

# “GREAT STRENGTH, GREAT COURAGE”

**Colin Stanley Winchester was a man of great strength and of great courage, integrity and love, a man whom every decent person delighted to call friend, a tough, hard-working, honest, yet compassionate policeman, a dedicated enemy of crime. Thank God he was on our side.**

He was a loving husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather and brother; his lifelong dedication to his job and the community left him precious little time to enjoy the family life that he loved so much.

To his family, his friends and neighbours at the Flat and in Canberra, his colleagues and the community at large, he was a giant. The sheer enormity of his friendship, loyalty and dedication has enriched each of us; not least the young offenders whom he put on a straighter path.

Col was born in Cootamundra in 1933 and grew up in Captains Flat where his father was the local baker. For a time he worked in the mines at the “Flat” and I am sure his great sense of humour had its origins there. He was always at the coal face whether

at the mines or in his fight against crime. He was a keen tough footballer and cricketer in his early days and of late was an avid bowler. He was a humble man who never lost the common touch.

He strove mightily and his zeal, devotion, integrity, commonsense, fairness and intelligence took him to high rank.

He met and courted Gwen, a tireless and devoted companion, and they were married on December 17, 1955. They had two children Peter and Jenny and Jenny, married to Phil in this church, has since produced two grandchildren, David and Andrew.

It is easy to speak well of the dead, but Colin Winchester was a man of whom people spoke well during his life. I recall my son’s comment that: “Mr Winchester always recognised you, even though you were a kid; and remembered your name. He made you feel like you were somebody. Pat Harley (a close friend and Superintendent Kevin Harley’s wife) spoke of his honesty and bluntness. He was interesting to speak with, he was warm and friendly, he always had a sparkle in his eyes.



*Mr Peter Crowley.*

With his brother Ken — or “Ragged” as he called him — and his other best mates, Mick Davis and Brian Dumbrell, you would hear a hundred tales. They would recount the anecdotes that grew with age and left everyone rocking with laughter.

He brought a no-nonsense, commonsense solution to everything that confronted him and yet he did it with compassion and humour. Barristers often complained that his honesty and fairness made him the worst witness to cross-examine and even the offenders he had arrested spoke highly of him.

The death of this great and good man has been a shattering blow to this, his community, and to the nation at large.

Words alone will not express our profound sense of loss. We particularly feel for his family, Gwen, Jenny and Phil and their sons, Peter, Ken and Edith and their families. I hope we can all be of some comfort to them in their grief and pray that the Lord will assuage that grief and give them peace.

**Peter Crowley,  
Solicitor, Canberra  
(a friend)**



*Col Winchester, then a sergeant, with an old ACT Police colleague Max Robinson, who later became Commissioner of the Tasmania Police.*