

## Tribute to Grandad Jim

Thursday 29th May 2013

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Roslyn Ingram and I am Margaret's elder daughter. I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Mum, my own family – husband Geoff and daughters Kate, Tori & Jacqueline and also my sister Carol and her family – son Cameron and daughter Alyssa.

Jim came into our lives over 22 years ago. Mum, first met Jim at a dinner for the University of NSW where both Pam and Carol had attended at separate times. Mum and Jim met up again in mid 1991 and both retired, had the opportunity to spend more time together with many shared interests. Having both had previous happy marriages, they had not anticipated finding that type of love and happiness again, however love will find a way and they were married in St Stephen's Uniting Church, Macquarie St. Sydney on December 4th 1993, thinking that they might have ten years together. As you can see it would have been twenty years this December.

Retirement and good health brings the advantage of having the time to spend on leisure activities and now they had each other to share these times with – especially going out for lunches... which they did!

In the early years of their time together, they had such wonderful travel experiences as a trip to Africa, visiting Zimbabwe, Botswana and Kenya including a game park safari and sleeping up n tree hut accommodation! They also visited the US, Canada and Alaska – cruising up the Inside Passage. Another cruise took them up the east coast of Australia and across to Darwin, Singapore and Bali.

Possibly their favourite trip was one to the UK in 1996, where they hired a car and drove from the south to the north, from Land's End in England right up to John O'Groats in Scotland. They combined this with a visit with relatives in Scotland, who also were very fond of Jim. Mum and Jim also travelled the next year to Switzerland making it right to the top of the 'Jungfrau'.

More recent years saw them enjoying the fun, fellowship and friendship of group trips such as with the Probus Club to varying destinations mostly within NSW and also to Smiggins Hole in January for a number of years, with the Oatley Flora & Fauna Group for some, in their case anyway, 'retirement grade' bushwalking! They also ventured out to Dubbo in a small plane with Rev. Ray Hughes, a past minister from this church and friends from the Adult Fellowship.

All this was apart from their own trips to - NZ with another couple, Tasmania to visit Megan plus other interesting destinations such as Berri, S.A., Fraser Is., Carnarvon Gorge and the Great Barrier Reef. As you can see they shared many precious and treasured times together.

During these years, Jim kept up his interest in Golf as a member of Strathfield Golf Club, only at the very end of his playing days resorting to using the 'cart' to assist with 'getting around' those 18 holes.

Jim also kept up his connection as a committee member of the 2/19th Association and the various activities associated with them. He always attended the Commemorative Service for the Fall of Singapore Day on the 15th February each year at Martin Place and marched with the 2/19th Battalion up until the last few years.

His last visit home was to watch the march with Mum on Anzac Day this year.



Jim embraced Carol and myself and our families with great affection. He was firmly a part of any family function or celebration. Carol and I both enjoyed stimulating conversations with him covering a wide range of topics- politics, current affairs and more recently what life was like in his younger days and how he remembered "swaggies" calling in looking for work/ meal during the Depression days in country NSW.

Our family enjoyed his company and his easy going nature, spending week ends away to the Blue Mountains, South Coast and Canberra with he and Mum. He was also my chief "Brains Trust/ Sports Consultant" for my workplace football tipping competition.... and like everything he undertook to do, he put a lot of time and effort into doing the best and most thorough job possible.... agonising over even this relatively unimportant thing for me. I called it our Friday morning "bonding session". At other times, I particularly used to smile when he referred to me (and even Mum at times!) as "lass".... now on the "other" side of 50 I feel it's been quite a while since I qualified as a "lass".... but of course he was both entitled to and welcome to use the expression.

Jim was very unassuming and almost dismissive of how he touched other people's lives. On a family trip to Canberra in 2006, I did the "school teacher" thing and with Geoff, took the girls downstairs to the then Research Section of the Australian War Memorial. Whilst looking up the Service Records of various family members, I suggested to Tori and Jacqueline that they look up Grandad Jim. I called out to them that they should search under "J.W.K.Forbes". At that instant, one of the lovely Research Volunteers standing nearby, Di Elliot, who is here today but unknown to me at that time, looked up and said..."That wouldn't be Jim and Margaret from Sydney would it?"

Di's own father had been with the same 'Ramsay' Force' as Jim as a POW and Jim had been able to explain to her and shed some light on what her Dad had gone through, years after his passing.

Jim's chief role during his time in Singapore, both before becoming a POW and after was in record keeping. Whilst he didn't speak of it much, it is these records and those of his colleagues that have greatly assisted historians, researchers and even family members of ex-POW's (who have visited him over the years). No-one would know the details of what had happened in some of those dark days if not for his contribution. Some of those records, Di tells me, are still buried in Thailand at the site of their last camp of Tamarkan. Those he did manage to bring home, now form part of the Official Records of the Australian War Memorial ... a worthy contribution without a doubt.

Grandad Jim, gave us all the gift of affection and affirmation. He enriched our lives by just being a part of it. We valued his opinions and his 'quiet wisdom'. He was one of Life's true gentlemen and the treasured memories of him we all hold, will be his legacy.

Thank you David, Pam, Greg, Megan and Kirsten for sharing him with us.