

Eulogy by John Trives

On behalf of Jayne, Will, Daniel and Elsa and also Peter's extended family warm appreciation is extended to you all for your presence here today; as we remember and cherish Peter as long as our memories of him endure in our hearts Peter will be still among us.

Appreciation is extended also to Father Kevin Bates for conducting this service and also for his understanding practical assistance, and his empathy.

Peter was born on 7th October 1947. The second child of Vera and Les. He was christened Peter after his Maternal Grandfather, who was a squatter who settled up near Narrabri. Mum was always very proud of that and on her Marriage Certificate listed her Father's occupation as squatter. William was the name of his Paternal Grandfather, who throughout his life was always known as Will. He like many in his family worked for the Railways.

Peter means rock from the Greek and then later Latin Petra. This as time moved on proved to be the perfect name for Peter. He was always absolutely rock solid in all aspects of his character and personality. He

was always calmly involved, looked for solutions and would offer any assistance he could at the drop of a hat.

He always from an early age wanted things done properly, exactly and in an orderly, organised fashion. Here's an early example:

When he was a toddler he got hold of the boot-polishing bag. This was a drawstring cloth bag about the size of a medium handbag. It contained tins of polish of various colours, cloths and brushes. Peter emptied everything out and put in those things, which were special and important to him. He draped the drawstring around his neck and the bag trailed behind him as he crawled and tottered around the house and yard. His belongings, which filled the bag, were organised safe and secure. Nobody ever knew exactly what was in the bag. He carried it around for a couple of years. He never told anyone what the contents were and amazingly no one ever looked!

Just last year I asked him what was in that old boat polish stained bag. He smiled and winked at me and said "My private things son!"

For the first three years of Peter's life the family lived at Tamarama in Grandfather Peter's Sydney home. When Peter was about eighteen months old Mum bought a portable baby seat. They were fashionable at

the time and the seat was carried on the Mother's hip by a shoulder strap. They were thought to be more convenient than prams or strollers.

We would set out, hike up the hill to Fletcher Street to catch the train to town. Mum would arrive at the tram stop feeling completely exhausted. She realised Peter was certainly a rock in more ways than one – a heavy and rapidly expanding one. The modern baby seat was soon replaced by a very sturdy stroller that remained in more or less permanent use until 1954.

Four more children followed, making a total of six. Gerard 1948, Jill 1951 and the twins Bernard and Leonie, now Sr. Veronica Mary 1953.

The family had moved to Brook Street Coogee in 1950. We all attended St Anthony's Clovelly to 2nd Class. The girls moved on to Holy Cross College Woollahra and the boys to St Charles Waverly and then to Waverly College for High School.

Peter was a clever and industrious student and did well at school. He enjoyed playing rugby for the school and was always, always the biggest boy in the team. Summers were spent at the beach, which was about

20 minutes walk away.

Like many children at the time, he had a paper run and delivered groceries in the afternoon for a local shop. When he was a bit older he also worked at the Old Whale Car Wash at Bondi Junction.

On the way back from the beach we would after drop into Mum's sisters' place (which was close to the beach) for a chat with Aunty Nell, Uncle Sid and Cousins Colleen and Maureen and perhaps something to eat and a glass of ginger beer from a big stoneware tankard, which was stored in the laundry.

We would all get together usually at our place for a family lunch usually on Birthdays and Christmas.

Peter completed the Leaving Certificate in 1964. (*Explain*) He looked up his results in the paper. He hesitatingly announced, "*I got a first Class honours and a Second class honours*" Well we asked "and what else?" He quietly replied "Nothing else. Well it's not after you have a disaster and a triumph of sorts at the same time!"

It was back to school for another year. He did well and achieved good results. That year he also collected a much sort after award given to the best cadet in the School Cadet Corps. Mum was extremely proud of that. Dad had died in 1963 – unexpectedly.

Peter was then off to Uni, enrolled in The Arts Faculty. That didn't suit him although he retained a fervent love of Robbie Burns and unless prevented would commence on his extensive recitations from both poetic and prose works.

At the end of that year, 1965, a different vocation beckoned and he joined Woolworths as a Trainee Manager and worked at the Double Bay Store.

He was then playing football for The Teachers Rugby Union club in Winter where he made many friends, and rowing in the Summer. He played over 150 games for the club and continued an active involvement with rowing all his life. In 1981 or 1982 he was the Australian Veteran's champion. He also was selected to represent Victoria as a Rugby player.

Mum and the family were watching the news one Saturday evening and saw a report of a rowing accident on The Nepean. We half watched as a rowing eight slowly slid over the weir. Suddenly everyone was wide eyed and glued to the screen. There was a terrified looking Peter half in half out of the boat as it floundered into the churning waters below the wall. After the initial shock and a reassuring call from Peter, initial trepidation gave way to mirth. This mirth lasted for a fair while but Peter took those many good nurtured jibes in his stride. It was amazing how many people reported seeing that on the TV and enjoyed a laugh over it.

Peter left Woolworths and joined The Wilkinson Sword Company. It marketed knives, scissors and razer blades. In the early seventies he began to work for Masterfoods. He moved to Melbourne with his work in 1975.

Peter and Jayne Munday had met in the early seventies and were married in Port Macquarie, Jayne's hometown on 23rd December 1974. Peter and Jayne have maintained close ties with Jayne's family and for some years have regularly spent time at Lake Cathie, not far from Jayne's Mum and Dad and sister Cherrie.

Back in Sydney, Jayne and her other sister Rebecca and her partner Gary ate breakfast together every Saturday morning.

But back to the seventies. Will was born in Melbourne in 1976 and Daniel back in Sydney in 1978 and Elsa in 1980.

By this time Peter had been as they say, “head hunted” by Coca Cola, after an extensive recruitment procedure. We jokingly hinted he would now have to be careful and discrete as he was almost joining a covert branch of the CIA and asked had he completed firearm’s training and fingerprinting techniques.

Peter’s career soared at Coca Cola and he rose to positions of great responsibility. He was in charge of the team responsible for the 2000 Olympics and the Rugby World Cup. He had been a part of the Sydney bid for the Olympics and celebrated with John Fahey and the team after the announcement. He retired from Coca Cola as the person in charge of South Pacific Operations.

By the mid seventies we were all married except Bernard, Leonie joined the enclosed order of Carmelite nun’s in 1979. Gerard and Chris had four children – Tara, Young Gerard, Emily and Lucy.

Jill and her husband Gary have Matthew, Ben and Amy. Elaine and I have three children - Simon, Claire and Marten.

We all met at various functions over the years. Peter was known to adults and children as Uncle Peter and often introduced to people that way.

Peter had a keen sense of humour and often composed puns. These received a mixed reception. One he got most with every time was this:

If something was said that he did not agree with he would reply

“You’re an Egyptian.” When you asked what was that all about he would laugh – “You’re in denial”

He had a favourite Christmas joke which had a ritual telling each year.

Most people did think best to forget it immediately, including me. But Jill and Gary have searched their memories and will tell you later if you wish to hear it.

There was another very, very small aspect to Peter’s character. In good Australian tradition, he was a little bit of a lair. He loved his cars and especially his early sixties bug eyed Austin Healy Spite, a tiny little sports car, lovely maintained throughout the years.

It is however, equipped with a muffler and exhaust pipe the size of a stormwater drain and it was not legal.

Peter was out driving one Saturday morning with Will. He was overtaken and stopped by a man highly and verbosely indignant about the thunderous roar coming from such a small car. Peter told him where to go. Very early next morning the same man appeared on Peter's doorstep still in a white hot rage, revealing that he was a Policeman and was intending to proceed with the matter. Peter advised him to be cautious and not to do anything he would most certainly later regret. He didn't take the well intentioned advice. Peter later attended the Police Station and after speaking to the Officer in Charge, accepted the Policeman's heartfelt apology.

Jayne has received many, many calls of condolence.

Old workmates especially from Coca Cola are receiving tributes from all over the world. His rowing associates are well represented here today, as an old friend remarked the other day Peter was a "*Gentle Giant.*"

On behalf of the family Gentle Giant – God speed for now. We know you are sailing on bright waters.