

Ralph 'Terry' Gibbs, who kidnapped his 'sweetheart' Carol Lisle from West Australian nursing home, dies days after she does

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Carol Lisle and Ralph Gibbs died within days of each other. (ABC News: Supplied)

An elderly man who kidnapped his dementia-stricken "sweetheart" from a Perth nursing home and tried to drive her across West Australia's hard border to Queensland has died just two days after his partner.

Ralph "Terry" Gibbs, 80, was killed in a car crash in Queensland yesterday after his vehicle collided with a utility south of Bowen, in the state's north.

His death came 48 hours after that of his partner of 15 years, 84-year-old Carol Lisle, who passed away in an aged care facility in Mandurah, where she was living with dementia and Parkinson's disease.

The pair died less than a week after a Perth magistrate gave Gibbs a seven-month suspended sentence for taking Ms Lisle from the same aged care home in January and trying to drive her across Australia in heatwave conditions.

They were caught by police 90 kilometres from the Northern Territory border, and Ms Lisle had to be airlifted back to Perth for medical treatment.

The magistrate described Gibb's actions as "extremely dangerous" and issued him with a restraining order to prevent him from contacting Ms Lisle.

Gibbs wanted to see his 'sweetheart'

Outside the court, Gibbs described Ms Lisle as "my little sweetheart" and said he had been "fighting for a year to get her back so we can see each other because she has dementia and may not last much longer".

A close friend of Ms Lisle, who did not want to be named, told the ABC she died in the early hours of Monday morning at Mercy Heath and Aged Care in Mandurah.

Key points:

- Ralph "Terry" Gibbs died in a Queensland car crash on Wednesday
- His partner Carol Lisle died just 48 hours earlier
- Gibbs received a suspended sentence for kidnapping Ms Lisle



Carol Lisle had been in poor health before her death at the aged care facility. (Supplied: WA Police)

The friend — who had known Ms Lisle for 24 years — said she was loved and well looked after at the nursing home, but she had been very unwell since being taken from there in January.

"Carol's friends are devastated at her passing and believe the separation from her loved ones contributed to her death," the friend said.



Ralph "Terry" Gibbs admitted taking Carol Lisle from her aged care facility near Mandurah and trying to drive her to Queensland. (ABC News: Joanna Menagh)

Queensland police said Gibbs was heading north on the Bruce Highway in the early hours of Wednesday when his vehicle collided with a utility heading in the opposite direction being driven by a 60-year-old man.

Gibbs died at the scene while the 60-year-old man was airlifted to a local hospital, where he is believed to be in a serious condition.

The forensic crash unit is investigating.