

'Platypus' is back with the fleet

The biggest and newest of the AFP's three new Water Police launches, designed for duty on Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin, has retained the name of the original ACT Water Police launch, 'Platypus'.

The new 'Platypus' began duty on 1 March this year.

And for this issue of the journal which shares the same name, researching the history of the original launch was made easy. It was all done by former Water Police member Senior Constable Dave Gough as part of his hobby interests.

Of the original 'Platypus' he writes:

"In early 1962, a Sans Souci boatbuilder, C. H. Fuimini and Son, was approached by the Department of Supply on behalf of the ACT Police Force, to design and build a 24ft cabin cruiser to be used as a Police launch, in conjunction with two 14ft Quintrex craft, on Lake Burley Griffin.

"The Police launch was built at a cost of 4,500 pounds, over a period of four months from a variety of timbers including oregon, teatree, spotted gum, maple, and Indian teak. It was powered by an imported Ford Interceptor V8 engine of 215 hp. Construction was supervised by Department of Supply and Maritime Service Board Engineers and on 30 May 1963, the launch was completed and slipped into Kogarah Bay for trials and testing.

"It was then transported to Canberra for storage to await the filling of the lake. She was first launched at Kurrajong Point, off Weston Park on 28 November, 1963.

"Superintendent L. Powley and Admiral George, of Navy Supply, put forward a suggestion that the launch be named after a Submarine Depot-repair ship, HMAS Platypus, which had served Australia with distinction in World Wars I and II and the name was accepted. (Platypus, broadly translated from the Greek, means Flat (platus) Foot (pous) — Flatfoot — a name used with tongue-in-cheek for Police for many years).

"A piece of timber, which had been salvaged from HMAS Platypus before her disposal,



● The old 'Platypus' top, now owned privately, and above, the new one during early work-up routines on Lake Burley Griffin. At the helm is Water Police Chief Sergeant Dave Ashurst with other water police members Ron Blacka (centre) and Matt Saarikko.

was donated to the Water Police Section by the War Memorial Trust, and after craftsmen from the Department of Housing and Construction had fashioned it into two name-plates, Mr D. Evans, of Braddon, completed the signs by painting the name

'Platypus' in gold leaf on them. The signs were then mounted to the sides of the Platypus wheel-house.

"Platypus was removed from the water for the last time as a Police craft on 16 December 1969, when her meter read 2140

hours.

"The name-plate from the first 'Platypus' has been fitted to the transom of the new 'Platypus', a seven-metre aluminium alloy cabin cruiser designed and built by Star Boats, of Perth, WA.

THE QUESTION OF A MOTTO

At the time of its formation in 1979, the AFP did not adopt a formal police motto.

In this, however, it doesn't stand alone. Tasmania's Police Force does not have a motto either.

Is the time now right for change?

This question we would like members to consider seriously. If you are for, or against, the motto idea your views would be appreciated. So would suitable motto suggestions.

The form on the back page of this issue is the way to let us know. Simply send the form to The Editor, Platypus, P.O. Box 401, Canberra City, ACT 2601.

Most mottos, understandably, come from the Latin, some from the French. South Australia's police adopted a quotation from Cicero's laws...*Salus Populi Suprema Lex* (The safety of the people shall be

the highest law). Victoria went for *Tenez Le Droit* (Uphold the Right), while NSW adopted *Culpam Poena Permittit Cums*, or in English, *Punishment Swiftly Follows Crime*.

In Queensland the motto is *Constantia Ac Comitatus* (Fairness with Courtesy), while organisations like the International Police Association took as its motto the phrase *Servo Per Amikeco* (Through Friendship).

The official Oxford Dictionary definition of motto is: "sentence inscribed on some object and ex-

pressing appropriate sentiment; word or sentence accompanying coat of arms or crest; maxim adopted as rule of conduct; verses, etc., in paper cracker, quotation prefixed to book or chapter; recurrent phrase having some symbolic significance."

Now you have it. Let's have your views, please.

● See cut-out coupon back page.

COASTAL WATCH CHIEF NAMED

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The review examined a proposal that the Defence Force be given the responsibility, but decided that this would not lead to a system that would better counter the traffic in narcotics and sustain the kind of surveillance necessary for other purposes."

Mr Young also said that traditional defence forces had been divorced in Australia from regular responsibility for law enforcement against Australian citizens.

Mr Young said the Coastal Protection Unit would plan and set priorities for surveillance and implement response and enforcement action. It would direct officers of Customs, Defence and Transport, as appropriate.

"There will be much closer Customs involvement in the new arrangements with Customs officers being attached to the Coastal Protection Unit and participating in

appropriate response and enforcement action," he said.

Mr Young announced that as part of the new plan Commonwealth regional co-ordination centres, under the management of the Coastal Protection Unit, would be established in Darwin with other centres to be set up in Queensland and Western Australia after consultation with the respective State governments.

The Prime Minister also had written to all Premiers and the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, seeking their agreement on the establishment of a proposed Standing Advisory Committee on Coastal Protection and Surveillance.

If formed, it would examine many aspects of the new service, including its possible expansion to include additional in-shore patrol craft or aircraft for operations in particular areas.

THE SHIRT ON YOUR BACK

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"The order can be a mixture of both or a mixture of these plus the smaller size T-shirts for youngsters."

"Anything we can do to help lessen the cost burden for competitors is a worthwhile project."

This view is supported by Constable Virginia Hatcher, who competed at the last International Police Olympics in 1981. She was one of the most successful

individual competitors at the Games, winning three gold, four silver and two bronze medals.

While stressing that it was an experience of a lifetime, Virginia said the cost was prohibitive, and only recently had she finished paying off loans raised to enable her to make the first trip.

● Further details and the order form for the T-shirts and sweat shirts are contained in a special handbill inside this issue of 'Platypus'.