

POLICE LEGACY

There to help



Bert and Teri with Demi, Abby and Tyla at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary in Queensland. The photo was taken during a family holiday not long after Bert was diagnosed.

When ACPO Bert Cubillo lost his valiant fight with cancer in 2008 he left behind his wife, Teri and three young children – Demi, Abby and Tyla. They lost a much loved husband and father. What they didn't lose was their place in the police family. Police Legacy has been there for them.

Bert Cubillo was determined his children would go to O'Loughlin Catholic College and Teri Cubillo admits that as a single mother she would struggle to provide the education he wanted for his children.

"My husband always wanted the children to go to the Catholic school. Police Legacy helped pay for Demi to attend until the end of Year 12. Abby is attending the school now. Tyla is still in primary school, but will go to the college. Without Legacy's help, I wouldn't have been able to fulfil Bert's dream," says Teri Cubillo.

"It gives me comfort to know they are getting the education Bert wanted."

Teri says it is a good school. Demi was at the school when Bert passed away. One of the indigenous teachers made sure Demi was OK, spending extra time with her.

In Year 11 Police Legacy helped Demi join her classmates on the school Odyssey. "Legacy's support has helped us a lot. And not just the school trip to the east coast. They've helped with sporting trips for all

of us. Without that help it wouldn't be possible," says Demi, who is beginning her university studies this year.

"As a single mum I wouldn't be able to provide that for the children. You juggle to try and find that extra to give them those things, but it's not always possible," says Teri.

When Bert passed away in 2008 one of the first people to visit Teri and the children was the Association representative. The organisation also deposited money into the family bank account to help with funeral expenses. "Not having to worry about that was a great relief. They were very supportive, just like an extension of your own family," says Teri.

Another early visitor is the girls' legatore, Tony Fuller. He is still a regular visitor and helps out wherever and whenever he can.

"Abby is a talented basketballer," explains Teri. "Tony is helping me with the applications to see if Abby can go to a Melbourne school on a scholarship to further her sport. She's very talented and is already playing in the women's team here."

Police Legacy has been there to help Abby compete with the representative team. Without that help it would be hard for her to compete. Demi, Abby and Tyla all went on a school sport's trip to Gove – thanks to Legacy.

Teri is thankful to the members who

contribute to Police Legacy. "Without the help it would definitely be a struggle. The girls are all talented and it's important for them to attend camps that will help to develop them."

Teri says Tony Fuller goes out of his way to see how the girls are going. They particularly like it when they see him in uniform. It reminds them of how proud their father was to be an ACPO.

Bert met Teri when they were teenagers at school. He was her first and only love. He worked as a storeman at the brewery for 20 years before becoming an ACPO. Seven months after he joined he was getting tired and losing weight. Tyla had just been born so they put the tiredness down to having a new baby in the house. It wasn't the case. He was diagnosed with cancer and given just six months to live.

We do things he would have done. That keeps his spirit with us.

"He went on for four years after that," recalls Teri. "He was strong. He would take a rest day when he was due to have chemo. One day we were driving home in between chemo treatments when he spotted some keys at the side of a roundabout. He made me drive around a second time and stop so he could pick them up. He then told me to drive to the station so he could hand them in. There was no talking him out of it. The most important thing to him after his family was doing his job. He worked until a week before he passed. He loved it."

Another thing the family believed kept Bert going was Teri's own battle with cancer. He passed a couple of weeks after she came back to Darwin after surgery and treatment. ACPO Brian Stanislaus was a good friend. When Bert passed Brian was going to take the day off. He told Teri he decided to go to work, after all Bert went to work when he was having chemo!

The family keep Bert's memory alive by doing things he loved to do, like throwing a handline in off the rocks and eating cream buns. The one thing he loved most was visiting the dump shop and fossicking around. Teri says he was like Steptoe. Demi remembers the electric scooters he found and got working again for his two oldest daughters.

"We do things he would have done. That keeps his spirit with us," says Teri.

"Dad was always fun and he was always funny. He loved being at home and hanging out with us. He was strong – very strong, but silent strong. He would never say if he was hurting. He just kept it to himself. He was a special Dad," says Demi.

The Importance of Welfare

The Association has been lobbying for qualified and trained sworn welfare officers as an adjunct to the psychology and chaplaincy services. Our position is not supported by the Commissioner.

Our Association was extremely disappointed to receive a short letter from the Chief Minister in relation to our ongoing concerns relating to welfare and chaplaincy services. The Chief Minister correspondence of 6 January this year is simply a regurgitation of the position adopted by the Commissioner of Police.

It is of real concern to our Association that the Chief Minister could not make the time to discuss our concerns directly with your elected representatives. We can only wonder what it will take for the Commissioner and now Chief Minister to acknowledge the obvious gap in this area.

He wrote: "Following consideration of the issues raised by you in your latest correspondence dated 26 November

The fact is, with around 1460 sworn members currently serving in the Northern Territory Police Force, the cost of reintroducing two sworn welfare members would equate to approximately \$200 per member, per annum.

2013, I confirm that my position regarding your concerns remains unchanged. I remain of the view that the care and support of police officers is better served by trained psychologists and chaplains within the NTPFES, ESS."

We don't agree. We have included on page 20 of this issue of NT Police News a positive approach being adopted in relation to welfare management in New South Wales and also a reflection on the difference between pastoral care and clinical services.

To repeat the final observation from the article in our December 2013 edition on this issue:

The fact is, with around 1460 sworn members currently serving in the Northern Territory Police Force, the cost of reintroducing two sworn welfare members would equate to approximately \$200 per member, per annum. The cost savings in productivity gains and reduced absence from work would in this Association's view far outstrip the outlay in wages and associated costs.

In our view, your welfare is worth at least that much. The Commissioner would appear to have a different view.

The Chief Minister appears to share the Commissioner's view. What price our members' welfare, Chief Minister?

PSYCHOLOGISTS AND CHAPLAINS

Where they fit into your welfare needs

There are vast differences between the roles of psychologists and chaplains. Despite this, some organisations link the two, putting them in shared offices and under the same control and command.

There may be times when you feel you need assistance dealing with the pressures of the job and life, but who should you see and how do they differ?

Chaplains establish and develop relationships to provide care and support. They are trained in pastoral care and counselling. They provide a neutral ear and are good listeners. Sometimes people need to get things off their chest. They chaplains visit members wherever they require. They are not restrained by rank or position.

By the very nature of their responsibilities, psychologists must keep notes and files on their 'clients'. Chaplains are not clinicians and do not keep notes or records on members.

No one can direct you to see a chaplain whereas; under some circumstances you can be compelled to see a psychologist. There may be a perception that you only need a certain number of appointments with a psychologist but you can have an ongoing relationship with your chaplain throughout your career and beyond. That relationship with the chaplaincy can extend to your entire family.

There is a spiritual dimension to everyone's wellbeing. Psychologists may not acknowledge this. The spiritual

relationship with the chaplains can extend beyond pastoral care. They are there to conduct baptisms, weddings, funerals and other religious services.

Psychologists engaged by the employer often only deal with work related issues. Chaplains are there issues of a more personal nature like grief, loss, illness, family issues and relationships. They are also there to care and support members at critical incidents and times of trauma. The Chaplaincy is there for you, 24-hours a day.

If you need welfare services the Association can help with contact details.