

**Submission
No 29**

**INQUIRY INTO THE FAMILY RESPONSE TO THE
MURDERS IN BOWRAVILLE**

Name: Ms Misty Kelly

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My name is Misty Kelly, Evelyn is my God Sister and first cousin, her father and my mother are brother and sister.

Back in 1990 I was only 10 years old. I can remember clear as my mother and father receiving the phone call from Bowraville saying that bones had been discovered and they thought they were Evelyn's – which they were.

A murder of a 4 year old innocent, defenceless girl is one of the most horrific crimes that you can endure. She had no way to defend herself or protect herself from the heartless person that committed this crime. How could someone want to hurt and take away someone's life who has only lived for 4 years? She was a beautiful, kind hearted, shy little girl.

Here we are 24 years after her murder and the murders of 2 other Aboriginal kids from Bowraville NSW who's lives were taken away from them without a thought, still trying to fight to get our justice. As it has been said many times before (and in saying this I am not racist – I have many white friends/family) if it had of been three white kids these murders would have been solved a long time ago and the person responsible convicted.

It's sad and hurts to know if they were a different colour/culture the police would have taken more interest and actually cared.

The NSW police FAILED to do their job properly and thoroughly! It was like they didn't care that three children all within 5-6 months had disappeared/been murdered in the same small town of Bowraville in NSW, instead saying they went walkabout! Saying the police have let our families down is an understatement. What evidence was taken from all three crime scenes if any? Were the houses/places fingerprinted and analysed by forensic investigators?

I'm sure if this was your child, niece, granddaughter, cousin, friend you would want answers and for the person that done this to be held responsible, and you would think that this isn't fair – well you know what, it isn't fair!

I have seen the pain, hurt, anger, emotional rollercoaster that this has done to my uncle (Billy Greenup), my mother, my aunties, uncles and families, also myself.

Some of our family and the community of Bowraville have been broken and fallen apart. The community has never been the same since 1990.

Evelyn's father has never been the same man he once was since his little girl was murdered and still has no justice to this day. He became a heavy drinker because I guess that was his way of trying to deal with what happened. We didn't know what to do, we didn't haven counsellors or anyone sent out to help us with our grief, loss and pain. It was like we were just brushed under the carpet, forgotten about like no one really cared how we felt or what we were experiencing, and that is not a good feeling at all.

Me personally, even though I was only 10 years old – I knew what was going on and for me it was like losing a little sister. It's something my family and I have had to live with for 24 long years and we are still fighting. The pain is like something has been taken away from you, a piece of your heart, a piece of you. The pain is always there inside you, you just find ways to deal with it but it never goes away. The anger – well yes that is always there as well. It's something I don't talk to many people about because it still has a very emotional effect on me. I haven't ever spoken to a counsellor about it, I just keep it bottled up inside me. The birthdays, Easters, Christmas's, holidays we have missed out on and will never get to experience is hard.

These murders have a very emotional impact on all families involved. You don't really know what it feels like until you're in this situation. Like my family said at the hearing they do not want their

children, grandchildren and great grandchildren to have the burden of fighting for justice passed down generations. That this is their fight and it should have been solved/justice served 24 years ago. Each time an inquiry or hearing is on it re-opens the wounds all over again. Family sometimes have not been notified of outcomes or things on television, we just see it on the TV – shouldn't we be given the respect to be told and kept informed?

Like the Detective said, this is a serial killer no different to Ivan Milat. All of his trials were linked together and if they hadn't been he probably wouldn't have been convicted. So why are our 3 children's cases not being heard together when there are so many similarities in the cases? That is far from a coincidence...

All we want is for our children to be counted as equals and their cases to be tried together. People know what happened because Bowraville is a small town, they are just not talking and I hope it haunts them every day for the rest of their lives and the guilt they feel eats them alive. These three children were never given a fair go from the start because of one simple fact – They were Aboriginal!

We will never give up our fight for justice for the three kids from Bowraville.

I watch crime shows from Australia and see people being convicted of crimes 20, 30, 40 years old and I think to myself, if they can do that how come nothing is happening with the Bowraville murders? It hurts and deeply saddens me.

I guess what our families are hoping for is that the accused person be trialled with all of the cases being heard together. This is really the last thing for our fight because after that and the outcome if it ever happens – that's it, we would have taken it as far as we can go and done all we can.

I'm sure most of you who are reading this have children of your own. How would you feel if you were in our shoes and in this situation? I know you would never give up fighting for justice and still have hope within yourselves.

All we want and need is justice for the Bowraville children and to let them rest in peace.

Yours Sincerely

Misty Kelly