

Doorknocking for Bill

Big Heart Appeal volunteer, Emma, lost her brother suddenly to heart disease when he was just 36.

Emma's family has always been close – both personally and geographically. They live within a few suburbs of each other in Canberra and whenever they got together Emma's younger brother, Bill, was always the life of the party; a big kid who never grew up – everyone loved Bill.



Bill was similarly popular at work, both for his sense of humour and his sense of commitment. So when Emma got a call that he hadn't turned up one day and hadn't called in sick, she drove to his home, pushing 'worst case scenarios' from her head and hoping it would just be something stupid.

When Bill didn't answer the door or respond to stones thrown at his window, Emma got a key from her niece and let herself in. Bill had had a massive heart attack and was lying on his bed. As a health professional herself, Emma knew straight away it was already too late for CPR. There was nothing she could do other than call 000, then call her family and get them together to say goodbye.

Sudden Cardiac Death had taken a life-loving 36-year old from them. The weeks and months ahead were some of the hardest any of them had known and even today Emma and her family often struggle to come to terms with Bill not being around.

To help raise awareness that heart disease affects young people too and to raise funds for life-saving research, Emma volunteered as a doorknocker for Big Heart Appeal. This year she'll be out there again, asking her friends and neighbours for donations.

In Emma's words: "We can't bring Bill back but we can stop other Australians losing their loved ones, when they've still so much of their lives ahead of them".

Thank you for being a doorknocker for Big Heart Appeal 2016.