

*Achieving closure! S/Sgt. Terry Cameron is reunited with Amra and her family in Sarajevo (May 1999). (L-R): Amra Abaz, Terry Cameron, Muniba, Fahrudin and Aida Abaz.*



Sarajevo in May, I called the number and spoke to Amra's sister, Aida, who informed me that Amra was in school. I made arrangements to meet with Amra and her family the next morning — May 22.

That night I called my old interpreter, Ernad, and he agreed to accompany me to meet Amra and her family. I felt this was only fitting, as Ernad had been involved in this, and other ventures from the beginning.

The next morning we drove to the address Amra's sister had provided and it turned out to be only a few blocks from where I normally stay while in Sarajevo. The whole neighbourhood must have been aware of this visit because people were coming out onto the street and giving us directions. We were met by Amra's father, Fahrudin, who brought us to his home where Amra was waiting, along with her mother Muniba and older sister Aida.

It's impossible to describe the emotions I felt at this time — here was 13-year-old Amra — not the scared little girl I knew in 1994. As expected, Amra did not remember me but did remember what had happened as well as her return to Sarajevo. When I gave her the photo of her and her grandmother, she cried a bit but it was her mother who was the most affected. They had seen this same photo when visiting the grandmother, who is still in Gorazde. While partaking in the Bosnian custom of coffee and cakes, I learned the background of Amra's stay in Gorazde and what happened after getting back to Sarajevo. During this conversation I could see just how much they appreciated the

efforts of Gorazde CivPol in getting Amra safely back to Sarajevo in 1994.

As it turned out, Fahrudin Abaz is a policeman in Sarajevo. Once he found out that I was also a policeman he became much more talkative. He told me how they had taken Amra to visit her grandmother in Visegrad, a town northeast of Gorazde, and when the war broke out they had to flee to Gorazde where they lived as refugees. Fahrudin and the rest of the family remained in Sarajevo and he felt particularly guilty because there was nothing he could do to get his little girl back. When he found out that we were trying to arrange the evacuation of Amra, he was praying that all would go well, and when he met with my monitors at the PTT building he couldn't believe she was actually there. The entire family was, and remains, grateful for the efforts of those involved.

Before leaving the Abaz family, I took another photo of Amra, Ernad and myself. Although we were all five years older, the events of 1994 were as fresh as yesterday. Now I have another photo to deliver during my next mission to Sarajevo. Before returning to The Hague later that same day, I met with the local authorities who were very pleased that they were able to help reunite me with Amra. They also made it clear that they were pleasantly surprised that I cared enough to pursue this quest after so many years.

In closing, I have to admit that finally getting that photo to Amra, and meeting her family, has brought a real sense of closure for me. And that is the rest of the story! ❖