

NSW ANZFSS BRANCH LIFE MEMBER PROFILE

Henry Delaforce APM

Henry Delaforce has been a member of the NSW Branch of ANZFSS since its commencement in 1974 and served as President over eight years (Nov 1989 - Nov 1996). During that period with the strong support of fellow Life Members Allan Hodda, Graham Cook, Carl Cameron and others, a successful effort was made to expand the branch membership with forensic practitioners from a wider variety of specialities whilst encouraging their research and development. He also supported a program of interesting presentations by speakers at monthly branch meetings on a diverse range of subjects. During the 1997 ANZFSS AGM, Mr Delaforce was publicly and personally thanked for his outstanding contribution to and support of the Society, the NSW Branch in particular.



*Henry Delaforce, ANZFSS
Life Member (NSW Branch)*

The success of the 13th International Symposium on the Forensic Sciences held in Sydney in 1996 was in a great measure attributable to Henry's role as Chairman of the Organising Committee and his ability to lead and organise a committee of dedicated experts to manage and execute the Symposium program. Other positions held included that of Deputy Chairperson of the National Executive, Senior Managers of Australian and New Zealand Forensic Laboratories Group (SMANZFL) and Chairperson of the NSW Committee of the same group, a member of the Panel of Advisors, National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) and the NSW Police Service Liaison Officer to the NIFS, a registration Advisory Committee member for NATA ASCLAD/LAB laboratory program and Chairperson of the Commissioner's Advisory Panel on the use of Experts. Henry also served on numerous other committees and panels in various roles relating to forensic sciences including with Michael Dawson at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), to establish a forensic science department. At Canberra in May 1995, Mr Delaforce presented a paper to the National Forensic Summit which had the objective 'to identify critical issues and future directions for the forensic sciences in Australasia'.

Henry joined the NSW Police Force in February 1961 and performed uniformed duties at Bankstown and Bulli before commencing duties on 19 August 1963 at Wollongong Scientific Investigation Bureau (later known as the Scientific Investigation Section, Physical Evidence Section and finally Crime Scene Unit). In 1968, Mr Delaforce was designated as Detective and, up until his transfer in December 1986 to take up the position of Inspector as Second In Charge of the state-wide Physical Evidence Section, he performed duties in the South Coast areas of the state between Waterfall and the Victorian border. During this period, he participated in many significant investigations such as the fire at Naval Air Station HMAS Albatross, Mount Ousley and Bulli Pass truck fatalities, numerous murders, aircraft, vehicle, industrial, mining, marine, arson, explosions and other incidents involving fatalities and also exhumations. Between 1974 and 1986 an additional role was that of a trained Bomb Disposal person for the South Coast region, again involving some major and dangerous incidents. Many of the investigations Mr Delaforce was involved in were the subject of articles printed in the Australian Police Journal and local newspapers.

One notable case of Mr Delaforce's career involved the 1981 "Head and Fingers Killer" (referring to the Illawarra murder of teenager Kim Barry). As the Chief of the Wollongong Police Scientific Division before DNA technology was available, Mr Delaforce conducted exhaustive tests to connect defendant Graham Potter to the crime. He presented evidence which showed that bone markings from the victims hand and fingers matched that of Potter's hacksaw. April 1982 saw Potter found guilty of the murder and sentenced to life in prison.

In March 1988, Henry was promoted to the position of Detective Superintendent Commander, Physical Evidence Section which was comprised of Crime Scene Units at 28 decentralised locations across NSW as well as the following Units; Forensic Ballistics, Bomb Disposal, Document Examination, Photogrammetry, Clinical Forensic Medicine, Vehicle Examination, Mapping, Video Operations, Crime Support & Photographic Services, Police Armoury & Weapons Disposal and Training & Research. During this period, Mr Delaforce raised the issue of post traumatic stress being experienced by some staff members but this submission was rejected outright by the senior Police Command and unfortunately was to have serious consequences in following years. Later, Mr Delaforce was appointed Detective Chief Superintendent, Commander of the NSW Police Forensic Services Group, a position he held until his retirement on 30 November 1996.

During his period of police service and dedication to the other roles he took on (many voluntary), Mr Delaforce introduced numerous initiatives involving new technologies becoming available at that time such as computers, digital recording and facial identification using sculpting and photographic techniques. One event he regards highly was his involvement with the Review of Physical Evidence Services in 1991 known as the 'Gibson Report'. Among the many recommendations was the development and introduction of a Diploma in Applied Science (Forensic Investigation) for crime scene examination personnel. This course was an Australian and International first.

Throughout his career, Mr Delaforce built up strong relationships with many professional bodies including the National Institute of Forensic Science and its Director Alastair Ross, the Association of Australasian and Pacific Area Police Medical Officers and its President, Dr Bill Ryan, as well as other organisations. Over many years Henry attended Government Medical Officer meetings at major centres around the state and also in Hong Kong to make presentations on subjects of interest to them. He also introduced training courses for personnel from all Australian states and New Zealand in the fields of Criminal Behaviour Profiling and specialised armoury functions using the best qualified people then available from institutions around the world. He oversaw several significant road disasters and victim identification procedures resulting from bus collisions at Cowper in 1989 and at Clybucca as well as the Newcastle earthquake, all of which involved many deaths. He was also on the ground during the 1994 Newcastle Freeway bushfires.

Between 1977 and 1994 Henry Delaforce was commended on seven separate occasions for exceptional work performance by Police Commissioners and in 1980 was awarded the National Medal and a clasp to the medal in June 1988. In 1971, Henry was awarded a commendation regarding his preparation of scientific evidence resulting in successful court proceedings. In August 1993 he was awarded the prestigious Australian Police Medal. In recognition of his contribution to forensic science the National Institute of Forensic Science created the Henry Delaforce Award to be presented annually for the best paper submitted by a serving Police Officer on a forensic science topic. Sergeant Gerard Dutton of the Tasmanian Police Service was the first recipient of this award. The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) awarded Mr Delaforce an Honorary Diploma in Applied Science (Forensic Investigation) for his crime scene related achievements. Personal interests include bushwalking in wilderness areas, photography, family history research, gardening and fishing. He was a member of Wollongong Lions Club and Charter Vice President of Woonona Lions Club. Henry readily acknowledges that he could not have undertaken the many tasks he did without the cooperation and full support from those around him and his family. His long and selfless service to the ANZFSS is fondly acknowledged as his passion for, and input to forensic work has been evident over many decades.

The NSW Branch of ANZFSS proudly presents Henry Delaforce as a Life Member.