

FROM BANGKOK TO BARTON

IT was one of the best compliments the Thai visitors could have paid Australia.

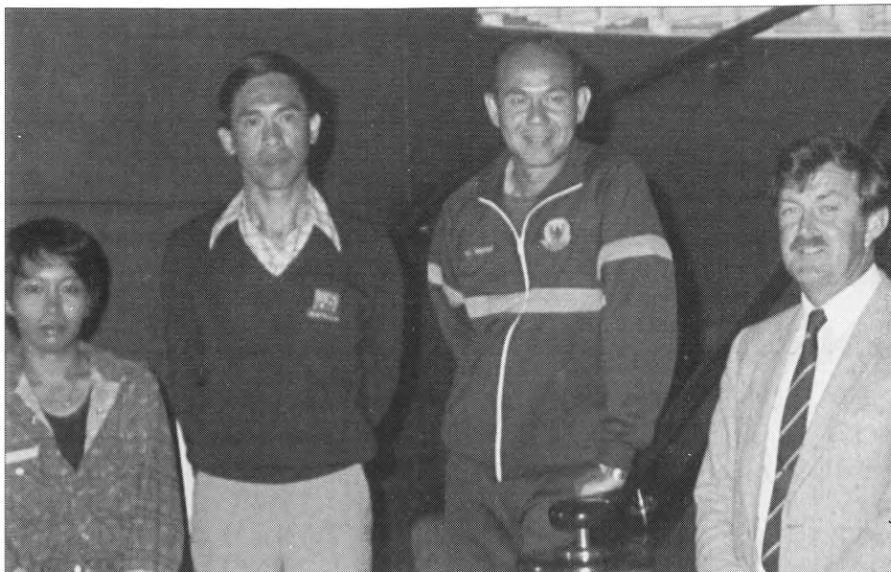
'We don't feel as if we are in a foreign country here. Australians are the same as Thais; they're easy going and don't take things too seriously,' they said.

The three Thais were the first people from that country to undertake training at the AFP College at Barton in Canberra.

They are Colonel Suppachai ('Toy') Ingkulanon, 43, the incoming Chief of the Policy and Planning Division of the Royal Aide-de-Camp Department; Commander Wattinna ('Pey') Phungphrak-eati, 38, the Permanent Royal Aide-de-Camp and Police Sub-Lieutenant Parn-sap ('Parn') Yomanage, 31.

The two military men are based in Bangkok and Sub-Lieutenant Yomanage is based in border patrol police headquarters in that city.

The officers told *'Platypus'* they would be part of a continuing programme.



(from left) Police Sub-Lieutenant Yomanage, Commander Phungphrak-eati and Colonel Ingkulanun with Senior Sergeant Stewart.

Another Thai, Sub-Lieutenant Pongprasert Ganjanarantr of the Crime Suppression Division of the Tourist Police, studied at Barton this month.

The three officers completed the Basic Close Protection Course in October.

The course, designed to train personnel assigned to VIPs, covers activities such as driving, marksmanship, first aid, radio work and bomb searches.

The three officers said they had found the course to be most valuable and comprehensive.

Speaking for the group, Colonel Ingkulanon said he wanted to thank the AFP and the Australian Government for the opportunity to take part in the course,

which had been arranged through the Australian Embassy in Bangkok.

But it was not all hard work.

One of the officers in charge of the course, Senior Sergeant Alan Stewart, explained that he had taken the three Thai officers and some people from Western Samoa and the Solomon Islands also doing the course to the New South Wales South Coast one week-end.

'I dived for abalone and one of the Solomon Islanders speared a sting-ray and some of the others collected shellfish. What with a few fish as well we ended up dining in style on some of the national dishes of the three areas,' Senior Sergeant Stewart said.

Fingerprints

THE work of the AFP Scientific Section will take a great leap forward early in the New Year when it will be tied in with the National Fingerprint Computer in Sydney.

At present, the AFP fingerprint section in Canberra, and the Tasmanian Police Force, are the only Australian law enforcement agencies not on line.

The main frame N.E.C. unit in Sydney was handed over to law enforcement agencies in August.

The Officer in Charge of the AFP Fingerprint Bureau at Weston Creek, Station Sergeant Gordon Kendall, said the latest advance would be an invaluable aid to the AFP's scientific work.

'It's going to cost the AFP \$800,000 for its computer and associated equip-

ment, but it's well worth it,' Sergeant Kendall said.

'There are 1.4 million fingerprints in the whole national collection and we'll have access to all of them.

'Fingerprint information started to be fed into the main frame about the middle of last year and that task finished last month.

'The fingerprint bureau at Weston Creek will be on line in January.'

Sergeant Kendall is the AFP representative on the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System and he says the system will provide the AFP with one of its biggest ever breakthroughs.

'I was in Melbourne recently when investigating officers received a partial fingerprint from the scene of an armed robbery. In about 2.9 seconds the computer produced a list of suspects and the name on the top of the list proved to be that of the offender.

'A manual system could have taken months to produce the same result and in fact the exercise may not have been undertaken at all because of the difficult nature of the material available with which to work.'

He says efforts should be made to expand the fingerprint register because of the need for the records in crime fighting.

'Increasingly, people are using false names to avoid their previous records becoming known.

'Such practices can hamper police work but an expanded national fingerprint register would help us overcome it.'

He said out that the value of fingerprints to crime fighting could not be over-emphasised.

A good example was a case in New South Wales recently when a murder committed in 1976 was solved by tracing a fingerprint found on a bingo card.