

As unaccustomed as I am to public speaking or performance,... Dale asked me to arrange his funeral, with particular attention being paid to celebrating his life and not to the sadness that is naturally attached to the day. He had certain things that he made me promise to include, and I have followed his wishes...and I'm sure that you will be able to notice these things along the way. I asked him if there was anything in particular he wanted me to say and he said "No, just make people happy" so that is what today is all about. He didn't want me to drivel on about Dale was born in 1986 blah blah blah. We all know that. He wanted moments.... every moment with Dale has made a special memory for me, and those are something that I will never lose. He was fortunate to lead a bit of a double life really. He loved the fact that he had the Mum stuff and the Dad Stuff... the mum stuff he loved was the family aspect with Glenn, Mitch and myself or with the rest of my family when in Brisbane and then in Bundaberg. The mum stuff was Barbeques, Karaoke, Footy Tipping and Boxing... and scaring the heck out of me at every opportunity. That is where Mitch learnt it from, and where my grey hair comes from.

- When little he loved the Bush Tucker Man and gave us great delight when he would pull on his little furry ugg boots, backpack and slouch hat and go exploring the backyard in Tennant Creek. Later it was Steve Irwin and now the pair of them can be "Crikeying" all over heaven!!
- He always used to find it amusing that when at his junior footy games I was in trouble for yelling at referees.
- He was a bit of a chick magnet (and even the rare occasion when he wasn't, he still thought he was!)...Most know of Katie and Zoe...but there were a lot of late night phone calls or trips to my house about his heart being broken and I knew of a lot of Leah's, Jessica's etc scattered about the place. When making the photo stories, it was difficult to work out who was real and who was just another download.
- Sport was very popular with Dale. Broncos, Golf, Cricket and Horse Racing – look out when his tip came in at the track... The "You Beauty" could be heard back in Brisbane. It shattered him when he had a bad week on our Footy Tipping. Which was pretty much most weeks come to think of it?
- He loved a special salad dressing that I made. He rang me in a panic one morning because he had been trying to make it and it wasn't working out right, and he needed it for dinner that night, so I ended up jumping in the car and driving him a jar of it down from Bundaberg.
- He loved his Car... with his 12 stacker CD player booming out his DOOF DOOF (oh or the Bon Jovi and Seventies CD's that would vanish from my house every time he was there.); he was always greatly amused to see me terrified by his driving skills. Although I'm sure he was more worried about the fingernail marks I was leaving in his Duco. He loved Karaoke and Christmas Eve we cranked up the Karaoke player and sang for 3 hours, finishing off with our famous Dale and Mum rendition of Paradise by the Dashboard Light, which we made famous at Ricks 1st Friday Karaoke at the Avondale Tavern. No wonder his voice went not long after that.
- His most recent way to amuse himself though was at poor Glenn's expense. OK so Glenn (or Furry Bear) has a bit of a habit of using particular phrases very often, so Dale devised that every time he did it, he would stick his finger up like getting a six in cricket. On a trip to Hervey Bay, we confessed to Glenn about what we were doing, and he had a good laugh. Lo and behold, only last Wednesday, Dale was snoozing (or so we thought) on the couch and Glenn made a comment and suddenly up went the finger. Well that was a blessing to see that he still had his sense of humour, right to the end.
- His other great love was his Missy. She pretty much ran the household in Zillmere...and stunk it out. Whenever I arrived it took me a few hours to clean up and disinfect the lounge room (more affectionately known as Poo Cemetery). He loved Missy to pieces, even when she filled his bed with fleas. He was a bit lost without her when she moved to live with Grandma and Grand dad at Maryborough but he soon followed and took great delight in thinking that he was getting one over Glenn when he went to work, by sneaking Missy into the lounge room. Sorry Sweetheart... we knew!!!! Missy loves her drives in the car to take Mitch to school or to visit Jan's Farm, so Thank you for my treasured Grand daughter – she is much more loved than the specimen jar you once handed me when you decided not to deposit at the Sperm Bank!!!

Well I'm sure the egg timer has well and truly run out on my speech. Dale and I had some truly great moments together, as he did with Mitch. When I was there with Dale when he was told that his Cancer was inoperable, that is what I would probably say was the worst day of my life. We spent a lot of time together over the last 15 months, working through coming to terms with what was inevitable...and accepting that he was not going to be here forever. That acceptance has allowed me to put together this day for him. He apologised to me for 2 very important things...he confessed that he allowed one side of the family to think that I never gave him presents for his Birthday or Christmas, and apologised for leaving me as a child because I was just a single parent and Dad could give him everything he wanted. But that was Dale. I never thought any less of him for these things...he was my baby. To Mitch, you are "Da King", and to me, you will always be my greatest love and Inspiration and will be forever in my heart and thoughts. We Love you Dale.