

Family Statement – Wendy Waine (Wayne Carey Brennan)

We would like to thank the special inquiry for taking the time to look into Wayne's passing. We are hopeful that there will be some information or closure as result of this inquiry.

Early life

Wayne Carey Brennan (Wendy Waine) was born in Newcastle on 26 July 1949. He was the youngest of six siblings. Our parents were John and Adelaide. Adelaide was a stay-at-home mum and John was a labourer. They divorced in 1954. Our mother managed to raise us on her own for quite a few years, she then met another man and married him. Our stepfather did not get on with any of the children, so this made life difficult. Our family started falling apart. The two oldest boys moved out, our sister married and so only Wayne, myself and another brother were at home. We were not physically abused but were mentally.

Wayne was made to go to a Catholic school, and he had a terrible experience there. Wayne then began to skip school quite a bit, so he didn't have a great education. In his teenage years, Wayne began to hang around the 'gay' scene mainly at the 'Star Hotel' in Newcastle. Wayne told me he was gay at this time.

Life in Sydney

He then started going to Sydney where he met a few people and began to investigate his identity as a gay man. He later moved to Sydney.

After his move to Sydney, Wayne worked some 'odd jobs' and joined 'Les Girls' with Carlotta as an entertainer. He later joined 'Pete's Beat'. When Wayne joined 'Les Girls', he began using a stage name 'Wendy Waine', although some of his friends would refer to him as 'Wendy' in social settings. Wayne never expressed a preference of which name he wanted to use, he was always happy to be referred to by either 'Wendy' or 'Wayne'.

There were two sides to who Wayne was. When he worked his odd jobs, he would always present as a male. He would wear men's clothes and refer to himself as Wayne. Although when he worked in entertainment or socialised with his friends, Wayne would present as a female, dressing in women's clothes and going by 'Wendy'. He always had more friends from the gay scene than he did straight people. His move to Sydney allowed Wayne to be who he was and embrace his identity as a gay person.

Wayne as a person

Wayne always had an 'open door' policy, where if anyone he knew needed a meal, a bed or just someone to talk to, he was there for them. He was a loner in himself, in that he mostly lived by himself usually with a dog. Although he did live with another person at one time.

I would take my children to Wayne's place in the school holidays. My children always said they loved doing this. Wayne and I often took them to Luna Park and Taronga Zoo. My boys grew up knowing about the gay scene, saw Wayne dress in 'female clothes' and met quite a few of his friends. In essence I feel my boys learnt a lot from knowing their uncle Wayne, especially about accepting people for who they were. My boys didn't grow up calling gay people names or putting them down.

Wayne was well liked and respected. He had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

Family Impact

His death had a devastating effect on our family. Our mother passed away in 2012 at age 95 years not knowing who was responsible or why her son was killed. I was very close to Wayne; we were only a few years apart in age. We spoke on the phone about 3 times a week and he would visit my home about every six weeks. Wayne had a wonderful sense of humour. The family have struggled to understand why Wayne was killed; he was always a very genuine person.

Even after all these years, we continue to mourn Wayne and always will. We may never know who is responsible for his passing, but we would like to know why. I feel the family would benefit from some form of closure.

I miss him still and will always love him.

Rest in Peace Wayne – Wendy.