

# Thomas Vincent Casey

## Biography/Obituary

Born 29<sup>th</sup> November 1926 – Died 11<sup>th</sup> October 2005

Aged 78

“TC” – “Tom Cruise” – “Tom Cat” – “Tommy”

(I remember him as “Uncle Spin”. I believe it was a reference to his ability to turn a cricket ball on the rough brick surface during family backyard cricket matches of his youth. My father told me this story, so we can pretty much believe it to be true)

Thomas Vincent Casey was born on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1926 at 54 Raglan Street Waterloo to Michael Edward Casey and Alice Maud Casey (Nee Wheeler).

Thomas’ Father Michael Edward Casey was a Carter born in Singleton and was 51 years old at the time of Thomas’ birth in 1926. Thomas’s Mother Alice Maud Casey (Nee Wheeler) was born in 1886 in Glebe aged 40 in 1926. They were married at Our Lady of Mt Carmel catholic Church in Waterloo on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1908. The priest was Fr Joseph Collins and the witnesses were a Thomas Casey (yep, another one) and a Maggie Wheeler. The groom was residing at Young Street Redfern at the time and he was employed as a ‘driver’. Alice was residing at Raglan Street Waterloo (house number unknown) and was listed as a ‘tailoress’

Michael Edward Casey (Tom’s Father) was born at Patrick’s Plains (i.e. Singleton) in 1875 with his parents being Michael and Mary Anne Casey (Thomas Grandparents). Toms father passed away on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1948 aged 73. Toms’ paternal grandparents (Michael and Mary Anne Casey nee McKeown) marriage was registered at Paterson in 1869, which is a small township in the lower Hunter Region of New South Wales. The town is located within the Dungog Shire and is situated on the Paterson River. Michael Casey, a farmer (born in Paterson NSW) was 29 years at the time of M.E’s birth. Mary Anne (born in Sydney NSW) was also 29 at the time of the birth. They also had one boy and two girls living at the time

Note: There will need to be further research conducted to ascertain the history of Thomas’ mother’s side of the Family (Wheeler). The Wheeler family were prominent in the Glebe District area from as early as 1858. (Alice was born on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1886 at Shaftsbury Gardens in Glebe. Her father was Moses Wheeler (a labourer, born in Camden NSW) aged 30 years at the time of her birth. Her mother was Mary nee Grumley (born in Sydney NSW) and aged 28 years at the time. Alice had an older brother (name unknown, but probably Joseph). Moses and Mary were married in Sydney on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1883. I remember visiting Mary at her home in Sutherland when I was very

young and I recall a fellow called "Uncle Joe" who resided there as well. I'm reasonably certain Mary lived to be about 103 and she is buried at Woronora Cemetery. There was a family story that "Uncle Joe" had buried money in a metal box in the backyard and when he passed away some family members dug up the yard trying to find it. I heard this story about 40 years ago, so how much truth there is to it I can't accurately say

Thomas Vincent Casey was the youngest of eight children born to Michael and Alice Casey. A list of Thomas brothers and sisters can be seen below:

- Mary Theresa Casey (Born 1909 – Died 7<sup>th</sup> March 1961 Aged 65 years) – 17 years old in 1926... **might need to verify the date of passing. I recall visiting Mary (at Camden?) around the early-mid 80s**
- Maud Cecilia Casey (Born 1911) – 15 years old in 1926
- Michael Joseph James Casey (Born 1913) – 13 years old in 1926
- Monica Agnes Casey (Born 1915) – 11 years old in 1926
- Francis/Frank William Casey (Born 9<sup>th</sup> April 1917 - **Died 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002 Aged 85 years**) – 9 years old in 1926
- Alice Patricia Casey (Born 1919 – Died 1<sup>st</sup> February 1945 aged 25 years) – 7 years old in 1926
- John James Casey (Born 1924 - **Died early [April?] 2002 Aged 77**) – 2 Years old in 1926
- Thomas Vincent Casey (Born 1926)

The Casey family lived in a terrace house located at 58 Raglan Street Waterloo. **(I lived there for the first 26 years of my life, before moving to Campbelltown in 1980. My parents, Frank and Lurleen... also known as 'Joy'... bought the house in the 1950s. They sold up in the early 80s and moved to Leumeah.)** Waterloo is an inner-city suburb of Sydney and is located just 4 kilometers south of the Sydney CBD. The suburb takes its name from the battle of Waterloo in which the Duke of Wellington defeated the Napoleon Bonaparte lead French Army in 1815. Waterloo has a very much working class background but recently has undergone some gentrification.

Thomas attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School although in the early 30's it was known as Patrician Brothers Primary School Mount Carmel as the Patrician brothers staffed the Primary School from 1886 – 1963. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School is one of the oldest Catholic Primary Schools in Sydney after first opening in 1858.

Tom begin his formal education in 1932 aged 5 attending the Patrician Brothers Primary School Mount Carmel Waterloo located at 2-6 Kellick St, Waterloo until 1938 a total of 6 years attendance and reaching 6<sup>th</sup> class and graduating with a qualifying certificate.

Tom then progressed to Patrician Brothers High School Waterloo, which he attended from 1939 – 1941 and obtained an intermediate certificate and graduated after completing the third year course (effectively Yr.10). Thomas left School at the age of 15, which was a common occurrence at the time. During this time Tom was a keen Rugby League player and mostly played on the wing. In 1940 Tom represented the Patrician Brothers, Mount Carmel School in the Metropolitan Catholic School (MCS) Rugby League Competition. The team finished runners up in the 1940 MCS competition.

On 12<sup>th</sup> February 1944 Tom enlisted in the Australian Military Forces at a registration hall in Paddington, at which time he commenced his full time War Service with the AMF. Tom was allocated the Army number of N480926 registering with the rank of Private. At the time of enlistment in the AMF Tom had stated his occupation as a chemical checker, which in all likelihood would have been his profession upon leaving School in 1941. World War II lasted from 1939 - 1945 and involved over 30 countries for which Australia became heavily involved in when Germany invaded Poland. It is said that Australia effectively fought two Wars, one against Germany and Italy as part of the British Commonwealth's war effort and the other against Japan in alliance with the United States and Britain.

Tom never saw active duty but was involved in various War game/training like scenarios in the NSW outback. During his time in the Army it was recorded that Tom performed general duties for which he was remunerated. On the 28<sup>th</sup> April 1947 Tom was discharged from the Army at which time he entered back into civilian life.

Tom and Kath met in (19??) at a Waterloo Catholic Youth Organisation function and a relationship formed and romance followed.

Thomas Vincent Casey married Kathleen Frances Fogarty on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1949 at St James Catholic Church Forest Lodge. The ceremony was held at 9am in the morning with the reception being held at St James School Hall located on Bridge Road Glebe.

Kath Fogarty was the eldest daughter of Patrick Joseph Fogarty and Anastasia Mary Fogarty both hailing from Thurles – Ireland which is located in mid County Tipperary. Patrick and Anastasia Fogarty left Ireland on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1928 and arrived in Australia on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 1928 to start their new life in Australia. The Fogarty family lived at 46 Allen Street, Glebe Point where they raised five children Kathleen (Kath), Mary (Maureen), Nancy, Martin and Eileen.

Tom and Kath had five children with the first being Christine Anne Casey born 5<sup>th</sup> April 1951, Paul Thomas Casey born 10<sup>th</sup> January 1954, Stephen Patrick Casey 1<sup>st</sup> March 1955, Maureen Therese Casey 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1957 and Peter Damien Casey 4<sup>th</sup> January 1959. The Casey family first lived at 38 Victoria Road, Glebe and briefly for a time at 34 Victoria Road Glebe. When the family began to grow and living in the semi-detached single style terrace housing became problematic a bigger house was sought. Tom and Kath purchased 3 Victoria Road, Glebe where the Casey family lived for decades. 3 Victoria Road was a generous Victorian residence located only a stone throw away from Jubilee Oval and Glebe Point Road.

It is no surprise then that all three of Tom's sons (Paul, Stephen and Peter) played hockey for the Glebe District Hockey Club. Paul Casey played 55 senior games for the Club from 1969 – 1973, Stephen Casey became the third highest games record holder

for the GDHC playing 720 senior games from 1970 – 2010 and Peter Casey played 258 senior games for the GDHC between 1970 – 1999.

All of Tom's children received their Primary Schooling at St James Primary School Forest Lodge. Tom's three sons received their secondary schooling at St Mary's Cathedral College, which incidentally is the oldest Catholic College in Australia and undertook further senior Schooling at Holy Cross College, Ryde. Tom's daughters Christine and Maureen both received their secondary schooling at St Scholastics College, Glebe.

In (1967-1968???) Tom and Kath purchased a holiday house on the South Coast of NSW in the small township of Currarong which is approximately 200 kilometers South of Sydney. The house is situated on the corner of Worrigeer Rd and Warrain Crescent and is affectionately known as Casey's Corner. The Property at 32 Warrain Crescent sits on roughly 600 square meters land and when original bought was a single fibro cottage with galvanised iron roof on brick piers and foundations with a galvanised iron water tank located at the rear of the cottage. In October 1970 a Development Application was lodged with the Shoalhaven Council to extend the existing residence with the addition of a family/rumpus room and a lock up garage. The present day residence at 32 Warrain Crescent has not changed greatly from the early 1970's. Tom added of garage at the bottom of the property as well as enclosing the front porch where Tom spent many mornings reading the paper with a peaceful outlook over the front yard and Warrain Crescent.

Toms working life consisted of varying occupations. Tom had no formal tertiary education and the work Tom often completed was long, hard physical work but Tom enjoyed it. In 1957 Tom's occupation was listed as a coal trimmer, which involves all coal handling tasks starting with the unloading of the coal and ending with the delivery of the coal. This was conducted down at Miller's Coal Yards located on Bridge Road Glebe, just a short walk from where the Casey family was living at 38 Victoria Rd at the time. The remains of RW Millers coal loading facility at Blackwattle Bay can still be seen to this day. Coal was brought into facility at Blackwattle Bay by ship where it was off loaded into storage bins. RW Miller trucks would distribute this coal to various customers, such as Power Stations located in and around Sydney.

Tom also worked at the Redfern Post Office located at 168-170 Redfern Street, Redfern. One of Tom's jobs during this period of employment was to wind the Clock that sits atop of the post office so as it kept accurate time. The Clock has four clock faces located on each face of the fourth storey, Tom used to access the tower via a series of timber ladders from the window off the first-floor roof. He was also employed in the accounts department of the Post Master General Department for a time. This is where Tom's interest and love of collecting stamps might stem from. Tom has collected stamps for over 50 years and has collection of stamps spanning 32 countries. These include Central Europe, Canal Zone (Panama), Africa, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Middle East, Africa, Mediterranean, USSR, Austria, Estonia, Montenegro, Latvia, Bavaria, Bohemia, North and South America, Cocos Island, Papua New Guinea, Norfolk Island, Christmas Island, Nauru, Pitcairn, Australia, New Zealand, Isle of Man, Hong Kong, Jersey, Gibraltar, Guernsey, England, Cyprus, Gold Coast, South Pacific, France, Yugoslavia, Germany, Burundi, Greece, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Scandinavia.

From 1963 – 1972 Tom worked at the Balmain League Club located at 138 Victoria Road, Rozelle. Tom was employed as a Supervisor and Bar Manager with records showing that he was extremely honest in his dealings with patrons, trustworthy and reliable at all times. Tom enjoyed the work at the leagues club being a social and affable person he enjoyed the camaraderie amongst the patrons he served. Tom for a time would work his day job down at Millers Coal Yards come home briefly for dinner and then go to start his night shift at the Leagues Club which often finished at midnight before having to start work again the next morning.

From 1974/75 till the 27<sup>th</sup> June 1977 Tom was employed at the Balmain & District Tennis Social Club located at 2 Withcombe Street, Rozelle. His duties included Steward – Cellerman and relieving assistant manager. The Balmain & District Tennis Social Club no longer exists today after amalgamating with the Ryde Tennis Club in 1978. The Secretary at the time Mr. E. H Slater remarked that Tom always fulfilled his duties to the best of his ability, and that club members and employees found Tom to be conscientious, trustworthy and thorough in all his work.

Tom was a keen sportsman and although he worked long hours found the time to indulge in the things he loved. Growing up in Waterloo Tom was a keen follower and supporter of the South Sydney Rabbitohs Rugby League Club. From 1930 till the early 1970's the South Sydney Rugby League team was a dominant force in the now National Rugby League (NRL) Competition. Tom often went to big games and grand finals, which were held at the Sydney Cricket Ground. During big matches and Grand – Finals seating was at times a premium and a luxury and in 1965 a young South Sydney Team went up against the St. George Dragons in front of 78,000 supporters which is remarkable considering the SCG has the capacity of 40,000 people.

Tom also enjoyed playing and watching cricket. Tom for a time played in the Sydney Grade competition and was a solid player who could perform all the basic skills well. Tom often retold the story that he was present on the day at the SCG during the 1946 – 1947 Ashes series against England when Sidney Barnes and Donald Bradman both scored 234. It was later revealed that Sid Barnes had got himself out so as to finish on the same score as Bradman.

Tom also enjoyed his Golf. For a time he was the chief driver in a Golf club made mostly of his friends and acquaintances'. They would play all over Sydney at the various courses and often adjourn to the clubhouse for a tippie of Dr. Tooheys magic elixir to discuss and recount the day's play. Tom played the game of Golf right up until his 70's playing predominately at the Callala Bay Country Golf Club a short 10 – 15 minute drive from Currarong. It was a short 9-hole Golf course and Tom would play most Friday mornings with Arthur (Last Name??????).

Tom was an active parishioner his whole life. Firstly at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church Waterloo located at 2 Kellick St, Waterloo where he received his first holy communion on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1933. St. James Catholic Church Forest Lodge, 2 Wooley Street, Glebe where he was married and lastly at St. Michael's Catholic Church, North Street Nowra. Tom only stopped going to Church late in life when the 30-minute drive to Nowra became too difficult due to health reasons.

Tom always had a pleasant and affable demeanor and had a number of sayings or euphemisms, which he would often say to bring a raised smile or a gentle laugh usually to people working in their day-to-day jobs, these included:

- Your good looks are only exceeded by your generosity
- Can I make a booking for T.C – That's right Tom Cruise.

Tom was also a staunch Labor supporter, which we can most likely contribute to growing up; living in working class suburbs and the hard physical work he often performed.

Thomas Vincent Casey passed away on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2005 at the Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick from a subdural haemorrhage of the brain.

Tom's Funeral Service was held on Friday 14th October 2005, 1.30pm, at St. Michael's Catholic Church, North Street Nowra. According to Tom's wishes he was buried at Shoalhaven Memorial Gardens. The inscription on his tombstone reads:

<p style="text-align:center">In Loving Memory</p> <p style="text-align:center">Thomas Vincent Casey</p> <p style="text-align:center">"TC"</p> <p style="text-align:center">29.11.1926 – 11.10.2005</p> <p style="text-align:center">Much Loved by his family and Friends</p> <p style="text-align:center">Will be sadly missed by all that knew him.</p>
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Tom all his life was hard worker; he worked hard to provide for his family and the community in which he lived. Tom lived a simple life, helping ordinary people, throughout his day-to-day life. He was a not a flash in the pan type of person. He was not a philosopher he was a doer. If there was job that needed doing, Tom just did it and got on with it. He never stopped to ask why he should be doing it or why someone else can't do it, he just did it! Tom was always fair and reasonable with his dealings with other people and always strove to do the right thing.

Tom Casey was a Catholic and all of us, family and friends, will take comfort in the expectation that Tom is now enjoying his eternal reward in Heaven, which God promises to all those of Tom's ilk, who lead a good life. He made a tremendous contribution here on earth and fit a lot in to his 78 years. The world is a better place as a result of Tom's efforts and activities. He contributed to the betterment of his fellow man, where and when he could.