

## Tribute to a good MAN

Sometimes the work of police is taken for granted. We rightfully expect them to respond to emergencies 24/7, facing violent criminals, rescuing people at traffic accidents, and many other instances that can place them in considerable danger. Unfortunately police sometimes die on duty or suffer injuries in trying to protect others.

Over the longer term, many police develop illness through working shifts outdoors often in adverse conditions over many years. Indeed studies undertaken in other countries show that the life expectancy of police officers is lower than other professions.

Recently a lovely lady Lilia Martins informed me of the death of her father who had served in many years in the PSP in the Algarve. He was not of particular high rank nor famous but, his career and commitment to his job, the community and his country, is typical of the professionalism of many police officers, I have known, not only in Portugal but elsewhere.

This is HIS story written by his daughter Lilia.

“This is the story of a good man: Eusébio, who was from Serra do Caldeirão, in the Algarve countryside, was born on the 14th of August 1956, on a hot summer afternoon.



His childhood was modest, in the midst of a humble but happy family. As a teenager, Eusébio came to Faro in search of a better education that would enable him to achieve a better life. It was there that he completed, with distinction, the course of Electrical Engineering, at the former Comercial and Industrial School of Faro.

Shortly thereafter, Eusébio was called in to join the parachute troops in Tancos - Santarém - the best and noblest school of his life.

Between 1976 and 1979, he took the Portuguese military parachuting course, with a strong technical component, of load and physical training, endowing him with the physical and psychological robustness necessary to perform all types of military functions.

Despite his desire to continue as a soldier, life brought him back to Faro, and his commitment and his love for his uniform remained unharmed, throughout his life.

At the beginning of the 80's, he applied to all security forces: GNR, PSP, Judiciary Police. He passed all the entrance exams to the next phase, until he was forced to make a decision. PSP was his natural choice. He entered the Police School in Torres Novas in 1982, few months after being a father for the first time.

He graduated from the Police Academy with distinction and in 1988 Eusébio became Deputy Chief in the PSP District Command of Faro, two years after the birth of his second son.

In the early 90's he decided to return to his studies, to take the course of Shooting Instructor, as well as two other courses of deactivating explosive devices. Shortly afterwards, he became leader of these teams at Faro Airport, and then he became Head Officer at Faro airport.

Eusébio as always guided his professional conduct with extreme professionalism and competence, honoring as no one else the spirit of mission, the uniform he wore for years and the values that it represents. He was always a greater example among his peers, who recognized him as Leader, man of arms, excellent comrade and friend in all hours.

However, he wanted more. Eusébio always liked to serve others, to have a civic spirit and be guided by the noble values of mission in the service of the public cause. For that reason, he decided to go further and start on an unprecedented adventure, with risk to his own life.

The world and Europe, in particular, were in troubled times in the early 1990s. The war had erupted in former Yugoslavia and in 1992, with two young children, Eusébio decided to go to Bosnia, joining the contingent of UNPROFOR - United Nations Protection Force - the first United Nations peacekeeping force in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the war, around 320 soldiers were killed serving with the forces during the conflict.

Fortunately and as my father used to say *"there was still no war in which all men died"*, the saying was confirmed and Eusébio came back home, to his family's joy. But it wasn't for too long.

At the end of the 1990s and at the beginning of the millennium, Eusébio decided to go on a new international military challenge, this time serving KFOR - Kosovo Force - an international peacekeeping force led by NATO, responsible for restoring an environment of peace and security in Kosovo which faced a serious humanitarian crisis, resulting from the armed conflicts between the former Yugoslavia and NATO.

In both peace missions, he served with distinction his Country, NATO and the UN, having received several praises, diplomas and distinctions from all of them.

In war theaters, Eusébio always knew how to fight for peace and order. Always at the service of the Fatherland. Always at the service of Humanity.

However, the biggest and hardest fight he had to fight in his life lasted six years, the last years of his life. And that was the only one that he didn't win.

It was the cancer that overcame him ... this terrible disease that has reaped lives and families, without pity, in an absolutely overwhelming and unprecedented way.

Eusébio's bravery did not let him settle for the disease. He always kept a positive spirit, the strength and courage that was part of his character, always thinking that he would beat it, without ever complaining or victimizing by his poor luck.

The motto he liked the most and that best defined him was from the parachutists, his first military school - "Que nunca por vencidos se conheçam."

He honored it and dignified it in an incredible and amazing way. In all areas and until the end of his life.

Eusébio was a true fighter, Man of Arms, Brave Warrior, Exceptional Human Being. Recognized by all.

This is surely how he would like to be remembered. As someone who served his Community, his Country and the World with Honor, Braveness and Glory.

We should therefore be proud of this Algarvian. A Good Man. To Eternity.

Lilia Martins"

Eusébio passed away just before New Year's Eve 2017. Hundreds of people attended the funeral at a church in Faro and the pall bearers were from the PSP.

Lilia Martins is a Board member of Safe Communities Portugal, currently working as an Accredited Parliamentary Assistant at the European Parliament in Brussels, as policy advisor in the International Trade and Regional Policies branch

**Eusébio Martins - 14/08/1956 - 30/12/17**

Written by Lilia Martins

