



FAREWELL

Jenny turned 65 on 17 May 1987. Full name Janina Nowak, but known as 'Jenny' to most of the staff and students at the AFP College in Canberra's inner suburb of Barton. To many of the younger people she was known as 'Mum'.

Jenny retired on 15 May, not because she wanted to, but because that is the rule of her employers, Commonwealth Accommodation and Catering, with whom she has been for 29 years. Still fit, she was a dining room attendant, and had looked after things in the dining rooms of Mulwala House, Gorman House, Richardson House, and then the College. Gorman House was at one time the Police College.

Mulwala House has been demolished. The Police College was once Lawley House, another Commonwealth Hostel.

Jenny was born in Poland in 1922, and married in 1946. She arrived in Australia on 23 December 1948.

'It was very hot. We went to Bonegilla camp, but we needed ten blankets at night,' laughed Jenny.

After a few weeks she went to Sydney and later to Canberra, where she has stayed. She joined Commonwealth Hostels in 1957.

At Barton since 1979, Jenny has made many friends.

'They call me "Mum", said Jenny. 'All the young police are very respectful. Sometimes the Superintendent shares a joke with me.'

I asked Jenny what she intended to do in her retirement.

'Have a good sleep,' she said. 'Then I might go to Batehaven, on the South Coast, and have a holiday for a few weeks. I like to read — lots of novels — and then I have the paperwork for my retirement to think about.'

Jenny has two children, both living in Canberra. Her two grandchildren 'are visiting all the time'. She shares rented

Jenny — in the place where many knew her best, the College dining room.

accommodation with her unmarried son in Hawker.

Jenny has no wish to return to Europe. She thinks that after a while she would like to see Australia.

'I am Australian. This is my home,' she said firmly.

Good for you, Jenny Nowak. Everybody wishes you well.

WELCOME

For most Australians, Canberra to Lightning Ridge is a comfortable day's drive. It was a major excursion for Chief Inspector Ian Williamson and his wife Anne, but as visitors from Ireland it brought home to them that Australia is a land of vast distances — and contrasts.

Ian is Chief Inspector Operations in the Grosvenor Road Sub-Division in West Belfast. If the New South Wales opal field was a contrast for them, it was no less a contrast for AFP officers to hear

the differences between policing in Belfast and in Australia.

Grosvenor Road has four stations with 450 officers, many of them on static security duty. The police stations have to be protected, as have the secure wards in the hospitals. A sick or injured officer has to be protected 24 hours a day.

The high rate of civil disturbance, and the constant threat of terrorism, has other effects. Ian's 'patch' has but five per cent of its officers women. Static security people are armed, and as a matter of principle, Royal Ulster Constabulary women police receive no weapons training and do not carry arms.

The RUC is supported by the regular army in its operations.

The Williamsons live about 15 km east of Belfast. 'A relatively safe area', said Ian. Anne works part-time as a nurse, in addition to looking after her four children aged from four to 17. The youngest is in pre-school, the eldest doing pre-apprenticeship training.

Anne won their trip to Australia in a provincial newspaper 'holiday giveaway'. She had visited Canberra some years ago, on her own, but this time brought Ian with her to stay with her brother and sister. For which Ian is very grateful.

'The hospitality and friendliness has been tremendous,' said Ian. 'We very much appreciate the warmth of the welcome from our fellow police officers in the AFP. We arrived unannounced, but we have been shown the city and the facilities at Weston. Nothing was too much trouble.'

Anne reinforced Ian's gratitude. 'And Canberra must be a great place to bring up children,' she added.

Chief Inspector Ian Williamson and his wife Anne at AFP Headquarters in Canberra.

