

[Transcript] Between Two Beers Podcast / Detective Inspector Scott Beard: Finding happiness through tragedy

On this episode of Between Two Beers we talk to Detective Inspector Scott Beard.

Scott is one of New Zealand's best known investigators and is still at the top of his game after 42 years on the force.

He has worked on a number of high profile cases throughout his career but is best known for leading the investigation into Grace Millan's murder.

The search gripped hearts and minds in New Zealand and thrust Scott into the international spotlight.

In this episode we talk about his experiences through the 1981 Springboks Tour, the 1984 Queen Street Riots, David Tummerhead and the murder of the Swedish tourist-slabeled Operation Stockholm, the Grace Millan investigation and the hardest press conference of his career, his cancer battle, training at the FBI Academy, what makes a good leader and how he uses football to escape.

Despite dealing with death and tragedy on a regular basis, Scott's outlook on life, his positive energy and belief in helping community is super inspiring and makes this one a compelling listen.

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This episode was brought to you from the export beer garden studio, enjoy.

Detective Inspector Scott Baird, welcome to Between Two Beers.

Thank you, thank you for the invite.

I wasn't sure about going with the detective inspector but Shay had given me grief about not saying Dame Lisa Carrington on a previous episode so yeah titles are important.

That's my work title, that's your work title, everyone else from Scotty B or Scott or Edie.

Is this your first podcast Scott?

To be honest no it's not, it's not, oh no, we thought it might be your first, no it did one for the states around Gracemaline, someone over there contacted me.

First New Zealand podcast.

Oh absolutely.

Oh hell yeah, we'll take that, that is very good and we're wondering you know 42 years on the force and we're going to get into it all.

You haven't done any podcast, we've done one overseas, why did you come on, I was thinking is it because I'm friends with your son?

Well that's one of the reasons but I think you know like when we talked you know at Richard's wedding and you sort of gave a theme or what do you want to talk, I thought there's some things I can talk about, just not work related but like work life balance, health, men's health and that sort of thing, I just sport, children in sport, I just think I can contribute in that now.

Again I'm so excited for this episode, we've got like so much to get through but the way we start is we tell the audience how we know the guests, so Shay, how do you know Detective Inspector Scott Baird?

Well Scott's really only been a news sound bite in my life but delivering often bad or

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troubling news, I recently though through the research realised I've probably crossed paths with you a number of times at Hibiscus Coast FC on visiting trips with various teams so I do apologise for not putting two and two together.

And I do know you as Beatty's dad and yeah in a good way, in a good way.

And Beatty was an absolute bobblehead at Stephen Stagdo when he'd had one too many beers, not in the export beer garden studio but for a little period of time there during that Stagdo he was just drifting away in his own world.

People at his own Stagdo, I had to get in 100 metres sprint with him and my other son and possibly my son-in-law to be, yeah hello.

I've heard and I'm looking forward to hearing more about the wedding which I think is where this kind of friendship was formed Steve.

Yeah, I've known Scott as my friend Richie's dad, I've also followed your career, you've been quite a high profile but we connected at Richie's Stag and then his wedding and his wedding was really special, Richie's wife Trina is Kosovo Albanian and the wedding was incredible and there was one scene towards the end of the night where they were doing the traditional dance, I think it's called a vaal veil and it was all that linked arms and there's this old Trina's family and then you're in the middle sort of joining in and I just thought it was such a cool moment of two cultures coming together and joining. I thought that was a really special, special night.

Oh absolutely, look Richie's in the UK, London for the last seven years, yes I've seen him a couple of times, he's been home a couple of times but as a family you know we have four children, three boys, Richie's the second boy and then a girl and it's 2017 was the last time all my four children were together and you know I have four grandchildren, they've all got wives, partners and just to get them all together in one room on that day on a really special occasion, I was so proud and I was so happy and just for Richard and Trina the wedding, yeah it was the day of the flooding, 27th of January but who cared about the weather, you know it was so good.

It was really special, it was really special and it's a bit of a dream set up having a guest whose son is such a close mate because he's given me some real gold and he's given us a few prompts and he suggested we start by asking you about your shrine, do you know what this means, yes I do.

What happened was, you know I used to have an office and of course with modern times you move to open plan and so in my office I had all these certificates and photos and stuff like that and presentations I've been awarded over the years and of course I don't have my own office now so I had to take them home and I just happened to have a spare office and I was bored one day and I must have been raining and I thought I know what I'll do, I'll just set these all up so when the grandkids come around they can have a look at this granddad look and you know right from when I first joined New Zealand Police, right through and so it's something for them to come and look at us but yeah Richard saw and he said you built yourself your own shrine.

So a room full of trophies and certificates and awards and photos and things, yeah his telling of the story was he came back and that was a place he was going to work, he was like what is this, that, do you though, all jokes aside do you look at that set up

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of things and think wow what a career?

No I don't really, you know I'm proud and I know my children are proud and that probably makes me even prouder but it's the work you do for the community, you know I don't know my mother had that community spirit and it's passed on to me and obviously you get involved in sport, type of thing, when your children, well I played football from a young age but then your children and you become coaching and then you just see the benefits and at one stage I was up in Kaikōi and I was coaching there and you know there were some definitely lower socioeconomic families and some of the players and I remember you know there was a young player and he had fetal alcohol syndrome, when he was on that field and playing you wouldn't know and I just thought oh my gosh this is so good for him and it's just giving back to the community and I know a lot of policemen who have either got life memberships at their sports clubs, various sports clubs whether it be cricket, surf lifesaving rugby and you know I think it is in the policemen's DNA and right up and down the country there's police officers who give their time back to the community away from work, involved in sport, a lot of it yes it's their own children but a lot give their time, their children are not involved now, like mine are no longer involved but they give up their time for their community and it's great.

Yeah I think that might be understating how much you give back and we're going to really dig deep into the Hibiscus Coast stuff a little bit down the line.

I did want to pick up on what you said about the stag do because that was another really special moment for me, the sprint race, right, that sounds amazing by the way.

So Scott was instigating it, he was sort of saying come on Richie let's have a sprint race and then as I was saying he had two sons and a son-in-law got involved so four men who are all well past their prime trying to run as fast as they can, it really tickled me but it also made me think what a great togetherness of family, of having fun and being able to do that but Richie suggested that we ask you about some of your fitness challenges, he said there's an obstacle course you have to complete at work that involves a six foot wall you have to scale and you're quite proud of still being able to do that.

So please we have to do the physical competency test and you know that involves pushing a thousand kilo trailer, stopping at a line, pulling the wheel out, running ten meters, dropping it down, doing a 200 meter sprint, going through a window, so it's a wall or a window, going through a window, doing some zigzags, going over a, I'm going under some low hurdles and then you've just got time to get up and you've got to get down again, then going over the wall which is a six foot wall and once you reach 50 you just have to touch the wall but like heck there's no way I'm going to start to think that I didn't go over that wall.

So you've got to go over the wall, then you've got to drag a 75kg body about 25 meters and you sprint round and go over eight foot fence, five fence and then finish a little sprint at the end.

So you're still doing that 50, like the only thing they take out at 50 plus is going over the wall but you're still doing all that other stuff?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, holy hell, yeah but we will do it, it's just part of being fit and I've always, but I've always been into fitness you know and I don't mind, I enjoy it, it's

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a challenge and pride, I'm competitive.

Yeah, I can tell already in the first five minutes.

Yeah, okay the last one from Richie, he suggested there was a great swimming challenge you did and it involved at Quantico which Shay has lots of questions about but did you get a brick for some swim challenge that you did?

The Blue Brick.

Blue Brick.

Blue Brick because when you're at Quantico and we were there for 10 weeks and that was at the FBI, the FBI National Academy.

Yeah, for the uninitiated, Quantico is the FBI Academy.

Yes, where everybody who joins the FBI goes through.

So I was there for 10 weeks and it was in the middle of summer so it was really hot but they have a pool there and you can get this Blue Brick if you swim, I think it was 10 miles over the course of the course, yeah over the time period of the course but you had to swim a minimum of half a mile each time.

So and I was, I've done triathlon and I've just, so yeah I was fit, I was 50, I was 50, yeah coming up 50, 49.

So yeah, it was just a challenge and helped the time and there were some people there who could really swim.

Right, Stephen's just embarking on his own swimming journey, Stephen, how close to being able to do that would you be?

My ambition was to do a 10K open water challenge from a guy that couldn't do two lengths so I started training myself.

I think I got to about 2K before the wheels sort of fell off and yeah a bunch of reasons got in the way but that's impressive, those are big numbers.

Yeah, it was just a challenge to do, you know we also on that course you have the Yellow Brick Road so there's one of the subjects you have to take is fitness and law enforcement and it just built up so that towards the end of the course we did a six mile basically cross country but you were climbing rope ladders, you were crawling under barbed wire, you were jumping hurdles and that day was so hot and humid.

I think about three people were taking the hospital that day.

Wow.

It's a real sense of achievement though to get there and you have a Yellow Brick and everybody talks about the Yellow Brick Road.

Yeah, yeah that's impressive.

Forgive my ignorant, I had to ask Shay what Quantico was, he got very excited when it came up in the notes but is that something you go to a lot, was that like a leadership thing or what was this?

So I was really fortunate.

New Zealand Police only send at the time, only sending one officer every two years and they have three or four courses a year and I got selected back in 2010 and originally I was going to go in the January but my mother had terminal cancer and so I managed to put it off till the July which is the summer, so it was really hot and it was humid there

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and there were times at Quantico they had put a black flag up which meant you could not exercise outside because it was so hot and humid and it was a risk to your health.

So that's when you'd go swimming.

So my reference point to Quantico is obviously crime fiction and criminal minds and shows like that, I don't know if you watch those but are they kind of an accurate depiction of what that place is like?

Does that place have an aura when you walk in there?

Because I think FBI and I think that's the top of the top.

Is that accurate?

Yeah, it's the training college and so the course I was on, the National Academy, there was 272 on the course, there was 30 international students from all around the world and basically it looks like a varsity semester so you have seven subjects and I had fitness and law enforcement, I took public speaking, police in the media, strategies for dealing with violent crime, managing death investigations, we had an international paper, law paper to do and I took the psychological

and criminal profile of Street and Prison Kings which is fascinating.

When you list off those subjects, they seem to be unfortunately really fit for purpose for what you were to deal with later on in your career.

Absolutely, absolutely.

So I was already a Detectives Inspector when I went over to Quantico and as it is a ten week course, it's like being at university so you have to do presentations, a bit of homework, PowerPoint stuff.

Just around that university thing, did they organise a domestic students versus international students boat race or anything like that and it seemed like a chugging comp, keg stands or you didn't get the same college experience that Stephen had clearly in the US.

No, in fact, when I go back to that blue brick, it was the distance from Quantico of the Potomac River to the FBI headquarters.

So that's the distance you had to swim, probably more than 10 miles actually, it will be.

That's a big swim.

That's a fascinating ten week period of your life though as well where you, I've met people who have friends all around the states, I have people I know around the world in different countries and Facebook friends and all that and you can go to them for advice.

I was going to say, once you've built that network, are you able to dial in officially or unofficially on helping you through situations that you face?

Yeah, I probably haven't gone to them, I think because New Zealand police is a lot different from how they police in the US and...

You police well here.

No, it's just a different environment, different world and but they were fascinated that police in New Zealand weren't routinely armed because they would go out because when you come into Quantico, all those Americans, and they were from all different law enforcement, they weren't training as FBI agents, they were in law enforcement, they had to hand in their firearms.

Well, I remember one time going just down probably five miles away to a local Walmart and these guys didn't have their firearms and they felt naked and the comments I was

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thinking, what are you worried about?

There's a life in their mentality and like my roommate, he'd shot and killed a guy in the line of duty.

They'd go across the hall from me, he'd shot and killed a guy in the line of duty but he'd been shot at the same time in the face and you can see he had facial reconstruction.

There's probably about six people I met on that course who'd all shot and killed some of the line of duty and that's almost an everyday thing for them.

Which is, I know we hear the ovens here in New Zealand, it's not great, but yeah, that's their life.

The stories that could get exchanged in those hallways or dorms, they're amazing.

We'll be right back after this short break.

Hey, I want to take us back to the start because it's written down on paper and it blows my mind, 42 years on the force and I'm not sure how far that memory goes back, but I've got it from good authority that a week after turning 19, you made your way to police college and Trentham and have been a copper ever since.

Is that really, you graduate, you go to cop school, forgive me if I'm giving that a police college?

Police college.

Police college.

Thank you.

And then you've been there ever since, reflecting on that.

What do you think?

When I was in high school, I went to Palmerston North Boys High School, I was a prefect and he could give out detentions and people say, oh, you should be a policeman.

And to be fair, I'd played football against policemen in Palmerston North and they were really good guys and I just thought, ah, and my next door neighbour, the elderly couple, their son was a detective sergeant at the time, Snow Pratt in Palmerston North and his mum was so proud of him, he had the old scrapbook with photos of him, he and it being the National Crime Manager in Wellington, I caught up with them, I was in Wellington in October, I caught up with them and yeah, so they were sort of the inspiration for me and I just thought these two foot wallers, next to an over-signed, really good people, that's what I want to do.

Well, you could join and go as a cadet, but the recruiting officer said, no, wait till you're 19 and go as a recruit because a cadet was a year long course where the recruit was four months.

So 10, 19 and a week later I was down at Police College at Trentham, not Club Med Pareru, Trentham.

Trentham.

And what was it, what was, from Palmer to Trentham, what was the, was it a culture shock in that situation?

It was a bit, but it was also the excitement, you know, you're here, this is what you wanted to do, you meet people who are lifelong friends, yeah, and I might not see them for years and then we catch up and it's just like yesterday.

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So 42 years ago, like I know there's a drive at the moment because we need more police officers, 42 years ago was that a well trodden path for people to become police officers? Like was it the same thing, they were screaming out for recruits or was it a more natural flow that I'm going to be a police officer?

No, I don't know if they were screaming out for, they were obviously recruiting and having the courses, of course policing is so much different now than it was then, you know, the training is different.

It's just like kids at school, you know, how I was taught at school, you know, I used to get strapped in cane, you know, I'll have to do that now.

How I was coached at football, you know, you get bollocked and wrote in, well, you know, I'll have to do that now.

So yeah, life changes and society changes and so you've got to change with that, but back then, it was just excitement, it was very quasi-military and as an example, Monday morning you had room inspection and we were in these old barracks that were built for World War One in front of, wow, and like even in my room, the window didn't close properly, we were there from May till September, it was freezing cold, I'd have six blankets on me because it would almost be snowing outside, it was so cold, but because my window didn't close properly and it was shut properly, you know, as in the hook was there and it was, but it was just warped and so there's, and it was freezing at night.

But you'd have a Monday inspection and the inspector would come round to do your room inspection and you'd have his white gloves on, you'd be standing your number one gears and they'd get their hand in the white glove and they'd go right down the back of your bed somewhere and they'd find a bit of dust, like proper that level of, yeah, yeah, and then they'd just wipe it on you all.

And your bed had to be made so that it was, the sheet was turned back 30 centimetres and it was 30 centimetres from the head of the bed to where it was turned back and if it wasn't, they just grabbed it and ripped it off and you had to start again.

Do you retain those habits now?

Yes, I do.

Yeah, I do.

And some of those, I do.

Yeah, and I think that's great that you, yeah, they are habits, they're habits that you carry on for life.

Like ironing your shirt, no railway tracks on your sleeves.

Yeah.

I ironed my shirt, no, people don't know what a railway track is.

The listeners will go, well, what are they talking about?

There's two lines, you just sort of have one crease down your sleeve and sometimes you get two and it's called a railway track and you don't, not allowed two, not on your police shirt, not then.

No one can see that far into the future, obviously, but did you know within those first years that this was going to be you for life?

No, it was, joining the police was really interesting because you know, I was born

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bred Palmerston North, I applied for Wellington because I wanted to go to a big city. And then my other options were I think New Plymouth, Napier and Palmerston North. And many young single guy, they sent me to Auckland and I didn't know where I come from Barrassup.

And so you're learning and a funny thing, I remember the first week I was doing beat down Queen Street.

In fact, when I got there we had to live in Barracks next to the police station at Central and I was, where's Queen Street from here and you could actually see Queen Street from my barracks in those days, looking over at your square.

But it was the first week I was doing beat and someone comes up and says to me, where's the Canterbury building, Saudi?

I looked and I said, Christchurch?

Well, it was actually across the road in Queen Street just up and you know, but you're supposed to be walking in Cyclopedy, but of course I didn't know Auckland at all.

Because how long are you at police college for?

Is it a year or two?

No, four months.

So you're still 19?

Yeah, still 19.

Fresh in the uniform.

Yeah.

Going into pubs.

In the big city.

Going, yeah, because it was, you had to be 20 to drink back then, didn't you?

Something like that.

Yeah.

But policing, we could go into pubs.

Police them.

Far out.

So it's hard to know exactly where to angle in on, but I'm keen to talk about Kaiko'i, because you travelled around a lot, you know, in those early days.

Is that fair?

Yeah, so I'll get to Kaiko'i.

So yeah, my police career, you know, I joined in 1980, came to Auckland, of course in 1981, we had the Springbok tour.

Yeah, were you directly involved in that?

Yeah, after the Hamilton game, which got cancelled, there's a lot more requirements for police.

And so we would get up, we'd be called in, I think the next game was against Taranaki and New Plymouth after Hamilton.

We had to start at like five o'clock in the morning, get a briefing, get bused out to Whanauapai Airport, have breakfast, get on a Hercules, which is like a slow boat.

Yeah, it's just how it gets off the ground.

I don't know.

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Anyway, you get on the Hercules and you fly, and it seems to take forever to get to New Plymouth.

You go to the New Plymouth racecourse, where all the police from around the country had come, were housed, and just for the day, then you take a brief, you're taken to the game, you police the game, you go back and expecting your flight to come in.

In those days, we just allowed after work, we were allowed to have a drink at the bar, and we actually drunk the bar dry, I think, that night.

Is that a police bar or a public bar?

No, no, the racecourse.

Oh, right.

Yeah, right.

And then our flight was cancelled, you know, because of weather-turned-bed, and so everybody else got out except the Aucklanders, and so they found accommodation for us, and then the next day, which was a Thursday or something, we ended up with the Red Squad and New Plymouth,

and then flew back that night, but yeah, the Red Spring got to her, and then if you didn't travel around the country, there were always protests in Auckland.

And so, and I remember, in fact, we were flying down to Wanganui for the game, but the intel was that there's a big protest in Auckland, so we didn't even get to the game, Wanganui.

We got put on the plane, flying straight back, and police it, and that night, there's a protest outside Hughes and Cochran, Kiva Pass, and someone threw a wheel brace into the police, and I remember it hit a police woman, it broke her nose, and yeah, it was just...

It was nasty towards the police on that tour, wasn't it?

Yeah, it was, and like, the saddest thing for me was, at times, we would have to line up and just use Simon Street as an example, because there's a protest coming, and there wasn't that many police, and you'd get on the bus to get out, you'd line up, the protesters walk past, and they would abuse you, and you might have a Māori or a Pacific Islander, police officer next to you, and they'd really abuse them, and I just thought, it's so sad, and it just wasn't fair.

We didn't have the choice.

That was our job, we had to be there, but they had to take, I think, more abuse than what the European Parliament had to take, and I just thought that was so unfair.

But we'd have to, they'd walk past, march past, we'd have to get on the bus, the drivers down, and we'd start again, getting on the line, because we just didn't have enough police to run the whole Simon Street, and then we'd start again, and they'd just do the same thing again, and you had to be professional, you had to keep your discipline.

Was it difficult to keep your discipline under that abuse, at 20?

And they could have loud halers, and they were right in your face.

Oh, it was horrible.

Does it create a brotherhood, a camaraderie, when you're all in that horrible position together?

I think policing creates a camaraderie.

When I was on section in 1980, and it was interesting because last year we met at the

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Newland RSA, there was ex-retired police officers at the Newland RSA, there was eight of us who had been on section together in 1980, who were there, and this is 2022. And we had an inspector, a sergeant, and six of us in uniform, and it was just like back in the day, and it was such a great feeling, and that camaraderie and that friendship just lasts and lasts.

Similar to football, I imagine, right?

The same brotherhood, the same changing room, same battleground?

Yeah, except all those club slots, they just move around all those clubs.

Who get the most money?

No, no, there's no money.

Yeah, that's right.

They get the most reimbursement for expenses.

Stephen got a lot of reimbursement for his expenses, and his football career, I can tell you that much.

That's the biggest open secret that there is in New Zealand sport, but hey.

Okay, follow the path then, so Springlock.

So Springlock tour on section, and then in 1984, worked on the Queen Street right, one of the first years.

In fact, the car they had, we were Queen Street, we were told we could park outside, our safe assembly point was outside the movie theatres, which basically is just across the road from Maytesc, we were there that early.

I think by the end of the night, the car was on its roof, panel broken, but we got there, and we were, I was working at Avondale at the time, and we were coming in because we were in Salat, seven o'clock work, and we had to pick up another car to work from, because we were going to work from seven o'clock at night, to three o'clock in the morning.

And so we didn't have all our gear, so we didn't have our helmet or gear, we had the long PR 24 baton at the time, but that was it, and just an open collared short sleeve police shirt, and bottles of flying, and I think that night there's about 50-odd staff, 50-odd staff taking the hospital, and you'd be doing a baton charge down Queen Street, and the person beside you would scream and drop, and you knew they'd been hit by the bottle or something like that, and, you know, as like the recent COVID in Wellington, you know, I just felt for those staff as well, because I'd been there in that situation,

I just knew what they were going through.

Does any form of police college training prepare you for an actual riot?

No, not really, no.

What prepares you is experience, so we'd been through the Springbok Tour, and that helped in terms of how to deal with what we're dealing with, yeah, and the one thing I always remember is the noise when we're sort of forcing them back down Queen Street to the water bottom of Queen Street, and then suddenly all the windows, and you just hear the spraking of glass going all the way down Queen Street, and then the looting, and you see people running out of shops with gear, you can't do anything.

And how frustrating is that being charged with law enforcement and seeing crime happen in front of you, and being like, well, yeah, if we go here, there's ten other things that

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are happening over here?

Well, you've got to be a team, you've got to have discipline, because you've got to look after your mates.

You don't want some isolation going out, because that creates problems for the rest of them.

And a slightly off-piece question, but do you still listen to Dave Dobbin music?

Because he allegedly incited the riot.

That's an interesting question, and one of the guys who's working at that Continental Square was on my wing, and I got on really well with him, and he told me what happened and how it started, and I just, yeah, I do listen to his music, but it always, I know exactly what he reminds me of, and that's always Queen Street, right?

That is a really powerful, like I said, it is a throwaway line, but I wasn't sure about it, and I thought it might elicit some sort of response like that, and it's really interesting.

I like Kiwi music anyway.

Yeah.

When I had my 60th, I had a whole lot of Kiwi music playing, but yeah, when I hear him, it just brings back that memory.

We'll be right back after this short break.

I'll tell you to chart your path, so you're a detective inspector now, but at this stage, this was like mid-20s, like what were you, what rank were you?

We're talking about this Queen Street light was 84, so then in 1986, I joined the CIB as a trainee detective.

Which for the uninitiated is the criminal investigation branch.

And is that moving away from like an everyday beat, and you start investigating crimes?

So you move away from wearing the police uniform, and walking on beat, with the incident car to working in the CIB, where you can work on a crime squad, which is the 24-7 shift, the initial action, or the different squads they had, they had burglary squads back in the time, general squad, robbery squads, and all that.

And so as a trainee detective, it's two and a half years, there's 24 modules to do, you had to get 80% pass in every module, and every fourth one was a review of the previous three, so you couldn't forget them, and the fourth one was Martin Wellington.

And it was a lot of pressure, you know, like I was married then, I had, you know, Richard was, you know, so I had one son when I joined the CIB, and Richard came along, in 1986 as well.

I don't know, too, but I joined the CIB because Richard had just been born.

And so you've got a young family, you've got all this pressure to train and study, you get major investigations, homicides, and you work long hours.

And back then, you know, the welfare, the staff welfare New Zealand police have today is so good compared to what, we had nothing there, it was just hardened up, toughen up, you work in the house.

No questions asked, and you didn't dare argue that.

Yeah right.

Where, you know, even now, my role as a detective inspector, I have to ensure that my staff welfare is paramount, you know, they've got families, some of them, you know, they've

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got their training to do, that's also what they have to get involved with in work.

And a lot of my work is death and tragedy, which from a CIB, a criminal investigation branch's perspective, has a lot of what else to after.

Can you remember your first homicide investigation?

Yes, I can.

And how soon after joining the CIB was that?

I was a trainee, and it was up in Simon Street, it was an assault bar in Simon Street, Edinburgh Castle actually, and we had a detective inspector back then called John Hughes, John Rex Hughes, tough as nails, but like he, he's a runner, like he would run the Sydney to Melbourne run.

Bloody hell.

Bloody hell.

And he would win it.

Bloody hell, that's it.

But he'd been a boxer, but he was hard as nails, tough and just driven.

Unbelievably driven, but his son was in my same induction course, CIB, induction course at the college from up, and so I got on, and I was a runner, and I got on well with Hughesy. So yeah, the first homicide, I just remember that, and it was different, like every homicide is different.

And that one there, we were told by medical people that, you know, the person would survive, and three months later he died, and that's when we had to go and find the offender, because we'd arrested the offender for what was called wounding with intent, and when we were told that he was going to survive, it was okay, a state of that, as soon as he dies, it becomes a murder, and if he has not pleaded to that, you can go back, withdraw that charge and charge him with murder, which we did, yeah, wow.

Is there a sense of accomplishment once you arrest that offender?

Oh, look, where I, back then, it was so busy, you know, I had a young family, you know, a couple of young boys, I had, you know, my CIB training and study, and I had to give up playing football, you know, I'd played, as soon as I joined the police, I'd played for the New Zealand Police, I'd played for the New Zealand Combined Services, but I couldn't do it all, and so I had to give up my football for my CIB career, and which is fine, because I look, I never wake up not wanting to go to work, even now, I really,

Wow, that's an amazing statement given what you've dealt with.

I don't see it as being a chore, you know, I see it as giving back to the community,

I see it as, you know, just, I enjoy it.

We're on the journey, are we about the time of Operation Stokko?

Is this around the time, or is it sort of, is there a few years before you're building into this?

No, so in 1988, I qualified as a detective, and I think within a couple of weeks, involved in a homicide, I was working at Auckland City District, I was involved in a homicide, which John Hughes ran over in Northcote, which is the Rex Bell Homicide in Motel, and then in 1989, in that April, in six weeks to solve during that homicide, my third son was born, and then in that April, the two-week couple reported missing, and I was working a duty

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weekend, and John Hughes was the detective inspector working the weekend, and he just grabbed a whole lot of us, said, right, you, you, you, and you, and you, you're on to inquire until the end.

And you don't know, you know, it was a missing person inquiry, their car had been found in Whatland Street, the White Suburban, I didn't know Suburban was around in 1989, either, by the way, I thought they were a relatively new car, an old White Suburban station wagon, and yeah, and so it was on, and, you know, it was run from Thames, and, but it had a police staff from, basically, up in North Highland, involved, and I was Auckland based, because there's so many inquiries to do in Auckland, and we had this sign, the detective senior said, and Auckland had this sign to say that, if he read rings, and of course, there weren't cell phones back then, there's a landline, if he read rings, and he says the coffee's boiling, then we're on to it, and we'd gone for six months or more, and he rang, I'd got home one night, about seven o'clock, he just rings and says, the coffee's boiling, whoa, what happened, and so he raced into work, and I got asked, tasked with preparing a search warrant for an address in Victor Street in Avondale, and where some of the Swedish property had been seen, staff had gone round to do an inquiry, as a result of phone records, Thames, and saw the Swedish urban holdings jacket on a chair, and it's a really distinctive jacket, and yeah, coffee's boiling, and then the next day, we'd worked out who it was, David Tam-Herry, and I was put on the suspect team, and went up to the mountain, and yeah, so this was a case which captured the nation, there were twists and turns, and it was international, because there's these two Swedish tourists that have come out, and they've disappeared, and New Zealand is known as the tourist haven, so there's all these different elements to it, and then there's David Tam-Herry, who was a convicted rapist, and I think he'd been found guilty of manslaughter at the time, so he looked like this, he looked like this perfect, well not perfect, but likely that he'd stolen this car, and that the clothes of these people were found in his family home, all eyes looked like he was lined up as a guy involved, and then as it turned out, he got prosecuted for it, he went to jail, and then it seemed like, and you can do a better job of explaining this than me, there's been a lot of doubt creeping in about whether they had the right man, and it's sort of one of these ones that's gone on, and on, and on, and on, and on, when reflecting back on it now, what do you think of the case?

So I have to be careful here because this case is at the Supreme Court of Appeal, again the Supreme Court, I know the Waikato staff have got the case, so it's still up for, oh wow, there's been another challenge around it, so, but my role was part of the interview team with David Aberheer, in Mount Indian Prison, and we probably spoke to him half a dozen times, and I was the scribe, so I had a senior detective, very good Wayne Kiley, just very, you could tell the experience, I learned so much just the way he treated, he talked, and just, yeah, and how we interviewed, you know, from a young, fresh detective, just nearly pointed to having this experience detective, and we had a detective sergeant with us as well, but of course, after our first interview, David and I got charged with stealing the car, good head admitted to that, and then my role was to be dealing with the Tamahiri family, the brothers, just his family, parents, and to build up a picture, and a profile, and just know him inside out, that was my role, which I did, so I know

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virtually every file that he'd been involved with, and yeah, so, and then we got to the stage where we hadn't found the bodies, crowns, all the evidence, circumstantial evidence we had, that we had sufficient to charge, so he was charged, ended up going to trial, to be the most nervous time I've ever been, the trial, simply didn't help when John Hoosers was going to give evidence, and there's media all around, and he just says to me as I was walking in to give evidence, I'll rate you out of 10, thanks, oh my God, so that's why you're nervous, because you've been charged on this scale, and because the week before, in those days they had what was called a foie d'etre, where they'd challenged the evidence, and you know, they'd been grilled by the Defence Council, judges had asked them serious questions, and yeah, it was just quite stressful, you know, because I hadn't been involved in court cases, but not like that, and then intensity, and then decisions made by the judge, and in the next week, it was me to give evidence, and you know, it was on the box for the whole day.

This case relied on, and if you're not able to talk about this stuff, we can cut it out, but it involved circumstantial evidence, and there was witness accounts from people that were in the prison with John, sorry, David, saying that, you know, that he confessed to them, and sort of, you know, he dumped the body out at sea, and he put the body somewhere, so it didn't end up being, one of the bodies didn't end up being.

Was that one of the last times that that was used?

They can't use prisoner confessions anymore?

Yeah, so cell confessions, they can be unreliable.

They can be accurate, but they can be unreliable, and for different reasons, different motivations by the person coming forward, in that case I think we'd had three, but there was, before we even got to that stage, we had a whole lot of circumstantial evidence, and from my perspective, having interviewed David Hammerhury, having, I don't think we got the wrong person, I don't think that at all, and obviously people say, oh yeah, but you're in the police, and you've got the blinkers on, and I accept people saying that, but I try and step back and look at a bigger picture, and yeah, but of course, as a detective, I'm not where I am now, as a detective inspector, so I don't see absolutely everything that the OC and the two IC are reading on that file, and everything.

What I do know is, I know his history, I knew him at the time, everything he'd done, every file he had, I knew it, and just interview the way it went, yeah, I believe we got the right person.

There's something about a whodunit that draws people in naturally, and more often than not, my frame of reference is, again, criminal fiction.

In that interviewing process, is there such a thing as good cop, bad cop?

Is that a genuine thing, or is that just a sensationalised depiction of the real thing that you do in those situations?

Look, back when I first joined the police, when I first joined the CIV, we didn't have the New Zealand Bill of Rights legislation.

Things were different and undifferent, and there was definitely the good cop, bad cop scenario we played up at times.

You don't get that now.

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Right.

Everything's recorded, it's video recorded on DVD, and so, but times are different back then.

And it's like I say to people, yeah, but we used to execute people in New Zealand, I think 1957 was the last time.

So society changed, times changed, and you have to move, and so that was then.

This is now.

We do things differently now.

But if you go back to the whodunit homicide, it's, yeah, I think it's an investigator's decision, because as sad it is for the family, and I always with the homicides try and put myself into the shoes of the family of whanau, because that way I can get a feeling of how to treat them.

And at the end of the day, their loved one is gone, but they're still there, and they've got to live with it.

So, but that whodunit homicide is the challenge.

It's, yeah.

Are we going to get here?

And with this cold case, and I've got a couple of cold cases that I've seen, and it's frustrating. But when you have a whodunit homicide, and you get an end result, and it's not an end result at all costs, it's where does the evidence take us?

What is the evidence we've got, and what's the analysis of that evidence?

And so you have a crown solicitor review your evidence, particularly around circumstantial case homicide, and Grace Malan's classic.

It's another interesting point that the Court of Public Opinion critiques your work, and to your point just before, you knew everything about that inside out, but then you get kind of people go, oh yeah, A, D, C, C, and A didn't do it, and that must be quite frustrating as well.

Yeah, but yeah.

Yeah, I try and keep an open mind about how people view things, and whether they've been told by someone or read a book, or whatever their viewpoint is, everybody's entitled to their opinion, and I tell my staff now, we go where the evidence takes us.

That's what we follow, the evidence, and if it gets to a stage, we need to sit down on the crown to discuss if it's circumstantial evidence.

Sometimes we have more than that, we have direct evidence.

Someone's witnessed it, or we've particularly now, CCTV, you can't argue, CCTV doesn't lie.

So yeah, it's, I don't know, a challenge of that, who done it, the policing the way we do things now, and that's why at times, I know I have to stay relevant after speaking. I'm not a techer, I'm an IT numpty, you know, I have some young staff who are so good, and I rely on them.

We'll be right back after this short break.

Things like Operation Stockholm, and there's Travis Burns, and there's probably a million others that we could talk about, sort of build us up to Grace Malan, which you just mentioned.

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And I was wondering if we could go there, because it seems like it is the culmination of your life's work that you were able to be such a steady front for that horrible tragedy. I remember watching your interviews on TV, which I'm keen to talk about if you're open to it, and the raw emotion as a dad, as someone who has just been made aware that the most horrific thing had happened to someone who is similar age to your daughter, and the way that you're able to compose yourself, and still communicate and do your job was incredibly inspiring, and it captured the nation's heart.

But can you take us back to the start of that, am I summarising that accurately, like your whole life as a police officer had built you up to be prepared to do that job?

Look, I've got to thank New Zealand Police for putting me in the position to be able to deal with that, like I did.

So I've done courses, we talked about the FBI course at Quantico, and I took public speaking police in the media.

In 2006, I'd gone across to the management of a serious crime course at Canberra run by the Australian Federal Police, and a big component of that was dealing with the media, and some of those Australian media could be ruthless.

And yeah, we did everything, we did stand-ups, we'd prepared our own speeches.

I'm one of, I think, my sergeants course got promoted, there's a media component.

So I've been prepared, New Zealand Police have done enough for me to be prepared, and of course, before Grace Malaine, I'd done a lot to media, I'd done live TV, I hadn't realised that until I got delved into the research about how much you've actually done over, I mean, obviously it's a very long career, we've been over that number of times, but I didn't, I feel like nothing has happened in Auckland City in the last few years without your fingerprints being on it, so to speak.

The reality is there's a lot happening and I don't get involved, I might know about it, but I don't necessarily get involved, and look, there's police staff around the country, you know, uniform staff, detectives, detective sergeants, detective, senior sergeants, detective inspectors, right across the country, who do a great job, and we had the training, and sometimes you get lucky, and sometimes good players have to make their own luck.

Sometimes we have the cold cases, and I've got one, so it's frustrating, but the police, I just always think, thank you for using the police, because you got me to the stage where we've come to Grace Malaine, I knew I had to take charge with that, because I'd worked on the Swedish inquiry, so I knew how much media would come into play, at the time we didn't know how long the investigation was going to go for, it went really, really quick.

The Swedish inquiry went for, I think it was nine months. And there almost wasn't anything between those two, right, the Heidi Parkinen and Ibaran Hoglan, New Zealand's reputation internationally took a hit, and then it kind of rebuilt, and then we had the Grace Malaine situation where it seemed to take a hit again. Oh, there have been other, did I say overseas tourists who've been in New Zealand, I've been with a girl at Mt Maunganui, and there's a girl in Taupo, and so, yeah, there have been occasions, unfortunately, but that's life when you deal with it. But yeah, so Grace Malaine, I just knew as soon as I was told the facts on the Wednesday afternoon, I just know this off my heart, the 5th of December, 2018, the red flags immediately, you know, she hadn't been in contact with her family

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since the Sunday, and this is Wednesday, and she'd had a birthday on the Sunday, they couldn't contact her, she hadn't contacted them, she hadn't contacted nobody, nobody could contact her, it's a huge red flag, so you know immediately, and I immediately just go and think, so we've got to get on to this, and we've got to get on to it now. You've got to get the staff in place. Yeah, and then I'm thinking, right, I needed to take Senior Sergeant, who, and the on-call one was Greg Brandt, and just Brandy played National League Football as a goalkeeper, his father had played for the All Whites, and what Brandy loved to tell the staff is that I played Football with his father on that old, so, but what it was was, Geoff was sort of a player coach for the New Zealand Police team, and I was just a young guy on the New Zealand Police team, and we played, that's why we played together, yeah, so, yeah, but I needed my Detective Senior Sergeant, basically the O.C., to focus solely on the investigation, because he couldn't afford to miss anything, it's too important, because a new and big international media, and the media focus would be big, and, yeah, it was, yeah, and like one of the first things we get told was that David Malaine, Drace's father, was flying over, and he was a multimillionaire, and that he was bringing the media with him, and I went, oh, Jesus, so I just told our family liaison officer, when he arrived in the airport, just bring him to my office, I needed to talk to him, and, you know, the investigation started on the Wednesday, sort of some inquiries, and a lot of it was just, who was it, Facebook stuff, social media, contacting the family, because, of course, our day is their night, so they're sleeping, well, they're not sleeping, actually, because they're stressed and worried, so we contacted them to get a lot more background on grace, on, you know, movements, and all that sort of stuff, and so come Thursday morning bank, we'd set up a range to get an investigation team, and at one stage we had over 50 staff, and I needed Greg Rand to take the scene started, just to focus on the investigation, and then I'd take away all the, you know, dealing with, you know, my bosses, dealing with headquarters, dealing with the media, if needed more resources, I'd get them, because that investigation was key, that's what's going to focus in on that, and not missing out anything, was really important, to, you know, Greg Rand, the two I see, Tony Mackenzie, and the staff did a great job. Yes, I took the media pressure away, because I had two police media staff with me, all day, every day, it was so intense, the media, so we just arranged, you know, a briefing on the Thursday night, in fact, that Thursday night, when I was doing the media briefing, Jesse Kempstin was being interviewed, not that I told the media then, because I couldn't, obviously, and then Friday, David Lillain arrived on the Friday, he came to my office, and I had to be upfront and honest with him, and say, look, I will tell you everything before I talk to the media, the only issue will be, if you talk to the media, then I won't be able to keep telling you, because we've got to have this trust and confidence, and we've got to be fair, he was a family man, just like me, he had interest in English football, just like me, and we got him really well, really well, how quickly did you build that rapport, was it instant, instant?

I think it almost was instant, obviously he was coming, as he said to me, I've been on a plane for over 24 hours, I've thought of every scenario, and we just kept the communication going, I just had to keep in contact with him, to support him, he was here by himself at the time, and is that outside standard operating procedure to build that rapport

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with someone like that, or was it the magnitude that you realised, or you saw what was coming? I think to be fair, I've tried and put myself in the shoes of the family whanau involved, and how would they want to be treated, and that's how I try and treat, you know, the families of the deceased, you know, homicide investigation, and, but we just had this connection, we just got on really well, and he was, in fact, when I sort of said to him, look, if you talk to the media, I'll probably stop talking to you, in terms of telling you everything, I don't think anyone had ever spoken to him like that before, you know, because he's a tough-made millionaire, big business, big business, you know, his company built the roof on the new Tottenham Hotspur estate, you know, I didn't know any of that information at all, but he was fine, he was fine with it, and I just said, look, this afternoon, we actually want you to come with me to our press conference, and we want you to speak, so we had to prep him and prepare him for that, and it was tough, and I think if you watch that press conference, you know, he's very emotional, and sitting beside him, it's tough, because you're on my father's will, you know, I just, you know, there's one interview which I watched last night, and I sort of talked a little bit about it before, but Grace had just been discovered, and then it was your job to tell David, and then, I'm not sure how long later, front the media, was that the hardest, was that the hardest period of time that you've had? Yeah, definitely. So what happened was, on the Saturday night, we had, just through the investigation, we'd identified where Kempster's phone had been polling up in the white tackerries, we were very close to where we eventually found Grace, only like a couple of days away. I'd actually, that afternoon, had a meeting with our search and rescue leaders to discuss how we're going to go, because white tackerries, we know people have been better than white tackerries before. So how are we going to do it? We knew on one side of the road was houses, while there's some bush, they were hidden by bush, there were houses, but on the side of the Grace that was found, there was none. But it's a narrow, windy road, and so, yeah, we'd already talked about labis, it has to be somewhere, he's going to be ready, he's got to be able to put his car somewhere. So we were thinking generally on those lines, and this is where the expertise of the search and rescue come in, and they were great again. So, and then Kempster that night, after his interview, indicated where she was found, and, yeah, he'd given a description which was past us, and I had staff up there, and they found where it was, and then he came out and confirmed it. So that was on the Saturday night, on the Sunday morning, and by that stage we'd seal it off, put tents there, and something that obviously must have seen it and rung the media, because next thing Sunday morning our two media staff with me are just getting calls after calls from media, what's going on in the white tackerries. So, you know, you can't lie, I don't want to lie to the media, so, you know, we're not sure we might have found a gravesite. So then all the media go out there, so then they'll go, hang on, there's a safety issue here, for my staff, for the public, for the media, we need to close the road, so we need to close a scenic drive. Now we're talking about, this is the 8th of December, so it's coming up to Christmas, and people like on a Sunday go out to the West Coast speeches, that we had to close off a scenic drive, there's a safety issue. And the media are there, and I'll put a tape across the road so they could come up to a line, and I'd actually said to them, look, 4.30 in the afternoon, we will do a media stand up here. And I was thinking

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of, you know, our New Zealand media, particularly the TV, because the six o'clock news, they want to have time to get prepared and get edited and stuff like that. Well, it was taking longer, and I had to take the pathologists up to the scene, and the media team, our police media team, went to the scene, and we eventually got the suitcase out, and we had an x-ray machine, and pathologists could open the one zip and soar, and there's a female body in the suitcase. So then I have to go and say, and by this time it's about 10 to 5, and I'd said to the media 4.30 briefing, so they get into a little entity as well, what's going on, what's going on. But before I could talk to them, I had to make sure David Malone knows, because we're no attackers, I'm trying to get the signal, and eventually got out of the hold of the victim, the family liaison officer, she managed to get hold of him and come back. But this was within five minutes, one minute, you're sort of there, the suitcase, in grace. David is advised, then my media person just handed me some notes, so you've got to say this, and then straight in front of the media, so there's no prep time, usually I'd have prep time, two media people would throw questions at me and just get in the zone, and then you'd go in front of the media, or in this case, at that particular time, I didn't have time. So basically within five minutes of grace, in this suitcase, not possibly identified, but we knew it was her, and today we've been told to stand in front of the media, and international media, and the questions were flying. The questions were flying, and yeah, man, that balance between doing your job and controlling your emotions, it was impressive, it must be a hard line. Yeah, it's interesting, and it's not a joke, but I did have some friends say, you're getting soft in your head. But it is emotional, we hadn't had a lot of sleep, the staff had worked some long hours, it was so intense, the media was so intense, and of course it was this crime novel playing out in the media, and of course we could go to the media because she was a missing person. Most homicides, like the family violence homicides, you have so many of them, it's tragic, but because we know who their friend is, and we usually have the friend of them 24 hours for that, you can't go to the media and talk to the media, but grace was missing, and that's what helped to generate, and there's this sad story, crime story, playing out in the media, and it's getting sadder and sadder, I think people started to know where it was going, and it kept playing out, and from my role, on the one front end, from the use of police in front of the media, I got staff doing the job, I'm trying to get my head around, okay, what are we doing, what's new, what evidential stuff, and it was just so intense. It's an insanely intense, stressful emotional time, who's looking after you during that? How do you look after yourself? So I've always tried to stay fit, play sport, run, stay fit, I'm very conscious mentally of the cumulation effect of all my roles in my years in the police, so I'm conscious of that, I'm quite happy to be comfortable to talk to people, even in this case, after the case, I went and saw a psychologist, police psychologist, just to make sure I was fine, and I'm not embarrassed about that, I'm quite happy to tell my staff, because if there's issues, I want them to get help as well, and so it's part of that leadership, it's nothing to be ashamed of, that's the job we do, and at times it is going to be stressful, and you need to talk to someone who's a professional, and so do that. So yeah, I look to say I've tried to stay fit, healthy, it was interesting because I never had trouble going to sleep, it doesn't

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matter what case I'm working on, I'm dead to the world, but I tend to wake early because my mind is racing, and I think just get up, don't just lie here, you mustn't get up, but there wasn't a lot of sleep, because the investigation required a lot of time and effort in a short space of time. Do you take time off after a big case like that, or is it crack into the next one straight away? No, you try and take time off, but to me that's what happens. Sometimes now our staff go from homicide to homicide, and we've got to be really conscious of looking after them, and monitoring that, and just giving them that break, that downtime, time to recoup, time to take a breath, time to refresh. I think I compartmentalise things, I've been in the job long enough now, I compartmentalise things, I have my family, I have my home life, I have my sport, I have my work. And those don't overlap, there are very clear definitions between them? Well, they obviously will overlap, it's just natural, but that's how I compartmentalise, I just compartmentalise, this is home time, it does not work, this is family time, I'm here from a family, and I've got to look after myself, because I have four children, but I have four grandchildren, and I want to be strong and happy for them, I don't want them to see grandad moping around, he's not happy, he's sad, so I've got to be positive, and I think I am a positive person in life, and same with investigations, you've got to be positive, you've got to get a result here, it might take some time, but we'll get there. You are a positive person, and it came across, again I go back to the stag, it's always, Scott's always in a good mood, he's always on the up, but obviously people do have the downs, but you navigate it. Maybe this is a good time to talk about the light, and the football, and the release that that gives you, because it feels like when you talk about work-life balance and looking after yourself, football is your escape, and we mentioned it at the top about how much you give back, and can you tell us about Hibiscus Coast, and how that has helped you get through all this stuff? I bleed green, you know that, Hibiscus Coast is green and white, predominantly green, I bleed green, and it's just the same we have at the club. I started playing football when I was eight, at school I played for Mano 2, 10, 11, 12-year-old rep team, went to Palmerston North Boys High, played football there, played in the first 11, the last year captain in the first 11, and then I played a team called Kiwi United in Palmerston North, because I wanted to get in the police, and I joined the police, I came to Auckland, I played for the Auckland Police team, the New Zealand Police team, the New Zealand Book Combined Services, and then when you have children, when I was playing, you have children, and then once they reach an age where they can start to play, you get involved in coaching. So yeah, and I've given my 28th year at Hibiscus Coast, and that first year a friend of mine, I knew in the police, he said, you know football, you're a cousin, you know, I'd played. He said, you need to come on the junior committee, I get on junior committee next year, junior chairman, then on the executive board, and then in 2012, I was voted as the president, and I'm still president this year, next year is going to be the club's 50th anniversary, but I've coached, you know, I've coached all my children, including my daughter, and so young girls' teams, teenage girls' teams, youth boys' teams, I really like coaching youth, because A, it gets them off the street, they're not hooning around their cars, drinking, they're sort of training on a Tuesday and Thursday, and I was sort of geared towards fitness training, so you know, run for us. And yeah, and like, I just, the energy I get out of that, and what do I see coming through,

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and like, I'm going off to a wedding on this Friday, over on my Hickey, and he's a boy, I coach, when he's 17, through to the under-23s, and he's now in the police, I was a referee for him, and there's probably a dozen players I've coached, and now they're all joined the police, some have left, but a number of them are still in, and yeah, it's just that feel-good factor, and that's really important, you know, you've got to feel good about yourself. What have you learned about, you know, these positions as chairman and coach and detective inspector, leadership positions, like, what have you learned about leadership across both sport and work? It's about communication, and it's about relationship building, you know, and it's even with my staff at work, they're just new staff, I want to talk to them, I want to know them, watch their background, where you've been, what you do before you join the police, you know, watch their aspirations, you know, you've got family, I just want to know, and talk to them. I'm not about work, just about them, how are you, you're right, and like, staff do the first thing, you know, might go to a post-mortem for the first time. How was it, are you okay? If you've got a problem, let me know, just put aside, you know, like, there's part of the investigation, if you need to talk to someone, let me know, I get the help if needed. It's just about showing that you are interested in them, not just that you're the boss and do this, I say. It's not about that. And it's about, as I say, communication and consultation. Yeah, I'm not on the street working out now, I sort of sit basically in my office, and I run and oversee, do strategic stuff. So I might have an idea of what we're going to do, but I'll talk to some of the staff first, and they might say, oh, yeah, but we should probably do this, I'll go, actually, you're probably right, yes, we will do that. So I'm quite happy to be flexible. It's not, it's not black and white, bang, bang, bang. Yes, there's going to be times as the boss that you say, right, we're doing this, that's it, my decision, I take the blame if it goes wrong. But I'd like to consult, because that helps them grow as well. But it's the same with the players on the field. You know, I was coached by hard-nosed coaches. I was probably hard-nosed coach, well, I was a hard-nosed coach myself, but it was never personal. It's always been professional, not personal. And I also wanted to, how can I improve you? How can I make you the best player you can be here? And so I was quite a technical coach in terms of the individual. I had my strategies through the coaching courses, but I went to a wedding, a couple of weeks after Richard's wedding, to a couple from the football club who I've known. I've played football with the girls' dad, I've coached her brothers, her partners played in our first team. I get involved, invited to their 21st, their 30th, all these people. And so I think it just goes back. Yes, you have to make decisions. And your skills and knowledge and experience helps making that. Same with coaching football. You know, you're going to make some tactical changes. You know, that comes from experience. And what you see and what you know, who you've got, who you can sub off. And the classic example I have is, because I was a hard-nosed coach. I don't know, five, six years ago, our coach in our reserve team, we're down at Manuree, we're half-time, we're losing 2-0, and we were playing cram. And I just looked at the captain, and I mean, and just walked, at Manuree, walked onto the tunnel into the change room. He held the back seat, we're going to get a roasting. Just, nobody said anything, just take it. We came in, I gave him a roasting. We won 3-2. About two years ago, I was coaching our reserve team under 23s at the club, and we're at the club,

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half-time, we're losing 2-0. We go into the change room, they're sitting down, and I think, if I give him a blast, they're going to start crying. Some of these are young guys, and they're just raised, society's different. And I just thought, oh, so it's just really nice. I just quietly said, why are we doing this? Get some buy-in from them. Right, we want to do this, do this, do this. Can we do it? Can you do it? And I was calm, quiet, and collected. We won 3-2. A 16-year-old who'd been at Manuree with me, was on that team, he said, I just thought you were going to blast us. You did it, you were so different. But that's change in society, change in time. And you have to adapt to that. Same within the police as the leader of the police. I have to adapt to it. I can't treat the staff as a detective inspector, like I was treated by a son.

Has that been a gradual change, or was there a pivotal moment where you realised that's not going to work anymore? No, I think it's been a gradual change. It's just a gradual change. And if you want to stay relevant, and you want to be a good leader, you've got to change with the times. Because are there some within the force that weren't able to change with the times? Well, it was different back then. Times were different. It was, yeah. We've got, we've worked some long, long hours in no sympathy. There's no welfare. And that's what I say, the News and Police are so good now for the staff. Yeah, we've got all these council welfare officers, there's psychologists we can see, our staff. Yeah, like a lot of the police work, I'm involved in, and I've been for a long time, there's child abuse.

So I first worked in child abuse in 1990. I've been the detective, sergeant, charge of child abuse team. I've been a detective, senior sergeant, charge of child abuse team. Well, there's now called child protection teams. I'm still as a detective inspector. I oversee our child protection team. I meet with Starship Health or the pediatricians, you know, I run child baby homicides. You know, the other world is at the adult sexual assault world.

And we've come miles. It's not perfect, but from where we were when I first joined the IOB, how we treated our victims of sexual assault, to how we treat them now, we're light years ahead. And so, you know, we've got a campaign going called, don't get the yes, sorry, don't guess the yes, which is, you know, it's about consent. It's about understanding what is consent, you know, if anyone can say no at any time. But some people don't accept that. You know, young people of these days, 10 or 11 years old, they can get on to their phone, get on to Pornhub, and they see what's going on. And they think that's normal in life, and they can do what they like. Well, no, you can't. That's a big, that's a, I don't think we can underestimate the impact that has on society, that the access to digital.

Like I come family from the Solomon Islands, for example, who have that access at their fingertips, but there's no contextual reference. There's no education programs in schools. There's no support systems whatsoever. So the damage that actually does to someone's reality is fucking horrific. Look, there's a few, as I said, the don't guess the yes, it was launched, it was first launched down in Wellington. And it targets the hospitality industry as well. But we've launched it sort of late last year in Auckland, and the hospitality industry, but also universities. And because a lot of it is about education. What is consent? You know, and the female has the right to say no at any time. And, you know, and it's just like I did a program called Swipe of Caution, which is about daily naps. And yeah, it's just, while there is still that keeping ourselves safe type behaviour and, you know, looking

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after yourself, you know, people should feel safe in society. And a lot of times, like in the bars, they can see what's happening. You know, like, don't leave your drink sitting and go to the toilet because someone might just drop a pill or something in there. And it's sad that that's reality, but that just happens. But yeah, so, yeah, so there in my world, you know, the child protection world, I have a huge focus on that. And the adult sex assault world.

Just looping back to Grace Malane, because that Swipe with Caution or Swipe under Caution was in the wake of that. How many documentaries or how many interviews do you think you've done on that particular case, not only here in New Zealand, but around the world?

So Grace Malane, I've probably done a dozen interviews, and like someone go for three hours, they might only use 20 minutes of it. But a number of them were obviously UK companies. But I've always spoken to Gillian Malane, Grace's mum, and get her consent to do it.

And we talk about the prevention message that we can get out. And, you know, her focus in terms of the Love Grace campaign and the handbag appeals, what she's doing. And she just climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. New Year's Day, she reached the top. And she says, every day is climbing Mountain for her, because, you know, David's passed away with cancer.

She had the Grace situation. And, yeah, she decided she was going to climb Mount Kilimanjaro and she wanted to be there on New Year's Day on the top, and she was. And they've raised so much money. And I speak to her probably a couple of times a month, just so in touch.

OK, so that links you for life, doesn't it? It does. You know, I was, in one regard, fortunate, you know, because during the investigation in January, I was able to go with our victim family A's and officer, sorry, family A's and officer over to the UK, because there's a whole lot of inquiries to do there. But we also went to the funeral. And, yeah, so I met the family, I met all the family, you know, brothers, aunties and uncles, cousins.

And, yeah, so, and it's that empathy. And then of course, David got sick as well with the cancer. And that was tough, because that was during COVID. And so Jillian would have to drop him off at the hospital, go back home and be by herself for, you know, a couple of weeks, you know, with no contact. And, you know, it plays, it plays with your mind. And she knows that. And she talks about that. But, yeah, it's just, it's one of those things where you just stay in contact, because I feel a little bit guilty that the daughter had to come to New Zealand, get murdered in New Zealand. And I was the face of the New Zealand police, but I was always in contact with them. But they treated me really well when I was over there. And obviously, they had to come for the high court trial here, which is tough, because, you know, sitting next to Jillian every day, and at times she's sobbing and crying. And there's nothing you can do. You know, you want to go out, you want to hear.

But it's really sad and tragic. It's an incredibly emotional trip to go on. And if you're open to talking about it, did you have a health scare of your own while you were over there?

So when I'd come back, so we went basically all of January over to the UK, which I was able to catch up with Richard. In fact, one weekend we got on a train and went up to Manchester and watched United play at Old Trafford. United play Brighton, it wasn't. Sorry, you had to go through that. Two one win. Two one win. Sorry, you had to go through that. Two united. Just losing no. Two one. I've also been to Wembley and seen United be ex-Bers 1-0. Sorry, I'm sorry, Ashford. Sorry, you've been through those things. Just saying. Sorry to go back.

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Is there a question? Oh, you could pull me off. It's an awkward signal. I was asking you about your health scare when you were over here. How can I forget that? Maybe United will do that to you, don't you? So we've been over in the UK for January. And since I turned 50 every year, I, and my mother passed away the year before cancer, I would go to my doctor and get a health checkup. So I'd come to February, I'd go and get my health checkup. And he contacted me and he says, oh, your PSA is up. And I said, oh, and I didn't really know it was. That's the cancer. In terms of your prostate, it talks about what? Yeah, your levels. And I said, oh, really? And he said, yeah, he said, come back in six weeks and do another test. Well, it was up really a lot further. He said, well, you need to see a urologist. You've probably got prostate cancer, but you need to get checked first. The interesting thing is, yeah, you get all these tests, you get MRI, you get a biopsy. That is funny. You go for the biopsy and you just have knocked out to do it. And the next time I went to see the specialist, and of course, the next time I went to see him, he had to tell me, yes, you've got prostate cancer. Because I said, I don't know what you did to me, the biopsy, but I could stand up, I could lie down, but I couldn't sit down. But that's how they have to do it. It was just a joke. I was just trying to make a light up the situation. I had just been told I had cancer. And so that's really, for family had known that I was sort of happening, and my daughter, and she rang me when I was drawing home from seeing the specialist, and she just broke down and cried when I told her. And it was hard because I was drawing and I was trying to keep myself. And of course, it's that secret that cancer, that's top two inches is really critical. But the surgeon, the neurologist, he'd given me some confidence and said, look, if you get it early, if you're young, we get it early, the chances of survival are up in the 90%. And if you're going to get a cancer, prostate cancer is one of the better ones because of recovery. So then the decision was, do I get the prostate taken out or have radiation? And you'd have a, there's a robotic surgery now, which takes the prostate out. Well, the health plan, police health plan at the time, doesn't pay the full amount for the robotic surgery. And I thought, oh, so, I had sought some advice. And of course, my third son, who's now an anesthetist, he's a doctor. So I was talking to him, trying to get some advice. So I wanted to have the prostate taken out because I've had a friend who took radiation stuff and then came back and when I went to take the prostate out, it disintegrated and spread through his body. So I wanted the prostate taken out. And the police health man was going to pay for it. So I had to pay for it. So I thought, and there's six weeks off afterwards. So I thought, well, I'm going to take you on because I'm not having that. And so I did, and be fair, they were really good. And I got all the material. I did all this research. I got a letter from my urologist and put in this investigation, basically, into it and put in this letter and they came back and said, we can't argue this. And so they ended up paying for it all, but they backdated it. And so there were staff from around the country who also got all these paid and going forward, they'll get it paid, which is really good. And they contacted me. They said, oh, my God, because what happened was some months later, and it was the police news, which is a magazine that the police association put out each month had come to me, talked about the Grace Malone case, and also because they're aware of my challenge to the police health plan. So we talked about that. And of course, I didn't even think,

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but they had my photo on the front, but it goes to all the media as well. And of course, the next thing, I'm just, no, I'm getting these phone calls. You've had cancer and stuff one interview, New Zealand Herald, you know, radio, so on, I'm going, what? I didn't even think, I just, I should have, but I didn't think. But then I'm quite happy to talk about it and say, right, I, it was more advanced and aggressive when I had the operation than what was anticipated. So every three months, I have to be checked and have blood tests for the rest of my life. And it's, it is what it is. I can't change that. I can't. I've still played football. I've played football last year. I still run. I could swim. I have, I want to be positive for my family, my grandchildren. And I've got, I look at it as being positive. And I know a lot of people say that people have been diagnosed against, oh, stay positive. And I try to say that to people, but it's true. Yeah, I try and stay positive as possible because say every year I go and have my checkup. And so then two years, 2021, ankles had been covered around, I had a hand of a checkup and the doctor just said, oh, anything else. And I said, oh, you've got this niggly cough. I said, I speak, it's just because I'm sitting on a bus and I'm wearing a mask all the time and blah, blah, blah. And he said, oh, he felt, he said, oh, you've got a lump in your throat. Well, ultimately it turned out to be throat cancer. So I've got the scar across the front of my throat. Most people stare at me in the back. This guy slipped. And so now I had half my thyroid taken out. So I now have an underactive thyroid. So I'm medication every day for the rest of my life for that. And that has, the thyroid is like the computer for your body. So it affects your temperature, affects your weight, your emotion, your mental health, a whole lot of things. So I'm really conscious of Aesthan fit because that's good for my mental health, what I eat, what I drink and all that. So yeah. And I say, while the surgeon was taking out the thyroid, he noticed a mole on my stomach. And he said, you've got a dodgy mole. I said, oh, I get a cheek spot. He said, no, I'm telling you, it's dodgy. So he turned out, he took it out, his melanoma, had to go back in, took a big chunk out, horrible weight on his weight off the stomach. But I'm really conscious. So every six months, small mats, body check. So, but I just put it out there, make things happen, don't let things happen. So, you know, to the man out there, get a check. You know, I didn't even think it would know much about prostate cancer, but I just, my annual checkup for general health and it picked it up. You know, women have to have such invasive, you know, testing done for any of their cancers and stuff like that. It mean you can just get a blood test. So yeah, my message out there is, if you get it early and you look after yourself, it's not as 4% chance to survive. Are these battles or scares changed your outlook on life? Changed you in any way? Yeah, I probably don't worry about things as much now. I think so. Yeah, because I've been through the scare of, because as I say, the cancer when you first are told, it does play tricks of your mind. Because you think of the worst case scenario. But I know there's things that I would used to be, okay, I need to solve this. I don't like that, blah, blah, blah. But I think I'm done. Life's too short. Yeah, it would have to. Well, thank you for sharing that with us. It's, yeah, it's hard to hear, but it's such a great positive outlook on something which can be really scary. Yeah, yeah, it's, I'll just say, if people can listen to me and I say, I don't know, I've got to please staff come to me. And then some who get diagnosed and they bring me because

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they know I've had it. And I can talk them through, certainly when I'm prostate cancer, you know, the process I went through and why the different things and the recovery and what happens and all that sort of stuff.

There's super important conversations because they normalize those things, which I use this word a lot, but they are icky things to deal with. You don't want to think about cancer below the belt. You don't want to think about what the consequences are. And you're right. As soon as you hear the cancer word, you're, you're, you're taken to dark places immediately and it doesn't have to be that way. No, no. So I'd, yeah, I'd try and be there for support for people I know who can testing or, you know, having to go through chemo or radiation just, yeah, because I can sort of, I get where they're at.

It's an incredible community spirit that you have. You made a kind of throwaway line around at early doors, but it really is a spirit of community that is radiating from you, be it through your professional capacity, your sport capacity, or you're just your compassion for other people.

Yeah, it's probably also, you know, I have a media profile. You know, like I've done media for years, Grace Malane then threw that out worldwide. And, you know, if I can use that to an advantage in terms of, you know, education prevention, then why don't I? Yeah, that's what the police is about. The police is about preventing prevention. A lot of us are about preventing. Yes, we have to pick up the pieces afterwards, but, you know, if we can prevent things happening, just like child abuse, you know, if we can get the message out there, you know, and a lot of the people, you know, those offenders, they've never had the love and care from a baby. In fact, there's things called the first thousand days, which is all about from conception to your first thousand days and how important that is for a baby in terms of their future life. And these YouTube clips and all that sort of stuff. But it's that sort of part of my passion around, you know, what you can do for children and probably a story that not many people know was during COVID, I was contacted by a lady who's, yeah, in her 30s. And she just said, I just want to thank you, because back in 1999, I was at the Dexter Sargent on the child abuse team. And she said, you know, she had been abused by a fan member. And she said, I just had the courage during the COVID to get my O.T. while I was child abuse and family file back then. And she said, I've read it. You're all through it. And you're the one that believed me. And you're the one that got me out of there. And you're the one that saved me. She said, I'm not a criminal. Yeah, I don't do drugs. I have a job. I'm going to get married. So I actually caught up and met her. And you go, well, you tell me, Thomas, you don't realize just the impact you can have. And I try and tell the staff that.

It's an amazing story.

Do you, when the time comes when you are no longer a policeman, do you look forward to that? Do you, what will you do with yourself? You seem like you.

Well, that's the thing. You also, oh, when are you going to retire? I said, well, what, if I retire, what will I do? I have to go to Stamble Bay and cut the grass with scissors.

The film would probably already do that, don't you? There's an element of the mundane task of a football club that just gives you a little bit of excitement, doesn't it?

Yeah, yeah. It's, well, that's the thing. Yeah, I just generally like to be busy and

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occupied. And, you know, while I feel fit, healthy, relevant of value, and, you know, to the police, yeah, I'm quite happy to stay. And, but I'm conscious that, you know, there will come a time where, yes, you have to retire and then what will I do? I'll have to plan that and think about that. But, you know, I'll be fair, like my mother, because she always died of cancer, but she volunteered and worked, basically full time for hospice and haven't had a hospice go to Naurua. And I, you know, I'll probably give my time back somewhere. You know, the football club will always be there. They've always got to tidy up that equipment shed and take the nets and after the games and all that sort of stuff. So, yeah, I'll look afterwards to do, you know, I want to travel and go places or, you know, grandkids, children, stuff like that. So that has been very wide ranging, some amazing areas there. Scott, thank you so much for coming in and sharing that with us. Yeah, what a life, what a career and so much more to give. But Shay's our outro guy that is not me. So, Shay, what do you got for us, bud?

I've started making notes now as I go through. So I don't freestyle these as much, but I kind of freestyle them as I go. But I think, like growing up, your appreciation for the police, it wavers, it goes through phases for me personally. And it wasn't until a very good friend of mine became a frontline police officer that I had a better appreciation for what the police do and the fact that they have families and those families worry about them every time they go in to work. And my perception of what a police officer is is completely different to what you are and who you are. And that empathy that you have for people, it shines. The positivity that you entered the room with that you've carried yourself through this conversation is amazing in spite of the horrific things that you see and you deal with on a day to day basis. And it astonishes me that you are able to put that positive lens on when you see some of the worst of society. And I think that's just an incredible character, amazing for your own family to see and be proud of, but also a testament to your upbringing. And you've mentioned your mother a few times in here, and she must have been an amazing woman to have instilled some of those characteristics and some of those traits in you. So you should be very proud of where you've come from, who you are and the legacy that you're leaving as well.

No, I think, definitely my mother, yeah, I am who I am because of her. She has a hard nose discipline, but yeah, she gave back to the community. I've got her DNA and...

Did she bleed green?

No, of course it was born in Palmerston North, but that green man or two was green.

Definitely green. Yeah, yeah. Scott Beard, thank you so much.

That's my pleasure. Thanks for having me. It's great.