

# THE COCK CROWS



**NEWS FROM ST PETER'S  
CREMORNE  
JULY 2022**

## RECTOR'S CORNER

### Do you love me more than these?

What do we love most as a church? What do you think visitors to St Peter's observe about what we love? Can they discern a common love in us for anything in particular? What would Our Lord discern about what we love?

I was struck by a quote I recently came across from the nineteenth century Baptist preacher, Charles Spurgeon:

**"As a church we must love Jesus, or else we have lost our reason for existence."**

It comes from his sermon on Revelation 2:1-7, a passage in which Christ commends the church of Ephesus for its hard work, perseverance, and its desire to resist wickedness and false teaching. But, Christ warns them:

"Yet I hold this against you: you have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place."  
(Revelation 2:4,5).

*[In the symbolism of the book of Revelation, the removal of the church's lampstand means that the church will cease to exist]*

To love Jesus is to long to know him more and more, to seek his honour and glory, to speak of him, to trust him – his word and his promises, to seek to keep his commands, to imitate him, to love his people, to love the things he loves, to serve his cause and to want to be with him.

There is, of course, a hierarchy of loves we are called to: First – to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. And a second flows from the first: to love our neighbor as ourselves. As we know the Triune God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, our wholehearted love for God is rightly expressed in love for our Lord Jesus. It is not wrong of us to love lesser things as well, only to love lesser things more – to forsake our first love:

<sup>15</sup> When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" (John 21:15)

In his message to the church in Ephesus, Christ first observes that the church has drifted in its love for him. As Spurgeon noted: "Certainly no observer can be so *tender* as the Son of God. Those lamps are very precious to him: it cost him his life to light them. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." Every church is to our Lord a more sublime thing than a constellation in the heavens; as he is precious to his saints, so are they precious to him."

And so, in love and mercy, the Lord warns his church – and he warns us – so that if we have lost our love for him we might repent and return to him. And every time we find we have drifted in our love for him, he will welcome us back and we will know afresh his love for us as our Redeemer, our Saviour, our Advocate, and our Lord.

How might we answer the Lord's question to us:

"St Peter's, do you love me more than these?"

*The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Grace and Peace,  
Tim*

### **Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity**

O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding: pour into our hearts such love towards you, that we, loving you above all things, may obtain your promises which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# AROUND THE PARISH

## Thanking our Administrative Assistant

Edwina Lambkin finished her role in the parish office on Thursday 23 June. Edwina touched all our lives with her diligence, attention to detail, friendly interaction with all, efficiency, and reliability. After 6 years of part time work in the office, she has taken a fulltime role working in Mosman.

Edwina remains a Parish Councillor and we look forward to continuing seeing her at the 9am service.



## Farewelling Julia and Geoff Williams

Julia and Geoff started attending St Peter's around 3 years ago at the invitation of Fr Tim, to help with the establishment and growth of a service that would be attractive to families in the Cremorne parish.

Geoff fondly remembers attending St Peter's as a little boy living in Illiliwa Street with his parents Jim and Enid Williams, who had also been married at the church. Geoff wanted to give back to the church where he had been baptised. They both felt a real calling to serve at St Peter's and a strong desire to see people in Cremorne come to know their Lord and saviour.

Julia and Geoff brought a wealth of experience and huge enthusiasm to engage with young families. They regularly attended each week and enjoyed the service. Sadly, just as things were firming up, Covid 19 struck, and we were all in isolation. After a few months, the parish resolved to purchase equipment to enable livestreaming. Julia's

technical experience was very helpful, and she showed others how to manage the livestream. Until recently, we livestreamed two services each Sunday.

In April and May 2020, Julia and Geoff produced a 3–4-page weekly bible reflection and prayer sheet, with reference to songs online, which was sent to parishioners to help keep the focus while in isolation.

At the AGM in 2021, Geoff was appointed Rector's Warden, with all that the gradual return to worship involved. He retired at the AGM in 2022 because of commitments to their rural ministry. During the year, he started a Prayer Gathering held in the evening in the David Armstrong Room on the first Monday on the month. Geoff prepared the prayer points and led the session. This meeting continues today.

When the Family Service recommenced, SPC JAM was introduced for primary children [St Peter's Cremorne Jesus and Me]. Julia and Sarah St Quintin ran the Sunday School in the Lower Hall, with Kate St Quintin helping.

Following the decision to close the 7am Eucharist and the 10:30am Modern Family Service on June 5, Edwina Waddy thanked Geoff and Julia for their contribution to St Peter's, sharing their faith with great enthusiasm, and presented the flowers as a small sign of our large thanks. Geoff and Julia are moving on to take up theological study, and to share the gospel in rural NSW in their new caravan.

*Edwina Waddy*



Julia and Geoff at their last St Peter's service



Pentecost Sunday – Chaplain Andrew Thorburn, Royal Australian Navy

## Visiting clergy

During Fr Tim's illness, we had a wealth of clergy step in to keep services going, ably supported by Bishop Peter Watson, Dan Gillis, Assistant Minister, and James Boardman, our student minister. We thank God for Tim's recovery.



Rev'd Craig Tubman, Senior Chaplain at St Andrew's Cathedral School



Bishop Peter splendidly attired



## ABM visitor



Lyn Bannerman, Fr Tim, Edwina Waddy, Missions Secretary, Colin Bannerman

Colin is a board member of ABM and was invited to speak about the annual ABM Lent Appeal.

## Garden working bee

In March, the Gillis family orchestrated a planting bee to freshen up the eastern garden of the church. Many hands made light work, and all enjoyed the sausage sizzle. Great job all!



Many helpers made a great day of it



The new hedge being planted by Sarah and Kate St Quintin



Master chef Dan Gillis at work

## Election stalls again



Election Day...happily, the rain stopped in time to make a success of our market stalls





Our notice boards were used to advertise the market stalls and sausage sizzle

Early into our cooperation with the new tenants of the upper hall, Nate and Maggie Wang happily prepared the hall for a Local Government Election and a By-election. Hard on the heels of those two elections, they were again called on to open up for the Federal election.

Our resourceful crafters and makers of goodies were ready and managed three laden tables of good buys and a raffle for a beautiful quilt. Dan's team ran a very successful democracy sausage sizzle which raised \$2,289.

The overall results were exceptional; just under \$5,000 was raised for flood victims at Lismore and in the Solomon Islands. The use of a portable point of sale device (Square) helped achieve the wonderful results, invaluable now that many people no longer carry cash.

Congratulations and thanks to all who prepared and participated on the day.



Dan Gillis demonstrating his many skills again



Edwina in action!



The wonderful quilt made by Esme Parker

## Baptism of the Boardman children



On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, it was a great joy to witness the baptisms of Elijah, Joshua and Hannah Boardman in front of a packed church.

James Boardman writes, "The day started well, with Elijah announcing, "Today, I'm going to be an Anglican!" During the baptism, Elijah and Joshua were able to share their faith with the congregation. Elijah told everyone they should be baptised as a sign and seal of the forgiveness of sins. Joshua declared he loved Jesus because Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins. James and Charly are very thankful for everyone who attended and who continues to pray for Elijah, Joshua and Hannah to grow in their faith".



A very enthusiastic candidate!

## Patronal Festival

Since our church building was dedicated on St Peter's Day, 29 June, in 1909, we have held an annual celebration on the closest Sunday - our "Patronal Festival". This year we marked our Patronal Festival on Sunday 26 June with a special Solemn Eucharist at 9:30am, followed by a 'High Morning Tea'. After two years of online Patronal Festivals, we greatly enjoyed fellowship together.

Our guest preacher for the service was the Right Reverend Mark Calder, Bishop of Bathurst. After serving in parishes in Sydney and Brisbane, Bishop Mark was consecrated and made Bishop of Bathurst in 2019. It was a joy to have him join us with his wife, Susan.

As has been our practice each year, we sought support for our mission and ministry at St Peter's through a special Patronal Festival appeal. In 2021, our appeal was for the development of the choir vestry into a "quiet room" where parents may feel comfortable to take young children (or indeed others with special needs). We were able to use the funds so raised to start the project, obtaining an acoustic report to guide us. We again made this project the focus of the patronal donations, aiming to take the next steps to develop the "quiet room". In conjunction with this aim, we have also applied for a State Government grant.

As we seek to 'Build Up and Reach Out', we hope that such a space will make new families feel welcomed and valued at St Peter's and that our current families will be better able to participate in the life of the congregation.

## Nate and Maggie Wang, Guests at Patronal

As a special thank you for their continued cooperation around the use of the Memorial Hall for local, state, and federal elections, we invited Nate and Maggie Wang, proprietors of the kindy, as special guests. We hope they will now have some reprieve before the next NSW election in March 2023. We are delighted that the good rapport we had



enjoyed with Nick Sutton continues with them both.

*Fr Tim*



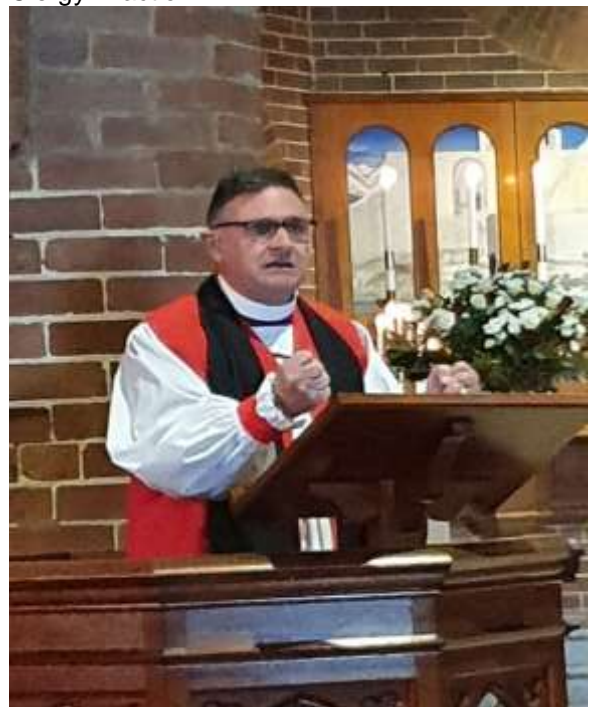
Maggie and Nate Wang



Clergy in action



Elijah Boardman holding the Children's banner,  
steadied by Kate St Quintin



Bishop Mark making a point



The traditional "after" photo

## Wedding of Antonia Waddy and Michael Badger

Antonia and Michael were married on 2<sup>nd</sup> April on a sunny afternoon after a week of rain.



Our local State member of parliament, Tim James



Pictured after the wedding vows in the sanctuary, left to right: Bishop Peter Watson, who kindly gave the address, bridesmaids, Antonia, Michael, best man and groomsman, and Rector Tim.



A great "High tea" was provided by many of the parish and enjoyed by all





## Redlanders benefit from “service and tune”



Fr Tim addressing the students

During the two years of COVID-19, SCECGS Redlands seniors missed out on the normal fortnightly visit to St Peter's for chapel – a 20 minute ‘service and tune’. So, the unanticipated opportunity for Tim and I to provide services (until the new school chaplain arrives) has been exciting *and* challenging, especially considering students in years 7-9 have had little to no chapel experience prior to this year.

Each service must be kept to a very simple format (*welcome + Psalm, song, reading, reflection, blessing + dismissal*) to tightly conform to the narrow timeslot. The services are delivered using a screen and projector which will be much simpler to set up once they are permanent installations within the church building.

Three chapel services are being delivered each week, capturing each of the six-year groups once/fortnight. The largest year group, year 7, tightly fill the pews with the back three rows empty. The smallest year group, year 12, comfortably fills the front half of the church. It has been incredibly rewarding to see the development of each year group's musically inclined students, who arrive early each service to rehearse one of the two songs that have been used – *10,000 reasons (Bless the Lord)* by Matt Redman, and *Cornerstone (Hillsong Worship version)*. These students have performed exceptionally well, utilising a range of instruments (including our organ!), accompanied by gifted singers delivering melody and harmony.

Without the rapport, context, and relational exposure that a school chaplain would have, the Chapel program was designed to integrate and support the school's Pastoral Care program. The broad theme distilled from the program is *Empowered to Decide and Act*. Four passages from Luke's and John's Gospels have been chosen and sequenced chronologically, according to Jesus's ministry: Luke 6:47-49 – *build your house on the rock*; 10:25-37 – *the Good Samaritan*; 12:13-21 – *parable of the rich fool*; and John 12:1-8 – *Jesus anointed at Bethany*. The reflective talks are designed with an overall structure and message, with particular sections tailored to each year group based on age, learning milestones, and a particular emphasis on either reflective thinking or responsible action. That said, seizing an opportunity such as this, to magnify the Lord Jesus and invite an effectively captive audience to respond to the hope and peace of the gospel is the real priority!

The feedback from students, staff, and the principal, Stephen Webber, has been very positive. In particular, students have been eager to assist with the screen/projector and readily provide their prayer requests for upcoming assessments and major sporting events. Teachers have commented that the reflective talks are age-appropriate, engaging, and challenging in the ‘inviting a considered response’ sense. Principal Webber has been especially pleased and has felt re-assured that the students are receiving capable and enthusiastic services that further enhance the relationship between the parish and the school. To that end, please continue to pray that this relationship, and the services, strengthen the bond, bring much glory and honour to Jesus, and sow seeds which will bear fruit.

*Dan Gillis, Assistant Minister*

## **Our new Warden introduced - Anna Reed-Stephenson**



I am originally from the US and lived all around the southern states when our family finally settled down in Roswell, Georgia I was in year 6. Growing up I was very involved in the United Methodist Church from children's programs to youth ministry, choirs and mission trips. I graduated from Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina with a double degree in English and Religion. When I graduated, I worked for the United Methodist Church District Office as the District Secretary and then moved to work for Deloitte where I eventually started as an IT consultant. At Deloitte I met my husband, Scott, a native Aussie. We were married in 2000 then moved to Australia in 2002. Our son Patrick was born in 2003. Both my husband and I have worked in IT throughout our careers and are both retiring this month.

When we first moved to Australia, we settled in Thirroul close to Scott's mother and sister and moved to Neutral Bay in 2010. I attended St. Augustine's Anglican until recently when I moved to St. Peter's. At St. Augustine's I was active on Parish Council, Synod Representative and served as a Warden during the time we decided to merge with the Bridge Church. My son was active in

the youth group until he started at ANU this year.

As my son was moving, I knew I was ready to find a church with a more traditional service. Serving as a board member for Redlands I met Tim St. Quintin. The more I learned about St. Peter's I was interested in coming to see what drove his passion for St. Peter's. I have really enjoyed getting back to a traditional service and even more I am excited there is a church where I can volunteer my skills for the work of our Lord. I have enjoyed meeting members of the congregation and am looking forward to meeting others in the coming months.

As we are now retiring, I am looking forward to spending time doing the things I enjoy. I have a small market business (Aniseed Designs) where I sell items I handmade and am looking forward to being able to focus on this more. I also love to walk, read and am a self-confessed podcast enthusiast always looking for people to share their favorite podcasts.

*Anna*

## **ANZAC Day**



ANZAC Day often provides our Rector with several opportunities to connect with our local community and beyond. This year was no exception, with Tim rededicating the updated War Memorial at the Mosman ANZAC Sunday service, leading prayers at the Dawn Service at the Cenotaph in Martin Place,



speaking at the Redlands ANZAC Assembly, preaching at the St Andrew's Cathedral School ANZAC service, and preaching at the St Paul's College ANZAC Day service where he caught up with our former organist, Stacey Yang. (Captain) Dan Gillis was able to bring his military experience to bear as he preached at our own ANZAC Sunday service.



Stacey Yang with Tim at St Paul's College

### Peter Morgan Memorial Plaque



Many parishioners joined Christine at the blessing of Peter's memorial plaque



### Quilting to support Mission Outreach

When the parish agreed to let the Memorial Hall to the Australian Electoral Commission as a Polling Booth for the federal election, there was great excitement to organise three stalls – Democracy sausages on the BBQ, Produce and our Crafters handiwork. For the first time, we were able to take donations electronically on a small *Square*, such is the triumph of modern technology.



Esme Parker

Our much-loved parishioner and Crafter, Esme Parker, now in her 90s, kindly made a quilt for the Patronal Festival Raffle. The Crafters support an ABM Project each year, and proceeds were directed to the Solomon Islands to address Climate Change, Disaster Management and a Social Inclusive Project.

I asked Esme for the background of the design of the quilt. She told me: *"The beginning of the quilt goes back some time. For years I have been fascinated by indigenous fabrics and I bought the book of patterns about eight years ago, Australian*

*Animal Patchwork Collection by Lulie McKenzie, which gave me the sort of patchwork design that I had been looking for. I had decided last year that the next federal election would be the time to make it. Each animal design came with its own history and cultural appreciation which added to the interest,*

*Over Christmas 2021 and New Year of 2022, I transferred the designs on to Vleisofix (fusible webbing) then chose the fabrics for each animal and ironed the transfers on to the background, cut them out, numbered them and stored them in individual plastic bags (most of them had about 17 individual pieces so the numbering became important). Once I acquired the book, I started collecting fabrics, mostly from fabric shops around Sydney as interest in indigenous fabrics increased. However, the main collection came on a visit to Darwin in 2018 before my Ghan trip from Darwin to Adelaide. There was an indigenous fabric shop close to my hotel. I was like a child in a lolly shop.*

*The indigenous fabrics are very attractive and dynamic, each came with the name and biography of the artist and were mostly from the NT, all adding to the interest as I made the quilt. The size of the quilt was determined by the fact that there are eight designs in the book and, although I would like to have made it bigger, I was not competent to add to the collection!*

*The quilt took me eight weeks to make, it would have taken longer but for the preliminary work over Christmas and New Year, the first five weeks were spent appliqueing the small pieces of fabric to each animal and then the animals appliqued on to the background and the last three adding the borders, quilting and binding. It was completed in time to start selling tickets on Election Day, 21<sup>st</sup> May.*

*Doing something like this to help raise funds for ABM is a case of using one's time, doing something one enjoys for the purpose of fulfilling the obligation of the Church to care for the vulnerable in the community through its agency and ultimately to be grateful for all*

*the blessings I have received during my long life.*

*I am delighted that the new federal government has undertaken to bring life to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. So much work went into it over the last two years, and I feel that it is the best possible way to get projects to work successfully with indigenous involvement."*

The raffle was drawn on Sunday 26 June, and won by long time parishioner Cheryl Dunn, who has sent the picture below with the note: *My quilt loves its new home.*



*Edwina Waddy*



## Lower Hall refurbishment

In October 2021, St Peter's received an Australian Government Stronger Communities Grant of \$19,996 to assist with the refurbishment of the lower hall. To this, the Parish Council agreed to add \$5000, giving a total budget of \$25,000. The aim was to make the lower hall a more pleasant area for the SPC Jam and the groups that meet there.

The first step was to air-condition the lower hall; the second was to refurbish the toilets, and whatever remaining money was to be spent on the flooring.

The air conditioning and toilets are now complete, and the toilets are fabulous. It has taken eight working days and during this time the day groups using the lower hall have been accommodated in the Armstrong Room.

The wardens have now started to look at options for the flooring, a difficult task due to the old, cracked, and uneven substrate, and the rising damp coming up through the floor. Wish us luck.

*Russ Layton, Warden*



The refurbished toilets in the lower hall

## Vale Peter Leon David Reuben 15.6.1926 - 27.3.2022

Excerpts from eulogies given on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022.



We are here to remember Peter Leon David Reuben. After he died, I started reflecting on Dad's life and the impact it had on me and the impact I knew it had on others. I thought of his schooling, naval career, his business life, his family life and his church life. Five separate areas of life, five separate realms as it were, yet, when I thought about it, one common thread. This was loyalty. Dad would occasionally tell me about his schooling. In some ways, it was dad's father's wish that dad went onto the Leaving Certificate, and this laid the foundations of his future life. Dad said when he started that higher level school course, the headmaster, I think, said to his cohort, "Gentlemen, you are the intelligentsia of Newcastle". While I'm sure that this didn't mean much to



him at the time, as he grew and developed his life skills and experience, the meaning became clearer to him. Due to his father's encouragement, dad was to gain an advantage over many other people, not due to innate intelligence or due to education, but due to qualifications.

Dad joined the RAN during the Second World War. The reason he joined this service, when his father was a decorated war hero in the First World War (with both the MM and the DCM) in the Australian Army, was due, again, to his father's advice, where he encouraged this choice as Dad would be always ensured of at least one hot meal a day and a sleeping place protected from the rain. Dad enjoyed his time in the RAN, not only because he was promoted to Able Seamen, but also to the experiences and life skills he gained. I still remember the horror of him describing "guarding" several hundred Japanese prisoners of war with only a few bullets in his rifle, knowing that if they attacked him, there was nothing effective he could do to save himself, or the humour of serving with the Americans, who complained that their ice cream machine had broken down, when he and his shipmates hadn't had ice cream for months... He enjoyed his time with the RAN so much he seriously considered enlisting permanently with them. It was only chance and a mate that caused him to change direction and leave the RAN at the end of his enlisted time and attend university. Even then, when he talked about it to me back in the '80's after I joined the Army Reserve, there was a hint of regret. Once he retired, he re-joined his naval colleagues and became a member of the Allied Chinese Ships Association. He offered me the privilege of being the banner bearer for their association during several ANZAC Day marches. This privilege humbled me. Dad also became the President of the Association and worked hard to support his shipmates.

Dad was a very successful businessman. He told me of being involved with many local community charities and events, not only to be known to the community and therefore attract customers, but also because that would help the community. One example was a judging event, where he was "voluntold" he would be a judge. He knew that, while the winners would be happy, the others would not. To cushion the blow, he offered, out of his own pocket, to provide a participation prize to all entries. This was in the days where he and mum's "entertainment" budget was one beer between the both of them once a week, 2/3s to Dad as a beer and 1/3 to Mum as a Shandy. When Dad retired and sold his Pharmacy businesses, I was there when he agonised over rewarding his staff for their contributions towards his success. I know that he had a formula for the newer staff, based on how many years they were with him, but the long serving staff, those who were there for many years, he agonised how to reward them.

Dad was a very dedicated member of his family. I have literally lost count of the number of times that he told me that only family matters, the only people you can count on are family, family always looks after each other.

Dad was always spiritual. He had grown up as Anglican. However, he was a Jewish child from a Jewish mother. There was some pressure from his mother's family to return to the "fold". He had also discussed with me how he explored other faiths, including, I think, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, before returning to his birth faith of the Anglican Church at All Saint's Church, Parramatta. He became a member of the Parish Council, before becoming a Warden and then becoming the Rector's Warden.

It can be difficult to know what to say at a time like this. It's even more difficult when you have to talk about your father and he's been such an integral part of your life, and a few short minutes can barely encapsulate the impact someone has had in an extraordinary life that lasted 95 years. With this in mind, I want to focus on just one thing – dad's character:

#### **Dad was unassuming.**

He was probably one of the most capable people that I've met. He achieved at the highest level in almost anything he tried and there were things that he did that were way ahead of the times in which he lived. Despite this he rarely sought recognition or acclamation, but instead displayed humility and often gave others the credit for the work he had done. His work in establishing the Crawford Village at All Saints Church in Parramatta was exceptional, but he sought no

acknowledgement and was even instrumental in ensuring that the Reverend Doug Crawford should be given all credit, hence its name. Dad didn't seek the spotlight but was always willing to serve others in whatever capacity he had.

#### **Dad was committed.**

In everything he did, he gave 100% and always found himself to be the "go-to" man. If something needed to be done, dad was normally involved in the process. Catchphrases and mantras were regularly heard around the house. So, I'm choosing 3 of his most common to highlight his commitment.

**"There's no such word as can't"**. He truly believed that you could achieve anything as long as you gave 100% and didn't give up.

**"I'd rather be respected than liked."** Well, dad, today we see the testimony that you were both respected and liked.

**"Do as I say, not as I do"**. He knew he wasn't perfect, but he knew what needed to be changed to facilitate improvement. He was always quick to admit his faults and never embellished his talents.

#### **Dad was caring.**

Always wanted the best for others and always looked after those in need. Mum and Dad, as a team, were incredibly generous with their money, possessions, and time. Dad was always on the sidelines watching our games – quick to congratulate us on our successes and support us when we struggled. Dad always wanted us to succeed in our chosen fields, yet he gave us enough space to make the mistakes we needed to make. In keeping with his character, he had the most understated wisdom.

#### **Finally, Dad was a man of Faith**

It is important to acknowledge dad's faith. He was an active member and Rector's Warden at All Saint's, Parramatta and then a member here at St Peter's, Cremorne. It was a simple faith, yet he knew Jesus as his Saviour. I'd like to thank Reverend Tim for his ongoing support since mum and dad moved into Bella Vista Gardens and also Barbara Gordon for her ongoing fellowship. Clearly dad wasn't perfect, because none of us is, but he was always striving to be a better husband, a better father, a better boss and a better person. He wasn't just Mr Reuben, Boss, Uncle Peter, Grandpa or even Peter... he was dad and like everything else he did was really good at that!!!





## **Vale June Marie Reynolds 16 June 1941 – 22 May 2022**

**Eulogy given on 6 June 2022**



June's funeral was held on 6 June 2022 at Macquarie Park Crematorium, taken by Dan Gillis, Assistant Minister at St Peter's. Below is the eulogy at the service.

Good afternoon. For those who don't know me, I'm June's daughter Susan. I would like to thank all those here for coming and those who are online, for helping us to say goodbye to Mum. What can I say about Mum? She was warm, she was kind, she never had a bad word to say about anybody, was always finding the good in everybody, and she was everybody's friend.

She had a stubborn, independent streak that meant that although she was always the first to lend a hand to others, she found it hard to accept help herself. She was fiercely loyal. Mum always had our back whether it was being Dad's sounding board or turning up to the Principal's office regularly because David had been caught smoking in the bush behind the school again, or getting up at 4am to stand in line outside Humphries Newsagent in Manly Corso to buy me Guns and Roses tickets. Nothing was every too much trouble. Most of all, she was loving - and family was everything to her.

Don't get me wrong. She had her faults as well. The worse one was her obsession with The Bold and the Beautiful. She also had very questionable taste in music.

As kids, we spent every school holiday, every long weekend, and some in between, visiting my grandparents out on the farm she grew up on, in Forbes. This is where she proved that she was a country girl through and through, mending fences and working the sheep yards, even though she had moved to the big smoke as a young woman. She would spend the entire week before we went away cooking endless mountains of cakes and slices. When the day to leave came, the HQ Holden would be packed like a game of Tetris – with David and me fighting in the back seat for any remaining room. It was at this point that Mum would pull out the cassettes, put them into the portable player and we would be held captive for the next 8 hours listening to Harry Secombe, Ray Conniff and Charlie Pride. I can assure this did not help the mood in the back seat of the car.

Mum was an only child, but with a number of girls on the neighbouring farms she was never short of company. With all of them becoming lifelong friends scattered up and down the east coast, she visited them whenever she could. Mum collected friends everywhere she went, whether it was helping in the kitchen with the other ladies at Dad's Lodge meetings, at Probus, as a member of the Austrian Club or her beloved tennis group. Neighbours weren't neighbours – they were family. A quick trip away to visit these friends and family would inevitably take 2 or 3 weeks as she and Dad went from A to B via X Y and Z.

Mum had a great love of travel whether it was to New Zealand, Europe, Asia, or the South Pacific islands. She hoarding travel magazines and maps just in case – because you never know when you might be on your way again. She even once drove out to Forbes, picked up her mother and then drove across the Nullarbor because, Why Not? This love of the open road may have started when she was a girl racing home-made go-carts or later, as unlikely as it sounds, her love of watching stockcar racing. We also spent a week every year going skiing with the Korner family who lived across the road. Mum didn't really take to the skiing itself, she always looks a little terrified, but she loved that she was spending time with her family and friends, spending nights playing cards and laughing into the night.

When Mum moved to Sydney, she took up nursing at the Camperdown Children's Hospital but between the starched uniforms and the strict matron, Mum's big heart meant that she couldn't watch the kids suffer. It was a career that wasn't to last. But caring for others was in her blood. At various times she took in and cared for Dad's parents, her own mother and both her sisters in law through their illnesses. She didn't do it out of duty or obligation but with love – because they were family.

It wasn't just people she collected. She loved her birds and there were always various birds sitting at the backdoor waiting to be fed, there were magpies that would knock on the glass door to let her know she was taking too long feed them. It wasn't unusual if the door had been left open to find them standing in the kitchen in front of the fridge waiting patiently for her.

Mum also had a constant companion for many years in the shape of Jake, a local fox terrier that lived down the street. He was there when the backdoor was unlocked in the morning and he would be put out when Mum went to bed. In winter she would even make this dog [that wasn't even hers] weet-bix with warm milk for breakfast.

Lastly, there is our little family. She met Norman in 1963 on a blind date organised by her aunt and uncle, his boss claiming I have a niece you need to meet. After that first date to see The King and I at the Tivoli, they both thought "not for me".

But there must have been something because they persisted for the next four years and in 1967 they were married, and were blessed with two children, David and me. Just when she despaired of having grandchildren, June suddenly had 4 little bundles of joy in 4 years: Kael, Zeke, Grace and Max who made her heart fit to burst with pride.

This is what she had strived for her entire life, a happy family, good friends, and a 55-year love story with the love of her life, Norman.

***Susan Kirkby***

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