

BOBBY PINS FUTURE ON NEEDLES

EASTERN Region's John Burrows stepped from the world of the policeman to that of acupuncturist the day he said goodbye to nearly 36 years of policing on 17 September.

It is but a new chapter in a life that has taken many fascinating turns.

For instance, John Burrows was the hero of the famous Sydney hijacking of 1979, when he freed a woman who had been taken hostage by an armed man.

He was awarded the Australian Bravery medal for his action.

He also was one of two policemen closely associated with the UK scandal that almost brought down the Conservative Government of the day — the Profumo-Christine Keeler-Mandy Rice Davis affair.

John Burrows was the man who arrested the doctor involved in the case — Dr Steven Ward.

But acupuncturist?

"That's right," said John. "Within weeks of leaving the AFP I will open my own acupuncture practice in Sydney. I have been studying acupuncture for the past six years and hold Australian and Chinese diplomas. The latter I gained during a period in China at my own expense."

Does he have any regrets about retiring?

"Of course," he said. "But I've reached the statutory retiring age and at least I prepared the way for a new chapter in my life."

From a policing point of view, that life began in the London Metropolitan Police in August 1948. A week earlier, he had left behind him a service life as a commissioned officer with the Corps of Royal Engineers.

During his 20 years as a UK policeman, John received a number of commendations covering just about every aspect of community policing and resigned with the rank of Detective Sergeant First Class.

"I know people would like to know more about what I know — or believe — of the Profumo-Keeler-Rice Davies-Ward quartet," he said. "Maybe some day I'll tell it — but not now."

John Burrows moved to Australia in 1968 to join the Commonwealth Police and before the amalgamation saw service in Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne. He returned to Eastern Region after the amalgamation.

His years in Australia saw him amass vast experience in criminal intelligence. He worked as an instructor at the Australian Police College, Manly, and also can claim responsibility for establishing airport policing in 1975, as well as being the instructor for Compol's first two airport NCO training courses.

"It's been a fascinating 35 years and I wouldn't have swapped my experiences as a policeman for anything," he said.

But the Burrows name will live on in the Australian Federal Police. John's son, Stewart, joined the job in 1984 and now works as a police motor-cyclist in Canberra.

John Burrows as a PC in London. He covered just about every aspect of community policing in two countries before retiring as an Inspector in the AFP.

