



# The Compassionate Friends of Canada

## When A Child Dies...

### National Newsletter - Special Edition - June 25, 2017



*Transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope.*

- Reverend Simon Stephens, Founder, TCF

Day to day and week by week TCF volunteers across Canada reach out to individuals and groups in their communities. But once in a while we are reminded that we are all part of something much larger, the TCF world that started in England and now reaches around the globe. Such was the case this week, when we received the following two messages from overseas:

## The Death of the Countess Mountbatten of Burma

Dear TCF volunteers, dear friends,

It is with deep sadness that we have learnt of the death last Tuesday of Countess Mountbatten of Burma, President of The Compassionate Friends in the UK. Countess Mountbatten was a passionate and loyal supporter of our charity. We will miss her enormously, and warmly thank her for her compassion and care for bereaved parents and their families over the many years she has been the Patron and President of our charity.

The Countess lost her fourteen-year-old son, Nicholas, in a terrorist attack in 1979. Her father, her mother-in-law and fifteen-year-old family friend Paul Maxwell were also killed in the attack. She, her husband, and their son Timothy Knatchbull (who is a Patron of The Compassionate Friends representing bereaved siblings) were injured but survived the attack. For more than 30 years she used her experience of the loss of her son to help other bereaved parents, through her support of The Compassionate Friends.

Our Chair of Trustees, Maria Ahern, has commented "*I didn't have the honour to meet the Countess, but I have spoken to others in our organisation who did and they spoke warmly of her compassion and her dedication to helping the bereaved. She was, by all accounts, an inspiring lady and she will be missed by our organisation. Thank you Countess for all the help that you gave us.*"

Our thoughts at The Compassionate Friends are with the family and friends of the Countess.  
More details at this link: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-40279925>

We will be writing to Timothy Knatchbull and the family to send our condolences, but if you wish to us to forward any messages to the family please do feel free to send them to the national office.

If you have met the Countess or heard her speak, and feel able to write something about her, please do let us know and send in your contributions by mid-July latest. We would like honour and celebrate the Countess's support for The Compassionate Friends in the next edition of *TCF News*.

With my warmest wishes,  
Carolyn



Support & friendship for bereaved parents

Support & friendship for bereaved parents

Carolyn Brice  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Office

14 New King Street, Deptford, London SE8 3HS  
Tel. 0345 120 3785 [info@tcf.org.uk](mailto:info@tcf.org.uk)  
[www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)

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## International Chairperson's response:

Dear Carolyn

Thank you for informing us of the recent death of Countess Patricia Mountbatten of Burma. I was fortunate indeed to have met and chatted to her at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at Bosworth Market in 2009. I warmed to her immediately and found her to be an interested, interesting and caring soul.

When Maria Ahern and I visited Iris Lawley on 8 May this year, while I was in England on the way to attend the Scottish National Gathering in Perth, we spoke of the Countess. Iris told us how she would look forward to the phone calls the Countess would make on their son Kenneth's anniversary. How thoughtful was that – to recognize the vision of our Founders and to support the work of it.

Please extend to the family the gratitude and appreciation of the Compassionate Friends worldwide and especially that of The International Representatives who value her dedication to helping those who are travelling the devastating journey that she travelled and to making a difference in so many lives.

She will long be loved and remembered - and those who had the honour of meeting her will treasure a special memory. (I have a photo taken with me standing next to the Countess and Joe and Iris Lawley on either side which is even more precious to me now).

In loving compassion

Myrtle

**Myrtle Fleming**

The Compassionate Friends  
East London Chapter Leader  
National and International Liaison Officer of South Africa  
and International Chairperson

Phone : [+27 \(0\) 43 721 0406](tel:+270437210406) Fax: [+27 \(0\) 43 721 0468](tel:+270437210468)

Cell No. [+27 \(0\) 83 973 6108](tel:+270839736108) [myrtlecf@telkomsa.net](mailto:myrtlecf@telkomsa.net)





2009: Adaline Leir and Gwen Linski present The Countess Mountbatten of Burma with a portrait to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Society of The Compassionate Friends, celebrated at Bosworth Hall in England.

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**From *The Next Step, TCF Newsletter for Vancouver Island, Winter 2009-2010* issue:**

In October 2009 I attended the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gathering at Market Bosworth in England. The highlight of the gathering for me was the people that I met, some old friends and some new friends. Founders Iris and Joe Lawley were there, along with the one other surviving parent founder, Joan Henderson. We reconnected with Margaret Pringle, Chair of the TCF International Committee, and Jim Pringle, who headed the organizing committee for the gathering. Two dozen international visitors attended from Australia, Belgium,

Canada, Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland and the USA, joining about five dozen attendees from the UK. A highlight for our Canadian contingency was the presentation of a portrait to The Countess Mountbatten of Burma. She is the Patron for the organization and is both a bereaved parent and a bereaved grandparent.

—Susan Lawrence, TCF Victoria

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**TCF Canada, its Board of Directors, and its parent members across the country, join the international TCF community in sending condolences to the family of the late Countess Mountbatten of Burma.**