The Most Rewarding Job

As a serving Detective Chief Superintendent and the Head of Major Crime for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, I am no stranger to seeing the impact of tragedy – families torn apart by a senseless act of violence or stupidity, writes Martin Brunning.

What I find difficult to comprehend is the impact on those left behind, for the most part innocent to what has happened, and being able do very little to ease the pain for those people.

My first-year anniversary as a Trustee of the board of The Gurney Fund passed recently. The year has given me the opportunity to see and experience the positive impact The Gurney Fund has on families affected by the sad death or medical retirement of a loved one within the Police Family.

When the board of Trustees, staff and I go our separate ways after our quarterly board meetings, the three-hour drive home is one which I use to reflect on the difference we have all just made. Board meetings are the highlight of my working diary as I know it will be an environment where ‘good’ is done.

Being a Gurney Fund Trustee is a remarkable privilege because so much good can be done to support those children and families who find themselves in a different type of crisis. For that reason, I wanted to ensure that the difference I can make for those people who need support is a really positive one.

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Support In Testing Times

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“I cannot thank you enough for the help towards the laptops. Without these the girls would not be able to be home schooled and they would be months behind, so thank you”

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“When you have your loved ones safe and sound you have everything”

“Thank you for the support you have shown to our family. It has always been appreciated and the funds help give the children a fun and happy life.”

I designed the document using our explanatory brochure, and links to the webpage, with my contact details as a backup.

I am confident that it is no longer simply the case that somebody might mention The Gurney Fund – those people now get the detail proactively which offers me some assurance that those that need help will get it because they know where to look.

Time will tell if those people do call on the support of The Gurney Fund. But for now, we’ve taken another step to make sure that we are there for people whose lives have taken a direction that once saw them as the ‘protector’ now needing some protection themselves.

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Ella, 16, received funds to attend a convention for her GCSE course.

“I would not have been able to go to Disney Paris and the media studies convention without the help of The Gurney Fund. It was such a great trip, I got to see media in action and met some of the stars of children's TV shows at the conference which I could use in my coursework. “It's something that I will always remember especially as Year 11 hasn't ended in the way I thought because of lockdown. Thank you so much once again”

Ella’s parents are also grateful for The Gurney Fund's support.

‘Ella has enjoyed studying media at school for the last few years. The school attend the media conference at Disney every year but this year was something Ella really wanted to go to as she could use the conference in her GCSE coursework.

“Without the support of The Gurney Fund she could not have attended. She was buzzing when she returned - and her coursework is now the basis of her whole GCSE grade given the lockdown so we are so very grateful she had the chance.”

Katie from Hampshire received financial assistance towards a trip to Disneyland Paris to perform in a dance show.

“Disney Paris was one of the best trips I've ever been on as I got the opportunity to dance on a stage in front of many people and perform in a parade. It was one of the most overwhelming and exciting things I've ever done and I'm so thankful to The Gurney Fund for giving me the chance. Thank you so much.”

Tom and his sisters became Gurney Fund beneficiaries in 2012 when their father Simon passed away.

“I am eternally grateful for the help The Gurney Fund has provided to us as a family. The money which is given to us each Christmas has enabled me to spoil my mum and my sisters, just like my dad would have. In addition, the financial support given to my mum has helped her greatly and enabled me to do so much.

“Every Gurney Fund holiday I have been on has always been the highlight of my year. The friends and memories I have made will stay with me forever. The opportunity to meet children in the same situation or similar, really helped me to process my father's death and made my sisters and I feel as though we were not alone.

“I cannot imagine life without The Gurney Fund and I thank them for the help they have given and continue to give, not just to my family but all the families they help.”
Trustees Hold First Virtual Meeting

Not to be outwitted by the coronavirus pandemic, The Gurney Fund’s May meeting procedure was adjusted because of the ongoing lockdown. The Chairman, Vice-Chair and Treasurer reviewed applications for funds and supporting documentation, before emailing their recommendations to the other Board members for comment and endorsement. On 14 May a virtual meeting took place: the recommendations were endorsed unanimously and work began to advise applicants of the outcome.

At the May virtual meeting, over **£4,000** was given towards school uniform, driving and swimming lessons, computers and university costs. Four new families were registered for assistance from The Gurney Fund.

NPMD Service Cancelled

This year’s National Police Memorial Day service, which was set to take place in Lincoln on 27 September, has been cancelled. This is due to the ongoing restrictions around COVID-19.

National Police Memorial Day Co-ordinator, the Reverend Canon David Wilbraham MBE said: “At this stage it is difficult to know what the situation will be later in the year and how that might affect planned events, including National Police Memorial Day.

“We are mindful of all those in the police family who have faced pressures over these weeks, whether in their own personal circumstances or professionally, as they have been part of the effort to keep people well and our communities safe.

“Based on the current circumstances, the Trustees of National Police Memorial Day have decided to cancel our gathering in Lincoln this year.

“We know that this decision will be a disappointment we all feel, and we will miss being together. However, we are absolutely committed to mark National Police Memorial Day over the last weekend of this September and do so in a way that will enable you and others to be part of it. It is likely that this will be an online memorial service.

“As soon as a decision has been made, we will make a further public announcement.”

Keep in touch
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