

Ferry's ex-wife speaks of a damaged man

Klaaborg reflects on Ferry's struggles

By Erick Bengel
EO Media Group

The ex-wife of Phillip Max Ferry — the man involved in the fatal altercation with Seaside Police Sgt. Jason Goodding — remembers him mostly as a loving and well-intentioned, yet thoroughly damaged, man who wanted to be better.

Ingrid Klaaborg, a 61-year-old Seaside resident originally from Switzerland, met Ferry in 1991, married him and gave birth to their twin girls in 1993. She divorced him in 1996 but saw him regularly until about 2001, when he began retreating further into drug abuse.

"Part of them go away," she said. "They're unreachable."

For the first 10 years of their relationship, though, she tried to be a positive influence on Ferry.

"I did better than average, I know that. But you can always do better, right? So maybe I could have made a bigger difference," she said. "I tried for a long time, because I loved him. And we still love him."

When Goodding attempted to arrest Ferry on a felony assault warrant in downtown Seaside on Feb. 5, Ferry, 55, allegedly produced a firearm and shot the officer. A second Seaside officer then shot Ferry.

Ferry's family was notified the next morning.

"It's a very tragic incident. It's very tragic when the end of a story is like that. You keep hoping that things don't turn out this way," she said. "I'm really sorry for everybody that got hurt."

A week later, many of Ferry's relatives and some neighbors gathered at Klaaborg's homestead on U.S. Highway 26 to pay their respects.

"There (were) people I didn't even know. They just showed up," she said. "It was quite something, really."

'He knew his failures'

To the extent that Ferry's daughters — two educated and well-adjusted young women — enjoyed a stable upbringing, they have their mother to thank.

For though Klaaborg tried to make her marriage work, she eventually realized she needed to keep Ferry's lifestyle away from them.



COURTESY OF INGRID KLAABORG

Phillip Max Ferry, left, with Ingrid Klaaborg in 1993, when she was pregnant with their twin daughters.

"He was never ugly to them, but you notice bad things attract flies. I shielded the kids from that," she said. "I just wanted my children to have a normal life."

Although Ferry could be a helpful parent — to both his daughters and to Klaaborg's sons from a previous marriage — "he was not cut out to be a dad," she said. "It was too much to ask (of) him, because he couldn't even really take care of himself."

When she finally drew the line, Ferry didn't hold a grudge.

"He knew his failures — and that's what made it hard for him, that he knew his failures and shortcomings," she said. "He knew how inadequate he was."

Ferry tried to be an active part of his daughters' lives after the divorce.

"He would remember birthdays, and, whenever he was able to, he would do something nice," she said. "My girls, they loved him. And they knew that he was a loving person, he just ... he just was not able to do the best he wanted to do."

Over time, he reached out to them less and less.

"He would call every now and then. He always was looking for some sort of guidance. And you try to keep a nice conversation," she said. "You're trying to keep the positive mood; that's really all you can do. You can't run somebody like a puppet on a string, but you can try to keep the positive mood inside somebody going."

Early childhood education

Klaaborg makes no excuses for Ferry, who was a habitual

criminal. But she suspects the path his life took can be traced back to childhood trauma.

"He wasn't a spoiled child. Definitely not," she said.

She said Ferry, who was adopted, dropped out of school in fifth grade and spent much of his life functionally illiterate. Many of his letters from prison were handwritten by someone else.

"He was embarrassed to write because he didn't know how to write," she said. "He learned to read and write in the prison system. He got much better at it."

Klaaborg, who is now a landscaper, worked as an elementary school teacher in Switzerland and at Head Start in Seaside. She has long been an advocate for funding early childhood education, something she believes Ferry could have benefited from.

"Every time a new person is born, there's a new chance," Klaaborg said.

Ferry was in and out of jail so often that it stopped fazing him; he became accustomed to punishment, she said.

"If you're looking for regularity, and you're looking for structure, jail provides that. You get a meal, you're warm ... It doesn't fix the problem," she said. "What fixes the problem is, you have the early childhood education values. That's what prevents it. Everything else is a Band-Aid after that ... That is his life story."

One of Ferry's daughters now works as a toddler teacher in Washington state.

"What I care about is that we learn something from this tragic incident," Klaaborg said, adding in a message. "I hope this world can lay the grounds to prevent this by raising happy, strong children that can be responsible for their actions."

'We loved him'

Days after the Seaside shooting, Klaaborg opened a German Bible that Ferry had given her more than a decade ago.

Flipping through the pages, she discovered a note from Ferry — an epitaph for their relationship — scrawled on a yellow Broadway Cab receipt (in someone else's handwriting, of course):

"Always will I love you. But it's time to go our separate ways. You can't do things to hurt yourself anymore because of me. You are free, and I wish it could

Ferry had stayed at halfway house but was asked to leave

By Lyra Fontaine and R.J. Marx
EO Media Group

The transient who allegedly killed a Seaside Police sergeant in a shootout Friday night struggled with anger and substance abuse and was described as "a complicated man with a lot of issues."

Phillip Max Ferry, who was killed after being shot by police, was on post-prison supervision and had a history of assaulting police and resisting arrest.

A visit to the last three places in Seaside where Ferry allegedly lived before Friday's shooting included Restoration House, a non-profit organization providing housing after prison.

Ferry lived at Restoration House 13 months ago, but has been a transient since then, Executive Director Mark Terranova said.

"We are a clean and sober house and when he comes out of jail, the corrections department uses us to house people," Terranova said. "They used us to house Phil for a period of time, but he could never stay clean so he lost his housing."

After leaving Restoration House, Ferry used addresses in Seaside on Third Street and Avenue I.

Ferry was last seen on the Restoration House property 10 days ago. He was kicked out by one of Restoration House's managers after siphoning gas out of a car, Terranova said.

"He was a complicated man with a lot of issues," Terranova said. "When certain types of personalities keep drinking and using (drugs), it's not safe for the community and that's the number one priority, as far as I'm concerned."

Asked to leave

Terranova said that if the house can't help people, then they can't live there.

"It's often a discussion between corrections, the courts, what's best for the community," he said. "When it becomes a situation



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Phillip Max Ferry lived at Restoration House in Seaside before he was kicked out for violating the facility's "clean and sober" policy.

where all the wraparound services fail, then we can't have him or anyone like that living here."

Ferry was compliant during his time at the house and when asked to leave, Terranova said.

Since the shooting, police have asked questions at Restoration House as part of the investigation.

Terranova also knew Sgt. Jason Goodding, the officer who was killed. "He would come here on occasion, whether to come for emergency calls or dealing with individuals in the streets. He was a fine young man, and it's a great loss," he said.

Under supervision

According to state Department of Corrections Communications Manager Betty Bernt, Ferry was on post-prison supervision since October 2012 and would have been under supervision until June.

John Orr, an attorney in Astoria, knew both Goodding and Ferry. "He was a diligent, thoughtful and intelligent officer," Orr said. "That combination of qualities made him an irreplaceable asset to the law enforcement community."

Orr was one among many lawyers who represented Ferry over the years.

"There is attorney-client privilege that survives the death of the represented party," Orr said. "I can say that his problems appear to have derived from chronic substance abuse, which over time, took its toll on his faculties."

have worked. I love you," she read aloud at her dining room table, her voice breaking.

At some point, Ferry had slipped it into the large antique tome, which had once belonged to his great-grandmother, along with an ul-

trasound scan of Ferry and Klaaborg's twins dated two months before their birth.

He could not have known that Klaaborg would find the items only after his death.

"I never took the time to really look until just a few days

ago," she said. "I open it up, and I see all this stuff inside it."

EO Media Group reached out to both of Ferry's daughters for this story; one did not respond, and the other said she wasn't ready to speak publicly about her father.

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