

The Memorial Plaque

"...The blossoms are blossoming without you..."
(Jennifer Meyers, "Joshua knew only the winter")

TO ALL WHO LOSE THEIR LIFE FROM OUR
EFFORTS TO SAVE THEM FROM DRUGS

"You have gone from earth,
Gone even from the meaning of a name;
Yet something's there, yet something forms its lips
And hits and cries against the ports of space,
Beating their sides to make its fury heard.

"But I was bound, and could not go that way,
But I was blind, and could not feel your hand.
If I could find an answer, could only find
Your meaning, or could say why you were here
Who now are gone, what purpose gave you breath
Or seized it back, might I not hear your voice?"
(Kenneth Slessor, "Five Bells")

16 December 1996

Erected by Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform

Permission by the publishers, HarperCollins, to print part of Kenneth Slessor's poem is gratefully acknowledged.

We acknowledge that the ceremony today
is taking place on Ngunnawal land.

FFDLR are pleased to be collaborating with ATODA and Uniting in organising
this event.

If you wish to be notified of the next ceremony please leave your name
and email in the book provided.

Further information concerning Families and Friends for Drug Law
Reform (ACT) Inc. can be obtained by writing to
PO Box 7186, KALEEN ACT 2617, by phoning (02) 62571786
by emailing president@ffdlr.org.au or filling in the Contact Form on the
website www.ffdlr.org.au



Weston Park, Yarralumla, ACT
Monday, 29th October, 2018
12.30pm

Supported by ATODA and Uniting

Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform (ACT) Inc.
committed to preventing the tragedy that arises from illicit drug use

Program

Musical item: “Let it Be” – The Beatles

Welcome and Introduction: Bill Bush, President, Families and Friends
for Drug Law Reform

‘Reflections’: Ann Finlay

Musical item: “Wish you were here” – Pink Floyd

Address: Gordon Ramsay, ACT Attorney General

Remembrance of those who have lost their life to illicit drugs

Reading of names: Caitlin Kensey Scott

Placing of flowers at foot of memorial

Musical Item: “Bridge over Troubled Waters” – Simon and Garfunkel

Address: Caitlin Kensey Scott, Chaplain with Uniting Resilient Families
and Communities

Musical Item: “Rise up” – Andra Day

Please join with us for refreshments.

A special thank you to
ATODA for the ribbons and ATODA and Uniting for organising assistance.
Canberra Recovery Services and Karralika for refreshments.

Please take the colours of the tree away with you in the form of one of the green and
white ribbons that are available.

Similar ceremonies are held across Australia and in some European Cities.

Why Remember?

Degrees of separation

Tree branches cold, spined, piercing a grey winter sky

Pain in barren frost and cruelty.

Can it be the same tree today?

A down of green, of tenderness, of dripping blossom, of life.

I wandered this place in winter. I saw stony inanimate things. Yes I know the tree is
the same.

It is in the same place rooted in the same earth

I came then bearing patience, hope and confidence in transformation of this tree.

Why, why oh bitter winter did not the same hope and confidence in the turning of the
seasons also nurse to life those we now remember?

Is not their life like the fleeting intangible scent of spring or the flitting of bees from
flower to flower?

The impression of their existence on this world that denied them life may count for
nothing among those who denied it of them;

but that insubstantial presence as of a faded flower
remains for us gathered here as real and solid as this stone.

Graham Long of the Wayside Chapel told us that no one ever passes from this earth
while their name continues to be sounded.

Separated yet with us.

How much more does the wisdom that our loss has cruelly taught us separate us from
those in authority, in power,

those who remain too scared to permit friends and family to enfold in community and
love those whose touch we miss?

Those who denied an opportunity when some stumbled;
a health or caring approach not banishment.

And who of us has never stumbled?

What separates those who “get it” from those who insist we come down harder?
from Johann Hari’s insight:

“For 100 years we have been singing war songs about addicts. All along, we should
have been singing love songs to them.”

Faith too separates us. Some of us pray to a god, some to none.

But faith also connects us. We have a sure and certain hope that change is possible.

We have faith in the possibility of a better world.

We have faith that the degrees that separate us from those who do not share the
wisdom

that our loved ones taught, can be bridged.

We, with our loved ones, are building a bridge over troubled waters.