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CLETUS DAVID EICHLER 1926 to 2009

Cletus David was the eldest of Bill and Lucy's two Children. He was born at Broken Hill on 25 May 1926.

He attended St Mary's School at Railway Town, Broken Hill. We have two reports of his progress in the 3rd and 4th Classes in 1934 and 1935.

ST. MARY'S, RAILWAY TOWN

6a Class.—Eileen Kelly, 1; June Wilson, 2; Kassie Cox, 3; Maxime Williams, 4.

6b Class.—Bernadette M'Inerney, 1; Vonnie Fitzgerald, 2; Patty Kernot, 3.

5th Class.—Thora Rodda, 1; Jim Jackson, 2; Jean M'Avaney, 3.

4th Class.—Colin Hoare, 1; Molly Ladlow, 2; Annie Hill, 3.

3rd. Class.—George Owens, 1; Stan Kitto, 2; Cletus Eichler, 3.

2nd Class.—Evelyn Acres, 1; Ron Murphy, 2; Frank Paholski, 3.

1st Class.—Maxime Hill, 1; John Cotton, 2; Clara Pell, 3.

Kindergarten.—Tom Murphy, 1; Dawn Kersten, 2; Josie Pace, 3.

ST MARY'S, RAILWAY TOWN

Class 6.—Bernadette M'Inerney, 1; Jean M'Avaney, 2; Thora Rodda, 3.

Class 5.—Molly Kerin, Mary Evans (equal), 1; Annie Hill, 3; Shirley Crowhurst, 4.

Class 4.—George Owens, 1; Shirley Greenslade, 2; Stan Kitto, Cletus Eichler (equal), 3.

Class 3.—Frank Paholski, 1; Evelyn Acres, 2; Ken Satterswaite, 3.

Class 2.—Rosa Cowie, 1; J. M'Devitte, 2; Veronica Mann, 3.

Class 1.—Dawn Kersten, 1; Julia Anderson, 2; Josephine Pace, 3.

CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL

Barrier Miner 15 December 1934

Barrier Miner 12 December 1935

The family moved to Semaphore in Adelaide in 1940 and Cletus attended the Marist Brothers School at Alberton. When Cletus left school he became an apprentice Fitter and Turner at Popes Works.

Cletus detested his name and always used the name of David despite this his sister and her family including his mother continued to call him Cletus.

David enlisted in RAAF 31 October 1944. He was 18 years old. On entering the Air Force he was trained in radio equipment and during the war he was stationed in Singapore where he had the job of repairing and servicing radios in planes.

After the war David stayed on in the Air Force and his role also included instructing in radio operation servicing and repairs. He was discharged 27 January 1961 with the rank of Flight Sergeant.

Marriage and Family

David married Dorothy Bond at Ballarat on 26 May 1951. Dorothy was previously married as Dorothy May McDonald to Peter Edward Bond in Sydney in 1942. Dorothy's mother was the Matron at the Ventnor Private Hospital, Bondi. Her name was Henrietta Macavail. We have been told that the owner of the hospital, Dr. Thomas Frederick Brown had a wife who was

infertile and Henrietta agreed to carry his child as a surrogate mother. On giving birth at Stanmore, NSW, she insisted on keeping the child who was named Dorothy. When Dorothy was older she used to participate in beauty competitions and pageants and she used the name of McDonald. She decided to use this name rather than Macavail.

Dorothy had a Stillborn child in 1942 and later two other children with Peter Edward Bond, with Christopher born on 4 May 1944 and a daughter Lynne born in November 1946. The Bonds separated in 1948 and Dorothy took her children to Ballarat where Christopher started school.

The Bonds were divorced on 20 April 1951 only a month before Dorothy's marriage to David at St Andrew's Church, Ballarat. Dorothy was born in 1921 and when she married David she was 29 and David was 25 years old.



David & Dorothy's Wedding. David Martini Best man

Christopher and Lynne were both still quite young when they came to live with David. While the children continued to live with him they used the Eichler name but there was no formal change of name or any adoption process. Their surname therefore is really Bond. David was good with the children when they were young and he accepted them as his own.

After they married the family moved to 25 Baker Parade, Ashburton and Christopher went to Ashburton State School in 1951. Dorothy and David had a child **William David** who was born on 2 February 1956.

At this time David was still in the RAAF and rode his motor bike to work every day into Victoria Barracks and back again. Every evening Lynne and Chris would have their baths, put on their pajamas and take it in turns to run down Baker Parade to the Railway Parade corner to meet David and to ride with him on the bike up the hill to their home.

David left the RAAF in 1961 and set up a television and radio repair business operating out of his home at 25 Baker Parade. In 1964 my father, Colin Harford, a nephew of David's mother Lucy, and his family moved into 6 Baker Parade. We doubt that Colin had ever met David before because his family had left Broken Hill by 1920. However, we now know that they met at Ashburton. David worked very hard at his business and was very good with his customers who would call him out to assist them often at times which were inconvenient to him. He was also very good with them in terms of payment arrangements.

Even though he was very busy with his work he still found time to cultivate a vegetable garden and was very proud of the large cauliflowers he used to grow.

We have been told that David's marriage to Dorothy was tumultuous and we know that he could be violent and he beat his children sometimes undeservedly. He was not so hard on David Jr. because he was quite a lot younger and also his own son.

We have also been told that three months after they were married, Dorothy's mother told David that Dorothy had been diagnosed with paranoid Schizophrenia. However, the source of this can only be traced to David. An alternative view is that she was diagnosed over a period of time by her own local doctor with evidence provided by David. Dorothy's health was also complicated by the fact that she was also had epilepsy and was subject to occasional fits.

After giving birth to William David she was also not well and in today's terms would have been diagnosed with post natal depression. In those times it was a case of getting on with things whereas today the symptoms are more recognizable, the care and attention more sympathetic, and the treatments very directly related to the condition.

By the mid 1960's she had been placed in an institution and she spent time at both the Mont Park and Kew Asylums. The treatment in these institutions was not nice to say the least.

Christopher attended De La Salle College in Malvern from 1957 to 1962. He had his final year of school as a boarder at St Bede's Mentone with money left to Dorothy on the death of her mother, Henrietta. There is no doubt David was unstable and acted irrationally and Christopher left the household at the earliest opportunity when he had finished school in 1963. Chris went on to RMIT studying electronics and for all his working life was employed at Channel 9.

In 1967, David met Patricia who at the time was a hairdresser at Hartwell. When it was clear that Dorothy would never come out of the institution David divorced her in 1970. He married Patricia on 22 January 1971 at the Presbyterian Church, Bentleigh. Patricia was 37 and David 45.



David & Pat



Richard, David, Pat, Peter & David Jr.

Patricia was born Patricia Beverley Buxton on 4 May 1934 and married James William (Billy) Hancock in 1954 when she was 20 years old. They had two boys Peter John born in 1955 and Richard Mark born in 1958. This was not a happy marriage for Patricia. Her husband was a "womaniser" and six months after Richard was born she left him. Billy Hancock was later to marry twice more.

After their marriage David took Patricia to his home in Ashburton. David Jr. also lived with his father, Patricia and her two boys at Ashburton. He went to school at the Salesian College at Chadstone and went on to Melbourne University where he graduated in Medicine



Graduation: Pat, David, Aileen & David Sr.

David had a scholarship from the Army which paid for his tuition and he was bonded for two years to the Army. Subsequently he volunteered for work with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. He later worked as a locum rather than setting himself up in private practice.

David Jr. met Aileen Tyler and they married in 2 December 1978 at the home of one of Aileen's girlfriends. Aileen was a very strong woman. On 5 January 1990 he was found dead at the age of 33. We are unaware of all the circumstances surrounding David's untimely death. An inquest was carried but the report is not yet publicly available.

The following are two of the notices in *The Sun* 7 January 1990.

"Eichler David 33

Peace at last. My dearest one how we will miss you.

Our love and thoughts forever.

Aileen & Rohan"

"David

Dearest one, memories are something no one can steal. They have a heartache only Jesus can heal. Did anyone truly understand your sensitive, loving, caring nature you gave humanity.

Sister Lynne, Arie, Rick & Sheryn"

David's death had a significant impact his father. He could not sleep and started taking sleeping pills. He also drank too much.

David and Patricia lived at Ashburton until 1988 when they went to Mandarin Court, Nerang on the Gold Coast. Patricia had a problem with the noise from nearby traffic and David did not like the constant heat. They returned to Victoria in 1989 and settled on the Mornington Peninsula at Rosebud.



Pat & David c1974

Patricia found David difficult to live with. He was moody and erratic and they argued often. After each argument he would go to his solicitor and change his Will. He told his niece Colette that she would be a beneficiary. He changed his Will twenty eight times. After he died the Solicitor rang Colette to advise her that nothing had been left to her.

David grew apart from his sister, Marie, who saw little of him over his last twenty years. Also her husband David Martini later in life tried to renew acquaintances with him without any success.

In his closing years, David had increased his dependency on alcohol and later developed Alzheimers Disease. In late 2009, He was taken to Frankston Hospital after an overdose of sleeping pills. He died in hospital 5 weeks later.

The Death Notice in the newspaper read:

EICHLER. - David. Passed away peacefully on Jan. 19, 2009, aged 82 years Husband of Pat. Father of David (dec.). Stepfather of Peter and Rick. Grandfather of BJ and Adam (dec.) Rest In Peace. In accordance with David's wishes, no Funeral.

This was followed by an In Memoriam Notice the next year:

EICHLER. - David. Loved husband of Pat, passed away one year ago. I didn't know just how much I would miss you. Love you - Patricia. Rest In Peace