

BIG BILL CHRISANTE

Abalinx Peter Adamis 14 September 2015



This small article is dedicated to an Aussie bloke who like me embraced the Aussie way of life and committed himself to becoming a guardian of the people.

I have often stated in the past that we of non Anglo Saxon background had to rise above the racism of our day and look beyond the veil of forced assimilation in order to integrate and contribute to the fabricate of Australian society.

BIG BILL CHRISANTE WAS ONE OF MANY WHO DID JUST THAT.

Bill came from a stable family whose origins were from Greece. A tiny nation that loved freedom above all else and whose troubled history somehow managed to survive the ravages of time, trials and tribulations of mankind's folly's. Big Bills parents arrived in this country like many other immigrants so many years ago and worked hard to provide their children with all the benefits that society could provide.

Given this foundation of a stable background, the Chrisante children excelled each in their own sphere of influence and contributed to the Aussie way of life in their own way. Big Bill chose a career which suited both his background, his character, love of life, a compassion for his fellow man, a commitment to serving the community and being part of the brotherhood of man that only those who have been through life's rings of fire can truly understand.

His duty of care and serving the people knew no bounds and his unselfish attitude and outlook on life set him apart from the ordinary immigrant and set a perfect example for others to follow in his footsteps. True as it may be, Big Bill did have his mentors and looked up to others who had also made that career choice of serving the people, but that is another story that Big Bill Chrisante may wish to tell on his own.

Throughout his 38 years service as Police Office, big Bill Chrisante was instrumental in being part of some of Victoria's major crime scenes and responsible for assisting many crimes that humanity find difficult to absolve, understand or even fathom. It was in this world that like minded guardians of Big Bill Chrisante stature find themselves working diligently, silently and keeping us safe from harm.

It is not an easy life being a member of the Victorian Police Force, but then again there is much satisfaction knowing that you as a law enforcement officer have made a difference to people's lives by preventing, solving and bringing to justice those who make a profit out making other people miserable.

I first met Big Bill some 20 years ago at a lecture and book opening of a mutual friend of ours whose expose of church doctrine caused some consternation and anxiety within the Australian Hellenic Orthodox community. The lecture was conducted in the hall of the newly build St Constantine and Helens church located at the rear of the Prahran Market. A place well known to me as a youngster growing up in the midst of a conglomeration of many cultures and long before the word multiculturalism existed.

The market itself was a place where people from many nations met and shared information, life skills, able to obtain job opportunities, share stories and retain culture traditions whilst integrating into Australian society. Prahran market was in effect the modern version of that ancient Greek Agora. Therefore the lecture was being held amidst the modern Agora of our times. Big Bill and I hit it off immediately as a result of our passion for all things of a bygone era and shared mutual stories of our service to the Australian way of life.

Big Bill Chrisante was a Police Officer and I was a Warrant Officer in the Royal Australian Regiment. We found that we faced very similar challenges and that we had both risen above that veil of racism and questionable policies that seemed to stop, deter, attract and or embrace new members to our relevant services and forces. These questionable and negative paradigms were soon to be challenged by a new generation that we now enjoy in the 21st century. One could say that people like Big Bill Chrisante was a pioneer in setting the example to others.

Now after all those years, Big Bill is now faced with the same challenges that I as an ex veteran faced back on the day of my discharge from the Regular Army. The opportunities, the unknown, not knowing whom to turn to, leaving the umbrella of a brotherhood that was there should the need arise, what to do with his life and a myriad of many other questions that come to mind when faced with a life changing scenario. I am quite sure that with his stable family background, a host of good friends and support from the community, Big Bill will do well in any field that he so chooses.

Big Bill Chrisante also reminded me of that great man who also left the Police service after a lifetime of being a guardian of the people and who somehow faced and overcome the challenges of a new life. His name is Charlie Bezzina, the man who was once in charge of the Victorian Homicide squad. Charlie, like Bill and I also came from an immigrant background and chose a law enforcement career. Charlie Bezzina was of Maltese background and was responsible for solving some of this states unresolved crimes of passion. Big Bill and Charlie are the perfect examples of people who have made Australia home and contributed to this country we call home. Australia. You are a credit to your parents, siblings and to this nation.

To you Bill, I dedicated the following message to you my good dear friend as placed it in the care of that other good bloke, Eugene Kontos to speak at your farewell. However if I find that Eugene failed in his mission, he can expect a knock on his door and being faced with an "angry little ant of a bloke" resplendent in his new hospital uniform with the saline drip

still hanging in his arm and requesting an explanation as why my farewell message was not read out. But knowing how methodical Eugene is, I am sure that he would have carried out his mission successfully. To you Big Bill, it has been an honour to have known you and we who have served this nation salute you.

I wrote this article as I got of bed this morning and wondered how Big Bills farewell went. It is my second article since being diagnosed with that exotic malady we refer to as the Big "C". Suffice to say, I know how important it is to be recognised and acknowledged for a life time of service and that the examples we set are not wasted or sung unknowingly in the wind as it passes us all by. As for this little bloke its back to the Olivia Newton John wing at the Austin hospital, isolation ward, (the Bubble) for another round of chemical cocktails and treatment.

The brief message below was dedicated to Big Bill as i was unable to attend in person due to circumstances beyond my control.

MESSAGE FOR BILL CHRISANTE

My Dear Bill.

I am unable to be with you today and therefore have asked someone close to you to read out my personal message to you. "Only those who have served this nations uniform can truly comprehend the personal sacrifices that an individual must give in order to keep its citizens safe.

You are one of those few.

It has been a privileges to have know you and it is a credit to you for serving this nation wearing its uniform, representing Australia and keeping its citizens safe. Do not view your retirement as break from the past but view the future as an exciting journey that is filled with beautiful and wonderful adventures.

Therefore we who have worn the various uniforms of this country we call home (Australia), salute you. Rest now, guardian of the people and enjoy the remainder of your life.

YOUR DUTY HS BEEN DONE.

Peter Adamis - Ex Royal Australian Regiment - 3 September 2015. Written from the Cancer isolated ward at the Olivia Newton John Austin Hospital



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