



Warren Mallard

you do what for a living?

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE A PRIVATE EYE? OR PERHAPS YOU'VE ALWAYS WONDERED HOW SOMEONE ENDS UP WORKING IN A FUNERAL HOME! THIS ISSUE WE HAVE SPOKEN TO THREE PEOPLE, IN THREE VERY INTERESTING PROFESSIONS

Warren Mallard, Private Investigator:

I am a goldsmith by trade, having left school at 16. After completing my trade I joined the New South Wales Police force where I spent 11 years, attaining the rank of Senior Constable. I sustained serious injuries whilst on duty and spent a year in hospital. Some fifty-three operations later I was retired on medical grounds. In 1978 I went back into the jewellery trade and in partnership I opened my first jewellery store but I still had a passion for investigation, so I sold my jewellery business to my partner and began a career in the investigation industry in 1983. Since my entry into the industry I have held numerous executive posts within industry representative bodies including five terms as president. It is a very rewarding career path, assisting those of us who have major problems. Everyone that we deal with has a problem they want resolved. Being able to bring people to justice, locate a loved one, reunite people long separated, locate evidence to assist in legal cases and generally get people back on track makes the job of investigation all worthwhile in the end. The most challenging aspect of the job of an investigator is gaining access to the tools that are required to bring a matter to finality. Many databases that the police have access to are closed to the public and investigators. This is what separates a good investigator from a bad one. Investigators have to act within the law to obtain information, however a skilled investigator can still get this information lawfully. There are so many misconceptions about what we do. Everyone knows that private investigators have two shots of bourbon before breakfast, are usually disgraced police officers who are generally dishevelled in appearance, live out of paper cups, are divorced and generally very shady characters

who have a small office with a frosted glass door with the words Private Detective emblazoned thereon. Wrong, very wrong. Today private investigators are highly skilled professionals who require a Private Inquiry Agents License and competency accreditation from a government recognised training organisation. This requires them to be persons of good fame and character and to be free of criminal conviction. The reactions Investigators get from others when they are told about their occupation vary dependent upon what their perception is. Generally, people are fascinated by the prospect of talking with a real live investigator. Investigators are normally quite secretive about their occupation as they never know when their paths might cross with anyone they may have already told.

I really thought that I would be a biologist or zoologist as that is still one of my fiery passions. Wildlife photography is my main passion and I am heading to the South Pole shortly on an expedition aboard a Russian Icebreaker to photograph the birdlife on the Auckland, Campbell and Macquarie Islands and the Ross Ice Shelf. Investigation is a bit like wildlife photography. You have to select the right location, the right equipment and the right time to capture that perfect photo. Preparation determination and exasperation are common properties associated with wildlife photography and the occupation of a private investigator.

Luan Barker, Embalmer:

I have had an interest in death from a very young age and somehow knew I was destined to work with death in some way. At age 21 I did work experience with a senior constable at Wollongong police station's physical evidence section, as this was my original choice of careers. From there I did work experience with a company and this led to casual

employment doing mortuary and funeral work. I then realised that this was the career I wanted and enrolled in the Mortuary Science/ Embalming course through the Australian Institute of Embalming. I worked voluntarily for a company for six months whilst I started my certificate and again this led to casual employment. Half way through my course I was employed on a permanent basis and stayed with that company for eight and a half years. During this time I did a post-graduate course in Thanatochemistry. I now work full time for a company that has a mobile embalming unit, which services Sydney and NSW country areas. The most satisfying aspect of my job is helping bereft people in the first step of the grieving process. Restoring deceased persons to a more natural appearance is also satisfying, especially in cases of severe trauma. The most challenging aspect of my job for me personally is working on deceased children. Speaking as a mother, it can be quite confronting to know that, unfortunately, the little people of our society are not immune to death. Working on people my own age is a challenge at times too. I guess we all expect to grow old and live a long fruitful life...sadly it's not the case sometimes.

The biggest misconceptions people have are that dead bodies are scary; and that my job just involves putting make up on deceased people and dressing them. Embalming is a relatively unknown topic in the general community, as death is still such a taboo subject. The process of embalming is much more involved than people imagine.

Most people are intrigued. Usually the first reaction is shock. Once the shock subsides, it can go one of two ways. Either the hand of the person comes straight up and they say "OK, don't wanna know" or a barrage of