

May I have an appointment with the (Bang! ARRGH!) Doctor, please?

Protective Service First Constable Margaret Grigsby has worked in the counter terrorist area for some time. For the benefit of *Platypus* readers it was suggested to Margaret that she might like to take a light-hearted look at her job. This article is the result.

When people think about counter terrorist training they probably conjure up an image of a serious-minded young man or woman with a serious expression doing a serious job.

That would be correct. But sometimes is hard to wipe the smile from your face.

Take target practice. Can you imagine trying to ring a doctor's surgery (as any normal citizen does) with such a "special effects" background?

One day I was making an appointment by telephone when just near me there was a shotgun blast and a very realistic blood-curdling scream.

The doctor's receptionist hesitated, then whispered urgently that the doctor would see me just "as soon as you can get here".

Goodness knows what the poor woman was thinking.

Or on St Patrick's day when, on arrival at work, one finds a baby's bottle full of milk on one's desk.

One starts pondering this, only to notice something else... a crouched person, grenade in hand, near the door to the lecture room opposite.

Ah, I know what he is doing, he is going to scare this morning's breakfast out of the students by throwing the dummy grenade into the room, with an appropriate noise to accompany it.

That's OK. It's normal for that sort of thing around here.

But what's this? Our Chief Superintendent walks out of his office, ready to lecture at the AFP College, resplendent in full uniform... and bright green tie!

Oh yes, it IS St Patrick's day. I should have known. Doesn't everybody wear a green tie on this day each year???

The baby bottle? Our Chief Inspector had borrowed his granddaughter's bottle to bring some milk in for coffee.

Helicopter Jump

I am not particularly perturbed by being 166cm tall, but there are times when I wish the Lord had been a bit more generous in the length of my legs. It can prove embarrassing.



I went along with a team of instructors to practice heliborne rappelling at Duntroon oval one sunny afternoon. I had practised on a rappelling tower and thought myself proficient enough to make a heliborne attempt.

My confidence was boosted by the talk given us by the RAAF crew of the chopper: "If the chopper crashes, it's every man for himself; there's nothing we can do for you in the event of a disaster."

Great. Nothing like the awful truth, is there?

The exercise went smoothly (or should I say slightly undulating?)

When the helicopter landed, the crewman gave the thumbs up and the five of us ran to the chopper, heads down.

Carrying 80ft of rope with a weight attached to one end, we climbed aboard.

The take-off and short flight was fun. At the signal, "two minutes", we checked our ropes and karabina and prepared to stand out on the skids of the aircraft.

On the command "Skids!" we are supposed to turn around and back out, placing our feet onto the skids.

This is a relatively easy operation if your legs are three inches longer than mine. But imagine my consternation as I stuck one leg out to reach the skids and touched nothing but air. With a certain amount of

chagrin, my two companions on the port side of the aircraft grabbed hold of my arms as I left my fate to the gods and backed out of the aircraft both feet at once. (I might add here that there is nothing to hold on to except your rope, when you back out).

Fortunately, my aim was true and both feet touched the skids and I was able to stand ready for the order to go...

This may sound amusing, but centrifugal force of a helicopter performing a turn in mid air is not helpful for a person of my height.

The final stages of the jump went without much upset although I did manage to tear off one of the fingers of the glove on my left hand.

Later I realised with some horror what could have happened if the gloves had not been several sizes too large.

Perhaps being a "small" person (compared to the size of your average cop) has some advantages after all.

Media event

Then there was the time that a special training course was thrown open to the media. An assortment of television and still cameramen and a number of journalists turned up for what turned out to be a fun-packed day.

First item on the agenda was photographs and film of target practice.

"The light's no good," said one photographer. "Neither is the subject".

"We want a good-looking girl with lighting effects to make her look sinister and dangerous."

I shrank out of sight but some one from police public relations pointed me out to the photographer.

"No good," he grunted. "There's no bloody way I could make her look dangerous!"

A short time later both cine-cameramen and still photographers wanted to capture on film a trainee bursting into a room through a closed window.

Someone had told them that this was a regular part of our training.



However, experience among the group of trainees for this particular course was somewhat limited.

Moreover, we had only one replacement piece of glass for the window pane.

We agreed to "give it a go" but

soon there was a dispute among the movie and still cameramen.

The movie guys said the clicking of cameras would be picked up by their tape recorder and spoil the shot.

The movie people won and our

specially selected "volunteer" duly hooked up his ropes on the top of the building and made ready for his spectacular descent and entry.

Lights! Camera! Action! Down the rope he came at incredible speed, in he swung towards the window and . . . THUMP! He hit the wall just under the window.

The glass slowly cracked and dropped in three separate pieces onto the carpet.

The second attempt was perfect and the movie guys were delighted.

"What about us?" said the two keenest still photographers. "We've run out of glass," we said, but that didn't deter them.

Any of you who have seen those very convincing colour and black and white photographs of a member with full protective kit and sub-machine gun in hand "bursting" through a window may like to know that the glass fragments were thrown at the member by half a dozen pairs of hands which just happened to be outside the picture.

As for the glass supplies, it took three weeks to winkle a new window out of the powers-that-be. And this didn't please the Chief Superintendent very much . . . it was his office.

Marauding Munchies

by Jeff Caldwell & John Weldon

What (or who) are the Marauding Munchies? Even platypus editorial staff are not sure but we believe they might have something to do with food. Anyway, read their contribution printed here and see if you are enlightened.

Welcome to "Marauding Munchies". This is the first in what we hope to be many articles on out of the way and somewhat different eating places.

Recently our travels took us to the New South Wales south coast town of Narooma. We stumbled across a Mexican Restaurant (which is aptly named for our first article) 'Mexican Munchies'.

'Mexican Munchies' is found down the stairs, behind and below the Hylands Hotel on the Princes Highway. One of the most striking things about this restaurant is Annette and Ian Hockey, two of the most pleasant and helpful hosts you could hope to meet.

Our meal started with an Aperitivo (or dip) called Frijoles (beans, onions, cheese and chili sauce). The main course consisted of what is called Mexican Munchie Mix — Taquitos, Tostada, Quesadillas, Enchilada, Camarones and a delightful salad tossed in honey and lemon juice. There were a range of desserts available.

For four it cost us (including wine and drinks) under \$50.00. We thought this very reasonable considering the generous servings.

Just as an after-thought: all the food is served mild, unless requested otherwise. If you are game ask for either the hot or 'mind-blower' sauces . . . just a word of advice: order plenty to drink!

The New South Wales Coast is a popular holiday area for people from Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. We feel that it is well worth a trip to Narooma to experience the excellent cuisine provided by Annette and Ian at 'Mexican Munchies'.