

EULOGY FOR DADDY

Brian was born in Melbourne on January 28 1929 – according to the official records. Actually he was born on February 28 that year but his mother was a bit absent minded when she signed the incorrect birth certificate...

He was the third of four children – his dad was a sports journalist and proof reader for Melbourne's Argus and the Herald newspapers and his mother an accomplished seamstress. At school he excelled at gymnastics. After completing Secondary School he attended Technical School to study design engineering and his interest in agricultural equipment design developed.

He travelled to the UK and Europe and lived in Kenilworth, Warwickshire to further his work experience at Massey Ferguson in Coventry.

Brian met Jean on a blind date with his friend Peter (and her friend, Marion) in 1957. They married in 1960 – and had seven children.

Over the years the family moved around the country with his work and had homes in Melbourne, Adelaide, Wellington (NSW), back to Melbourne then retired to Chewton.

Never one to let the grass grow under his feet, Brian was always active and supportive of all his children's schools, sports, music, and other extra-curricula activities. He was President of the P&F at St Mary's School in Wellington, the President of the P&F at Salesian College, Rupertswood and always assisted with any fund-raising involved with the Brownies and the Girl Guides.

With a generous spirit and willingness to help out, Brian was a life-long volunteer – always in support of, and in partnership with Jean.

He was heavily involved in all the local church and charitable organizations in whichever community his family resided: his children have fond memories of countless walkathons, door knocks, cake stalls and newspaper collections especially to raise money for the Australian Red Cross in Adelaide. In more recent years he volunteered his time and handyman talents for St Vincent de Paul here in Castlemaine.

But what he really loved in his spare time was to play golf - and he served on various golf club committees and as President of the “Highercombe” Golf Club in South Australia. He was so fond of those days that “Highercomb” was chosen as the name of his retirement “property”. His brother Allen cheekily referred to him as The Squire of Chewton.

It was here that he whiled away days on crosswords, reading (some of his favourites included the poems of Robert Burns, the stories of Charles Dickens, and the life lessons of Aesop’s Fables,) writing, gardening, playing “pool boy” at Mum’s swimming pool yet he never even dipped his toe in the water (!!) and tinkering in his very-well-kitted-out “cave” i.e. shed!

But as much as a man can love golf and his shed, he loved his family, and especially Jean, the most. Here are some of their special memories...

Janatha: Dad is the reason I passed Maths and Physics at school; love reading, and travelled the world.

Eleanor: Dad is the reason I love words and writing. And why I travel and love dogs...And he's the reason I am the world's second best Scrabble player (next to him!).

Caroline: Dad is the reason I make green tomato pickles, and have a great appreciation of the outdoors and all it has to offer. He gave me many practical skills which I still put to good use to this day.

Catherine: Dad is the reason I have curly hair and bushy eye-brows.

Martin: Dad is the reason I play golf. It has become my life's profession enabling me to support my family and enjoy all the golfing community has to offer for a wonderful life.

Gregory: Dad is the reason I am who I am. I strive to be as smart, kind, respectful, as talented and as gentlemanly as my father always was.

Rosemary: Dad is the reason I love reading books, and enjoy looking after Mum.

We now are content to know that Dad is in heaven with Nana and Pa and his dear brother, Allen. No doubt he'll be enjoying a few rounds of golf with his friends Uncle Ted and Uncle Peter, and exchanging clever repartee with Uncle Allen.

Maybe he will be enjoying lunch with his Adelaide work colleagues; having a steak-and-\$2-bottle of Penfolds Grange (that was a good thing about the 70's!).

We wonder if he'll be shaking his heads at us when we mix metaphors. Will he look down on us and correct our poor grammar and upbraid us when we use "Americanisms" instead of using the Queen's English? How very annoying that he is almost always right!

In heaven we imagine Dad still enjoying doing crosswords and crostics, sipping on Australian reds and chomping fresh oysters. Will he re-read the "Rumpole of the Bailey" stories with as much relish the third time around?

We really hope he does lots of bagpipe impersonations for everyone as he did for us when we were young, and that he keeps the wonderful joie de vivre and great sense of fun he had before he was ill.

We trust that all the little things that niggled him towards the end are no longer a source of irritation and worry, and that the wretched coughing has ceased and no longer distresses him.

We have faith that now he is at peace.

You can breathe easily now.

You will be very much missed by all who knew and loved you.