

Messages of support

Sincere thanks for the flood of good wishes and support. Please forgive if your messages are not responded directly but they are deeply appreciated. Here is a selection.

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I am a serving Police Officer and have followed your case with great Interest. I admire the way that you have stood up for what is right and I am dismayed at the politician's of this country.

At the end of the day there is that saying, 'how do you know when a politician is lying? Their lips move!'

As you say the only way to resolve this is to have a full enquiry, but we both know that they will do everything they can to stop this, as at the end of the day they won't want the truth to be heard.

I admire you and your father for continuing your fight for justice when a lot of others would have given up by now. Stick in there and the truth will eventually be heard

Regards

**P C
Scotland**

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Having just watched the Panorama episode I feel compelled to write to you both.

I have recently obtained a degree in Forensic Science and have followed your case closely, indeed in my dissertation on fingerprinting I quoted your case amongst others extensively.

In my first year we were given access to both Shirley's print and the crime scene print. (Without any details as to the case or where the prints were from) Basically this was to give us an idea of how difficult it is to identify fingerprints obtained from crime scenes. It may be not much comfort to you as even though we were not trained experts, a good deal the class were able to illustrate discrepancies between the two fingerprints.

I can't believe that the four experts are still able to continue working in the fingerprint office, nor can I believe or understand their arrogance as to making an honest mistake without actually apologising for it or giving any explanation as to why.

Surely the most important point now is to fully admit mistakes, change existing practice and to find who the print actually belongs to in the hope of catching the real killer of Marion Ross.

Maybe I'm being idealistic but it is my hope that after all this time both Shirley and David Asbury are fully exonerated and that full public apologies are made.

Best Wishes to you both,

L C

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To Shirley and her Dad.

Your performance at the inquiry the other day, was absolutely marvellous. You conducted yourselves with dignity and pride. I have supported this campaign the whole way through and am glad yourselves and the media will not let this scandal die down until the truth is out.

Well done guys.

R R.

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Having watched the BBC Panorama programme & been disturbed to say the least at some of the actions of the fingerprint service & Strathclyde police I read today of the appalling behaviour of 2 MSP's at the enquiry. It must be particularly galling having been vindicated in the most resounding way that these MSP's do not seem to have taken on board how wrong the fingerprint service was or how important it is that confidence in fingerprint evidence is restored. I understand the case is being cited to call into question fingerprint evidence everywhere.

Every right thinking person is on your side & I wish you well in your endeavours. I have never felt strongly enough before to email Government or anyone I don't know so having emailed The Herald, Cathy Jamieson amongst others, I thought I would just let you know you have the best wishes of lots & lots of people. What courage!!

yours aye

**K T
Lenzie**

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Dear Ms McKie

I train and work with fire investigators, forensic scientists, police and scenes of crime officers. I also teach them aspects of fire investigation. I also work with and deeply respect fingerprint examiners.

It seems to me that the world of fingerprint examination needs to be opened up for "peer review" by the scientific community in general. What worries me from last night's Panorama program was the use of the defence of "expert opinion" when errors were challenged. If expert opinion is the mainstay of fingerprint evidence then the entire profession is in deep trouble.

However, I don't see this as necessarily so. It is a scientific method and could be run along highly scientific lines. Practitioners should be required to submit scientific data rather than opinion. One always hears evidence based on the number of points of similarity but any good scientist would also expect to know the number of points of identifiable dissimilarity. In this way, poor examiners could no longer hide behind the "opinion" argument and they would then have to defend their assessments scientifically rather than just declare their conclusion as their own opinion.

I have had no direct experience with fingerprint identification but the evidence presented by the American specialist in the Panorama program was so clear that I would expect most jury members would have no problem reaching a valid conclusion.

Nobody wants to throw such a valuable baby out with the bathwater so let's push for more science in fingerprint analysis and less opinion.

Regards

K L

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Shirley and Iain

I just wanted to offer my support to you in what seems to be yet another difficult and frustrating time. I've just watched the proceedings from the Justice 1 Committee meeting and my admiration for how you have both conducted yourselves throughout this case has gone up several more notches.

I've found myself yelling at my TV and computer rather a lot over the last couple of days out of sheer frustration and anger at how ludicrous it is that people continue to defend the SCRO's actions. That you can sit and talk calmly with these people is impressive to say the least. I'm sure it must take its toll somehow though and I really feel for you in terms of the stress that must be involved.

I don't know anyone who thinks anything other than that you have been treated atrociously. I know that you must be aware of the amount of support that you have but I thought it wouldn't do any harm to express some more!

In that same regard, I know that you must have a lot of volunteers willing to help out in whatever way, but I'd like to add myself to the list.

All the best

C L.

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Shirley,

I have not contacted you before but I have been following the issues.

You did well yesterday at your attendance at the J1 committee. Try and remain strong and think to your future as I am not sure that you will get any real success in closing this issue. There are obviously a lot of people with vested interests who do not wish clarity to be brought to the issues.. It has gone way beyond admitting to an error as the subsequent managing of the issues by SCRO and its masters has been a disaster and a disgrace.

You are very fortunate in having your Dad beside you. He has maintained his clarity of thought and objectivity throughout.

Keep listening to him ; I thought that his words given on Newsnight last night were apt. Whatever the committee concludesgo and rebuild your life and forget the sniping and backbiting.

Good luck and best wishes for the future.

A friendly but concerned citizen of Scotland.

PS you deserve every penny of the compensation but in my opinion it was not enough.

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Dear Shirley,

After sitting on the periphery of the media coverage of the 'fingerprint case' and trying to understand and comprehend the extreme lows and highs that you must have felt over the last decade, I was disgusted at the line of questioning, and inferences, you were subjected to at the Holyrood inquiry yesterday by Des McNulty MSP and Ken Macintosh MSP.

Your strength of character has been tested on many occasions since February 1997 and you have done so with dignity at every turn, despite the personal cost to you and your family.

Please take my best wishes and I hope that you will draw strength from the knowledge that there are hundreds of thousands of people like me, wishing you well.

Stay safe,

T T.

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Hi Iain,

I hope yesterday was not too stressful for you and Shirley. I note that Shirley felt she was on trial again and, clearly, told the Committee of MSPs what she thought of them - good for her. We can all only hope that the Committee scrutinises the experts that made the mistakes in a similar way. If they don't - at the very least, you can make the comparison between the way in which the innocent was interrogated, yet again, and the perpetrators protected.

With best wishes.

P W

Wales

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Iain,

I felt that I had to contact you after watching your 'grilling' by the Scottish Parliamentary Committee as seen on BBC tonight.

You and Shirley have gone through a long and painful process – such as I can only imagine. I, for one, thought that fingerprints could never lie and placed implicit trust in the 'experts'!

What a mess! Good luck to you and Shirley – 'Don't let them grind you down!!'

Yours aye,

L M Ex-police officer

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Dear Shirley

Another awful day for you. I'm so sorry. But I'm afraid that it's probably time to walk away from this. I'm afraid that there are some people (we saw some of them today) just won't stop persecuting you. However all normal people are on your side. The public aren't daft - we can tell who is lying, and it isn't you.

Other people - politicians, campaigners etc. can carry on the fight without your direct involvement. After all it's something that concerns the whole of Scotland. You must try to cheer up, you must be assured that you've done your best. Please try and have a happy life. I heard that you were emigrating. You deserve some time in the sun.
Good luck for the future

Best wishes

R E

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Dear Iain,

Just watched you on Newsnight Scotland. I thought you were excellent in your exposition of your case and in your defence of Shirley against bullying politicians who had obviously no grounds to argue on other than to revisit a trial which was disposed of years ago.

Good Luck and regards

W L Ex Police Officer

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aye shocking,

Just been watching the highlights on newsnight, is it 9 years already? Unbelievable some of the questions Shirley had to face from MSPs!

Best Wishes for the future, sorry your fight is not over yet?

Regards

G Y

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Iain,

Just to add my short view on the short extract on Reporting Scotland tonight.

It was stated by the narrator on the film that you made an "outburst". Well, no ,you didn't. The narrator was wrong. You stated the relevant point firmly calmly, but even if you had made an outburst, you would have been justified beyond doubt, because of all the despicable people.

Another point. Those lying idiots at the SCRO who still insist that they were right should not be tolerated any more by you or Shirley or anyone else, and this point must be made if possible any time in the future. I thought of an analogy along the lines of each one of them maintaining that "2 plus 2 equals something other than 4" and being given ridiculous credence

beyond belief. This is indeed the case with them sticking to their lies, and a proper court would not stand for such nonsense.

Sincerely,

D V

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Dear Shirley,

I have no connections to the law, media or politics in Scotland. Today I watched the Panorama programme on the internet as I have followed your case throughout, and continue to do so, with huge admiration for your perseverance in search of the truth at great personal cost. We are probably about the same age.

To me, you were 100% innocent from the very start and there is nothing that will shake my belief that truth will prevail, with a full expose of the whole sorry affair and the individuals concerned.

The Scottish Government has to be aware that many, many thousands of ordinary people living in Scotland no longer have confidence in the Scottish Legal System, SCRO in particular. I will continue to find ways to add my voice to the debate and keep up the discussion about your case amongst family, friends and colleagues. It feels as though we all know you and your father personally and I am sure you wish that had never had to be.

However, you both remain a shining example of fighting the establishment with honour, total credibility and honesty and this comes through each and every time. I feel it is important you are constantly reminded of how many ordinary people "out here" are thinking of you, supporting you and wishing you the best.

Kind regards,

**S N
Glasgow**

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I have followed your case from the start and have admired and marvelled at your persistence and unflinching optimism. There can be no excuse for what has happened to you and your family and nothing short of conviction of those responsible can in any way be deemed to be justice. I would love to be in a position to do something to help you, but sadly I can't.

Please believe me when I say that you have my support, for what it is worth, and my best wishes. I will continue to follow your efforts and hope for a speedy and satisfactory conclusion. You have lost a great deal with out a doubt but keep smiling and one day I would love and be honoured to meet you.

Good Luck

F C

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