

**INQUIRY INTO UNSOLVED MURDERS AND LONG-TERM
MISSING PERSONS CASES IN NEW SOUTH WALES
BETWEEN 1965 AND 2010**

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My name is Linda Grimmer, I am making a submission as a family member of a long term missing person. My husband Paul Grimmer, is the brother of long term missing person, CHERYL GRIMMER. I have been with Paul for 35years, over that time I have experienced living in a dysfunctional family, what happened to his little sister has never allowed the family to move forward to endure a fulfilled and happy life, instead it has been filled with a lot of uncertainty, sadness and confusion regarding the justice system. That day in 1970 has shaped not only the Grimmer family's life but my life as an outsider. I learnt very early in our relationship that Paul had a sister and she was kidnapped, I also learnt very early on that it was a subject that could not be spoken about. I couldn't understand why it couldn't be spoken about, I come from a family that talk about everything. I also couldn't understand why the family never sought counselling, were they offered any, I don't believe so.

Paul & I also have four daughters who now know about their aunty Cheryl & what happened to her, they have a better understanding of why their grandparents were the way they were as well as their father. Paul was always the fun dad because he would always be near the girls whilst they would be playing, he could not fully allow them to be normal kids. Our girls never had sleepovers at their friends houses, our home would always have their friends at our house, our children thought that was normal, until high school where things were different with other families, and our children realised what they thought they were missing out on.

We as a family have navigated through life with uncertainty with our children. This stems from years of trauma carried through with Paul from a very young age. Our children have shown resilience throughout their childhood, having to understand later in their teenage lives once they fully were made aware about Cheryl through different media campaigns. They also are carrying the trauma with them with their own children now with the same beliefs that was instilled in them from a young age.

My recommendation for this inquiry would be:

Engage specialised support officers to interact with families who have had a loved one as a long term missing person or an unsolved homicide. Families need to be able to have a consistent contact person or agency who understand the complexities of each individual case, that is there to support the family.

Have access to information and legal processes to help the families to access financial assistance and legal documentation to assist during this time.

Insufficient access to a National coordination team - Missing persons cases often cross the state border of jurisdiction area, therefore more accurate information sharing data bases would be suitable for all involved.

Financial funding needs to be more accessible to access for resources that are available to families of long term missing persons or unsolved homicide. Also look at individual cases & increase the funding based on the circumstances at hand.

If hope this inquiry has a better understanding from the families of a long term missing person or an unsolved homicide victim what they have endured over decades and hopefully there will be a reform to improve the system that the justice system is based upon. Families need a stronger support whether is be short or long term, trauma has no time frame.

I thank the committee for examining these important issues and recognising that there is an issue with the lack of communication and lack of specialised support officers to assist families in their time of need.

Linda Grimmer