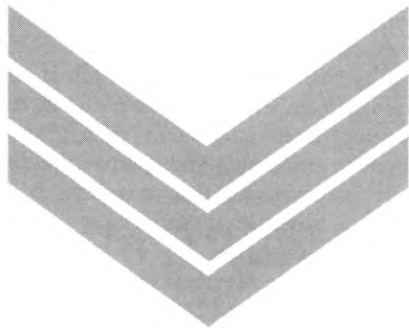


They're the men of new skills

By Brian McNamara



A couple of centuries ago, if you wanted to hire someone to enforce the law, you 'set a thief to catch a thief'. It could be said you hired a skilled professional.

The AFP still hires the right professionals. The crimes now are grander, the skills needed are different.

Some recent promotions within the AFP give point to the changes in society and the crimes against it.

Three men who joined the AFP after it was formed in October 1979 have been promoted to sergeant. They are three men with very different skills. An early

starter was Gordon Williamson, now instructing at Barton College. Gordon came to the AFP from the Australian National University Law School.

He found the student allowance inadequate for his needs, despite working to supplement his income. The work and study did not mix. Gordon felt the AFP would provide the kind of career that would match his interest in the law.

He joined the AFP in June 1980 and quickly found a niche in the Fraud Squad. He qualified for his three stripes in 1984, and has been an instructor at the College since October 1985.

Gordon teaches on fraud and evidence. He does some work on criminal intelligence.

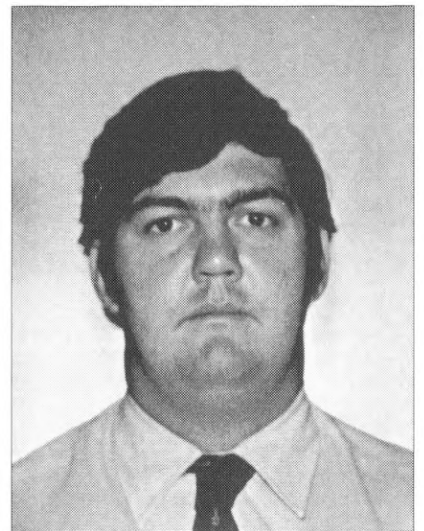
He sees his training work as part of career development. Good officers, Gordon feels, can best improve the service by contributing to the training process. After a stint before the classes, the officer would then be able to do his own job better. Ideally, alternating between training and operations would improve both the standard of training and the level of performance in the field.

Becoming a sergeant has not meant an increase in income for Sergeant Williamson. Teaching duties do not provide opportunities for overtime. But he does have time for 'getting away from it all' to do some fishing.

Now 27, Gordon is married to Dianne, whose time is taken up with managing three children. They both like Canberra, but Gordon is prepared to live anywhere.

Tradesman

Why would a skilled tradesman in one of the most highly-paid jobs, in which there is a shortage, toss it in for the police force?



Sergeant Gordon Williamson

Sergeant Steve Prothero wanted a change. After six years in the printing trade — he served an apprenticeship and got his ticket from the tech — Steve signed on in the AFP in January 1980.

He has done the rounds of uniformed general duties, stolen motor vehicles, medifraud, drugs, gaming and vice, and CIB. He is now back in drugs in ACT Region.

Steve believes that his work with the Drug Squad is a valuable way of contributing to society. So many crimes link back to drugs, he says.

'If we nip the drug offenders in the bud we have a chance of attacking the other crimes,' he said.

One of his more interesting cases was a recent one in which a pharmacist reported large sales of painkillers. On investigation, it was found that the pills

U.S. Law Chief says thanks

AFP members in Sydney and Los Angeles have been the subject of special mention by a U.S. State Attorney General, Mr Robert K. Corbin.

In a letter to Eastern Region Commander Assistant Commissioner Ray McCabe, Mr Corbin praised the assistance the State of Arizona received from the members during investigations recently completed.

In his letter, Mr Corbin said:

'I would like to take a moment to express my appreciation for assistance provided to this office by members of the Australian Federal Police in both Sydney, Australia and at the Australian Consulate General in Los Angeles, California.

For nearly two years investigators here have been attempting, through various means, to locate an individual who is a target of a major fraud investigation being conducted by an Arizona State Grand Jury and this office. That individual, Sidney S. Pearce, Jr., reportedly left the United States to avoid criminal prosecution in February, 1985. On April 28, 1987, we received information that Pearce was terminally ill in Sydney, Australia and was not expected to live longer than a week.

Special Agent Janet Vesely began efforts to locate and positively identify Pearce through the U.S. Consulate in Sydney. Initial inquiries failed to locate Pearce in area hospitals, so SA Vesely contacted the Australian Federal Police

General Inquiries Unit in Sydney, and was directed to Senior Constable Gordon H. O'Connor.

The situation was explained to Constable O'Connor who agreed to provide whatever assistance he could in locating and identifying Pearce and his associate, Stephen Humphries.

O'Connor's efforts over the next week included conducting inquiries relating to Pearce's residence and telephone number, identifying aliases used by Pearce and Humphries, identifying and locating the hospital and physician Pearce was using, and after his death determining the cause of Pearce's death, and locating and interviewing the undertaker who performed cremation and funeral services.

Additionally, O'Connor arranged for fingerprints to be taken from Pearce's body before cremation, which was critical in our efforts to positively identify Pearce. O'Connor maintained daily telephone contact with Special Agent Vesely to apprise her of each new development, and continually offered additional assistance as needed. Thanks to Constable