

NEWS FROM CENTRAL REGION

A Letter from Adelaide

Dear Readers

Platypus readers will, I hope, forgive me this light hearted, hopefully humorous letter as an aside from the more serious that pervade its pages, and the opportunity to convey news to former Centralites.

Central Region with its headquarters in the Festival City of Adelaide now enjoys sole occupancy of a two-storey building facing the spacious parkland on Greenhill Road — Hurrah for progress!

Some 94 members and OAFP support staff continue to form what becomes apparent to all interstate visitors a compact and, happily for the most part, contented region.

Contentment without complacency though, for the rapid changes in recent times to the AFP have not bypassed us in the least. Consequently, curious cursor controllers concentrate their skills, and computerese is cancelling out officialese at a frantic pace.

Technological advances also affect the ridiculous. Recently our Firearms Safety Testing Officer was called upon to put a piece of twentieth century wizardry through the mandatory safety test. The purpose of this contraption was to launch a rubber missile on a journey terminating some 50 metres hence, to be retrieved by a dog, presumably leaving the operator with more strength to use the arm for more pleasurable pursuits.

Canine conversation leads naturally to talk of our Explosives Sniffer Dog, 'Sam'. 'Sam' has been with us just over a year during which time, together with his handler, Senior Constable Jim Shotton, has created a respect for their professionalism, by various Commonwealth Departments and the South Australia State Police. 'Sam' has been used for the usual bomb hoax threat searches and security checking at V.I.P. visit venues.

On one such occasion Sam, together with handler and several senior officers of the SA Police, was transported in the confined space of a light aircraft to a venue in Whyalla. Sam's attitude to altitude turned turbulence into flatulence, thus ensuring a much less crowded trip home.

I am also advised that Sam's usual self-discipline and training deserted him once during a building search. I am further informed that a philodendron monstera in the Australian Taxation Department offices continued to prosper from this dereliction of duty.

Joking aside the police dog's ability to conduct searches has saved countless man-hours and risk to both personnel and property. That this message has gotten through at last was evidenced by an aware SA Police Inspector requesting the team's expertise to search the residence of a Family Court Justice after a break and enter. More about that later.

Talk of teamwork and Family Law matters enables me to say that the team of Senior Constable Jack Wieringa and First Constable Ray Beshara have completed a successful year in dealing with custodial access cases with the attendant emotional problems. They have now separated to take up other duties. There is not much light-hearted relief in this particular function, but it has not deterred Ray from tying the knot late this March.

Media spotlights focussed furiously on this Region recently over three unrelated incidents in quick succession.

The first involved the discovery by an enterprising reporter of the local press of the whereabouts of one Reginald Spiers. This story is of great interest and is perhaps better dealt with at length in a separate article. Very brief, Spiers and his girl-friend, Barbara

Tobin, jumped bail in Adelaide whilst awaiting trial on drug charges, thus dangling the carrot of an extradition escort trip to exotic parts ever since. No doubt that the officer-in-charge of the case, Detective Inspector Ed Tyrie, is waiting in the wings. Closer to home it resulted in our operational Detective Inspector Peter Darlaston, (affectionately known to the bold as 'Darls') putting a bit of titian on the television.

The next incident resulted from an advertising promotional campaign which flooded the Adelaide Casino with funny money. Funny or not the supposedly non-counterfeits did in fact deceive, when notes were accepted as legal currency, and the paper chase was on.

The necessity to prevent financial loss to the less discerning called for media and AFP co-operation and Darls did his duty.

Finally, the last of the three incidents was the previously mentioned break and enter of a Family Law Justice's residence. The sight of 'Sam' on the scene excited the press and our 'Darls' was constantly on the dog and bone.

Bones get broken and put out of joint — Senior Constable Wally Trenorden has not fully recovered from injury incurred on a cricket field in Darwin, but like all here, is pleased that our indoor cricket team took out the trophy locally.

At the time of writing, the football season is about to start. Coincidentally, footballs stuffed with heroin are also in the news. Central Region's Drug Unit can hardly kick that off the front page, but they do have their moments. The latest pinch was of an alleged drug courier named Galpin. Galpin's gulping resulted in him putting in considerable potty duty and his life was probably saved when a prudent precautionary X-ray revealed his appalling arithmetic. Taken when it was supposed that suppositories had revealed or released all the evidence, it was discovered he had miscounted and it was back to potty duty again.

Mobility or movements, dare we now finish this article by reminding his erstwhile colleagues that our new Commander Superintendent John Vincent is pedalling merrily and energetically the highways of Adelaide.

Yours Truly
Ray Nias (Sgt)

CENTRAL REGION CRICKET — THE JOHN VINCENT SHOW

Reporter Det. Sen. Con. Eric Dix

SUNDAY, 22 February, saw the Central Region members and ancillary staff journey to Flinders University to take on Temme's Family Court staff in cricket. Senior Constable Eric Temme is our man at the Family Law Court.

The game consisted of 33 overs, no LBW, no out first ball, and retirement at 25.

Family won the toss and elected to bat on a green top. Senior Sergeant Ray Elphick, Fedpol captain for the day, opened the bowling using Senior Constable Brenton 'Agent Orange' Davy with a tail wind and Senior Constable Eric 'Dorothy' Dix pushing into the breeze. Agent had trouble finding the pitch to start with, however, by the time he was into his third and final over he was looking dangerous. Superintendent Vincent was behind the stumps and after only a few overs it was apparent to all and sundry (sundry — cricket term) he had officiated in the capacity before. Son

David was in the field and it became clear quite early it was going to be the "John Vincent and Son Show" as they combined to dismiss the opposition.

Fedpol with some fine fielding and bowling were able to dismiss Family Court for 121 all out.

At the resumption after the long break, Fedpol opened with Senior Constables Jack 'Sniffer' Ford and Phil Hooper. After getting the side off to a good start the remainder of the Fedpol boys were able to attain the required runs with two wickets in hand. Best with the bat was Senior Constable Kim 'Kimbo' McAtee who contributed 25 not out-retired.

OPERATION VULCAN

AN interesting case involving the freezing of assets of a person in the drug scene, where no actual drug seizure or charges ensued, is that of Operation Vulcan.

Central Region RIU initiated the operation at the of 1984. Target was an alleged major heroin dealer who by the time the operation commenced had been out of gaol for about 10 months after a

lengthy incarceration.

In-depth financial analysis revealed a rapid accumulation of assets purported mainly to be horse racing winnings.

Evidence gained from a protracted surveillance exercise was eventually used by the NSW Homicide Squad who arrested and charged the target with a NSW murder. At the time of the murder arrest, the target was also served with a notice under Section 243 of the *Customs Act 1901*, whereby all his assets were frozen. These assets were over \$A500000 and included \$100000 cash and a house. They had been accumulated in less than two years.

The Taxation Department was also kept informed of the operation, and based on Federal police figures, raised an assessment of \$300,000 + on the target.

The Section 243 matter is currently in abeyance pending the outcome of the murder trial.

Major collation tool used was a DRUN program on the AFP computer. During the extradition proceedings in Adelaide, the facts that the target had large assets, and that the subject had a criminal record were suppressed. As a consequence, no details of the Section 243 action were publicised by the news media.