

ANDREW ALLEN'S CURIOUS CAMPBELLTOWN PODCAST INTERVIEW WITH KEN MARONEY ON 21 FEBRUARAY 2023

AA Hi everyone my special guest today joined the police force in 1965 and worked his way up to be the NSW Police Commissioner by 2002. He received numerous awards and recognition of a wonderful career. It gives me much pleasure to introduce Ken Moroney to Curious Campbelltown. Good morning Ken.

KM Good morning Andrew and good morning to your listeners.

AA Were you like me at Primary School? I remember running around when I was about 10 or 11 and I wanted to be a policeman and I think everyone in my whole year wanted to be a policeman. Did you have dreams of becoming a policeman when you were a young boy?

KM No not really. The only connection that my family had had with policeman or policing came from my great great grandfather John Joseph Cody who had been a member of the Irish Constabulary in Waterford where the famous crystal is made. He came here in about 1880 as a young man, as a single man. Shortly after that he married a young woman by the name of Elizabeth Doherty. The rest as they say is but history. They had 10 children, thankfully so because from that brood of ten came my great grandmother and ultimately I'm sitting here today with you. So, John Joseph Cody was our only connection to police or policing. I didn't harbour those views or thoughts at all. I had seen the police as you do as a young boy in the 50s and early 60s passing by and I thought about a range of careers, and I was attracted to policing in NSW at the age of 19, and that interest really came from a neighbour who had been, I'll call him a seasoned member of the NSW Police Force. Seasoned in the sense that when I did ultimately join the Police on the 16 August 1965, my first station of attachment was Liverpool and I regard myself as fortunate because I worked with men who came from what I refer to as the "University of Hard Knocks". They were men predominately who had served in the Second World War. They had rows and rows of ribbons on their shirt. So they had come through a fairly torrid period of life, not only for the nation but indeed the world and they had those lived experiences - a term that we often hear even today. So I was fortunate to be able to work with them and many of them were role models of that period, and they set the course really. Our training in 1965 was of five weeks duration at the old police academy at Bourke Street in Redfern. To give your listeners some indication Andrew, a great mentor of mine John Avery who was the 18th Commissioner of Police, he had joined the Police Force in 1945 - 20 years before me. His training was two weeks, so in a 20 year period the training had only gone from two weeks to five weeks and you compare that to today of course it's much longer and something in the order of about 18 months of preparation for a lifelong career.

AA How was the training? Did you have any doubts at any stage after you had started training?

KM Oh, look it was very drill-oriented. I remember we had an old drill sergeant who was one of those who had come from the army and he was into that old style what I call "American type drill" where you fill your bag full of books and run with it around the quadrangle of the old academy at Redfern held high above your head. I'm not sure if this was designed to test your stamina, your strength or your upper muscle limit. It was training that was relevant for its time. There were the basics of law, police practice and procedure, and some very rudimentary elements. It was relevant. It was not inadequate. It was adequate for that period of time. But clearly so much has changed, both in terms of police and policing but for every occupation and training had to move for the times and obviously it has.

AA Do you have fond memories of Liverpool where you were first stationed?

KM Oh I do. The old police station in Moore Street is long gone it is now part of the Liverpool Public School. The old courthouse still stands there. But as I said Andrew I was fortunate to have worked with a variety of men. Police women were very very few and far between. I mean they were primarily stationed at the CIB the Criminal Investigation Branch in the city. You rarely saw them in the suburbs as you do today. So these were men who as I said came through the College of Hard Knocks the University of Life. I learnt much from them in terms of how you treat people. That fundamental expression you treat people the way you want to be treated yourself was just so important. It was important that long ago, it's important today.

5 mins

AA How did your family feel about you joining up?

KM They were not adverse to it. My dad worked and owned hotels. I think he assumed that I would follow him into working in a hotel. That was akin to being raised in a chocolate factory. You know the last thing you wanted was chocolate and I can assure you the last thing I wanted to do was work in a hotel let alone consume the products of the place. I was about 21 or 22 I think before I had my first drink of alcohol. They were not adverse to it they were supportive. I think given that long family history going back to John Cody in the 1880s in Waterford in Ireland, I think in their minds at least from my mother's side of the family an obvious connection.

AA You went to university later didn't you. I believe is that right?

KM Yes, that's right I went to Mitchell College of Advanced Education, it's now referred to as Charles Sturt University. I did a diploma course. That was very much at the encouragement of then Inspector John Avery who later became the Commissioner of Police in New South Wales. It was a voluntary thing it wasn't a mandatory thing. That was a four year program conducted as we now call it Charles Sturt University at Bathurst. Later in the mid-90s I went off to Macquarie University and did a Master of Arts degree. Following my retirement in 2007 I was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Charles Sturt University. I was enormously appreciative of that.

AA You did some service in the country in the rural areas didn't you? Can you tell me whereabouts and perhaps what was the favourite place that you were stationed at?

KM It's a very easy question to answer I must say Andrew. In my 42 years' service when I respond to that question people look at me a little askew because I say to them that of my 42 years of service the 20 years that I spent in rural New South Wales at Lismore, at Goulburn, at West Wyalong which is down in the Riverina and a little town called Coraki which is a little town between Lismore and Casino about equally distant.

AA I've heard of that.

KM That was the best time of my working life. In particular West Wyalong. When I left the Police Academy at 19 I think I had one ambition never ever thinking that I was going to reach the position that I ultimately did. I thought if I could be the Sergeant in charge of a country police station that to me was the ultimate. Eventually I got to do that at West Wyalong. I enjoyed it immensely and it was the most satisfying six years of my life. But the time came when my boys were getting older, getting ready for high school and we were not of the land. Traditionally youngsters in that position would go on the farm and work for mum and dad. So I had to position the boys to a point where I thought I've got to move back to Sydney. John Avery had been appointed the Commissioner of Police by this, so there was strong encouragement from him as well to move back to Sydney. We did that and then the great decision was where are we going to live. When I went to Liverpool in 1965 I think there were about eight or so police in Campbelltown headed up by the late Sergeant First Class Bernard Patrick Slattery. Many of the older listeners would remember him.

AA I've not known him but I've done a bit of research on Sergeant Slattery he is a legend I believe.

10 mins

KM Absolutely. I ultimately came back to Sydney in 1986. I looked at the Campbelltown area, I looked at a lot of areas and so did my late wife Bev. I was keen to get the boys into St Gregory's at Campbelltown and the operating rules of the school at that time they had just opened an adjunct school called John Therry High School. So two of the three boys went off to John Therry High School, young Andrew went to Campbelltown North Public School and I was very satisfied in living here. I chose to live in Campbelltown. It wasn't a case of well there's a house go live there. We chose to live here. It was my fond memory of Bernie Slattery of that burgeoning area that it was in 1986 that it has become today. By that burgeoning I talk about Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn and all of the surrounding areas that go to make up the Macarthur. So I didn't regret moving to the area and it was fulfilling. Tiring toward the end of my service in the sense of travelling every day but at the end of the day I knew I could go home back to the Macarthur area. I made many friends here and they are still friends today.

AA It would have been a great community spirit back then in Campbelltown. There is now but especially back in those days too.

KM Very much so. You know it's obviously grown and with growth comes a whole lot of new challenges but certainly the Campbelltown that I knew of in the mid-60s and the Campbelltown that I knew of in the mid-80s when I came back here, there was still that rural atmosphere in Narellan, in Camden and some of these places have been fortunate enough to retain a little bit of that rural atmosphere. But I think the attraction was the people, the genuineness of the people that brought us back here. So we didn't regret as a family living here. It was a decision that if this was a new day I would make again and I would make again for the very same reasons.

AA That's great. So West Wyalong was so special to you because of the community as well was it?

KM Very much so. There was an elected Council as there is in most large rural centres but there is an unofficial council in many of these places which usually consists of the local Sergeant, The School Principal and the Bank Manager. Not that you organise or authorise road repairs or any of those sorts of things that Councils traditionally do but you tend to become the go to group. So there was a lot of satisfaction in West Wyalong. It was a community then and still is today out there on the junction if you head across the Hay Plains and those of you that have been across there know the distance and remoteness or you went down into the Riverina and south into Victoria. It was the people, it was the atmosphere. If I was honest and I hope I am my boss was about 150 kilometres away at Wagga which was probably about 150ks too close but we saw him probably every three or four months. So I was fortunate to have a good group and the very essence of John Avery had been about community based policing. He had been a country policeman most of his life. What he did when he became the Commissioner, he took that form of rural policing into the Sydney Metropolitan Area. So in fact all we were doing in that community of six or seven police officers that we had at that time was engage with the community, be part of the community. Whether you were coaching football, involved in sport or some other community based activity it was very much the police being part of the town, being about and being seen.

AA Getting back to when you were at Liverpool. Was your first day very memorable do you remember what you did?

KM My first day was memorable in the sense that all of the theory of five weeks you think I really don't know anything. I mean academies whether they are teaching academies, police academies or ambulance academies or whatever they can only teach you the theory of the profession in which you are entering. So very much where you learn is on the street. So it's just as I said not only working with experienced men and women but working with experienced people in the community whether they were local government officials, whether they were local members of parliament, people from community groups. The person I became I think was shaped by the people with whom I interacted.

15 mins

So you look at people their circumstances in which they live. It was a bit bewildering for me the phenomena of domestic violence for example. I remember going to homes trying to resolve domestic violence issues and I'm thinking to myself I'm 19 I haven't got a girlfriend and I'm trying to solve the matrimonial problems of people twice my age. They can teach you the theories of how to resolve domestic violence dispute legally or procedurally but when you get on the ground of having to deal with these things of how you deal with emotion and trauma in a motor vehicle accident, how you deal with that vast dichotomy of work that comes in the course of a police shift. You may be attending a motor vehicle accident where people are injured or killed. A short time later you might be at some domestic violence incident and then a different type of incident again. So your ability to be able to switch mentally all of the time as you grow in terms of your skill and your knowledge becomes very important. What I found even on my last days as Commissioner of Police, if you didn't know say so, ask somebody who does know. The mere fact that one is the Commissioner of Police or the Director General of an agency it doesn't mean that you know every single thing that there is to know. I think the importance is that you continue to learn and so every day of my job from 16 August 1965 to 31 August 2007 for me was a day of learning.

AA How did you go in those early days with motor vehicle accidents and knocking on doors? Did it affect you earlier on? Were you able to switch off early?

KM I don't know that I had any thought that it was impacting on me but clearly it was. Ultimately as I have heard from so many of my former colleagues like the dripping water on the stone you go to one too many. I remember being at Lismore many years later, I had gone to Lismore in 1973, probably about 1975/76 I had gone to a motor vehicle accident which was a fatal accident. I went to the home of this young man and ironically he lived in the same street that I lived in in Lismore. I remember knocking on his door and his mother answered the door and I think she knew when she saw me at about 7.30 in the morning that there was something wrong. I told her that her son had been killed in a motor vehicle accident and you and your listeners can imagine the trauma of all of that and how a parent responds. I remember her words 40 years on. She said I was cooking breakfast, the boys had gone out surfing, I heard the ambulance go up the highway and I just thought for a moment I hope that's not for Gerard. Gerard was her son and she quickly dismissed the thought from her mind. In fact the ambulance was for Gerard and his mates. Coming back they had run into a tree. It was that expression I hope that's not for Gerard I think that to me was the dripping water on the stone thing and all of a sudden having attended many of those accidents, some fatal some with injuries some not so, there is that dawning realisation that the most precious thing that we have as human beings is life. Accidents are going to happen, they will happen, they have happened, they will happen again but sometimes there is an element of deliberateness about some of these motor vehicle accidents that can be prevented. But all of these things, all the trauma that is associated with police and policing, ambulance officers, fire

brigade, any of our emergency services personnel I think ultimately and over time they feel the impact of post-traumatic stress. That's one of the areas post my retirement that I've been doing some work in that space.

20 mins

AA Even only a few days ago on the weekend my son was home a bit later than normal it enters your mind. But it also crossed my mind of how the police deal with that too.

KM No amount of preparation at the academy can really prepare you for how you knock on somebody's door. I had a practice that before you go to deliver a message of this type you go and check with the neighbours first whether the parents are elderly, whether they're medically infirmed, they may and I have seen this, they may go into shock. So you need an ambulance straight away. So it is all that preparatory work, those life skills come people who have been there and done it. No amount of words that you can muster, how you shape them reshape them Andrew it's a challenging message to deliver and then to stay with the family. There's no well I've been here for ten minutes now I must go, it's about trying to assist them into what is overwhelmingly the greatest shock. We have all heard that expression no parent should have to bury a child. Unfortunately the very nature of human behaviour on the road is that it has happened and will continue to happen. So all we can do as parents whether we're police or whatever occupation or profession we occupy is instil in our young people, all people but particularly our young people about the importance of road safety. They're two easy words but our young ones particularly, they are the most vulnerable group I suspect. It is about their safety and their protection that becomes so paramount.

AA Ken I think you kind of answered this a little bit earlier but you had no aspirations of being the New South Wales Police Commissioner. You didn't think you would rise that far.

KM No, in 1965 promotion in the police force was by strict seniority and virtually if I make light of it you had to wait for somebody in front of you to resign, retire or pass on and then you eventually moved up the promotion ladder. That's how it had been since 1862 when the police force as we know it in this state was formally established until John Avery. He implemented a promotion system by merit. That changed dramatically and I know the police promotion system has had many variations since John Avery's initial foray into that space but with that change of moving away from promotion by seniority but one based on merits, skill, background, qualifications and suitability officers were able to move up the promotion ladder.

AA How was your relationship with the Police Ministers. I think there were four during your term.

KM If I can answer the question, I had been the Chief of Staff which sounds a grandiose position to two Commissioners, John Avery when he was the Commissioner and Tony Lauer. So I had the opportunity to see how two Police

Commissioners and I saw them several times a day every day and then I was Deputy Police Commissioner to Commissioner Peter Ryan who came here after the Police Royal Commission. I've had this closeness with three of them and saw how they interacted with government, the government of the day, the Minister of the day and I think it fair to say that you learn lessons from many sources. When that day came in 2002 when I was appointed as the 20th Commissioner of Police I thought my role is to implement the decisions of the government of the day. To implement the policy of the government of the day. The day to day operations of the organisation were and still are the matter for the Commissioner. I never experienced a Minister say to me you must do this or you must do that enter into that operational field. Equally nor did I seek to enter into the political field. So you have got to be conscious of the government of the day and what their policy directions are. They have a lot of similar points between opposition and government and they have differences.

25 mins

As we know it is the nature of elections governments can change so you have got to be able to switch from a particular policy perspective to a different policy perspective. So I had one Minister twice, John Watkins a very good and decent man, Michael Custer and Carl Skully and for a short time Paul Whelan as the Police Minister. But that was a relatively short period when he was going out of the portfolio as was Commissioner Lyon. We got on well I mean you have to. You can agree, you can agree to disagree and you can totally disagree but provided the directions of the government of the day are lawful which they always were as far as I was concerned, provided they're lawful directions and this is the policy position we have on A, B or C then that is what you follow. I think what becomes important for the community and indeed for your own organisation is that those policy positions are fully explained and this is why we are doing these particular things.

AA I never considered much about the change of government and how you would have to go with the government of the time. Peter Ryan would have been an interesting person to follow wouldn't he? He was colourful.

KM Yes he came here in 1996. He had been the Commandant of the English Police Staff College. This was a college for aspiring commissioned police officers, Inspectors and Superintendents, Assistant Commissioners. He had been head hunted from the United Kingdom after the Police Royal Commission of 1994 to 1996. He had obviously different expectations of the organisations just in terms of the geography. I remember on one occasion he said to me I'm just ducking out to the border, I'll be back this afternoon. I said are you flying out to Broken Hill and he said no I'm going out to the border at Lithgow. He had no idea of geography. I say that kindly, he learnt. Peter was very English and a very English way of doing things. We had a good working relationship. I think the thing that led to his leaving the organisation it was just that he felt he'd done his job that he had been brought here to do in 1996. So we came to 2002. I had indicated to him in early 2002 that I was thinking of retiring. I'm a sentimentalist and I said

look I joined the police force on 16 August, I would like to finish about the same date in 2002. Well that didn't happen and the rest is but history. I don't regret the decision not to retire but that was brought on by Peter's decision to retire and ultimately go on and work the Olympic Games.

AA The Wood Royal Commission, can I ask you how you felt about the findings and the outcomes of the Wood Royal Commission into police corruption?

KM Here in New South Wales we had watched the Fitzgerald Royal Commission in Queensland into police and police corruption. I described the Fitzgerald Royal Commission very much as a giant locomotive. It roared through the state of Queensland, identified inappropriate practices and conduct and it came to the border and it stopped metaphorically at Coolangatta. We looked north. What happened was that the engine driver Fitzgerald got off and a new engineer got on called James Wood and the diesel then rolled into New South Wales. It was a challenging time, a difficult time.

30 mins

We observed in Queensland when the Fitzgerald enquiry was on that many, many good police officers were crestfallen they were crushed and we looked north and felt how could that happen. Then ultimately it was the time for New South Wales. These are challenging times, it's not an easy thing to read about colleagues, some of who you know or read of inappropriate conduct daily in the newspapers and I saw police officers who normally would have gone to work in uniform go to work in an old dust coat or a t-shirt. They just didn't want to be recognised as police officers. They hadn't done anything wrong, it was the embarrassment and the hurt of others. So at the end of the Royal Commission there was much to be done both in terms of the culture of the organisation, education, training, promotion, police operating procedures and to remedy those things either legislatively or administratively operationally across the whole of the organisation. That was Peter Ryan's main task. You can only do that with the support of the police force itself both the sworn police officers and the public service staff but you have to do it with the support of the community. So it was a hard time, a harsh time and we saw it impact in simple areas such as recruiting. Recruitment fell right away because of perceptions that people had. Corruption was not a new thing. I remember being asked in the Royal Commission is there corruption in the New South Wales police force. I didn't mean it as a trite answer I said yes it's probably existed since 1788 in varying degrees. Then I was asked what is your definition of corruption. My definition was about two lines long. When one reads the final report of the Wood Royal Commission the definition of corrupt activity is about one and a half A4 pages. So even the things that were not even thought of as being inappropriate conduct were captured by this Commission. So a number of police officers during that time took their own lives. Why did they do that? I honestly don't know Andrew only God knows that. It was the same phenomena in Queensland during their Royal Commission, a number of police officers there. Here we had something like 13 or 14 take their lives.

AA That's an enormous amount isn't it?

KM Very much so. Was it related to the Royal Commission? Not in every instance, there may have been other health issues, there may have been personal trauma in their lives, some I have no doubt were connected to issues identified within the Royal Commission. But the loss of any person particularly in those sort of circumstances is a tragedy for families, it is a tragedy for the organisation. Out of all of that then the organisation has to rise and so the New South Wales Police Force of 2023 I truly believe is a different organisation of say 2003, different to 1983 is different to 1863. It's changed in so many ways for obvious reasons but there is no shortage of young people wanting to join the organisation and I say light heartedly but if I was 19 again and I never will be, I would do it all again.

AA Would you?

KM I would do it all again in a heartbeat because the overwhelming majority of people that I have met inside and outside of the police force in the community are good and decent people. It's the nature of media reporting that we only hear about the negativity of life but overwhelmingly there are good and decent people trying hard every day to raise a family, to live on this land ethically as best they can. There are lots of challenges out there and they do a great job.

35 mins

AA I would like to touch on something that is local Ken that I know you were involved in at the time, the Macquarie Fields riots. Can you tell me what you remember of that time and I guess how the police handled it. Were you happy with how it was handled?

KM It was one of three major riots that all occurred within a 12 or 18 month period. Firstly there was a riot at Redfern which followed on the death of a young man who was being pursued by police. He was on a pushbike, he came off the bike and he was impaled on a fence and sadly he lost his life. Macquarie Fields started as a result of a police pursuit and two young men unfortunately lost their lives. Of course in 2005 there was the Cronulla riot and whilst no-one lost their lives there, there were a number of people injured both police and civilians and extensive amount of property damaged. So within that 12 or 18 months period we had all these responses. Probably no different to what we were observing in other countries. But to the specifics of Macquarie Fields. It was unfortunate that two young men lost their lives. That resulted in the driver of the motor vehicle escaping the scene and fleeing into the bush for some days until he was ultimately captured. The events then resulted in public disorder that is the only way that I can describe it with bottle throwing and property damage etc. Arising out of that there was one man for whom I had and still have the greatest personal respect and that is Father Chris Riley. Father Riley came to me after the riot and he said to me I need your help. He had been a bit of a legend in the area. It was not uncommon for Father Chris to be seen riding his horse with his two dogs Collingwood and Pie, two Great Danes because obviously you could tell Chris Riley was a great supporter of Collingwood. He had this style about him that reminded me, the older listeners would recall an old Spencer Tracey movie called Boystown in which Spencer Tracey played the role of a real life person Father

Edward Flanagan who started Boystown in America. There was a lot of Father Flanagan in Father Riley. Father Flanagan believed as did Chris Riley there is no such thing as a bad boy, it's just the circumstances in which some young men find themselves, some young boys find themselves that leads them into crime and violence etc. Chris had this vision of creating what is now the Koch Centre at Macquarie Fields. It wasn't the size of the building, it wasn't where it was to be located he had this vision that he wanted to support young people, young men, young women boys and girls. He believed in their future. So out of the unfortunate death of these two young fellows in the car pursuit, arising out of the arrest of the driver of the motor vehicle good came. The good was Chris Riley's approach. I then saw a succession of police officers in particular the then Commander Superintendent Glen Harrison. It was not uncommon for his officers to be down at Macquarie Fields Police Station or near the high school cooking breakfast. It wasn't a one off once a year they were cooking breakfast. Did they have to do that no, did they want to do it yes. What did that do? It provided many young people with a breakfast who otherwise would not have had it. It built the relationships between the police and young people.

40 mins

Were they compared to the Macquarie Fields riot and the genesis of it, did things improve 100% no but what we saw was a marked downturn in report of crime and anti-social behaviour. Did it stop, no it didn't stop. I talked about human nature, the nature of some human beings is they commit crime. But what we have seen is a significant turnaround in that community for the better. Great credit to that belongs not only to the police of that period but the police today and then as important the community itself. I saw them operate domestic violence seminars at James Meehan High School and I invited the then Chief Magistrate in New South Wales Mr Ian Pike to come and speak about domestic violence. He did a first class job. There were a number of community leaders spoke about domestic violence and how it was not appropriate but the most telling speaker was a father and his son. They recounted the story that the son said when I was a small boy I saw my father commit domestic violence upon my mother and I promised myself when I got older that he would never do that again. As he grew older and bigger and stronger he knocked dad base over apex. The father said I learned a lesson of what I had been doing all this time. They were by far the most effective speakers on the night. Did it stop domestic violence in Macquarie Fields, I don't think so but did it have an impact on the audience and on the broader community in the reporting of these things I think yes. So whilst governments can pass laws, whilst the police can enact those laws that relate to domestic violence or any other social issue, ultimately it is the community who had the real solution.

AA So some good things came out of it and progress was made but still got a bit of a way to go.

KM That will always be the case Andrew in every community. In Redfern things have changed for the better and we have seen what I call the gentrification of Redfern. Have you been there of late? The Redfern of 2004 is pretty much different to

Redfern 2023. The same as in areas like Woolloomooloo, places that have had some social disadvantage and they have improved. They have improved because the community wanted the improvement and the community made it happen and organisations like government or agencies of the government like police, family and community services, education etc they can help implement but ultimately it is the community who can do all of this if they put a mind to it.

AA I was going to ask you what you were most proud of. Is there one single thing that you are most proud of during your time as New South Wales Police Commissioner? I've put you on the spot.

KM Oh gee whiz that's racking the memory. Back in 2003 the whole issue of child protection was bubbling under the surface. This was well before the Child Abuse Royal Commission, well before exposés in various parts of Australia in terms of institutional abuse, historic institutional abuse and I had this interest in this whole phenomena of child abuse, abuse of young people and vulnerable adults. I decided it is no good New South Wales trying to do this on its own. It's not a New South Wales or a Sydney centric thing. Where do we start? I thought I'll get all the Police Commissioners from across Australia and New Zealand and the Pacific region together in Sydney and we did that. I was looking for a theme. I knew the theme, I was looking for a symbol, a sign a set of words that would encapsulate what this was all about. In Sydney public schools we conducted I will call it an art competition to come up with a symbol that best illustrated young people, hope for the future and a young lady from St John Bosco School at Engadine won the prize. It was a picture of a dove and the dove as everybody knows is a symbol of peace. So it wasn't the peace that's associated with war, it was peace that is associated with peace of mind, people finding an inner peace. That set the whole theme and I think many things flowed from that across Australia. Did we resolve the problem, no we didn't. But I like to think that was the commencement of a new approach with child abuse which is now morphed into other areas like abuse of elders etc. So I look with sadness on the issue of child abuse and paedophilia but I look at the importance of having that discussion in the first place. What am I proud of? I'm proud of my family, my three sons, Michael is Detective Chief Inspector here in Campbelltown, Peter was a Detective Sergeant in the Counter Terrorism Command until his medical discharge and my younger son Andrew is stationed at the Sydney Police Centre but alternates between there and the Police Academy at Goulburn. My daughter in law Ruth, my niece and nephew and other nieces and nephews, my brother all joined the New South Wales Police. My late wife Bev would have said to you family barbeques at our place were extremely boring for her at least. We were like a group of school teachers or group of plumbers, you talked shop. So I was always proud of the family connection and I used to think well maybe John Joseph Cody who came here in 1880 would be proud as well.

AA I'm sure he's looking down and he would be proud of you.

KM I'm just proud of the men and women in the organisation. I set myself a goal to get to the 444 police stations in this state. By day's end I go to 424 and I don't

think I have eaten so many triangle sandwiches in my life. My wife Bev and I had a pact, she would talk to the wives or the spouses of the police officers and at the end of the night we would get back together and it would be you need to get a new kitchen for Andrew's wife and you need this and she needs new carpets. So we lived in country police station houses and we knew some of them were excellent and some of them not so. I enjoyed being out and about with the troops. I think the thing I took great solace and support from the community, tremendous people. I moved across the state, proud of the organisation and when you sit back and you say could you have done this better or that, yes of course. Hindsight is a wonderful thing you know, if you could put hindsight in bottles and sell it you would be a millionaire. I look back and think yes we could have and yes we should have and maybe if this were a new day we would do something else. I think out of those experiences you grow. One small anecdote. I worked at a little country town called Coraki which I said is halfway between Lismore and Casino. I will simply say that as a young policeman the old sergeant that I worked with, he was what I will say from the old school. His size ten directed to the lower extremities of your backside probably accounted for something. He left and a new sergeant arrived and he had a completely different approach. We had gone to one part of the town on one occasion where there was I won't call it a riot it was just a disturbance you know lots of yelling and abuse directed toward each other and when we arrived our neighbouring police were 20 miles to Lismore and 20 miles to Casino. They might as well have been 200 miles away. So the mood of some of the crowd turned against us. Things were being thrown at us and a little boy ran in and stood in front of us and the sergeant Norm Dean who is now a hotelier down in Narrandera put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a packet of musk lifesavers and he gave them to this little boy. The mood of the crowd changed instantly. I tell the troops at the academy at Goulburn this story and I say do you know what I learnt, never go to that part of town without musk lifesavers. You treat people how you want to be treated yourself. That's what I mean. I mean the organisation has to be in a continual frame of learning all of the time. There are rules, there are procedures, there are guidelines, there are laws and those things are important but I think the greatest thing that every police officer has in his or her tool bag, common sense, good judgement, the ability to think and act and do all of those things simultaneously.

AA I understand, but that's an amazing story, that's a real feel good story.

KM Well it's a true story and I learnt much from that 25 cent packet of lollies. I think it was those circumstances and the things I learnt as a young policeman help shape you and so you can have good instructors at the academy, it's just so, so important to have equally good mentors out in the field as well.

AA Ok Ken, just to finish off I want to just check in with what you are up to today. What sort of things are you involved with now? You haven't slowed down though have you?

KM No Andrew, I suffer from the inability to say no. When I decided to retire in 2007 that was entirely predicated on my wife Bev's illness. I said all the public things

like I'm going fishing and I'm going to play golf and all those things you do say when you are going to retire but the hidden reason was Bev's health at that stage and then sadly she lost her battle against cancer. In her last few days, she had been a palliative care nurse, and in the last few days that she was alive we sat and we were talking and she said to me I want you to promise me one thing. I said yes because she knew her fate. I just want you to get on with the rest of your life. We didn't discuss that any further I knew what she meant. Don't sit in the corner full of self-pity because you will follow me very quickly. So with that yes I will get on with the rest of my life not knowing what that meant, so I interested myself in a range of things. I've done some work for the Federal Government and State Government on various boards and enquiries that they have asked me to do. But presently I am involved in a major fund raising effort for the St John of God Hospital at Richmond and they're looking at a major expansion into mental health care facility for what we call first responders, Police and emergency service workers and the military. I am the Patron of Lifeline Macarthur, I am the Patron of Newhaven Farms which is a facility at Windsor and Richmond for men with intellectual and physical disabilities. It is a residential care facility. I have an involvement with that and a range of other organisations focused on wellbeing care and support. I have continued my interest in the child abuse environment as well and I have done some work for different organisations not doing investigations. I mean that is a matter for the police and other relevant authorities but working with organisations to ensure that they post the Royal Commission into child abuse they have the system, the process, the governments, the compliance arrangements in place. Because if we fall into that trap of saying this only involved the group of predominantly men of a particular period of time yes that's right. But that whole phenomena of abuse the physical and sexual abuse of children or young people or vulnerable adults still continues. The perpetrators have changed. So there is a need for organisations whether they are schools or institutions, boy scouts, surf life savers, sporting clubs. We are seeing that now in the work I do with Sports Integrity Australia that was formerly known as ASADA which is the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority now called Sports Integrity Australia. So we are seeing now the emergence of complainants coming forward to talk about inappropriate conduct of people within the sporting environments. So vigilance continues to be important in that whole space, how we care and support the victims of abuse be it contemporary abuse or historic abuse, work with organisations to make sure they have the systems and the processes and the policies that those particularly, say the religious organisations where perpetrators may have finished a period of imprisonment are then released from prison back into those institutions not in a teaching role. Many of these men are in their 80s and 90s now but making sure that there is still a need, the community want to be assured that there are protective measures in place to make sure there is no opportunity for repeat conduct of behaviour. So that continues to be part of my interest. I am working away. I have moved from the Macarthur area back to the area of John Joseph Cody around Balmain and so I enjoy there. My boys and all the family are still out this way so I enjoy coming

out here to visit them. They think going in to the Inner City is like going to the end of the earth. They're basically if you don't have to go past Liverpool why bother.

AA You certainly have got on with it then. You are so busy still.

KM Yes, look I'm grateful to be asked. I'm grateful to be still doing something and always interested. I have just been asked to chair the Benevolent Fund for the Rural Fire Service. You will recall Andrew coming out of the 2019/20 bush fires there was a tragic loss of life including rural fire service workers, firemen. There was a huge community response to that. Arising out of that contributions by the community, they have established similar to the New South Wales Police. Police established Police Legacy similar to Military Legacy and the RFS are in the process of establishing this benevolent fund which will operate on similar principles. So I am involved in that. I mean it is as Bev would have said to me get on and make a contribution. With all the support you have received from the community it is time to give back again.

AA I have thoroughly enjoyed talking to you today and listening to what you have had to say. It's been really interesting and I thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to be involved in it. So thanks very much Ken for being part of Curious Campbelltown today.

KM Thank you Andrew and thank you for the opportunity.