

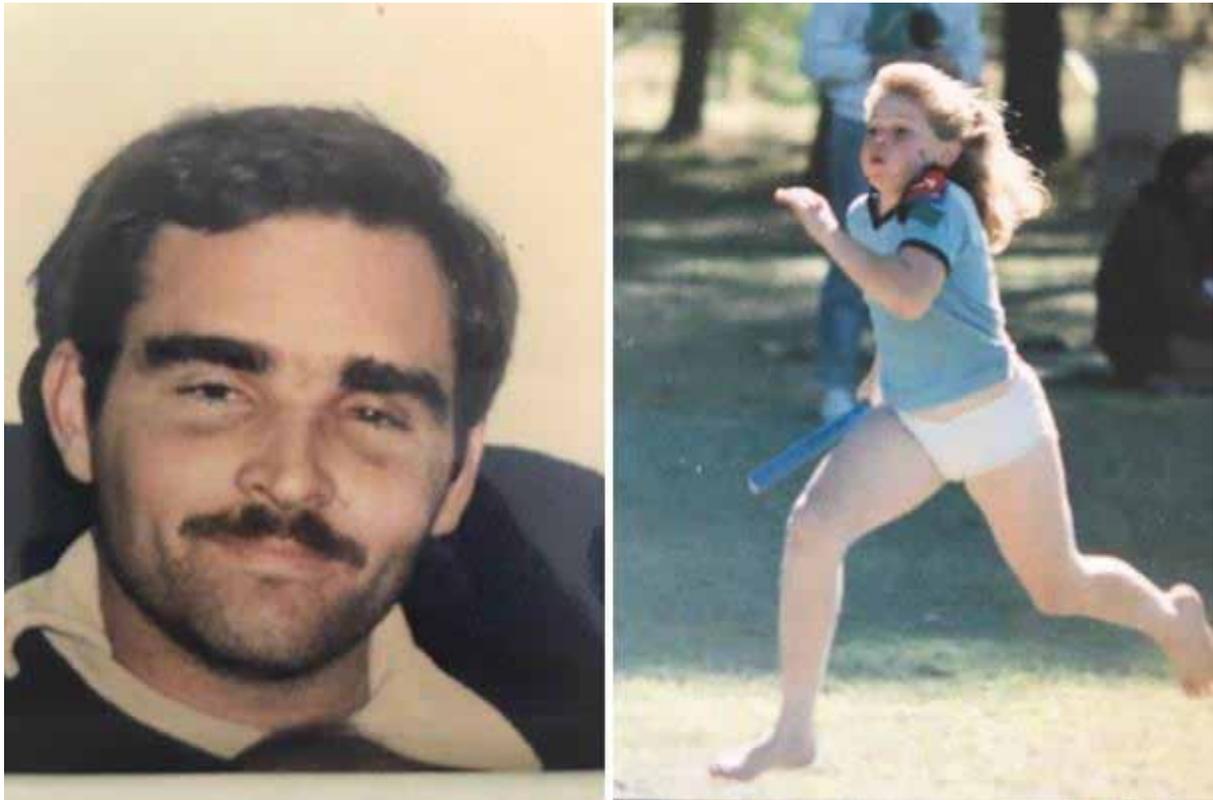
that's life!

# BRAVE SURVIVOR: How I JAILED my paedophile UNCLE

*True courage... - by Kathryn Lewsey*

28 OCT2019

**After suffering years of abuse, Kelly Humphries finally got justice. Here, Kelly, 38, from Bororen, Qld, tells the story in her own words.**



Running around the house, I giggled as I played with my siblings and cousins.

I was eight and over at my Uncle Bob and Aunty Von's, while Mum and Dad went shopping.

Us kids loved Uncle Bob.

He was always reading us books and playing games.

He'd even taught me how to fish.

But as I ran into the lounge room alone, I could sense Bob looking at me.

It felt funny.

**'Come here, Kel,' he said.**

Walking over, he put his hands on my bottom.

'I want to teach you how to love, like in the movies,' he said.

'What do you mean?' I said, confused.

'I'll show you later,' he smiled.

Feeling uncomfortable, I ran away, brushing it off.

But later, as Bob tucked me into bed, he kissed me on the mouth.

Then, he touched me down below, which hurt.

'You have to be quiet Kel,' he whispered.

After he left, I lay there frozen.



***Me at eight.***

*Supplied*

*What had just happened?*

From then on, Bob continued to abuse me.

Whether it was sleeping over at his or big family barbies, Uncle Bob would find ways to get me alone.

Sometimes, it was kisses and groping when no-one was looking. Other times, he would touch me.

I felt ashamed and dirty, but was too young to understand why. I just knew it felt wrong.

Raised as a Christian, on occasions I'd say to Bob, 'I don't think Jesus would want us to do this.'

*'Don't you think Jesus would want us to love each other?' he replied.*

So, the abuse continued and I kept quiet.

Then one day, when I was 12, Mum said, 'Has Uncle Bob ever touched you?'

He was my mum's brother and I could tell she was shocked at the thought, but he'd been accused of molesting someone else.

'No,' I blurted, scared.

Bob ended up going to prison for the abuse.

But he convinced our family it had been made up and when he was out of jail, he started abusing me again.

When I was 15, Bob and I went fishing.

At the creek, Bob got undressed and started kissing me.

As he pulled my pants down, I snapped.

*'Why do you keep making me do this? Get off!' I screamed, kicking him hard in the chest.*



***My uncle Robert John Griffiths***

*Supplied*

He stumbled back into the car.

'Take me home!' I demanded.

Amazingly, he did. And he never touched me again.

Struggling mentally, I took antidepressants and tried to focus on my studies.

After a few years, I moved to Toowoomba for college.

Then, when I was 19, I found myself telling my track and field coach about Bob.

'You need to tell the police. But first, tell your parents,' she urged.

So I asked Mum and Dad to visit me.

'Do you remember that day you asked me if Uncle Bob ever touched me?' I began.

'Yes I do... Kelly, he didn't, did he?' Mum gasped.

Tears began to stream down my face as I slowly nodded my head.

**'I knew it!' Dad spat.**

As I sobbed uncontrollably, Mum and Dad held me.

Three days later, I went to the police with a statement.

I also wanted to speak to Bob and record the conversation.

I hadn't spoken to him in two years, but I dialled his number.

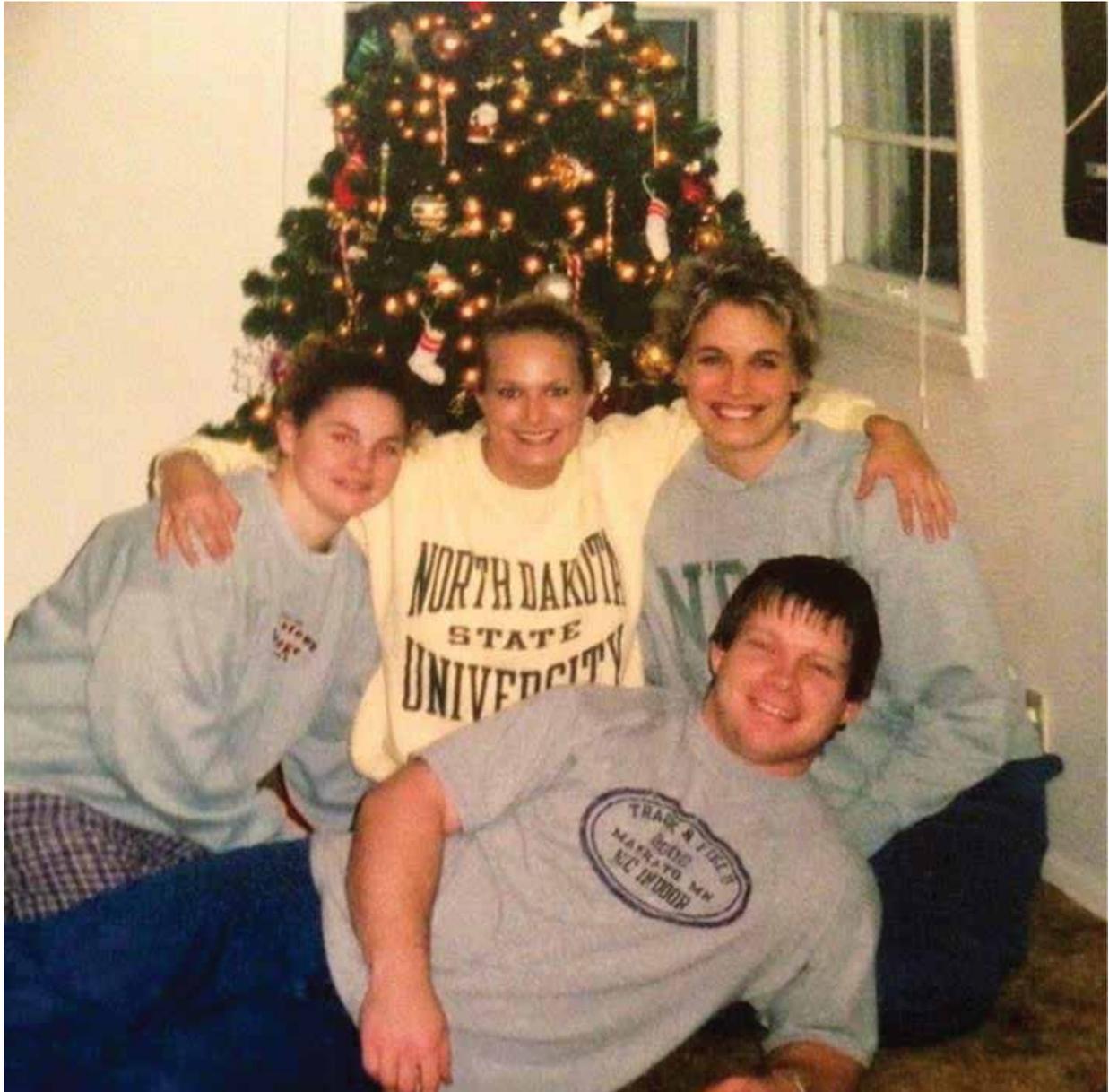
'Why did you do all that stuff to me when I was a kid?' I asked him.

'Well I'm sorry, it shouldn't have happened,' he replied.

Uncle Bob – Robert John Griffiths – was charged with two counts of indecent treatment of a child under 12, five counts of indecent treatment of a child under 16, one count of sexual assault and one count of sexual assault with a circumstance of aggravation.

In March 2001, he appeared at Gladstone District Court and pleaded guilty.

A few months later, my dream came true when I won a soccer and athletics scholarship to a US college.



***University for me was a time of healing.***

I was there when I received the news that Robert Griffiths had been sentenced to four years in jail, with a non-parole period of 18 months.

Four years after living in the US, I moved back to Australia.

Thinking about the detectives who helped me with my case, I decided to train as a police officer and graduated in 2008.



***Me in my uniform with my baby nephew.***

*Supplied*

It feels amazing that I can help other survivors get justice just like I did.

I also became an ambassador for Bravehearts and ChildSafe Australia.

And more recently, I wrote a book *Unscathed Beauty* about my own journey.

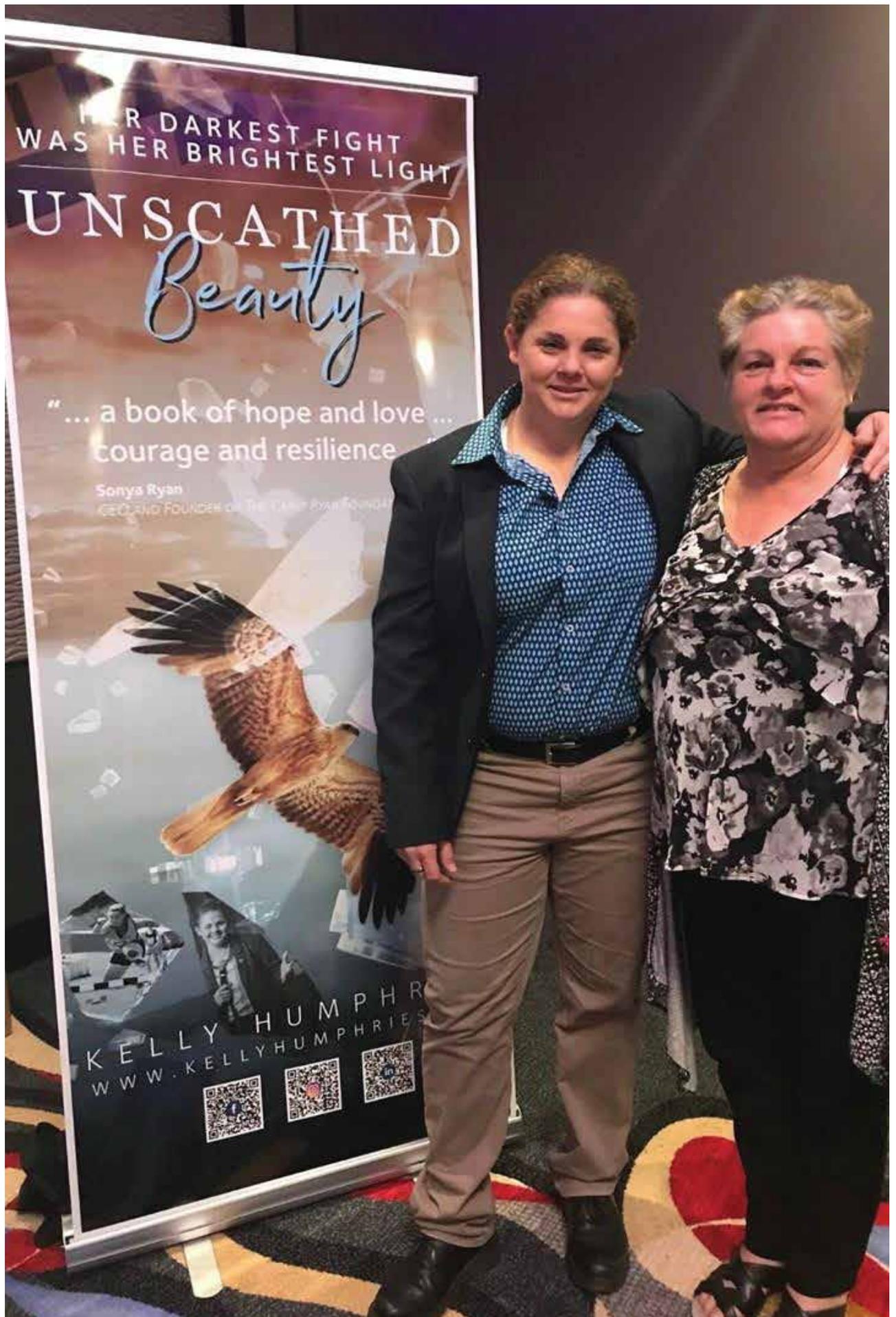
I received messages from people all over the world thanking me for being open about my experience.

Others have recognised me and hugged me in the street.



***At my book launch.***

*Supplied*



**Me and Mum.**  
*Supplied*

I want to remind survivors they're not alone and they should reach out and connect with other survivors.

Bob was conniving and manipulative. He groomed me – and even my family – convincing us he was a friendly, innocent person.

Today, although Bob's still alive, no one in my family has anything to do with him.

I'm not ashamed about what he did – I know it wasn't my fault.

I'm stronger than him and I refuse to let his evil ways get to me. ●

### **Kelly has waived her right to anonymity**

If you've been affected by anything in this story and need help, call 1800 737 732 (Aus) or 0800 88 33 00 (NZ).

You can buy 'Unscathed Beauty' at [www.kellyhumphries.com](http://www.kellyhumphries.com)