

Hard work has 'Silver' lining

LAST year Detective Superintendent John Silver began studies towards a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice Administration at the Philip Institute of Technology, Coburg Campus, in Melbourne.

He already had been awarded an Associate Diploma in Criminal Justice and Welfare Administration by the same institute in 1983, and viewed his renewed study as an opportunity to complete his qualifications.

Although the Bachelor of Arts units of study were consistent with those in the Associate Diploma enabling him to be awarded several subject exemptions, he was still faced with the prospect of completing nine units of study to qualify for his Bachelor of Arts.

Where the average part-time student would be more than challenged by the work associated with tackling three units per study semester, Superintendent Silver decided to complete all nine units in the current school year.

The units covered Education (two units), Community Development (two units), Research Methods, Victimology, Public Administration and an investigation (two units), for which he wrote a thesis on the state of current development of electronic interviewing techniques by Australian police forces.

Superintendent Silver has now been awarded a Bachelor of Arts (Criminal Justice Administration) and obtained eight high distinctions (straight A's) and one minor distinction (B) in re-

search methods.

All these studies, with the exception of three hours of studies assistance leave each Monday morning, were achieved in his own time, mainly after work hours.

He also spent the bulk of his 1989 recreation leave either completing assignments or researching for his major thesis.

High level of expertise

Superintendent Silver said the Bachelor of Arts (Criminal Justice Administration) course was designed to provide training and professional development for those working in

responsible positions in areas where a high level of expertise and conceptual understanding related to criminal justice administration was required, such as police forces, the Office of Corrections, Department of Community Services and Courts Administration.

"The course provides the opportunity to seek varied view-points from individuals who are not serving police members," he said. "It also provides a forum for the advancement of ideology as well as equipping the student with a framework of knowledge and techniques which have a practical application in the AFP workplace."



Detective Superintendent John Silver

Superintendent Silver said his studies had been very demanding on his family as well as costly — Higher Education Charges are payable by the student.

He conceded there were times when study became difficult to sustain due to work commitments.

Despite the drawbacks, Superintendent Silver obviously relishes the challenge. He recently began studies for a Master of Arts degree, this time by external research, in his own time and at his own pace.

Story by Keith Livingston, picture by Terry Browne

helped him improve his interpersonal skills and staff supervision.

"I can see things more objectively and analytically now, and I've learned a lot about myself," he said. Eventually, he would like to practice psychology, hopefully with the AFP.

Mark Phillips, of Eastern region, also is nearing the end of a long haul. Completing a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics last year, he is now studying for the Graduate Diploma in Public Sector Management.

He says he started his degree mainly to fill in the evenings. When his mates married and settled down, he found

himself at a loose end.

He quickly found part-time study was like working another full-time job.

"But in the long run, the study has been worthwhile," he said. "It's honed my skills in priority setting and time management."

Mr Phillips' long-term career goals lie in policy development and he is currently enjoying his work as OIC Pay and Conditions, Eastern Region.

Kay Bretreger, of Northern Region, has just completed her Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Economics, Industrial Relations and English. She has spent her twenties studying, and wants to spend her thirties catching up on her

social life.

Mrs Bretreger said she was very good at school, but got the travel bug after graduating, and spent four years on overseas trips before going back to study.

She is now very proud to be the first from her family group to have gained a degree and is grateful for her husband's support.

"At times, part-time study is like being in a wilderness and at the end of each academic year you can be mentally zapped-out," she said. "But in the end I've found it most rewarding."

Story by Terry Browne