

Eulogy: Bernard Dominic Molinari

BPM

14 June 1999

We are here today to celebrate the life and to mourn the passing of Bernard Dominic, known to all as Barney.

The details of his life are known to us all.

- Son of Dominic and Giacinta, he was born on 31 December 1913 at Midland Junction. He died in his 86th year, on 10 June 1999.
- He was the younger brother of Mary, who is still living here in Bunbury. He was the older brother of Arthur, who is here with us today. He was the older brother of James, who died in 1941 and the older brother of Helen who died as a infant in the influenza pandemic of 1920.
- He was the beloved husband of Lillian. They were married in St. Patrick's Cathedral here in Bunbury on 14 September 1941 and were together for 57 years.
- He was the father of Brian Patrick, of Raymond James and of Peter John; the father-in-law of Kerry, of Jennifer, of Marie and of Christine; and the grandfather of Rory, Kate and James, of Carla, Divina and Tristan, and of Michael, Clare and Patrick.

He was raised and educated in Cue and spent the formative part of his life in his beloved Murchison. Indeed the family always suspected that he did not fully trust the greenness of the South West to where we moved in 1948. Rather, he preferred the pioneering spirit of the Goldfields, with its hard light and its hard climate, with its reliance on personal effort and its honouring of personal integrity. There was, we thought, the red dust of the Murchison in his veins to the end.

He and Lillian were of the generation affected by the Great Depression. The generation of we his children and the generation of our children find it hard to understand its blighting of ambitions both conscious and unconscious. Education opportunities simply did not exist for ordinary folk, and his formal education finished in his very early teens at the convent school in Cue. He was, however, a highly intelligent and well-read man. He was a highly skilled and resourceful

tradesman, and his coworkers first at Big Bell Mines and then at Sunny West Dairies spoke highly of his abilities. In another time he would have been, I think, a professional engineer. He prized above all the work ethic. The highest compliment he could pass of someone was that the person was a “good worker”. Barney was himself a “good worker” in these terms and indeed was one of the best.

This background and the times made him self-reliant to a considerable degree. He didn’t replace anything he could fix himself. He didn’t rush to the hardware shop, but rather utilised the wonderful and inexhaustible resources of his shed. To see his shed was to understand Barney and indeed to find Barney you generally had to go to his Alladin’s cave, his shed. In their 25 years at Stirling Street it wasn’t clear whether visitors went to the front door in Stirling Street or went around to Queen’s Gardens, to the back, to the shed. If they were looking for Dad then it was surely to the latter. To be fair, it had a wonderful outlook to his beloved estuary, and allowed a daily check on the state of the town, of the harbour, and even of the woodchip pile.

He was possessed of a robust constitution, to put it mildly. He survived a major heart attack in 1968 and in later years a stroke, progressive heart failure and a major loss of sight. I extend the family’s heartfelt thanks to Dr John Gliddon and Dr Anne de Boer for exemplary medical practice, for kindness, and for friendship over this time. He rode his beloved bike, whenever possible without a helmet, until the last year or so. He died peacefully in his sleep, of an aneurism.

The Good Lord gave me the bonus of visiting home for a week, less than two months ago. I asked him then, in conversation, to reflect on his life and to nominate any regrets he had, of opportunities missed and of things not done. He thought for a few seconds and then said firmly that he had no such regrets.

So I conclude by identifying the good life of a good man, a full life, a fortunate life, a life without rancour and a life without regrets. I ask all here to celebrate that life and to honour his memory. We grieve his passing with the deep sadness that the passing of a husband, a brother, a father, a grandfather and a friend brings. We take comfort that he is with his Maker, in the eternal life.