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(BACK COVER)

Assistant Commissioner Colin Winchester's widow, Mrs Gwen Winchester, at the graveside at Queanbeyan Lawn Cemetery on January 13. (Photo: AFP Scientific Branch).

The Platypus has been adopted by the Australian Federal Police as a symbol representing the diverse requirements placed upon members in the execution of their duty. This unique and tenacious little Australian mammal is a survivor against increasing pressure from today's environment. It leaves no stone unturned in its daily pursuits and has equipped itself with a range of features to adapt to changes over many years. It is capable of passing unnoticed, if required, yet demonstrates an unfailing dedication to explore all possibilities in an effort to maintain its special place in Australia's wildlife, at times against large and more powerful opponents — a quality admired and respected by members of the Australian Federal Police.



THIS ISSUE OF *PLATYPUS*
IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY
OF ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
(ACT REGION)
COLIN STANLEY WINCHESTER
WHO WAS MURDERED
ON JANUARY 10, 1989.

COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE



WE were all shocked by the sudden, unexpected and tragic death of our work-mate, Assistant Commissioner Colin Winchester. I am sure you all join me in extending to his widow and family our very sincerest condolences and our pledge of support for them during this very trying period.

I had known Colin for almost as long as I can remember, although our contacts were infrequent until I took office within the AFP. During the past year I had come to admire and respect him as a hard working, intelligent, but pragmatic, senior officer and friend who had never lost contact with the reality of base level police work.

During ten years as a Commissioner of Police, I regret that I have attended far too many official funerals, each more difficult and traumatic than the last.

Over the past couple of decades people in the law enforcement industry have become increasingly aware that there are inherent dangers connected with their work. In Australia there have been many officers murdered in the performance of their duty. Usually these deaths have followed the escalation of aggravation during the course of transactions, which although dangerous, were dealt with effectively and safely almost as a matter of routine.

However, we are now faced with a new phenomenon — that is the element of calculated premeditation.

As members of the AFP we have all been shocked not only by this strong suggestion of premeditation, but also by the fact that the attack was carried out at Mr Winchester's home. Although most of us recognise the element of danger which is with

us constantly, we have tended to regard the risk as existing only during duty hours.

The lesson to be learned from this is quite clear: for the sake of our personal safety, and even more especially the safety of our families, we must all become more cautious than we have been in the past. On the other hand the exercise of this caution ought not result in a further downgrading of the quality of life which to some extent is already affected because of the nature of our industry.

The management of the AFP will do all that it can to ensure the highest level of occupational health and safety, but in the final analysis some of the responsibility falls upon you individually. I want you to think about this to ensure that risks which do exist are not exacerbated by recklessness.

R. (Peter) McAulay
Commissioner of Police

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A SAD DAY FOR ALL

by Philip Castle

ON Friday, 13 January 1989 more than 2000 family members, friends and colleagues attended the funeral of Assistant Commissioner Colin Winchester.

THE SERVICE was held at St Christopher's Cathedral, Manuka, and from there under police escort the cortege travelled to the Queanbeyan cemetery where his body was laid to rest near a tree.

Assistant Commissioner Winchester, the AFP officer responsible for ACT policing, had been gunned down by two .22 calibre bullets as he pulled up in his car in the driveway next to his Deakin home at about 9.15pm on January 10, 1989. At the time of publication his murder was still being investigated.

The full extent of the tragedy may never be known. Those at the funeral felt deep sadness and anger at his premature death. Many recalled his almost larger-than-life "true blue" image. He was known for his quick quip, interest in people, friendliness and rugged features.

One who attended summed it up for many by saying he was there "simply because he was a good bloke". A large number came from Captains Flat, a former mining town east of Queanbeyan, where Col had been a miner and the local hero.

Some mourners travelled long distances to be there. One former colleague travelled by car from Texas, Qld. Many car loads came from NSW and Victoria including two groups of Melbourne businessmen who had been unable to get aircraft bookings.

Most State police forces were represented, in many cases by their Commissioner.

An honour guard was formed at the Cathedral's steps under the command of Col's son-in-law, Sergeant Phil Spence. The service was conducted by family friends Father Kevin Flynn of Young and the Reverend Ed Hunkin of Victoria, and the eulogies were given by AFP Deputy Commissioner John Johnson and solicitor Peter Crowley (see separate report).

The pall bearers were two of Col's nephews, Chris Clancy and Rodney Winchester, and retired police colleagues Reg Kennedy, Roy Wilson, Bernie Rotchford and Joe Medwin.

The cemetery service in Queanbeyan was conducted by Father Flynn.

Col was affectionately known from his mining days at Captains Flat as "The Dog", and even that name is shrouded in mystery. Some say he was called the dog because he was always yapping, or because he was truly an Aussie and likened to a kelpie, or because he was a real stayer, a reference to his bush origins, or because of his investigative keenness where he always followed through to a full conclusion. Its real meaning is now legend.

As a close friend put it: "When we considered where to bury him, we

Photo: News Ltd.