

Neil Alexander Morton. 31.08.1940 – 04.02.2024.

The Eulogy delivered by his brother Ian at St. Faith's Church, Glen Iris.

Neil was humble, generous and he had an impish sense of humour.

He tended to shun the limelight and preferred to work quietly in the background on projects and things. Neil loved family gatherings and on occasions having a meal out with a friend or two.

And at times he delighted at hosting such events.

For the family he was a tower of strength and a rock of reliability.

#### HIS EARLY LIFE

Neil was born on the 31 August 1940 at South Camberwell and was christened and later confirmed at St. Faiths Church of England, Burwood. When he was old enough, he attended Lillery Kindergarten and then Hartwell Primary School, where in grade 6 he was captain of football. He then went to Camberwell Central followed by a stint in the RANC before going onto Camberwell High School.

#### HIS WORKING LIFE

After leaving school, following our father, he joined the State Savings Bank of Victoria and started work at its Hartwell Branch on the 16 December 1957. About 18 months later he was transferred to the Prince Henry Hospital Branch in St. Kilda Road, opposite the Shrine of Remembrance, and then 14 months later to the Bank's Mechanisation Staff.

When Neil joined the Bank, he was advised to undertake the Bankers Institute Course, which he completed very successfully.

Then, in early 1962, the Bank canvassed junior staff between the ages of 21 and 25 to see if any of them would be prepared to work in the London Office for a period of 3 years and no more than 5. Neil applied and was successful. He departed Port Melbourne mid- May of that year by ship and arrived in England late June 1962. He found lodgings at 33 Northside Clapham Common and this was his London base for the next 4 wonderful years of working in the Bank's London Office.

Whilst there he also caught up with some of our mother's extended family members at Lower Shiplake (near Henley on Thames) and he spent many happy times with them. He also caught up with a couple of Australians with family connections to the Bank.

He wrote many letters to his friends back in Australia and just for fun, began using the word Fred- rather than I – and he became known as Freddo Frog and then just Frog. A number of people also called Neil "Fred". He loved being known as Frog – Need we say anymore! His friends sometimes bought him small model frogs and so the joke continued.

The practice of writing to his friends remained with him for life.

Neil returned to Australia in 1966 and worked for a while in the Bank's Overseas and Mortgage Loans Departments and apart from a stint at its Burwood Branch, he spent the remainder of his time in various positions at the Bank's Premises Department, until he finished up in approximately 1990.

One of his roles was liaising with Architects and Builders on building sites and this is when he first donned the blue dustcoat – which became an essential wardrobe for the rest of his life.

After the Bank, he ventured into financial services, marketing in catering, and then later working in an Accountant's office near Hartwell Station.

#### HE LED A RICH AND FULL LIFE IN RETIREMENT

After retirement Neil did some volunteer work, including 14 years at the World Vision mail room. He enjoyed being part of an incredible organisation that helped across the world, and he loved the people he met there. It suited him! Early to bed early to rise as he started at 6 a.m. He

always said that I was missing out on the best part of the day. He regularly got up at 3 a.m. and liked to 'ease into the day' – needless to say, he was never late for anything.

At times the air conditioner in the World Vision mail room would be a little too warm for Neil's comfort, so about 9 a.m. he would walk across Vision Drive to Crossways, a large Baptist Centre, for morning coffee and he got to know some of the people there, including the Head Pastor who he would chat to from time to time.

#### THE CLUB

After he retired, Neil also really enjoyed going to monthly lunches with some of his Bank Colleagues and he and a 'Frog' were regulars.

He was a great mate of the late Noel Whale, an Anglican Minister, and they enjoyed an occasional meal together at the RACV Club.

#### BOATING

Neil also loved boats, ships and the sea.

In his younger years, after completing his banker's course, as a part time activity he joined the Royal Australian Navy Reserve. Then after returning from London, he went to join the Reserve again, but a back injury prevented him from doing so. However, to keep strong connection with the water, he then went on to become the Secretary of the Ship Lovers Society of Victoria for about 22 years – another voluntary role.

Throughout his life he continued to love the water and boating. He bought a boat and went boating most weekends with Bob at Hobson Bay Yacht Club and enjoyed everything to do with boats for the next 25 years or so. ('He liked mucking around in boats')

#### SENSE OF HUMOUR

Neil had a mischievous sense of humour. From a very young age he said: 'It's fun to make people laugh'.

At Sunday School he mimicked his teacher Mrs Vance and was caught. When our Mum Edna asked why he did that, he simply said it's fun to make children laugh.

Following that a group of Mum's friends came around for a formal afternoon tea and all the ladies had their coats and hats on the bed. Neil took it upon himself to don many of the hats and coats and appeared in the doorway to provide some entertainment.

#### CLOSE

On behalf of the family, Jan, Peter, Julia, Paul, Charlie and Nino, I would like to thank you all for joining us to celebrate the wonderful life of a wonderful person. Our thanks go to the wonderful staff at Shenley Manor for the love and care.

Thanks, Freddo Frog, for the laughs, the good times and the support you have given each and every one of us here today.