to advise younger generations of the significance of the site.

121 F. J. S. Wise, Administrator of the N.T., to the Secretary, Dept. of Territories, 31 August 1953, in Australian Archives, N.T., CRS F1, 1954/354, *Lease of Commonwealth Land - Nightcliff*, A. E. Fowler, "Seabreeze Private Hotel".

122 R. C. Hoath, personal communication, 1992.

123 "Liquor License Granted to Nightcliff Guest House", *Northern Standard*, Friday July 7, 1950, p.5.

124 B. James, "The First Seabreeze", *Star*, v.6, no.3, Wednesday January 28 1981, p.7.

125 *ibid.*

126 *ibid.*

127 M. Gruber, "A Career Woman from the Top Drawer: When 'Pigheadedness' Can Mean Success", *Northern Territory News*, Wednesday January 25 1967, p.17.

128 A. E. Fowler to the Director of Lands, 5 May 1955, in Australian Archives, N.T., CRS F1, 1954/354, *op.cit.*

129 E. J. Smith, Acting/Assistant Director of Lands to the Director of Lands, 7 July 1955, in *ibid.*

130 "Interim Liquor Licence for Seabreeze Hotel", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday August 23 1956, p.1.

131 "New Buildings to Cost Estimated £150,000: Two Hotel Licences Granted", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday May 2 1957, p.1.

132 "£60,000 Plan at Seabreeze: Big Plans", *Northern Territory News*, Tuesday December 10 1957, p.1.

133 "Seabreeze Hotel Licence", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday March 22 1962, p.10.

134 R. S. Leydin, Acting Administrator, to the Secretary, Department of Territories, 22 December 1953, in Australian Archives, N.T., CRS F1, 1954/354, *op.cit.*

135 H. J. Sachse, *Removal of an Artillery Bunker on the Nightcliff Foreshore*, 1962, pp.1-2.

136 M. Young and G. Dalton, *No Place for a Woman: the Autobiography of Outback Publican*, Mayse Young, p.168.

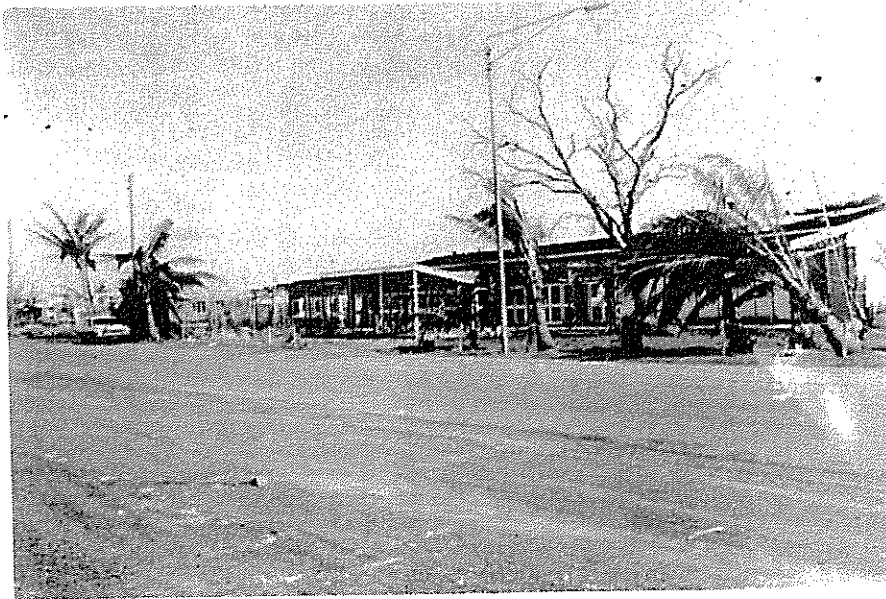
137 *ibid.*, p.1.

138 "Seabreeze Site Under the Hammer: Bidding Brisk as 13 Prime Lots Go", *Northern Territory News*, Monday July 27 1981, p.2.

139 *Trust News (Northern Territory National Trust)*, v.9, no.4, November 1992, p.8.



Seabreeze Hotel, 1973



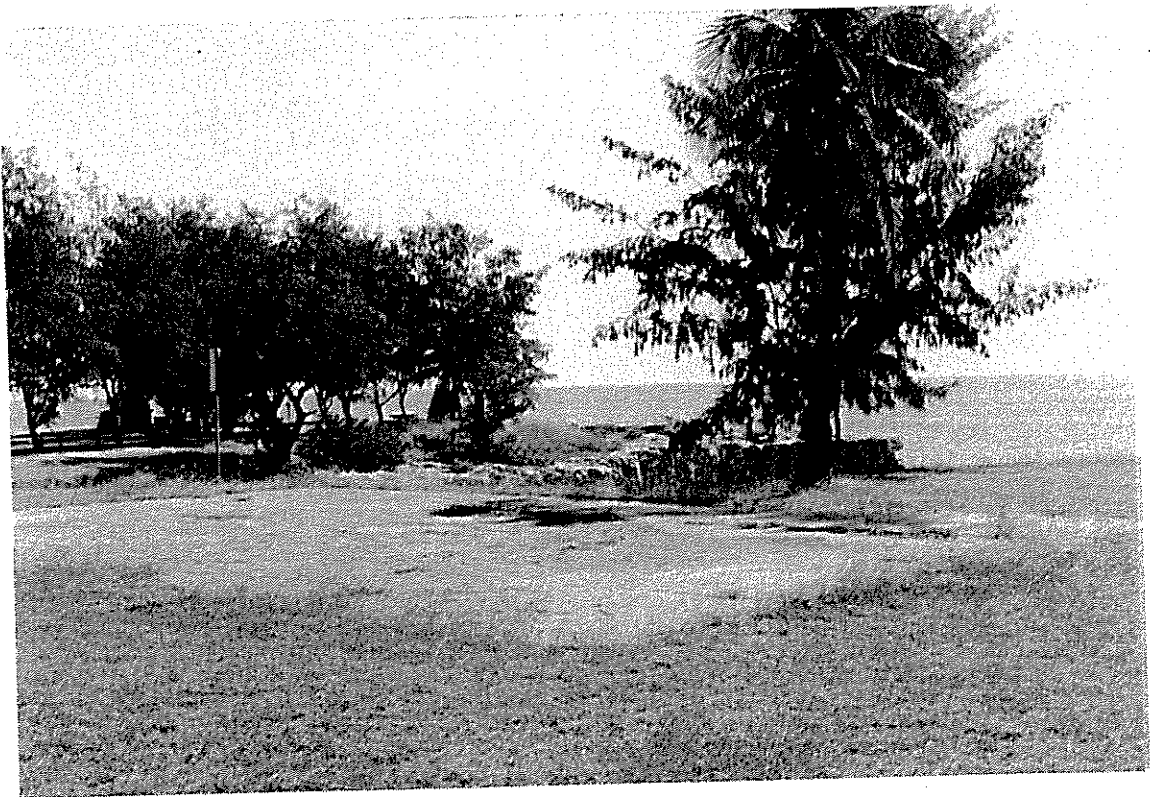
Seabreeze Hotel, 1975, showing damage caused by Cyclone Tracy



Aerial view of vicinity of Seabreeze Hotel site, 1979



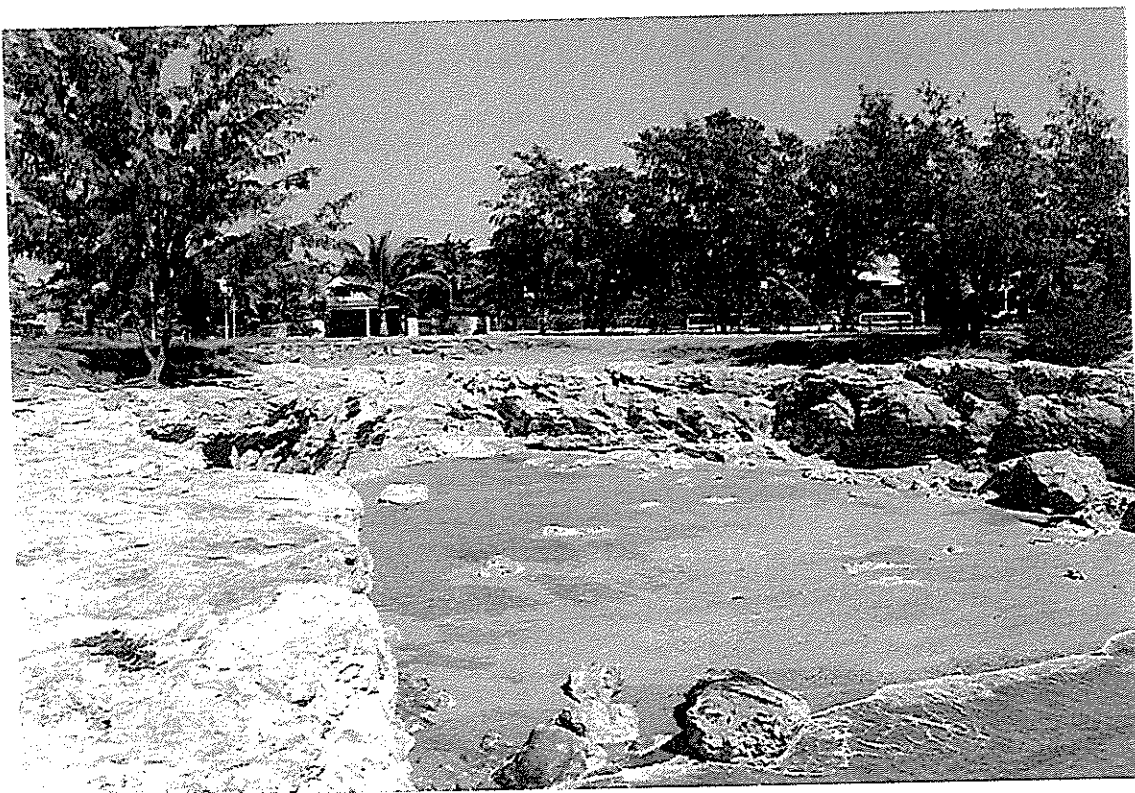
Dance floor with steps leading down, site of first Seabreeze Hotel



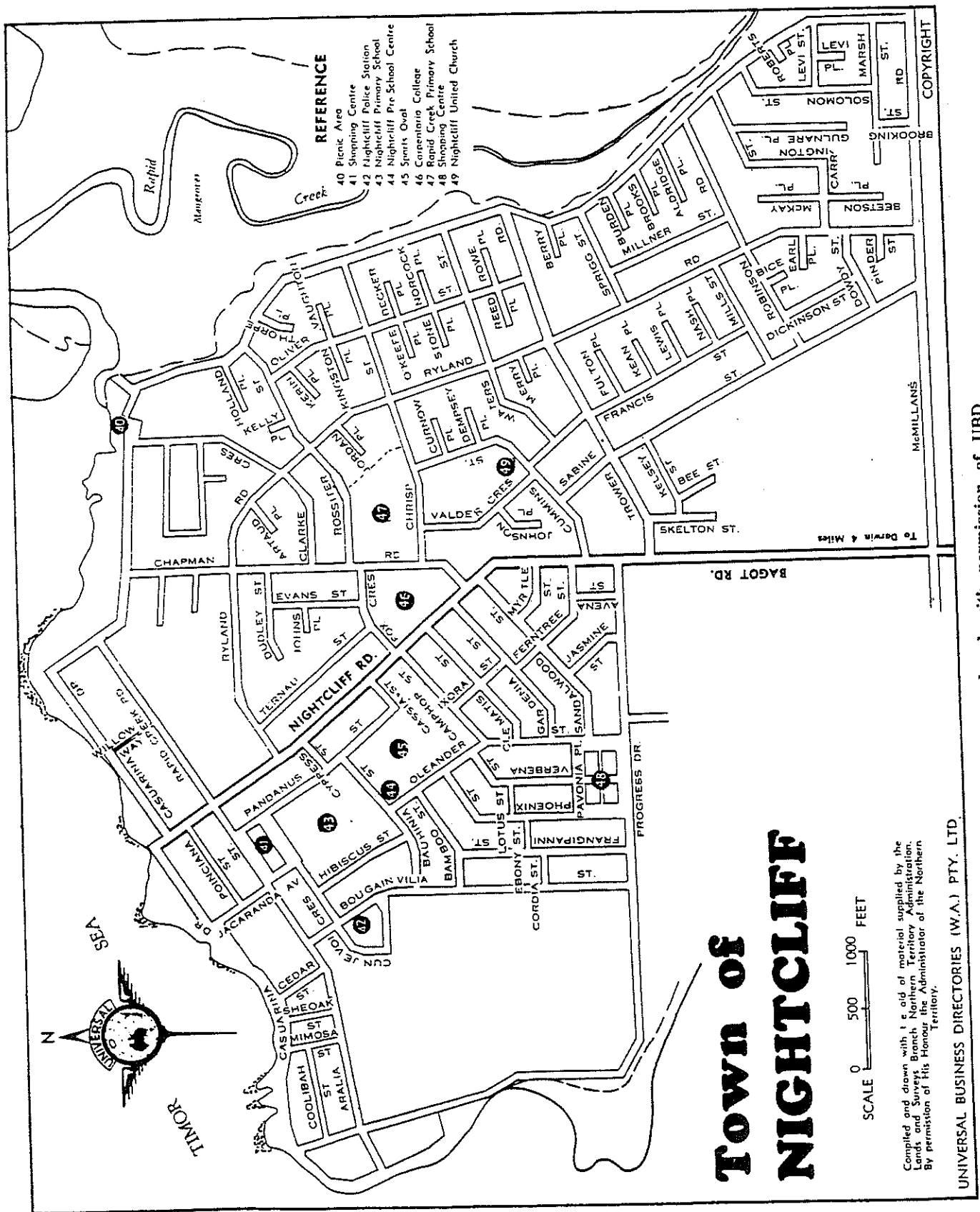
Concrete slab on site of first Seabreeze Hotel



Residential development, Casuarina Drive, on Seabreeze Hotel site



View from beach near first Seabreeze Hotel site looking across to residential development in the vicinity of the second site



SUBURBAN GROWTH

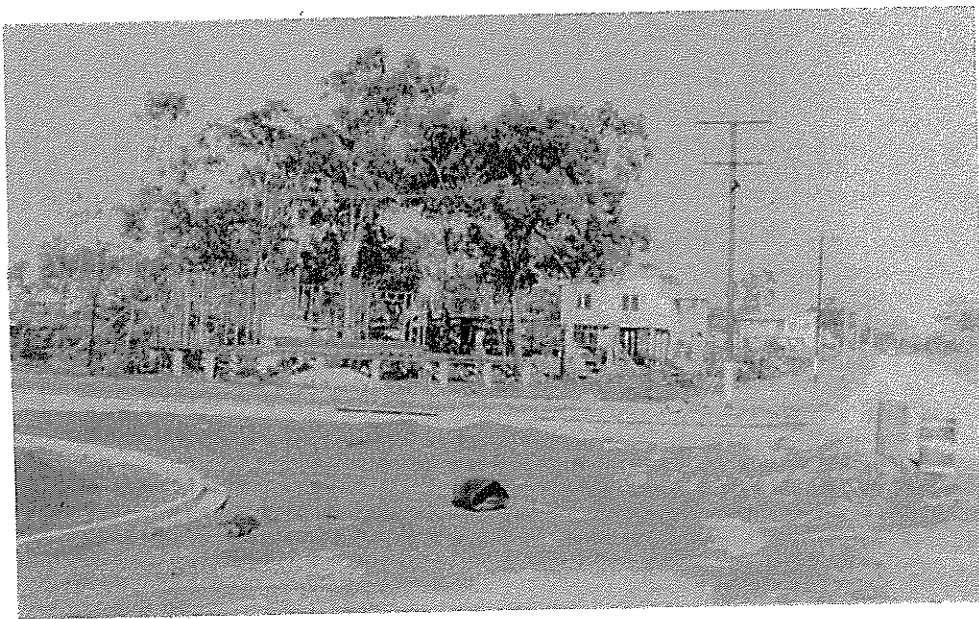
By 1960, the population of Nightcliff had reached 1,438.¹⁴⁰ If the growth during the late fifties could be regarded as impressive, then the growth during the sixties was even more spectacular. In 1961, the *Darwin Town Area Leases Ordinance* was amended so that holders of 99 year leases could apply to have them converted to perpetual leases; all subsequent land sales were for blocks held in perpetuity.¹⁴¹ In early 1962, it was claimed that the area was having a "population explosion" and it was estimated that a further 925 homes would be completed by 1965.¹⁴² During 1961, the Rapid Creek Development Company had been formed to subdivide land in the region, commencing with a parcel of 85 blocks south of Casuarina Drive and east of Chapman Road (see advertisement on the next page). This was the first instance of private land subdivision in the Darwin area.¹⁴³

The early 1960s also saw significant additions to the Nightcliff Shopping Centre in Progress Drive. Although the first shops had been erected there in 1958, a major landmark was the opening of Cashman's large store at the beginning of March 1962.¹⁴⁴ The year 1962 also saw work commence on the construction of Carpentaria College¹⁴⁵ and the Nightcliff Youth Centre.¹⁴⁶ The first government school in the region, Nightcliff Primary

School, had opened the year before with seven out of the planned thirteen classrooms ready for use.¹⁴⁷ By the end of 1962, four additional classrooms, a shelter-shed and a tuck shop had been added to the School.¹⁴⁸ The first eight classrooms for infants at the Rapid Creek Primary School were completed in time for the beginning of the 1964 school year.¹⁴⁹ Stage 2 of the Rapid Creek Primary School was ready for the commencement of the 1966 school year.¹⁵⁰ In the mid 1960s, planning had also commenced for a high school to serve the region,¹⁵¹ but it was not until 8 July 1970 that the Nightcliff High School was officially opened. 300 students, who had been temporarily housed in demountables at the Darwin High School, transferred immediately to the new buildings.¹⁵²

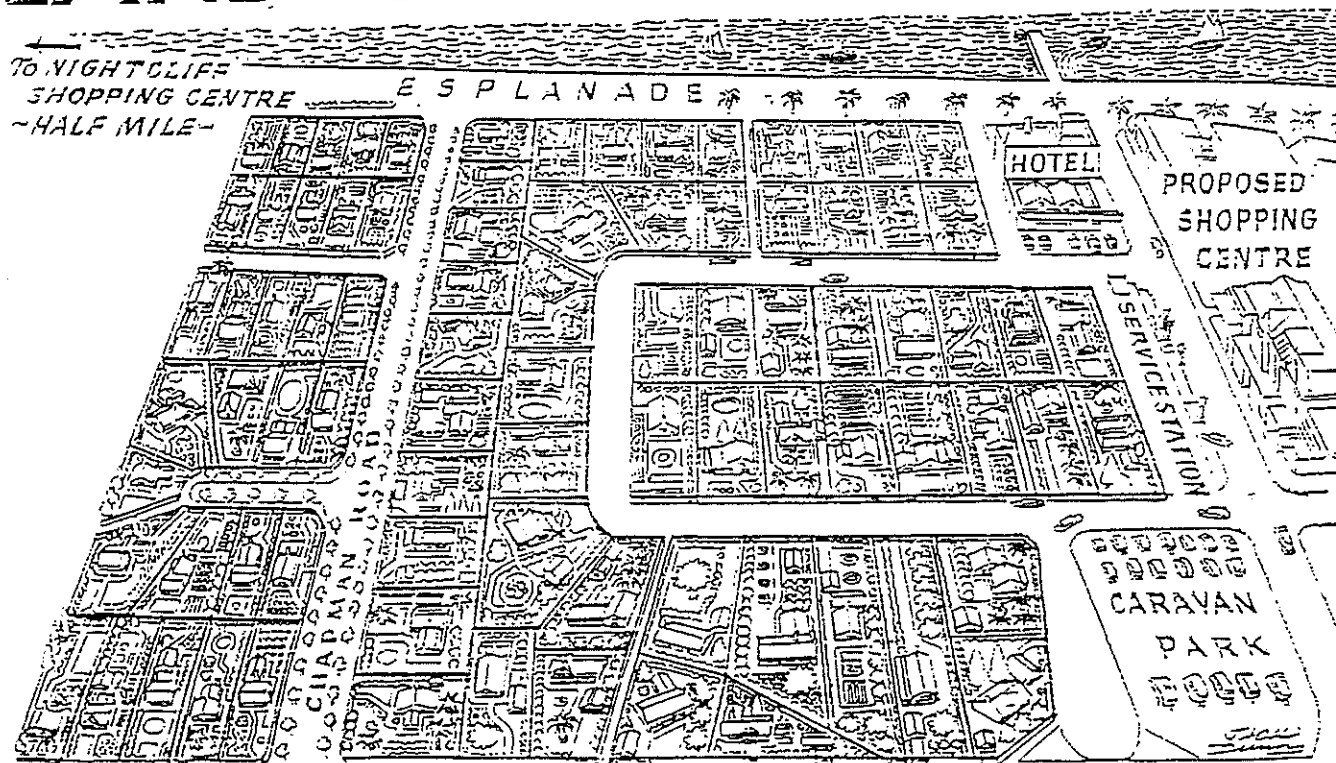
The opening of the drive-in theatre in December 1964 was another major event which focussed attention on the district.¹⁵³ At the time of this opening, the theatre was hailed as being the finest in Australia with state of the art projection equipment equal to the best available in America.¹⁵⁴ As Lorna Spall later pointed out in her book based on her impressions of life in Darwin between 1956 and Cyclone Tracy:

The drive-in cinema was one of the biggest private building projects



House under construction, Nightcliff, 1960.

LAND UNITS AVAILABLE



RESIDENTIAL and COMMERCIAL BLOCKS
a "stone's throw" from the sea...

Swimming, Fishing, Boating... a few steps away!

35 Residential Blocks An Hotel Site A Service Station Block Area for Caravan Park
For LAND in Nightcliff (Darwin's fastest-growing suburb)...

Blocks ranging from £450 — Three years to pay
LOWEST INTEREST RATE IN AUSTRALIA — 3 1.7 P.C.
Example: Block at £475 — Deposit £47/10/- — £3/0/6 per week.

RAPID CREEK DEVELOPMENT COMPANY PTY. LTD.

Telephone 51263

Governing-Director: Mr. Stan Jory

P.O. Box 430.

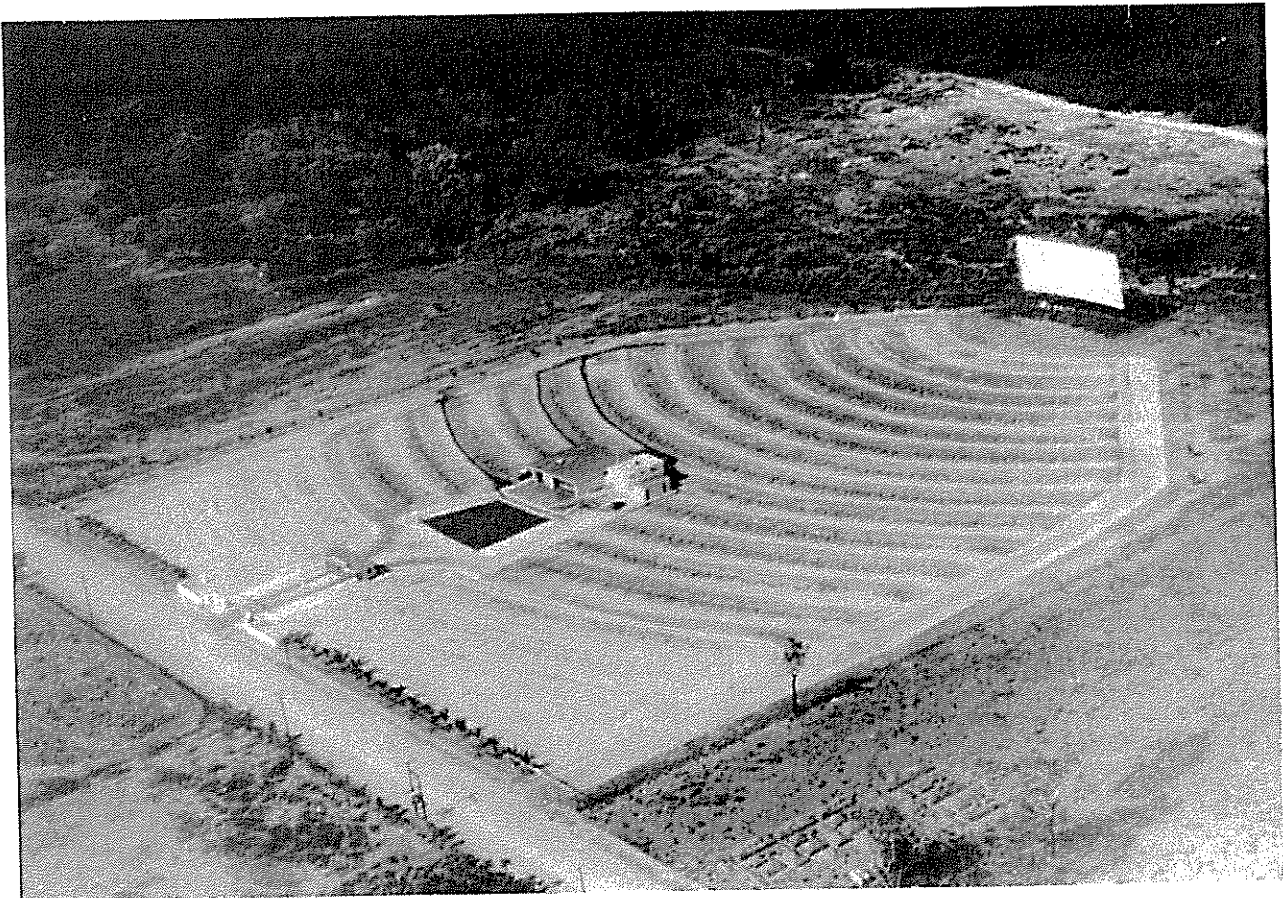
attempted in many years. Built and owned by our local millionaire, Michael Paspalis, it was also very well managed by Vincent Lucas, and proved an outstanding success.

The project cost over one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. The huge screen, suitable for standard cinemascope, stood sixty feet above ground level, with a screen picture covering 105 ft x 45 ft, which cost thirty thousand pounds, and was one of the biggest screens in Australia.¹⁵⁵

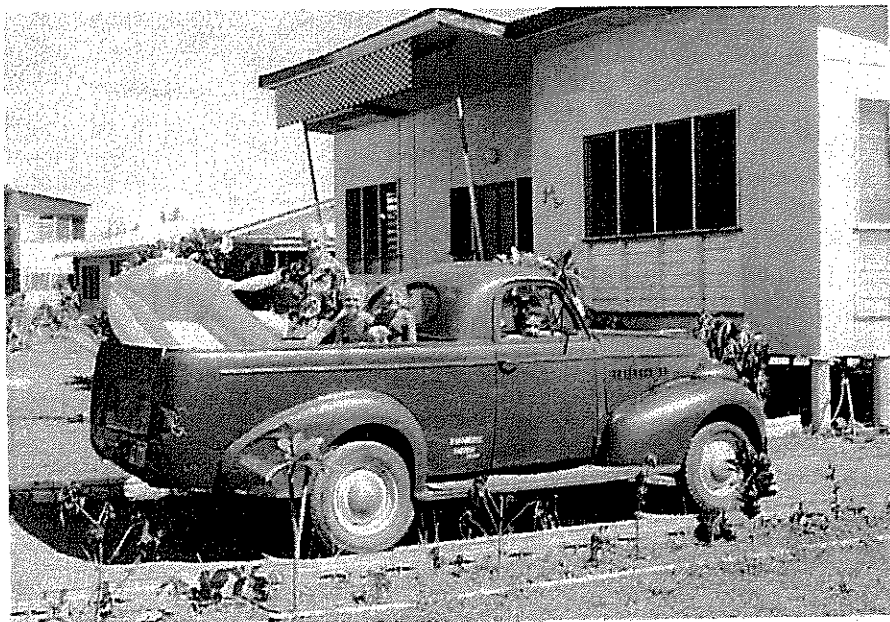
By the beginning of the 1970s, therefore, two government primary schools and a high school, first rate shopping facilities and a drive-in theatre had been opened in the region. Other facilities, such as the Nightcliff Public Library, which had opened in July 1965,¹⁵⁶ gave Nightcliff residents access to as comprehensive a range of services as could be found anywhere else in Darwin. After a long

period of planning and construction, the Nightcliff Swimming Pool had also finally opened in August 1967.¹⁵⁷

The Nightcliff Sports Club also dates its origins back to the late sixties, having been formed in 1969.¹⁵⁸ Because of the loss of records during Cyclone Tracy, the early history of the Club is not clear, but it is known that a number of sporting clubs, especially the Nightcliff Football Club which began as early as 1963 as the Works Football Club, had been active during the mid 1960s. In 1967, under the leadership of Alan Clarke, a steering committee held a number of meetings to explore the concept of a unified sports club. Two years later, on 10 April 1969, another meeting chaired by Clarke formed a Committee with President Bill Mitchell, Senior Vice-President Alan Clarke, Junior Vice-President Alan Grove, Secretary Kevin Gulph and Treasurer Harry Currington to plan for the formation of such a club. After several months of activity, the Nightcliff Sports Club was inaugurated on 3 July 1969.¹⁵⁹



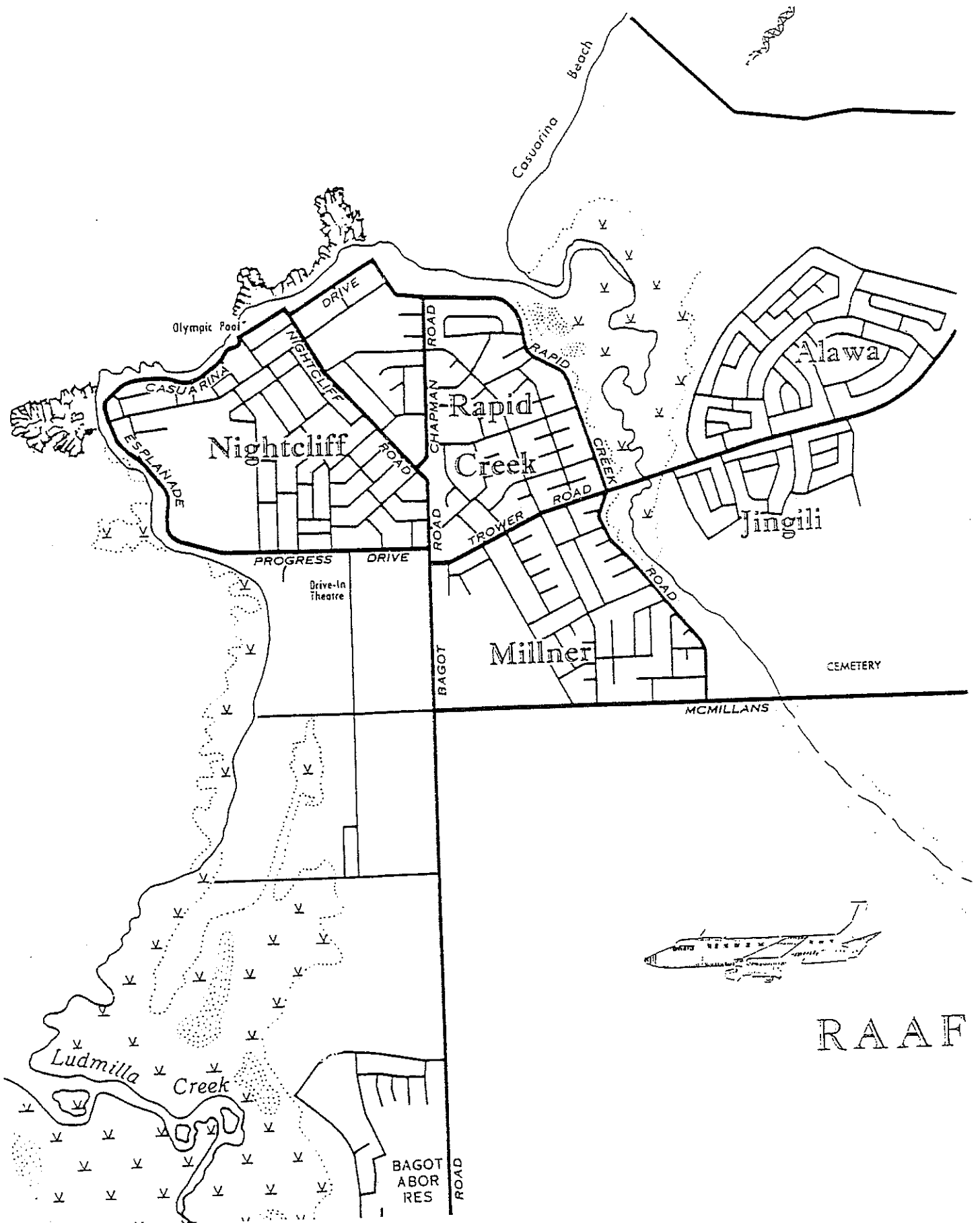
Paspalis drive-in theatre, Nightcliff, 1964



Leonard family home, Aralia Street, 1960



Aerial view of Nightcliff looking across Casuarina Drive, 1966



Northern suburbs, 1967
 Courtesy of the Northern Territory Department of Lands, Housing and Local Government

The Nightcliff Sports Club's first building, on the Camphor Street site still occupied by the Club, was completed during the next two and a half years and opened by the Darwin Lord Mayor, Ken Walters, on 4 February 1972. This building was the result of a considerable amount of hard work contributed by over 30 working bees of members, work which had to be repeated after Cyclone Tracy destroyed all but the coolroom of the new building. Club members again joined forces to contribute labour and materials to rebuild the facilities from their own resources. The Club now enjoys a membership of over 1,000 sporting and non-sporting members and affiliations with over 8 sporting bodies. Also associated with the Club has been the development of the Senior Citizen's Association, the Nightcliff Evergreens.¹⁶⁰

By the end of the decade of the 1960s, as can be seen from the map ~~on the previous page~~ dated 1967, Darwin's suburban development had also spilled over into the neighbouring suburbs of ~~Millner, Alawa and Jingili~~; Nightcliff and Rapid Creek were beginning fill out and it could no longer be said that the area represented the northernmost extremity of Darwin's suburban development.

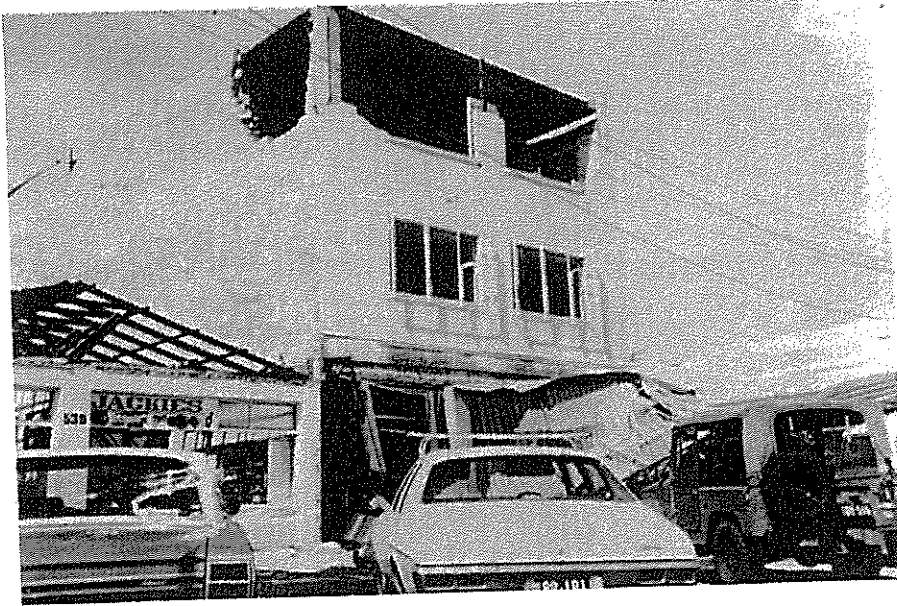
During the early 1970s, it only remained for several major building projects such as the Woolworth's complex in Progress Drive (now Rite Price Supermarket), opened in June 1971¹⁶¹, and Lim's Rapid Creek Hotel (later the Beachfront Hotel and now the Arafura Centre), opened in August 1972,¹⁶² to give the area a fairly familiar face. In December 1974, Cyclone Tracy temporarily but abruptly dislocated the growth of all Darwin's suburbs. Nightcliff and Rapid Creek were particularly badly affected because they lay close to the centre of the path taken by the cyclone. In late December 1974 and January 1975, the N.T. Housing Commission surveyed the area and found that, out of a total of 1,206 houses, only 58 had survived intact and 550 would have to be considered complete write-offs.¹⁶³

The new Nightcliff High School, which had survived the devastation better than most buildings, was immediately pressed into service as an evacuation centre, then becoming a hostel for workers involved in the temporary repair of essential services. Because of the massive evacuation of Darwin families after Tracy, it did not appear that the school would be needed for some time. By May 1975, however, sufficient numbers had returned to allow the school to reopen, temporarily sharing

its facilities with Rapid Creek Primary School teachers and students and the Nightcliff Community Health Centre.¹⁶⁴ Given the extent of the damage caused by Cyclone Tracy, the area has made a remarkable recovery. Today, there is little tangible evidence remaining of the severity of the cyclone.

During recent decades, the Electoral Division of Nightcliff has been well served by its Legislative Assembly members. The present incumbent, Stephen Paul Hatton, representing the Country Liberal Party, was first elected to the Assembly on 3 December 1983 and was re-elected on 7 March 1987, 27 October 1990 and 4 June 1994.¹⁶⁵ Steve Hatton, who has lived in the district since 1977, is greatly respected by all Nightcliff residents in a manner which overrides all considerations pertaining to party politics. In addition to pursuing the needs of his electorate with great vigour and tirelessly supporting local sporting clubs and other organisations, Mr. Hatton has consistently maintained a high profile within the Northern Territory Government. As well as holding the position of Chief Minister from 15 May 1986 to 13 July 1988, he has an impeccable record of performance in a large number of high level Ministerial appointments.

Prior to Steve Hatton's electoral win in 1983, the seat was held by another local resident, Alline Dawn Lawrie. Dawn Lawrie was, in fact, only the second woman ever elected to the Northern Territory Legislative Council, the institution which preceded the newly constituted Assembly in 1974. She held her seat in the Council from 23 October 1970 until 19 October 1974, and in the Assembly from the latter date until 3 December 1983.¹⁶⁶ As an Independent member, Dawn Lawrie displayed an outstanding commitment to fighting for the welfare of others. During her time in office, she achieved some remarkable results involving such matters as the rights of citizens to attend internal courts of inquiry into charges against prisoners, repealing vagrancy laws and setting up the Territory's first Parole Board.¹⁶⁷ Many Nightcliff residents remember the energy she displayed during the post-Cyclone Tracy reconstruction period and the objections she raised concerning the re-entry permit system.¹⁶⁸ Her firm stand on many issues brought her into opposition with conservative political elements, so much so that she was publicly labelled "the witch of Nightcliff" by Paul Everingham.¹⁶⁹ Since leaving the Assembly, Dawn Lawrie has continued to play a highly significant role in public life, most recently as the Territory's Anti-Discrimination



Cyclone damage to commercial buildings in Progress Drive



Total destruction in Bougainvillea Street after Cyclone Tracy

Commissioner.¹⁷⁰

By 1986, the population of both Nightcliff and Rapid Creek had risen to 6,568.¹⁷¹ Due to the fact that flat, townhouse and home unit development is proceeding at a prodigious rate, especially in the area bounded by Casuarina Drive and Aralia Street, the population of both suburbs is still rising. This situation has not been accepted uncritically by local residents. Proposals put forward during recent years regarding the Beachfront Hotel site (now the Arafura Centre) have shown that, by opposing excessive high-rise development, they are keen to preserve the existing character of the district.¹⁷² At the present time, therefore, it still remains appropriate to describe the area as a *garden suburb*.

¹⁴⁰"Last Chance for Hotel at Nightcliff", *Northern Territory News*, Friday July 8 1960, p.4.

¹⁴¹"Freehold Land Bill Now Law", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday October 12 1961, p.2.

¹⁴²"Darwin Needs More Hotels", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday March 22 1962, p.1.

¹⁴³"Rapid Creek Land Success", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday October 14 1961, p.4.

¹⁴⁴"Cashman's Supplement", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday March 3 1962, pp.9-16

¹⁴⁵"Carpentaria College", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday June 9 1962, p.2.

¹⁴⁶"Suburb Will Spend £20,000 to Help Youth", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday May 10 1962, p.8.

¹⁴⁷*Northern Territory Report for 1960-61*, p.41.

¹⁴⁸*Northern Territory Report for 1962-63*, p.55.

¹⁴⁹*Annual Report on the Northern Territory of Australia for the Period 1 July 1963 to 30 June 1964*, p.71.

¹⁵⁰*Annual Report on the Northern Territory of Australia for the Period 1 July 1965 to 30 June 1966* p.73.

¹⁵¹Australia. Parliament. Standing Committee on Public Works, *Report Relating to the Proposed Nightcliff High School at Darwin*, *Northern Territory*.

¹⁵²Nightcliff High School, *Nightcliff High School: 21 Years of Education*, p.40.

¹⁵³*Northern Territory News*, Wednesday December 9 1964, pp.10-19.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pp.11-12.

¹⁵⁵L. Spall, *Our Darwin: 1956 to Tracy*, p.59.

¹⁵⁶"Nightcliff Library to Open Monday", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday July 8 1965, p.7.

¹⁵⁷Heatley, *op.cit.*, p.75.

¹⁵⁸"Nightcliff Sports Club Inc. Open Day", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday June 1 1989, pp.17-19;

"Humble Start for Sports Club", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday September 11 1993, p.11.

¹⁵⁹"Nightcliff Sports Club Inc. 21st Birthday", *Darwin Advertiser*, Friday 5 February 1993, pp.7-10.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁶¹*Northern Territory News*, Thursday June 3 1971,

p.14.

¹⁶²*Northern Territory News*, Tuesday August 29 1972, pp.13-20.

¹⁶³Australia. Department of Housing and Construction, *Darwin Housing Redevelopment*, 1975-1980, p.7.

¹⁶⁴Nightcliff High School, *op.cit.*, pp.40-41.

¹⁶⁵Northern Territory. Legislative Assembly, *Parliamentary Handbook*, 1991, pp.24-25.

¹⁶⁶*ibid.*, p.57.

¹⁶⁷S. Bunk, "The Witch of Nightcliff", *Portfolio*, v.4, no.2, November 1987, pp.40-41; see also entry for Dawn Lawrie in: *Northern Territory Women's Register*, 1948-1988, pp.74-75.

¹⁶⁸K. Cole, *Winds of Fury: the Full True Story of the Great Darwin Disaster*, pp.83-84.

¹⁶⁹T. Dahlenburg, "She's the Witch of Nightcliff", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday October 13 1994, pp.8,10.

¹⁷⁰A. Toulson, "Fishing at 3 am is Dawn's Love (Visions of Darwin)", *Northern Territory News*, Monday January 17 1994, p.5.

¹⁷¹Information supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Northern Territory Office.

¹⁷²"Lim's Regulars Angry: Residents Upset with Proposed Demolition", *Northern Territory News*, Saturday July 6 1991, p.4; "'No' Tipped for High-Rise: Only One Submission Supported Proposal", *Northern Territory News*, Thursday October 3 1991, p.3.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

This study is largely based on primary sources, details of which can be found in the footnotes. Only some primary sources are included with the secondary sources listed below.

Austin, M., *The Quality of Life: a Reflection of Life in Darwin During the Post-War Years*, Darwin, Colemans Printing, 1992.

Austin, T., "Salvation Through Education and Training: Teutonic Industrial Missions to Aborigines", in Dixon, V. (ed.), *Looking Back: the Northern Territory in 1888*, Casuarina, N.T., Historical Society of the Northern Territory, 1988, pp.17-22.

Australia. Department of Housing and Construction, *Darwin Housing Redevelopment, 1975-1980*, Canberra, Dept. of Housing and Construction, 1975.

Australia. Parliament. Standing Committee on Public Works, *Report Relating to the Proposed Nightcliff High School at Darwin, Northern Territory*, (Parliamentary Paper, no.311/1964-65-66), Canberra, Government Printer, 1966.

Carment, D., Wilson, H. J. and James, B., *Territorian: the Life and Work of John George Knight*, Darwin, Historical Society of the Northern Territory, 1993.

Cole, K., *Winds of Fury: the Full True Story of the Great Darwin Disaster*, Adelaide, Rigby, 1977.

Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory, *Signs of History: a Photographic Collection of the World War II Historic Sites Signs in the Northern Territory*, 1992, Palmerston, N.T., Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory, 1992.

Daly, Mrs. D. D., *Digging, Squatting and Pioneering Life in the Northern Territory of South Australia*, London, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1887.

De La Rue, K., *An Historical Geography of Darwin*, Darwin, Unpublished report to the National Trust of Australia (Northern Territory), 1988.

Hardwick, C., *Register of Significant European Cultural Sites in the Northern Territory*, 2 vols., Darwin, National Trust of Australia (Northern Territory), 1984.

Heatley, A., *A City Grows: a History of the Darwin City Council, 1957-1984*, Darwin, North Australia Research Unit, Australian National University, 1986.

Heffernan, S., *Rapid Creek (Gurumbai) Education Project Curriculum Materials for English and Social Education Years 8-10*, 2 vols., Darwin, Greening Australia, 1992.

Jolly, R., *Rapid Creek Mission*, Darwin, Unpublished research paper, Northern Territory University, 1990.

Kettle, E., *Health Services in the Northern Territory: a History, 1824-1970*, 2 vols., Darwin, North Australia Research Unit, Australian National University, 1991.

Kerr, M. G., *The Surveyors: the Story of the Founding of Darwin*, Adelaide, Rigby, 1971.

Kingwell, S. G., *History of the 2/14 Australian Field Regiment A.I.F.: Prepared from War Diaries*, Unpublished and unpaginated typescript copy held by Bob Alford, Director of the National Trust of Australia (Northern Territory), n.d.

Lockwood, D., *The Front Door: Darwin, 1869-1969*, Adelaide, Rigby, 1968.

McInnis, R. A., *A Town Planning Scheme for the Town of Darwin, Northern Territory of Australia: Being a Report on the Present Requirements of the Town and Recommendations for its Future Development*, Canberra, Dept. of the Interior, 1940.

Nightcliff High School, *The History of Nightcliff [CD-ROM]*, Nightcliff, N.T., Unpublished multimedia compilation on a CD-ROM disc held by the State Library of the Northern Territory, 1994.

Nightcliff High School, *Nightcliff High School: 21 Years of Education*, Nightcliff, N.T., Nightcliff High School, 1992.

Northern Territory. Legislative Assembly, *Parliamentary Handbook, 1991*, Darwin, Government Printer of the N.T., 1991.

Northern Territory Women's Register, 1948-1988, 2nd ed., Darwin, Northern Territory Women's Advisory Council, 1991.

O'Kelly, G. J., *The Jesuit Mission Stations in the Northern Territory, 1882-1899*, Clayton, Vic., Unpublished B.A. Hons. thesis, Monash University, 1967.

O'Kelly, G. J., "Strele, Anton", in Carment, D., Maynard, R. and Powell, A. (eds.), *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography. Volume One: to 1945*, Casuarina, N.T., NTU Press, 1990, pp.284-286.

Sachse, H. J., *Removal of an Artillery Bunker on the Nightcliff Foreshore, 1962*, Unpublished typescript copy held by the Nightcliff Electorate Office, undated.

Sowden, W. J., *The Northern Territory As It Is: a Narrative of the South Australian Parliamentary Party's Trip, and Full Descriptions of the Northern Territory, its Settlements and Industries*, Adelaide, W. K. Thomas, 1882.

Spall, L., *Our Darwin: 1956 to Tracy*, Victoria Park, W.A., Hesperian Press, 1990.

Stokes, J. L., "Surveying in H.M.S. Beagle", in Macknight, C. C. (ed.), *The Farthest Coast: a Selection of Writings Relating to the History of the Northern Coast of Australia*, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, pp.104-122.

Sydney Morning Herald, *Cyclone!: Christmas in Darwin, 1974*, Artarmon, N.S.W., 1975.

Taylor, J., *A Social Atlas of Darwin: 1986 Census of Population and Housing*, Darwin, Australian Bureau of Statistics and the North Australia Research Unit, 1989.

Wilson, H. J., "Holmes, (Felix) Ernest", in Carment, D. and James, B. (eds.), *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography. Volume Two*, Casuarina, N.T., NTU Press, 1992, pp.95-97.

Woodgate, F., *The Lion and the Swans: a Short history of 54 Fighter Sqn*, 2 vols., Collaroy Beach, N.S.W., The Author, 1983-1992.

Young, M. and Dalton, G., *No Place for a Woman: the Autobiography of Outback Publican, Mayse Young*, Chippendale, N.S.W., Pan, 1991.