

DAD'S EULOGY by Kerrie

From an early age I remember dad recording our singing. Dad often accompanied us to perform for the relatives and entered us in a number of eisteddfods. He took us along to the Methodist Church in Dandenong, where Mum and Dad had married. He expected us to have good manners especially when we were out. There were long Saturdays when I had to endure watching his cricket game preferring to climb the oval boundary trees.

We shifted to Perth in the late 60s and Dad could finish some final study of accountancy qualifications. I remember him joining Mt Lawley Cricket club and purchasing vibraphones. Dad always seemed to quickly pick up any instrument and play. It was normal in our household to play music every day.

We returned to Dandenong North at the start of the 1970s and Dad began working for Mr Magid at Overland Development, firstly at Brandon Park and later the commencement of – now Westfield Fountain Gate shopping Centre. Dad expressed how Mr Magid treated him like a son and he worked there until his retirement.

Dad was quite strict about money and if he was paying for our piano lessons, he expected us to practice every day. As Linda and I were advancing I remember him saying "next year you will need to do 45 minutes a day". Linda and I bailed – I wanted to take up horse riding and we could not believe it when he sold the lovely piano and bought an organ....but organ sound was his love, and this stayed with him right up to the end of his life.

At this time, I was 14 and wanted a horse. Dad agreed as long as I paid for it and all expenses with my after-school job. As an accountant he expected us to learn to be responsible with money. Charging us for taxi drop offs.

At 17, Dad expected me to buy my first car together with Linda, so he drove our car, towing the horses. He did build our horse yards and saddlery cupboards and we had our horses in the paddocks right outside our back fence, so we were incredibly lucky.

Much to the dismay of my mum, Dad would float our horses down to Eastern View at Christmas time holidays where we could gallop along the beach.

It was fortunate Dad had ridden in his earlier years, often telling us the story of how he would ride bareback and if he spilt any milk added water before delivering it to the neighbours.

NOEL DAWSON

Dad would climb aboard our horses with bare feet in the stirrups and gallop off. A sportsman – he was so confident and balanced.

At Eastern View and family gatherings he would play for all sing-a-longs and my cousins all remember the fun we would have singing around the piano. He could play anything we wanted to sing.

I did get that beautiful piano back – as Dad bought me a lovely new Yamaha when Stephanie was little and I returned to lessons once again, this time with great enthusiasm! And we could again, share our passion for music.

It was 1999 when Dad fell in love & married Caroline. They lived in Vermont with Caroline's children Rob and Jacquie. Linda, Ashley, and I including my Mum, Philomena were all warmly embraced by Caroline and it was always wonderful for us to have our family gatherings. Dad & Caroline were always out socialising, going on trips and both loved going up to the little farm at Moonambel.

They decided it was time for a country shift and Maryborough was the chosen destination. Caroline and Dad moved into the community, making great loving, and supporting friends, Dad getting involved in the woodwork and organ club and Caroline joined the local Catholic St Augustine's church, singing in the choir and volunteering at Red Cross.

Dad wanted to keep being Project Manager and they purchased a house from Boronia and had it reconstructed at Daisy Hill. He could feel like he was on a farm again - got a couple of cows, not knowing they were expecting 2 more!

More sheds were built (I think Dad said he built at least 17 sheds in his life). However, within a few years, Dad's health declining, the cows had to be sold on. Dad kept up all he could when he was well, he loved playing for the monthly organ club.

The final move would be to Holyrood Street in Maryborough. Now that was the move of the year – the great downsizing! Even when I was trying to help him sort things out on our visits – “Oh, forget about that – let's just go out and eat!”

Dad always had time to listen, lots of stories, and could always see the funny side of life. He strived as long as he could, never giving up, staying positive to the very end.