

# Schapelle Action Support Group – Victoria

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Picture by Steve Pennells, supplied courtesy of The West Australian ©

*Keeping Schapelle's supporters informed of news and activities in order that we can determine what supportive action we may need to take, either individually or as a group.*

*If you would like to make a comment to be circulated amongst our group, or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email to the above address.*

## **Donations for Schapelle.**

The Trust Fund established by Schapelle's family for donations for Schapelle's personal welfare is the only fund approved for that purpose. The fund is used to purchase vital daily supplies for Schapelle i.e. food, clothing, personal items, sanitary items and medicine as and when required. We are also endeavouring to raise sufficient funds to cover the \$14,000 fine imposed on Schapelle, in default of which she will have an additional six months added to her sentence.

The fund is promoted on a number of forums and web sites and it is therefore imperative that a tight control is held on administration of the fund so that donors may have confidence that their money is reaching its target. We do not need a repeat of past experiences where some money collected allegedly did not reach the family.

**In order to maintain security and integrity of the fund it is therefore imperative that all donations, including direct debits, be channelled through the one collection point and the SASG-V has been accepted by the family to fulfil that purpose.**

**If you have arranged a direct debit donation and have not passed details to SASG-V would you please inform me**

**accordingly either by email or at the address below.**

All donations received are promptly banked and receipts issued when a stamped self addressed envelope is also received. Receipts are held for those donations where a SAE is not received, and can be requested at any time.

The SASG-V does NOT have access to the funds. Administration costs, including receipts and necessary postage are met by separate donations to the SASG-V and DO NOT come from donations to the Trust fund, hence the request for stamped self addressed envelopes. Receipts are not issued for payments made by Direct Debit as these appear on the donor's bank statements and the SASG-V is only aware of such payments when we are specifically notified by the donors.

A report of donations received is forwarded to the family each month for reconciliation purposes however, this is complicated by the fact that some payments have not been notified to us.

It is for these reasons that all donations are requested to be made through the SASG-V.

Individual payments are of necessity, and frequently by request, confidential between the donor, SASG-V for receipting, banking

and reporting purposes, and the Corby family.

Known donations from December to January total \$970 plus a small number of direct payments. We still have a long way to go.

If you would like to donate, cheques should be payable to—

**Schapelle Corby Trust Account**

and forwarded, with a stamped self-addressed envelope for a receipt, to —

**Schapelle Action Support Group – Vic  
P O Box 149  
Mulgrave Vic 3170**

There is no minimum amount for donations, all sums are greatly received. However, if you are considering making a regular donation through direct debit from your bank account, I recommend that you first determine the bank fees to be charged for transfer to a Commonwealth Bank account. These appear to range from \$1.50 (CBA) to \$7.50 per transaction with some other institutions.

The Bank Account number etc will not generally be made public however; relevant details will be made available where necessary, on specific request to the SASG-V.

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Over the past few weeks we have heard more unsubstantiated allegations against other members of Schapelle's family. Right or wrong, we need to be very circumspect with these allegations, as we have found with many which have been made against Schapelle and subsequently been proved without foundation.

To do otherwise, without concrete evidence, would put you in the same position as those who believe that Schapelle is guilty, based solely on 'lunchroom gossip'.

Such stories appear to have been released purely in an attempt to further discredit Schapelle.

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**The following feedback is provided to SASG-V from a family friend, who for privacy reasons, uses the name - 'Freepelle.'**

Many people have been asking why the Corby's don't ever post on the forums or elsewhere. The simple answer is, that you take into consideration some things - Ros Corby has openly admitted in the public that she has not had a broad education and for a long time, she couldn't even read. She is one smart lady and I respect her determination and drive but even Ros will admit she knows nothing of computers. She has never been on a computer and she wouldn't even know how to turn one on, let alone type. She is doing her best as a mother to support her daughter in a foreign prison. This is unbelievably challenging and not just physically. All her strength is not solely focused on Schapelle because there are other kids in her family still in school. They need her with all that goes with being a mum of teenage kids. Then she is a devoted partner to Greg and supporter to her former husband Michael, who as we all know has a terminal illness. It is enough for any person to have a child in prison let alone more than one, so this again increases her already tumultuous life and commitments. How much strength does one person have inside them to endure these things? I'm sure if Rosleigh had anymore inside to give to others then she would.

As for Mercedes, she has Wayan Snr to be a wife to and they are not living a life high on the hill. They live simply and humbly and do whatever they can to scrape their money together to keep going. They don't have a flash car or fancy house and though they would never say it, they find life difficult with all these added pressures placed on them. Somehow they continue to support Schapelle and still manage to keep their own

lives in order. They have to find the funds to assist with education (for their children) where they would otherwise be able to access public (free) education here (Australia). They have to try to find work in a country that has no work. Even finding work, do you think it is enough to survive on a few hundred dollars a month? (the salary is not comparable to Australian standards)

Internet access is a luxury that I would not expect them to afford. It is different for us who have broadband and can get online any minute of the day. Mercedes has to pay by the minute for internet access (like you would at a internet café) and that is very expensive given her budget - she really can't afford it. She is only able to 'log on' once a week to check email from family and close friends but thankfully, she sends messages to pass on to the supporters.

Where does Mercedes find the time in between going to and from the school for kids and to the prison to support Schapelle, and working if and when she can get a few hours, and helping her husband when he needs her help and then caring for her father?

Does it concern me that she has not enough time to go and sit on the beach and clear her mind? Of course! Her journey is more difficult than mine. She has lost friends. She has been hurt and for someone so young, she has a lot of responsibility that few people are forced to endure. I always wonder how Mercedes doesn't have a nervous breakdown or simply fall apart. She has a great spirit and grit - just like her MUM.

We all need to be encouraged and I know that it would be nice to hear from the family on a regular basis, but at times it isn't possible and then at other times, they are simply overwhelmed.

I know that Mercedes wants to reply to all the letters that have come in and each time she goes to sit and do this, some other crisis comes up. But in any case, I know they are

grateful for the support and they feel so very bad that they haven't been replying to letters and they hope to do something about this in the future.

This has been the most traumatic experience for Schapelle and her family. Mercedes in particular, has lost a great deal of weight. At times, her skin looked too much for her body. She didn't realise how much the stress was showing on her face. Her jeans looked like those a child would wear. So I really hope for her sake (health) that she can use some time ahead to get some of her life back for her.

It may be a long road yet... but all we can do is to support them (Corby's) and be there for them when they need us. Each of us has a role to play and there are some who are continuing to letter write to the Government, others sending care packages, others giving the family emotional support, others giving financial support and others who are simply caring and that is important too.

Let us all continue to be encouraged. This family has never given up hope and they are always thinking of other people because they all know how difficult life can be. They each have such a big heart and so much love for each other. They have stood together through tremendous pressure that would have driven many people to despair. They continue to seek ways to help other women in the prison by sending balls of wool, so they can make things to sell at the market to support the prison budget. They continue to visit the hospital in Bali and take the nurses anything they can because they saw that they had nothing and yet cared for so many Australians after the bombs. The Corby's really do love the people of Bali and are so sad that they are suffering. How remarkable it is that Schapelle has been a victim in all of this and yet, the Corby's still have such compassion for the Bali people.

I really hope that good things happen for this family. I hope that the crazy media (those that have reported negatively from the start)

will leave them alone and stop trying to bring them down. If Schapelle had said she was guilty then those media outlets would have accepted it as they have done with the Bali nine. I fear sometimes that when a person proclaims their innocence, and doesn't relent, then others seek to destroy them. I hope that Indonesia will see the real Schapelle now that all the cameras are gone. So when we rally together in support, let us try to show that same compassion for each other and for this family who need our support now more than ever!

Freepelle  
(A family friend)

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Keep up to date with the latest news on The Official Web site of Schapelle Corby - [www.freeschapelle.net](http://www.freeschapelle.net)

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**Many will be aware of a P O Box address in Cleveland, Qld to which care packages and mail for Schapelle and her family have previously been sent. Advice has been received that this address is now a private P O Box and is no longer available for mail to Schapelle or her family.**

All mail and Care Packages to Schapelle should be addressed as follows

Ms Schapelle Corby  
C/- LPM Kerobokan Jl.,  
Tangkuban Perahu Kerobokan,  
Denpasar 80117 Bali,  
INDONESIA

**Please take a few minutes to write a letter or send a card to Schapelle and personally let her know that you still support her.**

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Letters should also be written to Members of Parliament seeking their 'genuine' efforts to bring Schapelle home FREE, as soon as possible, if not sooner.

Following are a few tips for writing to our

Politicians in order to improve your chances of obtaining the best possible action and response from them.

The next Newsletter will cover 'Emails' to the pollies.

### **Tips for Writing Letters to Members of Parliament**

- Include your name and address: Identify yourself as a constituent by including your address when you write to your elected representative/s. Generally, politicians are likely to pay most attention to people who live in their electoral district.
- Keep it brief: Letters should be no longer than one page and should be about one issue only. Be as concise as possible. Politicians receive many letters on many topics every day. Long letters are likely to be put aside to read on a less busy day and that day may never come.
- Use your own words, not someone else's: An original letter sent by one single person is more effective than a form letter (or cut and pasted texts) sent by dozens of people. Even if your writing skills are not the best, a letter written in your own words will carry much more weight than regurgitating what someone else said.
- Handwrite, or type and sign, your letter: A handwritten, or typed and signed, letter is far more effective than photocopied form letters, postcard campaigns or emails. Some politicians regard handwritten letters more highly than typewritten letters (some of these are technologically illiterate, and some find it convenient to claim the sender probably just cut and pasted what someone else said without thinking about the issue themselves). Some, very likely many, regard emails as "second

class mail" and some do not even read email.

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- Include a subject line at the beginning of your letter. State the topic clearly either in the subject line or at least in the first paragraph.
- Start with a clear statement of purpose: For example:
  - "I am writing to urge your support for / opposition to..."
  - "I am writing to ask you to support / oppose ..."
- Focus on three important points: Choose the three points that are most likely to be persuasive in gaining support for your position and flesh them out. This is more effective than attempting to address numerous points in a letter.
- Ask your representative to take concrete action: For example, ask them to raise the matter in their party room.
- Ask for a response to your letter: While the response will usually be a form letter, written and authorised by their political party, you will know you have had an impact on their office. Party politics in Australia are such that few elected politicians are likely to tell you whether or not they personally share your views/position. However, a well-written letter can be instrumental in prompting them to take action behind the public scenes to inform and potentially change their political party's position.
- Personalise your letter: When possible, include a personal story and/or information on how the issue affects you, your family, your business, or people around you. This can help your representative understand your position and can be very persuasive as he/she forms a position on an issue. The more personal your letter, the more impact it is likely to have.
- Personalise your relationship: If you have ever voted for the representative, or contributed time or money to their election campaign, or have met them, etc, say so. The closer your representative feels to you, the more effective your letter is likely to be.
- Be polite: Be courteous, but don't be afraid to take a firm position. While your representative's job is to represent you, remember that politicians and their staff are people too. Threats, hostile remarks and rude/offensive language are among the fastest ways to alienate people who could otherwise decide to support your position in light of rational and reasoned argument. Your representative could be in elected office for decades, and could be promoted to higher, more influential, office within their party. Avoid creating enemies.
- Thanks is as important as criticism: Politicians/political parties need to be able to tell the 'other side' that they have been inundated with calls and letters supporting their position. Write thank you letters to politicians/parties that you know support your position. This will encourage them to stand firm on their position rather than backing down, which has often happened during the passage of proposed laws through Australian parliaments.
- Keep the irritation factor low: Avoid accusing/criticising the wrong politicians/party. Politicians, like anyone else, may become irritated when accused of holding views they do not. If you are not sure of the views of the person or political party you are contacting, either research the matter, ask them, or just inform them of your

views and why they should support same.

Thanks to *Electronic Frontiers Australia* web site <http://www.efa.org.au/> for the above article.

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During January we were pleased to have the company of Ann (from New Zealand) and Danya (from West Australia) for a few hours. Owen, from Tasmania also passed through Melbourne on his way home and made contact before boarding the ferry. All are strong supporters and we welcome the opportunity to meet with fellow supporters from far away.

Any supporters coming to Melbourne at any time (perhaps during the Commonwealth Games) are asked to make contact and we will endeavour to meet.

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### Show your support



Wear a yellow ribbon on your lapel.

Place a yellow ribbon on your car antenna.

Car stickers and silicon wrist bands are available free of charge, as long as they are used and not put in a drawer and forgotten.

### Car Stickers



approx 60 cm long and suitable for the rear windscreen of your car. Members have received a lot of positive attention and comments. Keep a supply of flyers in the car to hand out as circumstances permit.

### Yellow Silicon Wrist Bands



Several supporters have vowed to wear the bracelet until Schapelle returns home.

As these items have been privately funded, a donation, to enable continued supply would be appreciated although not essential.

Thanks for your continued support.

***Most importantly, keep Schapelle and her family in your prayers.***

***Not innocent because she is beautiful but beautiful because she is innocent.***



Cheers

Geoff

**Bring Our Girl Home**