



OBITUARY

Funeral for a friend

by WENDY CREIGHTON

AN honour guard of more than 60 Emergency Services personnel formed up outside the Dugandan Lutheran Church on Thursday morning to give their last salute to retired Boonah Auxiliary Brigade Captain, Glenn Sip-pel.

A convoy of fire trucks was parked up at the entry to the church grounds in a mark of respect to the man who had led the Boonah brigade for 14 years and had served for more than 43 years as a member of the local brigade and a man who was prepared to put his hand up to support other brigades in times of national disaster.

One of the red trucks also preceded the hearse as it made its way through town after the service.

The honour guard was among the 650 friends, colleagues and family members who attended the funeral service conducted by Pastor Peter Geyer.

"Glenn's was a life cut short but a life well lived," Pastor Geyer said in his opening address.

"The numbers here today indicate the way in which he was loved and the respect in which he was held."

The Eulogy was given by his daughter, Lara.

"Glenn, or as some of you know him - Sip, Captain or Big Fella, was born at Nanango on July 12, 1951 while his parents Les and Myrtle lived at Yarraman. He was their second child after Ken and his younger siblings are Neil, Karen and Leanne.

"Glenn's family later moved to Gatton and then in 1959 to Boonah where he has lived ever since."

Lara went on to recall incidents during her father's childhood and noted that while he didn't mind school ... "he was a great handy-man all his life".

"He secured an apprenticeship at Faulkner Motors where he worked on Holden cars. He was always loyal to Holden in their battles on the race track with Ford.

"When working at Faulkners, Glenn liked the occasions when he was sent out to Jack Faulkner's farm to fix his tractors.

He worked as a mechanic, except for a short stint in the army when he was called up for National Service, until he started his own carrying business.

"He carted furniture and electrical goods for his parents-in-law Sel and Lorna Pfeffer, as well as doing household removals. He was keen to diversify so he started up a picture framing business.

"He did both jobs concurrently for some years until he was able to concentrate on framing full-time.

He worked from home until he opened his business - Hall of Frames - in High Street. He framed and ran his small gallery until 2009 when he had the opportunity to sell."

Lara added that her father was popular with his customers due to the quality of his work and his friendly manner.

"After selling his shop, Glenn maintained his involvement in the Fire Service which was a

huge part of his life for 43 years. He joined when he was only 18.

"As a fireman he enjoyed the mateship, the chance to serve his community and the opportunities it gave him.

"He helped in many deployments during and after fire, flood and cyclone disasters.

"His last deployment was to the Blue Mountains less than a year ago.

"He received several awards during his service including a Bravery Commendation."

Talking about Glenn's family life, Lara said he met Juleen when they were at primary school.

"They grew up seeing each other at school and church. They started going out when Juleen was at Teachers' College and were married in 1973.

"Very few people are so blessed as to find their life partner when young and to be so compatible.

"They were married for a long time before they were blessed with their two daughters Lara and Meg. Both girls adored their dad and knew that he loved them just as much."

When Glenn's illness was diagnosed Meg returned from England where she had intended to spend a couple of years working and travelling.

His involvement in the Boonah Golf Club was noted and the fact that he was Club Champion several times, with a handicap of 1" at one stage.

"He was on the club committee and a keen volunteer until his illness," Lara said. "He received phone calls from Jack Newton,

Wayne Grady and Charlie Earp during his illness. Golfers will understand how much he valued those calls.

"The garden at home is proof of his creativity and hard work.

"Glenn was confirmed in this church in the same class as Juleen in 1964. He regularly attended church all his life until his illness and served this congregation in several roles. His faith in God was quietly expressed and lived.

"Glenn was diagnosed with mesothelioma in April this year, though it had been obvious that he had not been well for some time before this.

Mesothelioma is a cruel disease caused by exposure to asbestos, often many decades in the past. Glenn's exposure was either from his firefighting duties or his time as a motor mechanic.

"Glenn bore the effects of his illness with his usual quiet dignity. He died as he lived - without fuss and by trying to make it easier for Juleen, Meg and Lara as they cared for him at home until his death.

"He passed away with his family and his dog by his side. At the end they had the support of the wonderful BlueCare team."

Glenn is survived by his wife, Juleen, daughters Lara and Meg, son-in-law Chris, grandchildren Cooper and Sophie, his parents, Les and Myrtle, brothers Ken and Neil, sisters Karen and Leanne and their families.

Photos: DREW CREIGHTON