

senior officers, supervisors and the operational and administrative aspects of policing.

The Defence Co-operation Police Adviser Program ceases in December 1991 but it is intended that the program will be continued for a further three years with the assistance of the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB). Super-

intendent Terry Butler, at present Drug Liaison Officer in Malaysia, will arrive in January as my replacement.

The force has difficulty in meeting the objectives set by the Vanuatu Government because of the unique problems of distance and isolation, combined with limited resources. The costs of transport and communications are very

high and the force has no modern equipment for investigations or law enforcement.

The initiative by Vanuatu and AIDAB to provide upgraded training, equipment and facilities, together with the continued appointment of an AFP Training Adviser, will considerably improve the training and work performance of the force.

## ...And an AFP spouse's viewpoint

**In 1989, the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu asked the Australian Government for help to improve its police force.**

After high-level talks, it was decided that the AFP would appoint an adviser to Vanuatu and some terms of reference were drawn up.

When my husband saw the position advertised, he felt that it was something he could do, with his background in training, his work in Papua New Guinea for eight years during which he gained an insight into the Melanesian people, and his ability to speak PNG Pidgin English.

I was delighted when he won the position.

He went off for a week to Point Cook to learn the Vanuatu version of Pidgin, known as Bislama, which consists mainly of English words, unlike PNG Pidgin which has a mixture of English, local and foreign words. He picked up enough to get through the initial period in Vanuatu.

We arrived in the Vanuatu capital, Port Vila, on 13 January 1990 and spent five days in a hotel until our house was ready. It was the wet season and the humidity was extremely high — so different from Canberra's dry heat.

We spent our first weeks wringing wet, having to take several showers a day until we slowly began to adjust to the climate.

Harry's first job after meeting the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners and senior officers of the Vanuatu Police Force was to look at every aspect of the force and make a comprehensive report. He found that the most urgent need was to get courses started to train the officers and supervisors. He felt that once they were trained, what they had learnt would filter down to the lower ranks.

*By Audrey Bryant*



*Audrey and Harry Bryant*

Meanwhile, I was settling into our house, training a housegirl, and meeting the wives of the other advisers. There was no work available for me at that time so it was decided I would be Harry's unpaid typist.

When our computer arrived from Australia I began to put all the courses he had designed on to it and found it very interesting, although if anything was to be typed in Bislama, he had to dictate it letter by letter. I had learnt enough of the language to understand the spoken word, but I could not read or write it.

We had been here four months when he was advised that the Defence Co-operation Program under which he was the first policeman appointed, and which had sent many advisers here, was to withdraw funds from the project. However, his salary and in-country expenses would still be paid.

The change in policy made his job extremely difficult as there was now no money to bring personnel from the outer islands to attend courses, no money for Vanuatu members to attend courses in Australia, or for instructors to come from Australia for specialised training, nor for essential

training and operational equipment.

This meant that the training had to be within the resources of the Vanuatu Police Force, and he had to cancel many planned courses.

He decided to run a Methods of Instruction Course so that the instructors at the Training School would be able to run courses efficiently on their own. Prior to that, Harry had been designing and running all the courses himself.

Hopefully, he would have a group of instructors as dedicated as he to run things, leaving him time to do other things which the Commissioner had requested, such as to help rewrite the Force Standing Orders in a simpler, easier to understand form, and to visit the outer island police stations to set up a station trainer scheme.

Now, nineteen months have passed and we will soon be leaving. Harry feels that he has achieved something and hopes that his work here was worthwhile.

The Vanuatu Police Force officers and supervisors now do a much better job. The Police Training School now has several well-trained instructors who can run courses efficiently, thanks to Harry's training.

Although the Defence Co-operation Program has dropped the project, it has been picked up by the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB).

Superintendent Terry Butler will carry on the work which Harry started, and he will have sufficient funds to enable police members from outer islands to attend courses, specialists from the AFP and other Australian forces to be flown to Vanuatu for short in-country courses and Vanuatu members to attend courses and attachments in Australia. •