

Wiimali Chronicle

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Showers, High 26, Low 19

Homeless Man Former Chief Magistrate

A funeral was held this week for Edward John Alsop, 55. Five people were in attendance – two cousins, a former colleague, an elderly Aunt and an unknown person. Five weeks ago we reported him as the “homeless, nameless man assaulted in Wiimali Park”. Mr Alsop died in Royal North Shore Hospital from head injuries sustained in the attack from which he did not regain consciousness. Police are still appealing for witnesses to come forward. But Mr Alsop was not “just a homeless itinerant”. He was a former Chief Magistrate having worked in regional areas of Queensland for most of his professional life. He was

actively involved in programs to rehabilitate young offenders.

Mr Alsop’s life took a tragic turn two and a half years ago when his only child, Laura, and her 6 month old son were killed in a motor vehicle accident. Mr Alsop was the driver. He was found guilty of mid-range DUI and given a suspended sentence. Since that time Mr Alsop’s life spiraled out of control socially, personally and professionally. Estranged from his wife, family, friends and former colleagues he began taking prescription drugs for back pain caused by the accident. He also began drinking heavily; financial ruin and mental illness

soon ensued. Mr Alsop was the only son from a wealthy Wiimali farming family – now the site of the Wiimali colliery – but no one knows why he returned to Wiimali at this time or what his intentions were.

This brief overview of Mr Alsop’s life reminds us that “everyone has a story”.



Roads, policing and health care top list of concerns in Wiimali

Wiimali Council says the results of a community survey will be used as part of a push for more local police. A survey of ratepayers in the shire has found roads maintenance is the number one issue of concern for residents while crime, local policing and vandalism rank second and third. Health services and

aged care were also rated as issues of concern. Wiimali Council General Manager Owen Stevens says it is clear residents are worried about increasing levels of crime and would like more police. "Policing numbers on the ground are very low and our community is struggling to have a local officer

available 24 hours a day," he said. "With the support of the local area command Wiimali will take these issues to the state government with the forthcoming election, of the need to place a bit more of the budget into our community."