

Don Tomblin

We lost another “friend” of the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum on January 11, 2018. Don Tomblin was a true “friend” of the Museum. By that, I mean he not only gave financially, but he gave time and effort outside the Museum, to spread the word and get others to participate. He did it without fanfare, no public “pats on the back”. Don felt it was the responsibility of all of us in law enforcement to support the Police Museum, and recognize the rich history that laid the foundation for those who followed. History was important to Don.

Don felt strongly about those he served with. He was compelled to praise those who exemplified the best traits of law enforcement, but never let rank or power deter him from chastising those who fell beneath those standards. He had a strong sense of justice.

I met Don prior to my joining the Cincinnati Police Department. We were in an Army Reserve Unit together. Maybe that’s why he monitored my activities during my police career, and delighted in some “spirited” phone calls relating to some things I was involved in over the years. Those calls became more frequent as plans for the Museum started to come together, especially in the last several years. As we grew, he sent money, notes and suggestions. He brought his family to visit, and lamented being unable to be more active because of health issues.

Don Tomblin was not easy to get close to. Don either liked you or he didn’t. I’m proud to have been an acquaintance of Don’s. Don was a private person, but he allowed me to get a glimpse inside. I’m not sure what that says about either of us, but I feel good about it.

A couple of weeks prior to his death, I’m told, he had his wife drive him to the Eastside Saturday Breakfast just to drop off a cash donation for the Museum, asking that someone give it to me. I called him about an hour later to thank him. He came to the phone, we talked about his health and the Museum. He apologized to me for not being able to do more, and couldn’t guarantee future help. I requested that his weekly calls continue as long as he could make them, he said he would try. Unfortunately, I never received another call.

God rest you Don Tomblin, I treasure the time I had.