

Dad

What a wonderful man.

As a family we suffered an early tragedy with mum, being terminally ill. As she weakened you sat with her she made you promise. Promise to take care of us kids, a promise that was exceeded far beyond what anyone could have believed.

I think a testament to the true nature of this very promise is that whenever I spoke about my childhood as I have grown I would always follow the fact that I lost my mum, with saying that I was lucky, I had the best dad in the world.

You held true to your promise until the very end. Andrew and myself sat by your bed, I have to believe you knew we were there and the final piece of your promise Carnie, unfortunately could not come to your side because of Covid, but you waited until we put the phone by your ear and she spoke to you, then once you knew we were all there, we were all safe you quietly passed.

We were truly your world.

You had a very unique gift of being able to brighten the saddest of days with your wicked sense of humour. And against the odds, us kids all have such beautiful memories of a childhood full of laughter and love.

Times when we were camping and you would lead all the kids marching in single file around the camp grounds singing 'When the ants go marching..' then at bed time to all share a glass of raspberry cordial being told it was ants blood you had spent the afternoon collecting.

Driving up North on a camping trip with our cousins, you hid coins under leaves of a tree and would gather us and pick the leaves up revealing the coins telling us it was a money tree!! Causing all the kids near and far to stampede looking for coins.

You had the amazing shrinking and growing cereal boxes. You told us that cereal boxes would shrink in the freezer. We would all watch you place a large cornflake box in the freezer, to return an hour later and find it smaller, then another hour later to find it smaller again. Being amazed as a kid as these boxes got progressively smaller. To then to have you make them grow again in the oven, back to the original large box size. Only many years later did I realize that the supermarket actually sold all the different size boxes.

A memory Carnie and I still laugh about now, when Carnie and I were sitting watching the love boat and there was mention of masturbation, and I had no idea what it meant I asked Carnie she giggled a little and said ask dad. With my enquiring little mind I found dad in the kitchen and asked him, to be answered with I think it's time for bed.

When I met Clem I use to wear a little locket dad gave me, inside was a priceless picture of dad at the shack with his hair on end. Clem never told me until much later that he was slightly scared of the crazy looking man in the picture. He couldn't believe just how misleading that was. He and dad had a wonderful, jovial bond.

Then as I have grown and had my own kids I have watched with pleasure as you have created special memories with them. Callum in the wheel barrow collecting gifts for mum around the farm. Paige being endlessly pushed on the swings at the park. Special bushes that grew chocolate, very similar in sounding to our money trees!

Everyone that knows you dad, knows that these creative fun stories go on and on. As I said your unique sense of humour could brighten the saddest of days.

You held my hand  
when I was small,  
when no one else could.  
You caught me when I fell,  
The hero of my childhood,  
And of the later years as well.  
Every time I think of you my heart fills with pride.  
And although I'll always miss you, dad  
I know you're by my side.  
In laughter and in sorrow  
In sunshine and rain  
I know you're watching over me  
Until we meet again.

Dad you are truly my hero.

You can also view the service live on [tobinbrothers.com.au](http://tobinbrothers.com.au) It will be there for 12 months.

Barry and I first started seeing each other 26 years ago.

He impressed me with his empathetic, kind and caring nature and of course his whacky sense of humour which I admit shocked me at first, but I figured this man must be joking and would laugh nervously.

I think Barry was attracted to me because I smoked, liked a glass of wine (not red unfortunately), barracked for Essendon, loved opp shops and picking things up from hard rubbish collections, and at the time had red hair like his beloved mum Connie, although mine was from a bottle.

Barry eventually sold his house in Mooroolbark and came to live in Keilor with my two sons Tim and Jamie (Geoff having left home some years previously) and myself. Over the three years, we had Tim and Jamie with us, then Jamie and Carnie, so our family was blended.

He had left the bank and was working under contract for the Esso Credit Union and other financial institutions. Barry was a wonderful helpmate. He loved to fix things, cook (his spaghetti sauce was almost as good as her mother's Tania said), and didn't mind the odd painting project.

When his mother Connie moved into care in Wagga Wagga to be closer to Barry's sister Dianne, we discussed making a tree change.

We bought Glen Isla a small farm 34kms from Wagga and he was in seventh heaven. He loved the country and was a cow cocky at heart.

The house needed work and he set about fixing things with enthusiasm. Barry was happiest when making something out of nothing..... Up and down the Hume he would go with Darkie and an assortment of things for Glen Isla, whilst I still worked full time and joined them on the weekends. A bird aviary became a henhouse, an old shed the grandkids playhouse eventually, after taking off in a strong wind down into our neighbour's paddock. We were fortunate in obtaining wine grape cuttings from a friend and our vineyard was born.. We also kept a flock of Dorper sheep, who would disappear early every morning to seek greener pastures (much to Barry's horror) but who would come home every night in single file.

Dianne and John were only 3kms away and with our neighbours, Ross, Jo, Luxton and Margaret would watch with amused interest .... John, Ross and Luxton often coming for morning tea, a check up and chat.

Glen Isla was the “party house”. Family and friends (Kenny Mac and Jan, Junene and Ken, Juls Joan and Howard) often came to stay; we involved ourselves in farm stay for German and Canadian tourists who would stay overnight, enjoy dinner with the locals and get back on the bus the next day for Canberra.

Barry would think up things to host a dinner, all for a bit of a laugh a sausage sizzle to launch our first wine tasting good paint stripper and it never improved unfortunately although we did try.

We often had Ross, Jo and the girls Bella, Jacqui and Anna for dinner or looked after the girls after school. Once he handed Anna and her friend a bucket each to go snail hunting – thinking the girls would only collect a few, but was taken aback and a lot poorer when they came back with a bucketful!

We enjoyed many happy times with Frances and Bruce from a nearby property. Barry and Bruce commiserating with each other over their football teams’ performance

We had a twenty first birthday for Darkie the kelpie (at Sienna’s suggestion) and the farm dogs all dressed up – rabbit casserole and Shadows Run was on the menu. Luxton and Barry shared the same sense of humour and if Barry wasn’t defending his entrance gate donned with a pith helmet and swagger stick from Luyxton’s sheep, he and Luxton would be blowing up rabbit burrows, or competing as to who was the younger after ingesting a particular herb. Photos would be sent from Wagga/Melb/Wagga boasting how youthful they had become.

We would return to Melbourne monthly and enjoyed catching up with family and particularly the grandchildren. Barry had a special bond with children.... Whether it was doing exercises with the babies, changing nappies ... flowers to the front Barry would remind me .. playing poker with Ashley or making my cousin’s daughter Linni feel very special.

Jemma would come every Friday and Jemma and Bozie were firm friends. They enjoyed doing the hoky poky or Barry would pretend to be a customer at Jemma’s café. After our move from the farm, we purchased a town house in Ascot Vale. Barry and Jem would take long walks around the Ascot Vale neighbourhood with Moby. Down 5 dog lane they’d go setting all the dogs barking, then up to chicken leg park (where a lady left bones for the magpies) and off to see the submarine birds in the river and the pineapple trees where the birds nested in the evening.

Barry was well known in our immediate neighbourhood as he loved a chat ... everyone knew him and Moby (later our westie Leonora) ... with a “what’s on today”

and a greeting he would move on. Often coming home to rummage in the shed to lend a neighbour an essential tool or help out with a task.

Our country friends would often visit for a few days and we enjoyed their company immensely.

We became members of the All Saints congregation and Barry would help out on gardening duties or give me a hand church cleaning, morning teas, or where ever he could be useful. He really enjoyed the parish and the Opp shop and made friends easily with his kindness, humour and cheekiness. Barry and Fr Matthew were good friends and Matthew often popped in for a cuppa and a chat.

Barry and I did some overseas travel, incorporating a sight seeing tour of various countries with visits to my family in the UK and Andrew, Angela and family in Sweden and later Singapore. We enjoyed a few outback driving trips with De and Ian and loved the Australian bush.

Later as his dementia took hold, Barry suffered from Sundowners and Lewy Body dementia where he would wake several times per night to live his dream (rather like sleep walking)

I learned quickly to go along with Barry's delusions as to contradict him would cause him a lot of agitation. This is a nice house he'd say looking around .... Who lives here? I'd reassure him, again and again. The hardest part was being woken at 3.30am with all the lights suddenly switched on and Barry standing there, hair on end, jumper on back to front, pants and no shoes saying time to get up, I've got to open the bank!!

Barry entered care initially in respite at Nellie Melba in mid September 2021 and then the dementia unit in October. He settled quickly, and became a happy wanderer, up and down the halls. We learned to approach him quietly and speak gently as loud noises and voices would startle him.

Initially, he was happy to participate in armchair exercises and Carnie would also make sure he kept his mobility. He would sometimes hold his hands out and ask her for a dance, much to the amusement of the others.

As he progressed he was still able to laugh with us and at himself .... Food down the front of his jumper ... I'd say you've had your lunch, yes it was very tasty What did you have I ask I don't know that! Would be his response and we'd laugh.

We would have involved conversations.... What time is he coming.....How is he getting here....Is she coming... Where are they staying? I would answer and as I

left at lunchtime would remind him... I'd better go now they will be arriving at our place. Oh righto you'd better get going then

Barry must have thought I spent an awful lot of time at our church Opp Shop as it was a good standby for Carnie when he asked Where's Jackie, Where's my Jackie? Carnie would reply she's at the Opp shop today dad. Oh OK he'd reply.

Barry tried so hard to overcome his disability after the stroke and was trying to lift his foot and exercise it after the fall... when he realised he had had a stroke, the light went out of his eyes and he succumbed to sleep. He did have a couple of fleeting moments of lucidity on Sat/Sunday but it was time for him to leave us, which he did on Monday afternoon.

Rest in peace my love ..... and in the words of my youngest grandgirl, Summer whilst Barry played hidie and chasie with her .....

See Ya Later Alligator .... Don't forget the toilet paper!!

The Gladdie wave.....

To say I loved my dad would be an understatement and to say I'm going to miss him would be an even greater understatement.

He was a truly the most amazing dad: kind, loving, so patient and totally devoted to his children. Dad was a great listener. His life was his kids and he gave us a perfect family home.

He would come to watch all my ballet concerts, even did my hair in a bun - he would always struggle with the hair net and messy buns weren't really classical ballet style- the ballet mums always would fix it up. My cousins and I always did a Christmas concerts for the family and one time Dad even put a tutu and gave us a recital of swan lake!

Everyone knew Dads great sense of humour. My friends would come over and he would always say something funny to make them laugh.

At home on Saturday afternoons Dad loved watching the footy and his mighty Bomers play. And you'd always here him from outside offering coaching tips to the umpires.... And He loved to have a long neck VB beer watching the footy.

Growing up we always had pets in our household - Cat, birds, bunny, hermit crab, horse and dogs. Dad had a **love and hate** relationship with the our Cat. One particular day Dad thought it would be funny to startle the cat by banging a piece of timber on-top of the upside down wheelbarrow where the cat was sunbathing! A few days later the Cat thought it would be funnier to launch out of the bushes and latch all claws onto Dads bare legs in shorts - I remember Dad letting out a ripper of a scream with a few spicy words! It was Pay back time always in the Spink house - even from the Pets!

Dad as single parent - working full time and raising a family had to be really organised. He would stocked up the linen press cupboard like a supermarket aisle with rows of canned fruit, baked beans, creamed corn, milo, cereal, canned ham steaks, loads of toilet paper and fruit juice- and we were each allocated 1 litre of fruit juice for the week. Drew and I were always negotiating to trade our weekly juice supply off Katie (sometimes we would drinks hers anyways and refill it with watered down cordial)

Sunday evening was school lunch preparation for the week, and Dad had it down to a fine art. Starting with a couple of loafs of white bread laid out on the bench top, with margarine, and a mixture of fillings ranging from Jam, Honey, vegemite, peanut butter and mashed up garlic potatoes! He would assemble the weeks worth of sandwiches then cling wrap them tightly placing them back into the plastic bread bag and pop them in the Deep freeze. Each school morning he would randomly grab out a sandwiches for each of the lunch bags - so you never were quite sure which sandwich you would get -lucky if you got the garlic potatoes sandwich – certainly an acquired taste.. (its worth noting each lunch bag had one sandwich (occasionally still frozen on cold days , 1 apple and 3x sweet biscuits).....He would also write a cryptic note, joke or a sketch a drawing on our brown paper lunch bags – which our teachers were always super excited to see days message on the lunch bag.

Dad also loved play funny jokes. One of the funniest was when Dad and I decided to play a joke on my sister Katie. She had made a chocolate birthday cake for her girl-friends birthday party and put it in the fridge to take later to the birthday. So Dad and I thought it would be funny to make a 'replica of the cake' whilst she was out at work then replace it in the fridge with a piece taken out of it. So we spend the afternoon together baking the cake and belly laughing the whole time. When Katie came home she was happy and excited and asked us what we did for the day – Dad said "Drew popped over for a visit" – she immediately went to the fridge knowing Drew would eat anything in the fridge and saw a piece missing from her cake. She slammed the fridge door swearing and cursing and Dad and I were trying to keep a poker face – until WE burst out laughing and pulled out her untouched cake. She tried to stay angry with us --- but caved in!

Fast forward to my adult years so many great times celebrating birthdays, Christmas, family dinners and many glasses of red wine (his favourite). Matt my partner adored my Dad, they had a special handshake every-time they saw each other.... it was like an 'air shake'....even in aged care when his memory was fading he would still do the 'air shake' followed with a big smile.

Dads face would instantly light up with a big smile when his family was around and we always talk and laughed about our childhood stories, holidays with cousins, and life up at the farm.

Dad would always say to me '**We did ok, didn't we**'. I'd reply – "**We certainly did Dad**".

I would ring dad and always say Hi Dad, its your favourite daughter, and he'd always say Hey Katie, how you doing ! This was our ongoing joke right up to the day he passed. Unfortunately due to covid I was not able to be by his bedside but I still had the opportunity to tell him I loved him and told him what an amazing job he did as a DAD.... I think he was happy with that.

I want to say: Dad thank you for believing in me always, you left me with beautiful memories, Your love is still my guide, and though I cannot see you, you will always be by my side".

Rest in piece Dad and give my love to Mum.

Before I start I will like to thank everybody who has come to honour the memory of my father, especially those who have travelled from interstate.

I would also like to thank the people who are joining us on the streaming service because they are unable to attend.

Dad was the second child born to Orm and Connie Spink in 1941, he did have an older sister Jude and a younger sister Dise. They grew up in Essendon just down the road from windy hill football ground, Dad did follow in his father footsteps and went to Scotch College

Dad met mum ( Adrienne) at new year's eve party at around 21 years old this would have been in early 60's ( 62, 63 ).

They did get married in 1965 and together purchase a house in the outer suburbs of Melbourne , Greenville st, Mooroolbark. In Those days basically the boonys

Dad was a worker at the State Bank

Mum did give birth to a son , Me 1966 , Carney 1968, Katey 1972.

Needing a bigger house we did move to the other side of Mooroolbark 1974 , Marlow street, this is where our family did spend most of our younger years.

We did have a busy life with Mum and dad taking us on Frequent Camping holidays, and almost a yearly pilgrimage to Adelaide to spend time with our cousins, this did culminate with a camping trip, which did take us around Australia for a 3 month tour with friends and family.

Unfortunate mum was diagnosed with Leukemia in around 1977, this battle she did lose and did pass away unexpectedly in September 1979.

This did really throw a spanner in the works,

During this time Dad had progressed from the bottom rungs of the bank ladder to a job in town at the State Bank Branch Mechanization this job relating to the early computerization of the bank .

Unfortunately the travel time and the hours required for this job affect his ability to look after his young children, myself 12, carney 10, and little Katie at 7 .

To be closer to home he then did take an assistant manager's position in Baywater only 10 min away, a short time later a manager's position at Wandin North .Then finally to a regional Manager position in Yarra Junction.

He did love his bank job and dealing with all of the Yarra Valley locals

I cannot say the time were easy after mum passed but Dad unselfishly did do everything, he could to help us out, running around with our sports, school, scouts, holidays and organising help when needed to work

When I was around 19 we did get a new dog called Darkie he did come to be one of dad's great companions.

Jokingly Dad did end up calling Darkie 'Sole Benny' 'beneficiary' Insisting he was the only one who knew where all of the "cash" was buried.

Dad did also like nick names

After a stay up at the farm Nick one of my sons ) did let my uncle John piglet out ( nick though it was fun chasing and catching and returning the pig to the pen ), he also broke dad's tape measure while trying to help with a building job ,

That earned him the name "Swedish Turd"

After Daniel, another son of mine, was born he managed to score nick name "The Sneaky Russian "

I did test dad's to the limits a couple of times, he was definitely not impressed when he came home from work to find some of my engine parts, from my mini moke, in the oven, preheating before painting, that oven always required an occy strap to keep the door shut which required some skill to close properly without suffer a debilitating injury

Dad did also love and support my darling wife Angela and then my young family as they grew, and I did spend far too much time working and travelling.

It was not really until we all moved out did he have time to move on with his life and where he did meet Jackie in around 1996

I will miss our normal greeting, at the door I say " Father ", he would always respond with a stern " Andy " and offer a firm hand.

I still fear I did not spend enough time with him or tell him how much I loved him for everything he did do, he will be missed.