

FEAR & TERROR IN ETERNITY

Sophie Jensen introduces a new entry into the Eternity gallery which recalls a time of horror for Australians.

*The sound of the bomb, the fire and the shocking smell
It was a sonic boom, a war zone, an instant hell*

Simon Quayle, 2003

The National Museum's permanent exhibition examining Australian people, the Eternity gallery, has just added a significant new story on the theme of Fear.

Simon Quayle was the coach of the Kingsley amateur football club from Perth, Western Australia. Twenty members of the club had travelled to Bali in 2002 to celebrate their most successful season: winners in the reserves Grand Final and runners-up in the main competition. The day they arrived in Bali they freshened up at their hotel and headed out for their first night on the town. After a meal, they moved on to one of Bali's most popular venues, the Sari club. It was the evening of 12 October.

The Kingsley group were scattered throughout the club when, at 11.05pm, two bombs exploded within 10 seconds of each other. One was in a white van parked outside the front entrance to the club, one was in a backpack stuffed with explosives next to the dance floor.

**'A huge explosion. A few dead.
I will keep ringing. I love you'.**


Simon describes the moments after the explosions:

The roof was on top of me, it all caved in, and all around there was flames and fire and people started panicking and were trying any exit out, any entrance ... It was absolute chaos in there.

At 1.37am Simon sent his wife Norelle a text message 'A huge explosion. A few dead. I will keep ringing. I love you'.

Simon's mobile phone number was one of the few which the Australian media could reach in the hours and days following the attack. He gave interviews to many in the media – some of which are used in the Eternity display. At the same time as he was speaking to journalists, Simon was attempting to come to terms with the bombing and also searching for the missing members of his group. 202 people died in the Bali attacks of 12 October 2002, 88 of them Australians. Seven members of the Kingsley team were among the dead.

Within the Eternity gallery, Simon speaks of the fear of the moments immediately following the bombing as well as the heartache and pain involved in searching for and identifying team members in the days following.

The T-shirt that Simon was wearing on that evening is now on display in Eternity – a team shirt designed specially for the end-of-year trip to Bali. The bloodstained shirt evokes a vivid picture of the moments of terror within the club. 

*Sophie Jensen is Program Manager
in the Museum's Land and People section.*

Simon Quayle, Coach of the Kingsley Football Club, photographed at the clubs grounds in October 2003.
photo: Frances Andrijich for the Bulletin

White T-shirt from the Kingsley Cats football team's tour of Bali. courtesy: Kingsley Amateur Football Club.
photo: Dragi Markovic

